



Pick & Shovel

San Geronio
Mineral & Gem
Society

President's Message

Hello everyone,

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone into the month of February. May we all have a blessed Valentine's day with loved ones, and I hope to see many of you celebrating at the Riverside County Date Festival. I do want to highlight a special gratitude to all those that will be coming to volunteer your time at the fair and to those who are also putting

cases in, whether it be competitive or noncompetitive.

I can say that the Fair brings back special memories. Not only as a member of the club, but the Fair is what brought my family to join the club. Members had given us the information about our club during the Fair (a lot of times, since we kept going), and I am glad that we decided to join a few

years ago. I hope that like me, everyone who comes, makes blessed memories at the Fair.

Sincerely,
Alexa Velazquez.



Volume 9, Issue 2
February 2026

Our Mission Statement

The San Geronio 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.

What's New in 2026: The Evolution of Rock ID Apps

From Rock hounding.com The leap from 2023's apps to 2026's is bigger than you might think. Now, a few key trends have transformed the experience: Offline Identification, No more losing functionality when you're in the mountains or deep in a canyon. Many apps store AI models locally, so they work even without cell service. Community Integration Apps now let you share

finds with other enthusiasts, get expert feedback, and even join geology challenges or scavenger hunts. Educational Depth - Beyond naming a rock, apps provide geological history, formation processes, and sometimes even local geological maps. Multi-Feature Toolkits Some apps combine rock identification with other tools like GPS tagging, collection

tracking, and even augmented reality overlays that label rocks in your camera view in real time. These advances make rockhounding more accessible and fun than ever, whether you're ten years old or a seasoned geologist.



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January 6, 2026 - General Meeting Minutes

After a lovely potluck dinner the meeting was brought to order at 7 p.m., by Haas Brown.

Pledge of Allegiance, we welcomed a new guest: Brandon Castillo.

SUNSHINE REPORT: Get well wishes go out to our president Alexa and her family. We thank Haas for filling in for her tonight.

A very big thank you to Helen Sapienzae for the wonderful Christmas Party she worked so hard on. It was great.

FIELD TRIPS: Tracy will be leading a field trip on Thursday, January 15th, 9:00 am, to a local spot off of White Water/Tipton Road. Contact Tracy to RSVP. and for more info.

OLD BUSINESS: Dues are due! \$20 per person or \$30 per couple or \$40 for a family. Seniors over 75 \$10.

The Indio Date Festival is coming up, February 13th through March 1st. We need competitor cases filled. If you didn't get the chance to sign the sign up sheet for volunteering our fair booth, please contact Peggy to let her

know what days you can help. Everyone is needed to pitch in the weekend before the fair starts, Saturday February 7th. help is needed with cleaning the building, then Sunday the 8th will be our general/ Board meeting, at 10 am, followed by the potluck, Starting at 1 pm, competitors can start filling their cases.

Alexa is creating a scrapbook of our club she will enter into competition at the fair and she would appreciate any photos from past meetings or outings you may have. Write an essay about the club or members. She needs to have these soon.

There will be an extra shop day on Saturday January 17th 9 am to fill the 600 grab bags for the fair.

NEW BUSINESS: Alexa has come up with a terrific idea of a "Travel Board" which is a board that explains what our club does and hopefully catch some peoples interest in the club. If you have thoughts or ideas of locations of the board, or if you would like to use the board, give Alexa a call.

Alexa has been promoting our club to young people and will be presenting "Junior Rock Hound" badges each month. If you know of a child under 18 that may be interested in earning a badge bring them to the next general meeting or contact Alexa

This month's program was an over view of the competition cases for the fair, given by Peggy. She has first hand knowledge, as she has won many 1st place awards for her cases. If you have questions in regards to entering a case please contact her for help.

Congratulations to Jackie Epps for winning this months raffle prize.

"Shop Days" are: Saturday, Jan. 10th 8 - 12, and Saturday Jan 17th, 8 - 12. and Jan. 24th 8 - 12

Next Board meeting is Tuesday, January 20th at 6p.m. Next General/Board meeting is Sunday, February 8th at 10 am in Indio followed by our potluck lunch.

Respectfully submitted by
Tammy Cardona. Secretary

Birthday Wishes to these Club Members!

February

Debbie Keret on the 2nd.

Jenie Wilson on the 17th.

Jackie Misuraca on the 23rd.



March

Tracy Albrecht on the 9th.

January 20, 2026 - Board Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting: January 20, 2026

Call to order

SUNSHINE REPORT: Hoss and Jackie are now in charge of the sunshine report, which entails letting us know if anyone is sick or news from other members. Last year, birthday cards were sent to members, would be nice for that to be continued as well.

If any member of the board needs help with a task, then feel free to ask another board member for assistance. A member might have heard from someone else through a conversation or something along those lines.

A special thank you to Hoss and Jackie who ran the general meeting for January.

New Applicant – Deborah

Treasurer's report for November and December

End of Year Report including the 2026 Budget, Wells Fargo CD Renewal

NEW/ OLD BUSINESS:

Banning Art Gallery -

Potential Field Trip on either March 18th or 25th. Details are being finalized on the date.

