

The Opal Express

American Opal Society
P.O. Box 4875
Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875



**Volume #38 Issue #2
February 2005**

TO:

Some Topics In This Issue:

- AOS Election Results
- Restoring Finish to Opal
- The Three Z's
- Winter Safety, Part 1

Important Info:

Board Meeting
February 15th

General Meeting
February 10th

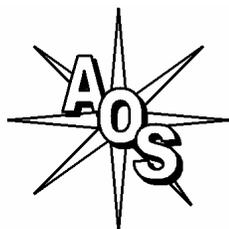
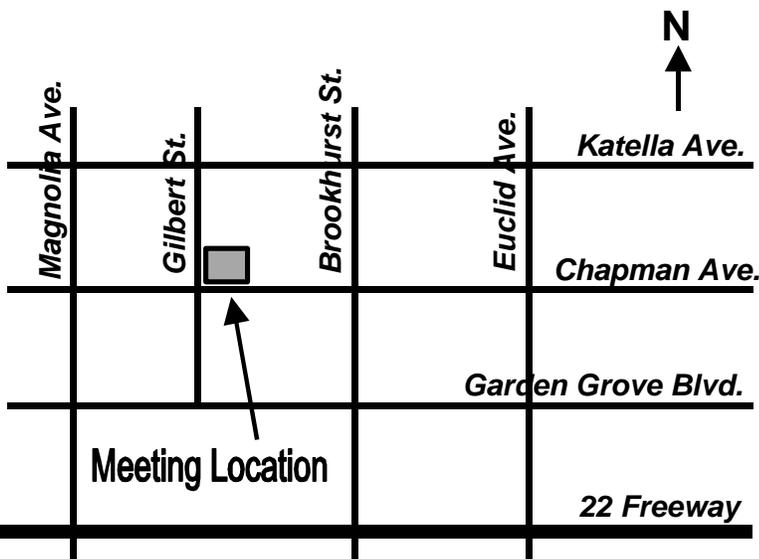
Feb. 10th Meeting

— GENERAL MEETINGS —

2nd Thursday of the Month
7:00 pm - 9:00 PM
Garden Grove Civic Women's Club
9501 Chapman Ave.
(NE corner of Gilbert & Chapman)
Garden Grove, CA

MEETING ACTIVITIES

Opal Cutting Advice Guest Speakers
Slide Shows Videos Other Activities



The American Opal Society

<http://OpalSociety.org>

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American Opal Society Membership Renewal

Thank you for continuing to support your American Opal Society!

TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP		DUES / FEES)	AMOUNT PAID
<u>DUES:</u> <u>SELECT ONE</u>	All <u>US</u> Addresses including Alaska and Hawaii	\$25	
	<u>International Members</u> = All addresses <u>outside</u> of US Addresses	\$30	
<u>ADDITIONAL BADGES</u> = \$5.00 each (First Badge <u>free</u> when joining)		\$5	
<u>ONE TIME INITIATION FEE</u> = All <u>New</u> members		\$10	
<u>SENIOR DISCOUNT</u> = Age 65 or over deduct \$5		-\$5	
TOTAL PAID – DUES, less Senior Discount plus Badge plus Initiation Fee (if Applicable)			

Please make check or money order payable to "**American Opal Society**". Mail payment and application to:
American Opal Society; PO BOX 4875; Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875
 An optional, quicker method of payment is via the **Internet** using **PayPal.com**. To pay, just log onto your PayPal account and "Send Money" to the AOS account, **webmaster@opalsociety.org**. There is no transfer charge!

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E-MAIL		
WEBSITE		
OCCUPATION	HOBBIES AND INTERESTS	

NAME BADGE ORDER FORM:
 PLEASE PRINT NAME AS YOU WISH IT TO APPEAR ON YOUR BADGE using up to two (2) lines of text for your name, nickname, or name of your opal related business.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER and NEWSLETTER MAILING: The AOS publishes a membership directory once per year in its Newsletter, the *Opal Express*. Your name will be included. Please check what additional personal information that you want listed for other members. If it is different from the information above, please note that on the application.

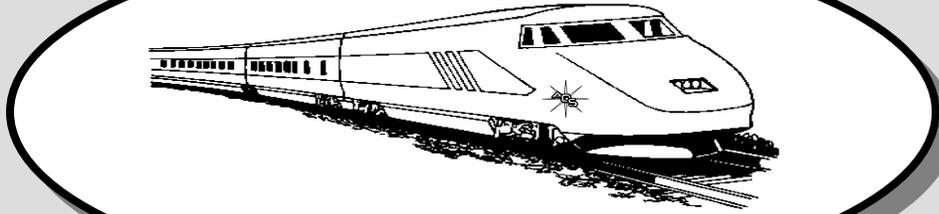
- Address
 Phone
 E-mail
 Website
 E-Mail the Opal Express Newsletter instead of Postal Mail
 Include my name & address on a list provided to the Dealers selling at our Annual Opal & Gem Show.

