




Grindings

Idaho Gem Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 8443  Boise, Idaho 83707-2443

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MARCH 2021

DIRECTORY

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Sparkling Idaho Gems!!

It was so nice seeing a few of you at the general meeting in February! Thanks for coming out! Our next meeting is March 16, 2021, at Mtn. View Church, 2823 N. Cole Road, Boise.

This month will be our first field trip on March 21 to the IGC Whangdoodle Opal Mine off Hwy 95, out of Homedale. We also will visit our 3 Queenstone claims. More details inside.

On Saturday, March 13, I offered to help the daughter of Laura Lindsay and Mike Jones clear rocks from a storage unit by helping organize a sale. Laura and Mike died last month from a house fire. They were avid rockhounds and had an extensive rock collection. Please turn out to support this cause. Details inside. Volunteers are needed to help out on Thursday, March 11, and Friday, March 12!

The Field Trip Schedule for 2021 will be presented at the General Meeting on March 16. The Owyhee Gem and Mineral Society in Caldwell, is allowing members to join their field trips again this year, held each third Saturday of the month. Our club trips will be on Sundays to allow you two collecting opportunities. Rattlesnakes are getting active, so beware when bringing dogs and children out on trips. Supervision is important, not just for furry and small members, but adults too! Let's be aware of our surroundings and keep an eye on each other! If you have any concern for a member wildly swinging a paleo pick and sweating profusely, say something!! Heatstroke, over exertion, and dehydration can affect everyone! We will also provide handouts of the tools helpful for field trips, and a copy of the AFMS Rockhounding Code of Ethics.

I want to thank Dana Robinson for doing a great producing our *Grindings* newsletter. She always comes up with interesting content, and is an amazing Editor. She encourages anyone to contribute articles of interest to our members.

Teresa, our Treasurer, is ready and willing to accept your membership dues by mail or at our meetings. Let's help her by getting caught up! She does an intricate job detailing our club accounts and is very much appreciated.

Rick Corbett is a Board Member and Refreshment Chairman who does the fun door prizes and greets everyone so cheerfully at the meetings He deserves a big thank you for being so dependable and helpful at every workshop. The cab making process is easier when Rick teaches you! He can operate any saw and machine we have and we thank you for your consistent help. He also teaches wirewrap classes and does some cool opal work! You're a real gem Rick!

It is a great team assembled to operate our club this year, and I'm happy Cheryl Link, 2nd Vice President, has included me in purchasing some educational items that we can soon do rock programs for community members at senior centers, schools, nursing facilities and civic clubs. She has committed to getting our Juniors Badge Program off and running and will soon be doing fascinating rock programs at all our meetings.

As we have a lot of new members from out of state joining us, feel free to share ideas from the rock clubs you have belonged to. We are growing and always learning and would love to hear the input you offer! We are here for you, and this is YOUR club! Share your ideas and suggestions anytime! Let's get ready to ROCK!! Opal is our rock of the month for March!

Respectfully submitted,

Deana Ashton, President

The deadline for issues is the Friday after each Board Meeting for the current month's edition. To submit articles, please send them through email to Dana Robinson, Editor drobinso@boisestate.edu

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	5 Board Meeting 7 pm	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 General Meeting 7 pm	20	21 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	22	23 Facebook Live Feed 2 pm & 5 pm
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	30 Workshop 10 am-2 pm

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	6 Board Meeting 7 pm	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 General Meeting 7 pm	21	22 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	2 Board Meeting 7 pm	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 General Meeting 7 pm	17	18 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Workshop 10 am-2 pm
28						

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Workshop 10 am-2 pm
2	3 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	4 Board Meeting 7 pm	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 General Meeting 7 pm	19	20 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29 Workshop 10 am-2 pm

MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	2 Board Meeting 7 pm	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Rock Estate Sale, 9 am Ada Storage
14	15	16 General Meeting 7 pm	17	18 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	19	20 OGMS Field Trip Bruneau Wood Pile
21 Field Trip Queenstone & Whangdoodle	22	23	24	25	26	27 Juniors Mtg. 4 pm Workshop 10 am-2 pm
28	29	30	31			

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Board Meeting 7 pm	2	3	4	5
6	7 ROLE Workshop 6-8:45 pm	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 General Meeting 7 pm	16	17 Workshop 6-8:45 pm	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Workshop 10 am-2 pm
27	28	29	30			

IDAHO GEM CLUB MEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Idaho Gem Club Field trip day is the 3rd Sunday of each month and Owyhee Gem & Mineral Society Field trip day is the 3rd Saturday of each month.

