

# SLAB & GAB

Website: [sjvls.club](http://sjvls.club)



Instagram: [@sjv\\_lapidary](https://www.instagram.com/sjv_lapidary)



Facebook: San Joaquin  
Valley Lapidary Society

## President's Message

Paradise... What a concept. Is it a place? Is it a feeling? There are so many ways to experience paradise.

I was recently privileged to attend Camp Paradise for the third year in a row. I spent a week in the secluded Plumas National Forest, surrounded by nearly 100 fellow rockhounds from throughout California and beyond.

Once again, I returned home inspired by just how far this hobby can take us—and by the people we meet along the way.

Now, summer gives way to fall, and another season of adventure awaits. The Kern County Fair is nearly here, and landscapes like the otherworldly Trona Pinnacles remind us that there is still so much to explore, sometimes practically in our own backyard.

Maybe paradise isn't one particular destination after all. Maybe it's wherever curiosity leads us next.

See you there...

Yours Truly,  
Cristian Baltazar  
President  
SJVLS



Cover Story

## Trona Pinnacles

The Trona Pinnacles are a unique geological feature in the California Desert Conservation Area. The landscape consists of more than 500 tufa spires, some as high as 140 ft., rising from the bed of the Searles Dry lake basin. The Trona Pinnacles were designated a National Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1968 to preserve one of North America's most outstanding examples of tufa tower formation. During the Pleistocene, massive runoff spilled from the Sierra Nevada into a chain of inland seas. The system of interconnected lakes stretched from Mono Lake to Death Valley and this

Included Searles Lake. Deep beneath Searles Lake, calcium-rich groundwater & alkaline lake water combined to grow tufa formations.

Tufa Pinnacles formed underwater 10,000 to 100,000 years ago. The pinnacles did not all form at the same time. They are divided by age and elevation into 3 groups. These groups are called the northern, middle and southern groups because they formed during the three ice ages. The northern group is the youngest at 11,000 to 25,000 years old. The small middle group claims only 100 spires, but boasts the tallest "tower", rising 140 ft. Continued on page 3...



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### General Meeting

Sept 14th, 2026 At 6 pm at the East Bakersfield Veteran's Hall at 2101 Ridge Road, Bakersfield, CA 93305

### Field Trip

Due to the fair, there will not be a field trip in September

### Kern County Fair 9/23-10/4

Sign up sheet will be passed out during the September General Meeting. Please take a look and see if you're available to help us out this year. If you volunteer for 2 shifts you get a SJVLS t-shirt to wear.

### October Camping trip – Oct 14, 15 and 16th

Sign up for the camping trip. Approx \$25/person –prepaid 2 weeks in advanced



## Member Spotlight



Please join us in getting to know Monica Escalante, one of our newer members of SJVLS, having been a member for less than a year. Even being a newer member, she has already found a wonderful community and plenty of inspiration through the club. Monica lives in the Rosedale area of Bakersfield, CA where she works as a care provider. Her journey into the world of rocks began with a simple purchase at the Kern County Fair. Monica bought a geode and had the opportunity to watch it be cut open. Seeing the beautiful surprise hidden inside sparked a love of rocks that continues to grow. After learning about SJVLS at the fair, Monica decided to join the club and explore her new passion alongside others who share her enthusiasm. Since joining, she especially enjoyed the field trips and auctions, both of which have given her opportunities to learn, explore, and connect with fellow members. When it comes to favorite stones, Monica has a clear favorite: Labradorite. She loves its beautiful flash and the way the stone seems to come alive as it catches the light. Her favorite place to rockhound is Clear Creek, and one of her favorite lapidary experiences so far has been cutting her first rock.

Rockhounding is the part of the hobby that currently interests Monica the most, but she is also discovering the creative side of lapidary work. she is learning about- and would like to continue learning - rock tumbling, cutting and polishing and wire wrapping. Wire wrapping has become a particular new interest as she expands her skills and find new ways to showcase the stones she loves.

For Monica, becoming a member of SJVLS has been about much more than rocks. She says being part of the club has given her a new family, and she thinks the members are amazing. It is clear that the friendships and sense of community she has found are just as meaningful as the beautiful specimens she discovers.

And now for a fun fact you may not know about Monica: she is an identical twin!

