March 2025 Volume 65 Issue 2

SKAGIT GEMS

Official Publication of the Skagit Rock and Gem Club Serving Skagit County WA Since 1961

Next Meeting

March 1, 2025 10:00 a.m. @ Mount Vernon Senior Center

Gem of the Month: Obsidian and Green Rocks (shamrocks?!)

Refreshments: Feel Free To Bring Snacks or Refreshments

We are collecting names and payment for membership pins/nametags.
Name Tags are \$15.00 (includes sales tax).
There will be an announcement and we will be taking names and prepayment at the March Meeting.

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2025 Skagit Rock and Gem Club Schedule

January 11 – Installation Banquet

February 1 – General Meeting

March 1 – General Meeting

April 5 – General Meeting

May 3 – General Meeting

June 7 – General Meeting

July TBA – Annual Barbeque and Swap Meet

Mugust 2 – General Meeting

September 6 – General Meeting

October 4 – General Meeting

November 1 – General Meeting

November 8 & 9 – Skagit Rock & Gem

Annual Show

December TBA – Annual Meeting for the purposes of elections, Potluck and Gift Exchange

Don't forget--Check out the WA State
Mineral Council webpage for all the
gem shows and field trips next year.
https://mineralcouncil.wordpress.com/

From the Editor:

Greetings Fellow Rockhounders!

It looks like Spring is on its way and with the better weather comes the chance for getting out more! There are lots of volunteer opportunities and events coming up. Maryjane is asking for help with a children's geology program at the new Mount Vernon Library sometime in July or August. She will also be selling her artwork "City of Clowns" at Mystical Wares next door to Dakota Art in Westside Mount Vernon this Saturday, February 22, from 10am to 4pm to help finance her geology degree! I've posted some samples of her work, so stop in and check out her work and help support her education goals! Here's a link to Mystical Wares, it's a pretty amazing place! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=507fuB027hw

We also received a request from a Stanwood Cub Scout leader asking if anyone would be interested in talking to their group about rocks, rock hounding ethics, and showing off some samples for the Scouts to receive their Earth Rock Badges. It could be any Tuesday in May. Please let Sherry or Maryjane know if you are interested.

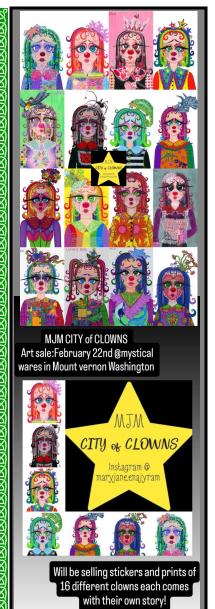
Sandy mentioned her Garden Club is sponsoring the Skagit Garden & Art Fair at the Skagit County Fairgrounds on June 21 & 22. This could be a good way to get the word out about our club and show off our goods and talents.

Think about what you can do to pitch in and help out with any of the projects mentioned above.

And above all, Keep Rockin'!

Charlene





Membership Information

Skagit Rock & Gem Club's yearly dues are due in September. Your yearly dues cover membership privileges from September 1st through August 31st.

If you would like to continue your membership and receive the newsletter, you must be current with your dues. Membership dues must also be paid to use the club shop.

New Membership Forms are available at every meeting. Invite your "rockhound" friends to be a guest at our next meeting. They can become a member after attending three meetings.

Dues are \$20.00 for single membership, \$30.00 for family, and \$25.00 for single, plus kid(s) under age 16.

Payment can be made by cash or check at a meeting.

If you are renewing your membership, you can mail in your payment to the address below:

Dave Britten
PO Box 244
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

2025 WSMC SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS

The WA St. Mineral Council plans guided fieldtrips to collecting sites. Open to member clubs, and the general public. Most trips are free. Included are the Pow Wow trips (must join to go on trips). Host clubs and contact persons will be set up as I gather info.

