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May meeting

Monday, May 18 at 7 pm

We are honored to have Maureen Carlisle from the Burke Museum (retired) give a presentation titled, *A Day on a Dig*. Maureen will talk about paleontology and archaeology. Her talk will be designed to interest kids as well as adults.

She will cover some experiences on both paleontological digs and archaeological digs. She was involved in dinosaur digs with the Burke Museum, and archeological digs as a volunteer with the National Forest Service. Maureen will discuss how a site is chosen and how it progresses; what problems and solutions typically are encountered; and where reality diverges from public perception.

Do you have dinosaur artifacts? The members would be interested to see them during Show and Tell. Or, you may share other specimens from your collection.

If your last name begins with a letter from A – M, please bring a snack to share with the members.



Classes in Lapidary Arts



Stone Carving Basics and Wet Angle Grinder

**June 25 (tentative)
from 6:30 to 8 pm**

Ever wondered about carving stone? This discussion will show basic hand tools, power tools, stone, and safety gear. There will be a basic demo as weather and space allow.

How to Clean and Prep Stones

**July 23
from 6:30 to 8 pm**

The discussion will focus on a handful of methods to clean quartz, epidote, pyrite, and other materials we find locally in the Pacific Northwest. There will be samples of before and after. The discussion will include chemicals needed and related safety.



Don Wilcox

Don has been a member of Maplewood Rock and Gem Club for over 18 years. He has served on the board including 2 terms as president. He has been creating art for over 25 years and is a member of the Northwest Stone Carving Association. He created Tundrafox Designs as his business where he makes and sells lapidary items, pushed glass, sculptures, and more. You can find Don and his work at Etsy https://www.etsy.com/shop/TundrafoxDesigns?ref=shop_profile&listing_id=1657011904 And on the web <https://tundrafoxdesigns.com/>

Here are two of Don's sculptures.



Rock Candy

This fossilized lizard was photographed by [kkorvin](#) and the photo was published on Pixabay.com.



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 summer celebration 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
Stone Carving Basics and Wet Angle Grinder	June 25 6:30 – 8 pm	Class
How to Clean and Prep Stones	July 23 6:30 – 8 pm	Class
Summer show	August 8 - 9	Show
Summer Celebration	August 17 usually at 6 pm	Summer celebration and August meeting
Holiday show	December, first or second weekend	Show
Holiday Party	December 14 at 6 pm	Potluck dinner and party instead of the December meeting

Rock Birthday

This photo of a rock birthday party was published on Pixabay.



Island Hopping in the Marianas Islands

By Jim Miller

My wife Jill and I enjoyed an interesting year living in the southwest Pacific on the island of Guam in 1977-78. We were there on behalf of the company I worked for while assisting with the engineering and design efforts to rebuild Guam's infrastructure after the island was devastated by Super Typhoon Pamela. Guam, like Puerto Rico, is a territory of the United States. There is an extensive U.S. military presence on the island as well as a sizeable civilian population. Along with Guam, the nearby islands of Rota, Tinian and Saipan are part of the Marianas Island group.

While living on Guam, Jill and I grew to love the tropical Pacific. Warm water, colorful reef fish and tropical vegetation are an inviting contrast to the cool Pacific Northwest. Besides working, we went snorkeling, fishing, sailing, hiking, traveling and exploring these fascinating island environments. I have visited many tropical islands since then and every one has been a unique and enjoyable experience.

In February 2018 I returned to the Micronesia along with two local scuba-diving friends (Chuck and Patty). We visited two friends (Kendra and Derrick) that were living in Guam. I was anxious to see how Guam had changed during my 40-year absence. And the allure of warm, blue water was beckoning all of us.

Our first stop was Guam. Besides being a strategic outpost for the U.S. military, Guam is a very popular Japanese tourist destination. The photo below shows the main tourist area of the island. Note the fringing coral reef and how quickly the water offshore deepens and changes color.

