

Mt. Baker Rockhound News

NEWSLETTER OF THE MT. BAKER ROCK & GEM CLUB

Club Happenings

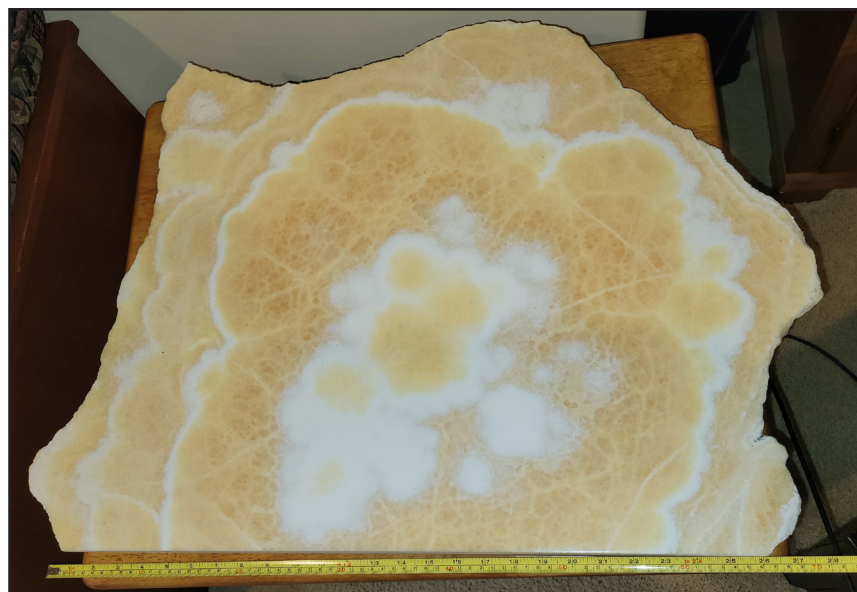
- **General Meeting** - April 20, 2026, 7:00 PM, Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry St, Ferndale, Washington.
Show and tell: No show and tell this month.
- **Lapidary Arts** - Thursdays, 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM (cleanup starts at 8 PM), lapidary room is open to members of MBRGC qualified to use the equipment. Sign up and prepay for classes/sessions at the club's store (Bellis Fair Mall, Space 424). See page 6.

Get Your Story Published

Members have the opportunity to submit ideas for inclusion in future newsletters.

If you have rock photos, ideas for mineral of the month, rock related jokes or quotes, rockhounding stories, rockhounding collection tips, or any other ideas, please send them to Jonathan Syltie @: jonny_on_the_rocks@yahoo.com

Rock Photo Corner



Calcite from the Uinta Mountains of Utah. Bought by a club member in Utah. They suspect it is from a cave pool.

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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 in full swing. Check out page 4 for all their guided field trips to interesting collecting sites for a variety of minerals.

FUNNY FOSSILS

Why was the sedimentary rock collection so cheap?

Because it was on shale.

Mineral of the Month: *Muscovite*

Muscovite is a common phyllosilicate mineral belonging to the mica group, which is primarily composed of aluminum and potassium, with the chemical formula $\text{KAl}_2(\text{AlSi}_3\text{O}_{10})(\text{F,OH})_2$.

Muscovite is known for its perfect basal cleavage, allowing it to be split into very thin, flexible sheets. It is found in various rock types, including igneous rocks like granite and pegmatites, and in metamorphic rocks such as schists and gneisses. It can also be found in sedimentary rocks, appearing as sericite.

The name "muscovite" is derived from "Muscovy glass," referring to its historical use as a window material in Russia. This mineral was mined for its sheets, which were a cheaper alternative to glass in the 16th century.



Muscovite mica on orthoclase feldspar. Found in a highway road-cut near Keystone, South Dakota. From the collection of Paul Syltie.

Do you own an awesome mineral, like the one above? If you do, snap a photo of it and send it to me. I will do the rest. Jonathan Syltie @: jonny_on_the_rocks@yahoo.com

Scholarships Awarded at Rock Show

By Todd Folsom

Two undergraduate students of Geology at Western Washington University were recently awarded scholarships via the club's scholarship program. They received their checks for \$1,500 from President Langley near the end of our annual Gem and Mineral Show.

This concludes the many years of the club running its own scholarship program. From now on the Board of Directors has authorized a transition to making an annual donation to the WWU Geology Fund which is managed by the WWU Foundation along with other university scholarship funds.

This transition has several advantages. In spring students will use the university's recently implemented scholarship portal to search out and apply for relevant scholarships. They will get decisions in time to know what financial help they may get for the next quarter. Geology students will not have to make a separate application to our club. Another advantage is that the club no longer needs to run its own scholarship program. The Board of Directors will annually, perhaps in January, decide upon how much to donate to the WWU Geology fund and send a check. That will boost the amount available for geology students!



Club President Michael Langley standing with the two WWU geology students that were awarded scholarships at the Annual Show.

Rockhound Storytime

Photos from the Tuscon Rock Show

By Candi and Gordy Gerard

This is the stuff we left behind in Tucson, AZ. We just couldn't get it into our suitcase.



Do you have cool rock photos like the ones above, or rockhounding stories and photos? If you do, send them to Jonathan Syltie @: jonny_on_the_rocks@yahoo.com

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

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.cascademineralogicalsociety.org

5-7—BONNEY LAKE, WASHINGTON: Annual show; The Puyallup Valley Gem & Mineral Club; Swiss Park, 9205 198th Ave. E; Fri. 12-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-3; No Admission Fee; With vendors both inside and outside you'll find a vast selection of rough and finished "treasures" on display. Choose from crystals, minerals, fossils, beads, findings, lapidary equipment, cabochons, geodes, and jewelry. Inside, watch demonstrators see displays presented by PVG&MC members; contact Jillian Higgins, (253) 987-6751; Email: PVG&MC@gmail.com; Website: www.puyallupvalleygemandmineralclub.com/shows

July 2026

24-26—TENINO, WASHINGTON: Annual show; Washington Agate and Mineral Society; Tenino City Park, 309 Park Ave East; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 9-5; Free; The rock and gem show is held during the Tenino, Oregon, Trail Days celebration. There will be about 20 rock and mineral vendors, demonstrations, artisan jewelry, and much more; contact Douglas Shank, (360) 701-3769; Email: douglas.e.shank@gmail.com; Website: <https://wamsolympia.com/>

August 2026

14-16—PORT TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON: Show and sale; Port Townsend Rock Club; Jefferson County Fair Grounds, 4907 Landes St; Fri. 10-8, Sat. 10-8, Sun. 10-8:30; Adults \$8, Seniors 65+ and for Students 13-17 \$6, Children 6-12 \$2, Free for 5 and under; Rock Show is in conjunction with the county fair; contact Vicki Stearns, (425) 941-5708; Email: vivkistearns52@gmail.com

15—SHELTON, WASHINGTON: Annual show; Shelton Rock & Mineral Society; Mason Co Rec. Area, 2100 E. Johns Prairie Rd; Sat. 9-4; Free Admission & Parking, \$40 Tailgate Space; 16th Annual Tailgate. 30+ vendors, rocks, minerals, fossils, rock crafts, equipment; contact Kevin, (360) 463-5527; Website: <https://www.sheltonrockandmineralsociety.com/>

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 VanAlsborg
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	Tawnya Soine-Crowe
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