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# THE BULLETIN

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Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club

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## President's message

# It's time to start catching up

Greetings Members,

This letter is going to be lengthy and actually be the Newsletter this month, but it comes with my sincerest hope that everyone had a good summer and Thanksgiving and that you are all doing well. There has never been a time in modern history when so much is taking place simultaneously. Everyone is looking for some semblance of normalcy so we can move on with our lives, yet the powers that be are telling us not so fast. So here we are at the end of 2020 and the onset of 2021 still on hold. Whatever our personal feelings are about all of this, as President along with the Board of Directors, we are obligated to follow the government mandates, but more importantly preserve the safety and well-being of our members. With COVID seemingly increasing, I am disappointed that the club is still closed until further notice. Once restrictions are lifted, it will take about a week and we will be reopening likely with limited capacity for workshops to start. If you are interested in monthly or bi-monthly **Zoom meetings, please call me or text me at (909) 234-5533**. If we have enough members, we will go forward with it, I miss seeing everyone each month and breaking bread together.

Elections were to take place in November, however without the ability to meet, the Board suggests we leave the 2020 slate of officers the same for 2021. If you do not agree, or if you want to run for a board position, you can send a text message to our **Recording-Secretary Lynne Bradshaw at (909) 534-0364** or an email to **smileylynnebradshaw@icloud.com** to voice your desire/opinion/objection. If enough people respond, we will act accordingly before years end with an official announcement or an online election. It should be understood that everyone agrees to the current slate of officers if there are no objections to the contrary. Please respond before December 20<sup>th</sup>. Lynne will not necessarily know who you are, so you must provide your name with your message, anonymous text messages or emails will be disregarded.

At the beginning of the year, we had such high hopes for 2020, then COVID came along while the Tailgate was in progress and immediately changed everything by the end of the weekend. Originally, the board scheduled to reopen the club on July 8<sup>th</sup>, but that did not go as planned either. The board has met regularly in various ways and are in touch often even if we are not meeting in a more formal environment. Business still goes on... following is the short list of a few things that have occurred since we last met in February:

1. We had to have a wrought-iron cage built around the electrical panel behind Kaman to keep the homeless from standing on the lever and shutting off their electricity on the weekends.

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## **Officers, Committees**

### **Board of Directors**

Dwayna Barron - President/  
Treasurer 909-234-5533  
Ruben Martinez - 1st Vice-President-  
Membership 760-490-8263  
Lynne Bradshaw - Recording  
Secretary 909-534-0364  
Sara Arnold - Corresponding  
Secretary 760-221-3734  
Don Pomerence - Board Member  
760-596-7424  
Gayland Graves - Board Member  
760-902-3249  
Sandra Skidmore - Past President  
760-617-6001

### **Committees**

Auctions - Don Pomerence/  
Lynne Bradshaw  
Bulletin Editor - Doug Arnold  
CFMS Director - Ruben Martinez  
Displays - Don Pomerence  
Education - VACANT  
Historian - Denise Millar  
Hospitality - VACANT  
Librarian - Denise Millar  
Maintenance - John Bradshaw  
Pettrified Pups -  
Photography - Rose Padilla/  
Denise Millar  
Social Media - Sasha Holtkamp  
Sunshine - Don Pomerence  
Tailgate - Committee  
Wagon Master - Gayland Graves  
Webmaster - Jim Fosse

### **Instructors**

Dwayna Barron    Gayland Graves  
Lia Hamilton     Chris Koch  
Ruben Martinez  
Don Pomerence

2. We did have a cleaning day when we were expecting to reopen and put everything from the Tailgate away, however the club needs cleaning again. A lot of dust, cobwebs and things have accumulated again from just being absent. The winds took their toll as well.

3. On a few occasions we have had to go to the club to deal with a situation, usually the sprinkler system. The homeless were breaking the sprinkler heads off creating geyser's and runoff into the street when the system turned on. Disaster averted, MB Landscaping to the rescue and all is good again. We have not had any problems for a while now. Yeah!

4. The #2 Lortone saw was completely restored, thank you John Bradshaw. Parts for the #1 saw are in and we are awaiting an opportunity to fix that saw as well. It will happen before we reopen the shop.

5. Fixed the Thermostat; an exceptionally high electric bill triggered the need to find out why given no one was supposed to be at the club. Voila! Batteries. Oh, my goodness, who would have thought.

6. The big white tables were repainted, thank you Ruben and Don. With the left-over paint, I retouched many of the cabinet faces, particularly in the kitchen. Maybe soon, we can do more.

7. Ruben replaced the A/C filters, the others were VERY black and oily. The thought of everyone breathing that air was... well you can figure that one out.

8. Bought a new battery pack for the security cameras. Installed a flat screen color monitor and a wireless keyboard/mouse to access the system. I have another remote control on order as the old one seems to be missing in action.

9. We started cleaning out the back office and organizing it. We had 4 boxes of old financials shredded with 3 more to go. We have the tax records, so there was no need to keep 40+ years of old receipts. It was fun to go through though. In the meantime, we will be going in next week to finish putting everything away.

10. Signage and a COVID-19 Business Response Book was created that provide protocols and procedures for dealing with the virus in a responsible manner. It will be updated prior to our return as protocols may be slightly different from when we first began.