For updated info, go to mineralcouncil@zoho.com or contact Nique Wicks at nwhoppyfrog41@gmail.com (509) 670-0630 or Ed Lehman at wsmced2@outlook.com (425) 334-6282

Date	Host	Site	Material	Meet Time/Place	Tools
01/18	MSVL	Walker Valley	Blue agate	9am Big Lake Store	Dig & light hard rock tools
02/22	MSVL	Cedar Ponds	Jasper & fossils	9am Sultan Park 1 mile hike on road	Dig & light hard rock tools
03/08	MSVL	Cherry Creek	Jasper	9am Park & North end of Duvall Wading in creek, bushy	Rock hammer light hard rock tools
04/12	Pow- Wow	Saddle Mt	Petrified wood	8am Boat launch SW of Mattawa	Dig & Light hard rock tools or just pick up smaller pieces
05/10	MSVL		Leaf fossils, morel mushrooms	9am 1-5 exit 240 Mini Mart	Shovel & rock splitting tools
05/24	MSVL	Wild Turkey mine	Noble serpentine	9am @ 3515 Waitts Lk Rd. Val- ley, WA Pay dig	Hard rock or surface picking
05/31	MSVL	Walt Bailey Trail	Rainbow chert	9am Verlot Ranger Station Collecting along roadside	Hard rock tools
06/21	WSMC	Saddle Mt	Petrified wood & opal	9am Harvest Foods, Mattawa	Dig & Light hard rock tools or surface picking
07/26	MSVL	Lake Wenatchee	Garnets	9am @ rest stop just West of Lake Wenatchee Hwy 2	Shovel, screen container for Gar- nets
08/16-17	Puyl	Greenwater	Agate, jasper, opal	9am Ranger Station in Enumclaw	Dig & Hard rock tools
09/06-07	Pow- Wow	Red Top	Agate, jasper, geodes	8am Teanaway Camp Ground	Dig & Hardrock tools
09/20	Puyl	Little Naches	Thunder eggs, fossils, lily-pad jasper	10am @ intersection of Hwy 410 & FR 92	Shovel, small bar
10/01	MSVL	Index	Picture jasper	9am @ Index	Rock hammer
11/08	MSVL	Blanchard Hill	Stilpnomelane (Dalmation stone)	9am @ 1-5 exit 240 Mini Mart Collecting on road shoulder	Hard rock tools

https://mineralcouncil.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/fieldtrips_2025.pdf

100 % of map booklet sales goes to Walker Valley lease, insurance for access to private property and general operation of WSMC

Many trips need Discover Pass, Trailhead Pass & Forest Pass. Ask when you inquire about trip

ALWAYS contact host for updated info a week before trip !!!

HOST CLUB CONTACT INFO

Msvl - Nique Wicks nwhoppyfrog41@gmail.com Or (509) 670-0630

Pow Wow -Larry Vess vessel3755@gmail.com or (253)473-3908

Puyl Nate White (206)349-7054 nate.white77@gmail.com

Keep updated on http://www.mineralcouncil.zoho.com Land management changes, and roads close regularly. There is a area on web page with tool category in pictures and names of tools.

Always have proper cloths and gear for conditions. Be prepared with safety, first aid, food and drink.

A week before trips I (Ed Lehman) will have a pdf file with map and info for that trip I can send you on request. I will do the same for trip host.

Try to be at the meeting site 30 minutes before trip time for details and instructions with a full tank of gas. Use code of ethics, keep our lands open to rockhounding.

Skagit Rock and Gem Club Meeting Minutes February 1, 2025

Meeting called to order at 10:11am by our new club president Rick.

Board Members present: Rick Van Pelt, Peggy Peterson, David Britten, Charlene Rhodes.

Attendance: 14 Members & 2 guests, Alissa and Tary Power.

Minutes of the last meeting were approved and seconded.

The treasurer report as given by Dave was accepted and seconded.

Old Business: There was no old business to discuss.

New Business:

- * Rick reminded us that tumbled rocks will be needed for the 2025 November Show. Rick will bring a bucket to every meeting, and you can add your contributions. Sizes from palm size to small pebbles but no smaller than a quarter to save choking problems.
- * Dave talked about the Mineral Council field trip to Walker Valley in January which some members participated in. A few small samples were found.
- * Maryjane asks for volunteers to help her with a children's geology program at the Mount Vernon Library. A date will later be announced for either July or August.
- * Maryjane will be selling her own designed artwork at Mystical Wares on Sat Feb 22 to help finance her geology degree. Mystical Wares is next door to Dakota Art in West Side Mount Vernon at 17869 WA-536, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. Free Event: 10am to 4pm
- * We received an email request from a Stanwood Cub Scout leader asking if anyone would be interested in talking to their group about rocks, rock hounding ethics, and showing off some samples. The Scouts are working on their Earth Rock Badges. It could be any Tuesday through May. Sherry will answer the email request, including Maryjane in the email, who will follow up with the Scouts about her meeting with them.
- * Sandy's Garden Club is sponsoring a Skagit Garden and Art Fair at Skagit County Fairgrounds on the 3rd weekend of June. Sandy will get back to us next month to let us know the booth price. It could be a good way to get the word out about our Club.
- * We had a brief discussion about Club Name Tags. Sherry will check on current prices from Mr. T's Trophies in Mount Vernon. The previous group price was about \$15.00 per name tag. Let Sherry know if you are interested.
- * Peggy brought up updating the 2025 November Show Poster. Maryjane volunteered to work on a prototype.
- * The Club workshop will be opened when the weather warms up.

