MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2026

VOLUME 40, ISSUE 5

MT. BAKER ROCKHOUND NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE MT. BAKER ROCK & GEM CLUB

Club Happenings

General Meeting – September 21, 2026, 7:00 PM, Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry St, Ferndale, Washington.

Show and tell: *TBA*

Lapidary Arts – Wednesdays & Thursdays, 6-8:30 PM, lapidary room is open to anyone qualified to use the equipment. Sign up and prepay for classes/sessions at the club's store (Bellis Fair Mall, Space 424)

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MOUNT BAKER ROCK AND GEM CLUB

MT BAKER ROCK & GEM CLUB
MEMBERS PRESENT

The 2026
ROCKHOUND RENDEZVOUS
AND OPEN SALE TO THE PUBLIC

ROCKS, JEWELRY, TOOLS,
& OTHER ROCK RELATED ITEMS

DATES:	September 26 - 27
TIME:	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM both days
Location:	Pioneer Pavilion Community Center 2007 Cherry St., Ferndale, Wa.
Contact:	Ralph (281) 806-4909, Mike (360) 201-1290 www.mtbakerrockclub.org

Rockhound Rendezvous
September 26-27, 2026

Club members sell or swap their rocks, jewelry, tools, and other rock-related items. The public is invited to come shop. You're sure to make a deal here. Sales will *usually* be by cash and are made directly to the club member.

If a member wishes to sell, the cost for a 10×10 space for both days is $50. Single day spaces are available for $30. Spaces are limited to two per family. The fee must be pre-paid in order to reserve your space(s).

Payment may be made at club meetings or at the club's store in Bellis Fair Mall. There is no food available for purchase, so please bring a lunch. You will need to bring your own table.

We're back; need your help

New member John Goldsbury is the new newsletter editor, so we're back in business there! The goal is to put out a newsletter at the beginning of each month. Please help me fill future issues:

- If you have cool rock photos, please send 'em in;
- If you have ideas for mineral of the month, please send 'em in;
- If you have rock related jokes or quotes, please send 'em in;
- If you have rockhounding stories from a recent trip, please send 'em in;
- If you have rockhounding collection tips, please send 'em in;
- If you've read a great book and want to offer a review or recommendation, please send it in;
- If you have any other ideas, please send 'em in.

Send to John Goldsbury at *flatpick_guitar@yahoo.com*

Policy of the Mount Baker Rock and Gem Club Regarding The Recording of Club Meetings With An AI Tool

The Board of Directors approved a policy that using an artificial intelligence tool (an AI Notetaker) to record general meetings, meetings of the board of directors or other club events is not allowed. Should anyone attending a meeting or event launch an AI Notetaker, they are required to halt the recording and delete the recording. Read the policy and rationale near the bottom of the "About the Club" page on the website.

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 nwhoppyfrog41@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 Wild Turkey Mine	Fossils Noble Serpentine	Rock hammer Hard rock or surface collection – Fee Dig
6/13	MVL	Saddle Mountain Diatom Pit	Petrified Wood Common Opal	Shovel, small pick, rock hammer Rock hammer, buckets w/lids (dust)
7/11-12	MVL	Lake Wenatchee	Garnet Talc	Shovel screen, container for Garnets 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	nwhoppyfrog41@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 & Mineral Shows, from this site HERE

Marcus Whitman Gem and Mineral Show - 09/12/2026
09/12/2026 - 09/13/2026
Hours: 10:00 - 5:00
Venue: Walla Walla County Fairgrounds Pavilion
Address: 363 Orchard Street
Walla Walla County Fairgrounds Pavilion
Walla Walla, WA
Website: https://www.marcuswhitmangem.com/

Southern Washington Mineralogical Society - 09/19/2026
09/19/2026 - 09/20/2026
Venue: Cowlitz County Fairgrounds
Address: 1900 7th Ave
Cowlitz County Fairgrounds
Longview, WA 98632
Website: https://www.facebook.com/groups/351538661569885/?hoisted_section_header_type=recently_seen&multi_permalinks=417378911652526

