

The Opal Express

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October 2024

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President's Message

Happy Halloween Opalholics!

This month is our annual Opal Show! I hope everyone will be able to attend. This is a last call for volunteers for the show. If you would like to help take tickets and help with memberships or check on vendors needs during the show, please contact Show Chair, Veronica Purpura. Please think about volunteering and helping out your club!

Kathleen James, the Editor of the Opal Express, has decided to resign after a five year run. She is also the Admin for our Facebook page and will be resigning from that position also. The society is currently searching for a new Editor and Facebook Admin starting in January 2025. Any takers out there?

Stan McCall
AOS President
Custom Creative Gem Cutting

Member area access is available only to members in good standing. Any other entry is unauthorized.

**USER NAME: member
PASSWORD: DFRACT47&**

Did You Know?

The Irish actually brought the pumpkin carving tradition of the Jack O'Lantern to America. The original Jack O'Lantern was not a pumpkin though because pumpkins did not exist in Ireland. Instead, Ancient Celtic cultures in Ireland carved turnips for Halloween and put an ember inside of them to ward off evil spirits.

Source: Google

Needed Opal Express Editor and Facebook Admin

At the end of December, I will be retiring as Editor of The Opal Express and will also retire from being the Admin on the AOS Facebook page. I've enjoyed my time as Editor and Admin, but it's time to move on.

Therefore, AOS is looking for someone to take over these positions. The same person does not have to be Editor and Admin. The only requirement for Editor is that you are familiar with a document program (Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc.). As long as the final document can be saved as a PDF file, you can use whatever program works for you. Newsletter content is up to you.

If you are interested in either position, please let me or Stan McCall know.

Kathleen James
Editor

Join us for the 54th Annual Opal Show



Koroit Opal photo
compliments of
Len Cram



54th Annual Opal Show
October 26-27, 2024
Velvet Rose Event Center



American Opal Society proudly presents **54th Annual OPAL, GEM & JEWELRY SHOW**

October 26th & 27th, 2024

Saturday 10AM - 6PM

Sunday 10AM - 5PM

!Fabulous New Location!

Velvet Rose Event Center

300 S. Flower St., Orange, CA 92868

Opal and Gem Dealers from around the USA and beyond
Rough and Cut Opals, other gemstones, jewelry & supplies
Huge Drawing Grand Prize custom design by Stan McCall
Many other prizes: gemstones, jewelry, books, tools, surprises
Free Demonstrations gemstone cutting, jewelry making, gemstone identification, faceting, gold panning and more!

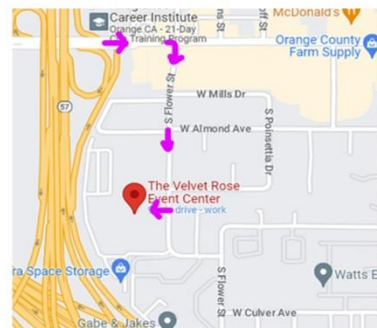
ADMISSION \$5.00 ADULTS

STUDENTS WITH ID & CHILDREN UNDER 15 FREE

FREE PARKING

American Opal Society, Inc.
PO Box 4875
Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875
Contact: Veronica Purpura (714) 501-9959
info@opalsociety.org <http://opalsociety.org>
(dealer inquiries welcome)

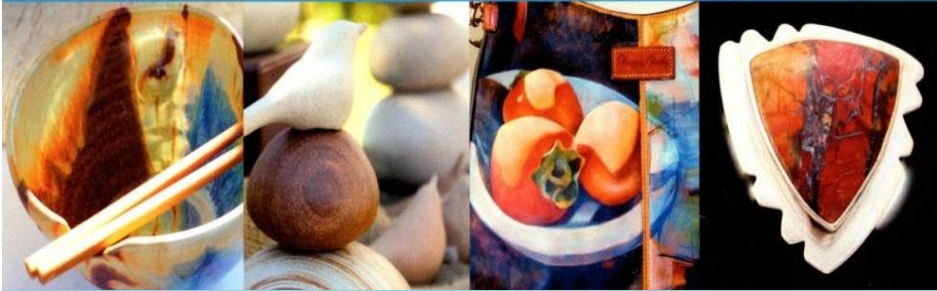
DIRECTIONS: exit Chapman from the 57 towards Orange. Take Flower Street and follow. Make a right into the venue just after passing Larkspur Drive. Parking lot is in the back. There is a church next door.