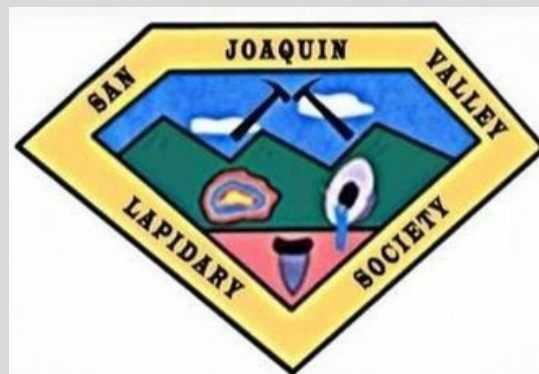
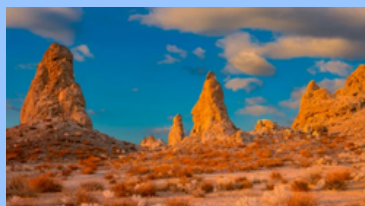
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Continued Cover Story

## Trona Pinnacles

The southern group includes 200 tufa formations aged 32,000 - 100,000 years old. Geologically, the pinnacles are classified into four general shapes. Towers are taller than they are wide and rise 30-40 ft. Tombstones are stubby and squat and rise 20/30 ft. Most tombstones are in the northernmost tufa formations. Ridges are massive toothy tufa ruins. Trona has 3 ridges, one in the norther tufa cluster and two in the middle group. One ridge is 800 ft long and 500 ft wide and 140 ft tall. Cones are less than 10 ft tall. Dumpy and mounded, cone shapes lie scattered throughout the Trona Pinnacles. The Pinnacles are recognizable in more than a dozen hit movies such as Disney's Dinosaur, Tv series Battlestar Galactica, Star Trek V: The Final Frontier and music videos for Lady Gaga's "Stupid Love" as well as many others.

**\*\*References: Wikipedia**



## The People Behind the Rocks

### A little appreciation for our Board of Directors

When people think about the San Joaquin Valley Lapidary Society, they probably think about rocks, gems, field trips, beautiful creations, meetings, shows, and maybe a garage or two filled with more rocks than any reasonable person could ever explain. However, behind all of that is something even more special.

People who volunteer to make it happen. Our Board of Directors, Cristian, Ashley, Paula, Bernie, Lisa, Topher, Michelle, Salem, Jan and Gerald, each who put in countless hours to this club throughout the year. There are meetings, phone calls, planning, organizing, setting up, cleaning up, answering questions, coordinating events, solving problems, sharing ideas, teaching, hauling things around and doing dozens of little jobs that most people will never see.

And none of us our doing it because it's our job. We're doing it because we love it.

Of course, we love rocks. We love finding them, cutting them, polishing them, creating something beautiful from them and occasionally bringing home another bucket when we absolutely promised we weren't going to bring home anymore rocks.

But I think what keeps us volunteering goes much deeper than that. We love bringing that joy to other people. It's seeing someone's face when they polish their first stone. It's watching a child become completely fascinated by a crystal. It's helping someone learn a skill they never thought they could do. It's seeing friendships form between people who might never have met otherwise. It's also knowing that for a few hours, someone can walk through the doors of our club, forget about everything else happening in life and simply create, learn, laugh and belong.

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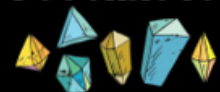


### ROCKY THE ROCK Solid Dude



### ROCKS

ARE LIKE  
DOUGHNUTS



YOU CAN'T HAVE  
JUST ONE

What do you  
call a rock that  
never goes to  
school?

*A skipping stone.*

## The People Behind the Rocks cont.

That's what makes this club special. A club doesn't become a community because of a building, equipment, bylaws or even a collection of beautiful rocks.

It becomes a community because people choose to give a little piece of themselves to it.

So, to Cristian, Ashley, Paula, Bernie, Lisa, Topher, Michelle, Salem, Jan and Gerald, thank you for every hour, every idea, every event, every late night, ever early morning and every little thing that you do when nobody is watching.

And thank you to all of our memebers and volunteers who step up throughout the year. Our board may help steer the ship, but it takes an entire club to keep it movning. We do it because it's fun.

We do it because we love this hobby. But most of all we do it because there's something pretty incredible about sharing something you love and watching some else fall in love with it too.

