



# The Conglomerate

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

September, 2023

**General Meeting**

Wed. September 6, 7 PM

Baldini's Casino, Second Floor

**Board Meeting**

Wed. September 13, 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 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.

## President's Message

*Dean Sizemore*

We're 2 weeks from Jackpot of Gems, an amazing event that happens every year and that is something we're so proud of. You've heard it for months now, but it needs saying again: WE NEED YOU; it takes a hundred people to pull this show off easily, so many who volunteer are volunteering multiple times and for multiple tasks. I'd love to see a hundred different people working. Having no meeting in August has really hurt us; traditionally, that's when we fill in all the empty spots still showing on the volunteer sheets. We still have one more General Meeting before JPOG. Please, either sign up there or check our website. Virginia Keeley and Stephanie Leonard have worked tirelessly to produce a way for you to volunteer online. If all goes well, that part of the website should be up and running before you read this. Can't thank them enough for putting that together. So don't hesitate to volunteer, even if you think you don't know what those jobs entail. There will be training for any position you volunteer for, so nothing to worry about, very satisfying.

We are already finishing up the summer, and Field Trips are ending soon, so get out and enjoy those. Still many great trips are scheduled. You'll love them, I promise. The trips up to this point have been amazing with great finds and great fellowship with your fellow rockhounds.

You will be hearing about volunteering for next year's Executive Board and for Board at Large positions. Please consider doing one of these. I started as president 4 years ago, afraid of getting in front of crowds, and had never done this. I had been on the Board at Large but a volunteer for president was needed and I decided to step out of my comfort zone and just do it. It's been a blast, and I'm very proud of everything we as a board have accomplished in those 4 years. If you're at all interested, get ahold of our Volunteer Coordinator, Wendy Kazas.

Have a great September and we'll see you at the General meeting and at the Jackpot of Gems.

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**Do You Just Belong?**  
*Author unknown; given to Virginia Keeley at Tonopah Show*

Are you an active member, the kind that would be missed,  
Or are you quite contented that your name is on the list?  
Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock,  
Or do you stay away and criticize and knock?  
Do you ever pay a visit to a member who is sick,  
Or leave the work to just a few and talk about the clique?  
There is quite a program scheduled no doubt you've heard about,  
We'll appreciate it if you, too, will come and help us out!  
So come to meetings often and help with hand and heart;  
Don't be just a member but take an active part!  
Think this over, member –you know right from wrong,  
Are you an active member, or do you just belong?

**Jackpot of Gems 2023**  
*Daniel Ellis, Show Director*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Hope you have had a good warm summer rock picking so far. Please remember to bring a bucket for the silent auction and the 32 auction when you return.

September 16 and 17<sup>th</sup> are just around the corner. The 15<sup>th</sup> is set-up day at the Convention Center at 7 AM.

We will be packing and loading the goods we need at the show on the 13<sup>th</sup> starting at 4 PM at the Rock Building. The more the merrier and it will go faster also.

RGMS provides a selection of activities and events that are of interest to the large variety of its members. But that very fact insures that some events will inevitably conflict. To keep conflicts at a minimum, anyone scheduling ANY event open to RGMS members MUST clear the date with **Julie Hilsabeck** who manages the calendar.

Also, your most easily accessible and most accurate event information will always be the calendar on the RGMS Website <[renogms.org/calendar](http://renogms.org/calendar)>.

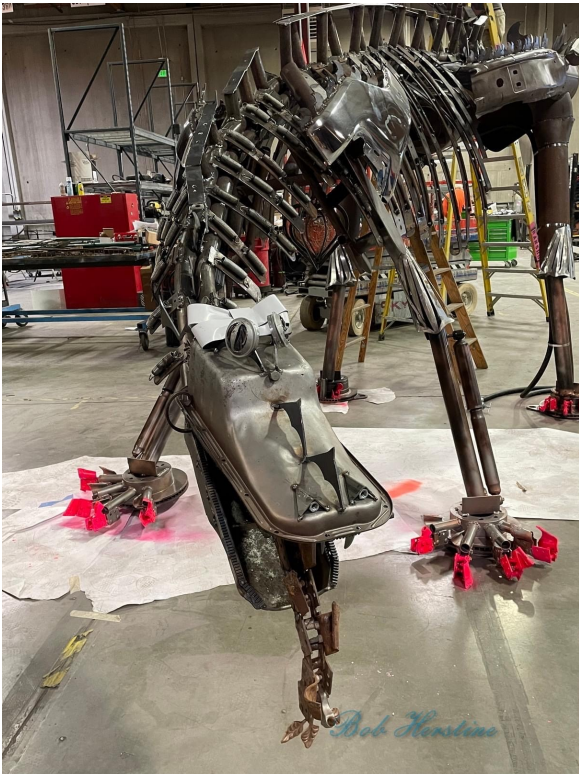
**Officers' Reports**

**Sunshine Report**  
*Joanne Sworthout*

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; **Janet Longueira**, Treasurer

If you have a situation for which you could use some support from your RGMS friends, or if you know of someone who could, please get in touch with **Joanne** at [sunshine@renogms.org](mailto:sunshine@renogms.org).

