

ROCK TALK



White Mountain Gem & Mineral Club
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March 2026

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

March 1, 2026

This busy year is flying by. Already March, and I still see Christmas decorations in some locations. Our club timeline has the same busy schedule, the STEM Fair (science, technology, engineering and math), was March 1. Sandra and Carol were judges and Donna brought rock and mineral specimens to display to the many guests at the fair. Even after the judging work, Sandra and Carol spent the day at the display with Donna, catering to the multiple guests present. With many families, with many children, adults, and other presenters stopping by to admire our collection, it was a well attended and busy afternoon.



STEM Fair Display



Still, the busy season keeps going. March 14th is our show and sale at the Mellon Center. March 21 and 22 is the field trip to New Mexico. Besides meetings and field trips in April, May, and June, you may think our timeline slows down, but no. This is the planning and implementation time for our big event of the year!

The annual Gem and Mineral Show is scheduled for July 10 – July 12 at the Elks Lodge in Show Low. Discussions, planning and signups to participate will be the main topic for the next few months. Listen in the planning stages and consider how you could help in some manner. Every little bit helps whatever the method or time frame may be. The children’s area, our club’s version of silent auction, the front desk, or the quiet security of just being a presence; these locations, and more, are places that will need man or woman power. Whether you stay the entire time (some of us really do!) or just come in for an hour here and there, all attendance will be welcome.

Signup sheets will be forthcoming, so consider what you can do to help, this is a true club effort to make this spectacular show a success. Here’s to a fun and successful rest of the year.

Donna L. Pollard, President, WMGMC



→→→→ PLEASE NOTE: THE APRIL MEETING HAS BEEN MOVED TO APRIL 12 ←←←←
DUE TO THE EASTER HOLIDAY.



Happy March Birthdays

Laurie Alderson Debi Seipp
 Judy Valentine Beverly Wilmon

**Monthly Potluck for April:
 Last Names M through Z**

It's time to renew membership! A membership application form is on Page 9. It can be printed off and filled in if you wish, and forms will also be available at the meetings.

LET'S DO LUNCH

The Let's Do Lunch Club will meet at Red Devil Pizza, March 26 at 12 PM. Address is 1774 E White Mountain Blvd, Pinetop-Lakeside, AZ.



February Let's Do Lunch

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NOTE: All mineral photographs have been sourced from Wikimedia Commons.

TREASURER'S REPORT

February Expense

Rock Talk Printing, Postage, Membership Badges, Club Business Cards, AZ Mineral Coloring Books (for the shows).

Upcoming Expense

Rock Talk Printing, Postage, Member Badges

Income This Month

Member Badges and Dues, Show Deposits, 50/50 Raffle, Silent Auction, Donations

In Memorium: It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of Diane Moten, our long-time greeter at the check-in table. She will be missed.

Rock Talk Newsletter

Our newsletter is published monthly by the White Mountain Gem & Mineral Club, Inc. Any information or comments members wish to include in the monthly newsletter must be given to the editor at the general membership meeting or call the editor no later than Tuesday following the meeting.

Membership Dues

Membership dues are \$20 for a single membership and \$25 for a couple/family. (\$5 less if you receive newsletter by email.) Dues are paid in January each year along with a completed application form. Memberships initiated in November or later in a given year are also good for the following year.

Meetings

We meet the first Sunday of the month (unless it falls on a holiday) at the VFW Post 9907, 381 North Central Avenue in Show Low. Turn north off the Deuce of Clubs at Burger King. Social half hour at 1:00 PM, meeting starts at 1:30 PM.

Elected Officers

Office	Name	Phone	Email
PRESIDENT	Donna Pollard	(480)600-2714	tdpollard@msn.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Sandra Angelo	(928)537-3726	sandra_angelo@hotmail.com
2ND VICE PRESIDENT	Debbie Trimble	(520)400-6527	dltrimble076@aol.com
SECRETARY	Shelly Applegate	(928)245-4300	shellylynn@gmail.com
TREASURER	Kim Whitley	(928)853-4455	kimwhitley@gmail.com
EDITOR	Bea Kennedy	(330)391-1916	bea.bullwinkl@gmail.com
FIELD TRIPS	Dick Turpin	(480)240-0995	dickturpinaz@gmail.com
	Ursula Wilson	(928)532-5703	uewilson@yahoo.com

Members At Large

Hope Rubi	(928)228-8851	Terry Pollard	(480)431-0686
Ursula Wilson	(928)532-5703	Carl Hickman	(928)536-3744

