



ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

SEPTEMBER 2019 • PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY® • PASADENA, CA

17 Things to Know about Opening an Etsy Shop

by Karl Stull

It can happen anytime, whatever kind of day you're having. An email from Etsy arrives: someone has bought a piece from your online shop. A customer out there has paid you the compliment of paying money for something you designed. It feels good.

The email tells who made the purchase, where they live, which piece they chose. You take a moment to let it sink in. The name indicates a gender. The city or state may suggest a way of life. While reminding yourself that it is bad to make judgments about individual people based on generalizations, you wonder about Maryalice from Mackinac. What was it about your plume agate pendant that motivated her to buy – the color of the stone, the style of the wire wrap, the \$40 price? Will she wear your piece on a date with a special someone, get married, and quit her waitress job forever?

But enough with the woolgathering. It's time for some shipping and handling.

Keep the Customer You've Already Won

Favorable reviews attract new business, so it's good to please the customer with prompt delivery **1**. Fulfill the order as soon as possible. The Etsy email has a button you can click to print out a mailing label with the appropriate addresses and digital postage. The label includes a tracking number, which is key to resolving any questions about delivery **2**. The fee for the label is around \$2.50. You can write up your own label and affix your own stamps if you'd rather.

Customers look forward to receiving their order. During the minute or two when they are opening the package, you have their full attention **3**. A few small touches can create a good impression and encourage future sales.

- Hand-written thank you makes the packing slip personal.
- Gift box and tissue paper reinforce the idea of fine quality.
- Free gift, such as a polished stone, says thank you again.

Instead of a gift box, you might choose a different container to accord with your brand. A gingham bag with a drawstring, for example, would go with a "country" look. If the name of your shop is RockyRainbow, you might use colorful paper. The idea is to create a memorable experience for the customer while they are focused on your delivery, one that will make your shop easy to remember and find again.

Enclose your business card **4**. You can also enclose a coupon good for a discount on the customer's next purchase **5**. In most types of business, it's a rule of thumb that selling to an existing customer is easier than finding a new customer.

Continued on page 4



Etsy urges sellers to post several high-quality photos with every listed product – customers like to zoom in. Provide front, back, and side views; show the piece being worn; include something of a known size and color for reference, such as a penny or flag postage stamp. This is labradorite in sterling silver, cabbed and set by Ellen Limeres. Photo by Ellen Limeres.

President's Message



Dear Fellow Members,

With summer coming to a close, it's a good time to think about doing something nice for a fellow rockhound – nominating them for Rockhound of the Year. A Rockhound of the Year may be someone very knowledgeable or someone who volunteers at club activities. They may have reached a milestone or achieved a personal best in the lapidary hobby. The main thing is they are an example and inspiration for others, helping to make PLS a club you're glad to be part of.

We'll have nomination forms at the September meeting. Or you can download the form at pasadenalapidary.org; go to Membership and scroll to the bottom of the page. After the nominations in September, PLS members will vote at the October meeting for Rockhound of the Year and a Junior Rockhound of the Year.

Looking ahead to our spring show, the Show Committee has its kickoff meeting this month. Chairpersons in charge of the Kids Area, Raffle, Display Cases, Hospitality, and all the other activities will preview what needs to be done in the coming months. This will also give everyone a chance to get to know Michelle Vandenbroeck, our new Show Co-chair. She is doing a great job, and we are going to have a great show in 2020 with her support.

As for the show theme, there is still time to send in your ideas. In 2016, the theme was "Rocks to Riches"; in 2017, "Treasures of the Earth"; in 2018, "Can you dig it." At the kickoff meeting, the Show Committee will choose the top three themes, and then PLS members will choose a winner at the October meeting.

Regular club activities are rolling along as they should. We have a very interesting speaker lined up for the September program. Kris Rowe, organizer of the Rockhound Field Trip Fanatics group on Facebook, will tell us about rocks we can collect in the Santa Monica Mountains. Later in the week, he will lead a field trip along Mulholland Highway, and although this is not a trip sponsored by PLS, you will have an opportunity to sign up.

Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting. And please remember: every day is a good day to do something nice for a fellow rockhound!

– Ellen Ferrell, President

Pasadena Lapidary Society®

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Bulletin	Karl Stull	Display Table Ferdie Sanchez
Education	Joan Harrison	Field Trips Karl Stull
Historian	Karl Stull	Hospitality Elizabeth Weston
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Publicity	Mona Ross	Social Media Elizabeth Weston
Sunshine	Ellen Ferrell	Technology Ben Shutman
Ways & Means	Philip Lahr	Webmaster Eugene Kim
Workshop	Carolyn Duncan	

Membership

Membership per calendar year is \$25; for additional adults at the same address, \$15. Junior members are \$10. There is an initiation fee of \$10 per person to cover costs of name badges, etc.

