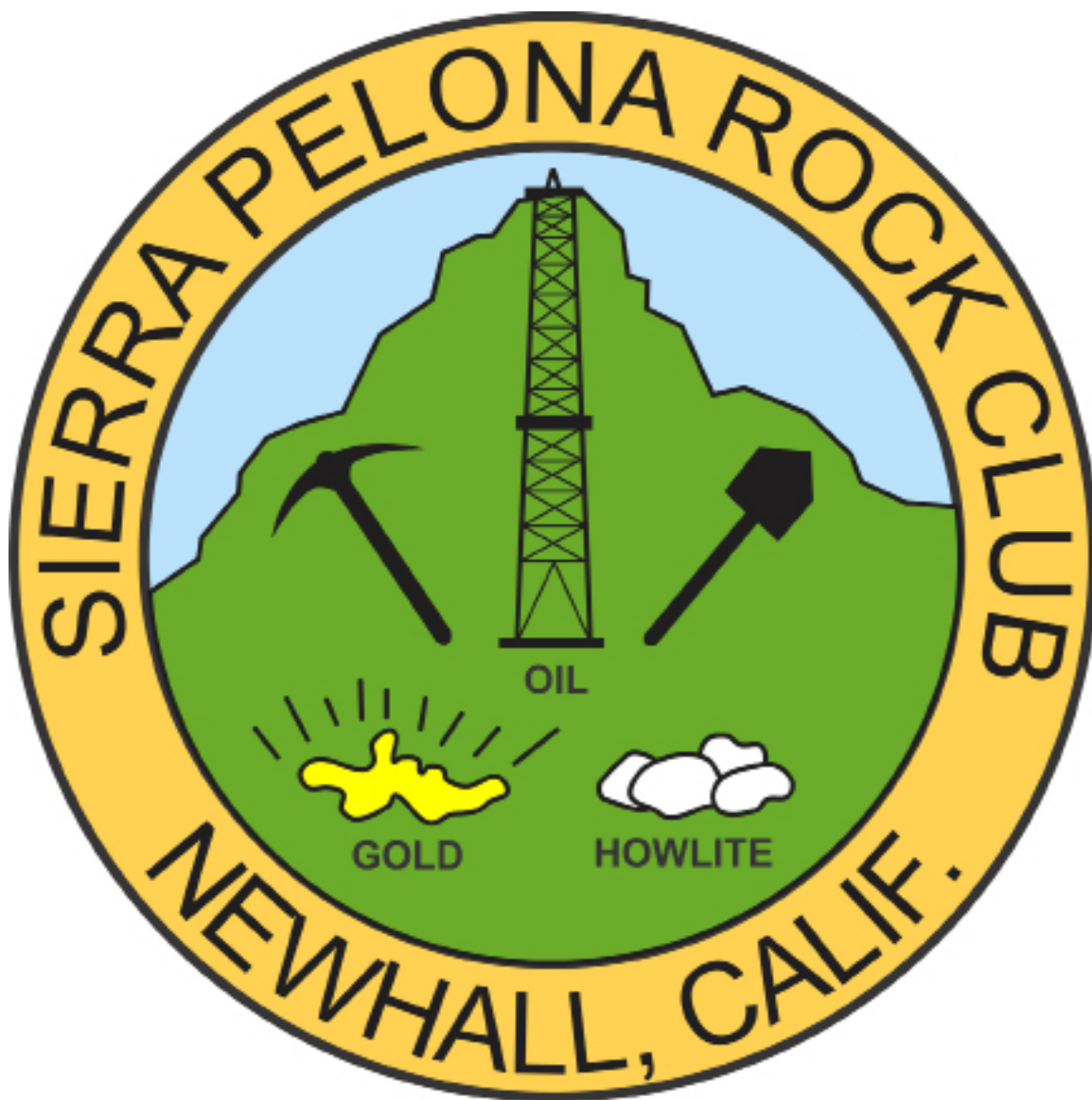


# The Sierra Pelona nagram



June 2023

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*... Member of the California Federation of Mineralogical Society Inc. ...*

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The Sierra Pelona Rock Club is a non-profit organization founded in 1959 with the objective to sponsor activities and promote interest and education in: mineralogy, lapidary, geology, paleontology and related subjects.



**June**

Connie Flores-Reisbeck  
 Akiko Strathmann  
 Heidi Webber  
 Janelle Williams  
 Dianne Wohlleben

**August**

Don Cogan  
 Bryan Hori  
 Ron Lawrence  
 Doug Vito

**End of Season Picnic**

Saturday, June 3 the club had their “End of Year” picnic at Meadows Park. It was a gorgeous, mostly overcast day albeit with a bit of a strong breeze. About 35 people came to enjoy the picnic and activities following. There were so many auction items that we never got around to playing Bingo as usual, but we all had a great time anyway.

