

# Maplewood Rock and Gem Club

## General Meeting Notes – April 15, 2024

### 7:01 meeting began

Bruce Samuels led the meeting.

Minutes taken by Nancy Samuels, Secretary

### Introductions

### Announcements from members

- Janet Flack is a new member. She brought a lot of posters pertaining to rocks. They are free for anyone who would enjoy them.
- Amaryah is looking for a speaker for June for the Juniors.

### Committees

- Treasurer report \$5200 net gain this year
- Heather Martin reported on our Spring show:
  - Ways and Means: \$1,368 income
  - Membership: \$73
  - Vendors: \$2,320
  - Bruce Samuels doesn't have all the expenses yet.
  - Expect to net \$3,400.
  - Heather thanked the many volunteers who helped make this show successful.
    - Raven Thompson-Happy, Michele McGraw, Linda Willemarck, Paul Sherman, Nathan O'Brien, Diane Marie, Jim, Gary Kirchberger, Marion Richards, Marjorie Thatcher, EJ Nichols, and Paul Newby.
    - Bruce Samuels and Chris Huffines for coming to the rescue a couple of times to put the ladder away and lock the container on Saturday, and unlock the container & help to put up the wavy man Sunday morning.
    - Chris Huffines for mowing the knee-high lawn. And moving the parking posts around (with Bruce's hand truck - thanks for leaving it at the club.)
    - The people who came to the work party on March 23rd, that made the club sparkly for the show.
    - Marion Richards for bringing flower baskets that brightened up the front doorway.
    - Michele McGraw for patching up the wavy man
    - Raven Thompson-Happy, Linda Willemarck, Brian, and Anita for helping with the Ways & Means tables

- Paul Sherman for going to get coffee at Starbucks, when we thought the coffee machine wasn't working
- Nathan O'Brien for putting up the wavy man Saturday morning
- Diane Marie & Jim Johnson for putting out signs for the show, in the neighborhood
- Gary Kirchberger for composing and hanging the two yellow signs on the fence
- Marion Richards for making sure the bathrooms were stocked and clean
- Marjorie Thatcher for serving the vendors snacks and manning their booths when they needed a break
- EJ Nichols, daughter and son-in-law, and Paul Newby for putting all the tables and chairs away, taking down the yellow signs and returning letters to their respective boxes
- Marion Richards for cleaning up the kitchen, putting the food away and mopping the floor.

## Rock of the Month

### “The Art of Finding Rocks” by Nathan O’Brien

Nathan spoke to us about how to find beautiful rocks in rivers, creeks, gravel bars, and the beach. He primarily focused on looking in creeks. During the meeting people were cautioned to never go rockhounding alone in a river or stream. Even out of the water, rockhounding is safer with two or more people.

### What to look for

- Color, pattern, and contrast are the primary characteristics that you look for when scanning rocks in a stream.
- Shape: He likes to look for rocks that are less rounded, more chunky with faces and corners. These are either harder and not as eroded by the stream or they have more recently been released from a cliff face or other earthen bed.
- Luster: waxy, reflective, having sheen, or metallic. For example, rocks like jasper tend to look waxy. Jade normally is covered with a dull brownish crust. You need to cut it to see the beautiful green.
- Translucence: Look for light penetrating the rock.
- Weight: Heavy rocks may have hematite or metal in them. This can create metallic or red patterns of color.
- Texture: Rocks that appear smooth yet have a grainy texture might not polish well, whereas a rock with uneven faces that are smooth to the touch are more likely to.
- Always keep a lookout for rocks with conchoidal fractures.
- With experience, you get better at noticing these qualities.

## What to keep

- Wear lines: These can indicate whether the rock is composed of both hard and soft substances which would be difficult to polish on a rounded cabochon surface.
- Sometimes you have to pick it up and look for fractures which can reveal the interior color and patterning of the rock.

## Where to search

- Go upriver first.
- Mountainous areas yield more good rocks.
- He has good luck following streams uphill.
- Research before he goes out: has some spots he knows and looks for maps online for where people have found rocks. He looks for areas where streams cross roads.
- He has gone to landslide areas, but it's easier to find rocks where they've been washed out by a river or the ocean. Landslide areas have rocks covered in mud, so you can't see what the rocks are like. You spend a lot of time washing rocks to evaluate them. Also, rivers are more scenic.
- Youngs Creek has bedrock exposed so it's easy to walk up the river.
- He found jade from the Teanaway area. The outside of jade has a rind that is dull looking. Inside it's a whitish light green jade.
- Favorite beach is Oceanside Oregon.
- His favorite Washington beach is on the Olympic peninsula. Third Beach to Oil City hike: <https://www.nps.gov/olymp/planyourvisit/south-coast-route.htm>

## When to search

- Between 10am to 2pm the sun is usually best for rockhounding in the water.
- Have the sun behind you.
- In low light it's harder to find good rocks in the river, so best to look in gravel bars.
- The best season to hunt for rocks in rivers is spring when the fresh rain and snow melt have washed rocks out of river walls and cliffs.
- In the spring rivers can have a strong current. Nathan looks for offshoots and feeder creeks. Also spring has more untouched freshly revealed rocks.
- In the summer, Nathan walks upriver ½ mile before even trying to look for rocks. This is because others may have wandered a short way up the creek and collected the good specimens.

## Tips

- If you have trouble seeing the color because it's a dry gravel bed, look for the shape.
- If rocks are covered in dead algae, keep going up the creek to find a place where the rocks are clean.
- Sometimes hiking back to the car is a bit tough with a heavy backpack, so he listens to music.

- Angle your body and walk sideways when walking through deep swift current. Use a walking stick too.
- Sun angle and shade can change how you see the rocks.

## Equipment

- He usually wears waders because they make the cold water tolerable.
- Waders with rubber soles can be slippery. You can buy felt pads and glue them on the bottom of your waders.
- Don't go into deep swift water with waders. If they fill with water, they can sink you. There are probably very good rocks in more shallow water.
- You can cinch up waders with a belt so they won't fill up with water if you fall.
- Backpack to carry rocks. He buys them from the thrift store because they wear out quickly. Rocks often have pointy corners that wear through backpacks.
- Polarized sunglasses help you see into the water.

## Show and Tell for adults

- Antha – arrowheads from amber her friend gave her.
- Brennan – agate. He found a lot of them at Malibu beach in CA. If you cut it in half and polish it, it will turn into many colors. It's translucent.
- Maddox – Brought jasper he found at Money Creek with Ed Lehman.
- Woman – Fluorite and lapis pendants.
- Man – pyrite nodule 4", crystal types too. From Spain and Italy are the best. They form over fossils.

## Field Trip

Field Trip to Racehorse Creek this weekend. Look for details on the Washington State Mineral Council website.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm

---