**Membership**  
**Lynda Traves, Director**



Wow! When you read this Mark and I will have already been at Burning Man for two weeks. I am writing this mid-August and Mark and I are leaving for Burning Man on the 18 for holiday/work until the 6 of September. We are staff for one of the larger departments and will be on the Black Rock Desert for that time. We spend time on the desert when it is not Burning Man looking for rocks. I know there is a field trip to this playa and it will be a fun one. I have included a picture of the art project our Reno Core Project is taking to Burning Man. We were honored to receive a grant from Burning Man and Reno Burners to bring this Recycled dinosaur called Stella the Recyclosaurus. She is made of all recycled metal with flame effects and LED lighting.

While I am away, Janet Longueira will be handling the memberships that are mailed in. I will have some internet access. I will try and keep up with all emails and online memberships while I am at Burning Man. The “Man” burns the Saturday of Labor Day, which is not too far off.

Memberships are 1/2 price until October 31, 2023; at which time (November and December), the price returns to full price and covers members fees for 2024. Thus, July-October Family is \$25; Individual is \$18; Student \$13.

We currently have 511 memberships representing 930 members. And, approximately 50 school aged children, some of whom attend the kids rock classes. (kids can start any time)

Welcome to the following new members for the past month: sent to be added with prior list, verify in newsletter.

Amanda Gomet

Erik Barajas and Mackenzie Woods

Bob Robinson

Gayle Dedrick

Bradley and Jeannie Collins

Hayley Riggins and Gatlin Featham

Carrie and Brett Stoll

Hugh Ivons

Chris Sullivan

Jeff Rasmussen

**Christopher, Katie, Oliver,  
and Elijah Bennett**

Jodi Roan and Mike McKenzie

Cortney Bloomer

Lesa and Walter Stalenski

David Bernosky and Donita Elnowski

Lisa and Nick Martin

Continued next page

Marne Sherman

Robert Robinson

Melania Carr, Mark Harrington and  
Cora Believeville

Ryan, Amanda, and Ella Dimit

Nancy Nacho

Susana Calibuso

Randy Littlefield

Tara Weller

Robert Grable

Tyler, Nuray, Atlas, and Aydin Ebel

Margie Franzen-Weiss

Shiloh McGaughey

Nicole French

Antonio Smith

Danyell Halvorson

Leon Werner

Apologies for the errors and omissions for any names above. Please advise asap any corrections or omissions so I may make the correction. Thank you.

To pay your membership online or download the membership form: <https://renogms.org/membership-2/> If you have any questions, please email me at [membership@renogms.org](mailto:membership@renogms.org)  
Membership Dues are: Individual: \$18; Family: \$25; and Student: \$13. Family memberships are for those who live in the same household.

Thank you so much. I look forward helping you and meeting you at the next event.

## IT IS FINALLY HERE!!

### ONLINE Jackpot of Gems Volunteering

Didn't receive the Email Blast? Here's an opportunity for MEMBERS to help out.

Haven't been able to get to the meetings but want to help make our show a success?

The website online access should make it easier for you to select the dates, times, booths, and other available positions that work for you.

**Here is how you can sign up.**

**Go to our website: [Renogms.org](http://Renogms.org)**

**On the Home Page, scroll down to "Upcoming Events"**

**Click on "Jackpot of Gems – 9/16-17"**

**There will be a link there for "Show Volunteer Opportunities" with a description of the positions, dates and times.**

**Click on the Red button for the area in which you would like to volunteer**

**Fill out the form and submit.**

It's that easy!

See you at the **JPOG Show**

**Youth Education**  
**Steve Norman, Advisor**

**Fall Craft Fair**  
**Theresa Langhans, Coordinator**



In July, the Reno Gem and Mineral Society's Education Outreach program gave four presentations to 62 students for Reno's Urban Roots Garden Classroom organization. Urban Roots brings children from 5-15 years of age to learn about plants and gardening. The garden is an excellent setting to discuss the carbon cycle in detail beneath the greenhouse that shelters and warms the plants for maximum growth. The presentation has examples of minerals and their uses that show how technology advances. Students learn how minerals work and why students might consider a science career. Every student is given a mineral gift, and information is provided to their parents about the Reno Gem and Mineral Society. We get support from the Nevada Division of Mineral's program to keep out of abandoned mines. I want to thank **Debbie Bush** for her help on many presentations and **Alan** and **Bobbi Metzger** for their contributions of a polished rock that students and teachers receive.

The Future Rockhounds program is on recess for the summer and returns with classes starting in October 2023.

**November 10, 11, 12 2023**

If you are interested in being a vendor at our upcoming craft fair, please complete the attached reservation form and return to me so that I may save you a spot. I do need to receive your reservation before the October 4th General Meeting. This is a great opportunity to sell your craft.

Here are some more specifics:

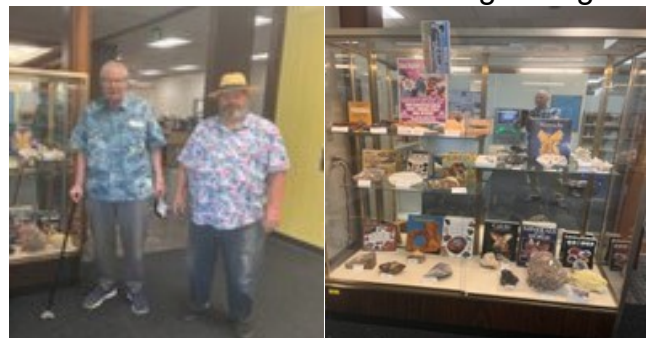
Friday, November 10	10am-6pm
Saturday, November 11	10am- 5pm
Sunday, November 12	10am-3pm

The event will be held at Reno Town Mall, South Virginia Street, next to Burlington Coat Factory.

