



## ***RIO GRANDE RIVER VALLEY AGATES***

Presented by Geologist Stephen Blyskal  
Join us via [Zoom](#) on Monday, April 14, at 7:30 PM.

The Rio Grande River valley has been hunted for agate since the 1950s. The valley gravels are widespread, covering an area up to 50 miles east of the river. This talk will touch on the history of the river itself and the tributaries it captured. A discussion of the Uvalde gravel will be included, with its importance to gravel distribution. Photographs of the different kinds of agates found in the gravels will illustrate the wide variety and quality of material.

### **About Stephen Blyskal:**

I am a retired petroleum geologist and a mineral collector with 60 years in the hobby. I also collect

Texas petrified wood and agate in areas across the state. I have been an HGMS (Houston Gem & Mineral Society) member since 1977. I am the chairman of the Mineral Section of HGMS, a group dedicated to the study of mineral crystals and how they form. I am also a lapidary, cutting and polishing agate and other semi-precious materials.

I have assembled a personal collection of over 4000 cataloged mineral specimens, including many special interest areas (like Texas Minerals). I have presented many talks on minerals and geology to my club, section, and other clubs.

[Zoom Meeting](#) ID: 310 836 4611  
Password: rocks

The Culver City Rock & Mineral Club 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 and practice of lapidary and related arts.



## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Happy spring to all!

Shoutouts are in order to welcome several new committee chairs, including co-chairs for Social (refreshments at meetings) Pat Oberg and Steve Dover. Additionally, our new Education Chair, Merrilee Marks, who recently gave a dynamic presentation at Farragut Elementary. Thank you! A new member volunteered to be our new photographer, but we have misplaced their name, so if you are that person, please let us know...



The club is shifting into high gear for the Fiesta of Gems, a mere 2 ½ months away. According to our sources, we are looking for at least 2 or 3 extra strong folks to help in the setup on Friday morning, June 27th, and also on Sunday, early evening, June 29th. The club is offering a shop-related remuneration for those who take on these heavy lifting volunteer positions. Send an email to Joanie Rippner if you want to volunteer for this kind of work.

The May meeting, on the 12th, will be a work party, where we will uphold the tradition of stuffing the kids' bags and addressing/stamping postcards.

Also, on May 10th, we will hold a sale in the alley just behind the shop. This is members selling their "stuff." It can be roughs, finished stones, used tools, finished jewelry, books, magazines, etc. The Club will have a table with excess tools, beads, magazines, and books. There may still be an open table. Contact Stephanie Dangott if you would like to participate. Come from 10 AM to 2 PM to see if you can find what you are looking for or just hang out.

— Alexa Hunter, President

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## **ALLEY SALE SPOTS**

We still have a couple of spots open for members who want to participate in the **Alley/Yard sale by the Lapidary Workshop on Saturday, May 10th**. The spots are for current (paid up) members only

and are free. Be prepared to bring your own 6 to 8-foot table and chairs. Setup starts at 8:30 AM. And for the non-sellers, come from 10 AM to 3 PM.

To sign up, email Stephanie Dangott at [sjdangott@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sjdangott@sbcglobal.net)

See some familiar faces and get stuff – including stones in all forms, from rough to finished bling, and all kinds of some lapidary and jewelry-related destash. The Club will have a table that includes some tools and a bunch of beads.

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## **LAPIDARY WORKSHOP HOURS**

**10866 Culver Boulevard  
Culver City, CA 90230  
(310) 836-4611**

**The shop is located behind the Scout House**

The shop is open Saturdays and Sundays from 12 noon to 4 pm. To see if there is room, go to the [Lapidary Shop tab](#) on the [Club's website](#) and send an email, do not just show up.

Saturdays: [Steve Dover](#)

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.

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## **APRIL WORKSHOPS**

### **LAPIDARY 101**

Sunday, 4/20/2025, 9 am to 12 noon at the Club's Lapidary Shop.

Get to know the equipment at the club's lapidary workshop. Use a trim saw to cut the outline for a cabochon. Shape the stone on the grinding wheels and use the Expando wheels to polish it. Use the arbor with a leather wheel to get a high polish. Go

home with a cabochon you can use for a pendant. The workshop is limited to 4 members. The workshop fee is \$20.00, payable in advance to jetsorensen@gmail.com via Zelle. If the fee has not been paid by 1/15/25, the spot may be given to someone from the waiting list, if any.

