



# The Conglomerate

The Monthly Newsletter of the Reno Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.

November 2022

**General Meeting**  
**Wed. Nov. 2, 7pm**  
**Baldini's Second Floor**

**Board Meeting**  
**Wed. Nov. 9, 6 pm**  
**Rock Building, 480 S. Rock, Sparks**

**RGMS Mission Statement**

The mission of the **Reno Gem and Mineral Society** is to create, develop, and encourage interest in the Earth Sciences and to locate and identify various material through field trips. As a **501C(3)** corporation, RGMS qualifies for donation write offs of cash and materials. Donation receipts are available at the society's headquarters.

A **General Meeting**, open to the public, is held usually the first Wednesday of each month at 7 PM at Baldini's Casino, Second Floor, 865 S. Rock Blvd, Sparks, NV.

**Board meetings** are open to all members and are held the second Wednesday of each month at 6 PM at the Rock Building, 480 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks, NV.

**Annual membership dues:** student: \$25, Individual: \$35, and Family: \$50.

**Conglomerate 2022**

**Digital edition:** free to members.  
**Paper version,** \$30 paid in advance.  
**Copies at the meeting** \$3 each, free to guests.

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**Important Message about Mailed Newsletters**

Beginning with the January Conglomerate, the Reno Gem and Mineral Society is going paperless, as have many other organizations. This change will affect primarily those members who have opted to pay for a paper copy to be sent by postal mail. That option will no longer be available as of January. You may have noted that stamp prices recently increased 2 cents, and it now costs 60 cents to mail a first class letter. Postage for mailed newsletter copies has also gone up (\$0.84). Members who do not have digital access via phone or computer will need to acquire newsletters at the monthly general meetings for \$3 or by using a computer at a local library, or by asking a friend or family member to print one for them. Phone access and library access will also require establishing an email account, but those can be had for free from Google or Yahoo. This change will not affect distribution of The Conglomerate for the rest of 2022. Copies will continue to be mailed throughout 2022 to those who have paid for them.

**President's Message**  
**Dean Sizemore, President**

Happy early Thanksgiving to all our members. Currently we are 7 members short of 1,000; that's an incredible number, and it is due to the hard work of every one of our Board Members who guide this organization and of the 100's of volunteers throughout the year. I encourage everyone to attend our General Meeting the first Wednesday of every month at Baldini's upstairs in the Northwest corner. These meetings often present valuable information and updates that occur after publication of The Conglomerate as well as information that is not available on our website. Also we have been blessed to have the most knowledgeable speakers on various topics each month.

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President's Letter, cont. from p. 1

This month we will be presenting our nominees for the 2023 Board. These are President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and 7 Board at Large Members. The Board at Large Members are your representatives. This Society flourishes with the infusion of new ideas and fresh blood. Board Members and Department Directors are expected to attend the General and Board meetings each month. That's 24 total meetings a year. You may volunteer at the meetings for various committees to guide new policies, procedures, and ventures. We are currently in the beginning stages of a building expansion that will double our space, provide more access to equipment--maybe, and most importantly, allow more classes to take place at the same time by having separate enclosed rooms. If you are interested in any of the above positions please contact Terry Bush, our volunteer coordinator at [volunteers@renogms.org](mailto:volunteers@renogms.org) and be present at the November meeting.

We have a lot of opportunities for members to help in 2023. Many long-time members who have been department directors for a number of years are stepping aside and we need new leaders. Many activities cannot take place without leaders. When you volunteer, the previous leaders along with the entire senior board will be there to help you.

For those who are new, the best advice I can give you to insure your membership is successful and fulfilling is to volunteer at any opportunity that arises. That is the easiest way to make friendships, many of which will last a lifetime. Come to meetings, share your ideas and most importantly, share your knowledge and skills. Come to the Summer picnic and our Annual Christmas Party, this year on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December. Get your kids involved in all the activities available to them. We have a growing kids group one Saturday each month, and most classes are open to children depending on age and maturity.

Have a great month. Denise and I pray you had a great October and a safe Halloween for the kids.

