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November meeting

Monday, November 17 at 7 pm

Raven Thompson-Happy is making a hearty chicken vegetable soup to share at the general meeting. Bring your own soup mug or bowl! If your last name begins with A to M, please bring food to share, something that goes well with soup ... including cookies!!!

We will be voting on the 2026 board members. Read Angela's article, *Heart & Soul* on page 4 for details.

Paul Newby will have a silent auction with specimens you can bid on and add to your collection. We have been publishing bios of the board members, and this month you can read Paul's on page 15.

Banner Image

The banner image is a photo of topaz crystals ranging in length from 9 to 16 mm. This photo was taken by [James St. John](#) and is published here under the Creative Commons license [CC BY 2.0](#).

Holiday Show

December 6 and 7th from 10 am to 5 pm

By Michele McGraw

Come enjoy the glitz and glam of the Holidays for a fabulous clubhouse shopping experience.

We deck the clubhouse with cheery holiday decor and have selected vendors who bring their very best selection of gift giving ideas for the discriminating rockhound in all of us.



Shop eighteen spaces of rocks specimens to delight, jewelry and gemstones, carved animals, tumbled agates, and showy statement pieces. Gifts that are thoughtful (big or little), treasures hard to find, and specimens chunky and awesome. Always things geared for kids to take home, igniting curiosity and joy in the lapidary arts.



Invite your friends to come and check us out. Help us spread the word so it is a super success and a bang up way to end the 2025 year. Mark your calendar!

Calendar of Events

Here are some important dates for your calendar. Parties and social time are such valuable ways we get to know each other that we dedicate two meetings a year to them. In August we have a BBQ and in December we have a holiday party. All our other meetings are on the third Monday at 7 pm.

Event	Date	What's happening
Holiday Show	December 6 and 7	Show
Holiday Party	December 8 at 6 pm	Potluck dinner and party instead of the December meeting. Please note it's on the second Monday, not the usual third.

Holiday Party

December 8 at 6 pm

In December instead of holding a regular meeting, we hold a party! We will meet a week and an hour earlier than our normal meeting time and date. So come join your rock-loving friends for a potluck dinner and celebration of us and all we enjoy together.



Please bring a dish to share and a wrapped rock-related gift (that cost you no more than \$10) to the clubhouse on December 8. We will do our usual gift exchange lottery, which is fun and filled with anticipation.

Heart & Soul — Building Our Leadership 2026



As we approach the end of the year, it's once again time to prepare for the next chapter of our club's leadership. The annual membership vote will take place at the November General Meeting on November 17. At this time, we have three Members at Large ready for confirmation, and we're still seeking nominations for President and Vice President.

In revisiting our club's archives—decades of notes, bylaws, and documents that tell

our story—it's clear that we, the members of 2025, are carrying forward something truly special. For nearly 75 years, the Maplewood Rock & Gem Club has held a cherished place "atop the hill" in Edmonds. Our history shows resilience and creativity, and while the journey hasn't always been easy, our shared passion has kept the club thriving through every challenge.

Today, we're at a reflective moment—one that invites us to reconnect with our heart and soul. Over time, the world around us has changed, and with it, so have the needs and interests of our members. Our mission as a social and educational community remains strong, and curiosity about what we do is still alive and well. To stay vibrant and relevant, however, we need to adapt and reimagine how we operate together.



Many of you have expressed feeling stretched thin by volunteer requests or uncertain about where to get involved. We hear you. Leadership turnover and open positions—such as Show Coordinator, Rental Agent, and Ways & Means Lead make it challenging to sustain the programs and activities we all enjoy. These roles are vital to our financial health and to keeping our club lively and welcoming.

Every bit of time and energy you contribute is deeply valued. Still, the long-term success of our club depends on finding balance—between leadership and succession, structure and creativity, business and fun. It takes many hands, shared purpose, and collaboration to build the next era of Maplewood Rock & Gem.

We have two paths ahead:

- We can move forward together—creatively, thoughtfully, and with renewed energy—to shape our future; or
- We can explore a more formal process to wind things down responsibly and with care.

This is a collective decision, one that belongs to all of us—heart and soul.

Please take a few moments to reflect on your hopes and ideas for the club's future. Share your thoughts on paper and place them in the wooden suggestion box.

Your voice matters. Together, we can decide the next chapter of Maplewood Rock & Gem.