Volunteer Positions

Website Maintenance	Donna Pollard	(480)600-2714	tdpollard@msn.com
Show Chairman	Sandra Angelo	(928)537-3726	sandra_angelo@hotmail.com
Assistant Show Chairman	Ursula Wilson	(928)532-5703	
Sunshine	Donna Pollard	480-600-2714	tdpollard@msn.com
Education, Schools	Open		
Greeter/Door Prizes/Raffle	Thelma Gray		
Auctioneer	Donna and Terry Pollard		
Highway Cleanup	Brookie/ Larry Embry	(928)537-0760	
Bonus Prizes	Sandra Angelo	(928)537-3726	
Historian	Donna Pollard	(480)600-2714	tdpollard@msn.com
Librarian	Rick Palmer	(928)333-5019	palmer57@frontiernet.net
Meeting Room Setup/ cleanup	Shelly Applegate	(928)245-4300	shellylynn@gmail.com

Chamber of Commerce Liaisons

Show Low: B.G. Hogarth

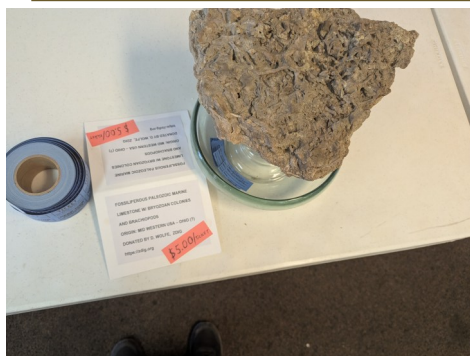
Snowflake/Taylor: Karen Hickman

Springerville/Eager: Rick Palmer

Heber/Overgaard: Aimee Webster

April Raffle

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the March fossil raffle will take place at the April meeting. Tickets are \$5 each. A bonus second fossil will be added to the raffle.



WHITE MOUNTAIN GEM & MINERAL CLUB MEETING MINUTES MARCH 1, 2026

GENERAL MEETING

The March meeting was called to order at 1:31 PM by President Donna Pollard and began with the Pledge of Allegiance and greetings to our guests and new members. Welcome to guest Wendy Kochhaser who wants to learn more about Geology. Also welcome to Wes and Suzy, returning members after 25 years away.

Donna spoke about the STEM Fair, sponsored by Navaho County that took place on February 28, 2026, at Nikolaus Homestead Elementary School in Show Low, AZ. A big thank you was given to Sandra Angelo and Carol Glick for attending early to judge student presentations and staying throughout the entire day to help show the public the rocks, minerals, posters brought by Donna for the event.

Notice was given of the Mellon Center Show in Concho, AZ, March 14, 2026, 9:00 to 3:00. If you are participating, please remember setup is 4:30 PM Friday, March 13, and doors open for our members at 8:00 AM Saturday, March 14.

It is time to begin to get ready for our Annual Gem and Mineral Show at the Show Low Elks Club—July 9 for setup, and the show is July 10 – 12, 2026. Please plan to support in any way you are able to.

Doug Wolfe announced that he has a Geology Gallery Exhibit in the Aspen Center, Northland Pioneer College, that is ongoing. The final day is Friday, March 13, until 7:30 PM. Please attend and bring your friends.

Two members presented show and tell items. Ursula Wilson showed beautiful petrified wood from the Hay Hollow area near Snowflake, AZ. Her self-described “ugly” specimen became “beautiful” when other members pointed out that the piece was not common agatized petrified wood, but opalized instead. A brief discussion of opal ensued. Learn more about opal in the March Rock of the Month article on page 6. Dick Turpin showed some tourmaline: black tourmaline called schorl, green tourmaline which he found many years ago as a highschooler, and pretty pink tourmaline.

The March field trip is a two-day affair, March 21 – 22, to the Ice Caves, and 21 Mine, about 15 miles from Grants, AZ. There is an option to go only on Saturday, or to spend the night, do some blacklight night hunting, and continue searching for fluorite and other minerals on Sunday. Call Dick Turpin for more information, 480-240-0995.

Our April trip is planned for Saturday, April 25, 2026. It will be a local trip to the Concho area to look for Cretaceous fossils, on private land owned by Shane Pollard. Our meeting in April was originally scheduled for April 5, but that is Easter! The club meeting has been rescheduled for April 12.

Our club gets a copy of Gem and Mineral magazine each month. Anyone is welcome to borrow, but it should be returned the following month. Donna has several copies of another magazine based in Germany called Mineralica, which are available to look at during the meetings. You may personally order, if desired, from the company.