Display Table: We had fun learning about the red rocks, heart shaped rocks, and other rock samples brought in by several members.

Thank You to those who brought in refreshments.

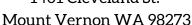
Next meeting is March 1st. Jennifer R will do an educational program on obsidian. Bring your obsidian and Green Rocks (shamrocks?!) for the display table. See you in March!

Meeting adjourned at 11:33

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!



Meetings are on the FIRST Saturday of the month (except for Jan, July and Dec) 10:00 am at the Mount Vernon Community (Senior) Center 1401 Cleveland St.





The purpose of this non-profit earth society shall be to stimulate interest in the study of geology, lapidary, and the collection of geological specimens.

We are a member of the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Washington State Mineral Council.

We are affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Dues are \$20.00 for single membership, \$30.00 for family, and \$25.00 for single, plus kid(s) under age 16.



Visit our website: skagitrockandgem.com Email: skagitrockandgem@gmail.com Mailing address: PO BOX 244, Mount Vernon WA 98273







2025 Officers & Board Members

President · Rick Van Pelt 360-708-2737

Vice President · Peggy Peterson 425-299-4123

· David Britten Treasurer 360-755-0741

Secretary · Iennifer Ross 360-610-1227

Fed. Director · Open Past President · Eric Self 360-366-6118 **Bulletin Editor**

· Charlene Rhodes 360-333-2156



Committees

Annual Show Chair Eric Self Facilities/Field Trips Dave Britten Greeter Peggy Peterson Scholarship Kim Kellems and Shelley Van Pelt **Publicity** Open Sunshine Open Vandenberg's Swap

The Earliest Humans in Yellowstone

Human occupation of the greater Yellowstone area seems to follow environmental changes of the last 15,000 years. How far back is still to be determined—there are no known sites in the park that date to this time—but humans probably were not using this landscape when glaciers and a continental ice sheet covered most of what is now Yellowstone National Park. The glaciers carved out valleys with rivers that people could follow in pursuit of Ice Age mammals such as the mammoth and the giant bison. The last period of ice coverage ended 13,000 to 14,000 years ago. Sometime after that, but before 11,000 years ago, humans were here on this landscape.

Archeologists have found physical evidence of human presence in the form of distinctive stone tools and projectile points. From these artifacts, scientists surmise that they hunted mammals and gathered berries, seeds, and plants.

As the climate in the Yellowstone region warmed and dried, the animals, vegetation, and human lifestyles also changed. Large Ice Age animals that were adapted to cold and wet conditions became extinct. The glaciers left behind layers of sediment in valleys in which grasses and sagebrush thrived, and pockets of exposed rocks that provided protected areas for aspens and fir to grow. The uncovered volcanic plateau sprouted lodgepole forests. People adapted to these changing conditions and were eating a diverse diet including medium and small animals such as deer and bighorn sheep as early as 9,500 years ago.

This favorable climate would continue more than 9,000 years. Evidence of these people in Yellow-

stone remained uninvestigated long after archeologists began excavating sites elsewhere in North America. Archeologists used to think high-elevation regions such as Yellowstone were inhospitable to humans and, thus, did little exploratory work in these areas. However, recent research in the park has located archaeological sites at high elevations, with several sites over 10,500 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). Today, archeologists study environmental change to better understand human uses of areas such as Yellowstone through time.

More than 2,000 archeological sites have been documented in Yellowstone National Park, with the majority dating to the Archaic period, spanning from about 8,000 to 1,500 years ago. Obsidian from several sources in the park was used as toolstone. Sites contain evidence of an increase in hunting a wide variety of game, including bison, bear, deer, sheep and goats, felines, rabbits, birds, and other small game. Campsites and trails in Yellowstone also provide evidence of early use. Some of the trails used in the park today have likely been used by people since the Paleoindian period.

