MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2026

VOLUME 40, ISSUE 6

MT. BAKER ROCKHOUND NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE MT. BAKER ROCK & GEM CLUB

Club Sale Oct. 10-11 (open to the public, so share!)

We will be having a club sale on October 10-11th from 10-5pm at Candi and Gordy's house on Paradise. (1371 Paradise Road: Ferndale). The club will be selling Rocks and Minerals and will have tools for sale. We have had some great new acquisitions!

*Open to the Public...so share!

We will be needing some volunteers to help with the club sales both Saturday and Sunday. If you are available to Volunteer then please let us know!

While Cash is King there will be credit available with a 4% fee :)

General Meeting Oct. 19

Monday Oct. 19, Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry St, Ferndale, Washington. The October Meeting will be The Annual Club Auction. This is a REALLY fun event and an opportunity to donate your extra rock related items you don't need and find some "Treasures"!

Bring your rock related items at 5:30 and drop them off. Anything Rock Related. **The auction starts at 6:30, not the usual 7:00 start time.** Be aware it may go late . . . things get cheap at the end! This is an old fashioned Auction with Wes as our Auctioneer. Start sorting thru your rock hoard for cool treasures to donate!

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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). More info at page 11.

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

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)

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. In September's issue we shared a link to several DIY Field Trips a rockhound could take. The link for all this is HERE. Also under the "Field Trips" menu on the website is a link to "Current Conditions" (link HERE). Here's the description of that page:

> Information about collecting sites from books and other sources can get out of date as conditions change. This page provides links to updated conditions supplied by club members. Remember that conditions can continue to change from what is reported here. Check the date of the report. Consider posting a query to our Facebook group to find out if anyone has more recent information.

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

MINERAL OF THE MONTH – VIVIANTE

Vivianite collection Michael Langley
Vivianite Blue-Green crystals from Brazil

Vivianite is a rather rare, hydrated iron phosphate mineral with the chemical formula of $Fe_3(PO_4)_2 \cdot 8H_2O$. Vivianite was named after John Henry Vivian who first discovered it in 1817 at Cornwall, England. Vivianite is colorless when pure, but the mineral oxidizes very easily, changing the color to a deep blue to deep bluish green. Exposure to light will ultimately allow this darkening to continue until the specimen is almost black and opaque. This exposure is irreversible and inevitable with any Vivianite sample left in the light.

Vivianite Black Crystals from
Kerch Peninsula, Crimea, Ukraine

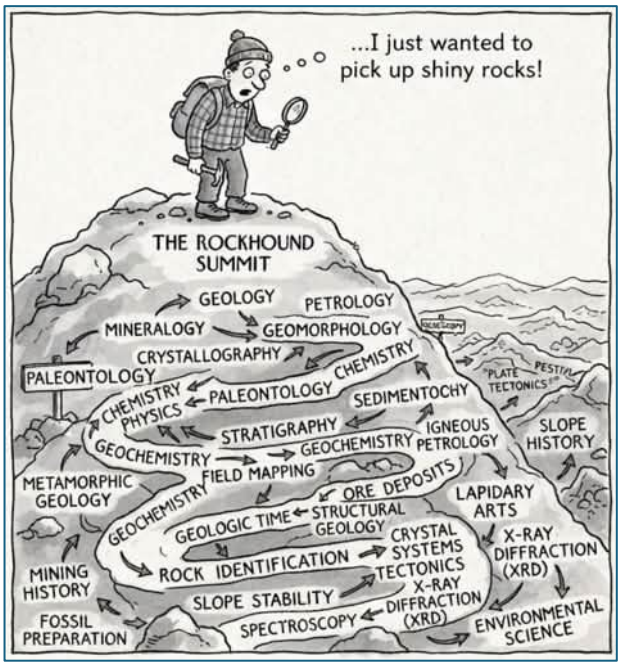
The mineral may occur as crystals, or as masses or concretions. Crystals are transparent to translucent with a vitreous luster, pearly on the cleavage surface, or

dull and earthy. Vivianite is a soft mineral, with Mohs hardness only 1.5 to 2, and specific gravity of 2.7. It splits easily, with perfect cleavage with a fibrous fracture. Bolivia has provided the collector with the world's finest examples of Vivianite. The Bolivian Vivianites are in transparent gemmy dark green crystals with distinct sharply angled terminations. Other countries where Vivianite has been found are Brazil, Cameroon, Ukraine, Mexico and the Blackbird Mine in Idaho U.S.A.