The year's first field trip will be to the Queenstone and Whangdoodle claims. The meeting place will be the Xtra Mile station at the intersection of Hwys. 55 and 95, just outside of Marsing. The time to meet is 8:30 am, leaving at 9 am.

Kathe and Jeff Miller are completing the 2021 Field Trip schedule and should have copies at March General Meeting. Tell them if you have weekdays available and we can add some trips during the week.

Field Trip Leaders Contact Information:

IGC -- Kathe & Jeff Miller 208-713-6807

Call if you'd like to share ideas of locations to visit!



THE GRINDINGS

is the monthly newsletter of the Idaho Gem Club, Inc., associated with the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Permission to copy is freely granted when proper credit is given to both the publication and the author.

Articles without bylines are written by the Editor or President.

CHECK OUT THE CLUB WEBSITE!

www.idahogemclub.com

IDAHO GEM CLUB LAPIDARY SHOP R.O.L.E. PROGRAM

R.O.L.E = Recognition Of Lapidary Excellence

The ROLE Program is a self-paced learning experience teaching you how to select, shape, and polish to perfection cabochons of many shapes/materials. Cabochons are used in jewelry. In each of 5 levels, you are challenged to produce cabs of certain material and specific size and shape. Your cabs are turned in for grading and returned. You earn a special award plate for your name tag and a certificate. With each level passed, your skills improve, confidence grows and you are able to help teach others. We provide the equipment necessary to partake in ROLE. On the first Monday of each month, the workshop is strictly for ROLE program participants. Brent Stewart is Chairman of the Workshop and will teach you how to successfully advance to the final level of achievement. Cost is \$5 per workshop. This is a terrific introduction to lapidary and helps you determine what you'd like to do with your collection of rocks. Contact Brent at Stewarts Gem Shop, next door to the club workshop at 27th and Idaho for more information!

WORKSHOPS

IGC Lapidary Workshops are your best benefit of membership. We provide and teach you to use quality equipment to create rock projects and jewelry. Come see what you can create!

Third Thursday of each month from 6:00 pm-8:45 pm
Saturday the week after general meeting -10:00 am-2:00 pm

Masks required!

WORKSHOP LOCATION

2620 W. Idaho St., Boise, ID
Next door to Stewart's Gem Shop

\$5 Fee for each visit (kids free)



GEM FACETING VIDEO SESSION

Robert Coggins is a Master Gem Cutter and is available to teach faceting classes. As there is expense involved with faceting gemstones, Robert has agreed to hold a Faceting 101 class via Facebook live video session. We need the commitment from 10 or more members to tune in to the club Facebook page and interact with Robert as he hosts a faceting demo session.

If you are interested in a overview class on faceting, please contact Kathe Miller to be put on the sign-up sheet and we will schedule a date.

This opportunity will help you understand what is involved in this aspect of our hobby. By the way, Robert is available for questions on selecting gemstones, and has many stones available for sale or custom work. You can contact him at 208-353-0825.

Thank you Robert for volunteering to teach!

LAPIDARY CLASSES SIGN UP SHEETS/INFO

Kathe Miller, Member of the Board of Directors and Field Trip Chairman, is managing sign-up sheets for club classes. Please call her at 208-713-6807 for information regarding:

Wirewrap Class with Rick Corbett or Marge Conley
Silversmith Class with Willa Renken
Gem Faceting Class with Robert Coggins
ROLE Program sign ups

LAPIDARY MENTORSHIP AVAILABLE!

Jason “Fuzzy” Smith , one of our Board Members, has offered to mentor members learning about the Lapidary Arts. If you have questions about basic rock workshop processes, metalwork, using or purchasing equipment, or jewelry making, you can contact Fuzzy. He can also help with questions about claims, mining, rockhounding, puppies, and much more! He will continue to do Facebook live sessions on a variety of topics. You can contact him via Facebook, or at 208-484-9729.

Fuzzy also creates custom silverwork jewelry and has cabs and jewelry for sale.

Thank you Fuzzy!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Chad Fleishman & Family

New Members:

Our website at idahogemclub.com has all of the information regarding our club operations. We also have a facebook page for interacting and socializing. Please contact any Officer or Board Member with questions or suggestions! Welcome to your Gem Club!