Hope to see you there as either a vendor or as a CUSTOMER!

**Sparks Library**

RGMS has a large display of rocks and minerals near the front door of the Sparks Library. A few specimens include bright mica, sparkling calcite, and soft yellow iron pyrite. Steve Rose and Sam Knipmeyer (hat) have displayed some of their treasures at the library for many years. There is more to see, including posters and flyers for the upcoming Jackpot of Gems Show (Sept. 16 & 17) at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center. Details are at [renogms.org](http://renogms.org).



### Field Trip Director Update

Hilary Loupee

Another great month of field trips! I left off last month right in the middle of our Davis Creek field trip. The rainbow obsidian collecting was extremely successful and I reached my permit limit with the most amazing colors. Besides only being open to collecting in July and August, I think it makes for a great summer field trip because of the shade and, of course, Davis Creek that runs through the entire area. I jumped in a few times to cool off!



Pink Lady Rainbow Obsidian



Digging for Fairview Agate

After Davis Creek, we had our Fairview Agate field trip. We had a great turnout and I hope everyone found some prize pieces. You do have to dig through some awful clay there, but those that dig are greatly rewarded. It was very hot though, and I was a bit jealous of the people that thought to bring shade tents. The sun and heat still didn't stop me from swinging my geopick 8 hours each day to pry out the "lizard turds." I had trouble moving my arms for a few days after that. I'll be really sad when the Navy finally closes off that area.

The trip to Frenchman Lake had a big turnout, and I saw some pretty pieces of rose and lavender quartz found by our members. One of the kids, **Michael**, asked me to move a big rock because he was sure there was a nice piece underneath. I moved the rock for him, and to my surprise, there was, in fact, a very nice chunk of pink quartz! Some people just have a nose for rocks! A group of people decided to head up towards the actual Crystal Peak. This isn't the same peak that's in Verdi. This is the sister Crystal Peak, also called the Pink Crystal Peak. **Steve**

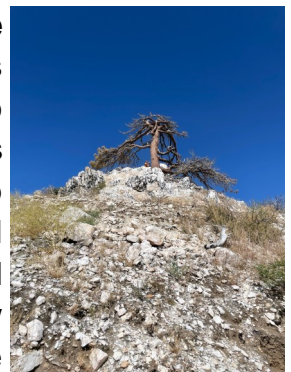


Digging for Rose Quartz



Top of Pink crystal Peak

**Norman** impressively made it most of the way in his truck, but the final stretch of road was a jeep trail, so we decided to hike it. **Stephanie** spotted some rocks on the side of the trail and we lost most of our group to those. **Sven** and I continued up the road and made it to the top. We were rewarded with an incredible 360 degree view, including a view of 395 near Omira. That must mean you can see the



peak from the highway if you know where to look! The peak was solid quartz, most of it white, but if you looked closer, it all had a pink hue. We broke a few rocks and they seemed to be deeper color underneath. I'm guessing the rose quartz must photobleach to some extent and who knows how many thousands of years that peak has been exposed to the sun. I hope everyone took advantage and enjoyed the lake a little. I went for a swim and then

Continued next page

**Nick, Todd, the Bushes**, and I did some fishing at the dam until sunset. Nick had a good fish on the line that got away, so no campfire fish for us!

The following day we had our field trip to Johnsville to learn to pan for gold in Jamison Creek. It was a smaller turnout, but we had a nice group of kids and eager adults. **Randy DeVore** came with his wife, daughter and granddaughter, and with a wealth of gold panning experience and helped me with instruction. Once we had everyone panning pretty well, **Todd** and I focused on digging some good deep sand from natural collection areas in the creek. With some deeper material, everyone started finding some good flakes. **Nick Bombard** didn't think he's found much, but when I tapped out his pan for him, a line of beautiful gold flakes appeared and his excitement was priceless.



Panning for gold

The next trips after this article are the Austin trip and the Gabbs opalized wood. Those are set for September 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> respectively, but watch your email, as I might switch them due to **Eric Lundin** going to Germany for a few weeks. He's an expert on Austin and I would love for him to lead that field trip for me. I always learn so much from him myself. For the Austin trip we usually camp just before Austin near our collecting areas. There are also places to stay in Austin and an actual campsite past Austin that I preferred when I was tent camping. I know a lot of people also like to camp by the hot springs, although I am not familiar with them. For the Gabbs opalized wood, we will camp at Quartz Mountain as usual. This is another area the Navy is taking away, so come get some amazing material before it is all gone!

**Jim Welker** is leading the Coaldale trip in October and sent this to better explain what we are doing and what to expect.

### **Monte Cristo Range Field Trip Oct 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>**

This is a nice area we have not hunted for a couple of years. We will gather Agate, Jasper, Rhyolite, and other material. In one area there are some nice seam agates with pseudomorphs and/or sagenite inclusions. We may go to an old turquoise mine and search the tailings. Suggest you bring a sprayer to help with finding the material.