Renewals are due in October and delinquent after December 31. Mail checks to PO Box 5025, Pasadena, CA 91117-0025.

Meetings

Board Meetings – 1st Thursday of the month

7 p.m. at Matt Denny's Ale House
145 E Huntington Dr, Arcadia
Dinner at 6 p.m. PLS members are welcome.

Workshop – 2nd Sunday of the month

9 a.m. –5 p.m. \$3 for half-day, \$5 for a full day. Equipment instruction is required; also liability waivers, eye protection, and closed-toe shoes. For directions, please call (909) 455-4360 (cell) or (909) 593-2781, or email gem.quest38@gmail.com. Bring lunch!

Junior members 9 and older are welcome with adult supervision.

Program Meetings – 3rd Tuesday of the month

Doors open at 6 p.m. Meeting is 6:30–8:45 p.m.
Pasadena Central Library, 285 E Walnut St.

Contact Us

Email: info@PasadenaLapidary.org **Instagram:** [/Pasadenalapidary](https://www.instagram.com/pasadenalapidary/)

Facebook: Pasadena Lapidary Society **Twitter:** [@pasalapidary](https://twitter.com/pasalapidary)

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Send articles by the 15th for publication in next month's issue. Very short items can get in as late as the 22nd but are not guaranteed to make the next issue.

Program Meeting – September 17



Rockhounding in the Santa Monica Mountains

It's surprising how many Southern Californians have never been to Disneyland, and surprising too how little local rockhounds know about the Santa Monica Mountains. That's partly because of a jumble of jurisdictions and private property in LA's coastal range, and limits on collecting. But never fear, you'll know a lot more after our September program. Kris Rowe will talk about minerals of lapidary interest along Mulholland Highway, such as marcasite agate, travertine onyx, and quartz crystals.

Kris Rowe is co-owner of Ranchos Lapidary, based in Madera Ranchos (about 20 miles north of Fresno). You may remember Ranchos Lapidary as a dealer at the PLS-hosted CFMS Annual Show in March. On Saturday, September 21, you can visit the Ranchos Lapidary tables at the Long Beach Mineral and Gem Society show (see page 7). Ranchos Lapidary is on Facebook.

While he's in the area, Kris plans to lead a Mulholland Highway field trip. Information about the date, time, and meet-up location will be available at our program meeting. For liability reasons, PLS does not endorse events unless they are CFMS-affiliated. However, you can talk to Phil Lahr about his experience on past field trips led by Kris Rowe. – *Mona Ross*



From Ranchos Lapidary on Facebook: "Here's a staggeringly beautiful piece of BLUE finger agate, with druse quartz, over plume agate. We mined this out in Sandy Wash in the Cadys. It's been through one white vinegar wash, and is set for a bit of saw work, to establish a safe base. Then I'll sand and polish the exposed plume agate [in the base], and offer it to our patrons."

When asked where in Sandy Wash the specimen was found, he replied: "Thanksgiving Hill, down the wash from the Bee Sting. It came from about 4 feet down, in a seam in broken rhyolite. It only took most of the day for me and Clayton to get this free."

Nominating Committee



The Search Begins

We had three volunteers for the Nominating Committee at the August meeting, and they were duly voted in to represent the general membership: Susan Carter, Chuiie Nishimura, and Yvette Fitzgerald. With Chris Kyte and Carolyn Duncan representing the Board and Karl Stull as Chair, the Committee scheduled its first meeting for the following Saturday.

First order of business was to figure out how many candidates we would need. Two officers on the Board are eligible for a second term – Secretary David Lacy and Treasurer Philip Lahr. Both have agreed to serve again if reelected. We will miss Mona Ross, who has decided to take a break from office. As Secretary in 2014–2015 and Vice-President in 2016–2019, she might have been the hardest-working member on the Board. All of which means the Committee will have to find new candidates for President, Vice-President, and Federation Director.

Who would you recommend? Be ready, because I have asked everyone on the Committee to phone or email ten PLS members for suggestions. Past involvement in the club is a major factor, but we are also looking for teamwork and business skills. If you have experience with Excel, posting to a website, or financial management, consider helping PLS with your knowledge – as a candidate or in an advisory role to the next President.