Please sign here: _____ Date _____

<p>The <u>Opal Express</u> is published monthly by The American Opal Society. Copyright 2005. All rights reserved. Non-Commercial Reprint Permission Granted Unless Otherwise Reserved. Editor-Jim Pisani Please address all inquiries and exchange newsletters to: The Opal Express C/O Jim Pisani P.O. Box 4875 Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875 E-mail: webmaster@opalsociety.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Are Your Dues Due Now?</p> <p>PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL. If your label shows the current month/year your dues are DUE NOW. If the date is older, your dues are overdue. A Renewal Grace Period of two months will be provided. If your dues are due now you will receive two additional issues of the newsletter. Please note, however, that as the system is now set up, if your renewal is not received you will be AUTOMATICALLY dropped from membership thereafter. It is your responsibility to assure your dues are current. Thank you, The Editor</p>
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The Opal Express

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Opal
Society



February 2005

Volume 38 Issue 2

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President's Message

By Dr. Walt Johnson

A Message from Your New President

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Walter M. Johnson, and I am an "opalholic." I will be bringing to the Opal Society 38 years of teaching experience in lapidary, opals, jewelry, lost wax casting, and art. These classes have been written up in The Los Angeles Times, People Magazine, The Orange County Register, and various trade magazines.

I first became associated with the American Opal Society in the later 1960's when John Sinkankas was the main speaker and the monthly attendance was so great that meetings were held at the theatre in Seal Beach, CA. Leadership was under the direction of Bill Whittle and Les Cubit who brought many members to take my new jewelry class in the "Self Casting of Jewelry." They were to learn how to make their own mounting and set the opals they were cutting.

We have many new changes in the works for next year including the workshop, seminars, and speakers. The upcoming meeting will be devoted to discussing ways of meeting the needs of our members. If you have ideas, please feel free to contact us.

Last Month's Elections

The following candidates are our new officers for the American Opal Society.

- President – Walt Johnson
- Vice-President – Eugene LeVan
- Treasurer – Russ Madsen

Let's all support our new officers!

Opal Workshop

The AOS opal workshop is at Ball Jr. High School on 1500 W. Ball Rd., Anaheim, CA. It can be open for members on Monday. Contact Stan McCall at (714) 220-9282.

Members Only Website Password

To log onto the website's members only area at: http://opalsociety.org/aos_members_only_area.htm type: Name: "member" and Password: "tecopa".

To have your Newsletter E-mailed to You...

About a third of the members responded positively to an e-mail asking if they wanted to receive the newsletter electronically. Thank you! You are helping your Society!

Since we don't have everyone's current e-mail address, we need to hear from you. A mass letter mailing will occur shortly, but if you want it e-mailed sooner, please e-mail the editor, Jim Pisani, at webmaster@opalsociety.org. Please indicate your name and e-mail address that you want it mailed to.

Thanks,
Jim Pisani, Editor, American Opal Society

Polishing Tips

When using chrome oxide for polishing jade, mix it with a solution of 1/2 water and 1/2 vinegar.

For a glossy finish on tiger-eye, polish once, dry the stone, then put a drop of vinegar on it. Let it stand for a few minutes, then give it a second polish.

Dark household vinegar dissolves epoxy glue by soaking overnight. Paul D. Oakey in Lapidary Journal had trouble with his polish "balling up" and scratching the stone, and remedied the problem by using a solution of one ounce of vinegar to sixteen ounces of water. He recommended cleaning the lap first with a toothbrush and the vinegar solution while the lap is turning at high speed. This procedure rejuvenated an old discarded Lucite lap. The solution should contain a little soap as a wetting agent. He dripped this slowly on the lap while polishing, thus ending his scratching problems. Oakey said this gave good results with quartz, beryl, and YAG using either tin oxide, cerium oxide, or Linde A. To polish a large table, he mixed polish, vinegar, Karo syrup and soap into a creamy paste and applied it to the lap without a drip.

From the *Rocket City Rocks and Gems June/July 1999 via the Pegmatite March 2000*

Polishing Tips

#1—The final polish on silver depends on the number of buffing wheel threads, not on the amount of rouge used. A cheap buff will not give the same results as a quality one.

From Chert Chatter via Pegmatite Nov 1999

#2—Stones may develop thread-like scratches while being polished. They are probably due to grit on the polishing cloth and can be removed by holding a piece of balsa wood, plywood or crepe rubber against the wheel while it is in motion. The grit penetrates the wood or rubber and leaves the polishing cloth clean.

From *Backbender's Gazette July 1999 via Pegmatite Nov 1999*

Restoring Finish to Opal

Here's a great thread from the Orchid Digest on restoring a finish to a piece of opal jewelry. The Editor.

From: Barb Baur Date: Mon Oct 4-10, 2004

Customer brought in a silver ring, the opal looks like it's just been worn enough to take the polish off the surface. (It's a very favorite ring) The fire is barely visible below the cloudy surface. Is there anything I can do about this? I'm basically a bench jeweler/metalsmith, no lapidary experience at all. I had thought I could restore it using Opticon, but that seemed like a less than desirable solution. Do I need to find a stone cutter to polish the surface again? It's bezel set in a sterling ring and looks to be a very pretty stone if it was shiny again.

Thanks! Barb Baur

From: M. Mersky

Hi Barb I've used a product called Linde A Powder and it works beautifully on opal, animal teeth and ivory (no, I do not use ivory). Unfortunately I don't know where to tell you to get it.

