

MT. BAKER ROCKHOUND NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE MT. BAKER ROCK & GEM CLUB

Club Happenings

- **General Meeting** - February 16, 2026, 7:00 PM, Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry St, Ferndale, Washington.
Show and tell: Petrified wood
- **64th Annual Gem and Mineral Show** - March 28-29, 2026, Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, Saturday 10-6, Sunday 10-5.
- **Lapidary Arts** - Thursdays, 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM (cleanup starts at 8 PM), lapidary room is open to members of MBRGC qualified to use the equipment. Sign up and prepay for classes/sessions at the club's store (Bellis Fair Mall, Space 424). See page 6.

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GEM AND MINERAL SHOW

Our 64th ANNUAL SHOW

March 28-29, 2026 (Saturday 10 - 6, Sunday 10 - 5)

ROCKS, MINERALS, FOSSILS, GEMS, JEWELRY, DEMOS, DEALERS, EXHIBITS, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE, ON-GOING SILENT AUCTION, CLUB SALES, FOOD SERVICE, ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS, AND MORE!

FREE ADMISSION! FREE PARKING!

Pioneer Pavilion Community Center
2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale WA
Cross the bridge into downtown and turn left on First Street

www.mtbakerrockclub.org



Field Trips

If you are interested in leading a guided club field trip in the future, please contact Michael Langley.

WSMC Field Trips for 2026 are now posted. Check out page 4 for all their guided field trips to interesting collecting sites for a variety of minerals.

FUNNY FOSSILS

Why was the boulder not bothered by its broken piece?

Because it was just a fragment of its existence!

Mineral of the Month: *Barite*

Barite is primarily made up of Barium Sulfate ($BaSO_4$). Barite is generally easy to identify. It is one of just a few nonmetallic minerals with a specific gravity of four or higher (4.5). Combine that with its low Mohs hardness (2.5 to 3.5) and its three directions of right-angle cleavage, Barite can usually be reliably identified with just these three observations. Barite appears in various colors, including white, yellow, blue, gray and can form in different crystal shapes, such as tabular, rosette, or bladed crystals.

Barite is commonly found in sedimentary rocks and as a result of marine sedimentation and in hydrothermal veins and is a gangue mineral associated with sulfide ore veins. It is found in association with ores of antimony, cobalt, copper, lead, manganese, and silver. There are many worldwide localities of fine Barite specimens. Some of the more noteworthy include Mibladen Mining District, Morocco, Cerro Warihuyn Huanuco, Peru, Rock Candy Mine, Grand Forks, Canada and various localities in China. US locations include Golden yellow Barite crystals from Elk Creek, South Dakota, Palos Verdes, California, Linwood, Iowa, and Stoneham, Colorado.

Most barite produced is used as a weighting agent in drilling muds for the petroleum industry. Its high density prevents blowouts by counteracting upward pressure. This flow of fluid cools the drill bit amongst other beneficial things. That is what 99% of the barite consumed in the United States is used for. Barite is also used for x-ray shielding as it has the ability to block x-ray and gamma-ray emissions.



Barite from Cerro Warihuyn Huanuco, Peru. From the collection of Michael Langley.



Barite from Palos Verdes Hills, California. From the collection of Michael Langley.



Barite from Hartsel Barite Mine in Hartsel, Colorado, self collected in July 1983. From the collection of Michael Langley.

Do you have the next Mineral of the Month?

Members have the opportunity to submit ideas for inclusion in future newsletters. If you have ideas for mineral of the month, rock related jokes or quotes, rockhounding stories, rock collecting tips, or any other ideas, please email them to: jonny_on_the_rocks@yahoo.com

Rockhound *Storytime*

Your Story Here

By You

Your awesome rockhound story could be here, but you didn't send it to me. So instead, you have to look at more pictures of me and my rocks. But seriously, if you have a story about a rockhounding trip you took, club field trip, your favorite collecting site, or just a rock story in general, please email it to:

jonny_on_the_rocks@yahoo.com



Instead of this handsome fellow, with a black agate from Greenwater, Washington, your picture from your awesome rockhound story could be right here!