JUNIORS PROGRAM

The Idaho Gem Club has been discussing how to activate the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies "Future Rockhound of America" badge program for the local juniors in the Treasure Valley. This program is designed to have volunteers and parents work together to help engage with the juniors of the local rock clubs to learn more about the hobby we all love. There are 20 different categories and badges the juniors can earn by completing a set of activities. I have reviewed the program on a high level. I think this is something even non-juniors in the club would enjoy participating in to enlarge their knowledge in earth science and the lapidary arts.

I would like to ask the general membership if any of you would be willing to help with one of the badges. If we can get 20 or more volunteers to help, I think we can make this happen and make it fun for everyone.

I would like to get a group of members/volunteers together to discuss the program and bounce ideas around. There are

suggestions on how to approach the program in the online manual at the federation's website: www.amfed.org.

I would like to get together on Saturday, March 27, at the church where we hold our regular club meetings. This also happens to be the same day as the club workshop, so I would like to have it after the workshop is over to give those helping at the workshop the opportunity to attend the meeting if they would like to. I was thinking of having the meeting from 4 pm to 5 pm.

I hope to see you there.

Best regards,

Cheryl Link



These are the 20 different category badges the juniors can earn.

SCAM /FRAUD ALERT!!

If any of you ever receive an EMAIL REQUEST, a SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGE, or a PHONE CALL asking you to help out a club officer by purchasing gift cards, donating money, or depositing money into any account, STOP! Look at the email address that sent you the message, print the message if possible, and flag the email. Report it and turn message copies into the Board of Directors or any Gem Club officer. We will alert authorities if this happens and you don't know how to report it.

PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND!!

This is a scam and you should never participate! THE BOARD OR OFFICERS WILL NEVER ASK FOR MEMBERS TO PURCHASE ANYTHING, ESPECIALLY GIFT CARDS. If ever the Idaho Gem Club needs assistance from a member, such a request will come from an officer IN PERSON!

There are a lot of crooks that make fraudulent phone calls asking for personal information, **BEWARE!** It is always best to donate to agencies or charitable causes in person so you know exactly where your money goes! For your information, our address is Idaho Gem Club, Inc., P.O. Box 8443, Boise, Idaho 83707-2443. Club officers' contact information is listed in every copy of the *Grindings*. Call us anytime!

SPECIAL ROCK ESTATE SALE!

Laura Lindsay and Mike Jones

MARCH 13, 9 am-5 pm

Ada Storage
1786 N. Hampton Rd
off Fairview

This special sale is part of a large collection of rocks that belonged to Laura Lindsay and Mike Jones. They were two lifetime members of our club. They passed away as result of a house fire on January 15, 2021. The sale is to benefit both families.

The sale will be held in a storage unit with no power for lights. Bring a flashlight to view the rocks. We have buckets for you to use. As the facility is secured with an access code and gate, we will have a volunteer at the gate to let you in. There is a broad variety of rocks, crystals, and fossils. Rocks will be sold by the pound, \$2 and up, depending on the material.

PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP!

We will need helpers to sort approximately 100 buckets of mixed rocks and set up tables on Thursday, March 11 and Friday, March 12.

Please text or call Deana Ashton at 208-794-5628.

**CLUB SECRETARY
NEEDED!**

Please consider filling the important job of club secretary! Requires taking minutes at two monthly meetings and reporting to editor, other tasks occasionally. No experience needed! Please apply!

SUNSHINE LADY REPORT

By Deana Ashton

If you know of members who are needing a little cheer during illnesses, end of life, are in isolation, or who need cheer, please contact the IGC Sunshine Lady at 208-794-5628. She will send cards, flowers or reach out to them. Extending friendship to our members is an important part of our community. Thank you.

OPALS

Idaho's nickname is "The Gem State." It has a long history of producing a variety of gem materials. The most important gems produced to date have been garnet and opal.

Opal has been found at many locations in Idaho, and mines there have produced it since the early 1900s. Most of the production has been from small mining operations and open cuts worked by two or three people. There have also been a few fee mining locations where individuals can pay a fee, search for opal and keep any that they find.

Today, commercial opal production in Idaho occurs at a few locations near the town of Spencer. The largest producer is Spencer Opal Mines. They mine precious opal and sell rough and cut stones. They also have an area where visitors



Spencer Opal Mine, Clark Co.

can search through material trucked in from their mine and keep any opals that they find. Another mine in the Spencer area is Idaho Opal Mines. They mine opal and sell finished stones and jewelry locally and at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show.