Finally, please join us at the November General Meeting.

Your participation is essential — come cast your vote for next year's leadership. If you know someone who would be a great fit for an open position (or if you'd like to serve yourself!), this is your opportunity to help shape what comes next.

Let's build the future of our club—together.



Heart2Heart

By Michele McGraw



When you spend any amount of time involved in the club, you'll find yourself face-to-face with the true HEART of this organization. We share space under a community roof, intersecting with each other to explore, learn, and discover old & new ways to enjoy the lapidary arts.

While dropping off some clean kitchen laundry one day, I stumbled upon another member in the building replacing a saw blade in the shop. Rich Osborne has been a member of the rock club for many years and was one of the first people I met when I joined. I remember feeling

impressed by his helpful and friendly nature, plus found him to be such a great resource for identifying rocks or pointing me in the right direction to someone who could.

So, he and I were talking about the heft and weight of a new 18" saw blade: How much it cost, how it's made, where he found it, & how long it lasts. Literally a wealth of information. Again, I'm feeling impressed at his generosity in ensuring these beastly machines run smoothly and we just briefly intersect. But I'm thunderstruck by his huge, generous heart. His sharing of himself, of his time, & specialized mechanical talents to benefit so many of us who do use the shop.



Just a brief encounter. As a bonus, I discovered that Rich marks his Levi denims with a R on the leather label to remind himself to wear only these pants when he's at the club working in the shop (the oil is hard on laundry). And he has a special recipe for washing clothes that come in contact with the machine oil: 1/8 c. Borax powder, 1/8 c. washing soda, 1 TB Dawn dish soap: Mix it all in a 5- gallon bucket of hot water and soak the clothing overnight – then do a quick wash cycle in the washing machine.

See that HEART? --- it's quite amazing.



I also remain in daily awe of the rock-loving member who stepped in when there was a void in club leadership for the 2025 year. Angela Vitense is strong of heart, passionate about rockhounding, and she's a natural leader. As interim President, she's been wise, gentle but solid, and I appreciate that she leads by example. She's capable, embodies a 100% can-do spirit, and has left her fingerprints on literally every piece of our building structure, our systems, policies & procedures, and also in building relationships.

Angela hasn't once shied away from the big, hard, complex things that have been required of her this year. Case in point: the container clean-out project and needed repairs. Our club relies on this for storage and because it's a structure with special exceptions on our property, losing it would have left a significant hole. She has remained present through thick & thin, filling in at

events, leading the meetings, and even took on the responsibility & heartburn of hashing out all the minute details of replacing the club's leaking, aged roof.

See that HEART? --- again, it's quite amazing.

Two examples of heart. BIG heart. We are all in this together. Remember to say "thank you" to the many members who YOU intersect with at the club, who are sharing their time, special skills/talents, their treasuresand HEART. Together, we can do anything.



2025 Community Showcase Recap



We had a fabulous turnout over the weekend for our annual Community Showcase! The day kicked off with a scrumptious Pancake Breakfast featuring homemade buttermilk pancakes, blueberry compote, sausage, eggs, and all the fixings.

A big thank-you to all the volunteers who helped with setup, cooking, and cleanup — you kept everything running smoothly and kept everyone smiling. Lots of happy faces and full bellies all around!



