




# Grindings

*Idaho Gem Club, Inc.*

P.O. Box 8443  Boise, Idaho 83707-2443

**VOL 82 NO 2**

**FEBRUARY 2021**

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Rockhounds!!

It seems so strange to not be swamped preparing for our Annual Gem Show this year, which we cancelled due to Covid restrictions. I know alot of you are missing this opportunity to see what the area miners discovered last year. Some photos are in this issue of the newsletter and hopefully you will check out some dealers' websites and send some business their way!

The March issue of Rock 'n Gem Magazine features one of our part-time resident miners family story – Spanish Stirrup Rock Shop owners Lori Lytle Coleman and fiance Bruce Williams, along with children Chloe and James. They mine in Idaho/Oregon with Steve Schultz every year. Check out this great issue!

Thank you Robert Coggins and Jason Fuzzy Smith for doing Facebook live segments on sunstones and cabochon creation on January 23rd. They will continue doing segments on various topics coming up. Watch the Facebook page for announcements. You may also view the sessions at any time.

If you browse You Tube, you will find Philip Stephenson, Steve Schultz, Eugene Meuller, and various videos on mining for your favorite materials. There are also workshop videos, and an opportunity to learn just about anything to do with lapidary and rockhounding.

Our workshop will be open this month, and we require masks and will limit attendance to allow distancing. See the calendar inside. Ask Brent Stewart if you have any questions!

Field trips are going to be announced hopefully at our meeting on February 16 and also will be listed on our [www.idahogemclub.com](http://www.idahogemclub.com) website. We know you are all excited to get out and collect again! Just a reminder, you should pay your club dues, receive a current membership card and keep it on you if you're out collecting on club claims. As always, we expect you to honor the Rockhound Code of Ethics; respectably travel on established roadways, avoid damaging trails by causing ridges and making mud bogs and ruts (go when it's dry outside and not wet roads), do not trespass on claims or private property, fill in any holes you make or find, pick up a little trash if you come across some, and only take as many rocks as you will use or need. It is not right to collect with intent to resell! Leave something for another person to discover!! Don't disturb vegetation or tree roots or cause destruction of habitat for animals and plants. If you are unsure of anything relative to rockhounding, ask somebody for help or the answers!

Check out the Idaho Mining Museum Bonanza newsletter at their website! They have a solid list of events coming up. Coyote Short will be doing rock and mineral identification February 13, 20, and 27 at the museum in the Old Penitentiary on Warm Springs Ave. Tickets may be obtained online (see page 4). They also have Field Trip routes with a guide online, links to a Rock Box Workshop for collections, and a Mineralogy Boot Camp. Let's safely enjoy a little rockhound hobbying!

I am looking forward to seeing some of you at our February 16th meeting at Mtn. View Church, 7:00 pm! Wear your masks, and come healthy! If you don't feel well, stay home please! We hope to have a new meeting feature to share with you couresy of Cheryl Link, 2nd VP.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Deana Ashton, President*

## MEETING AGENDA

Next General meeting will be Feb. 16, 2021, at 7:00 pm, Mtn. View Church.

The deadline for issues is the Friday after each Board Meeting for the current month's edition. To submit articles, please send them through email to Dana Robinson, Editor [drobinso@boisestate.edu](mailto:drobinso@boisestate.edu)

## ACTIVITY CALENDAR

## JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	5 Board Meeting 7 pm	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 General Meeting 7 pm	20	21 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	22	23 Facebook Live Feed 2 pm & 5 pm
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	30 Workshop 10 am-2 pm

## APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	6 Board Meeting 7 pm	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 General Meeting 7 pm	21	22 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

## FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	2 Board Meeting 7 pm	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 General Meeting 7 pm	17	18 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Workshop 10 am-2 pm
28						

## MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Workshop 10 am-2 pm
2	3 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	4 Board Meeting 7 pm	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 General Meeting 7 pm	19	20 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29 Workshop 10 am-2 pm

## MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	2 Board Meeting 7 pm	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 General Meeting 7 pm	17	18 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Workshop 10 am-2 pm
28	29	30	31			

## JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Board Meeting 7 pm	2	3	4	5
6	7 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 General Meeting 7 pm	16	17 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Workshop 10 am-2 pm
27	28	29	30			

## IDAHO GEM CLUB MEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Idaho Gem Club Field trip day is the 3rd Sunday of each month and Owyhee Gem & Mineral Society Field trip day is the 3rd Saturday each month.

