



THE JOURNEY OF DIAMONDS ***with ROB NORMAN***

August 11th, 7:30 PM Multipurpose Room in the back of the Veterans Memorial Complex, 4117 Overland Ave, Culver City, CA 90230

From their cataclysmic origin, to their residency well below our planet's surface, to the small percentage that risk ascent on one of our host's many alluvial "Elevator rides from Hell", join Rob Norman for a discussion spanning billions of years, from the vantage point of our hardest mineral, from their creation to their incredible escape to the Earth's surface, and beyond.

Sharing his insights on what he believes mainstream

science got right and wrong, an in depth look at diamondiferous Kimberlite samples, as well as what Rob calls "his indicator rocks" known as xenolith that share the "ride or die" bond with our beloved and oldest gemstones, and several of the most incredible rough diamonds specimens the world has ever seen.

Walk, hike, and see the trail through the lens of a prospector dedicated to discovery, and learn how he was able to follow a trail of ordinary rocks to riches.

From ranch hand and paperboy to Army Military Police Officer, English teacher, Software Program Manager, Animation Trainer, HR Leader, and diamond prospector, Rob Norman has always been driven by perseverance and a passion for learning. With

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.



a decorated military career, international teaching experience, and corporate leadership roles, Rob Norman brings a unique perspective to the world of geology and diamond exploration. Recent discoveries of diamondiferous kimberlite pipes and his spectacular diamond specimens have generated some real buzz in the industry. Rob Norman continues to push boundaries and explore new frontiers.

and a great way to understand the politics involved in putting on a show.

Our August 11th meeting, which is in person at the Veterans Memorial Complex, will feature diamond prospector Rob Norman.

Hope to see you soon.

— Alexa Hunter, President

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear All,

Our 2025 Fiesta of Gems was a resounding success. Special kudos for the members who volunteered their time and hard work. Without your help, we could never put on such a well-run event! This year's vendors had robust sales, as did we for our raffle tickets, plants, and kids' gift bags. If you did not volunteer for the show, please make a point of helping in other ways for 4 hours. The only way for our club to flourish is to have active membership.

For our annual picnic on Saturday, August 16th at Lindberg Park, the club will provide the main protein (hamburgers and hot dogs) thanks to Rick Shaffer and family. We ask each member to bring a side dish (fruit, dessert, veggies, juice, soda, etc.). Don't forget we have a silent auction from 12-1 pm, which always has wonderful bargains. We also welcome donations of old tools, specimens, cabs, jewelry, or books. A great way to help out for a few hours is to arrive at 9 am to assist with setup and stay for the cleanup around 2 pm.

Speaking of volunteering, we need two new Vendor Chairs for our 2026 show. The work involved doesn't really gear up until April, and the tasks and timing involved are clearly outlined in a booklet written by Karen Wallen and Darrell Robb, our 2025 chairs. Additionally, Karen and Darrell, and previous chairs, Jannelle Williams and DJ Gervais, will be available for support and advice. Being a Vendor Chair is a wonderful way to get to know our diverse group of vendors from all over the country,



ANNUAL PICNIC & SILENT AUCTION

AUGUST 16 - Join us for a delicious barbecue and fantastic silent auction

Lindberg Park, 5041 Rhoda Way, Culver City 90230. Covered Picnic area. We start at 10 AM. BBQ starts around 11AM, SilentAuction runs from noon to 1 PM-ish. We finish around 2 PM.

The Club provides burgers and hot dogs, condiments, and water. Bring a side dish, salad, or dessert. If you want something other than water, bring your own (non-alcoholic) drink(s).

We have included some spectacular donations for the Silent Auction, along with tools and books. Bring lapidary or jewelry related item(s) to donate for the silent auction. Only current members are eligible to bid at the auction.



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 Wednesday evenings from 5:30 to 8:30 PM, 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.

Wednesdays: [Javier Repetto](#)

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, a particulate mask is also recommended for certain kinds of work.

