



Pick & Shovel

San Gorgonio
Mineral & Gem
Society

President's Message

Hello Everyone,
Welcome back from the
Holiday Season! I hope
everyone had a great
time with loved ones
and friends. I, for one,
am grateful for the
Christmas Party we
had together! It was
really great seeing
familiar faces. I also
wanted to once again
thank those who came
off the 2025 board, as
well those who are
coming onto the board.
It has been a personal
blessing to become

acquainted with
everyone in the club
this past year.

As we get closer
to the fair, I hope
that many of you
are feeling
encouraged to
submit a
competitive case
or volunteer at
the fair!



Sincerely,
Alexa Velazquez.

Volume 9, Issue 1
January 2026

Our Mission Statement

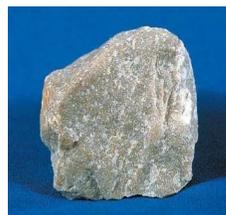
The San Gorgonio Mineral and Gem Society is organized to disseminate knowledge of mineralogy and the Earth sciences, and shall endeavor to unite and associate those persons who are interested in the collecting of semi-precious stones and the study of minerals and sciences; to encourage and practice the study of the lapidary art; to provide field excursions to localities of interest; and for enlarging our fund of geological knowledge.

Featured Rock: Quartzite

It is created when sandstone with a lot of quartz is converted through heat and pressure, and mostly related to tectonic compression. Pure quartzite is usually white to grey, though quartzites often occur in various shades of pink and red due to varying amounts of hematite. Other colors, such as yellow, green, blue and orange, are due to other minerals.

Pure quartzite consists entirely of silicon dioxide, and usually iron oxide and trace minerals are present. Quartzite has Mohs hardness of 7, which is comparable to that of quartz and considerably harder than sandstone. If you buy "quartz" for countertops, it is actually an engineered material made from crushed quartz, resin, and pigments and not

the natural rock. It is used to make roofing tiles, stairs, and flooring. When cut and polished, the rock is quite beautiful, as well as durable. It is used to make kitchen countertops and decorative walls.



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November 4, 2025 - General Meeting Minutes

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

Flag Salute

Introduction of Guests and New Members -

Sunshine Report and Correspondence- Judy Mifflin, is helping her father transition into an assisted living facility and could use our thoughts and prayers.

Sign Up Sheet - Our rock sale will be on the 15th. If you would like to be a vendor or volunteer your time please sign the sign up sheet. Help would start at 7 am.

Helen is providing cakes due to the amount of November birthdays there are.

You do have to bring your own tables if you are planning to be a vendor. There will also be a 10% commission on their sales. This compared to commission rates is a great deal, so I hope some of you consider selling. Plus, it'd be fun.

One of our members, Angel, found a food truck that will be parked by the clubhouse starting at 8am.

In our upcoming board meeting we will be introducing the new board members and all the board members will be choosing next year's board of directors.

In October, we counted the votes for the three members going on the board in 2026, as well as the Rockhound of the Year Award. Fred Richard, Hoss, and Jackie Epps have been voted onto the board. During the Christmas party, it will be announced who occupies each board position.

My dad, Pedro Velazquez was voted Rockhound of the Year.

Our Christmas Party will be on December 2nd. Helen, who is in charge of the Christmas party will be sharing more information.

There will be a field trip to Ludlow on November 9th, where we will join up with YVGMS to rockhound for Thulite and Fluorite. Meetup Spot: Pilot Gas Station at 2591 Commerce Parkway at 7:30 am or in Barstow at 68474 Rd. in Newberry Springs, CA at 9:00 AM at the Ludlow cafe.

The Indio fair will be from February 13th to March 1st next year. We would like to fill as many competitive and noncompetitive cases as possible at the fair, so if that is something you are interested in please contact us or go to the Date Festival website for more information.

We are giving members the opportunity to display items from the clubhouse at the Fair, so if that is something you are interested in please let me or Peggy know.

As of November 1st, we now have 339 rocks in total.

Program - Dr. Stephenie will now give her program on "Senseable Rocks"

Shop day - Sat 8th, 8 am to 12 pm

Shop day - Sat 22, RSVP to Lou, 8 am to 12 pm

Slab Give away and Raffle

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Aleza Velazquez,

Birthday Wishes to these Club Members!

January

Lou Mifflin on the 5th.

Susana Valazquez the 10th.

John Scofield on the 14th.

Marty Contreras on the 16th.



