



# THE BULLETIN

MAY 2024

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's message..... 1

Field Trip Reports.....2,7

Rocks, Minerals & Today.....3

CFMS + OTHER Shows.....4

Board Members..... 5

Committee Chairs.....5

Instructors.....5

Birthday's & Birthstone.....6

General Meeting & Potluck.....6

Meetings, hours.....10

Workshop training.....8

Education Night.....8

Junior Rockhounds.....9

**LET'S HAVE A BIG  
WELCOME TO OUR NEW  
CLUB MEMBERS.  
MAY 2024**

**JOHN O'CONNER  
THERESA SIMMONS  
DANIEL SIMMONS  
SAYA RUIZ  
DANIEL KNIGHT**

**HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL AT THE NEXT  
GENERAL MEETING & EVENTS!**

**COME ON IN AND SHARE OUR POT-  
LUCK LUNCHEON, JOIN IN WITH  
THE COMRADERY WITH NEW  
FRIENDS.**

**LISTEN IN ON NEW CLUB NEWS,  
EVENTS, GOINGS ON WITH OTHERS  
IN THE CLUB, AND LEARN HOW YOU  
CAN HELP TO MAKE US THE BEST  
CLUB IN THE HIGH DESERT AND  
SURROUNDING AREAS.**

**PICK UP SOME ROCKS WHILE  
YOU'RE THERE, AND GET SOME  
ROCK WORK DONE AFTER 2:30PM,  
THE WORKSHOP IS OPEN**

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE FOR MAY 2024

Greetings to all members!

Please join me in welcoming our new tenant for the front building, The Cages.

Elizabeth Brown and her husband Clayton have signed a 2 year lease to operate a business that offers indoor batting cages so that Little Leaguers have a place to practice when our high desert is too hot or windy for them to play outside.

This is good news for our great club!

Please be aware that, once they open, July 1<sup>st</sup>, we will need to make sure that they always have some parking spaces available for their clients. Please carpool whenever possible, and if our parking lot is close to full, park at one of our neighbor's lots. And please, just one car per household in our lot.

Since The Cages plan on being open 7 days a week, we will likely have to move our monthly meeting to another time, or maybe even another location.

Thanks in advance for your help on this issue.

Meanwhile, summer is coming soon. We have 1 more field trip planned before it gets too hot. Janet will be leading us on a trip north of Hinkley to find soap bubble Rhyolite and common Opal. This is a long trip and requires vehicles with 4-wheel drive and high clearance. For your own protection, Janet will send you home if your vehicle is not so equipped. Please see details elsewhere in this newsletter.

Finally, thanks to all 165 of our members for helping to make our club welcoming and friendly. Keep up the good work! **Dave Duncan**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is what the club is all about. Introducing Yessenia (Yaya) Ruiz, one of our newest club members. After signing up with the club, she came into the workshop and made her very first cabochon.

She is so happy and proud and it sure shows.

We hope all new members will come into the club and make something that you can treasure forever. Congratulations Yaya!



## FIELD TRIP REPORTS FROM WAGON MASTER SCOTT GRAY

April 14th was the date for the VVG&M field trip to North Edwards for travertine onyx, jasper, jasp-agate, and petrified palm, reed and wood.

During the 9am meetup, on a windy and chilly Sunday morning, members and guests rolled in and perused some sample of the various materials to be found at both sites.

Everyone was antsy to find some rocks so our group of 34 attendees headed north on Clay Mine Rd to the first of the day's locations: The Sierra Pelona Travertine Claim!

The Sierra Pelona club owns a wonderful mining claim and graciously allow access to clubs and individuals as long as a few basic rules are followed: all common sense ones such as do not dig in the road, fill your holes when your done, fill out the visitor forms, etc. While a pretty brown and honey colored travertine is the most commonly found on the claim, with a little looking and digging it isn't difficult to locate pieces with reds, blacks, and greens. Blaine and Judy Witte shared the beautifully contrasting black and white pieces they picked up at the western edge of the mine and which I have yet to find myself.

Not so well know are the various other materials hidden around this site by other rockhounds. It's kinda like an Easter egg hunt except with rocks instead of eggs. I found a chunk of wood and a nice moss agate on the pre-site visit. Guests turned up with green jasper, half a geode, and other stones not native to the mine. Lots of fun indeed! The mine is so productive that it didn't take long to load up with the travertine, including a 50 lb. piece dug from right below the surface. Holes filled and visitor forms filled out we were ready to head to the second location for the day: Castle Butte!