Margie Mersky

<http://www.mmwaxmodels.com>

From: Taylor

Is it an opal doublet or triplet? And is it boulder opal or precious? I had this challenge a few months back - these details matter. Could be a simple solution like having a lapidary heat off the quartz top and re-apply the optical adhesive which may have started to separate - causing that 'cloudy' appearance (I say simple but in fact it's a bit tricky).

<<Or>> sadly the opal may have been re-saturated with 'liquids' over the years (some older ladies like to do dishes with their opal rings on *cringe*) there is no solution for this problem.

Cheers, Taylor in Toronto

From: Hans Durstling

Hi Barb,

Here's what I do in such a situation. It is a common one. Usually the wear is concentrated on the top of the stone, which is the most exposed part. That also means that it is the part you are most likely to be able to get it with a sanding stick. I gently go over the stone with a 1,200 grit silicon carbide wet-or-dry sanding stick, maybe glued down to a popsicle stick or medical tongue depressor. Sand, gently, with lots of water, until the reachable parts of the stone are brought to a fine even silky frostedness.

Usually wear pitting like you describe doesn't require anything coarser than 1200 grit to remove. From that silky 1200 grit sanding finish you can proceed directly to re-polish the stone. Do this with a small leather wheel in the Foredom, at fairly slow speed, kept wet (don't let it get dry - that risks heat build up which may crack the stone), applying a slurry of any of the usual polishing compounds such as cerium oxide, tin oxide or aluminum oxide. Move the wheel around over the stone; don't let it dwell in one place. You could use a felt wheel too but felt builds up heat quickly which could be risky.

If you're not confident using the Foredom, you can do the polishing by hand also by gluing a leather strip to a wooden ruler or similar and applying the polishing compound to the stick. Again, do it wet. Use a light touch and frequently check to see what's happening.

Hope that helps

Hans Durstling Moncton, Canada

From: John Donovan

Hi there, It sounds like now you will have to seek out a cutter...It is our understanding that Opticon is a form of glue... It needs to come off the surface and then the opal can be repolished...Take care, John

Donivan

From: Greg DeMark

Barb,

Opal is one of the easiest gems to restore a polish to. First make sure it is a solid Opal and not a triplet with a Quartz top. If it is a solid opal simply wet sand it lightly with very fine Waterproof Silicon Carbide Sandpaper. Try starting with 1500 grit. Make sure you keep the Opal wet. After lightly sanding it rinse and dry it to check the surface. If the scratches are too deep for this fine paper drop down in grit and ten work back up to the 1500. Sand in different directions. Once you have the scratches removed take a new and clean cotton wheel and place in your Flexshaft. Charge the wheel with Cerium Oxide mixed with water to Polish the surface of the stone. Keep the stone wet and the Cerium Oxide should be mixed so as not to be pasty.

Good Luck

Greg DeMark

email: greg@demarkjewelry.com

Website: www.demarkjewelry.com Website: www.outdrs.net/demark

From: Margaret Malm

Yes, Barb, it needs to be repolished, by someone who knows about cutting and polishing opal. Opal is soft, and scratches easily. It is also brittle, and for these reasons not too often used in rings, at least not bezel-set. No Opticon! And then you might consider setting it a bit differently, so the opal is a little more protected.

Margaret

From: David Barzilay Lord of the Rings

It is definitely possible to polish the surface of a bezel set opal WITHOUT removing it from the ring. I regularly use Harry Kazanjian and Sons in L.A. (One of the best cutters and polishers that I know.) 213-624-4131 ask for Cookie or Virginia.

David Barzilay Lord of the Rings 607 S Hill St Ste 850 Los Angeles, CA 90014-1718 213-488-9157

From: Cap'n Kirk

Yup, you'd have to have it polished again; the stone wouldn't necessarily have to be removed from the setting. Opal's soft so it could be done easily and quickly.

From: coralnurt

What Taylor says about a possible separating doublet or triplet is a possibility, but it sounded from the first post more like this is a solid opal that has simply lost its polish. The standard for polishing opals is either 50 or 100K diamond on a poly pad or cerium oxide on felt. I prefer the latter myself. Linde A is not necessary. Also, opals do not 're-saturate'. Once the internal fluids have dissipated, they will not take on moisture again. When ladies wear their opals for doing dishes, they sometimes turn slightly to a yellowish color on the surface but the internal structure remains the same.

It is important to keep a good polish on opal as that produces a glassy surface and reduces the possibility of 'crazing' and best displays the internal 'fire'. In reality, virtually all opals will craze or crack in time....some will do it early, others take years.

Because they are relatively soft, 5.5 to 6.5 on Mohs scale though most around 5.5 to 6, opals will lose their polish fairly easily in normal wear, especially if not protected. They are reasonably easy to polish but this is often complicated when they remain in a setting because it is impossible to get access to the entire surface. Unless they are flush inlay, the best thing is to take the stone out of the piece, smooth the entire surface on at least a 600 soft diamond wheel (such as Nova), prepolish on 1200 soft diamond wheel and

then polish on a felt pad with damp cerium oxide turning at about 200 RPM.

