

The CULVER CITY ROCK & MINERAL CLUB, located in Culver City, California, brings together persons interested in the earth sciences to engage in research and study, to assist members in the collection and preservation of rocks and minerals and in the study of lapidary and related arts.



2023 HOLIDAY PARTY! PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Once again, we will have our Holiday Party, as always, on the second Monday of December this year on the 11th. We will start a little earlier than in the past, at 4 PM, and end a little earlier, at 8 PM. It is at the [Rotary Plaza at 5100 Overland Ave. \(corner of Virginia Ave.\)](#) Park in the street.

Bring a side dish, salad, or dessert as well as whatever (non-alcoholic) beverage you want. The Club will supply turkey, ham, and utensils.

As always, we will have the White Elephant Gift Exchange. If you want to partake, bring a wrapped gift with a maximum value of \$25. In the past, we have had some outrageously funny presents. Case in point, I scored a big blue telephone with two handpieces, used at hospitals when a translator was needed. The great majority of the presents are useful or decorative items.

Jette Sorensen

Dear all:

I am very excited that we will be holding our in-person holiday party on December 11 for the first time since 2019. It will be a blast to share this time-honored and very lively club tradition with many of you.



As we bid adieu to 2023, let's feel gratitude for some of this year's accomplishments: A terrific gem show; the largest grant we have ever received from Culver City which helped fund the show; a special recognition accorded us from Culver City's City Council; a robust financial status; a wonderful roster of guest speakers every month; a well-maintained and well-used lapidary shop; and a host of great new members.

Our November meeting had a wonderful turnout. Thanks to all who showed up on Zoom we were able to fill most of our club's elected positions. There are still some spots to fill and if you have not taken on a job yet, please consider doing so for the coming year. We need more members to step up. Most of the positions are not very time-consuming and make a huge difference in keeping the club afloat. We will have a table set up at the holiday party for signing up for the as-yet-to-be-filled positions.

Our November guest speaker, [Lesley Aine McKewon](#), took us through some wonderful lapidary tips, both in purchasing good cabs, and in making them. Her beautiful work serves as a testimony to choosing your stones very carefully.

Hope to see many of you in December!
Alexa Hunter

BENCH TIPS FOR DECEMBER

TEMPLATES

Whenever I have to make more than 2-3 exact copies of a sheet metal component, I think of making a template. Templates let me easily draw the shape of an item to cut out.

Art stores or online sources like cooltools.us/ and kingsleynorth.com/ sell templates for common shapes like circles, ovals, hearts, etc. but for non-standard shapes, I make my own out of a scrap of sheet plastic or sheet metal. My preference is brass. I carefully lay out the shape using a steel ruler, a set of dividers, a scribe, and a fine center punch.

One example is the brass template in the pic below that let's me quickly trace the design of ginko leaf earrings onto silver sheet. Another is the nickel template which makes it easy to drill a pattern of holes for pin inlay into wooden handles.

TESTING FOR SILVER

Often you need to identify some of those unknown "silvery" pieces of metal in the bottom of the toolbox or some piece of old jewelry that is not hall-marked. Is it silver or is it something else?



Of course, if you need to know exactly what you have, it's best to send your metals off for refining. But inexpensive silver testing solutions can be used to help distinguish higher silver content alloys from alloys that have the same appearance but with little to no silver content, like German Silver or Nickel.

I purchased a half-ounce bottle of JSP Silver Testing

Solution #GT41. It's not a rigorous analytic test, but it lets you know if you're on the right track. And it's inexpensive. Mine was only \$3.

With a fresh solution you have an instant reaction after applying it to the metal being tested. The procedure is simple - apply a small drop and watch for a color change. Note that the acid will leave a slight mark, so choose a spot that is out of the way or will be easy to polish.

If you suspect the object is silver plated, you should file a little notch somewhere inconspicuous to expose what metal is below the surface. Otherwise, all you test will be the surface plating.

Here's the reaction I got when testing various materials:

- Fine silver Red/Orange
- Sterling silver Brick Red
- 80% silver 20% copper . Dark red changing to gray
- Brass Yellow changing to blue
- Nickel Gray-green
- Copper Yellow changing to blue
- Steel Black
- Stainless Steel No color change



Caution - If you do any of this testing, know that you are handling a reasonably strong acid. The GT41 label says it includes nitric acid and potassium di-

chromate.

Wear safety glasses.
Do not get any testing solution on your skin.
Use a solution of baking soda and water to neutralize acid.
Wash and clean up well when you're done.

See Other Tips in my Smart Solutions for Jewelry-Making Problems
<http://amazon.com/dp/B0BQ8YVLTJ>

Happy hammering,

Brad Smith
BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com

Lapidary Workshop Hours

The shop is open Saturdays and Sundays from 12 noon to 4 pm.

To see if there is room, send an email, do not just show up.

Saturdays: Lynne Lukert
Sundays: Jette Sorensen

If you have not made a reservation, you can call the shop during open hours to see if there is room, 310-836-4611

Do not wear open-toed shoes. Wear old clothes. Bring eye and ear protection.