The Nominating Committee will present a slate of candidates at the October meeting. Any PLS member can make additional nominations at that time, and all nominations will appear on the ballot in November. Meanwhile, if you don't get a call from the Nominating Committee, please take the initiative and contact me: (818) 205-7135 or karlestull@gmail.com. – *Karl Stull*

On the Display Table



Ferdie Sanchez coordinates the Display Table at meetings. Share lapidary items, projects from workshop, or rocks from field trips. If you have a rock you'd like to have identified, put it on the Display Table with a "What Is This?" note. Knocking a corner off the specimen may provide clues.



Byron Stevens, a PLS field trip leader of the early 1960s, was known in the club as Steve. While camping in the Cadys in February 1962, he and fellow rockhounds heard a noise outside their tent and found a young fox. The visitor was willing to tolerate flash photography in exchange for free food.

These photos are from an album spanning 1948–1963. Along with photos, the album contains news clippings, certificates, reports, and newsletters – glued onto heavy black paper in a soft leather cover. If you'd like to help organize and index these and other materials, please contact Karl Stull: karlestull@gmail.com or (818) 205-7135 (leave a message).

17 Things to Know about Etsy *Continued from page 1*

Help New Customers Find Your Shop

More than 2 million sellers do business on Etsy. Despite the crowd, there are steps you can take to get noticed by likely buyers. Step 1 is to think like your ideal customer.

Imagine the customer who is going to like – or LOVE – the items and styles they find in your shop. If they walked into a bricks-and-mortar store, what words would they use to describe the necklace, earrings, or bracelet they are looking for?

Use those words to create listings for the items in your shop. An Etsy listing includes the following elements:

Element	Example
Title	Azurite Pendant in Sterling Silver Setting
Category	Dropdown menu: Jewelry, necklace
Attributes	Dropdown menu: Color, 2nd color, holiday...
Description	Your comments on material, methods...
Tags	Urban, rustic, understated, on-trend, retro...

The beauty of the dropdowns is that they result in a no-brainer exact match. If a customer types in “Necklace with blue stone,” then your listing with Category = Necklace and Color = Blue will move toward the top of the search results.

In contrast, writing effective Titles, Descriptions, and Tags depends on your learning to think and talk like your customer, using the same words they will use when they come to the Etsy main page and launch a search **6**.

Tricks of the Trade

Once you build a basic selling vocabulary for the products and styles in your shop, it's possible to add and alter wording to inch results upward. Study what works in your listings. Study shops that are similar to yours: look for repeated words and phrases, in listings and in comments by customers. An Etsy seller I know discovered two words had a galvanic effect on her customers. Whenever a listing included “Wild Horse,” orders galloped in.

Try the tips and best practices recommended in articles on Etsy. The seller support pages also include Q&A forums **7** covering a range of topics. All agree that repeating key terms helps you climb the list in search results. For example, if “sterling” is a key selling feature, it should be mentioned several times within the listing: in the Title, in the Description, and in the Tags **8**.

All agree that the first few words of a listing Title are the most important **9** for search engine optimization (SEO). However, they point out, the Title can be as long as 140 characters. Why not use the extra space for strategic repetition of value-adding terms? “Natural,” “Traditional,” and “Genuine” offer positive associations and below work together to define a shop's brand.

Azurite Pendant in Sterling Silver Setting / Natural New Mexico Stone on Traditional Necklace / Genuine Artisan Jewelry With Sky Color and Sea Color

The extra Titles should be separated, as shown.

Invite your customer to have a look around. In every listing, include a [See more](#) link to your shop's home page **10**.

Encouraging Etsy to Promote You

With SEO tricks of the trade, the goal is to attract customers who already know what they are looking for (when it matches items in your shop). But you wouldn't mind catching the eye of shoppers who have no idea yet what they will buy. The best place to catch these open-minded shoppers is on the Etsy home page. Below the header, there is always an array of interesting items from various types of shops. How do you get one of your items into that array...

Etsy doesn't discuss how featured products are selected, but one factor that search engines award points for is recent activity. On the Etsy home page, there is a big section titled "Popular right now" – which means "lots of activity, very recently." This space is dominated by high-volume sellers with a thousand or more reviews. However, the rows below show items from many shops big and small, including new shops. A new shop, when you think of it, is one where things are happening (recent activity).

When your shop goes past the point of being new, stir the pot with new listings **11**. Then post photos on Instagram (and other sites) with a link to your shop. Visitors who come to your shop, some of them clicking Favorites, boost your scores for recent activity **12**. Note: it may be more effective to post many listings in a short burst – for example, just before Black Friday – than to dribble out the same number over a long period.