That's the real gem of our club. 💎

Submitted by: Gerald Capps



## Member Spotlight cont.

A few of Monica's favorites:

\*Favorite color: Black

\*Favorite stone: Labradorite

\*Favorite place to rockhound: Clear Creek

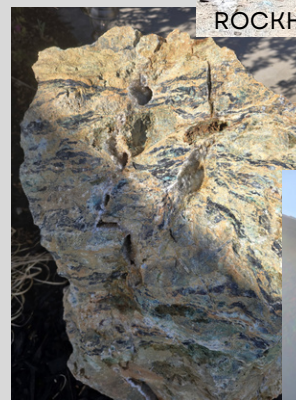
\*Favorite lapidary activity so far: Cutting her first rock

\*Hobbies she's most interested in: Rockhounding and wire wrapping.

We're glad Monica's love of rocks brought her to SJVLS, and we look forward to seeing where her lapidary journey takers her next. Whether she's out rockhounding, cutting and polishing a new find, or creating a wire-srapped piece, Monica is already adding her own sparkle to our SJVLS family.



ROCKHOUDING AT CLEAR CREEK

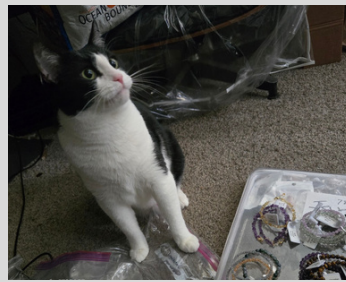


THE ROCK FROM CLEAR CREEK  
IN MONICA'S YARD

## This Week in Pictures



Lisa's cat Bella who likes to help her when she's doing nothing. 😊



Salem's cat Tomato Soup. She says he's Tomato and Basil soup when he's being naughty. 🍷



Angel, Zoey, Topher, Michelle and Catherine at the Tehachapi Mountain Festival



The map in the Tehachapi Train Depot Museum

## Let's Rock the Kern County Fair ...

Let's Rock the Kern County Fair

Our Mission: SELL! OUT!

September means cooler nights, fair food, bright lights, and the return of the Kern County Fair!

But while everyone else is thinking about corn dogs, cinnamon rolls, and rides, we have something much more important on our minds.

ROCKS!

This year, I think our goal should be simple:

LET'S SELL OUT!!

Let's send people home from the Kern County Fair with their pockets heavier, their wallets a little lighter, and a brand-new appreciation for rocks, minerals, gems, jewelry, and lapidary.

The fair is an incredible opportunity for the San Joaquin Valley Lapidary Society. Yes, it gives us an opportunity to sell some of our treasures, but more importantly, it puts our hobby in front of thousands of people who may have never experienced it before.

That little kid who stops because they see a sparkling crystal could become a lifelong rockhound.

The person admiring a handmade cabochon might decide they want to learn how to make one themselves.

And someone walking by who has never heard the word lapidary might leave wanting to join our club.

Submitted by: Gerald Capps



CMFS Corner Cont....

September 19-20, 2026 –

**Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society** Monterey Fairgrounds, 2004 Fairgrounds Rd., Monterey, CA 93940  
Hours: Sat & Sun 10-5

**Pasadena Lapidary Society** Arcadia Masonic Center, 50 W. Duarte Rd., Arcadia CA 91007 Hours: Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4

September 26-27, 2026 –

**San Luis Obispo Gem and Mineral Club** Alex Madonna Expo Center, 120 Madonna Rd., San Luis Obispo, CA 93405  
Hours: Sat & Sun 10-5

September 30 to October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Joshua Tree Gem & Mineral Show** Joshua Tree Lake RV & Campground, 2601 Sunfair Rd, Joshua Tree, CA  
Hours Wed-Sat 9-5, Sun 9-4

October 3-4, 2026

**Shasta Gem and Mineral Society** Shasta District Fairgrounds, 1890 Briggs St., Anderson, CA 96007 Hours: Sat 9-5, Sun 9-4

October 10-11, 2026

**Peninsula Gem & Geology Society and the Sequoia Gem and Mineral Society** Community Activities Building, Redwood City, CA 94061 Hours: Sat & Sun 10-5

### SAFETY:

Don't let your enthusiasm and passion for your rock hobby get in the way of safety! Keep up to date on workshop safety. Use hand tools and rock equipment safely. Wear gloves, safety glasses, face masks and hearing protection to keep you safe and healthy. Communicate any safety questions or issues to board members.