Soon we will need helpers to assist with inventory and cleaning the tool room (yikes). It will be at least a 2 to 3-day job, but with extra hands, it will go fast. Thanks to Gayland, John, Lynne, Sara, Don, Sharon, Louise and Ruben. You guys rock when it comes to doing what needs to be done when asked.

It is with heartfelt sadness to announce that Connie Weinberg went home to be with her Lord on September 24<sup>th</sup>. She was having health issues that her fragile body was unable to recover from, although she surely tried. Connie was going to be 109 years old on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Ruben and I had talked to her a few times during the summer with the hopes that we could go visit her, but COVID prevented us from doing so. One of the many things that she shared with us was her remembrance of the Spanish Flu outbreak and how different society handled it at the time. We were blown away by what she recalled 101 years ago. Connie would laughingly tell us to ask her anything, she remembered it all! She was an

# Brad's Bench Tips for April

## STRAIGHTENING WIRE

Have you ever pulled out some silver wire only to find that it's all bent up? The easiest way I've found to straighten it out is to stretch it a bit.

Simply put one end in the vise and grab the other end with a pair of serrated tip pliers. Then pull just enough to feel the wire stretch like a rubber band. This works best on smaller wire diameters, up to about 16 ga.

Be careful if you are trying to pull hard on a thick wire. Brace yourself in case the wire breaks or pulls out of the pliers.



Discover New Jewelry Tricks in Brad's "How To" Books  
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

## DO BEZELS SHRINK

The engineer in me says there's no reason a bezel should shrink when I solder it onto a base plate, but I sometimes find that the stone won't quite fit into the bezel that was perfect just before soldering.

If that ever happens to you, here's a fix that usually works for those times when there's just a minor problem. I file or sand the stone down a little around its base. For soft cabs like turquoise, lapis, jet or Howelite, you can use a sanding stick. Harder cabs like jasper or agates will require a diamond file. In a pinch, a ruby nail file from the drugstore will work.

There are two important things to remember when doing this. First, you can only make a minor adjustment to the stone's size. All filing or sanding has to be hidden by the bezel because it takes the polish off the stone. Secondly, remember to round off all sharp edges on the bottom of the stone. A sharp edge here might sit on a little extra solder that's in the bottom joint of your bezel. Just a little bump here can put enough stress the stone to risk breakage when you burnish the bezel down over the stone.

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amazing woman who still had aspirations for her future. What an honor and privilege to know her. We will miss you Connie, an icon of our club and many others... Christmas without your birthday celebration or sweet little stories will never be the same. Ruben says, rest in peace sweet princess.

Given where we are with COVID 19 at the moment the board has decided to cancel the Tailgate for March. As I am writing this, effective today the governor shut down southern California including campgrounds. If everything calms down over the spring, we thought we could go forward in the fall before weather becomes an issue. Tucson has cancelled their shows as well stating that they do not want to be responsible for one COVID-related illness or

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*2017 This is the Christmas she donated her turquoise and silver cuff she made.*

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potential death. Neither do we. Since we cannot control people's attitude or behaviors, we opted for safe and precautionary measures at this time. It will also give us time to plan for the fall if we choose to go there. I trust everyone will see our perspective and be respectful of the decision even if you do not necessarily agree with it.

**Our 2021 Membership renewal is now due!** The board has voted to reduce the membership dues for current members by half for the 2021 year. **Individual: \$13, Couple: \$18, Junior: \$8 each.** The numbers were rounded up to make accounting easier. This amount will at least cover the cost of our CFMS dues and insurance. If you have any questions you can always call me at (909)234-5533 or Ruben Martinez, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Membership at (760)490-8263. You can drop off payment in the mail slot at the club or mail your payment to the club at:

Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club  
15056-B Seventh Street  
Victorville, CA 92395

Payments postmarked or dropped in the box after December 31, 2020 will incur a late fee of \$10 and if payment is not received by January 31, 2021, your membership will be dropped from the rolls and reinstatement will be at the regular price of \$25 per Individual, \$35 per Couple and \$10 per Junior member. No exceptions.

The past few months have left a profound effect on us all. I truly hope that this next year we can come together in unity and harmony and just enjoy our hobby together whatever that looks like. As always, we ask that you join in and volunteer in some capacity, nothing happens without many hands and effort, there are always things to do from the most menial of tasks to the largest of jobs that require our attention. In January's newsletter I will provide additional information for you.

I pray that you all have a most excellent Christmas holiday and the Happiest of New Year's. Ours will be quiet and reflective as was our Thanksgiving. Through this season, love those close to you, give to those less fortunate, forgive others (and maybe even yourself) and keep moving forward, our time on this earth is precious, sacred and valuable, and please, please whatever else you do, stay healthy and safe as we look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Merry Christmas  
Dwayna Barron  
President



*Another pic of Connie Christmas 2018*



*This is Christmas last year.*

**Note: If you've changed your mailing address, email or telephone number since last year, please let me know so that I can update our database. We want to be sure you get the latest Newsletters and updates. All the ways you can do that: [dwayna.barron@gmail.com](mailto:dwayna.barron@gmail.com), [President@vvgmc.org](mailto:President@vvgmc.org), (909) 234-5533 call or text. If you call and I don't answer please leave a message and I'll call you back.**