Clallam County Gem & Mineral Show - 09/19/2026
09/19/2026 - 09/20/2026
Hours: Sat 9:00-5:00 Sun 10:00-4:00
Venue: Vern Burton Community Center
Address: 308 E 4th St
Vern Burton Community Center
Port Angeles, WA
Website: https://www.sequimrocks.org/

Rocktoberfest Presented by: Marysville Rock & Gem Club - 10/03/2026
10/03/2026 - 10/04/2026
Venue: Evergreen State Fairgrounds
Address: 14405 179th Ave SE
Evergreen State Fairgrounds
Monroe, WA 98270
Website: https://www.marysvillerockclub.com/

Skagit Rock & Gem Show - NEW LOCATION - 11/07/2026
11/07/2026 - 11/08/2026
Hours: Sat 9:00-5:00 Sun 10:00-4:00
Venue: Skagit Rock and Gem Club, Sedro-Woolley, Community Center
Address: 703 Pacific Street
Skagit Rock and Gem Club, Sedro-Woolley, Community Center
Sedro-Woolley, WA
Website: https://www.skagitrockandgem.com/

Fall Festival of Gems - 11/21/2026
11/21/2026 - 11/22/2026
Hours: 10:00 - 5:00
Venue: Kitsap County Fairgrounds - The President's Hall
Address: 1250 Fairgrounds Rd NW
Kitsap County Fairgrounds - The President's Hall
Bremerton, WA 98311
Website: https://www.kmgsrockclub.com

Washington Rock & Mineral Shows (from WSMC site here)

September 2026 19th 10am – 5pm 20th 10am – 4pm	Southern Washington Mineralogical Society	60th Annual show	Cowlitz Co. Fairgrounds Events Center 1900 7th Ave Longview, WA
September 2026 19th 10am – 4pm 20th 10am – 4pm	Fraser Valley Rock and Gem Club	Annual show	Aldergrove Kinsmen Community Center 26770 29th Ave Aldergrove, BC
October 2026 3rd 10am - 5pm 4th 10am - 5pm	Marysville Rock and Gem Club	50th Anniversary show	Evergreen State Fairgrounds Display Bldg #500 14405 179th Ave SE Monroe, WA

Exhibit: Painted Forest - The Science and Beauty of Petrified Wood. April 3, 2026 – April 25, 2027. Whatcom Museum in Bellingham Old City Hall. The ancient forest specimens on view represent examples from the Pacific Northwest, Arizona, and Utah, as well as places like Argentina, Madagascar, and Turkey. They range in age from 15 to 300 million years old, representing a huge span of geologic time. The specimens in this exhibition are on loan from the Rice Northwest Museum of Rocks & Minerals in Hillsboro, Oregon. More info HERE

MBRGC Online

The Mt. Baker Rock and Gem Club has several online outlets. We'll try to highlight them each month here.

Website. The website is here: Website. There's lots of good stuff here; we'll highlight one each month. Here's one example. One of the menu items on the site is "Field Trips." On that link are several DIY Field Trips a rockhound could take, including these:

- Crinoid Fossils at the ASB beach (Bellingham)
- Crinoid Fossils Below the Old Cement Plant (Bellingham)
- Honeycomb Weathering at Clayton Beach in Larabee State Park
- Beachcombing for Agate and Jasper
- Geology Exhibits at Western Washington University
- Olivine/Chromite (Dunite), Middle Fork Nooksack River

The link for all this is HERE.

Facebook Page for the Club. Actually, there are two!

- General Public Facebook Page. Here's the link: General Public FB Page/
- Member only private Facebook Page. Here's the link: Members Only FB Page Use this group to share photos of your trips and specimens, to ask questions about collecting sites or for help with identifying specimens, etc.

Facebook Page for the Store. Keep up to date with the latest goings on at our store at Bellis Fair Mall. Here's the link: Retail Store FB Page

[At our August 17 meeting, Larry Berghoff presented on using crushed rock for art projects. Below are Larry's notes]

2 things you can do with those little rock cutoffs scraps from projects

Painting a **picture** with crushed stones, and **inlaying** crushed stones into wooden items.

Any rock can be used that has a **MOH hardness of 5.5** and below. Those rocks are easily crushed by hand.