An even surer way to get featured on the home page is to say yes when Etsy offers publicity to shops participating in special promotions **13**. Etsy organized a Free Shipping sale during the holidays last year. Sellers who agreed to offer free shipping were featured on the home page and in email blasts.

Is Etsy a Good Deal?

Etsy takes a 5% commission on all sales and collects a 3% fee for handling money transactions **14**, which includes processing payments via credit card, PayPal, and others, and direct deposits to your bank account. In addition, there is a 20-cent fee for each product you list, renewable every four months. Fees for optional services (e.g., formatting a mail-ready label) are typically a few dollars.

Services provided by Etsy are an excellent value for the lapidary hobbyist. For someone who wants to dabble for now and maybe later go into business full-time, Etsy is a good springboard. Its bookkeeping, marketing, and other services – mostly as simple as pushing a button – would cost much more in time and money if you did them yourself or hired a specialist **15**.

- Year-end reports
- Sales tax in various states
- Cross-posting to social media
- Advertising on Google, Facebook, etc.
- Mediation with cranky customers

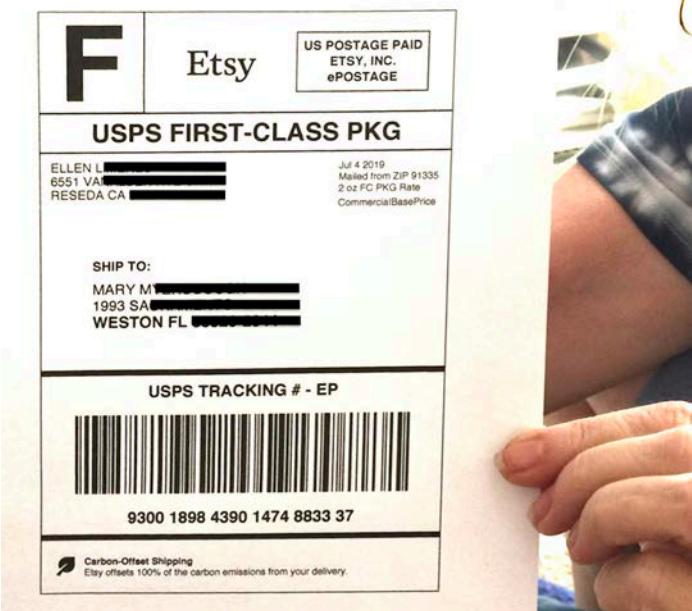
But the biggest benefit of having a shop on Etsy is being on Main Street **16**. With 39 million buyers in 2018, Etsy has become the online place to go for handmade products, vintage goods, and craft supplies. With an audience that large, even the most casual businessperson can enjoy the thrill of making a sale from time to time.

You don't need to be a computer expert. The process for setting

up an Etsy shop is comparable to starting a page on Facebook. But before you click the *Sell on Etsy* button, read about services and the basic agreement at etsy.com/sell?ref=ftr. **17**

If you're not ready for Etsy, a Facebook group that allows sales by group members may be for you. Search for groups such as "Hand Made Jewelry Makers" or "Gemstone Jewelry sell and buy (No rules)." And then share your experience with an article in your PLS newsletter. ♦

Thank you to Ellen Limeres, whose Etsy experience provided the inspiration and background for this article.



Name Your Shop

Coming up with a great name for your Etsy shop is like naming a rock 'n' roll band. IndiePendants. GnarlyRockhammer?

Required

- 4–20 characters
- No spaces or special characters
- Not used on Etsy already
- No trademark infringement

Desired

- Fits your brand
- Easy to remember and spell

Try the "two lists" method. List 1 has words associated with lapidary. List 2 has words that describe your style. Put words from the two lists together, in any order.

All of the suggestions here are available on Etsy and free to PLS members. Good luck!

- CraggyAccessories
- RockyRingsAndMore
- SilkyStoneDesigns
- WireWeHereCreations
- RocksInSilverLinings

Welcome, New Members

Kevin Koppers first got interested in rocks and minerals during his first tour in Afghanistan (2003–2005), where he oversaw a 4,000-foot dirt runway. Repairs to the runway were done with tailings from a local mine. As a result, Kevin was picking up a lot of tourmaline, quartz, jade, etc. Over time, he taught himself to facet, cab, create spheres, and do some silversmithing.



Kevin has been married 19 years, has an 11-year-old daughter, and lives in Glendale. He works as a logistic supervisor at Siemens Energy Management in La Mirada. Kevin found out about PLS through his friend (and our Webmaster) Eugene Kim.