Email Jette to reserve a spot: [jetsorensen@gmail.com](mailto:jetsorensen@gmail.com)



## SKINNY RINGS 102 - Attach Embellishments

Sunday 4/27/25, 9 AM to 12 Noon at the Club's Lapidary Shop.

Learn to solder using solder chips and paste solder to attach an embellishment to a skinny ring. Make your own embellishment by making a sphere and/or using the "water casting" method. Then, solder it to a skinny ring you make. This will all be done with Argentium Silver, a form of sterling but with a higher fine silver content than Sterling Silver. Bring a butane torch (Creme Brulé torch) and needle files. You can get the Brulé torch and needle files at Amazon or your local hardware store. Just make sure the torch can reach at least 2200F.

The workshop fee is \$65, including materials, and is payable in advance via Zelle to jetsorensen@gmail.com. The workshop is limited to 4 members. Email Jette to reserve a spot: [jetsorensen@gmail.com](mailto:jetsorensen@gmail.com)

## FUTURE WORKSHOPS

MAY 18	LAPIDARY 101
MAY 28	PRONG SETTING A CABOCHON
MAY 31	TREE OF LIFE WORKSHOP

## TREE OF LIFE WORKSHOP

Reserve a spot in a Tree of Life workshop May 31, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Boy Scout Meeting House. This hands-on workshop will guide you in creating a beautiful Tree of Life using your favorite fist-sized rock as a base and wire wrapped rock chips. You will create either an uplifted tree or a weeping willow. Workshop fee is \$50, with an additional \$10 for a material kit that you build by selecting wire and rock chips to complement your rock base. You will need to bring your own tools (a supply list will be provided). The workshop is limited to five participants, so it is essential to reserve your spot in advance. To confirm your place, the fee must be paid by May 24, 2025 via Zelle. If the fee is not received by the deadline, your spot may be given to someone on the waiting list. To reserve a spot, receive the class supply list, and obtain Zelle payment instructions, email Regina at [CLUBSRL@gmail.com](mailto:CLUBSRL@gmail.com)

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## THE MINUTES

### EXECUTIVE MEETING

In Attendance – Jette Sorensen, Stephanie Dangott, Alexa Hunter, Karen Wallen, Steve Dover, Ellen Moe, Joannie Rippner and Darrell Robb.

Called to order at 6:41PM by president Alexa Hunter.

Lapidary Shop – Steve stated that the 16" and 18" saws were mucked. The waste product needs to be sent to hazardous waste disposal. Ellen said she can do it since she has to bring home waste there.

Steve also indicated that the 18" saw switch isn't working and needs to be fixed by an electrician. Both Steve and Jette said there have been good turn-outs at the shop on Saturday and Sunday.

Lapidary 101 workshop is full every month. Jette will try to schedule an additional class soon. The silversmithing classes are also full. In May, Regina will do a class on creating gem trees.

We have a new education chair took display to Farrogout Elementary School for an event. She has

brought the display back to the shop.

Regina is handling Zelle for membership payments.

Alley show – Stephanie is organizing for May 10th, 10 AM to 3 PM. A lot of people have signed up to be vendors again, but there are some more spaces available.

#### Fiesta of Gems

Need to find out if postcards have been sent to the printer. Jette will follow up.

Stephanie is in charge of the breakroom again. More food needs to be ordered for Saturday. She will work with Darrell (treasurer about this).

Joannie is in charge of scheduling volunteers. All members are supposed to contribute 4 hours during the event. Joannie will work with Regina to see if there is a simple way to keep track of who has contributed.

Karen stated that better speakers are needed. Alexa may have something to use.

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS) Ellen said that the federation is auctioning off equipment from the Zzyzx location that they are no longer doing an event at that location. Will send information to Jette for the Nugget.

Summer Picnic – Scheduled for August 16th. Cannot reserve space at the park until 90 days before.

Treasurer – Darrell stated that we are in good shape. CD is coming due in April.

Special event permit for Fiesta of Gems is in process.

#### Programs

Jette said April presentation will be on Zoom. Presenter is from Houston.

Nuggett – Jette says she needs people to write articles for club newsletter.

7:25 PM - Stephanie made a motion to close the business meeting and it Joannie seconded.

#### GENERAL MEETING

Called to order by president Alexa at 7:34 PM.

2 guests in attendance.

Advised new members about our lapidary shop and how to sign up for a Saturday or Sunday hours.

Fiesta of Gems June 28th and 29th, with set up on June 27th.

