

Welcome Friends and Rockhounds

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The Petrified Digest

January, 2025

Meet the Members

R John Montgomery



R John Montgomery was Born in Austin, Texas. Back then it was a much smaller city than the sprawling metropolis that it is today. His mom's family were farmers and ranchers, so R John was raised in a rural setting. He told me that there was a lot of honeycomb limestone in the area and that he began picking up rocks and fossils around age four or five.

After graduating high school, R John attended McLellan Community College in Waco with the plan to become an Xray film technician. At some point, R John decided that he would rather work in the trades, so he became an apprentice carpenter in Austin. He told me that his father decided to remodel and expand a one-bedroom home into a four-bedroom version. R John said with a chuckle, "my dad saw an opportunity to use me as slave labor so I would go there after work and frame walls and do other stuff for him."

After pounding nails for a while, R John moved to Houston in the early 80s to start an electrician apprenticeship. He told me, electricians made more money than carpenters back then. However, Austin was always home, so he moved back there to practice his trade. Unfortunately, Austin suffered extreme economic strife in the late 80s because IBM pulled out, causing many people to become unemployed. This created many vacant houses and brought most new construction to a screeching halt. R John augmented his income by branching out into property management.

He moved to Michigan for a short time and then on to Riggins, Idaho on January 1, 1990. He lived with his mom and stepdad at the Bruce Motel (the one in Riggins, not the one in Wenatchee). In the spring he moved on to Boise where he roomed with his brother. In the summer of that year R John worked at Thunder Mountain Mine outside of Yellow Pine, Idaho. It was an open pit operation that employed the heap leach process using a series of chemical reactions that absorb specific minerals and re-separate them from other earth minerals. Three years later the claims were mined out and now the whole valley is a Wilderness Park.

One of the jobs he worked on was for Boise Locomotive removing and replacing electrical components on locomotives that were being rebuilt. After that, R John started working for an electrical contractor based out of the Tri Cities, so he moved there and stayed for 18 months where he worked as an electrician on the first Wal Mart that was being built in Moscow, Idaho.

R John wanted to continue doing industrial electrical jobs and this led him to moving to Bellingham and working at the ARCO refinery in Ferndale, Washington. When the refinery was bought by BP, R John said, "we were told that no one would lose their jobs and that everything would essentially remain the same. That was on a Friday and the following Monday, I was one of 150 employees that were let go." That was in 1994. R John, along with a partner, opened an espresso stand in Bellingham. He continued to do that until 2000.

It was then back to Boise where he worked at the National Interagency Fire Center which controls all the smoke jumpers and fire fighters for the Western region. This was a great opportunity for R John to lay down roots as he was in the process of being made a fulltime employee with the agency. Then 911 happened. As a result, President Bush put a freeze on the hiring of new federal employees and the promised job was gone. R John moved back to Bellingham and stayed there until he moved to Ephrata and joined the Union. He told me he has been there for about eight years building servers.

R John told me, "While I was living in Boise, some of my friends were in the Rock Club so I joined too." He went on to say that the club had several claims in the Owyhee Mountains. "They helped me to learn more and to gain access." He also talked about Boise's Stewart's Rock Shop. When he left there to move to Bellingham he joined the rock club there as well. When he first moved to the Columbia Basin to work, he joined the Ginkgo Mineral Society. The move back to Bellingham caused him to be inactive for a while but he rejoined about eight years ago. R John took over the duties, formerly held by Dan Hanson, of being the Chelan County Fair Superintendent and he did a great job ensuring that everything ran smoothly.

As for rockhounding, it's all about the beach for R John. He makes regular trips to the Westport area where his favorite gravel bar yields agates, jaspers, and Westport Diamonds which are globular silicates that are perfectly clear. There are also different types of quartz, sugar quartz, some pet wood and petrified whale and walrus bone that looks a lot like petrified wood. He also said that there were three shipwrecks off the coast of Westport. All of which were fueled by coal. He said that you can find nicely tumbled pieces of this coal.

R John told me he has 3000 pounds of beach rocks so that gives you an idea of how often he is out there looking for the next treasure. All his finds are sized and categorized. He is yet to branch out into lapidary but it's coming. He said that he recently acquired tumblers, a grinding and shaping arbor, a Lortone combination trim saw and buffing wheel some of which he got from Dan Hanson and some that he was given by one of his friends in the Boise Rock Club.

Last but not least, I want to tell you how R John got his name. He said, "There are a lot of Johns in my family and a lot of Johns in the world. I didn't want to be confused with them, so I started calling myself R John." He went on to say, "Plus, I didn't want to give anyone a chance to come up with some nickname for me either." Speaking for myself, I can say that he was successful in achieving his goal. I know lots of guys called John but only one R John.

Below are some of R John's beach finds



From the Scribe

There were no minutes for the December meeting but there was a Christmas party. As is tradition, gifts were exchanged and some were stolen but they could only be stolen once because that's the rules. There was plenty of good food and fun. Thanks to help make the party a big success.



