# GRITTY GREETINGS

**Waco Gem and Mineral Club**

Volume 62, Issue 10, October, 2021 P.O. Box 8811, Waco, TX 76714-8811

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**Our WGMC 2022 show date has changed to April 30 – May 1. Set up will be on Friday the 29th.**

## Contacts

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Minutes for September 11, 2021 Meeting, courtesy Jackie Dodson

The meeting was opened at 10:15. Harry Senn presided.

Minutes from the previous meeting were accepted.

Treasure's Report: There is $ 17,916.27 in the checking account. One of the CD's is coming up for renewal. Jackie Dodson will cash it in. The plan is to put the money somewhere that gets a better return. SCFMS dues and insurance payment is due by September 30th. This will be paid next week.

Unfinished business:

We need to find another location. Club members are encouraged to offer suggestions on a new meeting place. The owner plans to demolish the building.

New Business:

The web site was updated to reflect the new show dates. The show will be April 30 – May 1.

Discussed an agenda to get a club debit/credit card and to set a limit on the card.

Discussed moving our electricity account to TexPo in order to get a better rate.

Discussed a club trip to the Tri City Gem Show in Temple, TX in October. The show is October 9 – 10 at the Mayborn Civic and Convention Center.

Harry Senn showed a video: Find Cash and Treasure Aquamarine.

The next meeting will be October 2, 2021

The meeting adjourned at 11:30

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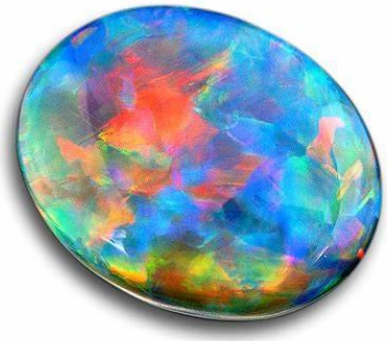
## October Birthstones , Opal, Tourmaline



The name “opal” originates from the Greek word *opallios*, which meant “to see a change in color.” The Roman scholar Pliny used the word *opalus* when he wrote about this gemstone’s kaleidoscopic “play” of rainbow colors that could simulate shades of any stone.

Opal’s characteristic “play-of-color” was explained in the 1960s, when scientists discovered that it’s composed of microscopic silica spheres that diffract light to display various colors of the rainbow. These flashy gemstones are called “precious opals.” Those without play-of-color are “common opals.”

Dozens of opal varieties exist, but only a few, such as fire opal and boulder opal, are universally recognized. Opals are often referred to by their background “body color” of black or white.

Opal’s classic country of origin is Australia. Seasonal rains soaked the parched Outback, carrying silica deposits underground into cracks between layers of rock. When the water evaporated, these deposits formed opal. Sometimes, silica seeped into spaces around wood, seashells and skeletons, resulting in opalized fossils.

Since opal was discovered in Australia around 1850, the country has produced 95 percent of the world’s supply. Opal is also mined in Mexico, Brazil, Honduras, Ethiopia, the Czech Republic, and parts of the U.S., including Nevada and Idaho.

The water content of opal gems can range from three to 21 percent—usually between six and 10 in gem-quality material. This, combined with hardness of only 5.5 to 6 on the Mohs scale, makes opal a delicate gemstone that can crack or "craze" under extreme temperature, dehydration, or direct light.

Wearing opal jewelry is well worth the extra care, though. This October birthstone has remained a popular choice for centuries.

The name "tourmaline" comes from the Sinhalese words *tura mali*, which mean "stone of mixed colors." As its name implies, tourmaline stands apart from other gemstones with its broad spectrum of colors in every shade of the rainbow.

Tourmaline is not one mineral, but a fairly complex group of minerals with different chemical compositions and physical properties. Certain trace elements produce distinct colors, and many resulting varieties have their own names.

Black tourmaline, known as "schorl" is rich in iron, which causes dark shades from deep brown to bluish-black. This variety makes up 95 percent of all tourmaline, though most of it isn't gemstone-quality.