**IN SEARCH OF SOCIAL BUTTERFLY**  
**Denise Sizemore 2022 Social Director**

After lots of thought I will be stepping away from the Social Director volunteer position at the end of 2022. I feel it is time for me to spread my wings in other directions regarding Reno Gem and Mineral Society and personally. This position has been a wonderful experience. When **Tamela Germano** asked me if I would do this, I said, I am not a social person. She said you certainly are. I stepped out of my comfort zone and the rewards personally and Oh my goodness, the friendships, they will forever stay with me.

The requirements for the Social Director position are first and foremost be social. Attend General and Board meetings in person, as you are also a member of the Board of Directors for the RGMS. There are 3 main events a year: Annual Potluck Picnic, the Holiday Potluck, and the Vendor Potluck the Friday before Jackpot of Gems.

The other day someone said to me, those are some big shoes to fill. NO! Tamela's were big shoes to fill. And I am honored to have been of service.

I will still be around in 2023 to assist the incoming person with any help they may need. If you are interested, contact me at <social.renogms.org >

**Officers' Reports**

General Meeting and Board minutes are posted on the bulletin board at the Rock Building monthly. Treasurer's reports are available to any member on request. **Steve Norman**, Secretary; **Robyn Howard**, Treasurer

**Thank You**  
**Al Bolshazy, Life Member**

To the Members, Officers and Directors of RGMS.

My heart-felt thank you for all your cards, support, best wishes and a beautiful plant. This has been an extremely difficult time for me as I know it has been for other members who have lost their loved ones. Your support and kindness has made a difference for which I am very thankful. So many folks have helped. I can only say thank you. I look forward to returning to being an active member after the first of the year. Again, thank you guys so much; it really has made a difference.

Al Bolshazy

**Rare Huge Green-blue Opal Found in Nevada**

The Roebing Opal is an extraordinary 2,585-carat piece of opal rough and is also the largest unpolished black Opal.

It came out of the tunneled portion of the Rainbow Ridge Mine in 1917 from Virgin Valley, Nevada. The opal was created by silica-rich water deposited in voids that remained after buried tree limbs had rotted away, in some cases resulting in opal casts of the original tree parts.

Although extremely beautiful, opal from this locality is not commonly used in jewelry because it tends to craze, or crack. Opals with a vivid play-of-color and a black or other dark body color are called black opals. The Roebing Opal is a black opal with flashes of blue and green play-of-color.

The Roebing Opal was donated by John A. Roebing in 1926 and now rests with the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Source: GeologyIn.com, text and image

**Education Outreach**  
**Steve Norman**

The Education Outreach program made 8 classroom presentations to about 140 students: Rollan Melton Elementary School (ES) third-grade classes, Huffaker ES second-grade classes, and Webb Varnum presented to a group in Pershing County. Each presentation is scheduled for an hour.

Students are encouraged to do well in school and think about exciting science education careers. Every student is given a mineral gift and information about the Reno Gem and Mineral Society to take to their parents. We get support from the Nevada Division of Mineral with stickers, pencils, and brochures that explain to parents how to keep safe in the wild spaces of Nevada. I want to thank **Debbie Bush** for her help and **Alan and Bobbi Metzger** for furnishing students and teachers with polished rocks

The Future Rockhounds of America badge program is starting up again. Students from 6 to 16 are welcome to learn about earth science with fun activities including art projects. The first meeting is on October 22, from 2 PM to 3:30 at the Rock Building. Mark your calendar also for November 12 and December 10. Students don't have to attend every class, but they receive a mineral for their collections for every class attended. A student earns a badge after attending three classes plus they learn a lot about earth science. Any questions call 775-560-4782 or email <educationoutreach@renogms.org>.



**November General Meeting**

**Steven Smith, Vice President**

Please join us for our November 2 general meeting. At this important meeting we will meet candidates and take nominations for officers from the membership. Our December meeting will be for electing and swearing in of our officers. You are a valued part of our election process, and so it is important for you to attend. This is a great opportunity to meet the individuals that are volunteering their time to lead RGMS next year. Again, your attendance at this meeting is very important. I look forward to seeing you at Baldini's 7pm November 2nd.

