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PRESS RELEASE

The Ventura Gem Show

The Ventura Gem & Mineral Society (VGMS) is pleased to announce our 61st Annual Gem, Mineral, Fossil & Jewelry Show taking place March 2 & 3 (10am–5pm, Saturday; 10am–4pm, Sunday) at the Ventura County Fairgrounds (10 W. Harbor Blvd., Ventura). The show is open to the public and admission is free (note: the Fairgrounds charges a parking fee if using the Fairgrounds lot).



The Ventura Gem Show has been a fun family event for six decades and counting with its focus on gemstone cutting and jewelry-making, rocks and fossils, and kids and education. At the show, we'll announce the recipient of our \$1,000 Scholarship Award given annually to a local college student. Upon entering the show, kids are given a free polished stone at our Welcome Booth, where teachers receive free rock samples and educational packets. At the Kids Booth, children enjoy activities offering an assortment of rocky prizes. A nearby display provides info about the society's two-room museum in Ojai, where teachers, home-schoolers, and youth groups can arrange tours by appointment.

There's gold in the California hills, and you can learn how to pan for it at the show. At one booth, expert prospectors will guide you through the basics, and you can purchase "pay dirt" to pan for real gold nuggets and flakes at the show or in your own backyard. In addition, this free show will feature displays of gems, minerals, fossils, and award-winning handcrafted jewelry. These include educational exhibits of fossils collected locally in and around Ventura County, as well as a display of our State Rock, Mineral, Fossil, and Gemstone (including a gold nugget, an Ice Age saber-tooth cat, and "Auggie", the California State Dinosaur). Still other displays will show how stones collected locally have been crafted into jewelry. Demonstrations give visitors up-close looks at artists pursuing their crafts: gemstone cutting and carving, silver work and jewelry making, beading, and other arts and crafts made from nature. Raffle prizes include a \$100 bill, fine jewelry, mineral and fossil specimens, and more. In addition, enjoy hourly silent auctions for rocks, minerals, and fossils, as well as a "Country Store" white elephant sale, a plant sale, and over 15 dealers selling beads, opals, jade, gemstones, crystals, fossils, jewelry and jewelry-making supplies, and gift items. It's a 61-year Ventura tradition the whole family will enjoy.

VGMS was founded in 1944 to encourage interest in rocks, minerals, fossils, lapidary arts and jewelry-making, and related areas through education, activities, and exhibitions such as this annual show, which is open to the community. The society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, educational organization and welcomes individual and family members. VGMS hosts monthly talks on earth science topics and jewelry arts, maintains a lapidary arts studio in Ojai, makes presentations to area schools, and conducts field trips for members and guests to collect rocks, minerals, and fossils in southern California and neighboring states.

The Ventura Gem Show is the society's major fund-raising event helping to underwrite educational activities, including the annual college scholarship and school visits and donations. For further details, call (805) 312-8467, email info@vgms.org, or visit our web site at www.vgms.org.

The Ventura Gem & Mineral Society, Inc., is a nonprofit educational organization.