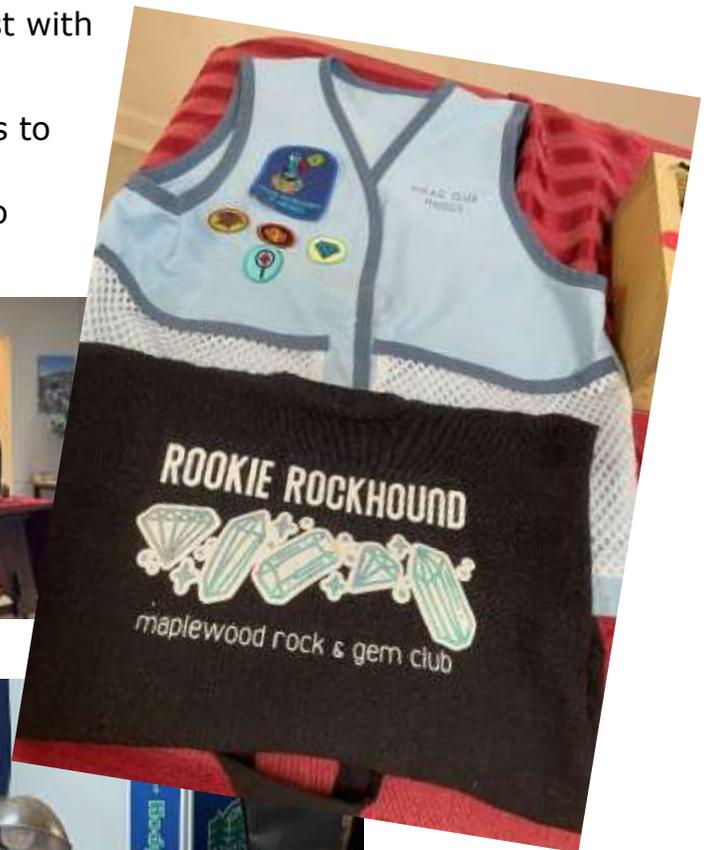
The showcase featured an incredible range of collection displays, including Obsidian, Opal, Petrified Wood, Fluorescents, Modern Flintknapping, and local Pacific Northwest specimens, along with several Junior collections that impressed visitors of all ages. It was a wonderful opportunity to share our love of rocks, minerals, and the earth sciences with the local community.

We were also delighted to welcome a few new members who joined during the event—welcome to the club!



Maddox displayed his Rookie Rockhound vest with all the badges he has earned!

Lisa helped staff the club sales table. Thanks to everyone who helped set up, staff, and take down the showcase and thanks to those who helped with the breakfast.







People's Choice Winners

The public cast their votes, and this year's People's Choice honors went to Eloise who won Juniors' prize for her impressive medieval-themed collection and to Bruce Samuels for his striking Obsidian presentation. Congratulations to both!



Meet Paul Newby!



Paul Newby at Graveyard Point in June 2020

The early years: My father delivered me in our family car on a hot morning in Las Vegas. I was slippery and was immediately dropped on my head - the rest is history.

Most of my childhood was split between the California redwoods and the Las Vegas desert. The desert offered an unfettered view of the surrounding geology and drew me into its mineralized secrets. Our house was at the edge of civilization, near the red rocks, and we spent our time on bmx or motorcycles 'playing' in the blast furnace of outside and finding the hidden beauty of the natural world (it was the 70/80's and we weren't allowed indoors until the street lights came on anyhow). It was early in elementary school when, bored to death and annoying my mother while visiting California, I was told to go find a fossil. I returned triumphant with a fossilized clam - so it began.

I was a good student, or at least tested well, and played lots of sports. I grew up fast and was my adult size in eighth grade. The immediate family was 3 boys and 1 girl, I was the second oldest. The extended family is massive where the

grandparents were one of 12, parents one of 6 and so on, most of us lived close creating a wonderful tangle of aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Worked on phone systems for the Imperial Palace hotel on the strip before graduating class of '88. Reported to Orlando for Navy bootcamp where I stayed for over a year completing electrician A school and nuclear power school. Transferred to Idaho Falls to complete 6 more months of training at the Idaho National Engineering Lab on a working copy of the USS Enterprise #3 engine room. Got orders to the USS Texas CGN-39 out of Alameda California. Join the Navy see the world they say, well the world is mostly water. Spent 3 years at sea in the Pacific and Persian Gulf; was on hand for Desert Storm and had my 21st birthday in Dubai. We moved up here, to PSNS, in 1992 for a scheduled reactor refueling. Congress pulled the plug on the funding and called for the decommissioning of the entire Virginia class of ships. I processed out, changed uniforms and went to work at the shipyard while attending classes at Olympic community college. Accepted to the electrical engineering department at UW, I continued to work swing shift at the shipyard and commute over for classes, until I just absolutely couldn't.

Graduated UW class of '99 and went right to work in Kirkland designing entertainment systems for VIP jets. The company was acquired in 2006 and was moving out of state but I didn't want to be in Iowa for any longer than absolutely necessary. I stayed on as the last engineer in R&D to train our replacements. Convinced my girlfriend at the time to quit her job too and we went on an extended family visit in Europe. I returned with a fiancée.

Pressed to find a new gig I started designing aircraft communication systems again in Kirkland. We married that summer and had a child in 2008.