Save the Date!

For more than 50 years, the Artistic License Fair has been a special part of Orange County. Handmade, one-of-a-kind items crafted by 50+ artisans are featured in this best-selling show. The fair will be at the beautiful Muckenthaler Cultural Center, 1201 W. Malvern Avenue, Fullerton, California, October 5, 2024 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Hope to see you there!

ARTISTIC LICENSE FAIR - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH - 10AM – 5PM



CELEBRATING THE SEASON OF AUTUMN AT THE MUCK!

Offering exquisitely crafted objects with living histories. Whether you're collecting for your home, your garden, or your wardrobe, the works of artisans will nourish your spirit. Surround yourself with handmade stories.



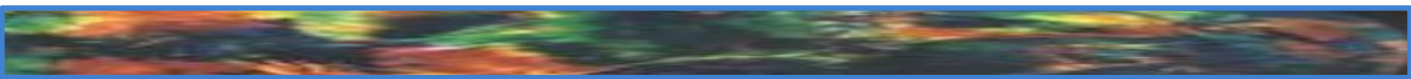
Muckenthaler Cultural Center
1201 W. Malvern Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92833

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024

Koala in a Gumtree - Opal Book Award 2009

by Mary Aracic

as told to AOS editor, Kathleen James



It was during the Yowah Opal Festival that Stephen and I got our inspiration from the variety of stalls displaying items of interest. Among them, displays of gem colour Yowah Nut Opal. Bolder cut and polished stones, with some of the most wonderful pieces set in stunning jewellery sold in the rough by the bucket.

Also beautifully displayed in jars of semi-rough to attract the dealers, who walked away well-loaded with gems.

Miners were there from Duck Creek and Koroit, as well as other areas of Queensland, most of them were happy with sales judging by the smiles on their faces.

We had our opal books stall amongst them and Stephen's book "Determined". It was so intriguing to know that some dealers buy our books with the intention of giving an appreciative gift to a special client, thus spreading the word of opal far and wide, an aspect that can only help colour the world with wonderful gem opal. It being Australia's national gemstone.

Entertainment during the show was great for young and old, with the ever popular ladies and gents "Windless Race" - a big attraction. The Yowah Designer Jewellery Competition were on public display and the evening events were great with self-service meals provided by very competent caterers from Thargomindah, followed by a choice of yummy desserts.

A lively band played, interspersed by a couple of individual singers - easy to listen to as the crowd lined up for a tasty meal. Chatting to old friends not met since last year's event.

If you felt like dancing, the floor was yours – albeit a concrete square on which to exercise your skills.

And that's not all! For when they say "put another log on the fire", that is done Yowah style. For out of the darkness comes a front-end loader to drop a huge log on the bonfire, sending flames, smoke and sparks into the night sky, much to the excitement of the seated crowd enjoying a meal. Most would agree that Yowah is the most peaceful place to be, a place that is very hard to leave without a feeling of sadness.

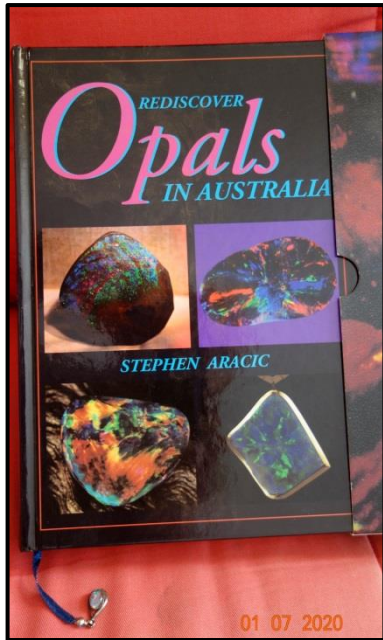
Many of the stall holders wanted to sample the hospitality of Lightning Ridge during Opal Expo 2009, and were looking forward to viewing the jewellery exhibits upstairs in the Bowling Club, which was expected to be world class and beautiful.

