

Information of interest to new members of the SVGMS

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Membership Info

What are some of the benefits of my club membership?

- o You are able to attend programs at club meetings
 - o You are welcome to use the club's rock shop during scheduled sessions
 - o You are given access to members-only area of the club web site
 - o You will receive field trip notifications and can participate in these with other club members
 - o You can enjoy field trip reports from members who participated in past trips
 - o You can exhibit your lapidary talents and interests in a display in the club's exhibit space at the club's annual show
 - o You can join in our occasional auctions and buy/sell/trade nights at club meetings
 - o You can join in our annual club picnic and Christmas dinner events
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How are communications of club information handled?

When you fill out your membership application each year, the club secretary will use the email address you provide as the primary means of sending out meeting notices, field trip announcements and other information of interest.

If it is a family membership and you want multiple people in your household to receive messages, please include all relevant email addresses.

If you don't provide an email address or prefer to receive communications via USPS, your physical mailing address will be used to send you communications.

Please note that the SVGMS does not share, sell or otherwise distribute your contact information and only sends out information we consider to be of interest to club members. If you do not wish to receive any of this, please let the club secretary know.

The club's Facebook page is an alternative channel for some types of communications. Since it is a public portal, we don't include things that are members-only there (for example, specific field trip information).

You can access the Facebook page [here](#) and you are welcome to post things related to the club's interests and to share with our other members.

How can I participate more actively in the club's meetings?

Each meeting has an agenda item for new business and members are welcome to bring up topics and discussion points for the club's consideration.

In addition, we are always glad to hear of your experiences on field trips, rock shows, museum tours, or other information on the broad spectrum of lapidary topics we all follow.

Another path to follow is to make use of any of the web site forms that solicit participation in various ways - see the following questions for specific links.

I want to bring up some new business at a club meeting - how do I proceed?

If you want to arrange this in advance, you can contact the club president or secretary or use [this web site form](#), which will automatically send the message out to the appropriate club officers.

The form collects a few points of information to help us understand your request and it may help you communicate everything we need to hear about your input.

I have a topic for a program I'd like to present - how do I get on the schedule?

If you want to arrange this in advance, you can contact the club president or secretary or use [this web site form](#), which will automatically send the message out to the appropriate club officers.

The form collects a few points of information to help us understand your request and it may help you communicate everything we need to hear about your input.

We have resources available to present a "slideshow", including a laptop computer, projector and screen, if requested in advance.

I'd like to volunteer to bring refreshments to a meeting - how's this done?

If you want to arrange this in advance, you can contact the club president or secretary or use [this web site form](#), which will automatically send the message out to the appropriate club officers.

The form collects a few points of information to help us understand your request and it may help you communicate everything we need to hear about your input.

Does the club have shirts or other apparel with the SVGMS logo on them?

Yes! Please see the Club Apparel [page](#) in the Members' Area for information. We have a version of the logo from the web site on file with a well-known clothing vendor and it can be embroidered on your choice of styles of shirts, tees, jackets and other items.

This allows you to pick your favorite color and size and purchase garments when convenient for you, as well as being able to enjoy a wide selection of items for the logo.

Please see the PDF linked [here](#) for details on the ordering process.

Meeting Information

Schedule

The club's meeting night is designated to be the second Monday of each month.

"The second Monday" means the Monday that falls in the week AFTER there's been a prior week with a Monday in that month.

For example, if the first day of a month is a Tuesday, then the meeting would be the 14th of the month.

If the first day of the month is a Monday, however, the meeting would be on the 8th.

Least confusing method: look at the [Events At A Glance page!](#)

All meetings start at 7:30 PM, although many folks show up earlier to help with setup and "ooh" and "ah" over rocks and specimens other members bring along for interest.

Depending on the length of the program and business session of the agenda, the meeting usually ends around 9 PM.

Inclement weather cancellation information

The SVGMS meeting will be cancelled if Waynesboro City Schools are closed/dismissed early due to inclement weather on the day a meeting is scheduled.

School closing information can be found at many sources, including:

[Emergency Information - Waynesboro Public Schools](#)

[WHSV - Closings](#)

We will also post updated information to [the club's Facebook page](#) and will send out emails if timing and circumstances allow.

Rock Shop Info

What kinds of things can I do in the club's rock shop?