The camping area is located 2.5 miles from Hwy 6, on Gilbert Road, and is a nice flat area. To reach the camp site go South on Hwy 95 to Coaldale junction where Hwy 95 joins Hwy 6. Proceed east toward Tonopah about 6 miles to Blair Junction (Hwy 6 & Hwy 265). As Hwy 6 is high speed, I stop there and let all traffic pass. Proceed east 4 tenths of a mile and turn left on a hard-to-see dirt road. Look for pink ribbons and RGMS signs. After turning left go 2.5 miles toward hills camp which will be on the right side on the road. If you wish, you could motel it in Tonopah about 45 minutes away. Also, I top off my fuel tank in Hawthorne.

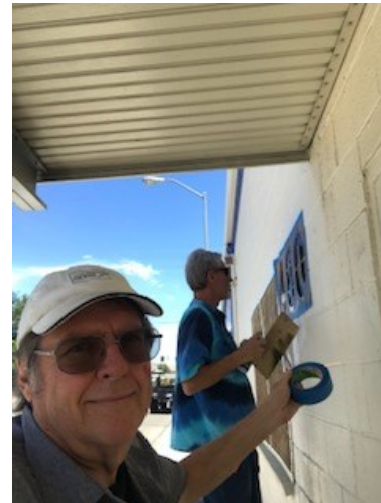
We will leave camp at 8am each morning. On Saturday, the 7<sup>th</sup> the Potluck is at 6:30. Any high-clearance vehicle will get to the collecting sites. Since we are collecting rocks, we will be in rocky areas that have snakes. Dress for Rockhounding--no sandals. Bring tools and if you wish breaker bars and hard rock tools. To get the good seam agate will require hard work. However, there is a lot of material on the surface that is great. Any questions e-mail me I will try to answer.

Jim Welker [jim.vch.reno@gmail.com](mailto:jim.vch.reno@gmail.com)

I hope to see everyone out there! The weather should start to cool down again this month, so I expect the field trips to get busier. Both of these trips can be done as day trips, but they are more comfortable as overnight trips. Please email [fieldtrip@renogms.org](mailto:fieldtrip@renogms.org) with questions.

**Various Photos from Our Photographer, Steve Smith**

A sign for the Rock Building that you can actually read:



The Culprits



Relaxing at Frenchman Lake



Burn Scar @ Frenchman Lake



Member working hard to collect pink and lavender quartz



Happy Campers



**RGMS Board Meeting Minutes – June 13, 2023****Steve Norman, Secretary**

These are the summarized notes. Contact me at [secretary@renogms.org](mailto:secretary@renogms.org) for the full report or find them on the clipboard near the office on a countertop.

Treasurer: **Janet Longueira** has May and June 2023 reports for the Board member's inspection. There were no questions, with both reports approved. The Building Fund is now over \$100,000.

Past President & Tech Chair: **Tom Nichols** reports that he has worked with **Renée Samuels** to add some Facebook content. Adding information to the RGMS Facebook page adds credibility to the organization and advertises what RGMS is about to the public. **Stephanie Leonard** has provided a detailed review of the website that will enhance the website once updated. Society members with things for sale could list them in the Conglomerate, announce them at the General Meeting, or put a note on the classroom bulletin board or shop.

Social Media: **Sven Sander** reports 18 email blasts to members from last month.

Jackpot of Gems: Director **Dan Ellis** reports 25 Vendors paid for a spot at the Show, with 30 vendors as the goal.

Vice President: **Steve Smith** reviewed the meetings and information gathered from the California Federation Mineral Society (CFMS) annual meeting and show at Lodi, CA. The investigation aims to determine the facts regarding insurance obtained from CFMS and other benefits from affiliation with CFMS. Steve found that there is a boundary question for Nevada State Societies that reside in CFMS to change affiliation to the Rocky Mountain Federation Mineral Society (RMFMS). The current payment to CFMS for our insurance costs is \$5.95 per member at the California Federation, \$2.00 for CFMS dues per member, and \$.75 per member for the American Federation Mineral Society. Steve found that CFMS has a Scholarship fund that RGMS may be able to add more scholarships or increase the funding presently budgeted. Steve asked Board members to consider being the champion of moving affiliations. RGMS can send more than one delegate to the CFMS and AFMS meetings. RGMS is CFMS's largest membership group. Steve reported that **Patrick Davis** made inquiries with the vendors at the Lodi Show to consider the Jackpot of Gems Show and is adding more possible vendors to the spreadsheet.

Door Prize: **Denise Sizemore** noted 86 people at July General Meeting with \$211 in donations.

Membership: **Lynda Traves** reports 480 memberships amounting to 883 members. People beginning memberships now get their membership for half price from July to November.

Field Trip/32 Auction: **Hilary Loupee** discussed a busy weekend finding rainbow obsidian and sunstones near Alturas, CA. Twenty people obtained the permit to collect at Davis Creek. **Chris Rose** allowed the field trip participants to collect sunstones from his claim. New members often ask Hilary about the costs of attending, not realizing that free field trips are a part of membership. She plans one more 32 Auction before the Jackpot of Gems Show.

Conglomerate and AFMS/CFMS: Editor **Sue Webb** reminds board members that articles are needed and are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Story articles are needed, and photos add interest.

The Rock Building, LLC Director **Linda Johnston** via ZOOM reports rents are accumulating as scheduled. She has conferred with Will Hitchcock to repay the \$82,000 loan to RGMS.