Kathe and Jeff Miller are completing the 2021 Field Trip schedule and should have copies at February General Meeting. Tell them if you have weekdays available and we can add some trips during weeks.

### Field Trip Leaders Contact Information:

IGC -- Kathe & Jeff Miller 208-713-6807

Call if you'd like to share ideas of locations to visit!

## IDAHO GEM CLUB RESOURCE GUIDE PROJECT

I have been working on a Directory or Resource Guide for rockhounds to contact dealers and support their businesses. Introduce yourself to the rockhound community and feature your lapidary goods in this resource guide. I'd like to give everyone associated with our club an opportunity to sell their jewelry and rock creations. Send an email with photos of your inventory or list the items you sell and we will organize this into a catalog. Send an email to [dashtonigc@gmail.com](mailto:dashtonigc@gmail.com) with subject line: Rock Resource Catalog. A fee structure will be decided on in the near future.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Rebecca Sparling  
Courtney Sparling & Family

Debbie Mitchell

## WORKSHOPS

Workshops are being restarted since we've moved to Stage 3 of reopening.

Our normal workshop schedule is the Thursday evening after the general meeting, and the Saturday of the following week. Please be sure to bring your mask. The dates are listed on the calendars page.

## New Members:

Our website at [idahogemclub.com](http://idahogemclub.com) has all of the information regarding our Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and Operating Procedures. Please contact any Officer or Board Member with questions or suggestions.

## WORKSHOP LOCATION

2620 W. Idaho St., Boise, ID  
Next door to Stewart's Gem Shop  
\$5 Fee for each visit (kids free)



### THE GRINDINGS

is the monthly newsletter of the Idaho Gem Club, Inc., associated with the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Permission to copy is freely granted when proper credit is given to both the publication and the author.

Articles without bylines are written by the Editor or President.

**CHECK OUT THE CLUB WEBSITE!**

[www.idahogemclub.com](http://www.idahogemclub.com)

## IDAHO MUSEUM OF MINING AND GEOLOGY

Check out the Idaho Museum of Mining and Geology's website for upcoming field trip tours, rock collection workshops, new gift shop items (lots of new books) and more.

[www.idahomuseum.org](http://www.idahomuseum.org)

### Identify your Rocks and Minerals!

Coyote Short PG will help you identify rocks, minerals and Native American artifacts.

Bring her your specimens!

Register for tickets here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mineral-identification-tickets-137201287745>

Coyote Short is a Professional Geologist, licensed in Idaho. She is one-half Paiute-Modoc Indian and one-half French. Born in central Idaho, she has lived in various parts of the northwest, and now makes her home in Boise, as her lineage is with the Boise Valley Tribes. Her fields of work include geology, archaeology, and chemistry. She studies at BSU and has been a dedicated volunteer at the Idaho Museum of Mining and Geology for over 20 years. Her knowledge of Idaho's rocks and minerals is impressive.



This will be an informal discussion, 3 people at 1pm or 2pm on February 13, 20, and 27. Face masks that cover nose and mouth required. Free for museum members, \$5 for each nonmember. Call Shirley with questions, 208-283-3186. Please leave message for a return call. The museum is moving to pre-registrations for all events.

## GEM CLUB LIBRARY

Western miners from Spanish Stirrup Rock Shop are featured in *Rock 'n Gem Magazine* this month. They are also part of a group of three families that formed a cooperative partnership to mine in Idaho, Oregon and Nevada. Check the magazine out from the Gem Club's Library this month.