Dravite or brown tourmaline is rich in magnesium, which causes colors ranging from brown to yellow. It's named for the Drave District of Carinthina (now Slovenia) where this stone is found.

Elbaite offers the widest range of gem-quality tourmaline colors, due to lithium traces combined with other coloring elements.

Rubellite or red tourmaline is caused by manganese. However, if the color becomes less vibrant under different light sources, it may be called pink tourmaline.

Indicolite or blue tourmaline can appear purplish blue or bluish green, depending on the amount of iron and titanium.

Verdelite or green tourmaline can resemble emerald. However, if its color is caused by chrome and vanadium, it's called a chrome tourmaline.

Paraíba tourmaline is a vividly colored purplish or greenish blue variety found in Paraíba, Brazil. It's the most recently discovered, and because of its desirably intense colors, it's one of the most valuable. The element copper is responsible for its vivid colors. Copper-bearing tourmaline is also found in other parts of the world such as Mozambique and Nigeria; but only copper-bearing tourmaline from Paraíba, Brazil is called "Paraíba tourmaline."

Achroite or colorless tourmaline is rare.

Parti-colored tourmaline displays more than one color, due to chemical fluctuations during crystallization. A common color combination is green and pink. These are often cut in slices to reveal a red center surrounded by a green rim, earning the name "watermelon tourmaline."

Tourmaline is mined in Brazil, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Mozambique, Madagascar, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the U.S.—primarily Maine and California.

Tourmaline is desirable because of its sheer range of color options. Combined with a good hardness of 7 to 7.5 on the Mohs scale, tourmaline makes very wearable birthstone jewelry.

One of this gemstone's most impressive traits is its ability to become electrically charged through heat (pyroelectricity) and through pressure (piezoelectricity). When charged, tourmaline can act as a magnet by oscillating and by attracting or repelling particles of dust.

Courtesy American Gem Society - See more at: http://www.americangemsociety.org/

# Bench Tips for September

In September my club is going to try its first hybrid meeting. Luckily the city owned meeting facility we use was upgraded earlier this year with high speed Internet for use by the local schools as temporary classrooms. So Internet is being supplied to us as part of the rental fee.

By hybrid, I mean that some of our members will attend the meeting while others will watch it online. Our speaker for the evening has been booked a month or two already and will be presenting from home.

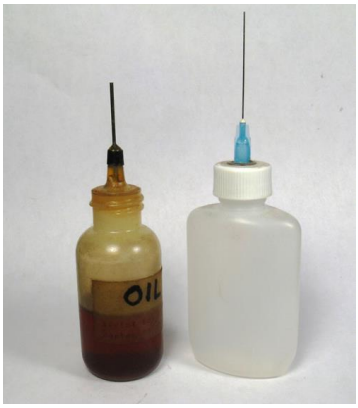
To pull off this hybrid session, we'll use the computer and digital projector in the meeting room that speakers had used in the past - with two changes. The computer will be signed onto the Zoom meeting and it's audio output will be connected to a PA system in the room. That will let the club continue to enjoy excellent speakers from across many time zones as we have become very accustomed to over past months.

A second computer, probably located in the meeting room, will be used to host the Zoom meeting. It'll be run by our club's Zoom coordinator. We created the position when the city closed down all public meetings and it has let us continue club meetings throughout the last 15 months. Not only did we never miss a meeting, but I believe we've had some dynamite presenters - some of the best quality we've ever had.

All this technology invites some glitches, so wish us well. Looking forward to giving you an update next month.

Happy hammering,

- Brad Smith
BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com




**JUST A DROP**

**Hobby shops and model airplane stores carry small plastic dispenser bottles that are handy for putting a drop of flux, oil, or glue just where you want it. They have a length of small metal tubing coming out the top that lets you squeeze out very small drops.**

**I use one with a short length of tubing for oil when I'm sawing or when drilling harder metals like steel. Another bottle I found in a plastics store has a longer length of metal tubing on it. Plastics people use them for dispensing fast drying glues to join pieces of acrylic. The long metal tube let's you reach into tight places. Either of these is handy for flux at the soldering station.**