Vivianite can be found in hydrothermal replacement deposits and in phosphate-rich granite pegmatites – igneous rock with a coarse texture and interlocking crystals. Vivianite can also develop in iron-rich sedimentary deposits containing decayed wood, and other organic remains, especially in clay and sandstone. Vivianite crystals are often found inside fossil shells, such as those of bivalves and gastropods, or attached to fossil bone like the tusks of a Woolly Mammoth. Vivianite is sometimes called the “necro-crystal” because it can form on decomposed bodies with the interaction between iron, water, and phosphate. Our bodies contain plenty of phosphate, especially in our teeth and bones, which is released into the surrounding environment when we start to decompose. In 1998, researchers discovered Vivianite on the remains of a US Serviceman who had been repatriated from Vietnam in 1992. He had been listed as missing in action from Vietnam since 1963 after his B-26B aircraft went missing. By analyzing the mineral, the researchers were able to conclude that the body had likely been buried in wet soil alongside parts of the plane, which allowed the Vivianite to grow. Vivianite can also appear on the iron coffins or on the corpses of humans as a result of a chemical reaction of the decomposing body with the iron enclosure.

Powdered Vivianite from petrified wood gifted to me by MBRGC member Harold Van Alsburg

Beginners' Questions



This is John, the new newsletter editor. I'm quite new to the world of rockhounding, and I have an endless list of beginner's questions. I'm guessing that others might, too. So, here's the plan: Each month I'll post here a beginner's question. (Below I'll ask two -- to kick us off.) **You are all invited** to reply to me with your answer/input at *flatpick_guitar@yahoo.com*. I'll summarize everyone's input best I can, and I'll share it in next month's newsletter, when I'll also ask my next question. Answers will be anonymous unless you tell me otherwise.

For fellow beginners: feel free to send to me a question for use in this column.

THIS MONTH'S BEGINNER QUESTION #1

I come back from my local beach with lots of interesting rocks to examine, all covered with gunk (the rocks; not me). What's the best way to safely clean all that stuff off?

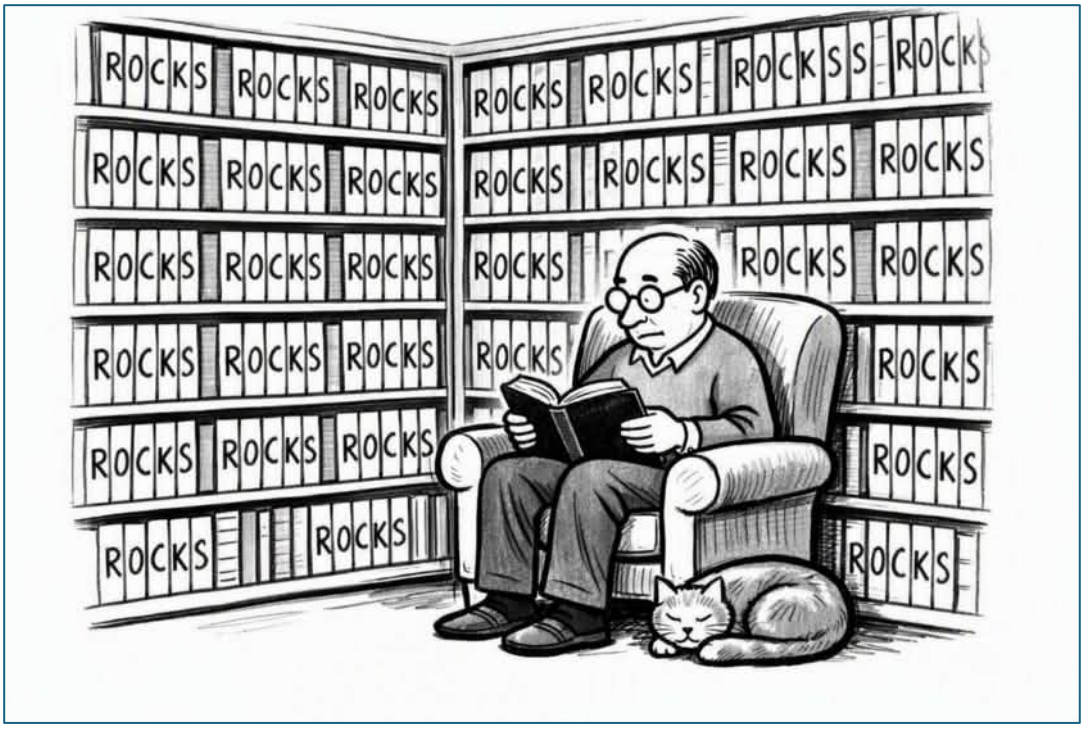
THIS MONTH'S BEGINNER QUESTION #2

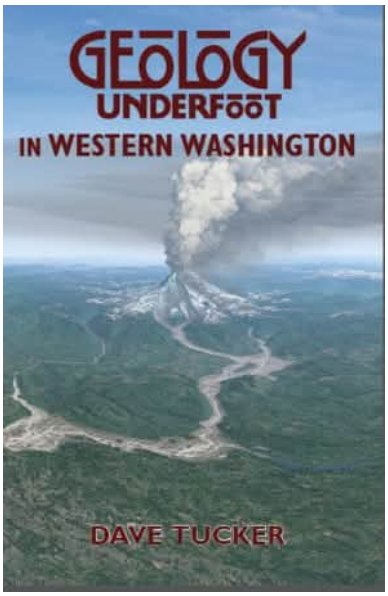
I am a true beginner; I have no "collections." Yet. I'd like to start collecting rocks, but the number of different ways to do so is overwhelming. That is, the various ways one can categorize rocks, and then collect rocks in that category, is mind-boggling (to me). What are some tips on how a beginning rockhound can begin a "collection?"