While Castle Butte is only about 7 miles away from the Sierra Pelona Claim it's a bumpy zig zag on washboard roads with a few washouts and no problems were encountered reaching the site: an intersection of roads on the eastern side of the butte. Soon the hunt was on. With a larger area to look and tons of material, including the inevitable leaverite, rockhounds fanned out every which way. Good material can be found here with a keen eye, a little patience, some walking, and a sprinkling of luck. Within a few minutes of arriving a guest turned up a nice piece of palm root with eyes.

This is a great site for beginners because so much can be found that you have to be very selective to get the best of what The Castle has to offer; forcing you to chip stones, use your water bottle, flip stuff over, and cull down your finds when you locate a similar but better piece. I saw several petrified reed specimens uncovered, as well as some nice green jaspers, and a couple pieces of petrified wood... including the one found by me! As the rain clouds rolled in the rockhounds rolled out. Sasha and I stayed a little longer trying to find another piece of that elusive palm root but it wasn't meant to be, a cold wind and a spattering of rain had us pack it in for the day. Oh well, looks like we will just have to make another trip to The Castle on a future field trip! Win Win!

Another successful field trip for VVG&M with a variety of great finds, lots of new members, and many guests... 2 of them from France! And I thought we traveled far that day to find cool rocks! See you guys on the next one! Thanks also to Ruth Hildalgo for her help at the site.

SCOTT GRAY



**MAY 11TH, 2024 FIELD TRIP TO OPAL MOUNTAIN!!!  
LEAD BY PAST WAGONMASTER JANET FLECHER.**

See further details on page 7



*Rocks, Minerals and Today, some Petrified Wood. By Cristiane Stoll.*



**Unearthing Nature’s Masterpieces; The Enigmatic Beauty of Petrified Wood Gems.**

In the realm of gemstones, few treasures captivate the imagination quite like petrified wood. These ancient wonders are more than just geological curiosities; they are nature's time capsules, preserving the essence of bygone forest for millions of years

**A fossilized journey through time.**

Petrified wood begins its journey as ordinary wood, part of ancient forests that flourished millions of years ago. Through a process known as permineralization, the wood gradually transforms into stone while retaining its original structure. This occurs when the wood becomes buried under layers of sediment and ground water rich in minerals, such as silica, seeps through the porous material. Over time, the minerals replace the organic matter, turning the wood into stone and preserving its cellular structure in exquisite detail. The result is a stunning array of colors and patterns, with vibrant hues ranging from earthy browns and reds

to shimmering blues and greens. These colors are often the result of trace elements present in the mineral-rich groundwater, infusing the petrified wood with a kaleidoscope of natural pigments. The intricate patterns, known as dendrites, are formed by mineral deposits that follow the original grain of the wood, creating mesmerizing swirls and whirls that evoke images of ancient forests frozen in time.

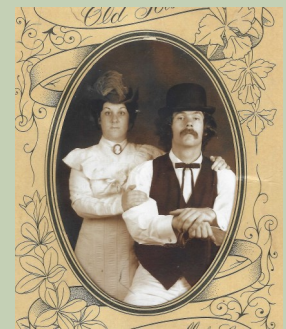
Petrified wood gems are more than just objects of beauty; they are reminders of the extraordinary power of nature to transform and endure. With their rich colors, intricate patterns, and timeless allure, these ancient treasures invite us to connect with the Earth’s history and marvel at the wonders of creation. In a world that is constantly changing, petrified wood gems stand as enduring symbols of resilience, perseverance, and the enduring beauty of the nature world.



*Happy 50th Anniversary To Jacob (Jake) & Susan (Sue) Brouwer. May 18, 2024.*

Yep, 50 years, 4 daughters, 8 granddaughters and grandsons, 10 great granddaughters and great grandsons. From very humble beginnings we worked our butts off to make a go of it in the 70's, in the 80's we explored the southwest in our spare time and came to love the desert. In the 90's we reached the top at our work places, and Sue started a home business while I still worked. In the 2000's we moved to Hesperia, where we have lived since 1999, working on various treasure related projects, and selling on eBay, April was our 24th year in business with eBay.