Life moved along, as it does. Sometime around 2016/2017 we stumbled upon a table of wonderful rocks at the Fremont market. Brittany Burkhardt took the time to show us her best rocks and minerals while answering all of our questions. Mike Collins sidled up and let us know about this Maplewood rock club thingy while handing over a flyer and a free rock for the kiddo. As a family we were excited about this and took in a club meeting. Yadda yadda yadda we joined, volunteered, learned, and enjoyed. Collectively we now have hundreds and hundreds of pounds of the most awesome rocks and the most wholesome and knowledgeable rock-pals.

Fabulous Flint in the Chalk Cliffs of Denmark

By Jim Miller

Most of you have probably heard of the “White Cliffs of Dover.” These dramatic white cliffs border the English Channel in southeast England and have served as a beacon to ocean navigators for centuries. You may be surprised to learn that there are similar white cliffs elsewhere in Europe, specifically in some coastal areas of Denmark and Germany.

The white shoreline cliffs in Europe consist of very pure limestone (chalk) that was deposited in a shallow sea during the Cretaceous period, about 70 to 100 million years ago. This is the time when dinosaurs dominated the land areas and oceans of our planet. The limestone itself consists of trillions of skeletons of tiny oceanic plankton. Although the white cliffs consist mainly of pure limestone, flint nodules are also included within the chalk deposits. These nodules have been collected for centuries for building construction and for ship ballast. During ancient times, the nodules were prized as a stone source for making sharp-edged tools like knives and arrowheads.

To get a better look at the chalk cliffs of far southeast Denmark, my wife and I visited “Mons Klint” in 2014. This is a popular tourist destination and a relatively new World Heritage Site. As shown in the aerial image below, Mons Klint boasts a spectacular shoreline of white chalk cliffs adjacent to the Baltic Sea. There is very little beach exposed at the base of the cliffs at high tide.



The chalk cliffs at Mons Klint reach heights as great as 420 feet above beach level. An informational tourist "GeoCenter" is located at the crest of the chalk cliffs. The narrow beach at the base of the cliffs can be accessed with an impressive wooden stairway near the GeoCenter. This isn't just a simple set of stairs; it has 497 steps from the top of the cliff to the beach. A journey to the beach isn't too bad going down, but it will get you breathing hard on the way up! The image below shows the lower part of the stairway. When the beach is finally reached at the base of the stairs, you are rewarded with a fabulous view of the cliffs, also shown below.



Chalk is quite soft and the cliffs are constantly being eroded by wind, weather and waves. The narrow beach at the base of the cliffs is not a sandy oasis. This beach surface consists almost entirely of flint nodules! While the chalk is quite erodible, the flint nodules that weather out of the cliffs are very hard and accumulate on the beach surface. As shown below, this is a very unusual beach!



The nodules have an irregular shape and are about the size of potatoes. The example below has had a flake removed to show the dark color of the flint within the nodule. I huffed and puffed to heft a few flint cobbles from the beach for souvenirs back home.



Flint consists of microscopic crystals of very pure silicon dioxide (quartz). The fine texture of the flint allows for the removal of very sharp, smooth stone flakes that are slightly translucent, as shown in the example below. No wonder our ancestors valued flint for making sharp-edged tools and weapons!



All of Denmark is fascinating, with wonderful history and architecture. If you travel to Denmark and are interested in a strenuous hike to a unique beach at the base of a chalk cliff, I highly recommend taking the time to visit Mons Klint! After all, where else can you explore a beach blanketed with flint nodules?

Jim Miller

Jim Miller is a long-time member of Maplewood Rock & Gem Club. He is a retired geologist and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in geological engineering, as well as a Master of Science degree in environmental geology. Jim has loved rocks, fossils, crystals and the natural world since grade school. He enjoys rock tumbling and is an accomplished flintknapper. In 2006 Jim wrote and published a CD book on the types of stone used for knapping arrowheads and stone knives. He enjoys technical writing and has had several of his articles published in Rock & Gem magazine.

Rock Candy

When you visit Denmark's white cliffs, you might want to detour to the Faroe Islands, a territory of Denmark, where you can visit the Mullafoosur waterfall. This photo is by [Emil02050](#) and is published here under the [Pixabay license](#).



Who doesn't like *free*?