In fact, so beautiful that we didn't hold much hope of our piece winning in the Fantasy Awards of a Koala in a Gumtree opal book marker, it being our very first entry - seemed lost in a sea of twinkling rich colours, famous among Lightning Ridge black gem opal displays.

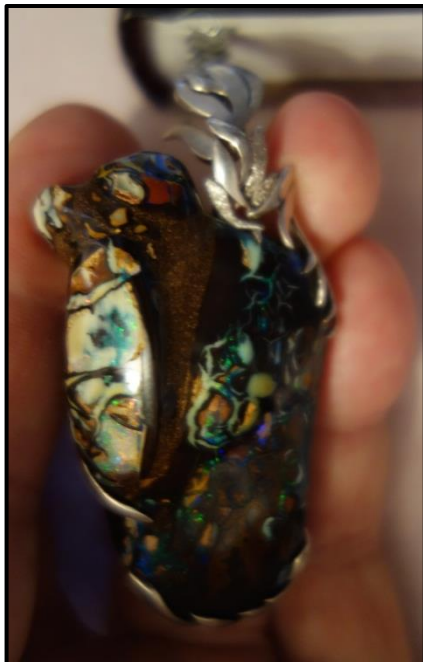
But to the panel of judges, we hoped our entry would look impressive for the sparkle, like a colourful jewel in his own right, as a beautiful specimen of a Yowah Nut Opal, so expertly shaped like a Koala. He seemed to be smiling at his younger mate by a million years or so, in a picture of a more recent cuddly Koala in a Gumtree between the open pages, 141-142 of our Special Edition Opal book "Rediscover Opals in Australia, 1999.

Continued on Page 5

Koala being an Australian treasure. There he was proudly displayed at the end of a silver ribbon, surrounded by silver gum leaves, serving a dual purpose, that of an opal book marker or worn as a stunning pendant on a silver chain.



Opal book with Koala in the Gumtree book marker



Close-up of Koala in the Gumtree book marker

So it was much to our surprise on the Gala Night of superb entertainment that our names were called amongst the winners in the Fantasy Section of "Highly Commended" for our entry of "Koala in a Gumtree - Opal Book Marker". I felt so shaky in my high heels on the catwalk, that Stephen had to hold my hand. Such was my excitement at winning.

There were four winners at our table. Three from Lightning Ridge - Joe Belica, Michael Mitchell and us. The fourth winner being Ian Bell.

I was so busy selling our opal books in the Beer Garden before the Gala Night and had



Koala in a Gumtree Yowah Nut Opal book mark and a cuddly Koala.

not seen our entry piece on display upstairs. So it was a real thrill to see our entry piece on a shelf of its own, at the end of the open pages of our opal book, in a glass cabinet amongst other beautiful winning pieces on shelves below it, which was a real credit to the organizers of the Opal Jewellery Designers Awards. And we thank them for it most sincerely.

Continued on Page 6

Most exciting of all was the reaction from Michael Mitchell to his winning piece, “Nature’s Gift”.

Like us, it was his very first entry. We felt so proud of him, as he hugged his glass-framed award to his heart. For not only had he gone to school with our son, Paul, but he kept pace with Stephen for 8km, with a bunch of school children from The Lightning Ridge Primary School, amongst them was a local, Damien Waterford, Lorne Station. When Stephen walked to Sydney pushing a stroller, demonstrating a safety automatic stroller brake he had invented and fitted to a stroller.

It may not have gone on the market, much to the regret of mothers who had lost babies in run away strollers, but it did put Lightning Ridge on the map. A point brought to Stephen’s attention by Michael Mitchell, a fine young Aboriginal man, as he reached across the table with a hand of pure friendship! For that was back on June 10, 1972, way before those credited on the Gala Night speeches. But Michael seemed to remember it very well. He was lost for words wit his award, but glad to say that thanks to local encouragement of “Best Employment and Centrelink” he did a course with Tafe, under the guidance of his teachers, Michelle Schellnegger and Daniella L’Abbate. There is no doubt that Michael, with such encouragement will go on to bigger achievements with his natural talents.