*Lori Coleman (right), her children, Chloe and James (left and front), and fiancé, Bruce Williams (back).*



*Lori Coleman and Steve Schultz, Quartzite*



## AMETHYST

Amethyst is a purple variety of quartz ( $\text{SiO}_2$ ) and owes its violet color to irradiation, impurities of iron and, in some cases, other transition metals, and the presence of other trace elements, which result in complex crystal lattice substitutions. The hardness of the mineral is the same as quartz, thus making it suitable for use in jewelry.

### Hue and Tone

Amethyst occurs in primary hues from a light lavender or pale violet color, to a deep purple color. Amethyst may exhibit one or both secondary hues, red and blue. High quality amethyst can be found in Siberia, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Uruguay, and the Far East. The ideal grade is called “Deep Siberian” and has a primary purple hue of around 75–80%, with 15–20% blue and (depending on the light source) red secondary hues. ‘Rose de France’ is defined by its markedly light shade of the purple, reminiscent of a lavender/lilac shade. These pale colors were once considered undesirable but have recently become popular due to intensive marketing.

Green quartz is sometimes incorrectly called green amethyst, which is a misnomer and not an appropriate name for the material, the proper terminology being prasiolite. Other names for green quartz are vermarine or lime citrine.

Of very variable intensity, the color of amethyst is often laid out in stripes parallel to the final faces of the crystal. One aspect in the art of lapidary involves correctly cutting the stone to place the color in a way that makes the tone of the finished gem homogeneous. Often, the fact that sometimes only a thin surface layer of violet color is present in the stone or that the color is not homogeneous makes for a difficult cutting. It can even cut crystal quartz, which is one of Earth’s sharpest gems.

Amethyst can fade in tone if overexposed to light sources and can be artificially darkened with adequate irradiation. It does not fluoresce under either short-wave or long-wave UV light.

### Geographic Distribution

Russia was the major source of amethyst until the 19th century, when large deposits were found in Brazil. Once as rare as ruby or emerald, amethyst was suddenly in abundance.

Amethyst is produced in abundance from the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil where it occurs in large geodes within volcanic rocks. Many of the hollow agates of southwestern Brazil and Uruguay contain a crop of amethyst crystals in the interior. Artigas, Uruguay and neighboring Brazilian state Rio Grande do Sul are large world producers exceeding in quantity Minas Gerais, as well as Mato Grosso, Espirito Santo, Bahia, and Ceará states, all amethyst producers of importance in Brazil.

It is also found and mined in South Korea. The largest opencast amethyst vein in the world is in Maissau, Lower Austria. Much fine amethyst comes from Russia, especially from near Mursinka in the Ekaterinburg district, where it occurs in drusy cavities in granitic rocks. Many localities in south India yield amethyst. One of the largest global amethyst producers is Zambia in southern Africa with an annual production of about 1000 tons.

Amethyst occurs at many localities in the United States. Among these may be mentioned: the Mazatzal Mountain region in Gila and Maricopa Counties, Arizona; Red Feather Lakes, near Fort Collins, Colorado; Amethyst Mountain, Texas; Yellowstone National Park; Delaware County, Pennsylvania; Haywood County, North Carolina; Deer Hill and Stow, Maine and in the Lake Superior region of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Amethyst is relatively common in the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Nova Scotia. The largest amethyst mine in North America is located in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Amethyst is the official state gemstone of South Carolina.



Several South Carolina amethysts are on display at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History.

### History

The name “amethyst” derives from the Greek *amethystos*, which means “a remedy against drunkenness,” a benefit long ascribed to the purple birthstone. Because of its wine-like color, early Greek mythology associated the gem with Bacchus, the god of wine. Amethyst was also believed to keep the wearer clear headed and quick witted in battle and business affairs. Renaissance Europeans thought it calmed lovers overrun by passion.

Amethyst was used as a gemstone by the ancient Egyptians and was largely employed in antiquity for intaglio engraved gems. Royals have admired the deep purple hue of the February birthstone since at least the days of Alexander the Great. Medieval European soldiers wore amethyst amulets as protection in battle in the belief that amethysts heal people and keep them cool-headed. Beads of amethyst were found in Anglo-Saxon graves in England. Anglican bishops wear an episcopal ring often set with an amethyst, an allusion to the description of the Apostles as “not drunk” at Pentecost in Acts 2:15.