New Business. The Board formally thanked Vice President **Steve Smith** for all his work on the prospect of changing affiliations from CFMS to RMFMS. **Mary Hicks** brought up the issue of no trash service at the building. There is a need for a trash service proposal and someone to champion this idea to get the service.. Adjournment: 7:48 PM

***Yesterday and Today***

***Virginia L. Keeley***

If you are looking for a trip that is fun and interesting and you don't mind a four-hour drive from Reno, head to Tonopah, Nevada. There, you get a feeling of taking a step back in time. The town was nicknamed "Queen of the Silver Camps" because of the extensive mining done in the area in the early 1900s. It still holds onto its historical flavor with the Mizpah Hotel, the Tonopah Historic Mining Park, and the Central Nevada Museum to name a few attractions.

The drive can be a bit long and monotonal through the desert landscape that seldom changes, but every once in a while, you are entertained by an occasional slowdown for local road hazards.



A prospector named Jim Butler started Tonopah (which means "hidden spring") around 1900 when he went looking for his burro that had wandered off. About to throw a rock at the creature, he noticed the rock was very heavy. This led to the discovery of the second-richest silver strike in Nevada history.

More recently, the town has relied on the military as its main employer. The Tonopah Test Range is used as a bombing range and a base for the development of the F-117 Nighthawk. The Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Project is also near by.

But I digress. While we really enjoy wandering around town and checking out the mining park and historical buildings, which could take quite some time, we have come



to the middle of Nevada in the middle of Summer for a very different reason. We had heard that Tonopah was holding its “First Annual Rock and Bottle Show.” Well, being a couple of old Rock-hounds, we didn’t want to miss that.

Being members of RGMS has taken us to places we would never have visited on our own and has afforded us the opportunity to meet some of the most interesting and knowledgeable people in Nevada. Several of the vendors at the Tonopah show have their own mines and shared their experiences. We found their stories amazing.

Several vendors were exhibiting rock specimens such as turquoise, fluorite, variscite, gary green agate and obsidian along with other minerals. And you can always find something to talk about when it comes to rocks.



We also met this incredible young woman who, with five children and another on the way, has developed a creative process to design and make water bottles, tumblers and thermal bottles.

I have to confess; we thought they were so unique that we had to get some for ourselves.

And, who knew there were so many different bottles of various sizes and shapes and colors dating back to the 1800s. There were Coke bottles, apothecary bottles, liquor bottles, milk bottles, and some that no one had any idea of their purpose. One of the vendors showed us a bottle made in 1854. How it made it to 2023 in one piece was a miracle. People have found bottles at old ghost town sites, at rubbish mounds in the hills, and at any number of other places.

What would a trip to Tonopah be without a drive 26 miles south to Goldfield. There was a Rock Shop (big surprise) that we like to visit on our travels to the area and we took the opportunity to head down there. We had no idea the town was celebrating



“Goldfield Days”. This was our chance to join in the festivities and meet New and Old friends.



All photos by Virginia Keeley.

If you go to Tonopah, for whatever reason, a stay at the Mizpah is worthwhile. There is no guarantee you will be visited during the night by one of the legendary ghosts. But, then again, there is no guarantee you won't be.

***September 2023 Program***  
***Steve Smith, Vice President***

We will be having our General Meeting at Baldini's 7pm Sept. 6th. Our guest presenter will be **Stephen H. Provost**. Stephen has authored over 23 books and will be sharing with us about the Lincoln Highway in Nevada.

Please be sure to join us for this important meeting. JPOG is fast approaching, and we need your attendance to hear about our biggest fundraiser of the year. Come on out to our general meeting and hear all about it. Great door prizes will still be on hand so be ready for some fun. This is the meeting you do not want to miss. I look forward to seeing you there.

## Oppenheimer the Rockhouser?

Christopher Tong



Sciencephoto.com

**J. Robert Oppenheimer** (1904-1967) was one of the leading American theoretical physicists of his era. He is better known to the broader public as the wartime director of the **Manhattan Project's Los Alamos Laboratory**, a then-secret facility where the first atomic weapons were designed during World War Two. A film released earlier this year tells a version of Oppenheimer's life story, emphasizing Los Alamos as well as the loss of his security clearance after the war. The film does not shy from portraying Oppenheimer as a controversial and deeply flawed individual. One thing missing from the film, however, is Oppenheimer's rock-hounding adventures, which began in childhood.

Oppenheimer was born in New York City. His father was a German immigrant, and when Robert was 5 years old, the family went on a European vacation, where they introduced him to his German paternal grandfather, **Benjamin Oppenheimer**. Benjamin gave Robert two gifts, an encyclopedia of architecture (since Robert liked to play with building blocks) and "a box of rocks, each labeled with its Latin and German names, obviously designed to be the starting point for a collection of minerals. Robert took the bait. Collecting and studying minerals became, and remained throughout his childhood, his main hobby" (Monk, 2012, p. 27). Back home in New York, Robert was tutored by the curator of minerals at the American Museum of Natural History. "On walks around New York's Central Park, on summer holidays on Long Island and on family visits to Germany, Oppenheimer would collect rock samples, which he would then identify and display [at the family home] on Riverside Drive" (Monk, 2012, p. 32). At age 11, Robert also began corresponding with the **New York Mineralogical Club** (one of the nation's oldest), and a year later, was invited to present a paper at their meeting. The members were shocked to find themselves being addressed by a 12-year-old. (Oppenheimer would address the club again years later, as a special guest speaker on the occasion of their 75th anniversary in 1961.)