So what's next we wonder, sometimes you just take things as they come. For now, Happy Anniversary to my loving wife, friend and lover of 50 years! Love ya honey!



## California Federation of Mineral Societies Show Dates

For the months of May, June closest to our location

### May 3-4, 2024 – Yucaipa, CA

Yucaipa Valley Gem & Mineral Society

Show will be held on Yucaipa Blvd near Adams Street, Yucaipa CA 92399

Hours: Friday 5 PM – 10 PM, Saturday noon – 9 PM

YVGMS annual show held in conjunction with the city of Yucaipa Music and Arts Festival (YMAF). The YVGMS show will include 15 dealers, kids activities, club store, geode cracker, and a great raffle.

YMAF will have name bands both nights, other arts and crafts dealers and food, beer and wine booths. Great for the whole family. Contact: [grandpasgems@gmail.com](mailto:grandpasgems@gmail.com). Website: <https://www.yvgms.org/>

### May 4-5, 2024 – Lancaster

Antelope Valley Gem & Mineral Club

2551 W Ave. H, Lancaster, CA 93536

Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM

AVGMC Rock, Jewelry and Gem Show. Parking and Admission are free. Plenty of vendors, displays and activities for the whole family.

Contact: [marylandoriole@gmail.com](mailto:marylandoriole@gmail.com)

### June 8-9, 2024 – Escondido, CA

Palomar Gem and Mineral Club

California Center for the Arts – at the Conference Center, 340 North Escondido Blvd., Escondido, 92025

Hours: Saturday 10AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10AM – 4 PM

Held at the California Center for the Arts – at the Conference Center, 340 North Escondido Blvd., Escondido.

Admission: \$5.00, Children under 12 Free

Contact: (425) 281-6218, [tonifloyd41615@gmail.com](mailto:tonifloyd41615@gmail.com)

Website: <http://palomargem.org>

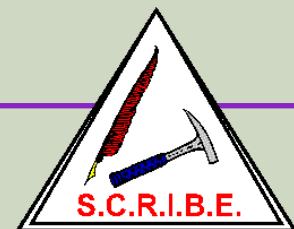
### June 15, 2024 – Bellflower, CA

Delvers Gem and Mineral Society

Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church, 14515 Blaine Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706

Hours: 10 AM – 4 PM

Rock & Lapidary Extravaganza. Parking lot sale – Tons of Fun. Free Admission, Free Parking. Gems, Minerals, Equipment, Odds and Ends. [delvings@yahoo.com](mailto:delvings@yahoo.com)



**BOARD MEMBERS, CHAIRS, INSTRUCTORS.....**

**President.** / Dave Duncan, EMAIL : [president@vvgmc.org](mailto:president@vvgmc.org)

**Vice President / Membership.** Beka McNeil / EMAIL: [vp@vvgmc.org](mailto:vp@vvgmc.org)

**2nd Vice President: Education.** Lia Hamilton

**3rd Vice President: Tailgate Chairman, Junior Rockhounds Chairman, Mark Lantz** EMAIL [marklantz53@gmail.com](mailto:marklantz53@gmail.com)

**Recording Secretary /** Mark Lantz (temporary) / EMAIL: [recordingsecretary@vvgmc.org](mailto:recordingsecretary@vvgmc.org)

**Treasurer /** Janalee (Jan) Arnold

**Corresponding Secretary /** Jake Brouwer

**Board Member /** 2 Year term - Lorie Cunningham, Pam Trozera

**Board Member /** Sara Arnold, Past President

**Board Member /** Cory Beck

**Maintenance /** Temporarily unavailable.



**COMMITTEE CHAIRS.....**

**CFMS /** Position is open

**Wagon Master /** Scott Gray

**Librarian /** Algot Stephenson

**Newsletter /** Jake Brouwer / EMAIL: [jakelsdg@verizon.net](mailto:jakelsdg@verizon.net)

**Photography /** Temporarily unavailable .

**Webmaster / Tech /** Jim Fosse / EMAIL: [info@vvgmc.org](mailto:info@vvgmc.org), In training, Angela Auberry.

**INSTRUCTORS:**

Janet Fletcher    Mary Lou Fletcher    Dwayna Barron    Chris Koch    Stina Smith  
 Mark Lantz    Dave Duncan    Lia Hamilton    Gayland Graves    Beka McNeil    Lorie Cunningham