Joelle Cooperrider hails from Highland Park, “where I live with my snowshoe cat Bella. Just having recently learned that I had an ‘addiction to rocks,’ joining PLS only made sense. I love to travel and find little treasures along the way; it is a great way to remember my trip and bring something to admire into my growing collection. Consequently, I’m excited to get to work in the workshop to really let my finds express their natural beauty. Outside of trips in nature and mineral-finding, I spend time in my art studio creating abstract paintings (some of which may or may not resemble rocky and planetary bits).



Mumu Aung, a fashion designer, and **John Zoraster**, civil engineer, live in Altadena. Being retired, they travel often; they’ve been to the jade and amber markets in Myanmar (Burma). Mumu is from Myanmar, John from Van Nuys. For most of his career he focused on water resources. One of his later clients was the Huntington Library. Mumu is interested in jewelry design, and she is eager to learn to work with stone at the PLS workshops. John’s interest is more in the mineral resources of the state, and he looks forward to field trips.



A “salute to quartz” display case at the 2019 CFMS Show.
Photo by Sue Pang and Steve Cady.

Workshop – September 8



As always, workshop hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Half day is \$3, all day \$5. We sometimes close early due to heat, storms, or low attendance. If you plan to come late, please call ahead.

For directions, please call **(909) 455-4360** (cell) or **(909) 593-2781**; email gem.quest38@gmail.com.

Park on the street or in the lot on the east side of the building. Entrance is on the *west* side of the building, down the walkway between buildings. Do not enter by the ramp in the parking lot.

– Carolyn Duncan

Wrightwood Sites Closed

Sorry, No PLS Field Trip for September

We scouted the Wrightwood area for actinolite and marble but found mostly closed gates and new construction at sites where PLS has collected in the past. There is a stretch of Sheep Creek with lots of actinolite cobbles but no reasonably close parking for a group. If you’d like to visit on your own, and don’t mind a half-mile hike, ask me about the location at a meeting.

– Karl Stull



This spud-sized specimen from Sheep Creek shows off the chatoyance (sha TOY ance) of actinolite – streaks that flare and then go dark as the stone turns under a light. The clumpy texture is very like tree bark, and could make an interesting display piece (see health note below about sawing or grinding). The colors we found at Wrightwood ranged from pea green to dark green. Collected by eagle-eyed Jay Valle.

Health warning: Actinolite is a form of asbestos. Sawing or grinding it will scatter micro-fibers, which cause lung cancer and other lung diseases. Take all appropriate measures to avoid breathing dust from actinolite. A painter’s mask from the hardware store will not catch the most dangerous fibers, which are less than 10 microns in size.



Sylvia Cliffe (left) brought in a sphere-preparation device that she happened to have in the garage. Carolyn Duncan adjusts the vise knobs on either end. With a cube-shaped rock in its grip, the device clamps inside a saw. A base under the cube can be turned left or right for trimming off a cube's 12 edges..

Rock and Gem Shows

September 7–8 ARROYO GRANDE San Luis Obispo Gem & Mineral Club, South County Regional Center, 800 West Branch St. Hours: 10–5 daily. slogem.org

September 21 LONG BEACH Long Beach Mineral & Gem Society, Expo Arts Center, 4321 Atlantic Ave. Hours: 10–5:00.

September 21–22 CHICO Feather River Lapidary & Mineral Society, Silver Dollar Fairgrounds, 2357 Fair St. Hours: Sat 9:30–5, Sun 9:30–4. featherriverrocks.org

September 21–22 MONTEREY Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society, Monterey Fairgrounds, 2004 Fairgrounds Rd. Hours: 10–5 daily. cvgms.rocks

September 28–29 LODI Stockton Lapidary & Mineral Club, Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 East Lockford St. Hours: 10–5 daily. stocktonlapidary.org

IT HAS COLOR, BUT NO "PICTURE."

— JEFF DENGROVE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 2019	2 Labor Day	3	4	5 Board mtg PLS members always welcome	6	7  Gem show
8 Workshop	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Program mtg Kris Rowe, Santa Monica Mtns	18	19	20	21  Gem shows
22  Gem shows	23	24	25	26	27	28  Gem show
29  Gem show	30					<i>Fire Opal ring by Stan McCall, Custom Creative Gem Cutting</i>



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A hefty chunk of chrysoprase from central Utah, collected by Sylvia Cliffe and cut on a 24-inch saw by Joe Goetz

While the Women Toil...



Joan Harrison, Marcia Goetz, and Becky Fregoso get down to business mucking out big saws and cleaning up workshop equipment. Photo from a few years ago by Ellen Ferrell.