Later Oppenheimer recalled that while his interest in minerals began as a collector, it morphed into a scientific interest, and thus, was his gateway into science. However, there were additional consequences. After graduating from high school, Robert went on another European vacation with his family, during which he took a solo rockhounding trip to the old mines near **Joachimsthal**, near the Czech border, known for silver as well as the source of the pitchblende from which Uranium was first discovered (!). "It was an ideal place for a rock collector, and Oppenheimer returned with a suitcase full of interesting specimens" (Monk, 2012, p. 46), though he also contracted a very serious case of dysentery on this trip. He was forced to delay his entry into **Harvard University** for one year to recuperate from both the dysentery and colitis. He spent part of this time in **New Mexico**, partly because of its climate, and it was then that Robert Oppenheimer began his lifelong affection for that state, where he and his younger brother **Frank** eventually acquired a ranch, and of course, where the Los Alamos lab would be located years later.

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Minerals played a role in an infamous Oppenheimer story from his adulthood. In 1927, he was a post-doc at **Caltech**, and struck up a friendship with new chemistry professor and fellow rockhound, **Linus Pauling** (future 1954 **Nobel Laureate** in Chemistry and 1962 **Nobel Laureate** in Peace). They were both interested in the crystal structure of minerals and planned to work together on quantum chemistry research. They got on so well that Oppenheimer gave Pauling most of his rock collection, which "occupied twenty cabinet drawers in Pauling's office" (The Pauling Blog, 11/19/2009). Unfortunately, their collaboration never came to fruition, because Oppenheimer foolishly and unsuccessfully attempted to date Pauling's wife, who refused, and told her husband about it. Pauling cut off the friendship immediately, though evidently he kept the rocks. Incredibly, years later when Oppenheimer lost his security clearance, Pauling publicly defended Oppenheimer, denouncing the government action as "a disgraceful act" in 1954.

An article on Oppenheimer in the RGMS *Conglomerate* needs to mention some Reno connections. Oppenheimer's wife **Kitty** spent six weeks in Reno in order to divorce her previous husband; Kitty and **Robert** married the day the divorce was finalized (Nov. 1, 1940). And according to **Vincent C. Jones** (1985, p. 83), before settling on Los Alamos for the site of the secret lab, **General Leslie Groves** briefly considered other options, including one "near the California-Nevada border, on the east side of the Sierra Nevada in the vicinity of Reno" but this was ruled out as "too inaccessible" and too snowy in the winter. We all know that another site in Nevada would be the location of later atomic tests. Recent media reports indicate that Oppenheimer's granddaughter is presently an employee at that test site.

#### SOURCES

I do not have the book that the **Christopher Nolan** film was based on, so my main sources are **Ray Monks' Robert Oppenheimer: A Life Inside the Center** (New York: Doubleday, 2012) and especially an article by **Andrew A. Sircee** in *Popular Mineralogy* (Sept. 2007): "Atomic Bombs and the Mineral Collector". Dr. Sircee has posted the text of this article as a comment on the *Linus Pauling Blog* (linked below), where you can also see samples of Oppenheimer's mineral collection, part of which is now at the **Ava Helen** and **Linus Pauling Papers** at **Oregon State University**. Sircee's post on the Pauling Blog is short and highly recommended for more details. **Vincent C. Jones' Manhattan: The Army and the Atomic Bomb** (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1985) has the trivia about Reno.

<http://www.newyorkmineralogicalclub.org/history/>

<https://paulingblog.wordpress.com/2009/11/19/the-oppenheimer-minerals/>

<https://paulingblog.wordpress.com/2009/11/23/oppenheimer-minerals-update/>

## **The Kid's Corner**

**Steve Rose, Geologist**



### Ruby

Perhaps the most attractive of all gemstones, Ruby's bright red color is called *pigeon blood*. Ruby's rich red glow is hard and durable with a 9 on the Mohs hardness scale. Only the diamond is harder at 10. Nature's ingredients contain common aluminum and oxygen with just a touch of chromium for its beautiful color. This mixture of aluminum and oxygen makes up the mineral group called corundum. Sapphire is another corundum gem but with a

bit of titanium that changes the color to blue. Corundum minerals form when land masses collide. When plates move against each other, the land exerts tremendous pressures that cause atoms to become closely packed in the crystal structure, and strong electrical forces combine to create the dense and hard corundum mineral. Corundum forms into six-sided prisms that reflect the internal hexagonal crystal structure. Sometimes rutile, a mineral of titanium and oxygen added to the crystal as it is forming, creates an asterism, that is, light reflected into a six-rayed star. A Star Ruby or Star Sapphire creates an even more spectacular stone! In the past, any hard red gemstone was considered a ruby, but now we know that some of these minerals are Spinel with a 7.5- 8.0 Mohs hardness. People from ancient Egypt 3500 years ago began mining rubies. If you are born in July, you have Ruby as your birthstone. That might be a great gift idea!

Submitted by Steve Norman

Reference: *Minerals and Man* by Cornelius Hurlbut, Jr., Professor of Mineralogy, Harvard University 1968  
Picture from Online Bing images.