**MARK YOUR CALENDERS  
2022 HOLIDAY POTLUCK  
Denise Sizemore, Social Director**

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the 2022 Holiday Potluck, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Lazy 5 Park, 7100 Pyramid Way, Sparks. We will be in the Cottonwood Room, 3pm to 4pm Mix & Mingle, Potluck starts at 4pm until 5:30pm, and I believe Santa is scheduled to come by at 5:30 to visit with all the children. And there will be a gift exchange, please bring a male or female gift to be able to take part in this exchange.

We will need everyone to RSVP by November 30<sup>th</sup>, so we can arrange seating and get our message to Santa. When RSVPing, please let me know how many people, how many children, under 18, and whether you will be bringing an appetizer, side dish, salad, main dish meat, or dessert. We will supply soda, water, plates, silverware, cups. If your dish requires serving spoons or bowls, please bring with you, as this is not at the RGMS Building. Please: NO PETS & NO ALCOHOL!!!

Have a very Happy Fall and I look forward to seeing you all for our end of the year tradition,

**Membership  
Janet Longueira, Director**

We want to welcome all of our new members and welcome back those who have renewed recently. Currently we have 512 memberships and 941 members. November is also the time to start thinking about renewing. Please complete the attached form and submit or renew online!

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Rob Bauter  | Ryan McWilliams  |
| Leslie Biederman                                      | Rochelle Pabst   |
| Lisa Bue  | Tamara Perlman   |
| Melinda Collins                                       | Sally Ploe   |
| Alysia Crissman                                       | Christine & John Quintieri, Chrissy, John, Kaiya, & Gigi           |
| Betty Dannenfelser                                    | Melissa & Doug Rainey  |
| David Ford & Song Hageman                             | Katie & Stu Sherbourne   |
| Boyd & Emily Freeman                                  | Paije Shoemaker  |
| Michelle Hall & Brian Tanner, & Sierra Blair          | Patricia Stewart   |
| Alisha Hanson-  | Susan Stewart  |
| Alisha Hanson-Glatzel & Kevin, Aspen, & Saige Glatzel | Cynthia & TJ Stuart, Amara & Annabelle                             |
| Ashley Hodes  | Megan Streeter   |
| Karri & Jeff Hurwitz, Khloe                           | :Brian Sueksdorf   |
| Jill Hyatt  | <b>Renewals</b>  |
| Sophia Ionin  | Kelsie Gardiner, Lylah, Hunter & Ryker, "D. Yencarelli D. Cantrell |
| Ashley Kasinger                                       | Avery Huckaby  |
| Michael Lindholm                                      | Douglas & Diane McCoy  |

**Field Trip To the Opalized Wood**  
**Hilary Loupee, RGMS Board Member at Large**

It's been known for decades that there is opalized wood near Quartz Mountain south of Middlegate. It was more recently discovered that there are very large pieces of opalized wood west of Hwy 361 and this area has been an RGMS field trip site. Many of us have heard stories about some of the pieces that have been found, but it wasn't until we started greatly expanding the holes out there that the size and scope of that location became more apparent.

**Eric Fendelander** and I took a smaller field trip out there for our visiting Las Vegas rockhounds who were at the Jackpot of Gems. This was on a Monday, but we still had a decent turnout from RGMS. I helped get people started in the holes and showed them what they were looking for. Since only so many people could dig at a time in the main holes, I used the opportunity to scout around and look at the hole where I'd heard they had re-exposed a piece too large to move. It should have been covered, but I found it sticking out. And it was BIG! After admiring it for a moment, I started digging into the wall in front of it to bring some dirt down to try to cover it. We had plans to try to excavate it whole at some point, but until then, we would try to keep it covered to protect it from those who might try to break it apart.