**ASSOCIATE INSTRUCTORS** Algot Stephenson. Ann Musik



Send your articles in by the 23rd of Each month! [jakelsdg@verizon.net](mailto:jakelsdg@verizon.net)





**Welcome all club members to MAY 2024** Our **potluck luncheon** for May 18, 2024 starts at 12:00pm. Birthday cakes for those celebrating this month will be needed for deserts. We ask all, that you bring with you an entrée, side dish, salad or fruit to the luncheon. The meeting will start with the pledge of allegiance, followed by a moment of silence to remember members and friends that are no longer with us. The General Meeting will start after tables are cleaned up. Try to make it, as in these meetings we discuss state of affairs for the club, planning, and other news. Afterwards there are door prizes of rocks, and minerals, and other items. Tickets passed out at the door. Extra tickets are available. We will also have rocks on display to enjoy and to have some fun with exciting rocks, gems, fossils and other related items available to members. Once the meeting is over those that wish to work in the shop will start. New for May; Kamen Building, volunteering, workshops and Education night.

**MAY'S BIRTHSTONE:**

So, back in 1984 your editor saw the film Romancing the Stone with Michael Douglas, and Kathleen Turner. Being an adventure buff, it made my day. Action and adventure. I was 34 at the time, doing gold panning, sluicing, on the East Fork of the San Gabriel River, exploring the Mojave, and working 60+ hours a week. I had heard about the great Spanish shipwreck the Atocha, and its fabulous treasure of gold, silver and emeralds. It led eventually in 2005 working with shipwreck folks on the 1715 fleet doing research, and business planning for 7 years.

The emerald became my favorite gem, and color. Since my birthday is in May, it is fitting that I write about May's birthstone which is the emerald, a rich green variety of the mineral beryl. Ranging in color from greenish-blue to green, they have a clear depth of color that few gems command. Known as the gems of romance and intrigue, emeralds are one of the rarest gemstones, and their unique and highly coveted color makes them a prized and special gift for anyone born in May.

In centuries past, this birthstone symbolized fertility and good fortune, and was even thought to cure diseases and restore exhausted travelers. Spiritual traditions and legends held that these gems had the power to make their wearer more intelligent and quick-witted. Emerald lore also claimed that by placing an emerald under the tongue, one could see into the future. Others believed it improved the wearer's eloquence and gave protection against evil spells.

Off to the right is a shelf in my home of some of my favorite green pieces. The very front and center is an emerald on matrix from one of the 1715 shipwrecks. There are also emerald green coffin shaped bottle, ink wells, and other green goodies like malachite, epidote, some turquoise, and opal.

I hope all our May birthday folks enjoy their day. Maybe get out there and hunt some rocks, in our great Mojave Desert. Start a green collection or other colors of your birthstone, color favorites, and well, wow, you just may enjoy it as I do when I see emerald green. *Thanks, Jake*

**MAY BIRTHDAYS**

**CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SPECIAL DAY**

- VILMA WHITEHEAD
- JOHN ALCORN
- JAKE BROUWER
- JOHN MUIR
- SARA ARNOLD
- GEORGE ROBLES
- STEVE RUCKER
- CHARLIE MICHNER
- JEANIE AMAYA



### MAY 11TH, 2024'S FIELD TRIP, By Janet Flecher past Wagonmaster

So are you ready for the most fun field trip of the year! This will be an all day fun, grueling, trip filled with all kinds of finds from different sites including a stop at Inscription Canyon, and Scouts Cove.

The first stop will be OPAL MOUNTAIN. But, first we meet up to discuss the entire trip. The meet up will be at the cross roads of old Hwy 58 and Hinkley Road. Old 58 is between the railroad tracks and the new 58. You need to be very sure that you are there by 8:00 in the morning sharp. Usually we will give up to 10-15 minutes wait, but please do not be late as it will be long day.

The key to this trip is SAFETY! You must have a 4 X 4 vehicle with high clearance and know how to drive it in sand, rocky roads, up inclines, and up or down a possible ledge. If you are not sure if you or your vehicle can make you should check with the club house to be sure, or you will have to turn back. Your vehicle will be checked out for potential problems you may encounter on the trip. So check your self before you leave, check pressure for tires, spare tire, radiator, oil etc. Have a great breakfast, pack a good midday meal, and plenty of snacks and lots of bottled water. Bring a first aid kit if you have one.