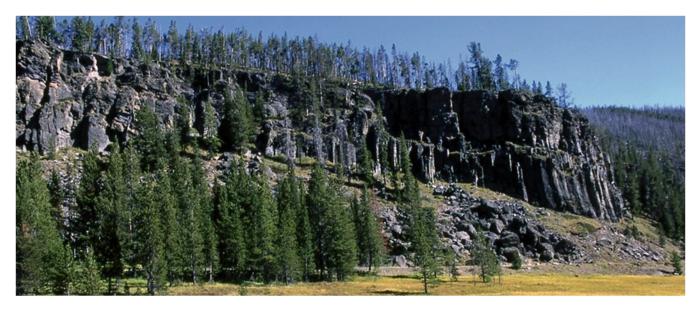


Cody knife (ca. 9,350 years ago) from the Yellowstone National Park Museum Collection.

NPS

Source: https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/historyculture/earliest-humans.htm

Obsidian Cliff in Yellowstone



Obsidian Cliff, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1996, is located on the Grand Loop Road between Mammoth and Norris.

NPS

Significance

- Obsidian is found in volcanic areas where the magma is rich in silica and lava has cooled without forming crystals, creating a black glass that can be honed to an exceptionally thin edge.
- Unlike most obsidian, which occurs as small rocks strewn amid other formations, Obsidian Cliff has an exposed vertical thickness of about 98 feet (30 m).
- Obsidian was first quarried from this cliff for toolmaking more than 11,000 years ago.
- It is the United States' most widely dispersed source of obsidian by hunter-gatherers. It is found along trade routes from western Canada to Ohio.

Obsidian Cliff is the primary source of obsidian in a large concentration of Midwestern sites, including about 90% of obsidian found in Hopewell mortuary sites in the Ohio River Valley (about 1,850–1,750 years ago).

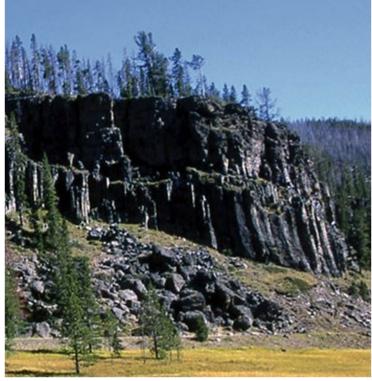
Recent History

About 90% of the forest on Obsidian Cliff plateau burned in 1988. The fire did not damage the cliff face, but it cleared the surface, creating optimal conditions for archeological surveys. Those surveys added substantially to knowledge about how obsidian was mined from the bedrock and collected as cobbles from the overlying glacial till. Staff are now researching the intensity of use of this obsidian, both within the park and across North America.

The kiosk at Obsidian Cliff, constructed in 1931, was the first wayside exhibit in a US national park. It was listed on the National Register in 1982. The site was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1996.

Source: https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/historyculture/obsidiancliff.htm

Hopewell Culture Obsidian



Hopewell Culture National Historical Park

Obsidian Cliff in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming.

NPS Photo

Written by Park Guide Sarah Hinkelman

Obsidian is a unique material. It is naturally forming glass (a type of igneous rock) that is only formed from the rapid cooling of lava, so it only occurs in places where there are volcanoes. You might be wondering, "What is obsidian doing in the Scioto River valley in Ohio? There are no volcanoes here!" This is a reasonable question. The nearest volcano is over 1,500 miles away in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. What was it about this material that motivated the people who participated in the Hopewell culture to obtain it and place it within their magnificent earthworks in Ohio?

Well, even today obsidian continues to be valued for its properties and its connections to the earth, a similar connection was likely true for the people who lived in the Scioto Valley 2,000 years ago.

Obsidian is naturally occurring glass that is jet black in color but can also be brown, tan, or green. However, the obsidian found in the earthworks here in the Scioto River Valley seems to be only black in color. The obsidian artifacts found in Hopewell Culture National Historical Park came from Obsidian Cliff in Wyoming, inside Yellowstone National Park, and Bear Gulch in Idaho, just west of the National Park boundary. We know this from scientific studies on obsidian that compare the elements found in the obsidian in Ohio to different possible source sites in North America through techniques like x-ray fluorescence (XRF) which measures the chemicals in rocks, minerals, sediments, and liquids. All the matches from Ohio obsidian artifacts can be traced back to the Yellowstone region.