Huge turnout for the second field trip

All images by Hilary Loupee

As I was digging into the wall, some nice chips of opal were coming out of the dirt. I kept digging, trying to knock more dirt down, and about two feet in, I hit a large rock. As I removed the dirt around it, I realized that it was another large section of opal. I was admittedly hoping to be able to get out a piece for myself as I'd never gotten any nice pieces from this spot despite visiting multiple times. As I dug for at least half an hour, I realized that the piece was almost as large as the one behind me. Once I realized there was no chance I could remove this piece whole, I started to dig in front of it to cover it up as well. Small chips of nice opal continued to be revealed, so I kept digging. Another couple of feet in I hit another large piece and started to expose the edges. There was a natural crack, so I managed to finally have a nice piece, but knowing that this piece was also too large to move, I knew I had to cover it up. I showed it to Eric Fendelander and that's when we started to realize what exactly was buried.

We returned to the site leading another RGMS fieldtrip on October 4<sup>th</sup>. There was a surprisingly large turnout for a Tuesday. I'm guessing those were people who saw some of the pieces we were digging. A large group of Oregon Rockhounds had made the trip out and also participated in the Austin field trip on Sunday.

Continued next page

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We had some work to do to prepare the upper hole for digging, so I led everyone down to where another opal chunk was buried and started a bucket brigade. The tailings were fresh and full of opal chips for those who weren't diggers or bucket haulers. Within 10 minutes the bucket brigade had uncovered the large chunk of opal and started excavating went back up to the upper hole to help Eric. As I was digging out a side wall, I discovered what I thought was only a few small chunks of opal, but as I dug, the opal only continued to widen along the wall. Once it was safe enough for others without the risk



Diggers hard at work



Bucket brigade and tailings diggers

of the walls collapsing, we allowed a group to come up and start working on the pieces I had uncovered a couple of weeks before as well as the new finds. Everything uncovered was thrown to the top of the hole to be shared later. This has been extremely important for these kinds of digs as a lot of people end up helping with digging and bucket brigades and deserve to take home an equal share of opal. It's not fair for a few people to push into the hole once something good is revealed, do the final 10 minutes of digging, and keep it all for themselves. I'm surprised I even have to

say that, but I've been surprised at how often that exact situation happens. It happened to an extent on both of these field trips despite our best intentions to divide the finds fairly, and it's the reason that I myself had never taken home any opal from this site despite entire days of helping to dig.

At the end of the day, we had moved a tremendous amount of dirt as a team and had quite the pile at the top of the hole to split up as well as wonderful pieces from the other hole. In the end, despite a few people arguing, everyone there took home some truly amazing pieces. The Oregon group couldn't thank us enough and gave us some secret locations that they frequent. It definitely pays to share knowledge and rocks! We also collected several buckets for the RGMS auctions, so watch for those! You'll have a chance to get some if you missed the field trips, or get some extra if you made it out with us. I look forward to seeing everyone on the next outing!



Chunk of opal

**Kid's Corner**  
**Steve Norman**

Fossils can determine the age of some rocks because fossils can be very old. There were about 2 billion years of rock building before any life or fossils showed up on the earth. The famous Dinosaurs came about 251 Million Years Ago (MYA) and were extinct by 65 MYA.



Creative Common: <https://i0/hippos.com/photos/797/292/012/fossil-trilobite-fossils-arthropods-preview.jpg>

Trilobites showed up over 541 MYA, which is getting into some deep geologic time. The first life on earth was a bacteria plant called cyanobacteria that started to

live by using sunlight and carbon dioxide as energy sources. The bacteria gave off oxygen that they could not use but that other animals like people, bugs, and frogs need to breathe. These microscopic organisms began about 2 billion years ago



CC: The Crystal Council.com

and they left behind many kinds of fossils including a circular button size fossil called a stromatolite. You can buy them at rock shops or maybe even find some yourself! Jellyfish began life at 635 MYA and sponges took form at about 890 MYA making them the oldest complex animal ever found.

Fossils are made through a physical process of mineral replacement or by sedimentary physical impressions. Sedimentary rocks are formed with the help of water. These rocks form layers of sediment that are called clastic rocks. Clastic rocks get cemented together as minerals are dissolved by some water. When there are layers of minerals accumulating, the

weight of the clastic rock causes pressure to form into such things as shale, sandstone, conglomerate, and limestone. Sedimentary also known as clastic rocks may contain fossilized plant or animal impressions or physical remains.