In 2026 Washington public lands agencies have chosen the following days when you don't need a Discover Pass to park at

- state parks
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources land
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife land

A Discover Pass costs \$45 for a year of parking on state land listed above. The pass covers two vehicles.

The Discover Pass funds significantly help the state agencies provide

- recreation opportunities
- conservation of forests and seashores
- clean bathrooms
- trail maintenance



The free days in 2026 are

- Thursday, Jan. 1 – New Year's Day and First Day Hikes
- Monday, Jan. 19 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Monday, March 9 – Billy Frank Jr.'s Birthday
- Thursday, March 19 – State Parks 113th Birthday
- Wednesday, April 22 – Earth Day
- Saturday – Sunday, June 6-7 – Free Fishing Weekend
- Friday, June 19 – Juneteenth
- Sunday, Aug. 9 – Smokey Bear's Birthday
- Saturday, Sept. 26 – National Public Lands Day
- Saturday, Oct. 10 – World Mental Health Day
- Wednesday, Nov. 11 – Veterans Day

To rockhounds born in November

Happy Birthday!



Your birthstones are citrine and topaz.



The Malaga Citrine mystery

In the 1980's or 1990's a flawless citrine was discovered in Mina Gerais, Brazil. This gem is called the Malaga Citrine, after the city in Spain where it was going to be displayed at the Art Natura Malaga, a natural science museum.

This enormous gem weighed 20,200 carats which is 8.9 pounds and measured 20 x 15 x 10 cm! This is easily the largest citrine ever discovered.

Sadly, in 2012 before the gem went on display the owners of Art Natura Malaga and the city council had a disagreement which led to the museum closing its doors. The current whereabouts of this gorgeous gem are a mystery.

You can see a photo and learn more about this stunning gemstone at

<https://www.devonfinejewelry.com/our-blog/2022/Nov/09/worlds-largest-faceted-citrine-at-20200-carats/#:~:text=The%20internally%20flawless%20Malaga%20citrine,by%20Programa%20Royal%20Collections%2C%202010.>

Rock lovers everywhere

Before you go rockhounding

Rockhounding is fun to do with a group. Join one of the trips listed below and meet other local rockhounders. If you plan to go, please contact the host a week or so ahead to let them know you are coming and to find out if anything has changed.

As you get ready for the trip, we recommend that you go through this checklist:

- Contact the host a week before the trip.
- Plan your driving time so you arrive 30 minutes before the meeting time.
- If needed for parking, get a Discover Pass or bring money for a trailhead or forest pass.
- Collect your tools and containers for the rocks:
<https://mineralcouncil.wordpress.com/photos-of-collecting-tools/>
- Prepare a first aid kit.
- Plan appropriate clothes, boots, gloves, snacks, and water.
- Gas up your vehicle.
- Review the Rockhound Code of Ethics. It's important to follow these so that the lands remain open for rockhounding.
<https://mineralcouncil.wordpress.com/rockhound-code-of-ethics/>



Rockhounding Hosts

Here is the contact information for hosts of the rockhounding trips:

Maplewood Club	Don Wilcox	wilcox.don@comcast.net
Marysville Club	Nique Wicks	nwhoppyfrog41@gmail.com (509) 670-0630
Pow Wow	Larry Vess	vessel3755@gmail.com (253)473-3908
Puyallup Club	Nate White	nate.white77@gmail.com (206)349-7054
Washington State Mineral Council	Ed Lehman	wsmced2@outlook.com (425) 334-6282
	Nique Wicks (contact information is above)	

Trips and shows

Date and Time	Host and Location	Details
Dec. 6 – 7th 10 am – 5 pm	Maplewood Rock and Gem Club	Holiday Show

Grit and oil for sale

The Shop Stewards have grit. When the shop is open you can buy grit or oil. Please email them a day ahead of when you will stop by: shop@maplewoodrockclub.com

Each grit package is \$4, and this is what they sell:

1 lb of 60/90
1 lb of 120/220

$\frac{3}{4}$ lb of pre-polish
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb of polish

Gallon of oil for \$20 (Bring your own container.)