Connie Flores-Reisbeck was even there with her broken foot in a boot and wheelchair.

New members Maria Falasca and Suzie Rizzo (returning member) were given their membership packets and introduced to the club.

Afterwards, Ron Rackliffe did his usual great job of auctioning the many items on the table. There was more than one bidding war. I myself, think I won big.

It was a great day, and it was nice to see everyone. There are a couple little outings planned for the summer, including a mid-afternoon luncheon in August, all of which will be announced via email. Otherwise, I’ll see you in September!

**July**

Trina Aeen  
 Sandra Cattell  
 Dower Jai Gervais  
 Ron Rackliffe  
 Betsy Swallow  
 Jaclyn Wright  
 (Wow! Trina, Sandra and Ron are all July 28!)

**September**

Cheryl Cogan  
 Maria Falasca  
 Jenn Jenkins  
 Margaret Stamboulian  
 Julie Tinoco



**Officers:**

President – Linda Jenkins  
 Vice-President – Julie Tinoco  
 Secretary: Tina White  
 Treasurer –Ed Learn  
 Federation Director (CFMS/AFMS) --Greg Mazourek

**Chairpersons:**

Claim--Linda Jenkins  
 Donation Rock Table--Dianne Wholleben  
 Equipment--Bill Webber  
 Field Trips – Julie Tinoco  
 Historian -Open  
 Hospitality – Ron Rackliffe  
 Membership – Heidi Webber  
 Website-- Larry Holt  
 Pelonagram Publisher, Editor – Heidi Webber  
 Programs –Tina White  
 Publicity –Open  
 Sunshine--Yolanda Resnick

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club, is a member of the California and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. (CFMS/AFMS). The general club meetings (Open to the public) are at 7:00 PM, on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at: College of the Canyons, 26455 Rockwell Canyon Rd in the Dianne Van Hook University Center, Room 209. (Go to their website for a map, It’s in section 14)

Contact the Club or the Sierra Pelonagram Editor at:

**Sierra Pelona Rock Club**  
**P.O. Box 221256**  
**Newhall, Ca. 91322**

Or e-mail: [hwebber50@gmail.com](mailto:hwebber50@gmail.com)



Greetings!

Our summer started with a very well-attended picnic at Meadows Park. The auction went well with some really heavy (and sometimes comical) bidding. Ron's grandson, Lucas, who apparently had money of his own, kept bidding up the items. For those of you bidding against him - Lucas can count to a HUNDRED! It could have been worse.

There were really nice rock specimens brought by Bryan Hori, whose mother made jewelry back in the day. His jars and box included pieces of opal, casting tools and other misc. items. Thank you for sharing with us.

We also welcomed our two new members, Suzi Rizzo and Maria Falasca. Thank you, Ron, for being our Auctioneer along with your sidekicks, Dianne and Bill. Thank you, Tina, for keeping track of the bids and the winners of the bids.

I just want to recognize and thank those persons, without whose help we would not have SPRC.

Heidi Webber for preparing the Pelonagram each month and reminding me to prepare my President's Message (thank you for your persistence);

Julie Tinoco, Vice President and person in charge of our great, interesting field trips;

Tina White both Secretary and our information go-to person;

Ed Learn, Treasurer;

Greg Mazourek, Federation Chair;

Ron Rackliffe, Hospitality Chair;

Bill Webber who keeps the club equipment working.

Dianne Wohlleben, in charge of the monthly meeting drawings and auctions; and last but not least,

Yolanda Resnick, who brings Sunshine to the club.

We may not have any monthly meeting until September, but Julie has a field trip or two up her sleeve so look for emails coming from her.

Have a great summer and we'll get together in September.

Linda,

President of the SPRC

*There were two Special Board Meetings in May, as both were under time constraints. Following are the notes from the meetings.*

#### Special Board Meeting

May 16, 2023

Heidi Webber requested a special meeting due to time constraints. The meeting was held after the General Meeting. Julie Tinoco, Linda Jenkins and Ed Learn were in attendance and a quorum was met.

Heidi discussed the fact that Dower Jai Gervais told her about a Covid Grant for small businesses and non-profits that lost income-producing business because of the Covid shutdown. The amount could be as much as \$25,000 with no reporting required, but to be used for equipment, and running the business. The application deadline was in 3 days, hence the urgency if the board wanted to apply for the grant. Dower Jai offered to help Heidi apply for it, as she had already done so for her personal business and another rock club and was already registered and had attended the required web meeting. By doing so, she was allowed to apply for multiple grants on behalf of other qualified entities.

Linda motioned that we should apply for the grant, Julie seconded and all approved. (Dower Jai and Heidi completed and submitted the application the following day).