Examples of possibilities are Azurite and Lapis for blue, Turquoise for green, Sulfur for yellow, Serpentine for yellow green, Jet for black, Pyrite for gold, White Marble for white, Pipestone for brown, Stichtite for pink, Pearl for sparkle, coral for red.

Almost all of the rocks I use came from attending rock shows in Arizona over 10 years. Crushed stones are available to buy online, if you don't want to go to AZ.

natural-expressionsinc.com is 1 source.

The heart of the process is the **crusher**.

It consists of a 2" X 6" **galvanized nipple with a cap** on 1 end that is the holder. The second, crusher part, is a 1" x 12" nipple with a cap on both ends. A piece of **plywood** over the pounder keeps dust from flying up out of the holder with each whomp.

The holder should be placed on a **firm base**. Maybe the edge of a table right over a leg, or a piece of 4"x4" 3 feet long that stands vertically on concrete works well. Or, for softer stones holding it in your hand is possible. Just not fun.

The **number of strikes** to pound is somewhat determined by the softness of the stone and the size of the pieces you want. Half a dozen hard blows is a good place to start.

After a few blows the stones are dumped into a **kitchen sieve** that is shaken over newspaper. The stones in the sieve go back into the crusher and the process is repeated until the stones are gone, or you have enough material for your project. Of course, **different sieve sizes** will give you different sized grit.

The material on the newspaper is poured into a **container**. That container could be used to dispense the crushed material. Or, a **triangular dispenser** is good for pouring into small places. Or the stones can even be applied by the "**pinch**"

As an **adhesive**, you can use Modge Podge, or a DIY version uses **Elmer's School Glue** diluted by 20%, or 4 parts glue to 1 part water. Glue container marked for 4 teaspoons glue, add 1 teaspoon water. Glue inevitably becomes **contaminated** with grit as you work, so keep amount in container you are working with small.

FOR PAINTING

A small amount of stone **is separated** from a larger jar into a dispenser. With multiple-colored designs, bits fall off and contaminate color you are working with. Separating small amounts means no contamination of whole batch.

Glue is **applied** with a brush over a small area at a time to keep glue from drying out.

The **stone is thoroughly sprinkled** over the glue. Then **dumped off** onto paper. That goes **back into** stone **dispenser** for next round.

The **larger stones** want to come out first, before finer pieces. So, apply stones slowly using **sweeping motion** over whole glue area. The bigger bits will come out first, followed by the finer pieces finally followed by powder. That maintains a **consistent texture**, instead of chunky places and flat smooth places. To make **fine powder** for filler, sluice on paper.

As you continue to work push **new glue** up against stones. **Brushing sideways** along stones picks up grit. **Wipe brush** off on a rag.

A **second coat** of crushed may be necessary for a saturated color look. Just repeat process after first coat is dry.

Good tweezers are essential. As you progress, grains from a previous color will fall off into working material. These need to be picked out. It is akin to picking up a grain of sand on a beach.

The glued **stones are resistant** to touch, but for insurance a **clear fixative** can be applied. Krylon clear **satin enamel** is 1 product.

FOR INLAYING

Glue for inlaying is **CA glue**. **Cyanoacrylate**, better known as super glue, however many "super glues" are too thick to use here. **Hot Stuff** is an excellent brand. It comes in **original**, that is thin as water. **Mid** for glueing stuff with a slight gap, and **Gel** as a gap-filler. Only use in **well-ventilated** spaces. Fumes are nasty!

Hot Stuff can be Purchased on **Amazon** or **Diamond Pacific**.

Time to fully set **is 5 – 10 seconds**, so you can keep working without stones falling out.

Spray accelerator makes the glue dry instantaneously.

To dissolve use **Acetone**. Keep some close for when you mistakenly **glue your fingers** together.

It has a short shelf life. **Store in freezer**. **Moisture** is it's enemy.

Gap filler gel **dries clear**, so shows color of what is below.

Canes:

create a channel in your stick with a **carbide flame burr** chucked into a **Foredom** or Dremel.

Ball burrs are used for making circles.