Spencer Opal Mine, Public Collection Area, Clark Co.

a silica gel that has collected and hardened in underground cavities and fissures.

Formation

Opal is a hydrated amorphous form of silica ($\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$); its water content may range from 3 to 21% by weight, but is usually between 6 and 10%. Because of its amorphous character, it is classed as a mineraloid, unlike crystalline forms of silica, which are classed as minerals. It is deposited at a relatively low temperature and may occur in the fissures of almost any kind of rock, being most commonly found with limonite, sandstone, rhyolite, marl, and basalt. Our local Whangdoodle Opal Mine has opal in basalt cavities.

There are two broad classes of opal: precious and common. Precious opal displays play-of-color (iridescence), common opal does not. Play-of-color is defined as "a pseudo chromatic optical effect resulting in flashes of colored light from certain minerals, as they are turned in white light." The internal structure of precious opal causes it to diffract light, resulting in play-of-color. Depending on the conditions in which it formed, opal may be transparent, translucent, or opaque and the background color may be white, black, or nearly any color of the visual spectrum. Black opal is considered to be the rarest, whereas white, gray, and green are the most common.

History

Opal's name evolved from the Greek word "opallios" meaning "to see a change of color." The Greek word was a modification of the ancient Indian Sanskrit name for opal, "upala," which meant "precious stone."

Opal was rare and very valuable in antiquity. In Europe, it was a gem prized by royalty. Until the opening of vast deposits in Australia in the 19th century the only known source was Červenica beyond the Roman frontier in Slovakia. Opal is the national gemstone of Australia.

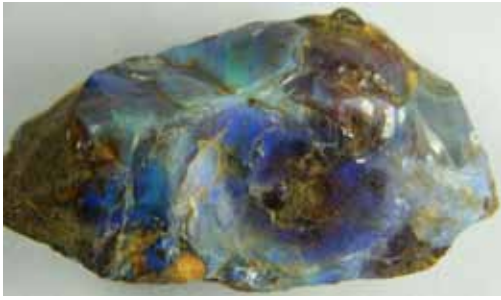
Precious opal

Precious opal shows a variable interplay of internal colors, and though it is a mineraloid, it has an internal structure. At microscopic scales, precious opal is composed of silica spheres some 150–300 nanometres (5.9×10^{-6} – 1.18×10^{-5} in) in diameter in a hexagonal or cubic close-packed lattice. These ordered silica spheres produce the internal colors by causing the interference and diffraction of light passing through the microstructure of the opal. The regularity of the sizes and the packing of these spheres determines the quality of precious opal. The colors that are observed are determined by the spacing between the planes and the orientation of planes with respect to the incident light. The process can be described by Bragg's law of diffraction.

Visible light cannot pass through large thicknesses of the opal. In addition, microfractures may be filled with secondary silica and form thin lamellae inside the opal during solidification. The term opalescence is commonly used to describe this unique and beautiful phenomenon, which in gemology is termed play of color. In gemology, opalescence is applied to the hazy-milky-turbid sheen of common or potch opal which does not show a play of color. Opalescence is a form of adularescence.

Common opal

Besides the gemstone varieties that show a play of color, the other kinds of common opal include the milk opal, milky bluish to greenish (which can sometimes be of gemstone



Deer Hunt Mine specimen, Clark Co.

quality); resin opal, which is honey-yellow with a resinous luster; wood opal, which is caused by the replacement of the organic material in wood with opal; menilite, which is brown or grey; hyalite, a colorless glass-clear opal sometimes called Muller's glass; geyserrite, also called siliceous sinter, deposited around hot springs or geysers; and diatomaceous earth, the accumulations of diatom shells or tests. Common opal often displays a hazy-milky-turbid sheen from within the stone. In gemology, this optical effect is strictly defined as opalescence which is a form of adularescence.

Other Varieties of Opal

Fire opal is a transparent to translucent opal, with warm body colors of yellow to orange to red. Although it does not usually show any play of color, occasionally a stone will exhibit bright green flashes. The most famous source of fire opals is the state of Querétaro in Mexico; these opals are commonly called *Mexican fire opals*. Fire opals that do not show a play of color are sometimes referred to as *jelly opals*. Mexican opals are sometimes cut in their rhyolitic host material if it is hard enough to allow cutting and polishing. This type of Mexican opal is referred to as a *Cantera opal*. Also, a type of opal from Mexico, referred to as *Mexican water opal*, is a colorless opal which exhibits either a bluish or golden internal sheen.