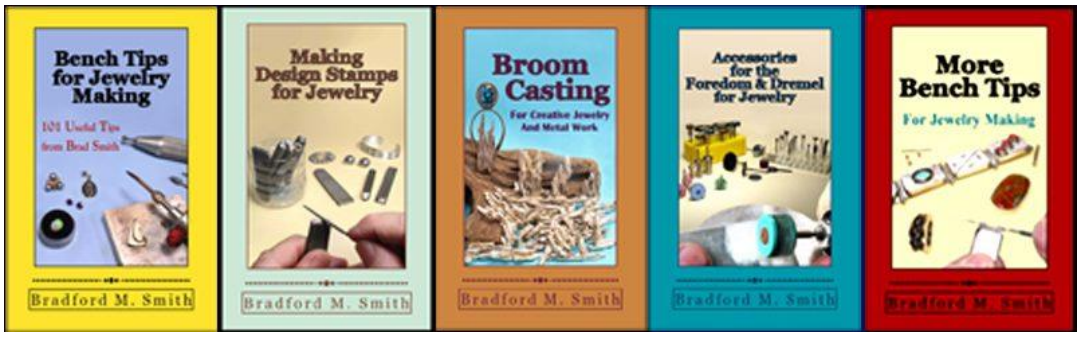
**FOREDOM MAINTENANCE**

**If you have a Foredom flexshaft, it makes sense to check it over every so often to be sure it's running properly. But how to do that? You've probably lost the little booklet that came with the unit. Well, being the good company it is, Foredom has put together an extensive set of videos on how to everything.**

**The series covers set-up, lubrication, replacing a sheath, motor maintenance, and handpiece maintenance. Few if any special tools are needed. You can watch the videos at** www.foredom.net/flexibleshaftmachinemaintenance.aspx **particularly under "Foredom Basics" or the "Foredom Shafting..." categories.**

**Any repair parts needed are available on the Foredom site or from most jewelry supply catalogs. If you have any question about their products, a phone call or an email will get quick answers.**

## Smart Solutions for Your Jewelry Making Problems




[Click to see all of Brad's books on Amazon]

## Notes

The editor requests news items from any member to be included in the Gritty Greetings.

Deadline for submissions is the 20th day of the month.

**Name Tags:**

It is great that we feed the pig at our meetings because we don't have or have lost or forgotten our nametags to drop a quartering the pig. The money from the pig goes toward our Scholarship program, and we really do appreciate every 2 bits, 4 bits, 6 bits or more. However, if you need a nametag you can purchase them at the businesses below!

Waco Gem & Mineral Club nametags are available at **Print Mart**, 202 Deb (behind AutoNation Chevrolet). Cost with a pin back is $8.00 (with tax $8.66), and with a magnet back is $11.00 ($11.91). or at Award Specialties at 431 Lake Air Dr.

**Club Dues:**

Annual Waco Gem and Mineral Club dues are $12.00 for an individual membership or $20.00 for a family membership. Please check with Jackie if you aren't sure whether you've paid your Dues!