Fill channels with crushed stone, then fill channel with **original Hot Stuff**. The push on **cap will glue** itself to the bottle in time, so unscrew cap and use a **pipette** for precise drips. **Wipe threads** of bottle with a rag before screwing cap back on.

Sand stones down to wood.

Fill pits with fine crushed if needed. Apply **glue**.

Sand smooth.

Tiny pits can be fill with gap filler gel.

Final sand or cut off bump of dry CA glue with single edge razor blade.

For sanding, always use **carbide sandpaper**.

Drum sander for canes

Flatwork:

Carve design with Foredom burr, or use **brad point** (flat bottom) drill bit for circles.

Fill with stone, apply CA original glue.

Sand with **orbital sander** using carbide discs.

Repeat as needed.

MINERAL OF THE MONTH – STILPNOMELANE

Stilpnomelane is a phyllosilicate mineral. It has the complex chemical formula K(Fe2+,Mg, Fe3+)8(Si, Al)12(O, OH)27·n(H2O). Named for its color and luster after the Greek *stilpnos*, which means "shining," and *melanos*, meaning "black." Stilpnomelane was first discovered in Moravia, now part of the Czech Republic.

Stilpnomelane has occurrences in banded iron formations, slates, schists, blueschist and greenschist as well as some metamorphosed massive sulfide deposits. The mineral's hardness is a 4 and can resemble Biotite. Due to the potassium content, Stilpnomelane is very slightly radioactive, although it is barely detectable. It is somewhat uncommon, occurring in locations such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, England, Sweden, the USA, Canada, Western Australia and New South Wales in Australia, and New Zealand.

Stilpnomelane is also found on Blanchard Mtn near Alger, Skagit County, Washington. The Stilpnomelane here was discovered in the spring of 1988 along a road cut. Unlike other locations, where Stilpnomelane only occurs in massive flakes, this deposit contains the world's finest specimens of this uncommon silicate mineral. It is also the first time this mineral has been

observed to have crystallized in spherical radiating form. The Stilpnomelane crystals are found embedded in chert and milky quartz. Rarely, you can find small stringers of pyrite also in the host material. Washington Mineral Council hosts an annual field trip to Blanchard Mountain in November. Our club also had a field trip there as recently as 2025. The location is accessible year-round. Vehicles need to have a Discover Pass to park here. 2 miles after this roadcut is a spectacular viewpoint that overlooks Samish Bay and the San Juan Islands.

The 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!

2026 Elected Officers

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

Volunteer Positions

Webmaster	Todd Folsom
Newsletter Editor	John Goldsbury
Social Media	Tawnya Soine-Crowe
Publicity	Mike Marsh
Scholarship	Todd Folsom
Membership	Tawnya Soine-Crowe
Mineral Council	Michael Langley

Volunteer Positions Monthly Meetings

Silent Auction Mgr	Ralph Sisco
Projector Coordinator	Mike Marsh
Kitchen Managers	Kathy & Kevin Mayock
Backup Kitchen Mgr	Harold VanAlsburg
Snacks Coordinator	Michael Langley

Volunteer Positions Annual Events

Show Chairman	Candi Gerard
Show Co-Chairman	Mike Marsh
Rock Rendezvous Sale	Ralph Sisco
Rock Rendezvous Sale	Mike Marsh
Christmas Party Coordinator	Bonnie Keel
Christmas Party Coordinator	Nancy Fortier
Auction Night Auctioneer	Wes Gannaway
Picnic Coordinators	Candi Gerard & Mike Marsh
Picnic Venue	Candi & Gordy Gerard

MBRGC's Bellis Fair Mall Shop

Shop Co-Manager	Tawnya Soine-Crowe
Shop Co-Manager	Michael Langley
Lapidary Manager	Bruce Wickler
Lapidary Helper	Kimberly Lilley
Lapidary Helper	Arthur Cartier
Lapidary Helper/Technician	Harold VanAlsburg
Wire Wrapping Class	Bruce Wickler
Intro Lapidary Class	Candi Gerard
Tumbling Class	Sandee Hess

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 instructions on how to make a cabochon. The lapidary room is open on Wednesdays and 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