### Treatment and Synthetic Amethyst

Heat treatment is the most common technique for improving the color and marketability of natural amethyst. Heat treatment can't make pale amethyst darker, but it can lighten the color of very dark amethyst and make it more attractive. It can also remove unwanted brownish inclusions in some amethysts. Some amethyst turns yellow – to citrine – with heat treatment.

Heat treating amethyst results in a permanent change in color. However, submitting it to intense heat may render it slightly more brittle than usual, and care must be taken not to damage pointed faceted corners and sharp edges. Note, too, that excessive heat can remove the color entirely, and some amethyst



fades with prolonged exposure to strong light. Though the color is stable with normal use, this is not a stone to wear to the beach every day.

You'll also encounter lab-created amethyst. Having the same chemical and physical properties as its natural counterpart, synthetic amethyst has been known since the 1970s.

In some cases, it is very difficult to distinguish natural from synthetic amethyst without access to advanced gemological testing. The GIA Laboratory can tell the difference, but many in the jewelry industry do not request testing because of the cost and time required to determine the origin of what is a comparatively inexpensive gem. Still, merchants are required to tell you if a gem is natural or synthetic.

Synthetic (laboratory-grown) amethyst is produced by a synthesis method called hydrothermal growth, which grows the crystals inside a high-pressure autoclave. Synthetic amethyst is made to imitate the best quality amethyst. Its chemical and physical properties are the same as that of natural amethyst and it cannot be differentiated with absolute certainty without advanced gemological testing (which is often cost-prohibitive). One test based on “Brazil law twinning” (a form of quartz twinning where right and left hand quartz structures are combined in a single crystal) can be used to identify most synthetic amethyst rather easily. It is possible to synthesize twinned amethyst, but this type is not available in large quantities in the market.





Treated amethyst is produced by gamma ray, X-ray or electron beam irradiation of clear quartz (rock crystal) which has been first doped with ferric impurities. Exposure to heat partially cancels the irradiation effects and amethyst generally

becomes yellow or even green. Much of the citrine, cairngorm, or yellow quartz of jewelry is said to be merely “burnt amethyst”.

### Cleaning Amethyst Jewelry

Amethyst is a 7 on the Mohs scale of hardness. This means that it is appropriate for daily use in rings and other jewelry, but over time it may show wear and require repolishing. Because this February birthstone is more susceptible to damage than harder gems such as rubies, sapphires and diamonds, you risk scratching your amethyst jewelry if you place it next to these harder stones. Amethyst jewelry can be cleaned with an ultrasonic cleaner, but steam cleaning is not recommended. A soft brush with mild soap is the safest option.



## SUNSHINE LADY REPORT

By Deana Ashton

If you know of members who are needing a little cheer during illnesses, end of life, are in isolation, or who need cheer, please contact the IGC Sunshine Lady at 208-794-5628. She will send cards, flowers or reach out to them. Extending friendship to our members is an important part of our community. Thank you.



Photo from Idaho River Sports facebook page.



### Mike Jones and Laura Lindsay

Michael David Jones was born in Boise, Idaho, July 1, 1957, and died January 15, 2021. Laura Fay Lindsay was born in Roswell, New Mexico, April 21, 1960, and died January 17, 2021.

Mike and Laura met in Murphys, California, in 1991 and moved to Boise in 1995. They worked together as independent painting contractors. In fact, they did everything together and were rarely seen one without the other. Always interested and always doing things, Mike and Laura led an individualistic, nonconforming lifestyle. They were avid participants in two of their favorite activities: kayaking and rockhounding, and developed many friendships. They enjoyed lapidary arts and making gifts for family and friends. Mike and Laura died due to smoke inhalation in an accidental house fire.