February

Debbie Keret on the 2nd.

Jenie Wilson on the 17th.

Jackie Misuraca on the 23rd.

November 18, 2025 - Board Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m., by President, Alexa Velazquez

Board members in attendance: Alexa Velazquez, Peggy Richard, Helen Sapienzae, Tammy Cardona, and Bob Zola (via phone). Also present was Fred Richard, Jackie Epps and Jim Brown.

Treasurers report given by Peggy Richard along with an overview of one of our insurance policies.

SUNSHINE REPORT: Keep Lance Albrect in your thoughts and prayers for a full and speedy recovery from surgery. Also, for our Secretary, Judy Mifflin, who is going through a rough time.

NEW MEMBER: The board approved the application for membership from Dywana Trimble. Welcome to our club Dywana!

FIELD TRIP: Upcoming trip, Dec. 14th, in conjunction with the Yucaipa club, to Silverado Canyon to look for fossils. Talk to Fred Richard for more details.

OLD BUSINESS: Christmas Party is on Tuesday, Dec. 2nd. at a new location.. The Grace Lutheran Church, 1000 W. Wilson, Banning. 6:00p.m.

If you have not done so, please be sure to let Helen Sapienzae, or any other board member, know if you are planning on attending and if you will have a guest. Also, what you will be bringing for the potluck.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Rock Sale on the 15th so we decided that we will be having a spring Rock Sale, the exact date is not set so look for details at the beginning of the year.

NEW BUSINESS: We will be having a "Grab Bag Filling" party along with our normal shop day on Jan 24, 2026. We will need lots of help filling 600 grab bags for the fair.

The new board positions have been assigned and are as follows:

President: Alexa Velazquez.

Vice President: Judy Mifflin.

Assistant V.P.: Lou Mifflin.

Second Vice President: Jackie Epps.

Assistant 2nd V.P.: James "Hoss" Brown.

Secretary: Tammy Cardona.

Christmas Party director: Helen Sapienzae.

The unofficial positions assigned are.

Bulletin Editor: Lance Albrect.

Editor assistant, Fred Richard;

Hospitality and Hostess: Jackie Epps.

Sunshine report: Jackie Epps.

Fair Chairman, Eric Mandeson.

Gem building Supervisor: Fred and Peggy Richard.

P.O box/alternate, Peggy Richard/Tammy Cardona.

Field trip Chairman:

Fred Richard.

Alternate, Tracy Albrect.

CFMS Director/Alternate:

Helen & Sam Sapienzae, Jackie Epps & "Hoss" Brown.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Next Month's shop day: Saturday Dec. 13th 8 - noon

Next General meeting is January 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Next Board meeting is January 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Tammy Cardona,

Thursday, January 15 Club Field Trip to Windy Point Dunes, Whitewater CA
9 am Meet at Tipton Rd / Whitewater Rd just north of Hwy 111 and south of Railroad Tracks
Bring good walking shoes, water, snacks. Camera and walking stick also recommended.
Collecting allowed! Call Tracy with questions and to RSVP (760) 641-8832



January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6 General Meeting 6pm, potluck 7pm	7	8	9	10 Shop Day 8am -12 Grab Bags
11	12	13	14	15 Windy Pt Dunes field trip 9am-12 RSVP Tracy	16	17 Shop Day 8am -12
18	19	20 Board Meeting 6pm	21 Quartzite Az (OZ) Pow Wow	22 OZ Pow Wow	23 OZ Pow Wow	24 Shop Day 8am -12 OZ Pow Wow
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 Shop Day 8am-12

February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 No General Mtg tonight. See Feb 8	4	5	6	7 Date Festival (DF) Cleaning 9 am – finish
8 DF General and Board Mtg 10 am Pot Luck 11:30 am Case entries 1-5pm	9 DF Case entries 1-5pm	10 DF Case judging	11	12 DF Festival opens 3-10 pm	13 DF 3-10 pm	14 DF 10 am –10 pm
15 DF 10 am –10 pm	16 DF 10 am –10 pm	17 No Board Meeting	18	19 DF 3 –10 pm	20 DF 3 –10 pm	21 DF 10 am –10 pm
22 DF 10 am –10 pm	23	24	25	26 DF 3 –10 pm	27 DF 3 –10 pm	28 DF 10 am –10 pm
<i>March 1</i> DF 10am –10 pm	<i>March 2</i> DF Clean up, retrieve case items					

Christmas Party 2025!