Peruvian opal (also called blue opal) is a semi-opaque to opaque blue-green stone found in Peru, which is often cut to include the matrix in the more opaque stones. It does not display a play of color. Blue opal also comes from Oregon and Idaho in the Owyhee region, as well as from Nevada around the Virgin Valley.

Opal Sources

Australian opal has often been cited as accounting for 95–97% of the world's supply of precious opal, with the state of South Australia accounting for 80% of the world's supply.



Owyhee Blue Opal, Owyhee Co.

In 2012, Ethiopian opal production was estimated to be 14,000 kg (31,000 lb) by the United States Geological Survey.

The Virgin Valley opal fields of Humboldt County in northern Nevada produce a wide variety of precious black, crystal, white, fire, and lemon opal. The black fire opal is the official gemstone of Nevada. Some of the opal has high water content and may desiccate and crack when dried.

Another source of white base opal or creamy opal in the United States is Spencer, Idaho. A high percentage of the opal found there occurs in thin layers.

Other significant deposits of precious opal around the world can be found in the Czech Republic, Canada, Slovakia, Hungary, Turkey, Indonesia, Brazil, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

In late 2008, NASA announced it had discovered opal deposits on Mars.



Spencer Opal Mine specimen, Clark Co.

Idaho Opal Locations

Fire Opal

Clark Co., Spencer Opal Mine

Gem Co., Lava beds of Squaw Butte, Emmett area and Black Canyon Dam

Latah Co., 5 miles south of Forney on Opal Creek

Owyhee Co., Whangdoodle Opal Mine, near Givens Hot Springs, at Oreana and on the west side of Squaw Creek

Banded Opal

Custer Co., 3 miles west of Challis

Owyhee Co., Squaw Creek

Colored Opal

Gem Co., along Willow Creek near Emmett

Common Opal

Custer Co., Poison Creek

Latah Co., Moscow Opal Mines

Lemhi Co., Panther Creek, Pahsimeroi Valley near May

Nez Perce Co., Clearwater River Valley

Owyhee Co., 17 miles south of Marsing, Castle Creek, Mule Springs, Given Hot Springs area

Opalized Wood

Gooding Co., Clover Creek area

Latah Co., Potlatch River Canyon, Kendrick area

Owyhee Co., Idaho-Oregon state line, Coal Mine Basin

Jewelry Use

For gemstone use, most opal is cut and polished to form a cabochon. “Solid” opal refers to polished stones consisting wholly of precious opal. Opals too thin to produce a “solid” may be combined with other materials to form attractive gems.

An opal doublet consists of a relatively thin layer of precious opal, backed by a layer of dark-colored material, most commonly ironstone, dark or black common opal (potch), onyx, or obsidian. The darker backing emphasizes the play of color and results in a more attractive display than a lighter potch.

An opal triplet is similar to a doublet but has a third layer, a domed cap of clear quartz or plastic on the top. The cap takes a high polish and acts as a protective layer for the opal. The top layer also acts as a magnifier, to emphasize the play of color of the opal beneath, which is often an inferior specimen or an extremely thin section of precious opal. Triplet opals tend to have a more artificial appearance and are not classed as precious gemstones.



Spencer Opal Mine specimen, Clark Co.

Jewelry applications of precious opal can be somewhat limited by opal’s sensitivity to heat due primarily to its relatively high water content and predisposition to scratching.

Combined with modern techniques of polishing,

a doublet opal can produce a similar effect to solid black or boulder opal at a fraction of the price. Doublet opal also has the added benefit of having genuine opal as the top visible and touchable layer, unlike triplet opals.



Synthetic Opal

Opals of all varieties have been synthesized experimentally and commercially. The discovery of the ordered sphere structure of precious opal led to its synthesis. The resulting material is distinguishable from natural opal by its regularity; under magnification, the patches of color are seen to be arranged in a “lizard skin” or “chicken wire” pattern. Furthermore, synthetic opals do not fluoresce under ultraviolet light. Synthetics are also generally lower in density and are often highly porous.