Mike is survived by his father and step-mother Connie and David Jones, his brothers Jerry Jones (Julie) and Dale Jones (Jenny), and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his sister Caroline Jones and mother Donalie Marie Salo.

Laura is survived by her son Zachary Lindsay (John Sanner), daughter Carissa Lindsay (Josh Daughtery), grandsons Kolten, Liam and Hayden Daughtery, and brothers Robert and Raymond LaBell. She was preceded in death by her father Andy LaBell.

No services are planned at this time, but messages may be left on the share link of the online obituary.



## BRAD'S BENCH TIPS

by Brad Smith

### Bezel Closer

A bezel closer is a steel punch that makes quick work out of pushing the metal down over a round stone and burnishing it. It works with regular bezels, with tube settings, and with prong settings. Stones can be set in as little as 30 seconds.

The working end is a concave cavity that fits over the bezel or prong setting and is pushed and twisted to capture the stone. Sets can be purchased but are expensive and contain many sizes you will probably never use. If all you need is one or two sizes, here's how you can make them yourself.

Find a round steel rod or bolt a little larger in diameter than your bezel cup or prong setting. Cut a 5 inch length. File both ends flat. Locate the center of one end, centerpunch a divot, and drill a small pilot hole about 5 mm deep. Remember to use a little oil as lubricant when cutting steel.



Select a ball bur a bit larger than the bezel. Enlarge the pilot hole to a full hemispherical cavity. Test for proper fit with your bezel. Bezel should first contact the cavity about a third of the way in. When the size is correct, polish the cavity using Zam on a

length of chopstick in your flexshaft. If the tool is not polished it will leave scratches on your bezel or prongs.

When using the tool, the first step is to capture the stone correctly. I usually work by hand and push the punch straight down over the bezel or prongs. This causes the metal to start bending over the stone. Next, if it's a small stone, I inspect with a lens to be sure the stone is staying level. This is repeated until the stone is seated on its bearing and can't move anymore.

Next you want to force the metal down onto the stone uniformly all the way around. While this can be done by hand, I often gently tap the punch with a hammer. Finally, I burnish the bezel by twisting the punch around.

### Bench Shears

When cutting sheet metal, it's quicker and easier to use a set of shop shears as compared with using a hand saw. The cut is not as precise, but many times you don't need that. Shears will easily cut up to 24 gauge sheet, and some will cut 22 or even 20 gauge.

Current prices for shears run from \$13 - \$36 in jewelry catalogs, and the Joyce Chen scissors recommended on some jewelry blogs run more than \$20. But we found a cheaper alternative at the 99 Cent Store – some gardening utility scissors that were only \$1.07.

I buy a half dozen of them at a time for use in my jewelry classes. They're great for cutting beels, trimming around a bezel cup and cutting a piece off a larger sheet.



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Learn New Skills with Brad's "How To Do It" Books  
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

## GEM CLUB OFFICERS

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## MINUTES OF THE IDAHO GEM CLUB GENERAL MEETING JANUARY 19, 2021

There was not a general meeting in January. We will be doing a meeting for February.

*Respectfully submitted, Deana Ashton, President*

## MINUTES OF THE IDAHO GEM CLUB BOARD MEETING FEBRUARY 2, 2021

Deana Ashton called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Present:** Deana Ashton, Willa Renken, Teresa Nebeker, Brent Stewart, Cheryl Link, Ed Moser, Jason Smith, and Rick Corbett.

**Absent:** Kathe Miller, Randy Harrison, and Teri Frostrom.

Deana asked for any corrections to the minutes as printed in the Grindings. Willa made a motion to accept the minutes as printed in the Grindings, which was seconded by Ed Moser. Board members voted, motion passed.

**Secretary Report:** No report. Gia has stepped down as club secretary. If anyone knows of a replacement, please let us know.

**Treasurer Report** by Teresa Nebeker: Teresa went over the month's expenses and membership renewals. She sent the NFMS club dues and has the new NFMS directory. Willa asked that we not continue sending newsletters to addresses that have seen returns before checking with member for updated address information.