AUGUST WORKSHOPS

We are significantly expanding the [workshops](#). Workshops in the Lapidary Shop are exclusively for members. Workshops in the Scout House are for both members and non-members.



LAPIDARY 101

Sunday, August 17, 9 AM – 12 PM – Lapidary Shop
– Jette Sorensen

Get to know the equipment in the Lapidary Work-

shop by making a polished cabochon – see the full explanation at culvercityrocks.org/workshops/

SEPTEMBER WORKSHOPS



BEGINNING METALSMITHING

Saturday, August 30, 1 AM – 2 PM – Scout House – Monica Moreno

Discover how to create metal adornments using tools and materials that you can easily utilize at home. - see the full explanation at culvercityrocks.org/workshops

BEGINNING PRONG SETTING

Sunday, August 31, 9 AM – 12 PM - Lapidary Shop – Jette Sorensen

Learn to create a prong setting for a cabochon by fusing a frame, measuring and cutting prongs, and soldering them onto the frame - see the full explanation at culvercityrocks.org/workshops



BASIC TREE OF LIFE SCULPTURE

September 13, 10 AM – 2:30 PM – Scout House – Regina Lozano

Create your own Tree of Life sculpture. You'll choose from a wide variety of wire and semi-precious stone chips, including aquamarine, smoky quartz, garnet - see the full explanation at culvercityrocks.org/workshops

LAPIDARY 101

Sunday, September 14, 9 AM – 12 PM – Lapidary Shop – Jette Sorensen

Get to know the equipment in the Lapidary Workshop by making a polished cabochon – see the full explanation at culvercityrocks.org/workshops.

BEGINNING RIVETING

Saturday, September 20, 11 AM – 3 PM – Scout House – Monica Moreno

Perfect for beginners, this workshop will guide you through the process of joining metal components without the use of heat – see the full explanation at culvercityrocks.org/workshops





BEGINNING BEZEL SETTING

September 28, 9 AM – 12 PM at CCRMC Lapidary Shop

Learn to solder a bezel cup to a ring and set a cabochon. Solder a premade bezel cup to a ring made in a prior workshop. Learn how to set a cabochon in the bezel cup - see the full explanation at culvercityrocks.org/workshops

MEETING REPORT

We were delighted to have geologists Richard and MaryPat Weber return to present septarian concretions, AKA septarian nodules, at the July 14 meeting. Dick explained how concretions originate, their locations, and showed striking images of nodules, many of which were from Utah.

The Webers brought an impressive selection of septarian specimens from their personal collection, some of which were carved.





MINERAL REPORT: SHAPING TIME: LAPIDARY AS RITUAL, LABOR, AND FORM

There is a violence at the moment of contact—when steel touches stone and geologic time is re-routed through human hands. This is the essence of lapidary: not merely the cutting of crystals, but the rearranging of worlds. Within that incision lies a gesture of audacity. Not destruction, exactly, but transformation. Each polish pulls light from the mineral's depths and connects us deeper into the material of our world.

Lapidary has always been more than adornment. It is a technology of belief. The earliest crystal beads—pierced carnelian, polished turquoise—were not decorative objects but devotional ones. Shaped stone carried the soul through death, fixed the body in community, allowed the living to grasp the immaterial through the material. In these objects, time itself was rendered tangible—geologic patience harnessed into intimate scale.

In ancient Egypt, this sacred relationship was carved into the backs of beetles. The scarab, emblem of Khepri and his ceaseless rebirth of the sun, became

a vessel for the names of kings and the prayers of the dead. A scarab carved in lapis lazuli is not simply blue—it is the celestial reified, the dome of heaven compressed into a symbol of continuity. The Scarab of Sithathoryunet (below), its beetle form curved with anatomical reverence, once adorned the body of a princess, the underside etched with the throne name of her father, Amenemhat III. Worn not for show, but for assurance—that the order of the cos-



mos would outlast her flesh.



500 years later, the winged scarab pectoral of Tutankhamun (above) carries the same theology in multicolored stone: lapis, carnelian, turquoise inlaid into gold. The scarab pushes the solar disk, not as metaphor, but as metaphysical guarantee. In these objects, stone is both image and action.