#### Special Board Meeting

May 17, via Zoom 7pm

Ron Rackliffe asked if the board could hold a special meeting to admit two new members so they don't have to wait until September for approval. One is a returning member after 5 years. The other has attended meetings and field trips. A meeting was set up via Zoom.

Linda Jenkins, Julie Tinoco and Ed Learn attended the Zoom meeting. A quorum was met. Linda proposed admitting both women, Julie seconded and the motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05.

Submitted by Heidi Webber

## SPRC Board Meeting

6/6/23

On Zoom

The meeting was called to order sometime before 7:05 p.m. (Secretary Tina White was late and didn't get online until then.) by President Linda Jenkins

Attendees: Heidi W., Ed L., Linda J., Julie T., Tina W.

### Unknown:

- Ed brought up something about a letter, Greg M., and CFMS that was in the PO Box. He will mail it to Greg.

### Picnic:

- Tina asked Ed if he had received auction proceeds from anyone; he did receive \$67 from Heidi.
- Tina further shared that we made nearly \$500 from the auction; she will send the proceeds to Ed soon.
- On a roll, Tina also suggested that we request RSVPs in the future as we were short of some types of food because so many showed up without having notified us of their attendance/food contribution. Linda suggested that we cater the food instead of making it a potluck and charge a nominal amount, but it was generally agreed that wouldn't stop folks from showing up without advance notice.
- Heidi shared that Ron R. will be adding the "BYO Chair" information on future announcements.

### Field Trips:

- Julie T. told us that there won't be a field trip this coming weekend (June 10-11), but a beach trip would be planned for the future. Group discussion brought us to setting the date of July 8th, specific definition TBD.

### August Gathering:

- When: August 19th 2:00 p.m.
- Place: El Pescador in Fillmore
- Julie (?) will send out more information closer to this date.

### Future Meetings:

- Ed asked if he should contact COC about booking a meeting room for us later in the year; it was agreed he should. He will also check to see if there would be any charge for cancelling should we find another location.

### Finances:

- Ed will send the financial report to Linda.
- Our COVID grant application is pending...

### Desert Advisory Council's Subgroup (DAC) for Mojave Trails:

- Julie reminded us to send our letters – hard copy or email – urging that the DAC not further limit where rockhounding can be done. The email address is: [BLM\\_CA\\_NFO\\_MTNM\\_PLAN@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_CA_NFO_MTNM_PLAN@blm.gov)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

## SPRC General Meeting

May 16, 2023

Meeting was called to order at 7:06pm. Ed gave his treasurer's report.

**Julie Tinoco** discussed the field trip to gather KoKoWeef at the cave this Saturday, the 20th. She said we won't be able to do Moonstone Beach this year as she is getting no response from the owners of the area where we collect. She also spoke of a potential trip to Cerro Gordo near Lone Pine, which is a ghost town. She has contact information from Ron Lawrence.

**Ed Learn and Martin Schreiner** said the day at Placerita Canyon Nature Center's Open House was good. A lot of people stopped by the table for information, spinning the wheel and collecting a rock and candy. Martin had his coprolite collection on display and did a lot of talking to patrons about it.

**Heidi Webber** spoke of the upcoming club workshop at her and Bill's home on May 27. Members only although non-members are welcome to come and observe and learn, they just can't use the equipment. She will prepare lunch for \$5 as usual.

**Ron Rackliffe** spoke about the End-of-Season club picnic at Meadows Park. He passed around a sign-up sheet for the potluck. This is also a member (and guests) only event.

**After business** was discussed, the raffle was held, then the silent auction.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted by

Dianne Wohlleben, transcribed by Heidi Webber  
for Tina White, Secretary, SPRC

## Giant Rock

Landers, California

A regular looking rock with an unbelievable history.

THIS SEVEN-STORY GIANT BOULDER HAS attracted UFO conferences, Hopi spiritualists, and the engineers of a “rejuvenation machine.”

Geologically speaking, Giant Rock—located in California’s Mojave Desert—is roughly seven stories high and covers almost 6,000 square feet. Some say it is the largest freestanding boulder in the world.

While the rock has been a Native American spiritual site for thousands of years, the modern backstory of the boulder begins in the 1930s, when a German immigrant and miner named Frank Critzer met a pilot named George Van Tassel. The pair became fast friends and Van Tassel loaned Critzer 30 dollars to buy mining equipment. Critzer then dug out a 400-square-foot home for himself directly beneath the rock. Some locals thought he was crazy, but since he was known to point a shotgun at those who approached his underground home, no one inquired further. Critzer was also a radio enthusiast, and is said to have set up a radio antenna on top of the rock for better reception.

