

Meeting began at 7:02

- Introduction and guests:
  - Jimmy Vuong and Alishia Ruff, joined tonight.
- 2024 Board members were installed:
  - President: Chris Huffines
  - Treasurer: Bruce Samuels
  - Secretary: Nancy Samuels
  - Members at Large: Linda Willemarck, Paul Newby, Marion Richards, and Randy Peterson.
- Announcements/Reports-
  - Drawings for Juniors and attendees
  - Chris talked briefly about the people leaving the Board: Nancy Ross, Rich Osborne, Carla James, and Michele McGraw.
  - Dues: Renewals due in January and a \$10 late fee added in February. Cost goes up by \$10 beginning March 1.
  - Chris Huffines: priorities for this year.
    - Membership survey to ask what people want
    - Increase membership
    - Decrease the age of members
    - Best practices – e.g. don't have married people on the Board together.
  - Juniors — Amaryah Daniels
    - 1<sup>st</sup> meeting today about fossils and petrified wood. Great turnout. Next month they will talk about fluorescent rocks. Need volunteers to help speak to kids about a topic you are excited about. Specimens to show or give to kids. Need more UV flashlights to use next month. Looking for flashlight donations or loans for the meeting.
  - Membership — Linda Willemarck
    - Couple new members tonight: Jimmy Vuong and Alishia Ruff.
    - Last year increased membership by 175%.
  - Treasurer — Bruce Samuels
    - 2023 year end: net gain \$3078
    - His term ends on December 31, 2024. Looking for someone to become treasurer next year. Talk to Bruce if you want to know more about this role.
  - Shows — Heather Martin
    - next show: 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in April. She sent out the contracts to vendors already. If you want to sell but didn't get a contract, contact her at [shows@maplewoodrockclub.com](mailto:shows@maplewoodrockclub.com).
    - Spring show: April 13 and 14 from 10am to 5 pm
    - Summer show: Aug. 10 – 11 from 10 am to 5 pm

- Rentals — Craig Kosovich
  - Reminder that members get half off which is a great deal
- Shop Stewards — Rich Osborne, Ashley Martin, Nathan O'Brien, and Bruce Samuels
  - Most everything works. Got parts to improve saw 1. Working to get saw 3 working better.
- Open Studio — Lynz Taylor
  - 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays from 3-6 pm.
  - \$15/month
  - Cab/Kings will be available but not the saws
- Sunshine — Nancy Ross
  - Let Nancy know if someone is ill and might enjoy a card from the club.
- Newsletter/Website/Admin—Nancy Samuels, Mel Milnes, Carla James
- We need a new Website Manager.
- Important roles we need someone to fill: Trip Coordinator, Ways and Means team, and more.
- Intermission
- Rock of the Month — Gary Kirchberger spoke about fire opals. "All about opal"
  - Precious opal or fire opal or gem opal
  - Fire caused by silicon dioxide in silica spheres arranged in lines and layers. Fire is possible when those spheres are arranged in the layers.
  - Water makes it possible to see fire. 5-10% water. Allows refraction from light going from water to silica and back again.
  - Found in Australia from the central region that once was an inland sea. People think that opal was deposited in that sea. Fairy opal, boulder opal on iron stone, black opal, major, crystal, white face
    - Lightning ridge produces black opal. It's typically more valuable. It occurs in nobbies. They mine nobbies and break them to see whether there are opals inside.
    - Couber Pedy is where they mine white face opals in shafts straight down into the ground.
  - Found in Ethiopia
    - Volcanic in origin in rhyolite.
    - Fire can be seen when the opal has water, loses it when it dries out
  - Mexico
  - USA
    - Spencer Idaho
    - Oregon in three places
    - Virgin Valley in NV in petrified wood

- Value: solid is more valuable than a doublet which is more valuable than a triplet. Red more valuable than other colors. Some patterns are more desirable, like column opals from Ethiopia.
- They can crack. You can't prevent it.
- He buys from Village Smithy in Montana is a reputable dealer. E-bay and Etsy too.
- Gary had a box of opal chips and invited people to take one or two to keep.
- Show and Tell
  - Nathan O'Brien showed an opal he shaped.
  - Heather showed opal in the rough. They are in water.
  - Emmitt brought fluorescent rocks and a UV light.
  - Girl has petrified wood from S. Dakota
  - Michele shared a sampling of fossils.
  - Boy showed a big piece of petrified wood that his nana gave him.
  - Mike Collins – rocks from his nightstand. Jaspers, agates, basalt, clam shell from Beverly Beach, blue lace agate, Mt. Rainier agate, red jasper with hematite, polka dot jasper and much, much more.
  - Show and Tell raffle winner:
- Meeting ended at 8:28 pm