Be careful not to chip the stone with taking it out or resetting. Opal is not only soft but very brittle.

Cheers from Don at The Charles Belle Studio in SOFL

where simple elegance IS fine jewelry!

dcdietz@comcast.net

From: coralnut

Actually, Opticon is a resin that is commonly used to fill small cracks or porous stones. It is not useful to 'resurface' a stone unless it can actually permeate the surface.

Cheers from Don

From: The Doctor

> Opal's soft so it could be done easily and quickly.

Opal can be as hard as 6 1/2 on the Moh's scale, nearly as hard as quartz, at 7 on the same scale. So, while not as hard as most gem materials, it isn't exactly soft, either. The real problem with opal is toughness, another element of gemstone durability. It is prone to breaking and chipping, especially on the edges. It can also craze or crack for several reasons, not the least of which is heating while polishing. People have thought of opal as a soft stone for too long, a lack of toughness is why setting opal in rings and bracelets is unadvisable. But at least it isn't as soft as soapstone or serpentine.

As for polishing out the scratches, most of what's been posted already is good advice. If it's a solid opal, you can easily polish it in place, either with silicon carbide sticks, or by charging small cup brushes with diamond compound and working down to finer grits. If (or when) the scratches are small enough for final polishing, there are many options. Some recommend cerium or tin oxides on felt, some recommend the same on leather. Either can be done with your rotary tool Freedom. Others have their own "secret recipe." One of the best opal polishers in Southern Florida (incidentally, his name is Dr. Huffman) tells me he uses his own blend of Linde A and tin oxide on leather. My best polish on opal has always been Holy Cow on felt.

If you're not comfortable with the process, contact a lapidary. A read-through of a mineralogical or gemological book or text can help you understand the differences between hardness and toughness, as well as those qualities as applied to gem materials such as opal, jade serpentine and talc, and the best ways to polish them safely and well.

James in SoFl

From: Stan McCall

Hello Barb

There are many factors to consider when repolishing an opal. Is the stone a natural opal or is the stone a synthetic opal (there is a lot of synthetic opal set in sterling silver out on the market today). Some of this synthetic opal has a polymer impregnated into it and makes it quite soft (Mohs 4.5) and must be treated carefully. If the stone is natural there could be internal cracks that can be hidden by the scratched surface. Doublets and triplets can sometimes have their own problems with delamination of the assembled layers causing a fogginess in the stone.

It's best to have a professional lapidary look at the stone to determine the condition and advice before polishing. Remember, It's your customers favorite ring. Typical charges to polish an opal in a setting runs about \$20 to \$25 dollars. Is it really worth it to try it yourself and ruin the stone.

Stan McCall

Custom Creative Gem Cutting

<http://home.earthlink.net/custom-creative/>

From: Margaret Malm

Barb, Check out your local rock shop, or one of the mail-order or online suppliers of rockhounds' products. (However; you will need to have the right cutting and polishing equipment in order to use it. Margaret

From: Taylor

> opals do not 're-saturate'. Once the internal fluids have > dissipated, they will not take on moisture again. When ladies > wear their opals for doing dishes, they sometimes turn slightly to > a yellowish color on the surface but the internal structure > remains the same.

Thanks for the information Don, I had always believed (was taught) Opals were starved for water and would take on additional moisture until the arranged silicon structure was saturated causing the milky or faded effect - even complete loss of fire. This is an interesting topic; it looks like I have some research to do.

Cheers, Taylor in Toronto

From: Richard Hart

> In reality, virtually all opals will craze or crack in > time... some will do it early, others take years.

I have opals I cut 20 years ago, I still have them, they are not cracked and not crazed. Lalique made pieces with opal, I believe in the late 1800's, I saw them at L.A. county museum. They were not cracked, not crazed. I have about a pound of opal I have had for 20 years, uncut. Very few pieces have crazed. The most unstable is Mexican jelly opal or Virgin Valley, Idaho.

In my experience, most opals are cracked by the wearer smacking it against something and shattering it. I believe that it is a myth that opals dry out. I live in Denver, low humidity, very dry dehydrating environment, and we have had very good success at carrying opal at our retail store for over 10 years. A few doublets have separated, and a few have spontaneously combusted.(kidding)

Over time, some opals can craze, compared to how many I have, the number that did craze would not be a deterrent for me to not work with them. I have paid \$5,000 an ounce for some material, so I would be very unhappy if my investment disintegrated over time. What I have has gone up in value as some opal mining areas are not as productive now as they once were.

I am not discrediting your experience, it just that my experience seems to have been different. While cutting opals I have never ruined the color by overheating, or cracked one during cutting or polishing. I have gone through color layers, and lost value by grinding away too much, and I have oriented opal wrong so the best color was visible only at a significantly tilted angle.

Repolishing opal usually involves re-sanding as wearing causes scratches and pitting. Polishing usually does not help unless the scratches and pits are removed.

Richard in Denver

From: Derek

As word of caution that has not yet been mentioned on polishing opal I've cut thousands of them and teach opal cutting. Before you go any further you need to find out about the age of the opal. If the customer has had this ring for a long time or it's an heirloom, polishing it could be rather dangerous. Opal can get unstable when it's been cut for more than about 20 years. It will not generally crack spontaneously, but polishing it will change the tensions in the stone and it might bring on crazing. Trust me, you don't want to be responsible for replacing a stone because it's extremely difficult to match and can be quite expensive.