Your safety matters!

### The Kern County Fair:

The fair will be here before you know it. Have you started working on your fair exhibit entry? You must register and pay for your entries by Sept 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Go to [www.kerncountyfair.com](http://www.kerncountyfair.com) and click on **participate** and follow the easy steps to register. If you need any help just ask.



## CFMS Corner

### CFMS WEBSITE

The CFMS website is accessible at [www.cfmsinc.org](http://www.cfmsinc.org)

There is a lot of information from the President's Message to Display Exhibits and communication to help your club run more efficiently.

Our club President Cristian has returned from his week at Camp Paradise and will be showing us what he learned during our October General Meeting. Hopefully this will inspire you to participate in Camp Paradise next year.

September 2026 Club shows:



September 5th and 6th, 2026 –

**Hanford Gem & Mineral Show** Hanford Civic Center, 400 N. Douty, Hanford, CA 93230, Sat 10-5 and Sun 10-4

September 19-20, 2026 –

**Feather River Lapidary & Mineral Society** Silver Dollar Fairground, 2357 Fair St., Chico, CA 95928 Hours: Sat 9-5, Sun 9-4

## Paula's Pumpkin Roll

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

### Ingredients :

#### Cake:

1 Cup sugar  
3 eggs  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup pumpkin  
1 tbsp cinnamon  
1 tbsp baking soda  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup flour

#### Filling:

8 oz cream cheese, softened  
2 tbsp butter, softened  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp vanilla  
1 cup powdered sugar

#### Cake:

In a mixing bowl add your sugar, eggs, pumpkin and cinnamon and mix well

In another bowl add baking soda and flour.

Add the flour mixture into the pumpkining mixture and blend until smooth

\*Add your favorite nuts if desired

Spray an 11 x 15 cookie sheets that's  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep with a non-stick spray. Tear off a sheet of wax paper that will fold over and under each end of the cookie sheet. Press the wax paper into the pan making sure the better will fill in at each corner. Spray the wax paper with non-stick spray and spread the mix into the pan on top of the wax paper. Make sure the batter is level.

Bake 12 to 15 minutes

Do the touch test for doneness.

When done, pull cake out of the pan by the end of the wax paper (I pull one end and slide cake out onto the counter)) Let it cool on the wax paper while making the filling.

#### Filling:

Mix the cream cheese, butter, vanilla and powdered sugar by hand until smooth.

Now spread the filling on the top of the cake. Once done start rolling the cake up long ways (for more slices) if you want less slices you can roll it the other way. Get a new sheet of wax paper and roll it over the roll and roll it up tight and twist the ends. Then roll it up in tin foil, twist the ends. Put the roll in the freezer to get it to cool and set faster.

Easy to frost and decorate when it's frozen, or just slice into rolls. Enjoy!



## Fall is for Rockhounding

September opens up a new season



September has arrived, and for rockhounds, that means one of the best collection seasons of the year is just around the corner.

After months of summer heat, the cooler days of fall make it much easier to get back outside, explore new areas, revisit favorite collection spots, and maybe finally take that trip we've been talking about all summer.

California gives us an incredible playground. From agates and jasper to quartz, fossils, petrified wood, obsidian, and minerals of every imaginable color, there is always something waiting to be discovered. Sometimes the best find isn't the rarest specimen. It's the rock you almost walked past until the sunlight hit it just right.

Make this fall a rockhounding season.

September is a great time to start planning a few adventures. Pull out the maps, check your tools, clean out those buckets that somehow still have rocks in them from the last trip, and start making a list of places you'd like to explore.

It's also a perfect time to invite someone new along.

One of the best ways we can grow our club and keep the lapidary hobby alive is by sharing it. Bring a friend, child, grandchild, neighbor, or someone who has always wondered why you get so excited about a pile of rocks.

Because we know the secret:

They're never just rocks.

They're pieces of history. They tell stories about volcanoes, ancient oceans, mountains, deserts, pressure, heat, and millions of years of change. Then we get the privilege of taking something nature created and revealing what has been hiding inside.

Don't forget the workshop

Fall is also the perfect time to start thinking about winter projects. That rough material you collect in September could become the cabachon you polish in November, the wire-wrapped pendant you make in December, or the piece you proudly enter into a show next year.