More SAFETY; bring extra clothing, also be prepared to spend the night if you end up having to spend the night. (only in cast of an emergency. (Medical or breakdown). Flashlights. Once we leave the highway we will be on non graded roads, deep sand, slipping hills, and some steps. Always keep in sight of the vehicles in front of you. The last vehicle will wait for stragglers.

CRITTERS; you may see some desert tortoise, ground squirrels and rattlesnakes. Be prepared!

FINDS: You may find rhyolite soap bubble jasper and other jaspers, agates, chalcedony and opal, these and more were found on the recent scouting trip.

We will be making 5 stops along the way, three are for rock hunting in the Opal Mountain, the fourth if all goes well up to then, will be the ancient Indian site known as Inscription Canyon. It is filled with wonderful signs of early time made by local tribes known as Petroglyphs

Last stop is Scout's Cove located in the Opal Mountains. It was a mining site for opals in the early 20th century, financed by the Tiffany Jewelry Company from New York. There is evidence that ancient Native Americans also mined opal from this area. The miners carved a nice shelter in the tufa dome near the mine, which is now used by campers. You can still find bits of opal around, but be careful, as the open pit mine appears to be very deep!



Seams of white opal & below some chalcedony



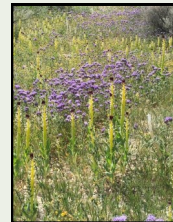
SCOUT'S COVE



OPAL MOUNTAIN & INSCRIPTION CYN



May we shed a tear this week for dear Mary Lou Flecher, who very recently Lost her dear Mother. Hugs are in order. The image to the left is of mom on her 90th birthday. To the right an image by Mary Lou of some beautiful flowers that I thought was appropriate to share, as I am sure that her mom passed on to Mary Lou, her love of nature, and the earth's treasures. All our sympathy from the Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club. *Editor*



**SATURDAY WORKSHOPS WITH COREY BECK AT 1:00 PM,****Stabilizing Stones Workshop Recap:**

We had a workshop on stabilizing stones Saturday, April 13. Corey Beck discussed how to stabilize stones, heal cracks in stones, and make doublets. Corey showed us his method and the products he uses but explained that there are several other methods and multiple products. Go onto YouTube and search 'stabilizing stones'.

Stabilizing a stone means to harden a soft stone or to heal all the tiny cracks in a stone so that it does not split or flake. Most turquoise is stabilized. If you sell a stabilized stone in jewelry, you are supposed to notify the buyer.

Healing Cracks is different in that you are filling larger more obvious cracks. A different more viscous material is used.

Stabilizing and healing of stones is done at any time to rough stones, slabs, cab blanks, and finished cab's.

When you stabilize a stone or heal a crack you force an adhesive, usually epoxy, into the small spaces and cracks in the stone. Heat or a vacuum are two methods used to get the harder into the stone's pores, cracks, and fissures. Once the stone has been stabilized the epoxy is allowed to dry. The stone is now ready for cutting, cabling, or polishing.

At the club we have a vacuum machine for when you stabilize rocks and a small oven for use when healing cracks in rocks. They can both be found in the Silver room. As always you must be signed off by an instructor to use these machines.

Making Doublets is where you add a backing material to a rock to make it thicker for cabling or to simply make a thin stone stronger. This is often done with opals and turquoise but also intarsia pieces. There are also Triplets. A triplet is where there is a clear top, normally of quartz, a stone in the middle (such as a thin piece of Opal) and a base material. Triplets are made to protect or give depth to a very thin stone.

Upcoming workshops, all on Saturday at 1 pm, include Sand Casting, Broom Casting, Wire Wrapping a crystal, and Slabbing and Cabling Tiger Eye. If you have a request for a workshop, please let the Board know. May's specific workshop days will be sent by email to all members.

**EDUCATION NIGHT WITH LIA HAMILTON AND PRESENTATION BY KEN VILLARS****Introduction to Lighting Small Reflective Objects:**

For Education Night this month, Lia has asked me to give some pointers for making nice photos of jewelry and cabs, with the goal of members being able to make nice photos to help present and sell those items.

We will cover some of the problems inherent in photographing small reflective objects, with an emphasis on problem solving so you can feel more confident with your improvised home studio.