The Flag Foundation sponsors a large Gem and Mineral show each year in January at the Mesa Community College parking lot—2026 was the 53rd annual show. They also sponsor a symposium each year. One can become a member of the Flag Foundation. If interested, see Donna for more information.

There are new Arizona rules for vendors. They do not affect our group as we are not considered vendors. If you desire more information about these important rules for vendors, see Donna for the information.

Hope Rubi has announced the latest “Lets Do Lunch” scheduled for March 26 at noon. This luncheon will take place at Red Devil Pizza in Pinetop, AZ. All are welcome. Please come.

On March 28, 2026, the White Mountain Symphony Orchestra Concerto Concert will take place at the Show Low School District Auditorium from 3:00 to 5:00. Have a pleasant lunch and go to the concert! Sandra has a few tickets to pass on.

An announcement was made about our friend and door greeter Diane Moten being ill and in a care facility in Mesa, AZ. It is painful to have to tell our members that Diane passed away on March 3, 2026. She will be sorely missed.

Winners of our monthly prizes were \$61.00 to Malcohm Glick, Sharon Griwold received a geode slice, our guest Wendy received a geode, and Greg received white coral. After a break, the business meeting commenced.

BUSINESS MEETING

February minutes were approved, with Loren and Ursula approving. The treasurer’s report shows we are in the clear, with everything looking good financially. Expenses for the month are subscriptions, and rock coloring books we will use at the July show.

A motion was made by Donna to have the WMGMC rejoin the Show Low Chamber of Commerce. The motion was approved by the majority of the voting members. (Continued on Page 5)

MARCH FIELD TRIP

MARCH 21-22, 2026

March 2026 Field Trip: New Mexico Ice Cave and 21 Mine

Field Trip Leader: Dick Turpin 480-240-0995 dickturpinaz@gmail.com Please let him know if you plan to attend either by text, email, or phone.

Date: Saturday and Sunday, March 21-22, 2026

Location of the Field Trip Site: Ice Cave, New Mexico

Where and When We Will Meet: We will meet at the Dollar General Store at the "Y" on Highways 60 and 61 at 8:00 AM and depart around 8:15.

Recommended Vehicle: Any vehicle can reach the Ice Cave. Getting to the 21 Mine collecting area requires a high-clearance, 4-wheel-drive vehicle. There is plenty of parking at the Ice Cave and at the beginning of the 21 Mine Road. We will carpool from these areas so everyone can get to the collecting sites. The road to the mine is short, but very steep and extremely rocky. We may have to ask some of our sturdier members to do some road work before we use the mine road.

What we will collect: Fluorite and other minerals.

Recommended Things to Take: Buckets, rock hammer, grabber, digging tools, UV light, water, lunch, sunscreen.

Cell Phone Service: The site is moderately remote and likely has limited cell service.

Directions: Take Highway 60 to St Johns, turn left on Highway 61/191 for about 63 miles, Highway 61 turns right to the east toward New Mexico. It turns into Highway 53 in New Mexico. Drive 73 miles to the Ice Cave. It is on the right (south) side of the road and marked by a large billboard. In total, the driving distance is about 150 miles and takes 2.5 hours.

Options: Feel free to attend either day or both. If you plan to attend on Sunday, contact Dick for directions to the mine.

If you have a camper and want to use it, you can camp at the Ice Cave for \$20/night or at the beginning of the 21 Mine Road, 4.2 miles east of the Ice Cave on the north side. If you need hotel accommodations, Grants is only about 15 miles from the Ice Cave.



BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES CONTINUED

The Treasurer is requesting a copy of the bylaws. A notification by a fellow member explained that the bylaws can be downloaded from our website, www.whitemountain-azrockclub.org. The website facilitator is currently updating our website as our past webmaster is no longer here. The bylaws are available.

A reminder was issued again about the Mellon Center Show, with setup Friday, March 13, 4:30 PM, and doors open to club members 8:00 AM Saturday, March 14.

Regarding the July show, 61 tables have been reserved with fees collected. There is room for 4-5 more tables as of the date of this meeting. The show chair has a few food vendors left to call. Member volunteers from last year have been contacted by the Chair and will lend their services again. Donna has suggested doing the silent auction a bit differently this year because of lack of space and time. Dick Turpin has offered to man the table to move our rocks and minerals. He would like someone else to step up to do announcements at the show. The wristbands used at the Gila Show worked well for them. The information needed to access the wristbands has been passed to the Show Chair. Finally, security at the show is an issue. We would like more members to volunteer as security at the show and investigate official security to be present during the hours of the public show. A suggestion was made to put up fake security signs and cameras.