Unfortunately, Critzer’s German origin and radio antenna led to suspicions of his being a spy during World War II, and a police raid was made on his cavern. While the exact cause of Critzer’s death is still unknown, legend holds that when authorities attempted to extricate him by shooting tear gas canisters into his cave, one accidentally ignited a small store of explosives (for mining) and blew the peculiar loner to smithereens. As it turns out, Critzer was not a spy after all, but just what he seemed: an eccentric who wanted to be left alone to live, quite literally, under a rock.

Upon hearing of his friend’s death, Van Tassel—a high school dropout who had become a pilot—went to the boulder and reopened an old airfield at the Giant Rock in the 1950s, naming it Giant Rock Airport. Van Tassel’s war friend Howard Hughes, for whom Van Tassel was a test pilot, is said to have flown there just for a slice of pie baked by Van Tassel’s wife.

In addition to being an aviator, Van Tassel was also a firm believer in alien life. In 1952, Tassel began holding meditation sessions in Critzer’s old home under Giant Rock. Here, Van Tassel believed he was receiving vital information from alien sources directing the construction of a fantastic machine. The body, Van Tassel learned from his alien sources, was an electrical device, and aging was caused by a loss of power. Van Tassel claimed to have even been transported to an alien spaceship, where he met a wise group of aliens known as the “Council of Seven Lights.” Van Tassel said this extraterrestrial meeting, along with ideas from scientists such as Nikola Tesla, inspired the construction of a building/device which was to be a “rejuvenation machine.” It was dubbed “The Integratron.”

Van Tassel held popular UFO conventions known as the “Giant Rock Spacecraft Conventions” on his property for over 20 years to help raise money for the Integratron’s construction. The domed structure, built without nails over a period of 34 years, was said to be capable of collecting up to 50,000 volts of static electricity from the air in order to charge the human body. Unfortunately, Van Tassel suffered a heart attack before its “final” completion, giving rise to a host of conspiracy theories. There were once plans to turn the Integratron into a disco, but instead it has been reincarnated as a sound bath meditation retreat.

Long before Van Tassel or Frank Critzer were around, Giant Rock was a spiritual site for thousands of years, used by Native American tribes in ceremonies and prophecy. Hopi shamans have suspected since the 1920s that the future of the 21st century would be foretold at Giant Rock, based on how the rock cracked. In February 2000, a giant chunk of the rock did indeed break off. Spiritual leader Shri Naath Devi interpreted the break in a positive light, saying, “the Mother had opened her arms to us, cracking open her heart for the whole world to see.” It is speculated the break was the result of fires burned under the giant rock in what was once Frank Critzer’s underground home.

Know Before You Go

Giant Rock can be reached by car by traveling south from Lucerne Valley on Hwy 247 to Reche Road in Landers, or traveling north from Yucca Valley on Hwy 247. Take Reche Road to Belfield Blvd, left on Belfield until the pavement ends. To your right will be the Integratron. Go past the property, turn right and then immediately bear left on the well-graded dirt road.

The dirt road will follow the edge of the jumbo rock pile about two miles. Follow around the end of the rock pile until Giant Rock comes into view. Be cautious of broken glass and snakes in the area. Always bring extra drinking water. Cellular service is available at the site.

*Reference: Geology Rocks--Facebook*





## SPRC Board Meeting

5/2/23

On Zoom

The meeting was CTO at 7:13 p.m. by President Linda Jenkins Attendees: Heidi W., Ed L., Linda J., Julie T., Ron R., Greg M., Tina W.

### **Julie ~ New Club Business Card**

- Heidi forwarded us a copy of the old one to compare
- Ron suggested we add our FB address/link
- Heidi said we can drop the www. (!)
- Tina suggested an Oxford comma before &
- Vista Print is less expensive, blank on the back, regular color card stock
- We'll get a copy to approve
- Julie will order 200

### **Ed ~ Treasurer's Report**

- Ed gave his report and emailed the details to the board.
- Meetings resume in September (no Dec.); will tell COC

### **Heidi ~ Membership**

- We unanimously voted Andy Schubert in as a member

### **Julie ~ Field Trips**

- No word back from woman in Cambria; Julie has tried 3x
- Tentative plans for field trip the 3rd weekend of June
- Ballarat could be too hot
- Kokoweef cave onyx trip in the Mojave with Orange Belt group
- Ron has reached out to the Rose Quartz owner but hasn't yet heard back
- Fall field trip ideas included Tourmaline and Strawberry Onyx

### **Heidi ~ Placerita Canyon Open House May 13th**

- Game (wheel/squares)
- Need tumblers
- Heidi will get candy

### **Heidi ~ Workshop**

- May 27th at the Webbers
- \$5 for one of her delicious lunches

### **Group ~ Annual Club Picnic**

- June 3rd is the date everyone present is available

Oops! I lost internet connection at 8:16 p.m...