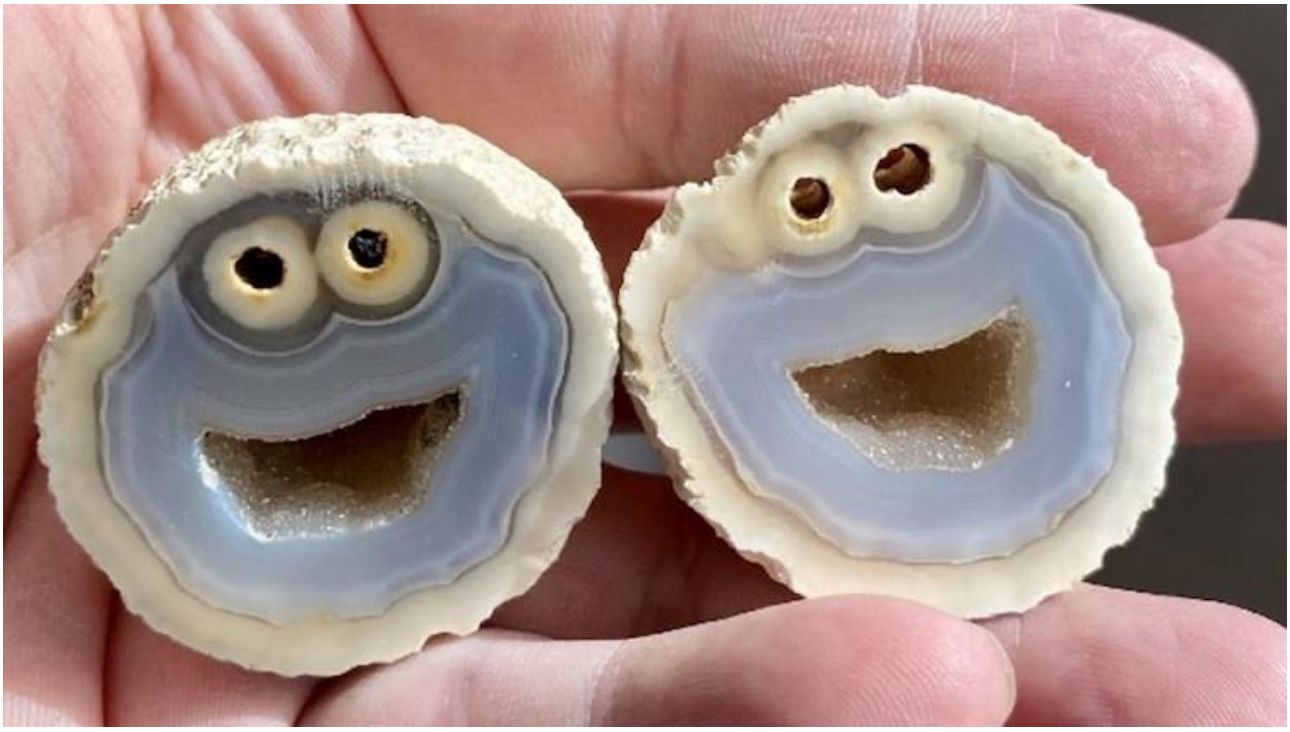
**Shop Fees:**

Lapidary Workshop fee is $2.00 per hour. Slab Saw fee is an additional $2.00 per hour. Class fees are always dependent upon class and instructor.

The Waco Gem and Mineral Club is a member of the South-Central Federation of Mineral Societies; and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month (except July and September) at 10:00 a.m. at the Waco Gem and Mineral Club Clubhouse, 187 South McLennan Drive in Elm Mott, Texas. The lapidary workshop is in the clubhouse.

Our website is www.wacogemandmineral.org

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/WacoGemAndMineralClub



# Geologists Discover Agate With Cookie Monster Hidden Inside When Split Open

Gems and geodes have ways of surprising us. From rainbow crystals to heart-shaped amethysts, these rocks prove you can never be too sure about what you'll find when you crack them open. One of the latest unexpected discoveries is a pair of Cookie Monster twins in an agate from Brazil. Gem collector Mike Bowers, with the help of Lucas Fassari, unearthed the rock that the famed Sesame Street character was hiding within. The resemblance to the beloved puppet is uncanny—down to the blue face, goofy grin, and large googly eyes.

The rare Muppet mineral was concealed in a small, egg-shaped volcanic rock. It gave no indication that once split open, there would be two flawless recreations of Cookie Monster clad in sapphire quartz. To announce this fabulous find, Bowers did a reveal video on Instagram set to the now-iconic song "C is for Cookie" sung by the king of confections himself.

By Sara Barnes on January 26, 2021

## Club Purpose

- to bring about a close association of those persons interested in earth science and lapidary arts
- to increase and disseminate knowledge about rocks, minerals, fossils, Indian artifacts and other geological materials
- to encourage lapidary art and the collection and exhibition of rocks, minerals, fossils and artifacts
- to conduct field trips, meetings, lectures, displays and an annual show for the edification of the public
- to cooperate with educational and scientific institutions and other groups in increasing knowledge and popular interest.