The young models on the cat walk, all locals, did a splendid job displaying some of the finest winning pieces.

We watched with interest for the first time, a stall near us with a colourful display of Ethiopian opal. It looked so unusual in a brownish background of geode type formation, with deep red hues and flashes of green and blue emanating from it, also light seam type gem opal from a new mine, sold

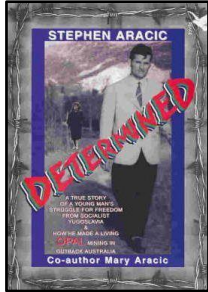
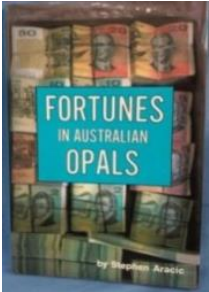
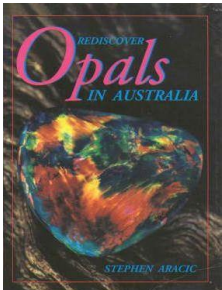
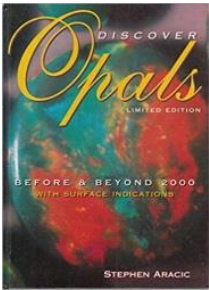
mainly in the rough with some cut stones. It created a great attraction from local miners and traders. Their stall holders were so interested in Australian opal, that they bought two of our opal books – “Rediscover Opals in Australia” and “Determined”.

Tour busses were busy taking visitors around the interesting sights of Lightning Ridge, Grawin, Sheepyards, Glengarry, Coocoran and Mehi. Also other opal fields in the area which are more interesting now than ever. Well done to all for the exciting opal events, both in Yowah, Quilpie and Lightning Ridge.

And not forgetting the entertainment, “Outback Style”.

This story is also in “Metal Stone & Glass”, page 18-21, Summer 2009 Volume.

As AOS Editor, I would like to thank Mary and Stephen Aracic once again for allowing us to share their wonderful stories from Lightning Ridge. I look forward to sharing more opal stories from Stephen and Mary in future newsletters!



You’ll find more opal stories from Stephen and Mary in these books.

~ Bench Tips ~

This page will be dedicated to bench tips and techniques from our readers. If you have bench tips you'd like to share, let us know! Bench tips can be anything - metal work, lapidary, wirework - anything creative that you would like to share. Send your tips to: aos.editor.02@gmail.com

TAPERED REAMERS

by Brad Smith

A tool you don't see often these days is a tapered reamer. It's not a tool you'll use everyday, but they're particularly useful for making an irregular hole round or for enlarging a hole to an exact diameter. For example, the small set in the yellow pouch is for holes in the range of 0.3mm to 2.5mm. They are great for sizing a tube to fit a hinge pin. Other times when I'm drilling a hole for riveting and can't find the exact size drill, I simply drill the holes with a slightly smaller bit and enlarge them with a reamer until the wire just fits.

For larger hole sizes in sheet metal up to 14 gauge, I really like the reamer with the black handle. It makes quick work of sizing holes from about 3mm to 12mm. You can find them in well-equipped hardware stores.

You may never use the large diameter reamers, but when sawing out a ring from 4mm thick sheet, I found they worked well for rounding and sizing the hole.



NO MAR PLIERS

by Brad Smith

Pliers can often leave nicks and scratches on your work. If this is giving you a problem, first take a close look at the plier jaws. New tools can be a little rough. I typically relieve any sharp edges, sand away any tool marks, and give working areas a quick polish.

If that doesn't solve the problem, you probably need to cover the jaws. Plastic electrical tape provides a quick fix but can leave messy adhesive on the jaws, and dips don't seem to last very long.

A quick and easy solution is to slip a length of 1/8 diameter vinyl tubing over each jaw. It works well and leaves no sticky residue. The tubing can be found in a store that sells aquarium supplies. Note that this will increase the size of the plier jaws a bit, but I haven't found that to be a problem.



Work Smarter & Be More Productive with Brad's "How To" Jewelry Books on [Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Reader: If your organization has an opal or rockhound-related event, please email particulars to info@opalsociety.org. Upcoming Event listings will be included at the discretion of The Opal Express editor as space and scheduling permit.