I'd first find out how old this ring is and if it's old at all decline the operation unless the customer understands the risks. In that case make sure whatever you do you do let this stone heat up at all. Again if it's been cut for even over 10 years the stability with polishing could be suspect.

Derek Levin

From: Lee Einer

> I'd first find out how old this ring is and if it's old at all
> decline the operation unless the customer understands the risks.
I would go the author of this post one better and say that you would be wise to apprise the customer of the risk of crazing regardless of the stone's age. I have seen opals crack and craze with no human intervention whatsoever. Repolishing can only increase the risk.

Lee Einer Dos Manos Jewelry
<http://www.dosmanosjewelry.com>

From: Greg DeMark

Derek,
I respect your experience as an opal cutter but I must confess that your statements are confusing. I am a Gemologist and I have 32 years experience as a goldsmith. One of my specialties is the restoration of Antique and Vintage jewelry. Over the years I have had to repolish untold numbers of Opals in Antique rings. The fact is that once an opal is stable it remains stable unless it has been exposed to extreme heat and cold. If the Opal is kept cool with water while polishing there should be no damage from crazing unless that crazing already exists below the surface.

Greg DeMark
greg@demarkjewelry.com
www.demarkjewelry.com
www.outdrs.net/demark

From: Douglas Zaruba

On a slightly different topic: I have heard that it is possible to "hide" crazing fractures in an opal. Does anyone know about this?
Douglas Zaruba 35 N. Market St. Frederick, MD 21701
301 695-1107
dreamgate@earthlink.net

From: coralnut

Richard,
Twenty years is nothing in the life of an opal. Even a hundred years is nothing. All I said was that, in time, virtually all opals will craze. Some won't make it to the cutting stage, others wait till they are cut before crazing. Some come off looking just great and may stay that way for many, many years. Well past our lifetimes they may just decide to craze. I too have opals that have been in my collection for well over 20 years both cut and uncut. Many have survived but many have decided to give up the ghost. It sounds like we share many opal experiences in our cutting careers. But I will never let the potential problems with opal deter me from cutting them either. They are still one of my favorites but then, I never yet have met a stone I didn't like.
Cheers from Don

From: The Doctor

> On a slightly different topic: I have heard that it is
> possible to "hide" crazing fractures in an opal. Does anyone know
> about this?

Oil and wax have been used to disguise crazing for quite a long time. Plastics and epoxy resins such as Opticon are being used often now. Since two-part epoxies also harden, they are considered a good stabilizer for opal, turquoise and other porous stones. Whichever the desired result, be it stabilization or to hide crazing, non-disclosure is considered unethical.

I recently went up to Mississippi to visit, and ran across a friend with a simple Lightning Ridge opal pendant I made years ago. The little black stone had developed a crack (as in 'deeper than a craze') from one edge up over the top a little. I offered to update the setting for her, and mentioned that while I had the opal removed, I could

treat it with a resin, which could help restore some durability to her opal. She agreed, and I must say I was as happy as she after seeing it's appearance. Most of the crack was invisible from the top over the side, and the rest was under the bezel.

I believe this was a happy experience due in major part to disclosure of the treatment. I explained that we weren't trying to hide the crack, rather trying to stabilize it before it went any further. Treatments have their purpose, but "hiding" inclusions and imperfections is not an ethical one. Besides, I've seen many crazed opals that were far more interesting because of this "defect."

James in SoFI

P.S. Oh, and don't forget about water for hiding crazing in rough. Seldom do I see rough opal for sale outside of a water-filled bottle of some sort.

From: Bruce Holmgrain

> On a slightly different topic: I have heard that it is
> possible to "hide" crazing fractures in an opal. Does anyone know
> about this?

I've heard it too, yet among the opal repairs that I have done in the past, have come to believe that there is nothing to be done with crazing. I also wonder if there is something other that cracking that is happening.

Bruce

From: Richard Hart

> P.S. Oh, and don't forget about water for hiding crazing in
> rough. Seldom do I see rough opal for sale outside of a
> water-filled bottle of some sort.

James,

When cutters buy rough, like lapis, turquoise, opal... agate etc., they wet the rocks to see what they will look like polished. What a rock looks like wet is usually what it looks like polished.

Bottles of opal are usually parcels of material that will cut similar stones in color, pattern of fire, and price. Every opal dealer I have dealt with for 20 years has allowed me to open the bottle to inspect each and every piece. Water makes the stones look bigger and better, but it is used as a tool for inspection, not deception. I personally have never seen a dealer putting crazed Australian opals in a water filled bottle. If someone did that, they would lose credibility immediately from any cutters that knew what they were doing.

I have seen bottles of Mexican jelly opal in matrix for sale that had some stones in the lot that had crazed or cracked, and that is the way that material is sold. If you are lucky with that material, you get a few nice stones and some specimens for kids. Blasting is used to remove material to get at the Mexican jelly opal, and that causes cracking which is usually easy to see.