The [rock shop](#) has a good array of lapidary tools, including diamond slab saws, trim saws, a diamond cabochon making machine, polishing wheels, and other equipment that can help you turn your rocks into polished specimens or jewelry components.

Better yet, it comes with mentoring and guidance so even a complete beginner can develop and practice the methods of working a stone into something artistic.

Everyone is surprised after their first session that they are able to achieve good results with a modicum of effort and hands-on.

This is an excellent resource to explore whatever inclinations you have about taking your lapidary interests to a new level - be warned, though - it is addictive!

We have photos in this gallery that give you a sample of what members are able to accomplish in [Leo's Lapidary Lounge](#).

Please note that at this point in time, we do not have any faceting capabilities in the rock shop, so that direction of endeavor is not available.

Schedule

The monthly rock shop session is scheduled for the Saturday immediately following the club's Monday meeting night.

This means it can occur between the 13th and 19th of the month.

Best reference on this schedule is the Events At A Glance page [here](#).

The shop is open from 9 AM until noon, and members are welcome to come and explore their interests and develop their lapidary talents.

I'm interested in attending a rock shop session for the first time - what do I need to know or prepare?

We emphasize safety in operating the lapidary equipment, so a good pair of safety glasses is very necessary. There are moving parts to be cautious of, and long hair/loose clothing needs to be restrained. Some people find hearing protection to be a good idea, but many do not find the amount of noise to be objectionable. Aprons and running water are provided, along with hand-cleaning soap, degreasing spray and paper towels.

The main thing you will need to bring is a degree of curiosity and a desire to discover what can be discovered using the techniques of a lapidary on a piece of stone.

If you have a rock you've found or procured at a rock show and want to work with, by all means bring it along. Some materials are better candidates for first-time lapidarists, while others are more demanding of technique and time. The "old hands" at the rock shop session will give you guidance and help you take your first steps.

If you don't have a particular rock to work with but want to check things out anyhow, come on down - there's usually some material on hand that you can experiment with, and you can get an idea where your interests lie.

On any given day, there may be enough participation that everyone has to take a turn at a slab saw or cab machine, but everyone gets a chance during the session to advance their work.

At the end of the session, everyone helps out with cleaning up and leaving the equipment in good working order for the next session.

There's a Shop Supplies \$\$\$ jar located on the center table, and members are asked to contribute what they can towards replacement blades, wheels and supplies in return for the use of the equipment.

Please sign in on the roster located just in the door so we can get an idea of how many people are making use of the facilities so we can plan upgrades and expansions.

Field Trip Info

How do I find out about field trips and other club activities?

Official field trips are announced at club meetings or by messages from the club secretary or field trip coordinator. They are sent to all members with current year's dues paid, as this is a prerequisite for being able to participate in a field trip.

The field trip announcement will usually contain sign-up instructions, contact information, directions and any specific safety requirements for that particular destination. These are especially important to heed and conform to exactly, as our hosts may bar you from their property if you are not in compliance.

Other club events are announced by similar means. If you find references to trips and events on the club web site or Facebook page and you did NOT receive a message about them, please bring it to the attention of the club secretary.

What preparations should I make for a field trip?

Make sure your dues are paid for the current year!

Make sure you have contact information for the field trip coordinator and they have yours in case of logistical problems or weather issues.

Make sure you have accurate and complete directions to the location or rendezvous point.

Safety is of paramount importance for all club field trips and activities.

In general, most trips to rock-hounding sites such as quarries, mines, and the like will require this safety gear:

- o Hard hat less than five years old (there's a date inside the hat)
- o Steel-toed boots or boots with protective toes
- o Safety glasses
- o Wheel chocks for your car tires

Individual locations may have additional or more stringent requirements - please pay close attention to these details in trip announcements.

In addition, you may want to consider these items:

- o Heavy-duty work gloves
 - o Rock hammer and chisel
 - o Something to haul rocks to the car in
 - o Something to haul rocks home in
 - o Something ELSE to haul rocks home in
 - o Packing materials, in case a delicate specimen is acquired
 - o Water
 - o Insect repellent
 - o Sun screen
 - o Camera (so you can take pictures to contribute to the club's web site)
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How are field trip cancelations handled?

If you will not be able to attend a trip, please contact the Field Trip Coordinator to let them know. This is especially important if you had arranged to car-pool with someone or when other logistics could be affected.