Featuring fluorite.

Karen is the vendor co-chair with Darrell.

Steve is in charge of door prizes and needs donations. He is also in charge of display cases and there are some cases still available for members to display their gems and minerals.

We need people who can do a lot of heavy lifting Friday morning and Sunday evening.

Treasurer – Darrell stated our club is solvent.

Our new education chair is Marilee.

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS) Ellen stated that there is a meeting in Lancaster on May 10th.

Alley Sale – Stephanie announced the event is on May 10th from 10am to 3pm.

Jette requested articles for the Nugget.

She also advised that April meeting is on Zoom. Presenter is part of a club in Houston, about agates in the Rio Grande Basin

Workshops – Jette said that Lapidary 101 and silversmithing fill up fast. She will try to add another Lapidary 101 class will be added soon.

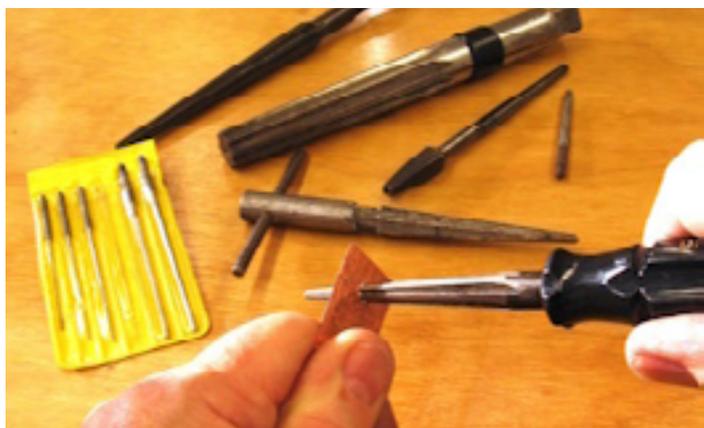
Lapidary shop – Steve announced that deep cleaning/mucking of saws was recently done. If someone does this, they will get 4 hours of shop time.

Meeting ended at 7:57 PM.

Our presentation was from Gary Mitchell, a long time club member. He brought several beautiful specimens he has collected and talked about them. He then helped members identify specimens they brought.

— Stephanie Dangott, Recording Secretary

## BENCH TIPS



### TAPERED REAMERS

A tool you don't see often these days is a tapered reamer. It's not a tool you'll use every day, but they're particularly useful for making an irregular hole round or for enlarging a hole to an exact diameter. For example, the small set in the yellow pouch is for holes in the range of 0.3mm to 2.5mm. They are great for sizing a tube to fit a hinge pin. Other times, when I'm drilling a hole for riveting and can't find the exact size drill, I simply drill the holes with a slightly smaller bit and enlarge them with a reamer until the wire just fits.

For larger hole sizes in sheet metal up to 14 ga, I really like the reamer with the black handle. It makes quick work of sizing holes from about 3mm to 12mm. You can find them in well-equipped hardware stores.

You may never use the large diameter reamers, but when sawing out some rings from 4mm thick sheet, I found they worked well for rounding and sizing the hole.

### TORCH GASSES INSIDE THE HOME

It's important to understand the risks in using a torch to make jewelry inside the home. For fuel gases, my preference is to use only the small disposable Propane tanks. That avoids any possible problems with the fire marshal, with your landlord, or with your insurance company. Note that you can get an adapter to refill these tanks outside from your BBQ propane tank.

For oxygen, I used to use the high-pressure tanks, but I don't like the risk of transporting them for refills. My gas supplier wouldn't even load them into the car for me because they didn't want the liability.

A better choice is to get an oxygen concentrator. Search the want-ads for a good bargain. Got mine for \$300. The units put out about 5 psi and will run a Smith Little Torch very nicely. No regulator is needed. Look for units with under 5-7000 hours of operation.