Pizza in January, Bring Your Appetite

The club will be providing pizza and soda at the January 17th meeting at 7:00 pm. We look forward to seeing you there.

Christmas Wrapping Fund Raiser

Once again, Pam Lander led a successful gift wrapping fund raising event at the Wenatchee Valley Mall. In addition to Pam, Carl Pederson, Dena Hanson, Brenda Jackson, Carol Smith, Larry and Wanda Shaw, Carol Lechner, Susan Oglebay, Jodi Rose, Marcia Summers, Sheila Danielson, Liz and Alayna Hembery lent their talents over the three days before Christmas and in doing so raised over \$1200 for the club! Thanks to everyone. A very special thanks needs to go out to Pam who has been leading this annual event for the past five years and will now be stepping down. Thanks so much Pam!



Rockhounds Downsizing & Estate Sale

Saturday 2-8-2025 9 am-3 pm (One day only) Cash only
 Everett United Church of Christ 2624 Rockefeller AVE, Downtown Everett
 Gemstones, Lapidary Rough and Slices, Mineral Specimens and Much More

Important notice: This facility is used as a Homeless Cold Weather Shelter. If temperature drops below 35, the shelter will be opened and the sale will be cancelled and rescheduled. You can call the day before the sale at 425-977-9686 to find out if the sale will be cancelled.

Where's the Equipment

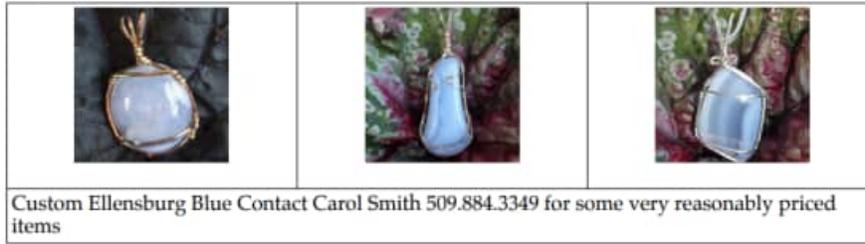
Several of our members have graciously provided homes for our shop equipment. They will make the equipment available to Club members by appointment so we can still cut and polish the stones we collect. Below is a list of equipment with phone numbers to call to arrange an agreeable time:
 R John Montgomery: A Genie and trim saw 509-860-2762
 Jodi Rose: A Genie and trim saw 509-763-9402
 Carl Pederson: A Genie, an 18-inch slab saw (\$2.00 per cut), 10 inch slab saw, faceting machine 509-630-8239. If you need slabs cut contact Carl, he may be able to cut them for you.
 Marcia Sommers: A slant lap.509-860-7556

From the Vault

As of January 8, 2025	
3 CDs	\$13,277.24
Savings Account	\$2,086.87
Checking as of 11-1-2024	\$5,761.55
1 Deposit	\$95.00
3 Checks Written (Rent, 2025 Insurance, 2025 PO Box	(\$918.00)
Ending Balance As of December 1, 2024	\$4,938.55

Individual: \$20.00
Family: \$40.00
Senior (one): \$15.00

Marketplace



The Ginkgo Mineral Society was formed to promote the education of mineralogy and geology; to encourage the collecting of rocks and minerals; to provide field excursions to mineral collecting areas; and to promote interest in lapidary work.

We are a 501c7 organization and are not "charitable" in nature but are a membership organization formed to serve its own members. 501c7 organizations do not solicit charitable donations. As long as a social club is "organized for pleasure, recreation or other non-profit purposes" it can qualify as exempt from federal income tax.

Annual Dues: Individual-\$20.00, Senior-\$15.00, Family-\$40.00, Lifetime (20 plus years)-Free. Please mail your dues to Ginkgo P.O. Box 303, Wenatchee, WA 98807.

[Learn more](#)

Next Meeting:

January 17, 2025 at 7:00 pm
Presbyterian Church
200 S. Kentucky, East Wenatchee

Email ideas, trip notes or photos
to: Lizhemberry@hotmail.com Website:
www.wenatcheerockclub.org
Facebook page: Ginkgo Mineral Society

Club Officers

President..... Melisha Maxey.....509-885-2996
Vice President..... Brenda Jackson..... 509-884-5135
Secretary..... Liz Hemberry..... 509-699-9450
Treasurer..... David Earhart..... 509-860-0988

Coordinators

Marcia Summers..... Membership..... 509-860-7556
Pam Lander..... Grit..... 509-884-5135
Carl Pederson..... Shop and Equipment..... 509-630-8239
Melisha Maxey..... Rock Auction.....509-885-2996
Brenda Jackson..... Social Chairperson..... 509-884-5320
Susan Oglebay..... Club Website..... 509-754-2665
Museum.....Open
R John Montgomery.....Chelan County Fair....509-860-2762
Ken Hemberry..... Newsletter..... 509-699-9450
Cheri McMillan.....Facebook Page Admin.....509-860-0009
Assistant Facebook Page Admin.....Open
Christmas Wrap.....Open



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