Credited Photos: Fair Use by Non-Profit

**ALAA Land Use Policy**

1. Adherence to the AFMS Code of Ethics assures compliance with most statutes and regulations governing collecting on public lands and encourages respect for private property rights and the environment. Clubs are urged to read the AFMS Code of Ethics in at least one meeting every year, to publish the Code frequently in the club newsletter, and to compel compliance on club field trips.
2. Individuals and clubs are urged to write their elected representatives and land use management agency supervisors regarding issues of rule making, legislation and enforcement affecting field collecting of minerals and fossils.
3. Individuals and clubs are urged to join and support activities of the American Lands Access Association (ALAA), a sister organization with responsibility for advancing the interests of earth science amateurs with legislatures and land use management agencies.
4. The AFMS will receive a report from ALAA at its annual meeting.
5. The AFMS endorses the principle of multiple use of public lands as a guarantee of continuing recreational opportunities.
6. Wilderness and monument designations are inconsistent with the principle of multiple use. In view of the vast amount of public land already designated as wilderness and monuments, future such designations should be minimal, taking into account the increased demand for recreational opportunities, including rock-hounding, created by a growing population.
7. In furtherance of the principle of multiple use, the AFMS believes that laws, regulations and rules established by relevant governmental authorities should be designed to allow freest possible access to all public lands, coupled with minimal restrictions on the recreational collection of minerals, fossils, gemstone materials and other naturally occurring materials.
8. A right to collect minerals and fossils on public lands should be protected by statute.
9. The AFMS urges its members to work with any or all government authorities to achieve a good working relationship in order to improve the public image of recreational collectors.

**AFMS Code of Ethics**

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind—fences, signs, buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material—matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes, which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land Management, or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule," will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and public image of rockhounds everywhere.



**RGMS Classes & Shop Hours for September**  
*Julie Hilsabeck, School Director*

Please respond via email to me, Julie Hilsabeck, at [school@renogms.org](mailto:school@renogms.org), if you want any of the classes below. Please indicate which class date and time you want. Many of the classes are limited to a maximum of 4 students. If the day of the week says Tuesdays (for example), the plural means the class lasts all month.

**Advanced Silver Fabrication \$22.50 per class**

Thursday, 9/29 only 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

**Beading \$20.00**

Sunday 9/24, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm beginning stitch, Chevron Necklace Picture is on the calendar.

Materials should be available locally from The Bead Gallery or The Bead Shop

- 55 6x8 rondelles
- 57 4mm bicones in a contrasting or different tone color
- About 7 grams size 11/0 seed beads in a contrasting color
- Coordinating clasp
- #6 fire line
- #10 beading needle

**Beginning Lapidary \$60.00**

Tuesday 9/12 and 9/13 11:00am to 3:00pm

Saturday 9/9 9:00am to 5:00pm

Saturday 9/23 9:00am to 5:00pm

**Beginning Silver Fabrication \$120.00 -Rings**

Tuesdays 6:00pm to 9:00pm

Thursdays 11:00am to 2:00 pm

**Lost Wax Carving for Casting**

Class catch-up will be on 9/10 during Open House

**Mineral Identification \$60.00 plus \$25 kit fee**

No Mineral ID classes until the fall. The instructor is out of town.

**Open House \$7.50/hour of use**

Labor Day 9/4 11:00 am to 5:00 pm

Mondays 11:00am to 9:00 pm

Thursdays 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Sunday 9/10 10:00 am to 6:00pm This is the **last Sunday Open House** since no one has attended this additional time.

**Slab Saw Use \$60.00**

Saturday 9/9 9:00am to 5:00pm

**Tumbling \$60.00**

Tuesdays 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

## CFMS/AFMS Shows Aug./Sept. 2023

## Classes Offered by RGMS

Additional information is available on the CFMS website, [cfmsinc.org/shows](http://cfmsinc.org/shows)

### September 16-17, 2023 – Monterey, CA

Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society  
Monterey Fairgrounds, Monterey, CA  
Contact: (831) 801-5887, [susieharlow@gmail.com](mailto:susieharlow@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://cvgms.rocks>

### September 16-17, 2023 – Reno, NV

Reno Gem and Mineral Society  
Reno/Sparks Convention Center, 4590 S. Virginia St., !  
Contact: (775) 229-4420, [sailondan55@aol.com](mailto:sailondan55@aol.com)  
Website: [www.renogms.org](http://www.renogms.org)

### September 16-17, 2023 – San Luis Obispo, CA

San Luis Obispo Gem and Mineral Club  
San Luis Obispo Veteran's Memorial Building, 801  
Grand Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA Contact:  
2023show@slogem.org, Website: <http://slogem.org>

### October 7-8, 2023 – Grass Valley, CA

Nevada County Gem and Mineral Society  
Nevada County Fairgrounds, 11228 McCourtney Rd.,  
Grass Valley 95949 Contact: [4vanclan5@att.net](mailto:4vanclan5@att.net)

### October 7-8, 2023 – Signal Hill, CA

Long Beach Mineral & Gem Society  
Signal Hill Library, 1800 E. Hill Street, Signal Hill, CA  
Contact: (562) 253-1390, [lbmineralgemsociety@gmail.com](mailto:lbmineralgemsociety@gmail.com) Website: <http://www.facebook.com/LBMGS>