ANSWERS FROM THE GROUP. [Coming in November]

Book Review/Recommendation

Each month (or so) we'll highlight a book of interest to rockhounds. Have a book you'd like to recommend? Please send info to me: flatpick_guitar@yahoo.com





This one is right from our website: **Website > Learn More > Links & Resources**. It's *Geology Underfoot in Western Washington*, by Dave Tucker. 2015, Mountain Press Publishing. Amazon Link HERE. (This is one of 10 books in the "Geology Underfoot" series. Check out the others HERE.)

The following summary is from Dave Tucker's (the author's) website, which is HERE.

My book, *Geology Underfoot in Western Washington*, published by Mountain Press Publishing (Missoula), is available in bookstores (though you may need to ask them to order a copy for you), or order it directly from the publisher. It is part of the Geology Underfoot book series. The book features 22 field trips to exciting geologic

sites in the western part of the state. The book is written for a popular audience, though it should be useful and enjoyable for geologists and earth science educators, too. Each chapter takes you to a particular site, and gets you out of your car and face-to-face with the rocks and landscape. Here is a sample chapter that visits folded and overturned sedimentary layers at Beach 4 on the Olympic Peninsula. The book includes a 'Geology 101' – style introduction to basic concepts, as well as an extensive glossary. It has many color photographs and original explanatory drawings.

Some of the sites described in the book include:

- Willapa Bay stumps submerged by the January 26, 1700 Cascadia Earthquake (M 9), and the workings of subduction.
- Golden Horn granite at Washington Pass and Blue Lake. This chapter discusses the mechanisms for emplacement of large volumes of magma in the crust.
- A tour of some significant glacial erratics in the Puget Lowland.
- An urban geology tour of downtown Seattle, and the fascinating rocks from all over the world found on buildings.
- The still-unresolved riddle of the Mima Mounds
- The Kulshan caldera near Mount Baker
- Pleistocene glacial and interglacial deposits on Whidbey Island

Mountain Press Publishers of Missoula also publish the well-known Roadside Geology series. Other volumes in the Geology Underfoot series can be found at the Mountain Press website.

The cover art is by Eric Knight of Los Angeles. It shows a future eruption of Mount Rainier, based on past eruptions, in particular the Electron lahar that filled west-side valleys 500 years ago.

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. The annual show is moved up to the 2nd last weekend in March when it falls on Easter, like in 2027**.** 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

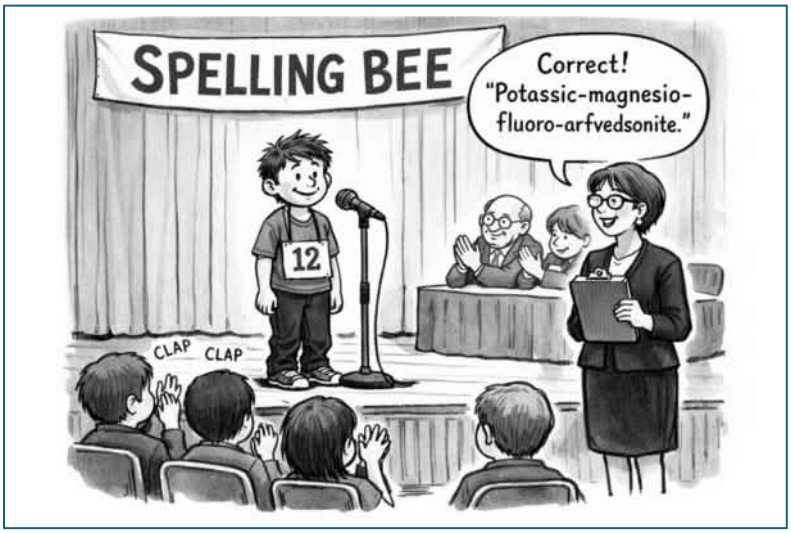
Club members of MBRGC may use the lapidary room after taking the lapidary introduction class ($30 per person). Members will learn to use the equipment safely and also get basic instructions on how to make a cabochon. The lapidary room is open on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 6-8:30 PM (cleanup at 8 PM, 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



Till (that's "rock talk" for miscellaneous)

Share Your Rockhound News

You're invited to share your rockhound news in the next newsletter emailing John Goldsbury at flatpick_guitar@yahoo.com

- 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 an idea/topic for a recurring page each month, please send it in;
- If you have any other ideas, please send 'em in.

Throwback

The April 2022 issue of *Rock & Gem Magazine* had a story on the creation of The Mount Baker Rock & Gem Club's store at Bellis Fair Mall. You can view it HERE.