**AFMS Convention in NOLA**  
**Sue Webb, Alternate AFMS Rep.**

The 2022 meeting of AFMS was held at the Alario Convention Center in Westwego, LA, just across the Mississippi River from New Orleans. President protem **Matt Charsky**, presiding instead of 2022 president **Margaret Kolaczyk**, called the meeting to order at 9AM. The first order of business was the reports of the regional vice presidents. The secretary, treasurer, and Central Office. The regional VP's reports followed. CFMS reported that the AfMS in 2024 would be hosted by the Ventura society., The 2023 meeting will be held in Billings MT. The Committee reports followed: The All American Club awards will be presented at the banquet Rh Boundaries chair, **Bob Carlson**, is ill and in hospice. Duties are temporarily being provide by **R. Jaeger**. A permanent chair will be announced soon. The newsletter editor announced that she is retiring at the end of the year, and will be succeeded by **Linda Jaeger** of RMFMS. The Junior programs announced the implementation of a Junior Achievement award. The Scholarship Foundation has given out over \$2 million in scholarships since inception. The Website Contest winners were announced. There being no unfinished business, new business included discussion and approval of the 2022-23 budget, election of 2023 officers, an operating procedure change which will be published in the newsletter, and an announcement that the Uniform Rules Committee is trying to make the Uniform Rules more user-friendly. . The meeting was adjourned at 11:05AM.

**School Report**  
*Julie Hilsabeck, School Director*

You must register for the following classes by responding to me, Julie Hilsabeck, at [school@renogms.org](mailto:school@renogms.org) before Class starts. Please be aware that class size is limited and spaces fill quickly. So, if you want to attend a class, respond soon!

**Mondays:**

- Open House; 11:00am to 9:00pm. Fee is \$7.50/hour.

**Tuesdays:**

- Beginning Lapidary: 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Mandatory Safety class 11-1-22 at 12:30pm. Class fee is \$60.00.
- Beginning Lapidary: 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Mandatory Safety class 11-1-22 at 6:00pm. Class fee is \$60.00.
- Slab Saw Use: 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Class fee is \$60.00.
- Beginning Silver Fabrication: 6:00pm to 9:00pm. Class fee is \$120.00. 3 Tuesday evenings and 1 Wednesday evening on 11-23-22.

**Wednesdays:**

- Tumbling: 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Class fee is \$60.00.
- Wire Wrapping: 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Class fee is \$60.00. Class will be held November 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th.

**Thursdays:**

- Beginning Silver Fabrication: 11:00am to 2:00pm. Class fee is \$120.00.
- No Casting Classes.
- Advance Silver Fabrication: 6:00pm to 9:00pm. Class fee is \$90.00. Jill will be teaching on 11-4 and the 17th.

**Saturdays:**

- Jewelry 101: November 12th, 10:00am to 1:00pm. Class fee is \$22.50.

**Sundays:**

- Bead Weaving Dec. 4 tentative (Nov. 34?—lol ). 10am to 2pm Class fee is \$20.00

**Special days:**

Lost Wax Carving for Casting: Class fee is \$120.00. Class will be held on November 5th, 6th, 19th, and 20th. Bring your lunch as class goes all day on all 4 days.



**CFMS/AFMS Shows 2022-23**

**November 6, 2022 – Mason, NV**

Mason Valley Gem & Mineral Club  
55 Bridge St., Mason, NV  
Time: 1 PM – till over

This event will be held at the VFW Hall in Mason, NV. Do not turn on Bridge St. in YERINGTON. About 3 miles south after intersection with 95A. . Cash or Check only  
Contact: srheid@usa.net

**November 6, 2022 – Lake Elsinore, CA**

Lake Elsinore Gem & Mineral Society  
32097 Corydon Road, Lake Elsinore, CA 92530  
Hours: 10 AM – 4 PM  
Contact: Berylman50@aol.com  
Find us on Facebook