Opals which have been created in a laboratory are often termed “lab-created opals”, which, while classifiable as man-made and synthetic, are very different from their resin-based counterparts, which are also considered man-made and synthetic. The term “synthetic” implies that a stone has been created to be chemically and structurally indistinguishable from a genuine one, and genuine opal contains no resins or polymers. The finest modern lab-created opals do not exhibit the lizard skin or columnar patterning of earlier lab-created varieties, and their patterns are non-directional. They can still be distinguished from genuine opals, however, by their lack of inclusions and the absence of any surrounding non-opal matrix. While many genuine opals are cut and polished without a matrix, the presence of irregularities in their play-of-color continues to mark them as distinct from even the best lab-created synthetics.

Two notable producers of synthetic opal are Kyocera and Inamori of Japan. Most so-called synthetics, however, are more correctly termed “imitation opal”, as they contain substances not found in natural opal (such as plastic stabilizers). The imitation opals seen in vintage jewelry are often foiled glass, glass-based “Slocum stone”, or later plastic materials.



*Whangdoodle Opal specimens,
Owyhee Co.*

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MINUTES OF THE IDAHO GEM CLUB GENERAL MEETING FEBRUARY 16, 2021

Meeting called to order at 7:10 pm by President Deana Ashton followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were 18 members and 2 guests in attendance. There was not a meeting in January, so no meeting minutes to vote on.

Program by Cheryl Link: Cheryl explained the microscopes that will be available at the meetings. There will be one per table with a computer monitor so everyone can see the images. She has permission from the church to install a cabinet for storage of the equipment. We will be getting some micromounts that will be available for education. She is also getting black lights and boxes to do fluorescent education.

Juniors Report by Cheryl Link: Cheryl is working on materials for the Junior Badge program from the AFMS Future Rockhounds of America. She has packets made that will work on one badge at a time. We really need volunteers to help parents and kids with this program. There are 20 badges total. Please contact Cheryl if you are interested in helping out.

Door Prizes/Building Fund: Rick Corbett drew 6 door prize winners, and Christine Anderton drew 3 winners for the Building Fund raffle. There is a large quartz crystal on the back table that was donated by Karol Cawthon for a special building fund raffle. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. The final drawing will be at the April meeting.

Secretary Report: POSITION OPEN

Treasurer Report by Teresa Nebeker: Teresa was not in attendance, however there was a financial statement at the front table for anyone interested.

Workshop Report by Brent Stewart: The regularly scheduled workshops will be starting up again with the Thursday workshop open from 6 pm to 8:45 pm on Feb. 18th. The following workshops will be Sat, Feb. 27 from 10 am-2 pm; and ROLE on Mon., Mar. 1 from 6-8:45 pm. Following workshops are listed on the calendars.

Field Trip Report by Kathe Miller: First field trip of the year will be to the Whangdoodle and Queenstone claims on March 21st. The club will be meeting at the Xtra Mile station at the corner of Hwys. 55 and 95, just outside of Marsing at 8:30 am, leaving at 9 am.

You can also use Facebook Rooms to get together with other members for field trips beyond the club sponsored outings.

Old Business:

No old business.

New Business: The Library will be open to check out books.

The Twin Falls club wants to join with other clubs for a camping field trip to the Challis area this summer to collect crystals. We need to do more collaboration on schedules.

The Mining Museum is hosting Rock Identification with Coyote Short for three days in February. They are also doing virtual field trips in their online magazine.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Dana Robinson, Editor

MINUTES OF THE IDAHO GEM CLUB BOARD MEETING MARCH 2, 2021

Deana Ashton called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm.

Present: Deana Ashton, Willa Renken, Teresa Nebeker, Brent Stewart, Cheryl Link, Ed Moser, Jason Smith, Kathe Miller, Teri Frostrom and Rick Corbett.

Absent: Randy Harrison.

Guest: Liz Warner.

Deana asked for any corrections to the minutes as printed in the Grindings. Willa made a motion to accept the minutes as printed in the Grindings, which was seconded by Rick Corbett. Board members voted, motion passed.

Secretary Report: No report.

Federation Report by Deana Ashton: The NFMS meeting is going to be on Zoom, but there are still field trips at Big Piney, WY.

Treasurer Report by Teresa Nebeker: Teresa went over the month's financial statements. The scholarship recipient was paid. She also contacted four members with newsletter returns for updated information. One of them is not current on dues. Ed's newsletter still not getting through. Not sure why.