So this month, challenge yourself to do something different.

Collect somewhere new.

Cut a material you've never worked with.

Teach someone how to use a machine.



Continued on pg 8



## September Birthdays



9/1 Christina Cornwell  
 9/4 Ron Hevle  
 9/8 JR Kennedy  
 9/9 Will Penner  
 9/13 Jasmine James  
 9/22 Zoey Conrad  
 9/27 Nancy Borgman  
 9/28 Penny Dukes



**Happy Birthday to all. We wish you all a wonderful day!!**

If we have missed your birthday please see Michelle Coleman and we will make sure we have your information. Email at [chellecoleman.mc@gmail.com](mailto:chellecoleman.mc@gmail.com)

## Gem of the Month: Sapphire



The birthstone for September is the sapphire, a durable corundum gemstone best known for its deep blue color but found in many hues, symbolizing wisdom, loyalty, and nobility.

### Overview

Sapphire is the official modern and traditional birthstone for September. It ranks 9 on the Mohs hardness scale, making it one of the most durable gemstones suitable for daily wear.

### Colors

While sapphire is most famous for its rich color, it naturally occurs in nearly every color except red. Variants include Blue (classic "cornflower" or "Kashmir" blue), pink, yellow, green, purple and Padparadscha (rare pinkish-orange)

### Meaning & Symbolism

Sapphire has long symbolized:

Wisdom & insight  
 Loyalty & faithfulness  
 Nobility & protection  
 Truth & justice

These associations date back to ancient Greece, Rome, Persia, and medieval Europe.

### History

Sapphires have been cherished for thousands of years by royalty, clergy, and collectors. Famous examples include the Rockefeller Sapphire and Princess Diana's sapphire engagement ring.

### Sources

Historically significant sapphire sources include: Kashmir, Myanmar (Burma) and Sri Lanka. Other deposits exist in Australia, Thailand, Cambodia, Madagascar, and the U.S. (Montana).

Sapphire's enduring beauty, symbolism, and durability make it one of the most valued and meaningful birthstones



## The Rock Shop in Tehachapi

On the morning of Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, a few of us decided to make the short trip up to Tehachapi for their annual Mountain Festival. The air was cool and a slight breeze was blowing.

We made our way to the Gem and Mineral show first to see what treasures that we could find. There were beautiful polished stones, handmade items, cut slabs, raw material to work and so many wonderful smiling faces.

After we made our rounds and spent a few bucks, we ventured over to the park where the Mountain Festival was happening. There were vendors as far as you could see. There were so many wonderful smells coming from the food trucks! There were crafts & food galore.

After another bit, we headed to the train museum. The history of Tehachapi is quite fascinating.

We even made our way to the train show for a bit to see the model trains.

From this point on our journey, we decided to go check out the new Tehachapi Valley Gem & Mineral Society's new shop! The Rock Shop.

We were greeted with smiling faces and enthusiastic personalities.

We spoke to several of the Society members and were given a quick tour of their new shop! They have trim saws, cabbing machines, a sliversmithing area, flatlaps and in the back room a gigantic slab saw!

## Fall is For Rockhounding Cont..



Teach someone how to use a machine.

Ask another member to show you a technique.

Or finally cut open that rock that's been sitting on your shelf for three years because you're afraid the inside won't live up to your imagination.

You might be surprised!

Here's to cooler weather, dusty boots, full buckets, beautiful stones, and another season of discovering what is hiding beneath our feet.

Happy Rockhounding!!

San Joaquin Valley Lapidary Society

Submitted by Gerald Capps

They had tables in the main room for crafting (where Zoey painted a beautiful rock) and teaching kids about lapidary arts. They also featured beautiful rocks & fossils for sale.

They have vendor spaces available if you wish to! We sell your rock or gem creations. They have an education center that offers a variety of weekly classes.

I strongly encourage you to take a trip up to Tehachapi and visit their shop! Who knows? You might even have a good time while you're at it!!

### The Rock Shop

#### Hours and location

20406 Brian Way Ste. 4A

Tehachapi, CA 93561

Mon-Sun: 10 am to 6 pm

[tvgms.net/the-rock-shop](http://tvgms.net/the-rock-shop)



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## The Board of Directors

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