October 12-13, 2024 – Redwood City, CA

Peninsula Gem and Geology Society and Sequoia Gem and Mineral Society
Redwood City Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt Ave.,
Redwood City, CA 94061
Hours: 10 AM – 5 PM daily
Rocks, Minerals, Fossils, Gems, Jewelry, Beads, Demonstrations, Kid's Activities
Contact: cci@pacbell.net
Website: <https://www.sequoiagemandmineralsociety.org/sqms-gem-mineral-show.html>

October 12-13, 2024 – Long Beach, CA

Long Beach Mineral and Gem Society
Signal Hill Library, 1800 E. Hill Street, Signal Hill, CA
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
2024 Gems on the Hill
Contact: (562) 253-1390, lbmineralgemsociety@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.facebook.com/LBMGS>

October 19, 2024 – West Hills, CA

Woodland Hills Rock Chippers
First United Methodist Church, 22700 Sherman Way, Woodland Hills, CA 91307
Hours: 10 AM – 5 PM
Contact: barnettcelia53@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.rockchippers.org>

October 19-20, 2024 – Santa Rosa, CA

Santa Rosa Mineral & Gem Society
1351 Maple Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 6 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM
Earths Treasures: Come enjoy the many and varied specimens slabs, rough rock, fine stones and jewelry the earth has created for us.
Contact: (707) 849-9551, coons@sonic.net
Website: <http://SRMGS.org>

October 26-27, 2024 – Sacramento, CA

Sacramento Mineral Society
Scottish Rite Center, 6151 H Street, Sacramento, CA 95819
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
88th Annual Sacramento Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show.
Free parking, \$8 adult admission, kids under 12 free with paid adult
Contact: (916) 662-5819, gemshow@sacramentomineralsociety.org
Website: <http://sacgemshow.com>

October 26-27, 2024 – Orange, CA

American Opal Society
Opal Gem & Jewelry Show
Velvet Rose Event Center, 300 S. Flower Street,
Orange, CA 92868
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 6 PM
Sunday 10 AM- 5 PM
54th Annual Opal, Gem & Jewelry Show
Rough & cut opals and gemstones, jewelry,
supplies. Huge drawing. Free demonstrations.
Contact: (714) 501-9959, info@opalsociety.org
Website: <http://opalsociety.org>

November- 2-3, 2024 – Concord, CA

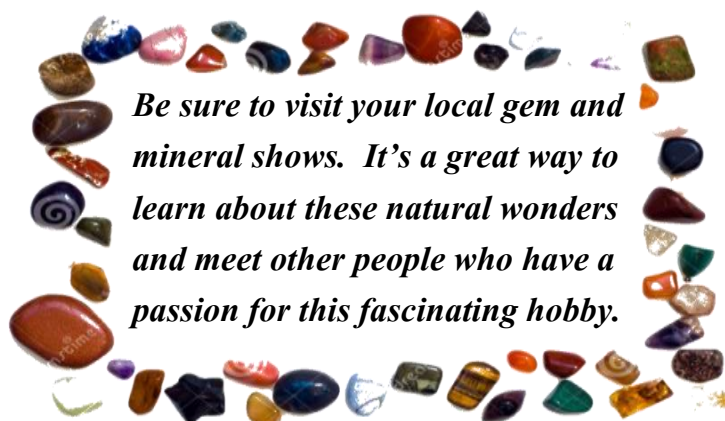
Contra Costa Mineral and Gem Society
Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Road, Concord, CA 94521
Hours: Saturday 10PM – 5 AM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
Join us for our Annual Mineral & Gem Show! 13 & Over \$10. 12 & Under FREE. Youth Org in Uniform FREE. Vendors, Holiday Shopping, Minerals, Gems, Fossils, Meteorites, Jewelry, Beads, Slabs, Displays, Fluorescent Tent, Demonstrations, Family Activities, Games, Rock Painting, Door Prizes, Silent Auction, Raffle, plus so much more...FREE SUNDAY ADMISSION WITH PAID SATURDAY! And lots of FREE PARKING!
Contact: show@ccmgclub.com
Website: <http://www.ccmgclub.com/show>