There is a learning curve to buying good rough. Everyone that buys any kind of rough knows this. Part of the thrill and adventure.

From the Orchid Digest from <http://www.ganoksin.com>, dated 10-04-04 to 10-10-04. The Ganoksin Project provides an information forum on the Internet free of charge for all things connected with jewelry and jewelry making. Visit it and see! Printed with permission of Ganoksin.

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The Three Z's

Just as butter, buttermilk and milk are three different things, so are zircon, zirconium and zirconia. **Zircon** is a natural stone which can be faceted like a diamond. **Zirconium** is a metal. During the nuclear accident in Pennsylvania the 'bubble allowed the temperature to rise so high that the Zirconium tubes in which the uranium pellets are contained I cracked and warped'. **Cubic Zirconia** is the ultimate diamond simulant now on the market.

Via Owyhee Gem, 11/01, Via the RockCollector, 3/02

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Winter Safety - The Deceptive Killers - (Part I)

By Chuck McKie, CFMS Safety Chair
Via The American Red Cross

This preparedness guide explains the dangers of winter weather and suggests life-saving action YOU can take. With this information, YOU can recognize winter weather threats, develop an action plan and be ready when severe winter weather threatens. Remember... your safety is up to YOU.

Why Talk About Winter Weather?

- Each year, dozens of Americans die due to exposure to cold. Add to that number, vehicle accidents and fatalities, fires due to dangerous use of heaters and other winter weather fatalities and you have a significant threat.
- Threats, such as hypothermia and frostbite, can lead to loss of fingers and toes or cause permanent kidney, pancreas and liver injury and even death. You must prepare properly to avoid these extreme dangers. You also need to know what to do if you see symptoms of these threats.
- A major winter storm can last for several days and be accompanied by high winds, freezing rain or sleet, heavy snowfall and cold temperatures.
- People can become trapped at home or in a car, without utilities or other assistance.
- Attempting to walk for help in a winter storm can be a deadly decision.
- The aftermath of a winter storm can have an impact on a community or region for days, weeks or even months.
- Extremely cold temperatures, heavy snow and coastal flooding can cause hazardous conditions and hidden problems.

Heavy Snow - Heavy snow can immobilize a region and paralyze a city, stranding commuters, closing airports, stopping the flow of supplies, and disrupting emergency and medical services. Accumulations of snow can cause roofs to collapse and knock down trees and power lines. Homes and farms may be isolated for days and unprotected livestock may be lost. In the mountains, heavy snow can lead to avalanches.

The cost of snow removal, repairing damages, and the loss of business can have severe economic impacts on cities and towns. An avalanche is a mass of tumbling snow. More than 80 percent of midwinter avalanches are triggered by a rapid accumulation of snow, and 90 percent of those occur within 24 hours of snowfall. An avalanche may reach a mass of a million tons and travel at speeds of up to 200 mph.

Injuries Due To Ice and Snow

- About 70% result from vehicle accidents.
- About 25% occur in people caught out in a storm.
- Most happen to males over 40 years old.

Winter Flooding - Winter storms can generate coastal flooding; ice jams and snow melt, resulting in significant damage and loss of life.

Coastal Floods - Winds generated from intense winter storms can cause widespread tidal flooding and severe beach erosion along coastal areas.

Ice Jams - Long cold spells can cause rivers and lakes to freeze. A rise in the water level or a thaw breaks the ice into large chunks, which become jammed at man-made and natural obstructions. Ice jams can act as a dam, resulting in severe flooding.

Snow Melt - Sudden thaw of a heavy snow pack often leads to flooding

Wind Chill - Wind chill is not the actual temperature but rather how wind and cold feel on exposed skin. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at an accelerated rate, driving down the body temperature. Animals are also affected by wind chill; however, cars, plants and other objects are not.

Frostbite - Frostbite is damage to body tissue caused by extreme cold. A wind chill of -20° Fahrenheit (F) will cause frostbite in just 30 minutes. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities, such as fingers, toes, ear lobes or the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately! If you must wait for help, slowly re-warm affected areas. However, if the person is also showing signs of hypothermia, warm the body core before the extremities.

Hypothermia - Hypothermia is a condition brought on when the body temperature drops to less than 95°F. It can kill. For those who survive, there are likely to be lasting kidney, liver and pancreas problems. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion.

- Take the person's temperature. If below 95°F, seek medical care immediately!
- If medical care is not available, warm the person slowly, starting with the body core.
- Warming the arms and legs first drives cold blood toward the heart and can lead to heart failure.
- If necessary, use your body heat to help.
- Get the person into dry clothing and wrap in a warm blanket covering the head and neck.
- Do not give the person alcohol, drugs, coffee or any hot beverage or food.
- Warm broth is the first food to offer.

Exposure to cold can cause frostbite or hypothermia and become life threatening. Infants and elderly people are most susceptible. What constitutes extreme cold varies in different parts of the country. In the South, near freezing temperatures are considered extreme cold. Freezing temperatures can cause severe damage to citrus fruit crops and other vegetation. Pipes may freeze and burst in homes that are poorly insulated or without heat. In the North, extreme cold means temperatures well below zero.