PROGRAM REPORT 11/11/23



Cabochon of good thickness with correct side walls



Very thick with high walls



This Cabochon

Stone Wall Thickness

There are a variety of ways to cut the wall on a cabochon.

Typically a height of 2-3mm is standard.

Cabochon can also be cut with a flat top.

Lapidarist and jeweler, Lesley Aine Mckenow (see work below), presented "What Makes a Good Cabochon" to the largest audience we have ever had since we started Zooming in 2020.



Lesley gave us an in-depth understanding of what is needed to get the best of the best cabs and stones, starting with the different kinds of cuts, such as cabochons, freestyles, and designer cuts.

You can see if a stone is a good cut by looking for a curvature (shape) that should be a mirror finish when looking from side to side, with no flat spots or bulging, and not thicker on one side and not the other. If the stone has an intentional flat top, look for evenness as well.

You can easily check the curvature by the way light is reflected on the material. If it is smooth with cir-

Well cut cabochon will feature:

Even curvature across the face of the stone
note how the moves smoothly over this stone



cular lines, it is a good cut, if all or parts of the reflected light are jagged, it is poorly cut.

If there are scratches on the wall of a finished stone, it will not be suitable for a prong setting.

One of the most important, and often overlooked, things to look for is a beveled edge at the bottom of the material. This allows space for solder in a bezel setting and prevents chipping at the bottom. If it is

One of the most important and most commonly over looked aspect that really good cabochonb is the **beveled edge** on the bottom edge of the stone.

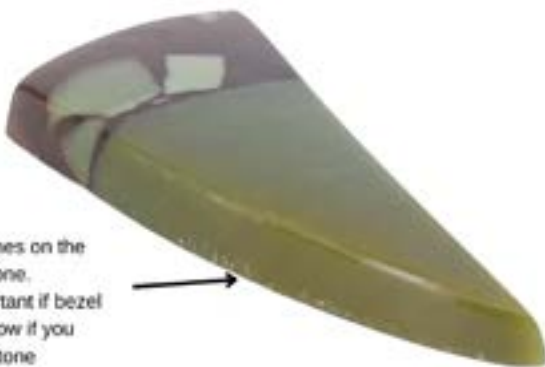


This little slanted edge allows the stone to sit in the bezel setting with out chipping or bulging the side of your setting.



absent, the stone is not cut by a good stone lapidary artist.

Always make sure to inspect the bottom of the stone. Is the bottom level and flat? Are there any fractures? Are there drag marks from the polishing wheel? If



NOTE

Look for scratches on the edges of the stone. While not important if bezel setting it will show if you prong set this stone

you see it is not level or flat or has fractures or drag marks, perhaps it's not worth buying.

There are instances where fractures can be "healed" with Super Glue and then polished. Lesley pointed out that Opal cannot be healed with Super Glue because it will show.

Lesley showed a lot of gorgeous stones cut by herself and several other lapidaries, including some very well-known artists.

After the presentation, we were treated to see how quickly she could make a bezel. She uses a pair of sheers that alleviate filing. The sheers are included in "Favorite Products" on her website,

<https://www.lesleyainemckeown.com/favorite-products>.

- Jette Sorensen



We're always **looking for new programming** for our members - if you've got an idea for a presentation or know someone who our members would love to learn from, reach out to Jette Sorensen to the editor: nugget@culvercityrocks.org

NOVEMBER EXECUTIVE MEETING 11/13/23

Those present: Darren Cokin, Steve Dover, Lorna Herf, Alexa Hunter, Darrell Robb, Joannie Ripner, Ken Rogers, Jette Sorensen, Ana Maria Strambi Guimaraes,

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM by President Alexa Hunter.

The following was discussed:

-Alexa Hunter reminded that the Holiday party would take place on December 11 and indicated help was needed with sending an Evite to the members.

-Alexa indicated that a committee needed to be formed to propose revisions to the Club's Bylaws. One of the changes to be considered was to lower the minimum quorum necessary to approve motions. Alexa appointed Rick Shaffer, Jannelle Williams, Jette Sorensen, Darrell Robb, and Steve Dover as members of the committee.

-A discussion followed on how the administrative tasks of running the election of officers for 2024 should be conducted at the upcoming general meeting. Ken Rogers indicated he would not be able to serve as head of the Programs committee moving forward. Jette Sorensen and Lorna Herf agreed to co-serve, beginning January 2024.

-A discussion followed as to whether future meetings should be alternated between virtual and in-person.

-A motion was made and approved to propose to the Club members to evenly split the 2023 Fiesta of Gems raffle proceeds between LA Goal and the Friends of the Culver City Scout House (FOCCSH).

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.

Submitted by Ana M S Guimaraes, Recording Secretary, based on notes provided by Stephanie Dangott.

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING 11/13/23

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by President Alexa Hunter. A quorum was established.

-The September and October General Meeting Minutes were approved as read in the October and November editions of The Nugget, respectively.