Additionally, Chuck from the Art Gallery has invited us to have our own Show at the Banning's

Woman Club in either May or June. More information was asked of them in regards to what

displays they would like as well as what the show should entail for the members that want to participate.

RIVERSIDE DATE FESTIVAL:

- Schedule of the fair.
- Critter Count
- Money set up during the Fair
- Workday
- General Meeting and Potluck
- Show case entries for competitive entries.
- Some clubs from the local college and university are interested in participating in noncompetitive entries. Does any member know of another club that would be interested in participating?

- Fred has requested payment for Brazilian agates for the Fair.

- Review Geode sale price

- Who is eligible for raffle tickets at the fair? Should it be free for members?

- Flyers with information about clubhouse location, or activities.

- Club scrapbook: Members can have their favorite memories in the scrapbook.

Plan another class from Hoss.

Potential "How to paint rock" booklet from Hoss.

Plan Rock Sale so that flyers can be passed around at the fair.

Should we contact the same food truck from last time to see if they'd be interested in coming to the rock sale?

When should the club picnic be this year? Usually, it is in the summer, but last year, it was switched to a "Welcome Back Party".

AFMS newsletter will now be available only digitally starting February of this year. AFMS will no longer be mailing them.

They are also having zoom seminars with ideas that clubs could implement. Should we reach out for the link? And is this something that the club would be interested in learning more about?

CFMS are also having informational zoom meetings, with a variety of topics.

CFMS Junior Achievement Award Application, 2026, due March 1st.

Any additional ideas for the fair.

Shop Day / Critter Party: January 25th

Clean Up Day at Fair: February the 8th.

The next general meeting is at the Fairgrounds, February 9th, starting at 10 o'clock.

Meeting Adjournment

Respectfully submitted by
Tammy Cardona, Secretary



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

March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 DF 20am-10pm	2 DF Clean up, retrieve case items	3 General Meeting 7pm, potluck 6pm	4	5	6	7 Shop Day 8am -12pm
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Board Meeting 6pm 	18	19	20	21 Shop Day 8am -12pm
22	23	24	25 Field Trip to Banning Art Gallery.	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Windy Point Field Trip by Dr Stephanie Slahor

“The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork,” says the Psalm. And that “handiwork” was definitely displayed on our January field trip to Windy Point and the dunes near Tipton Road and Highway 111.

Tracy, our guide, provided “something for everyone,” in pointing out wonders in geology, biology, botany, and human history. Among the treasures were: rock “walls” created during the Hillary storm that moved boulders, clays, sand, logs and debris down and along the river channels near Windy Point; mention of the area’s endangered species milkvetch (even found some in bloom) and fringe-toed lizards (still sleeping soundly in their winter “digs”); amazing, beautiful and mysterious dunes and rock formations along the curve of Windy Point to the south and

west; stunning vistas of open country and open sky; fragile, slender sprigs of long-leaf plants in a long, thin row, just emerging from the sand after our rains (and we wondered what they will grow up to be); lore about the first inhabitants and users of the land and the older history of the Banning Pass, and we even found a few “unexpected” things that had flowed down the river during rains including a couple leaf blowers, the head of a bed, and the yoke of someone’s electric bike! Of course, most of us tucked away a few interesting or appealing rocks that had to join our rock collections, and some collected a few “stems” as we considered whether they were, in their past life, plant stems that had fossilized, or if they were stems that had been struck by lightning to become fulgurites.

Sending a HUGE thank you to Tracy and all the participants who joined her in creating a day of wonder, fun, fellowship, and discoveries!



Dr. Stephanie approves the Dunes.

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
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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

Quartzsite is more than a Rock! (Cont. from Jan issue) by Tracy A

The US Army experimented with camels in the 1850s to transport cargo across the “Great American Desert.” As they traveled from Texas to California the camels caused panic among burros, mules, and horses and a camel packer rose to fame.

Of Syrian and Greek origin, Philip Tedro, also known as Hadji Ali, or Hi Jolly (1828 – 1902) aided the US Government for 30 years as a camel packer and scout. Ali was the lead camel driver during the US Army's experiment with the U.S. Camel Corps. The high cost of the American Civil War resulted in that Congress did no longer approve more funds for the Corps. After the camel experiment was abandoned, Ali was discharged



from the Quartermaster Department of the U.S. Army at Camp McDowell in 1870, he became a prospector, and moved to Quartzsite. Most camels were auctioned in 1884 in Benicia, CA while Ali stayed in Quartzsite where he married, continued using camels for freight and became a US citizen and died in 1902 at the age of 75.

Today's Quartzsite, AZ, may be the RV boondocking capital of the world. Quartzsite has become a mecca to visitors and exhibitors for rocks, gems, minerals and fossils during the town's famous two-month-long gem show and swap meet every Jan and Feb. From its humble beginnings the now-massive Quartzsite show has grown to epic proportions with vendors offering everything under the Quartzsite sun.