November 2-3, 2024 – San Diego, CA

San Diego Mineral & Gem Society
Liberty Station Conference Center, 2600 Laning Road, San Diego, CA 92106
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 6 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
Admission & Parking: Free (Service Animals Only)
San Diego's finest gem and mineral show located in the beautiful Point Loma neighborhood of San Diego, 1/2 block north of N. Harbor Dr. and the San Diego Bay.. Featuring 20+ Dealers, Demonstrations and Exhibits with Minerals, Gem, Fossils, Crystals, Jewelry, Lapidary, Slabs, Rough, Rock & Gem I.D., Books, Door Prizes, Kids' Zone, and much more.
Contact: LuAnn Benton, benton.luannz@gmail.com
Driving Directions: <https://bit.ly/libcmap>
Website: <https://bit.ly/gemdiego2024>

November 2-3, 2024 – Ridgecrest, CA

Indian Wells Gem and Mineral Society
Indian Wells Valley 68th Annual Gem and Mineral Show
Desert Empire Fairgrounds, 520 S. Richmond Rd., Ridgecrest, CA 93555
Hours: 9 AM – 5 PM Both Days
Field trip to Rainbow Ledge Agate Claim on Sunday November 3rd at 10 AM
Contact for additional information or vendor space: Miguel Gonzales (760) 382-2967 or miglogonzal@hotmail.com



Be sure to visit your local gem and mineral shows. It's a great way to learn about these natural wonders and meet other people who have a passion for this fascinating hobby.

American Opal Society Membership Application

FILL IN APPLICABLE INFORMATION		DUES / FEES	AMOUNT PAID
DUES: SELECT ONE	RENEWING MEMBERS	\$35.00	
	NEW MEMBERS	\$45.00	
INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FEE (All addresses <u>outside</u> of USA)		\$15.00	
PRINTED NEWSLETTER FEE (<u>Paper copy postal mailed instead of PDF file by e-mail</u>)		\$10.00	
ADDITIONAL BADGES (Your First Badge is <u>free</u> when joining)		\$15.00	
TOTAL PAID DUES plus International, Print or Badge Fees 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

To pay via PayPal, please visit the [PayPal](#) page. The AOS PayPal account is membership@opalsociety.org. You may pay with a credit card or via your PayPal account. The transaction is completely secure and the AOS never sees your credit card number. If paying by PayPal, please [download](#), complete and send this application form by mail to the address above or email to AOS Treasurer aos.treasurer.02@opalsociety.org.

NAME			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.
BUSINESS NAME			
ADDRESS		APT # or PO BOX	
CITY		STATE	
ZIP or POSTAL CODE	COUNTRY (IF OUTSIDE USA)		
PHONE - Home ()	PHONE - Business ()	FAX ()	
E-MAIL			
WEBSITE			
OCCUPATION		HOBBIES AND INTERESTS	

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER: 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

Please sign here: _____ Date _____

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Please address all inquiries and exchange newsletters to:

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 Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875
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Are Your Dues Due Now?

PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL or NEWSLETTER E-MAIL

There should be a date that shows the current month/year of your membership. If the date is older than the current date, your dues are overdue. A warning will be stated if you are overdue.

A Renewal Grace Period of two months will be provided. 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

(revised 06/23/24)

The Opal Express

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

Volume 57, Issue 10

— GENERAL MEETINGS —

3rd Thursday of the Month

6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Anaheim Community Center
250 E. Center Street
Anaheim, CA 92805

TO:



Meeting – Thursday, October 17th
at the Anaheim Community Center

Social Time: 6:30 p.m.

General Meeting - Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.



General Meeting Location at:

Anaheim Downtown Community Center

250 E. Center Street
Anaheim, CA 92805

Next meeting will be Thursday, October 17th at the
Anaheim Downtown Community Center

→ Social Time: 6:30 p.m. ←
General Meeting - Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.

American Opal Society

Website: <http://OpalSociety.org>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/opalsociety>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanOpalSociety>
Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/opalsociety>
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCegTIH1IEyO7y8wdqvRfyUA?view_as=subscriber

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Veronica Purpura	Show Chairman	(714) 501-9959
Jamie Cassidy-Curtis	Secretary	

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