**November 19-20, 2022 – Santa Cruz, CA**

Santa Cruz Mineral and Gem Society  
Santa Cruz Live Oak Grange, 1900 17th Ave., Santa Cruz, CA  
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM  
Contact: (831) 459-0572, scruzmgms@gmail.com  
Website: <https://www.scrockngem.or>

**2023**

**February 18-19, 2023 – Antioch, CA 94509**

Antioch Lapidary Club  
Contra Costa County Fairgrounds, 1201 West 10th St. Antioch, CA 94509  
Hours: 10 AM to 5 PM Saturday and Sunday  
Contact: (925) 301-6957, edysnyder@gmail.com  
Website: <http://www.antiochlapidaryclub.com>

**February 25-26, 2023 – Vallejo, CA**

Vallejo Gem and Mineral Society  
Solano County Fairgrounds, McCormack Hall, 900 Fairgrounds Drive, Vallejo, CA 94589  
Hours: 10 AM-5 PM  
Contact: (415) 254-1506, ddahonvgms@gmail.com  
Website: <http://vjgems.co/>

**March 4-5, 2023 – Ventura, CA**

Ventura Gem & Mineral Society  
Ventura County Fairgrounds, 10 W. Harbor Blvd., Ventura, CA  
Hours: Saturday 10 AM-5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM  
Contact: (805) 312-8467, info@vgms.org  
Website: <http://www.vgms.org>

**March 11-12, 2023 -Turlock, CA**

Mother Lode Mineral Show  
Stanislaus Co. Fairgrounds, 900 N. Broadway, Turlock, CA  
Contact: bwendx2@yahoo.com  
Website: <http://www.turlockgemshow.com>

For more information see [cfmsinc.org/shows](http://cfmsinc.org/shows)



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We have glass!  
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Think of all the  
Complements You'll receive,  
When you show your friends  
Your handmade beads.

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**Officers**

<b>President:</b>	Dean Sizemore	<a href="mailto:President@renogms.org">President@renogms.org</a>
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<b>Past President</b>	Tom Nichols	<a href="mailto:pastpresident@renogms.org">pastpresident@renogms.org</a>

**Board Members at Large**

Lori Connel	<b>Available</b>	Albie Longueira
Eric Fendelander		Hilary Loupee
Rob Kendrick		Webb Varnum

**Commission Directors**

<b>ALAA rep</b>	Al Bolshazy	<a href="mailto:alaa@renogms.org">alaa@renogms.org</a>
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## ***Volunteer Page***

A new feature in the *Conglomerate*, this space will feature those members who are not officers or directors but who regularly volunteer their time to help RGMS function in a number of different and valuable ways, or sometimes in addition to serving as an officer or director. Please thank them for their service if you see them at the Rock Building or at the meeting. You will notice that some members serve in more than one capacity—for example, Steve Norman has 3 jobs—count ‘em. A number of others are doing 2. Think you might find time to do just one job? There are several available.

Used Equip, Sale Coord.	<b>Available</b>
Gen. Mtg. Guest Greeter	Joanne Sworthout
Gen. Mtg Door Prizes	Denise Sizemore,
Educational Outreach	Steve Norman
Future Rockhounds Advisor	Steve Norman
JPOG Silent Auction	Lori Connel
Facility Expansion	Patrick Davis

### Instructors (Alphabetical by class)

<i>Bead weaving:</i>	Sue Webb
<i>Casting:</i>	Spencer Ennis
<i>Jewelry 101 &amp; Cold Connections</i>	Robyn Howard
<i>Lapidary</i>	Julie Hilsabeck
	Barbara Hartman
<i>Lost Wax Carving</i>	Tim Steeper
<i>Mineral ID</i>	Webb Varnum
<i>Silver Fabrication (Adv.)</i>	Jill Atkins
	Al Bolshazy
<i>Silver Fabrication (Beg.)</i>	Spencer Ennis
<i>Slab saw</i>	Patrick Davis
<i>Tumbling</i>	Janet & Albie Longueira
<i>Wire Art</i>	Ginger Ragazzi