**Federation Report:** No report. Need to check with Randy to see if he attended the AFMS Zoom meeting.

**Refreshments Report:** No report.

**Program Report:** No report.

**Field Trip Report:** The field trip list for 2021 should be ready for the February general meeting. Deana will be meeting with Kathe to help her finalize the list.

**Workshop Report** by Brent Stewart: The workshops are able to restart. Brent went over the dates for the upcoming workshops. Feb. 18 6-8:45 pm, Feb. 27 10 am-2 pm, Mar. 1 ROLE workshop 6-8:45 pm, Mar. 18 6-8:45 pm, Mar. 27 10 am-2 pm.

**Scholarship Report:** The scholarship winner sent her article for the newsletter. Teresa will get contact information from Phil or Deana to send the check to her.

**Old Business:** Fuzzy did his Facebook Live Feed. It was very good and enjoyable. Anyone could follow his instructions and succeed. He will need new equipment before he can do more videos. Robert Coggins also did a video on sunstones. He will be doing more in the future.

Idaho Expo agreed to roll payment forward for the 2022 show. The last payment will be held until 2022. The dates will be Feb. 26 and 27, 2022.

**New Business:**

Willa asked if the meeting room at the church had been paid for in 2020. Teresa could find no record of it.

A house fire claimed the lives of Mike Jones and Laura Lindsay in January. They were long-time members of our club and always volunteered at the show. Deana would like to do a memorial picnic in June to honor the members who have passed away. Dana will call the park to schedule reservations. It wasn't possible until we reached Stage 3 again.

Cheryl discussed the new cabinet for storage at the church. There was discussion on its placement, as well as delivery.

There was also discussion on claim work. Cheryl will set up a work day for June to do Beacon Hill, painting posts, etc. Posts also

need maintenance or replacement at Whangdoodle and Queenstone, which will also require a work day.

Federation Director Randy Harrison is working with Sandra Mitchell on upcoming changes to our recreation areas and will report at meeting.

Three new applications were reviewed. Willa made a motion to accept the new members, Jason seconded, the board voted and the motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

*Respectfully submitted, Dana Robinson  
and Deana Ashton, President*

## CLUB SECRETARY NEEDED!

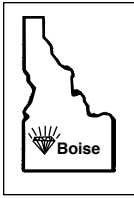
Please step up if you can fill the position of club secretary. Meeting notes are taken twice a month at meetings!



*Dead Camel Jasper, new material from Phil Stephenson.*



*A Cookie Monster geode!!*



Idaho Gem Club, Inc.  
P.O. Box 8443  
Boise, Idaho 83707-2443

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

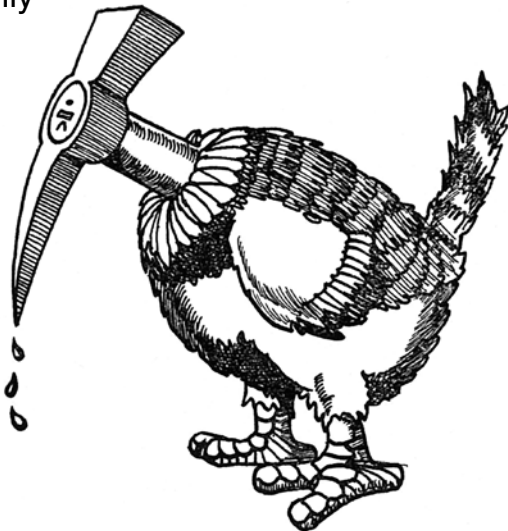
The purpose of the Idaho Gem Club is to promote mutual, educational and scientific interests and benefits of it's members in mineralogy, geology, gemology, the art of lapidary and kindred arts and sciences

**Dues:**

- \$22.00 individual
- \$25.00 couple
- \$28.00 family

**Subscription only:**

\$10 per year



**GENERAL MEETING:**

3rd Tuesday of every month: 7:00 p.m.

**BOARD MEETING:**

1st Tuesday of every month: 7:00 p.m.

**ADDRESS:**

Mtn.View Church of Brethren