Cold Injuries Related to Cold:

- 50% happen to people over 60 years old.
- More than 75% happen to males.
- About 20% occur in the home.

Winter Storm Hazards in the U.S.

How Winter Storms Form - There are many ways for winter storms to form; however, all have three key components.

- 1) **Cold Air** - For snow and ice to form, the temperature must be below freezing in the clouds and near the ground.
- 2) **Moisture** - Water evaporating from bodies of water, such as a large lake or the ocean, is an excellent source of moisture.
- 3) **Lift** - Lift causes moisture to rise and form clouds and precipitation. An example of lift is warm air colliding with cold air and being forced to rise. Another example of lift is air flowing up a mountain side.

KEEP AHEAD OF THE STORM by listening to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, and television for the latest winter storm warnings, watches and advisories. The National Weather Service issues outlooks, watches, warnings and advisories for all winter weather hazards. Here's what they mean and what to do. Use the information below to make an informed decision on your risk and what actions should be taken. Remember to listen to your local officials' recommendations and to NOAA Weather Radio for the latest winter storm information.

OUTLOOK - Winter storm conditions are possible in the next 2-5 days. Stay tuned to local media for updates the next 36-48 hours. Prepare now!

WARNING - Life-threatening severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours. Act now!

ADVISORY - Winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. If you are cautious, these situations should not be life threatening. Stay informed!

Electronic Equipment - Equipment is available to receive weather information/NOAA broadcasts: Weather Radio, Radio, TV, Pager, Cell Phone, and Two-Way Radio.

What to Listen For - NOAA Weather Radio is the best means to receive warnings from the National Weather Service. The National Weather Service continuously broadcasts warnings and forecasts that can be received by NOAA Weather Radios, which are sold in many stores. The average range is 40 miles, depending on topography. Purchase a radio that has a battery backup and a Specific Area Message Encoder feature, which automatically alerts you when a watch or warning is issued for your county or parish.

At Home and Work - Primary concerns are loss of heat, power and telephone service and a shortage of supplies if storm conditions continue for more than a day.

Have Available:

- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and portable radio to receive emergency information. These may be your only links to the outside.
- Extra food and water. Have high energy food, such as dried fruit, nuts and granola bars, and food requiring no cooking or refrigeration.
- Extra medicine and baby items.
- First-aid supplies.
- Heating fuel. Refuel before you are empty. Fuel carriers may not reach you for days after a winter storm.
- Emergency heat source: fireplace, wood stove, space heater. Use and Ventilate properly to prevent a fire.
- Fire extinguisher, smoke alarm. Test smoke alarms once a month to ensure they work properly.
- Make sure pets have plenty of food, water and shelter.

From the CFMS Newsletter, 1-2005

February 2005 Gem & Mineral Shows

5-6 — OAK HARBOR, WA: Annual show; Oak Harbor Senior Center, 51 S.E. Jerome St.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; contact Keith Ludemann, (360) 675-1837; e-mail: slabs@whidby.net.

5-6 — PANAMA CITY, FL: 14th annual show; Panama City Gem & Mineral Society; American Legion Fairgrounds, 15th St. and Sherman Ave.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; free admission; exhibits, gems, minerals, fossils, jewelry, beads, lapidary arts, wire wrapping, door prizes; contact Al Zar, (850) 763-0109; e-mail: Aquezpie@aol.com.

11-13 — FORT MYERS, FL: 42nd show; Frank Cox Productions; St. Lucie Civic Center, VA Ave. at 25th St. S; Fri. 1-6, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; \$4 admission good all three days; gems, jewelry, beads; contact Frank Cox Productions, 755 S. Palm Ave. #203, Sarasota, FL 34236, (941) 954-0202; e-mail: frankcox@comcast.net; Web site: www.frankcoxproductions.com.

11-13 — MERRITT ISLAND, FL: Annual show, "Symphony of Gemstones" Central Brevard Rock & Gem Club; Kiwanis Island Park, 950 Kiwanis Park Rd.; Fri. 1-6, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; contact George E. Tolson, (321) 783-4795.

18-20 — KIRKWOOD, MO: Annual show; Cabin Fever Productions; Kirkwood Community Center, 111 S. Geyer; Fri. 4-9, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 10-4; adults \$2, seniors and ages 12-18 \$1, under 12 free with adult; contact Bruce or Becky Vick, 6 Tanewood Ct., Belleville, IL 62223, (618) 394-0443.

18-27 — INDIO, CA: Show; San Geronio Mineral & Gem Society; Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival, 46350 Arabia St., Gem & Mineral Bldg., (Bldg. 1); all days 10-10; contact Bert Grisham, (951) 849-1674.

19 — MACUNGIE, PA: Show; Discount Card Club of America; Macungie Memorial Park; Sat. 9-3; contact Ralph Renninger, P.O. Box 251, Emmaus, PA 18049, 888-285-2781; e-mail: r.renninger@discountcardclub.net.

19-20 — APACHE JUNCTION, AZ: 40th annual show, "Rocks Alive" Apache Junction Rock & Gem Club; Apache Junction High School Cafetorium, corner of Ironwood Dr. and Southern Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4;

contact Richard Robertson or John Frary, (480) 288-8573; Web site: www.apachejunctionrockclub.org.