In Mesopotamia, belief took cylindrical form. Chalcidony, jasper, and crystal were shaped into seals—rolled across clay to leave scenes of devotion, myth, power. Here, too, the lapidary gesture was more than mechanical. It was performative. The seal was the person. To press it was to enact oneself. One Akkadian seal, carved in translucent agate (below), shows a figure grappling a griffin—a single moment suspended in the round, preserved in the mineral for eternity. Each line incised into that cylinder is a breath held across four thousand years. The repetition of its rolling carved not only the image, but the space of identity.



And then, the Greeks and Romans asked the stone to resemble us. Where earlier stones were carved to activate power, now they were shaped to reflect beauty. Intaglios of heroes, gods, and philosophers were carved into sard; cameos of emperors emerged



from layered sardonyx and amethyst (above). The act of carving became a mode of portraiture, of idealization. Rome, inheriting the approach of the Greeks, made it imperial. Stones bore the faces of rulers not only to preserve them, but to extend their dominion. The Gemma Augustea (below)—a two-layer sardonyx cameo—elevates Augustus to

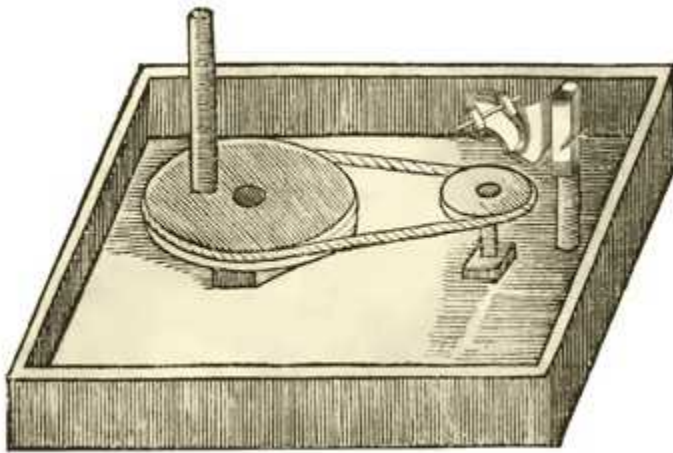


divine status, his likeness ascending in white above the darker background like a god emerging from shadow.

These gems traveled time not only as objects of beauty, but as vehicles of memory. Renaissance collectors revered them as fragments of a lost world, more precious than painting, more faithful than poetry. Each gem was a fossil of power, encapsulated in hardness, demanding reverence through its resistance.

That resistance continued. In the Islamic world, lapidary became geometry—divinity traced in perfect form. Crystal, agate, and onyx were inscribed with Kufic script (such as the Timur Ruby at bottom right), cut into facets echoing the order of heaven. The image was forbidden, but the pattern infinite.

In Europe, stones found themselves embedded in reliquaries, chalices, crowns—absorbed into Christianity's material grammar of the sacred. The [Lothair Crystal](#), a disc of rock crystal engraved with scenes from the Book of Daniel, glows with a moral clarity that mirrors its transparency. The choice of quartz is not aesthetic—it is allegorical. Purity made visible.



from the *Gemmarum et Lapidum*, Anselmi Boetii de Boodt, Prague, 1609, source: [IGS](#)

But the Renaissance brought rupture. The invention of the faceting machine allowed crystal to be rendered into angles of calculated light. The intuitive relationship between stone and hand was mechanized, the natural fracture lines disregarded in favor of optical perfection. Geometry displaced

geology. The brilliant cut—an invention of modernity—sought not meaning, but sparkle. The diamond became less a mineral and more a spectacle: reflection as value, brightness as belief.

Yet lapidary is cyclical. The 20th century brought a return to the raw, the irregular, the metaphysical. The New Age movement reclaimed quartz not for adornment, but for vibration. Stones were no longer cut to eliminate flaws, but to reveal them. Inclusions became stories, not impurities. Lapidaries began again to work with the grain, not against it.