A ceremonial obsidian spear point from the Hopewell collection at the park.

NPS Photo

In the vast amount of land between Ohio and Wyoming there is hardly any presence of obsidian other than in Hopewell sites. This leads archeologists to believe that the material was not traded down-the-line but carried directly to the Scioto Valley. The material was likely brought to Ohio by ancient peoples either making quests to the source to experience the journey as a religious experience similar to a religious pilgrimage or vision quest; or was carried by those coming from faraway lands to participate in the ceremonial events occurring at the earthwork complexes in the Scioto River Valley. Either way, the journey from Yellowstone to Ohio was a life-changing event for those who completed it.



Obsidian is a strong material, yet it can be easily shaped by chipping away flakes in a process called knapping. The obsidian found within the earthworks in the Scioto River Valley was shaped into large, elaborate spear points. The largest obsidian spear, found in Hopewell Mound Group, is over 17 inches long and six inches wide. These spear points were not for hunting or everyday use—they were ceremonial. They were likely only displayed or used during religious events. Four out of five of the obsidian spear points at Mound City were found broken alongside other ritual artifacts and human remains. These spear points were broken intentionally, likely ritually destroyed before they were buried.

An obsidian spear point from the Hopewell culture. Note the horizontal break in the middle of the point, indicative of its ceremonial use.

NPS Photo

Archeologists believe that for the ancient people in the Scioto River Valley, obsidian was strongly connected to the spiritual world. The material is formed from volcanic activity deep in the earth that rises up to the sur-

face and is retrieved from a place surrounded by natural wonders. The spiritual connection is still felt today. Visitors to Yellowstone National Park come to see the steam propel up to the sky from geysers, marvel at the rich colors of the pools surrounding the thermal features and take in the terraces and rock formations formed by the volcanic activity and the movement of glaciers. In this natural space we can feel a connection to the earth and the forces of nature that are larger than us. Obsidian was likely seen as an embodiment of these elements too for the people who brought it to the earthwork complexes here in the Scioto River Valley.

Even today obsidian is viewed as a very special material. Because of its rich color and shine, it is often found in jewelry and decorative elements as a semi-precious stone and is even used as mirrors. Obsidian's glass-like texture makes it incredibly sharp and it has been used in the place of surgical scalpels. The cutting edge on obsidian is so sharp and thin it can cut between cells rather than tear through tissue like steel scalpels. Many people are familiar with this magnificent stone as obsidian appears in pop culture as Dragon Glass in the Game of Thrones and as a challenging and highly sought material that players collect on Minecraft.

Source:

 $https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/hopewell-culture-obsidian.htm \#: \sim : text = The \%20 largest \%20 obsidian \%20 spear \%2C\%20 found, or \%20 used \%20 during \%20 religious \%20 events.$

2025 Calendar of Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Shows in Washington

Name	Start	End	Location
East KingCo Rock & Gem Show	03/01/25	03/02/25	Pickering Barn, 1730 10th Avenue NW, Issaquah, Washington 98027
Local Treasures Gem & Mineral Show	03/07/25	03/08/25	Colville Fairgrounds, 317 W Astor Ave., Colville, Washington 99114
Rock Rollers of Spokane Washington Annual Gem, Jewelry & Mineral Show	03/28/25	03/30/25	Spokane Fairgrounds, 404 N Havana St Spokane, Washington 99224
Mt Baker Rock & Gem Show	03/29/25	03/30/25	Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale, Washington 98248
Maplewood Rock & Gem Sale	04/05/25	04/06/25	Maplewood Rock & Gem Clubhouse, 8802 196th St., Edmonds, Washington 98026
Lakeside Gem & Mineral Club Show	April 2025 TBD		Benton County Fairgrounds - Building #2, 1500 South Oak, Kennewick, Washington 99336
Yakima Rock & Mineral Club Annual Gem & Min- eral Show	April 2025 TBD		Central Washington State Fair Grounds, Modern Living Building, 1301 S. Fair Ave- nue, Yakima, Washington 98901
Grays Harbor Gem, Geology, Rock & Gem show	04/26/25	04/27/25	Grays Harbor County Fairgrounds, 43 Elma-McCleary Road, Elma, Washington 98541
West Seattle Rock Club Annual Gem Show	04/26/25	04/27/25	Alki Masonic Temple, 4736 40th Avenue SW, Seattle, Washington 98116
Everett Rock & Gem Club 69th Annual Gem, Jewelry & Mineral Show	05/03/25	05/05/25	Evergreen State Fairgrounds, 18359 Cascade View Dr., Monroe, Washington 98272
Seattle Mineral Market	05/17/25	05/18/25	Hangar 30 Building @ Magnuson Park, 7400 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, Washington 98115
Puyallup Valley Gem & Mineral Club Annual Show	May 2025 TBD		Swiss Park, 9205 198th Ave. E., Bonney Lake, Washington 98391
Cascade Gem and Mineral Show	June 2025 TBD		Kent Commons, 525 4th Ave N, Kent, Washington 98032