When Jill and I lived on Guam, our apartment was located on the left side of the developed area shown in the photo below. The apartment building is gone and is now an amusement park!





Although Guam has a sizeable population, there remain relatively remote areas accessible by hiking. One of my favorite secluded locations on Guam is known as "Shark's Hole", which is reached only by hiking along the shoreline. This spectacular spot has a sandy pool within the fringing reef that is perfect for snorkeling and fish watching. The photos at the left and immediately below show scenes from my hike to Shark's Hole with Kendra, Patty and Chuck.



The northern portion of Guam consists of a former coral reef that has been uplifted as much as 700 feet above present sea level. Ritidian Beach (shown here) crowns the northernmost tip of the island.



An interesting attraction on Ritidian Beach is patiently searching for and collecting star sand and sand discs. These skeletons of oceanic plankton drift ashore and share the beach with the local coral sand. This photo shows these amazing sand shapes after I plucked them carefully from a bag of sand that I brought home. Plankton and coral help remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and convert it to solid calcium carbonate (limestone).

Our second stop in the Marianas was the island of Saipan. WWII saw terrible and brutal battles on Saipan. There are many modern monuments on the island that commemorate the conflict. Perhaps the saddest location of all is Bonzai Cliff (pictured below), where thousands of Japanese civilians committed suicide by jumping to their death after U.S. forces had conquered the island.



The Chinese are presently developing Saipan with casinos and other attractions. Those investments definitely change the character of the island, but plenty of scenic areas remain to be visited. Not to mention the beautiful water that is warm and teems with tropical fish and sea turtles (see below).



The island of Rota was our last stop in the Marianas. Rota has decided to remain relatively undeveloped. It is truly an island paradise with spectacular scenery, beaches, archeology and history. The ancient Chamorro culture thrived on Rota for about 3,000 years, leaving behind numerous archeological "latte stone" sites. The island of Rota has carefully preserved these sites, which consist of coral limestone pillars with hemispherical capstones (see below). The capstones no longer rest on top of the pillars, probably a result of past earthquakes. The latte stones served as supports for elevated structures that housed the elite.



More recent history exists from the WWII era. Although Rota was bypassed for invasion by U.S. troops, the Japanese had installed significant shoreline defenses to ward off such an attack. Shore gun emplacements still remain in several parts of the island (see next two photos).



And Rota has much more to offer... Shoreline scenery is spectacular, such as the view below of Chuck perched above crystal-clear water at Gagani Point. Chuck was tempted to dive in, but there was no safe place to exit the water.



There is a bird sanctuary and rookery on the island where a variety of tropical sea birds nest and raise their young. The beaches on Rota are well maintained and virtually deserted. We visited several beaches and had them completely to ourselves. The beach pictured here was my favorite. It is my example of the perfect tropical beach with white sand, turquoise water, coral reefs and bordering palms.



The Marianas Islands are a long way from the U.S. mainland, but they and other tropical islands in the Pacific are wonderful gems of paradise that deserve to be visited and loved.

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.

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

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

Happy Birthday to everyone born in May!



Your birthstone is emerald.

**Let's see how emeralds
compare to diamonds.**

While diamonds seem to capture everyone's attention in the gem world, emeralds are 20 times rarer.

Inclusions in diamonds cause the gemstone to be less desirable, but that is not necessarily true with emeralds. Nearly all emeralds have inclusions and networks of fine fissures which are called the gem's *jardin* (garden). When a *jardin* is pleasing as viewed under a microscope, the emerald is worth more.

Diamonds and emeralds also differ in color. Diamonds can be white, black, yellow, blue, red, or other colors, but emeralds are always green. Their color is from trace amounts of chromium or vanadium.



In the Columbian emerald mines, the workers receive a picando each month. That is a day in which all the emeralds they find, they keep. In African diamond mines the workers undergo electronic scans each day.