The Club Christmas party brought members and their families together in holiday spirit. On arrival there were engaging table games with Christmas cards exchanged. After thanks, a delicious potluck was enjoyed among the singing talents of Eric Mandeson. The outgoing Board, Jackie M, John S and Bob Z, was acknowledged for their service followed by heartfelt words from Bob. As the 2026 Board (Alexa V, Judy M and Lou M, Jackie Epps, James “Hoss” Bown, Tammy C.) plus those in unofficial roles were welcomed, a group photo was taken. In addition Pedro Velazquez was awarded the Rockhound of the Year and Adriana Hammack Junior Rockhound of the Year. Members then voted on programs they are interested in and the fun gift exchange followed. Thank you Helen Sapienzae for organizing this memorable and special way to close out a great year!



From left, the new Board, Special Award winners, the Zolas, the Richards.

Board of Directors - 2025

President	Alexa Velazquez	C (442) 294-8916
First Vice-President	Judy Mifflin	C (253) 261-5123
Assistant to First Vice-President	Lou Mifflin	C (253) 261-5123
Second Vice-President	Jackie Epps	C (951) 223-0807
Assistant to Second Vice-President	James “Hoss” Brown	H (760) 409-8779
Secretary/Alternate	Tammy Cardona	C (951) 230-4966
Treasurer	Peggy Richard	C (951) 963-6751
Director Christmas party	Helen Sapienzae	H (760) 507-7070
Bulletin Editor	Lance Albrecht	C (760) 641-6291
Gem Building Supervisor	Peggy Richard	C (951) 963-6751
Hospitality & Hostess	Jackie Epps	H (951) 223-0807
Sunshine Report	Jackie Epps	C (951) 223-0807
P.O. Box/Alternate	Peggy & Fred Richard	C (951) 963-6751
Field Trip Chairman/Alternate	Fred Richard	H (316) 519-8505
	Tracy Albrecht	C (760) 641-8832
CFMS Director/Alternate	Helen & Sam Sapienzae	H (253) 261-5123
	Jackie Epps & Hoss Brown	C (951) 963-6751
Fair Chairman	Eric Mandeson	C (626) 290-4795

San Gorgonio Mineral & Gem Society



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Place address label here

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See us on the
Web! At
SGMGS.org

Quartzite is more than a Rock! by Tracy A

Quartzite is now a phenomena. It is also a landscape of the Sonoran Desert with volcanic mountains. Its sentinel species is the Saguaro cactus, suggesting it gets about ten inches of rain per year, including summer monsoons. Native residents to the area are the Yavapai people. They are ancestral to the Havasupai and Hualapai and Mohave Indians and often mistakenly associated with Apache. Like the Cahuilla they were hunter gatherers supplemented with a rich trade system and small scale and effective cultivation. Their language is Yuman origin and also like Cahuilla they continue their oral history with Bird Songs. The story of these people is dynamic and most are in other areas of AZ such as Prescott. Conflicts with new culture moving in for first, water then minerals caused hardships on these people and they eventually settled in other parts of AZ.

Quartzite got its name from the quartz that was found in the area. Although Quartzsite we know today itself was not a mining town, it was surrounded by many mining camps. In search of placer gold, hundreds of individual prospectors swamped the areas around Quartzsite in the 1860's and beyond. The 1864 census, the first one in the territory of AZ, showed one out of every four residents reported the ir profession as miner or prospector. Miners prospected mostly for gold, and also for silver, kyanite, copper, and lead. Since the Colorado River Gold Rush of the 1860s up until the 1950s, Quartzite was a water hole and stagecoach station, it was named Tyson Wells. Charles Tyson was a miner who foresaw the mining potential. According to the Quartzsite Historical Society, in 1864, Tyson dug a well by hand. The well served stage-coaches that traveled from the



Old Fort Tyson

towns of Ehrenberg and Prescott. Tyson's Well Stage Station became a busy stagecoach station since it was located on the Butterfield Overland Mail route between Prescott, AZ and Riverside, CA. Tyson Wells served travelers with basic comforts and a hotel was added in 1890. Today it is preserved at its, original site as a Museum, Fort Tyson.

Tyson owned three stores, two saloons and a post office. The establishment of the railroad affected the commercial aspect of the area since most people preferred to travel by train. Tyson's Well stage station continued to provide rest and refreshment to travelers and freight drivers. In 1897, the town was officially named Quartzsite. *(Cont. Feb. 2026 newsletter)*