— Brad Smith, [Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making](#)

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## UPCOMING GEM SHOWS

### April 12-13, 2025 – Placerville, CA El Dorado County Mineral and Gem Society

El Dorado County Fairgrounds, Placerville, CA  
Hours: Saturday and Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM  
Contact: (530) 676-2472  
Website: <http://edcmgs.org>

### April 12-13, 2025 – Mariposa, CA Mariposa Gem and Mineral Club

Mariposa County Fairgrounds, 5007 Fairgrounds Rd., Mariposa, CA 95338  
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM  
Mountains of Minerals! Mountains of minerals, rocks, fossils, jewelry, supplies, geode cutting, silent auction, raffle, and FOOD!  
Contact: [mgmc@sti.net](mailto:mgmc@sti.net)  
Website: <http://mariposagemclub.org>

### April 12-13, 2025 – Thousand Oaks, CA Canejo Gem and Mineral Club

Borchard Community Center, 190 N. Reino Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320  
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM  
Canejo Gem and Mineral Club's "Pageant of a Thousand Gems" 48th Annual Gem and Mineral Show. Free admission and free parking. Club mem-

*Free* **SEARCHERS** *Gratis*  
**64TH ANNUAL GEM, MINERAL & JEWELRY SHOW**  
 Saturday, **April 26th, 2025** / hours 10am - 5pm  
 Sunday, **April 27th, 2025** / hours 10am - 4:30pm



Photo courtesy of  
 Veronica Purpura  
 polished Agate  
 Ammonite

**BROOKHURST COMMUNITY CENTER**  
 2271 W. CRESCENT AVE, ANAHEIM, CA  
[www.searchersrocks.org](http://www.searchersrocks.org)




bers' displays, vendors of jewelry, gems, fossils, metaphysical art supplies, lapidary demonstrations and rock carving demonstrations. plant sale, silent auction, youth activities and prizes.  
 Contact: Karen Abrahams (805) 908-1428  
 Website: <http://www.CGAMC.org>

**April 26-27, 2025 – Anaheim, CA**  
**Searchers Gem and Mineral Society**

Brookhurst Community Center, 2271 W. Crescent Ave., Anaheim, CA 92801  
 Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4:30 PM  
 Silent Auction, Exhibits, Vendors, Door Prizes, Children's Activities, Gold Panning  
 Contact: [anaheimsearchers@gmail.com](mailto:anaheimsearchers@gmail.com)  
 Website: <http://www.searchersrocks.org>

**May 2-3, 2025 – Yucaipa, CA**  
**Yucaipa Valley Gem and Mineral Society**

Yucaipa Blvd and Adams Street, Yucaipa, CA 92399  
 Hours: Friday, May 2 5 PM – 10 PM, Sunday Noon – 9 PM  
 Contact: [grandpasgems@gmail.com](mailto:grandpasgems@gmail.com)  
 Website: <http://YVGMS.org>

**APRIL MEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

Janice Metz	4-Apr
Richard Shaffer	8-Apr
Darren Cokin	12-Apr
David Scheuer	14-Apr
Joseph Katona	16-Apr
Jette Sorensen	18-Apr
Vanessa Fry	18-Apr
Stephanie Dangott	27-Apr
Veronica Hassett	28-Apr

## APRIL NEW MEMBERS

Sylvia Amaya	Alexandra Lawson
Krystal Chang	Karie Schroder
Kira Fish	Alex Sepe
Veronica Hassett	Lauren Stambaugh
Elaine Hernandez	Lorie Weinroth
Joseph Katona	

## 2025 Elected Officers

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

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## 2025 Committee Chairs

Education - Marrilee Marks  
Federation Director - Ellen Moe  
Field Trips - Harvey Schwartz & Ben Granger  
Librarian - Joannie Rippner  
Membership Co-Chairs - Regina Lozano  
Minerals - Joel Kuennen  
Photography - VACANT  
Programs - Jette Sorensen  
Publications Committee - Jette Sorensen,  
Joel Kuennen  
Publicity - Janice Metz  
Social - Co-Chairs Pat Oberg, Steve Dover  
Sunshine - Karen Wallen  
Trading Post - Gary Mitchell  
Webmaster - Bart Gampe  
Workshops - Jette Sorensen  
Zoom Host - Darren Cokin

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## 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](mailto: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](mailto:nugget@culvercityrocks.org)

## Mailing Address

Culver City Rock & Mineral Club  
PO Box 3324  
Culver City, CA 90231  
[info@culvercityrocks.org](mailto:info@culvercityrocks.org)  
310-836-4611

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.facebook.com/groups/2605376056257691](http://www.facebook.com/groups/2605376056257691)

## Zoom Address

<https://zoom.us/j/3108364611?pwd=WnRTclZTS-3RJMEdWdlV2c01mQWxqdz09>

Meeting ID: 310 836 4611

Password: rocks

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## Board of Directors

2025  
Ana Maria Strambi Guimaraes  
Bradford Smith

2026 + 2027  
TBD

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