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 America the Beautiful pass, as required.
- ☐ 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	Paul Haak	pvhaak@gmail.com (253) 312-1743
Washington State Mineral Council	Ed Lehman	wsmced2@outlook.com (425) 334-6282
	Nique Wicks (contact information is above)	
NW Federation of Mineralogical Societies	Doug True	dtruefossils12@yahoo.com (406) 670-0506

Trips and shows

Date	Host and Location	Details
May 21 – 25	NW Federation Blue Forest, Wyoming	To be announced
May 23 – 24	Marysville Kettle Falls, Wild Turkey Mine	Search for fossils and noble serpentine. Bring a rock hammer and tools for hard rock or surface collection. Fee.

Date	Host and Location	Details
June 13	Marysville Saddle Mountain, Diatom Pit	Search for petrified wood and common opal. Bring a shovel, small pick, rock hammer, buckets with lids (dust).
June 25 – 28	NW Federation Tee Pee Canyon Agate, South Dakota	To be announced
July 18 – 19	Marysville Lake Wenatchee	Search for garnet and talc. Bring a shovel screen, container for garnets, hand saw.
Aug. 8 – 9	Maplewood Summer Show	
Aug. 15 – 16	Puyallip Greenwater	Search for agate, jasper, opal Bring digging tools, chisel, small pry bar, rock hammer.
Sept. 12 – 13	Pow-Wow Red Top	Search for agate, jasper, geodes. Bring digging tools, chisel, small pry bar, rock hammer.
Sept. 19	Puyallip Little Naches	Search for lily pad jasper, fossils, thunder eggs. Bring digging tools, hard rock chisels, pry bar, 3# hammer, rock hammer.
Oct. 11	Marysville Walt Bailey	Search for rainbow chert. Bring hard rock chisels, rock hammers, pry bars.

Date	Host and Location	Details
Nov. 7	Marysville Blanchard Hill	Search for Stilpnomelane (dalmation stone). Bring hard rock flat chisels, hammers, pry bars.
Dec. 5 – 6th	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.)

Opals from horsetails

Horsetail plants are unusual among flora for their absorption of large quantities of silicon (SiO_2) from the soil. They pack this silica into every part of their beings from the rhizomes to stems to leaves. This makes the plants good abrasives for fine sanding. Just rub the ribbed stalks on wood and it will smooth out the surface. Horsetails can be up to 25% silica by weight.



As horsetails decay, they leave micro-structures of opaline behind. It is believed that large deposits of this silica contributed to the development of gemstones, like Australian precious opals.

Washington State Mineral Council

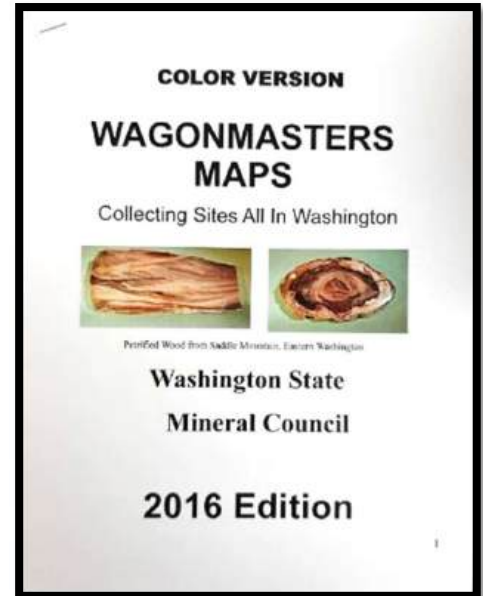
Our club, along with many other rock and gem clubs in the state, is a member of the Washington State Mineral Council. This organization helps us by

- 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
Nathan O'Brien
Dirk Sierag
Scott Higson

Shop@maplewoodrockclub.com



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: open
 Past President: Angela Vitense
 Members at large: Paul Newby, Mark Tomas, Nathan O'Brien, and Craig Kosovich.

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 05

Publication year: 75