Teresa also had a question on the current interest rates for CDs.

Program Report: Cheryl needs volunteers for presentations. She will set up microscopes on the tables for micromounts at next meeting.

Field Trip Report: The field trip list for 2021 still not quite ready. Will be finalized for the March general meeting. Field trip for March will be to the Queenstone and Whangdoodle claims on the 21st. Meeting point will be at the Xtra Mile station, intersection of Hwys. 55 and 95 at 8:30 am, leaving at 9 am.

Workshop Report by Brent Stewart: The workshops are able to restart. Brent went over the dates for the upcoming workshops. Mar. 18 6-8:45 pm, Mar. 27 10 am-2 pm, Apr. 5 ROLE 6-8:45 pm, Apr. 22 6-8:45 pm. The Saturday workshop was busy.

We need to start bringing more attention to the ROLE program.

There was much discussion about getting better hard wheels for the genies. Liz did some pricing on wheels and Willa suggested centered wheels. The budget for Repair and Maintenance for the workshop was checked and will allow it. Brent and Liz will also check Covington prices in addition to what Liz already has. The workshop committee will make a proposal to present to the board at the next board meeting.

Old Business: Cheryl bought a used drill press for the workshop at a recent yard sale at the McConnel's. It just needs bits.

New Business:

Deana asked about purchasing mineral boxes that were made for education by the McConnel's. Cheryl decided to take it out of her education budget.

Cheryl made a motion to take \$110 from the Education Fund for minerals for education boxes and a tote for storage. Willa seconded, the board voted and the motion carried.

One new application was reviewed. Ed made a motion to accept the new members, Cheryl seconded, the board voted and the motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:26 pm.

*Respectfully submitted, Dana Robinson
and Deana Ashton, President*

BRAD'S BENCH TIPS

by Brad Smith

Sharp Knives for Cutting Molds

Cutting molds is easier and more precise with a sharp blade. A new Xacto blade is sufficient for cutting RTV molds, but is usually not sharp enough for vulcanized rubber. For that it's best to use scalpel blades, available from most jewelry supply companies.

The #11 blade is triangle shaped, and the #12 is hawksbill shaped. I find the hawksbill is particularly nice for cutting the registration keys of the mold.



Use Your Thumb

When using multiple bits in a Foredom, we often have to deal with several different shaft sizes — the usual 3/32 inch burs, the larger 1/8 inch shaft sizes and, of course, the many different sizes of drills. For some reason I really dislike having to turn the key multiple times to open or close the jaws of the handpiece chuck.

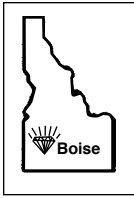
So I have two ways to speed up that task. For opening up the jaws, I just remember "four," the number of turns I have to make to open the chuck just enough from the 3/32 bur shaft size to the larger 1/8 bur shaft size.

For closing the jaws around a smaller shaft, there's a neat trick. Hold the new bit in the center of the open jaws of the chuck, put your thumb lightly onto the outer toothed collar of the chuck, and gently start up the Foredom. As the chuck turns, it will naturally tighten the jaws around the bur shaft or the drill bit. Then all you have to do is a final tightening with the key.



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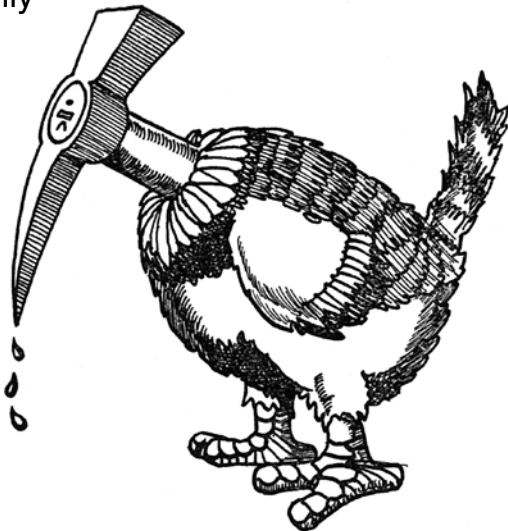
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 \$22.00 individual
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 \$10 per year



GENERAL MEETING:
 3rd Tuesday of every month: 7:00 p.m.

BOARD MEETING:
 1st Tuesday of every month: 7:00 p.m.

ADDRESS:
 Mtn.View Church of Brethren