2026 WSMC Sponsored Field Trips

The Washington state mineral council plans guided field trips to collecting sites. Open to member clubs. Most trips are free. Included are the Pow-Wow trips (You must join POW to go on these trips. Dues \$7.50 or \$15 a family. They supply two free breakfasts on trips). Host clubs and contact person will be set up as I gather info. For updated info, go to the mineralcouncil.org. or contact Nique Wicks at nwhopyfrog41@gmail.com (509) 670-0630.

| Date | Host | Site | Material | Tools |
|---------|------|-----------------------|--|--|
| 01/31 | MVL | Western WA University | Tour | Camera, notepad, pen/pencil |
| 02/28 | MVL | Walker Valley | Agate | Digging tools, chisel, bar 3# hammer |
| 3/22 | MVL | Skykomish | Picture Jasper | Rock hammer, wading boots |
| 4/18-19 | POW | Saddle Mountain | Petrified Wood | Shovel, small pick, hammer (surface collection) |
| 5/09 | MVL | Finney Creek | Listwanite | Digging tools, hard rock chisel, pry bar, sledge- |
| 5/23-24 | MVL | Kettle Falls | Fossils | Rock hammer |
| | | Wild Turkey Mine | Noble Serpentine | Hard rock or surface collection – Fee Dig |
| 6/13 | MVL | Saddle Mountain | Petrified Wood | Shovel, small pick, rock hammer |
| | | Diatom Pit | Common Opal | Rock hammer, buckets w/lids (dust) |
| 7/18-19 | MVL | Lake Wenatchee | Garnet | Shovel screen, container for Garnets |
| | | | Talc | Hand saw |
| 8/15-16 | Puy | Greenwater | Agate, Jasper, Opal | Digging tools, chisel, small pry bar, rock hammer |
| 9/12-13 | POW | Red Top | Agate, Jasper, Geodes | Digging tools, chisel, small pry bar, rock hammer |
| 9/19 | Puy | Little Naches | Lily Pad Jasper, Fossils, Thunder Eggs | Digging tools, hard rock chisels, pry bars, 3# hammer, rock hammer |
| 10/11 | MVL | Walt Bailey | Rainbow Chert | Hard rock chisels, rock hammers, pry bars |
| 11/7 | MVL | Blanchard Hill | Stilpnomelane | Hard rock – flat chisels, hammers, pry bars |

100 % of map booklet sales goes to Walker Valley lease, insurance for access to private property and general operation of WSMC

Many trips need Discover America the Beautiful Pass. Ask when you inquire about trip

ALWAYS contact host for updated info a week before trip !!!

HOST CLUB CONTACT INFO

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|--|----------------|
| MVL - Marysville Rock & Gem Club | Nique Wicks | nwhopyfrog41@gmail.com | (509) 670-0630 |
| POW - All Rockhounds Pow Wow | Larry Vess | vessel3755@gmail.com | (253) 473-3908 |
| PUY - Puyallup Rock & Gem Club | Paul Haak | pvhaak@gmail.com | (253) 312-1743 |

Keep updated on <http://www.mineralcouncil.org> Land management changes, and roads close regularly. There is a area on web page with tool category in pictures and names of tools.

Always have proper cloths and gear for conditions. Be prepared with safety, first aid, food and drink.

Try to be at the meeting site 30 minutes before trip time for details and instructions with a full tank of gas. Use code of ethics, keep our lands open to rockhounding.

Washington Rock & Gem Show Dates

February 2026

14-15—OAK HARBOR, WASHINGTON: Annual show; Whidbey Island Gem Club; Oak Harbor Senior Center, 51 SE Jerome St., Oak Harbor, WA; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5. Email: vick_o_rama@hotmail.com

March 2026

7-8—ISSAQUAH, WASHINGTON: Annual show; East KingCo Rock & Gem Club; Pickering Barn 1730 - 10th Ave. NW, Issaquah, WA; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Admission: \$1 for adults, free for kids 12 and under; 30 Gem, Jewelry and Mineral Dealers, Gem and Mineral Displays, Stone Sculpture Exhibit, What's My Rock - Bring your rocks to identify, Door Prizes, Silent Auction, Kids' Activities; Email: eastkingco@gmail.com; Website: www.eastkingco.org

14-15—SEATTLE, WASHINGTON: Annual show; North Seattle Lapidary & Mineral Club; Crown Hill Center, 9250 14th Ave NE, Seattle, WA; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Free; Displays, junior activities, dealers, demonstrations, door prizes; contact Susan Gardner; Email: sgardner3@mindspring.com; Website: www.northseattlerockclub.org

20-22—PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire; Washington State Fair Event Center, 110 9th Ave. SW; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; General admission \$7, Free admission for children under 12 years old; Fine jewelry, precious & semi-precious gemstones, millions of beads, crystals, gold & silver, unique gifts from around the world & much more at manufacturer's prices. Buy directly from the importers & wholesalers. Jewelry repair & cleaning while you shop. Free parking; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; Email: info@gemfaire.com; Website: www.gemfaire.com

28-29—FERNDALE, WASHINGTON: 64th Annual show; Mount Baker Rock & Gem Club; Pioneer Pavillion Community Center, 2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale, WA; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Rocks, minerals, fossils, gems, jewelry, demos, dealers, exhibits, door prizes, raffle, on-going silent auction, club sales, food service, activities for kids, and more! Website: www.mtbakerrockclub.org