-A motion was made and approved to evenly split the 2023 Fiesta of Gems raffle proceeds between LA Goal and the Friends of the Culver City Scout House (FOCCSH).

-Vice-President Steve Dover conducted the election of the Club officers and appointment of committee chairs for 2024.

The following officers were elected:

- President: Alexa Hunter
- Vice-President: Steve Dover
- Treasurer: Darrell Robb
- Recording Secretary: Stephanie Dangott
- Corresponding Secretary: Karen Wallen
- Parliamentarian: Ana Maria Strambi Guimaraes

The following Board of Directors were appointed:

- 2024 - Gary Mitchell, Karen Wallen
- 2025 - Ana Maria Strambi Guimaraes, Bradford Smith
- (2026 - TBD)

The following committee chairs and co-chairs were appointed:

- Federation Director: Ellen Moe
- Librarian: Joannie Ripner
- Membership: Bradford Smith and Regina Lozano
- Minerals: Joel Kuennen
- Photography: Vladislav Firtich
- Programs: Jette Sorensen and Lorna Herf
- Publications: Jette Sorensen
- Sunshine: Karen Wallen
- Trading Post: Gary Mitchell
- Webmaster: Bart Gampe
- Virtual meeting host: Darren Cokin

The following committee chair positions remain open: Education, Field Trips, Historian, Social.

-Alexa Hunter informed that a committee was formed to propose revisions to the Club's Bylaws. The following Bylaws committee members were appointed by the President: Rick Shaffer, Janelle Williams, Jette Sorensen, Darrell Robb, and Steve Dover.

-Alexa informed that the Holiday party would take place at the Rotary Plaza on December 11. Help was needed with decorations and to create an Evite. Joel Kuennen volunteered to do the evite.

-Treasurer Darrell Robb informed that the Club remained solvent and well positioned to fund its activities in 2024. He indicated the annual investment dividends should appear on the December bank statements.

-Program chair Ken Rogers informed the November program was the last program he would organize as he would be leaving the position effectively 2024. The newly appointed chairs would determine upcoming programs.

-A discussion followed regarding repairs that need to be made at the shop due to the recent rains.

-Alexa asked members to become more involved and volunteer to take over vacant chair positions.

-Alexa informed that the Club needed volunteers to take over the Vendor chair and co-chair positions for the 2024 Fiesta of Gems. Outgoing chair Janelle Williams confirmed that there are a large number of vendors to contact. The position includes, among other duties, managing vendor applications, making sure vendors have insurance, and collecting the raffle prizes from the vendors.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM.

Submitted by Ana M S Guimaraes, Recording Secretary, based on notes provided by Stephanie Dangott.

December Member Birthdays

Edmondo Coronel
12/01/23
Mercedes Bonness
12/03/23
Virginia Hollis
12/06/23
Brian Lallement
12/07/23
Yvette Trinh
12/09/23
Ellen Moe
12/10/23
Rosemarie Ihde
12/14/23
Cyndy Mandell
12/15/23
Rida Qureshi
12/15/23
Bart Gampe
12/23/23



to our newest members:

Mercedes Bonness
Rida Qureshi
Vladislav V Firtich

The Nugget – Submissions

The submission deadline is on the 15th of every month. Articles or notes without a byline are written by the Editor. Photographs without credits are shot by a CCRMC member. Email the Nugget submissions to the Editor: nugget@culvercityrocks.org

The Nugget – Advertisements

The Nugget accepts paid advertisements. The cost for an eighth of a page is \$7 per insertion, payable in advance. Size is about 2" high x 3.5" wide. Ad location is at the discretion of the Editor.``

Ads, copy, or business cards must be received by the 10th of the month.

Email submissions to the Editor:

nugget@culvercityrocks.org

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See local field trips posted on LA-Rocks at

[facebook.com/groups/411978609512229](https://www.facebook.com/groups/411978609512229)

More field trips are posted on SoCal Rocks [www.](http://www.facebook.com/groups/2605376056257691)

[facebook.com/groups/2605376056257691](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2605376056257691)

2023 Elected Officers

President – Alexa Hunter

Vice President – Steven Dover

Treasurer - Darrell Robb

Recording Secretary
Ana Maria Strambi Guimaraes

Parliamentarian - Jon Gowing

2023 Committee Chairs

Education - Vacant

Federation Director- Lorna Herf

Field Trips - Vacant

Historian - Virginia Hollis

Librarian - Vacant

Membership Co-Chairs
Stephanie Dangott & Jette Sorensen

Photography- Pam Leitner

Programs- Ken Rogers

Publications Committee
Jette Sorensen
Brad Smith

Publicity - Vacant

Trading Post - Gary Mitchell

Webmaster - Bart Gampe

Zoom host - Darren Cokin

Board of Directors

2023

Adrienne Louis
Jette Sorensen

2024

Gary Mitchell
Karen Wallen

2025

Ana Maria Strambi Guimaraes
Bradford Smith

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