Today, the lapidary practice lives at the intersection of precision and intuition. Some cutters use software and lasers to achieve nanometer-level faceting. Others grind cabs by hand, letting the stone speak its own form. In either case, the gesture remains the same: to carve into time, to shape resistance into resonance.

To cut a crystal is to reconfigure time, to take something formed in the crush of the Earth and make it speak in light. The moment of contact—between wheel and stone, between hand and hardness—is not just technical. It asks, always: what do we see in the depth of matter? Is it healing? Power? Vanity? Or, simply, time itself? — Joel Kuennen, Mineral Chair





UPCOMING FIELD TRIP

Field Trip September 6

Join Us for a Rockin' Adventure at Flat Rock Beach!

Grab your buckets and your sense of wonder—our next club field trip takes us to Flat Rock Beach in Palos Verdes! This scenic coastal spot is perfect for hunting colorful sea glass, unique rocks, and coastal treasures shaped by the tides. Whether you're a seasoned collector or just love the ocean breeze, this trip promises a fun and relaxing day of exploration. Don't forget your sunscreen, sturdy shoes, and a keen eye for nature's hidden gems!

For directions, see the Google Maps link below. Upon arrival, there is free parking on the side of Paseo Del Mar during the day. The Bluff Cove Trail will take you down to the beach. Rockhounding results are highly dependent on the tide, and on the day of the trip, low tide is estimated to be around 3 PM, which is why we list the start time at 1 PM. Feel free to come whenever you please, but do check the [tide tables](#) beforehand.

Location: [Flat Rock Beach](#)

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2025

Time: 1pm

Lead: Ben Granger

BENCH TIPS



RAISING A CABOCHON

When a cabochon sits too low in a bezel, the bezel hides a lot of the stone. The solution is to either sand down the bezel height or boost up the stone. But if you choose to raise it up, the question is what's the best material to use ?

I was taught to use fine sawdust but now think that might be a problem when used in rings. I reason that rings will frequently get wet, which would cause the sawdust to swell in size and push the stone against the bezel. Then when the sawdust dries out, the stone would be a little loose.

A better approach is to insert a flat sheet to boost up the stone. It can be a scrap of metal or some plastic from product packaging or old credit cards. In either case, just cut a piece to loosely fit into the bezel and drop in the stone (with some dental floss) to check its height.

TRANSPARENT CABS

When bezel setting a transparent cabochon in silver, I usually cut out the back of the bezel to allow background light to show off the colors and patterns in the stone. If this is not possible or appropriate, I worry that the silver bezel will tarnish under the stone and ruin its brilliance. What to do?

My solution is an extra step before setting the stone. I place a piece of thin silver Mylar plastic under the stone to act as a mirror that will never tarnish. Mylar is readily available in craft and gift wrap stores, or in

a pinch from a party balloon supplier. You may even want to experiment with using colored or patterned Mylar (i.e. diffraction pattern) under some stones.

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

THE MINUTES

Culver City Rock and Mineral Club Meeting Monday June 9th 2025

BOARD MEETING

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

Called to order at 6:37 PM by president Alexa Hunter.

Lapidary shop – Steve says the back door needs to be replaced. He will ask Tony Bravo to give a quote. 20 gallons of oil for the saws has been purchased. Javier will be out for 2 weeks, so Jette is the shop instructor in his place.

Jette will have workshops the next 2 Sundays.

Membership – Regina stated we have 176 member, 27 that joined at Fiesta of Gems.

Programs – Jette has programs for the rest of 2025. Also, Renee Newman will give a talk about pearls at the January 2026 meeting.

Holiday Party – It was suggested that we use Rotary Plaza again. Karen suggested a room at the Veteran's Auditorium, but none of the rooms has a kitchen. Karen will see if she can find a facility with a kitchen through the city of Santa Monica. This could be free of charge.

Workshops – Per Jette, Monica Moreno will do monthly workshops on Saturdays including beginning metalsmithing, and riveting. On September 13, Regina will do a class about making gem trees.