The Alpine show, which we try to attend each year, is scheduled for August 14-16. We are planning to attend as a field trip for the club on August 15, with a side trip to the Escudilla Mountain mineral collecting site.

Our meeting was adjourned at 3:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Shelly Applegate, Secretary

ROCK OF THE MONTH — OPAL

Submitted by Donna Pollard

Until recently, opal was considered to be an amorphous solid. Amorphous means that the material cooled too quickly for any crystal lattice (structure) to form. An example of an amorphous solid is obsidian, known as volcanic glass. It is now understood that opal is composed of microspheroids of hydrous silica, tiny round spheres of quartz and water. Thus the chemical formula of opal is $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n \text{H}_2\text{O}$. It forms when silica-rich water fills underground cavities, often at the level of the water table.



Common Opal, Nevada

Opal is never found in a visible crystal structure; it may be massive, or embedded in host rocks such as ironstone, sandstone, or volcanic rock. It often forms in cracks in the host rock, creating boulder opal. Other natural hosts are fossils, shells, and teeth.

Opal may be white, known as hydrophane, which, when immersed in water, becomes transparent. Opal can also be colorless naturally, blue, black, whitish, an appearance like porcelain or plastic (luster), red, brown, even have "fire" (fire opal), and more.



Precious Opal, Western Australia

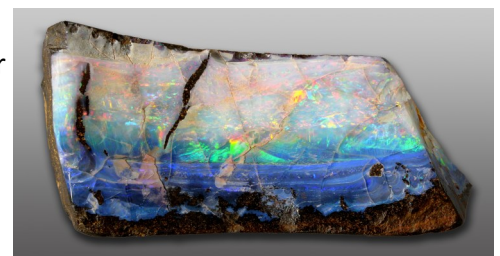
A form of pale opal forms in deposits from hot springs, and is called geyselite. Organisms in the hot fluids may color the pale opal various bright colors.

The iridescent play of rainbow colors common in opal occur because the dispersion of light varies based on the angle of incidence and the size and order of the spheroids making up the opal.

Opal is found worldwide, with the well-known black precious opal found mostly at Lightning Ridge, New South Wales, Australia. Other colored precious opal, though not necessarily iridescent, is found in Transylvania, Romania, Virgin Valley, Nevada, Idaho, and Oregon. Queretaro, Mexico, is known for deposits of fire opal. Geyselite is well known from Iceland. An interesting form of opal with a resinous luster and concentric banding representing growth rings is called wood opal as part of petrified wood. It is found in Yellowstone National Park, Egypt and Sardinia. While most of the petrified wood in the Petrified Forest of Arizona is agatized, opal wood can be found there sparingly. Concretions of opal in stratified layers called Diatomites are present in California and are used for abrasives.

While opal has a hardness of $5 \frac{1}{2}$ - 6, it is very fragile with conchoidal fracturing called "crazing." This happens because opal contains water in its formula. When opal dries out and loses the water, it can easily crack. Under certain conditions, the opal will turn into quartz (SiO_2), the formula for opal minus the water ($n \text{H}_2\text{O}$).

Opal makes lovely jewelry and many people have opal in their jewelry collections. Be gentle with it. Even the most expensive opal can "craze" and be destroyed.



Fire Opal

ROCKIN' SHOWS COMING UP!

March 2026

7-8—TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO: Annual show; Sierra County Rock and Gem Society; Sierra County Fair Barn, 1321 Hyde Ave; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; Free Admission, Free Parking; Rough & Finished Rock, Slabs, Cabs, Beads, Jewelry, Petrified Wood, Fossils, Geode Cracking. Field Trips, Presentations, Demos. Gold and Sapphire Panning. Wheel of Fortune, Door Prizes. Family Friendly with Fun Kids Activities; contact Megan Holden; Email: scragssierracounty@gmail.com; Website: scraggs.org

14—CONCHO, ARIZONA: Second Annual Show at the Mellon Community Center, 99 Frontage Road. Sat. 9-3. Child Friendly. Bring the Family. Fun For All. Local Member Vendors. Free Admission. Contact White Mountain Gem and Mineral Club. Website: whitemountain-azrockclub.org