Each particular piece presents its own specific challenges, so it is my hope that we can mainly do some practical work with several samples that people will bring from home. Time permitting, we may be able to send a few people home with a digital file they can use to show off their work.

Ken Villars teaches primitive skills and sells atlatls and darts, as well as a line of flintknapping tools. The Villars family resides in Apple Valley. Ken and Barbara Villars are new members (they joined at this year's Tailgate event), and have two children, Jack (13), and Darla (11). Jack and Darla are being home schooled, and membership at the Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club is augmenting their education. Ken received a degree from the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California, with a major in Industrial/Scientific photography.





## JUNIOR ROCKHOUNDS WITH MARK LANTZ, PHOTOS BY KEN VILLARS

I stated today, April 20, 2024 at the General Meeting, that there were six Junior Rockhounds working on their lapidary badges. All Junior Rockhounds learned to use the trim saws to cut a slab to the approximate shape for grinding, and how to apply a dop stick to the cut slab. They then worked on the flat laps to shape their pieces. Special thanks to Pam Trozera, Beka McNeil, and Dwayna Baron for helping out and their participation helped make this day a success.

You all should know that the Junior Rockhound Program has gained some supplies for field trips. Allyson Herek, donated various tools including two Geiger counters and two metal detectors, various hammers, chisels, pry bars, gold pans, sieves, magnifiers and 20+ plastic storage boxes of rocks. I will go through the donation, inventory it and send a letter to Mrs. Herek. *Mark Lantz*



JUNIORS, MARK AND LAP MACHINE



APPLYING DOP STICK TO CUT CABACHON



LEARNING TO STORE THEIR COLLECTIONS



UNDERSTANDING MAPS



Hello club members, what you see above is the results of Mark Lantz spending 33 years in education on the 6th - 12th grade level in geology and earth sciences. Just one of his hobbies is lapidary work. He is also a collector of Indian Zuni figures, and a railfan. When Mark volunteered for this position with the club, he studied for many hours honing his skills with the CFMS, and AFMS guidelines on teaching their programs for Junior Rockhounds. We all are so grateful to have him working with the youth in our community. What these children are learning here with the Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club is something you will not find in many schools these days. So much has been cut from education in areas of the arts, music and in this case geology, earth sciences, and a hobby known as lapidary arts. Many families like the Villar's are home schooling their children. Think about how this could help your family and give the club a call and see how you to can join with your family. *editor*

Victor Valley Gem & Mineral Club

was founded in 1947, as a 501/  
C4 non profit education club.

Visitors are always welcome.

Our objective and purpose is to disseminate knowledge of mineralogy & earth sciences. To encourage study in those subjects through various programs. To arrange field trips for exploration, study, and collection of specimens. The preparations, publication, and distribution of articles pertaining to these fields. The encouragement of interest of young people and fostering of classes in mineralogy and Lapidary Arts.

**SHOP DAY: TUES MAY 14, 21, 28 2024**

**12:00pm - 5:00 pm**

**SHOP DAY: THURSDAYS - 2:00pm- 8:00**

**SHOP DAY: SATURDAYS— 12:00pm-5 pm**

**SHOP DAY: SUNDAYS - 12:00pm - 5 pm**

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS AS FOLLOWS**

**CLUB CLEAN UP DAY: TO BE ANNOUNCED**

**INSTRUCTORS MEETING: TUES, MAY 7, 2024, 3pm**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: TUES MAY 7, 2024**

**4:30pm TIL FINISHED.**

**EDUCATION NIGHT: MAY 14, 2025 6:00 PM**

**GENERAL MEETING: - MAY 18, 2024. 12:00 - 2:00 pm,  
followed by our tradition door prizes, and more. Shop  
work resumes APPROXIMATLY 2:00 -5:00 pm.**

**JUNIOR ROCKHOUNDS: MAY 11, MAY 25, 2024 - 9:00  
AM TO 11:45 AM**

**THE BULLETIN IS THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER...**

Published by the Victor Valley Gem & Mineral club and is distributed free of charge electronically to the members by email. Views expressed by authors in the articles appearing in THE BULLETIN do not necessarily reflect those of the VICTOR VALLEY GEM AND MINERAL CLUB. The editor publishes content as presented with minor changes for continuity.

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**Articles and pictures are due by the 23rd for each month. Please contribute when you can!**

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