Library – Joannie is starting inventory.

Karen is working on a Vendor Chair manual for the Fiesta of Gems.

Treasurer – Investments have made a significant return.

Prentis Campbell has donated a faceting machine to the club. We need to determine a price and how to dispose of it.

Picnic is August 16th at Lindberg Park.

Set up is at 9am and the picnic is 10am to 2pm.

Potluck and silent auction. Confirmed that Rick Shaffer is bringing meat to barbeque.

Concern that last year there was unfairness at the silent auction. A member bid on a few items, then at the last minute the siblings of another member outbid her. Need to decide if only members can bid. Decided that club president Alexa needs to make an announcement to the attendees to participate fairly before the silent auction starts.

7:25 pm Stephanie made a motion to end the meeting. It was seconded by Jette.

GENERAL MEETING

Called to order by president Alexa at 7:28 PM.

Regina stated that we now have 176 members. Several new members were at the meeting and introduced themselves.

Jette stated that she is requesting articles for The Nugget, which can be submitted at nugget@culver-cityrocks.org. Submit the articles by the 20th of the current month.

Jette also stated that we will have a lot of workshops starting in July. Include Beginning metalsmithing, beginning lapidary, stacking rings, and riveting. Regina will do a gem tree workshop on September 13TH. Classes will be at the shop or scout house. Club member asked if we will do wax casting in the future. We are figuring out the details because of heat needed. Also requests for water casting, broom casting and cuttlebone casting with pewter.

Karen asked Britt to coordinate these requests via group text of the club members.

JULY NEW MEMBERS

Another member indicated that they are teaching a wire wrap class at another location.

Fiesta of Gems – Alexa thanked all the volunteers.
Library – Joannie is going to do an inventory. She requested that members return books that they have checked out.

Jette stated that a field trip to Palos Verdes to hunt for agates is being planned.

Trading Post – Steve taking over for Gary this time. Tickets are \$1 each, and 6 for \$5. There are some nice septarian nodules and other nice pieces.

Picnic is August 16th. Lindberg park.
Set up is 9am. Silent auction noon to 1pm.
Bring potluck.

Treasurer – Darrell stated we made the following amounts at FOG:
Kids outreach games - \$370
Plants - \$1631
Grab bags - \$351
Donations for geodes - \$52
Raffle - \$1610. The raffle proceeds go to local charities. Previously have gone to Friends of the Scout House and LA Goal.

Karen made an announcement about Fiesta of Gems and thanked the volunteers.

Rick Shaffer made a motion to accept the minutes from the past months and Jette seconded.

Meeting was then adjourned, time not recorded.

Presentation about septarian nodules by Dick Weber. Wife Mary Patt set up a display of the beautiful personal collection.

Submitted by Stephanie Dangott, Recording Secretary

Brian Deagon
Michael Eckhardt
Orlando Gonzales
Katelyn Marmon
Angie Ann Mendoza
Chrysoula Micholou
Jordyn Morris
Arianna Pennisi
Hannah Sands
Esther Sutevski
Ashlyn Tatro
Jennifer Tong

JULY MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Cody Laux	1-Aug
Krista Sawchuk	1-Aug
Joanie Rippner	6-Aug
Angie Ann Mendoza	8-Aug
Leda Rogers	10-Aug
Joyce Watanabe	10-Aug
Laurence Chuck	10-Aug
Cameron Soltani	11-Aug
Damon Pressman	12-Aug
Emi Ruzzin	13-Aug
Steve Hanna	17-Aug
Bradford Smith	19-Aug
Steve Seleska	21-Aug
Wayne Rosenberg	24-Aug
Luan Ton	25-Aug

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

Mailing Address

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Culver City, CA 90231
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

Zoom Address

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

Meeting ID: 310 836 4611

Password: rocks

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The CCRMC is a nonprofit 501(c)(4) organization.

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

2025 Committee Chairs

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

Board of Directors

2025
Ana Maria Stambi Guimaraes
Bradford Smith

2026 + 2027
TBD