Washington State Mineral Council

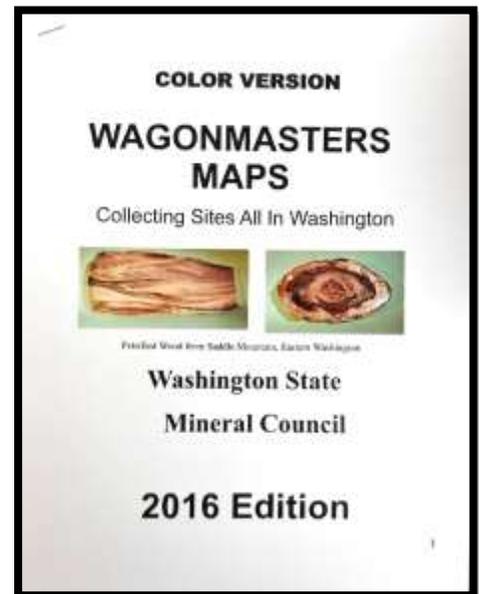
Our club, along with many other rock and gem clubs in the state, is a member of the Washington State Mineral Council. This organization helps us by

- advocating for access to public lands
- advocating for beneficial land use policies
- compiling and sharing maps and other information
- publicizing shows and field trips so members learn about and can participate in events at other clubs

Read their latest [Newsletter](#).

Maps for Rockhounds

The Washington State Mineral Council has put together a 62-page booklet with maps for finding rock hounding sites. You can buy a copy for only \$20 at the meeting.



Seattle Regional Gem and Mineral Shows Committee

Our club is a member of a Seattle area organization of rock clubs. Together we share wooden display cases that we use at our shows. These cases are stored in the new shed behind our building. The other member clubs are the [North Seattle Lapidary Gem and Mineral Club](#) and the [West Seattle Rock Club](#).

Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Our club is a member of the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies: <http://Northwestfederation.org>. We email their newsletter to our members each month.

About Us

Lapidary Shop

Our lapidary shop is reserved for members who have paid their dues. Inside are five slab saws, three CabKing™ machines for polishing cabochons, and two trim saws.

Sign up for shop time

All shop users must sign up for a time slot at least a day before the session. On their first visit, new shop users will be trained on shop procedures and safety before being able to use any equipment.

You can [sign up for shop time online](#). The system will send you a confirmation email which you should save until after your session. You will need the email if you need to cancel your reservation. Each Thursday and the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays we have two shop sessions available:

- Session 1: from 3:00 to 5:30 pm
- Session 2: from 5:30 to 8:00 pm

How to cancel

If you sign up for shop time online and later realize you won't be able to make it, you need to cancel your reservation no later than two days before the session. So, if you are cancelling a Thursday time, you need to cancel by Tuesday at midnight. This enables someone else to sign up. *If you do not cancel, you will be charged for the session.* To cancel, click the link in the confirmation email you received.

What to bring

You need to bring \$10 (cash or check) to pay for the session. Additionally, please bring these:

- Eye protection
- Hearing protectors

Before you leave the shop

The shop stewards are volunteers who generously give 6 hours a week to enable us to use the tools. Before you leave a tool station, please wipe it down and leave it in the same condition as you found it. If you discover a problem with a saw or tool, please let the Shop Steward know.

Shop Stewards

Rich Osborne
Bruce Samuels
Ashley Martin
Nathan O'Brien
Maiko Luckow
Dirk Sierag



Connect with us

Website: <http://www.maplewoodrockclub.com/>

Facebook page: Maplewood Rock & Gem Club

Facebook group for members: MRGC Sales and Trades

Email us: info@maplewoodrockclub.com



Address: 8802 196th St SW, Edmonds, Washington 98026

Our Board



Our club is run entirely by volunteers; and we are grateful for the time, energy, and expertise they give to our community.

President: Angela Vitense

Vice President: open

Treasurer: Lisa Rammell

Secretary: Raven Thompson-Happy

Members at large: Paul Newby,

Nathan O'Brien, and Michele

McGraw.

Image licenses

We use abbreviations in the license attributions. Here are the definitions.

CC: Creative Commons license

BY: attribute the author, link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

SA: share alike - If you publish the image, you must use the same license.

ND: no derivatives - You may not alter the image.

NC: non-commercial use - You may not use the image for commercial use.

3.0 or other number: version of the license

News to share?

Did you go rockhounding? Have you acquired a beautiful new specimen? Contact Nancy

Samuels, the Editor at

MRGC@nancysamuels.com.

This issue

Maplewood Rock and Gem Club News

Volume 11

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