2025 Calendar of Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Shows in Washington

Name	Start	End	Location	
Cascade Gem and Mineral Show	June 2025 TBD		Kent Commons, 525 4th Ave N, Kent, Washington 98032	
Darrington Rock & Gem Show	July 2025 TBD		Mansford Grange, 1265 Railroad Avenue, Darrington, Washington 98241	
Washington Agate & Mineral Society Rock & Gem Ren- dezvous	July 2025 TBD		Tenino City Park, 300 Park Ave. W., Tenino, Washington 98589	
Port Townsend Rock & Gem Show	August 2025 TBD		Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 4907 Landers Street, Port Town- send, Washington 98368	
Puyallup Valley Gem & Min- eral Club Show in the Trees	August 2025 TBD		Tacoma Sportsmans Club, 16409 Canyon Rd E., Puyallup, Washington 98375	
Maplewood Rock & Gem Club November Show	08/16/25	08/17/25	Maplewood Rock & Gem Clubhouse, 8802 196th St., Edmonds, Washington 98026	
Shelton Rock & Mineral Soci- ety Tailgate Rock Sale & Swap	August 2025 TBD		Mason Area Recreation Park, 2100 E Johns Prairie Road, Shelton, Washington 98584	
Seattle Mineral Market No- vember	November 2025 TBD		Everett Mall, 1402 SE Everett Mall Way, Everett, Washington 98115	
International Gem & Jewelry Show Seattle (November)	November 2025 TBD		Seattle Center (Exhibition Hall), 301 Mercer St, Seattle, Washington 98109	
Skagit Rock & Gem Club Show	11/08/25	11/09/25	Sedro Woolley Community Center 703 Pacific St. Sedro-Woolley, Washington 98284	
Sweetheart of Gems Show	February 2026 TBD		Oak Harbor Senior Center, 51 SE Jerome Street, Oak Harbor, Washington 98277	
https://xpopress.com/show/state/Washington				

MT BAKER ROCK AND GEM CLUB



2025 GEM AND MINERAL SHOW

March 29-30, 2025 ((Saturday 10 - 6, Sunday 10 - 5)
Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale WA

ROCKS, MINERALS, FOSSILS, GEMS, JEWELRY, DEMOS, DEALERS, EXHIBITS, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE, ON-GOING SILENT AUCTION, CLUB SALES, FOOD SERVICE, ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS, AND MORE! **Free Admission Free Parking**



www.mtbakerrockclub.org

GPS Co-ordinates Needed

The WSMC needs the GPS co-ordinates of any and all of the collecting sites in the state. In an effort to make the map booklets





YAKIMA ROCK & MINERAL CLUB

PRESENTS

62nd "PARADE OF GEMS"

April 25, 26 & 27, 2025
CENTRAL WASHINGTON STATE FAIR PARK
Modern Living Building 1301 Fair Ave. Yakima, WA. 98901

Special Display

"Fossils of the Northwest and Beyond"

Raffle Door Prizes Silent Auction Kid Activities

Demonstrations, Gold Panning, Trash Can Volcano Ellensburg Blue talks Saturday & Sunday

Vendors' have: rock & mineral specimen's, jewelry, jewelry making supplies, lapidary equipment

Friday April 25, 10 am to 4 pm Saturday April 26, 10 am to 5 pm Sunday April 27, 10 am to 4 pm.

Free parking at Gate 5

Admission: Adult \$7. Student \$2. Under 12 free with

paid adult

Discount Coupon: \$1. off Adult Admission Limit One



Skagit Rock and Gem Club PO BOX 244 Mount Vernon, WA 98273