April 2026

24-26—YAKIMA, WASHINGTON: 63rd Parade of Gems; Yakima Rock & Mineral Club; Central Washington-State Fair Park, Modern Living Building, 1301 South Fair Avenue, Yakima, WA; Fri. 10-4, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; Admission: Adult 7\$, Student \$2, Under 12 free; Vendors, raffle, door prizes, silent auction, kid activities, demonstrations, gold panning; Website: www.yakimarockclub.com

25-26—SEATTLE, WASHINGTON: 58th Annual show; West Seattle Rock Club; Alki Masonic Temple, 4736 40th Ave. SW, Seattle, WA; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Free; Vendors, Demonstrators, silent auction, activities for kids; Website: www.westseattlerockclub.org

May 2026

2-3—MONROE, WASHINGTON: Annual show; Everett Rock & Gem Club; Evergreen State Fairgrounds, 14405 179th Ave SE, Weikel Event Center; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; All ages welcome. Free admission, free parking; Rocks, gems, jewelry, Displays, kids activities, demonstrations, silent auction; contact Candra Burkhardt, (425) 772-3326; Email: Secretary@everettrockclub.com; Website: www.everettrockclub.com

June 2026

27-28—KENT, WASHINGTON: Annual show; Cascade Mineralogical Society; Kent Commons, 525 4th Ave N; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Free; Vendors from all over the Pacific Northwest, activities for kids, door prizes, silent auction, and raffle for amazing prizes. Demonstrations, mineral specimens, rough rock, cabochons, jewelry, beads, and metaphysical specimens. Something for everyone; contact Noelle Barnes, (206) 914-0514; Email: noelleb@outlook.com; Website: www.cascademineralsociety.org

Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club Information

The Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club is a member of the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Washington State Mineral Council. We are affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Purpose Statement: The purpose of this organization is to promote education and interest in the earth sciences (geology, rocks, minerals, gems), lapidary and related jewelry arts, and the joining together of people who share these interests. The Mt. Baker Rockhound News is the official club publication. The contents of this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given.

Club meetings are held the third Monday of each month of the year 7:00 pm, at Pioneer Pavilion Community Center in Ferndale, Washington. The exceptions are October being the club auction and December being the Christmas party. Our annual show is held the last full weekend in March at the Pioneer Pavilion Community Center in Ferndale. Field trips are scheduled on a regular basis throughout the year, including bus trips to local shows, museums, and special exhibits. Annual Membership Dues are \$20.00 per household, payable in October to the treasurer, or dues can be sent to: Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club, PO Box 30324, Bellingham, WA 98228.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

MBRGC Officers and Volunteer Positions

2025 Elected Officers

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| President | Michael Langley |
| Vice President | Harold VanAlsburg |
| Treasurer | Ralph Sisco |
| Secretary | Tawnya Soine-Crowe |
| Federation | Mike Marsh |
| Director | Bruce Wickler |
| Director | Jonathan Syltie |
| Past President | Candi Gerard |

Volunteer Positions

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Show Chairman | Candi Gerard |
| Webmaster | Todd Folsom |
| Newsletter Editor | Jonathan Syltie |
| Social Media | Trevor Duncan |
| Publicity | Mike Marsh |
| Mall Shop | Candi Gerard |
| Lapidary | Bruce Wickler |
| Kitchen | Kathy Mayock |
| Kitchen | Kevin Mayock |
| Scholarship | Todd Folsom |
| Mineral Council | Michael Langley |
| RRR | Ralph Sisco |
| RRR | Mike Marsh |

Lapidary Arts

Club members of MBRGC may use the lapidary room after taking the lapidary introduction class (\$30 per person). Members will learn to use the equipment safely and also get basic instruction on how to make a cabochon. The lapidary room is open on Thursdays, from 6-8:30 PM (cleanup at 8 PM, out by 8:30 PM) at Space 424 of the Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham.

You must sign up and pre-pay for classes and sessions at the club's store (Bellis Fair Mall, Space 424). The fee is \$10 for 3 hours of use. There will be only four people allowed each session, so when you go to sign up it will be "first paid, first date available".

There will be a waiting list for prepaid members. If you do not show up for the time you selected, you will forfeit your \$10. The club's insurance requires that users of the lapidary room must be club members and at least 18 years old.

Large cuts on the saws will be done by one of the monitors. The class fee may include one slab cut. Other cuts will be done for a fee when time allows. Bring your own safety glasses and hearing protection.

A class on how to use a tumbler for polishing stones is held depending on interest. If you are interested in taking a tumbler class, please attend one of our meetings or send email with your name and phone number to the club's email address: admin@mtbakerrockclub.org