### October 7-8, 2023 – Anderson, CA

Shasta Gem and Mineral Society  
1890 Briggs Street, Anderson, CA 96007  
Contact: [sgmsrocksredding@gmail.com](mailto:sgmsrocksredding@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://shastagemandmineral.org>

### October 8, 2023 – Fallbrook, CA

Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society  
123 W. Alvarado St. Fallbrook CA 92028  
(show on street & in parking lot), Contact: (760) 728-  
1130, [info@fgms.org](mailto:info@fgms.org) Website: <http://www.fgms.org>

### October 14-15, 2023 – Redwood City, CA

Redwood City Community Activities Bldg, 1400 Rose-  
velt Ave., Redwood City, CA 94061 Contact: (650) 575-  
3144, [cci@pacbell.net](mailto:cci@pacbell.net) Website: <http://sequoiagemandmineralsociety.org>

### October 21-22 2023—Santa Rosa CA

Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Bldg, 1351 Maple Ave.  
Cpmtact (707) 849-9551 [jolene4srmgs@gmail.com](mailto:jolene4srmgs@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://srmgs.org>

### October 21, 2023 – West Hills, CA

First United Methodist Church, 22700 Sherman Way,  
West Hills, CA 91307 Contact: [whrc@rockchppers.org](mailto:whrc@rockchppers.org)  
Website: [www.rockchppers.org](http://www.rockchppers.org)

This is a general listing of RGMS classes that are typically offered. For specific dates, consult the calendar on the Website or talk to the school director at the General Meeting or email at [school@renogms.org](mailto:school@renogms.org).

Advanced Silver Fabrication  
Basics of Slab Saw Use  
Beading/Bead Weaving  
Beginning Lapidary  
Beginning Silver Fabrication  
Casting  
Cold Connections  
Etching on Copper  
Intermediate Lapidary  
Jewelry 101  
Lost Wax Carving for Casting  
Make Your Own Ear Wires  
Mineral Identification  
Silver Crocheting  
Silver Chain Making  
Tumbling  
Wire Wrapping/Weaving

Future

Enameling  
Faceting  
Intarsia

Take a few minutes and check out the *CFMS Newsletter* for September. Just enter <http://www.cfmsinc.org> and find the newsletter in the list on the right. Click on the link.

The *Newsletter of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies* is published monthly. You can view the current issue as well as back issues online at [www.Amfed.org](http://www.Amfed.org). There is also a new Kids' Website.



**Officers**

<b>President:</b>	Dean Sizemore	<a href="mailto:President@renogms.org">President@renogms.org</a>
<b>Vice President:</b>	Steven Smith	<a href="mailto:Vicepresident@renogms.org">Vicepresident@renogms.org</a>
<b>Secretary:</b>	Steve Norman	<a href="mailto:secretary@renogms.org">secretary@renogms.org</a>
<b>Asst. Secretary:</b>	Suzanne Webb	<a href="mailto:assistantsecretary@renogms.org">assistantsecretary@renogms.org</a>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Janet Longueira	<a href="mailto:treasurer@renogms.org">treasurer@renogms.org</a>
<b>Asst. Treasurer:</b>	Robyn Howard	<a href="mailto:assistanttreasurer@renogms.org">assistanttreasurer@renogms.org</a>
<b>Past President</b>	Tom Nichols	<a href="mailto:pastpresident@renogms.org">pastpresident@renogms.org</a>

**Board Members at Large**

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Stephanie Leonard	Jim Wellker	Denise Sizemore
	Tim Steeper	

**Commission Directors**

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<b>Ass't Editor</b>	Karen Boldi	
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<b>Field Trips:</b>	Hilary Loupee et al	<a href="mailto:fieldtrip@renogms.org">fieldtrip@renogms.org</a>
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<b>Security</b>	Marty Hagans	<a href="mailto:security@renogms.org">security@renogms.org</a>
<b>Shop:</b>	Patrick Davis	
<b>Social:</b>	Debbie Bush	<a href="mailto:social@renogms.org">social@renogms.org</a>
<b>Sunshine:</b>	Joanne Sworthout	<a href="mailto:sunshine@renogms.org">sunshine@renogms.org</a>
<b>Tech Director</b>	Tom Nichols (temp)	<a href="mailto:tech@renogms.org">tech@renogms.org</a>
<b>Volunteers</b>	Wendy Kazas	

## ***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.	Patrick Davis & Committee
Gen. Mtg. Guest Greeter	Joanne Sworthout
Gen. Mtg Door Prize Coord	Denise Sizemore,
Assistant Door Prize Coord.	Lori Connel
Educational Outreach	Steve Norman
Future Rockhounds Advisor	Steve Norman
JPOG Silent Auction	Renée Samuels
Facility Expansion	Patrick Davis
JPOG Dealer Chair	Terry Bush
Safety Officer	Spencer Ennis

### Instructors (Alphabetical by class)

<i>Bead weaving:</i>	Sue Webb
<i>Casting:</i>	Spencer Ennis
<i>Etching</i>	Irene Comstock
<i>Jewelry 101 &amp;</i>	Robyn Howard
<i>Cold Connections</i>	“
<i>Lapidary</i>	Julie Hilsabeck
	Barbara Hartman
<i>Lost Wax Carving</i>	Tim Steeper
<i>Mineral ID</i>	Tom Calhoun/Webb Varnum
<i>Silver Fabrication (Adv.)</i>	Jill Atkins
<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