21—TUCSON, ARIZONA: The Las Choyas Geode Deposit of Chihuahua, Mexico. The **University of Arizona Alfie Norville Gem and Mineral Museum** is pleased to host a free presentation suitable for all ages by **Jeff Smith** on the unique Las Choyas Geode Deposit in Chihuahua, Mexico. Renowned for its amethyst "coconut" geodes, the Las Choyas Deposit is complex and contains a fascinating array of beautiful agate nodules, geodes filled with intricate silicified sedimentary patterns, faulted configurations, and oddities. Attendees will experience a virtual field trip including video from 70 feet underground mining geodes at the working face. Jeff will also discuss geode formation, the geology/mineralogy of the deposit, a history of mining, and different sorting and processing techniques. A stunning variety of photos of discovered material is also included in the adventure. Join us at the museum on Saturday, March 21, 2026 at 11am for this special presentation. Visit <https://events.trellis.arizona.edu/en/f441Nu67/the-las-choyas-geode-deposit-of-chihuahua-mexico-4a3UV4kOQj/overview> for more information or to register.



20-22—ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO: Annual show; Abq. Gem & Mineral Club; Expo NM State Fairgrounds, Creative Arts Bldg, 300 San Pedro Dr. NE; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; Fri. \$2, Sat & Sun. \$5, kids 12 and under free; Treasures of the Earth Gem Expo. Enter Gate 3 @ San Pedro and Copper; contact Roy McKinney, (505) 715-0138; Email: show-chair@agmc.info; Website: <http://www.agmc.info>

April 2026

11—MIAMI, ARIZONA: Show and sale; Gila County Gem & Mineral Society; Bullion Plaza Cultural Center & Museum, 150 Plaza Circle; Sat. 9-2; Free; Vendors selling a variety of gems, minerals, jewelry, rocks and more. Wheel of Fortune. Visit with rockhounds & jewelry makers! Popcorn & beverages are available for purchase. Bento Guy Food Truck will be on site. Interested in being a vendor - 8-foot table space \$10 each; contact Beverly Hawkins, (928) 363-0345; Email: gilagem.shows@gmail.com; Website: GilaGem.org

July 2026

10-12—SHOW LOW, ARIZONA: We are thrilled to announce that White Mountain Gem and Mineral Club (WGMGC) has scheduled its 27th Gem Show for Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 10 through 12 at the Elks Lodge located at 805 E Whipple Street, Show Low, Arizona 85901. Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; Adults \$5, Kids 17 and under free; contact Carl Hickman, (928) 536-3744; Email: carlhickman8@earthlink.net; Website: whitemountain-azrockclub.org



2025 White Mountain Gem and Mineral Club Annual Show

WHITE MOUNTAIN GEM & MINERAL CLUB

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2026



FIELD TRIPS WANTED!!

PLEASE LET US KNOW OF ANY GREAT PLACES FOR OUR OUTINGS!

MONTH	MEETING DATE	TRIP DATE	NOTES
JANUARY	4	17	Gila County Show
FEBRUARY	1	21	
MARCH	1	21	Mellon Center Show—14th
APRIL	12	25	
MAY	3	23	Highway Cleanup—16th
JUNE	7	27	
JULY	5	25	ANNUAL SHOW 10-11-12
AUGUST	2	22	
SEPTEMBER	6 (Picnic)	26	Highway Cleanup—19th
OCTOBER	4	24	Harvest Fest
NOVEMBER	1	21	
DECEMBER	6		Christmas Party



WHITE MOUNTAIN GEM AND MINERAL CLUB
SHOW LOW, ARIZONA

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PO BOX 3504
SHOW LOW, AZ 85902

DATE: _____ **NEW** _____ **RENEWAL** _____

Printed Name(s): _____

Phone(s): _____ **Brass Name Badges (\$5 each)** _____

Mailing Address: _____ **City:** _____ **Zip:** _____

E-mail Address(s): _____

Type of Membership: **Single (\$20)** _____ **Couple/Family (\$25)** _____

(\$5 deduction if getting newsletter by E-mail)

Please send club newsletter by: **E-mail** _____ **US Mail** _____

May we have birthdays? (Month Only) _____

List any junior members you would like to sponsor (No added fee):

1. _____ **Age:** _____ 2. _____ **Age:** _____

3. _____ **Age:** _____ 4. _____ **Age:** _____

Signatures: _____ **Date:** _____

Seasonal members, please list alternate address and months of residency:

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Months: _____ **Phone:** _____

Around and About at the March 2026 Monthly Meeting