Some of our field trips have a space limitation, so if we know you will not be attending early enough, we may be able to give someone else an opportunity to attend in your place.

Contact information for the Field Trip Coordinator is normally included in each Official Field Trip Notification.

Annual Gem & Mineral Show Info

What are some of the details regarding the annual Gem & Mineral show?

See full details [here](#) - check back as the show dates approach for the latest news and developments!

Can I have a display at the annual club Gem & Mineral show?

Absolutely! All members are encouraged to pick up a club-provided display case prior to the show and use it to exhibit your best rocks and minerals for the public's enjoyment and education. There is a selection of resources regarding displays and preparations [here](#).

How can I assist the club with the production of the annual Gem & Mineral show?

We ask for volunteers to help staff the ticket booth, distribute show flyers and a variety of other tasks to prepare and produce the show. Ask and you will receive!

Learning & Education

I have a question about ??? - how do I best use club resources to find an answer?

One of the best means to use to further your rockhounding and lapidary pursuits is to connect with the skills, experiences and talents of the membership. Among our members, we have people who are trained in geology, work with rocks professionally, or are serious hobbyists with many years of hands-on experience. Everyone is willing to lend an ear to your questions and give you the benefit of their familiarity with the object of your curiosity.

If you review the topics presented at past club meeting programs [here](#), you may be able to find a member who has aligned themselves with a particular area or subject. For example, this would include topics like:

- o [Geology](#)
- o [Gold prospecting](#)
- o [Faceting](#)
- o [The quartz family of minerals](#)
- o [Volcanism in Hawaii](#)

To name but a few. The only danger in asking a question will be you getting back WAY more information than you thought possible!

Beyond our club member's collective capabilities, the [Links & Resources pages](#) have been selected with the general intent of connecting members up to other organizations, sources and forums where rock-hounding, lapidary endeavors, and geological interests can be explored in great depth. There are tremendous resources available on the internet and hopefully this assortment will give you a good jumping-off point for your explorations.

I found this rock - how do I learn what it is?

Bring it along to a meeting and the members will be glad to give you an opinion (or several opinions...) about what it might be.

There are also some mineral identification tools and sites listed in the [Links & Resources pages here](#) that can narrow down the possibilities for you.

Club Web Site Info

I have something that I'd like to share on the club web site - how is this done?

You can use the on-line form on the club's web site [here](#) or send a message to the web wrangler at this address: webwrangler@shenandoahvalleyrockclub.org.

We will verify the material is in line with the general purposes of the club and the web site and if so, will include it on the next web site update. It will typically be given a home in the publicly-accessible [Links and Resources](#) area.

I have some pictures from a recent field trip or club activity I'd like to contribute - how is this accomplished?

The picture files can be emailed to the web wrangler at webwrangler@shenandoahvalleyrockclub.org along with some notes to identify which field trip the photos encompass. Alternatively, you can bring the files to the next club meeting on a USB flash drive and hand them to the web wrangler. The USB drive will be returned to you at the next club meeting.

Pictures are credited and used by your permission. We may have to select or edit pictures to avoid privacy compromises, but all submissions are appreciated.

I have some news or general information I'd like to share with the club membership and other site visitors - how is this arranged?

You can use the on-line form on the club's web site [here](#) or send a message to the web wrangler at this address: webwrangler@shenandoahvalleyrockclub.org

We will verify the material is in line with the general purposes of the club and the web site and if so, will include it on the next web site update.

Please keep in mind that it will be included on a publicly-accessible [page](#) and we want to avoid endangering anyone's privacy or security.

Special Interest Groups

Does the club have any special interest groups?

Yes - at this time, there is a Microminerals group that focuses on collecting, viewing and photographing specimens that are best appreciated via a microscope or other magnification.

We have an area of the web site set aside for this group [here](#).

If you would like to contact the group leader, you can use [this web site form](#) and they will be sent your message.

If there are additional special interest groups you would like to see created - volunteer! Although they don't have any formal status independent of the SVGMS, we consider it part of the club's mission to facilitate these groups and encourage them within the membership.

Club Apparel

Does the club have any shirts or other items with the club logo on it for members to purchase?

Yes, indeed - see the [Club Apparel](#) page in the Members' Area for information and details. Note that through this vendor, many different styles of embroidered shirts and other items are available with your choices for material, style, and color.