19-20 — GEORGETOWN, TX: 34th annual show; Williamson County Gem & Mineral Society; Community Center, San Gabriel Park, Bus. Hwy. 81N; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$2, ages 6-12 \$1, children under 6 free; dealers, demonstrations, door prizes, noncompetitive exhibits; contact Donald Buell, P.O. Box 781, Buchanan Dam, TX 78609-0781, (512) 793-2740.

19-20 — PLAINVIEW, TX: 43rd annual show; Hi Plains Gem & Mineral Society; Ollie Liner Center; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$2, students and children 50 cents; contact Jim Matlock, 701 Zephyr, Plainview, TX 79072, (806) 293-3476; e-mail: jmatlock@TXonline.net.

19-20 — SEATTLE, WA: 39th annual show, "Presidents' Gemboree" West Seattle Rock Club; Alki Masonic Temple, 4736 40th Ave. SW; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; door prizes, dealers, demonstrators, junior activities, silent auction, grab bags, Spin-a-Wheel; Audrey Vogelpohl, (206) 932-3292; e-mail: avogelpohl@comcast.net; Web site: www.westseattlerockclub.org.

19-20 — STOCKTON, CA: 54th annual show, "Earth's Treasures" Stockton Lapidary & Mineral Club; classes, seminars; San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, Bldgs. 3 and 4, 1668 South Airport Wy.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; contact Laurie Haines, (209) 838-0108; e-mail: Lhaines99@aol.com.

25-27 — PALM SPRINGS, CA: Annual show, "Palm Springs Rockfest and Earth Science Fair" Rockfest USA; Palm Springs Market Fair, I-10 exit, Ramon Rd.; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; ages 13 and up \$5, ages 7-12 \$3, ages 6 and under free; 50 dealers, 20 earth science organizations, gold panning, giveaways, grab bags, demonstrations, spin the wheel, museum and club exhibits, student exhibit area; contact W.R. Russ, 4515 E. Joan De Arc, Phoenix, AZ 85032, (602) 684-7381 or (620) 929-7802; e-mail: pghrockfest@hotmail.com.

25-27 — SARASOTA, FL: 151st show; Frank Cox Productions; Municipal Auditorium, 801 N. Tamiami Tr. (Hwy. 41); Fri. 10-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; \$4 admission good all three days; gems, jewelry, beads; contact Frank Cox Productions, 755 S. Palm Ave. #203, Sarasota, FL 34236, (941) 954-0202; e-mail: frankcox@comcast.net; Web site: www.frankcoxproductions.com.

26-27 — ALBANY, NY: 12th annual show, "James Campbell Memorial Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show and Sale" NY State Academy of Mineralogy, Capital District Mineral Club; NY State Museum, Empire State Plaza, Madison Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; admission \$5; contact Mike Hawkins, Geology Collection Manager, (518) 486-2011 or (518) 473-7154; e-mail: mhawkins@mail.nysed.gov.

26-27 — BOISE, ID: Show and sale; ID Gem Club; Western ID Fairgrounds, Glenwood and Chinden Blvd.; Sat. 10-7, Sun. 10-5; dealers, lectures, kids' area, silent auction, demonstrators, wheel of fortune, grab bags, 100 display cases, black light room; contact Charlie Smith, (208) 628-4002.

26-27 — EVERETT, WA: 52nd annual show; Everett Rock & Gem Club; WA National Guard Armory, 2730 Oakes Ave.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; dealers, demonstrations, raffle, silent auction, junior activities, door prizes, grab bags, club displays, club sales; contact Mel Buhr, P.O. Box 1631, Everett, WA 98206, (425) 338-2184.

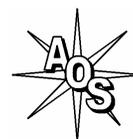
26-27 — JACKSON, MS: 46th annual show; MS Gem & Mineral Society; A&I Bldgs., State Fairgrounds, High St.; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, two days \$7, children \$3; competitive, noncompetitive, educational, and working exhibits, special junior workshops, more than 26 dealers; contact Ashley Redden, (601) 925-8272; e-mail: asredden@netzero.com.

26-27 — MONROE, WA: Show; WA Prospectors Mining Association; Evergreen Fairgrounds, 14405 179th Ave. SE; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 9-4; adults \$4, children 13 and under free; contact Keith Hovland, (206) 954-2669; Web site: www.WAprospectors.org.

26-27 — PASADENA, TX: 30th annual show; Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society; Pasadena Convention Center, 7902 Fairmont Pkwy.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, youths 12-18 \$1; contact Al Pennington, (281) 481-1591; Web site: www.ghg.net/gpenning/annual.htm.

26-27 — ROSEVILLE, MN: Show; Anoka County Gem & Mineral Club; Har Mar Mall, 2100 Snelling Ave.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5; contact Catherine Cummings, 1192 CA Dr. #201, St. Paul, MN 55108-2251, (651) 487-2609.

26-27 — SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Show; Crystal Fair; Laguna Ave. and Marina Blvd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; contact Jerry Tomlinson, (415) 383-7837; e-mail: sfxlt@earthlink.net, Web site: www.crystalfair.com.



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