



# Snoopy Gems

Volume 45 Number 10 October 2019  
Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem &  
Mineral Society Inc.



Email: [mgcgms@bellsouth.net](mailto:mgcgms@bellsouth.net)

MGCGMS Established in 1974

## Presidents Message

Hello again friends,

Okay. We are a little over a month away from our November show. We have lots to do, so buckle up and keep your hands inside the ride at all times.

First, just to make things extra weird, we are moving the time and place for October's meeting. "Why?" you ask. Because, if we held it in our regular time and place, it would be smack dab in the middle of Cruisin' The Coast activities and most of our officers, including yours truly, would not be there. The Library isn't available on the 5th, so we are going to have it:

OCTOBER 5TH at EL SALTILLO in Ocean Springs. We will meet at 11 AM.

That's the first Saturday of october, not our usual second saturday and it is at El Saltillo, 3100 Bienville Blvd #78 Ocean Springs.

Come for the Meeting. Stay for the chips and dip.

We will have a quick meeting and divide up various jobs that need to be filled at the show. You might want to show up and make sure you get the job you want, otherwise .... who knows where we might stick you.

We'll be doing other jobs to get ready for the show. Some people will be finishing their Raffle projects too.

Sorry, no workshops this month. BUT HEY!!!! It will still be fun! So make sure you get there by 11AM. We'll a quick meeting, have a nice snack and then get a good bit of the work done.

See you there!  
Patrick Barrett  
MGCGMS President

## October Workshop:

Our October workshop/meeting will be Saturday 10/05/19 in the party room at El Saltillo's Mexican Restaurant in the Rouses Shopping Center Ocean Springs. The doors open at 11:00 am.

We will have a short meeting starting at 11:15, a quick lunch after, and then we will work on stuff for the show. We will use this workshop to work on the show advertising, ticket stapling, making fans, and finishing personal projects to donate to the Show Raffle! We will not have our machines at this workshop. Be sure to bring anything you need to work on and finish your raffle donation.

David W. Cook  
228-341-9944  
[dwcook@cableone.net](mailto:dwcook@cableone.net)



Magnolia State Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show

<http://www.mgcgms.org>

PO Box 857 Ocean Spring, MS 39566



## Meeting Minutes: GULF COAST GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY September 14, 2019



**Called to order:** 1:07 pm

**Members in Attendance:** 29

**Meeting:** President Patrick Barrett called the meeting to order.

**Minutes to Accept:** A motion was made to accept the August minutes by Lisa Fitch & 2nd by Vicki Reynolds. Motion carried.

**Treasury Report:** Report by Barbi Beatty. A motion was made to accept by Jane Cook & 2nd by Lisa Fitch. Motion carried.

**General Announcements:** Nothing to report.

**Workshops:** Dave Cook taught a vine design wrapped bracelet class & Aurora King taught how to make a crochet wire necklace.

**Gem Show:** Barbi Beatty reported we have 17 vendors paid. Waiting on a few more vendors contracts. Some new vendors are coming & some are not coming back. A few open tables available. Discussed several advertisements. Live radio show (105.9) on Sat. at the show & on facebook for 2 weeks prior.

**Library:** Liz Platt brought the library for all members to check out.

**Sunshine:** Reba Shotts sent out several cards & received some thank you's.

**Membership, Newsletter, badges, etc:** Nothing to report.

**Education & Projects; Speakers for meetings:** We had 2 speakers. Mary V. Haindel, GIA & Ira Savoie, Independent Certified Gemologist Appraiser.

**Tools & Equipment:** Report by John Guglik. All machines are working. Jump ring machine will be available & another machine was just repaired.

**Outside classes/workshop programs:** Nothing to report.

**Old Business:** Lisa Fitch passed out raffle tickets to members. Raffle donations are being accepted now for show.

**New Business:** Due to Cruisin the Coast, Barbi Beatty proposed to move next months meeting to Sat, Oct 5th. All members in agreement. Motion carried. The location to be determined. Some members brought in jewelry pieces that they made in classes & gemstones that they faceted.

**Gemstone Education:** Buddy Shotts spoke about sapphires.

**Door prizes:** Door prizes won by: Kate Barrett, Bill Lance, Claire Martin, Cheryl Rodriguez & Harvey Marcum.

**Adjournment:** 2:11 pm. Motion made by Barbi Beatty & 2nd by Judy Hall. Motion carried.

**Board meeting:** 8 in attendance

**Proposed bylaws addendum to add to Article III, Elective Officers: Duties Proposed by Patrick Barrett & 2nd by Barbi Beatty, motion carried.**

**In the event that a vacancy occurs of an elected officer of the Board, the Board can appoint an interim officer for the remainder of that term.**

**Report by:** Cheryl Rodriguez MGCGMS Secretary.



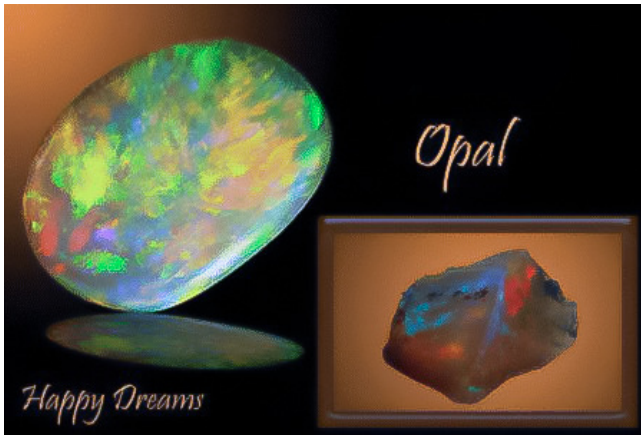


# Happy

# October

# Birthday

Barbi Beatty Karl Beatty Melinda Gerhart  
Miku Daynes Stacy Reichel Owen Schmidt  
Lynn Tate Cheryl Wilkinson



**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. Opal is the national gemstone of Australia.

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 pseudochromatic 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.

## Play-of-Color and Opalescence

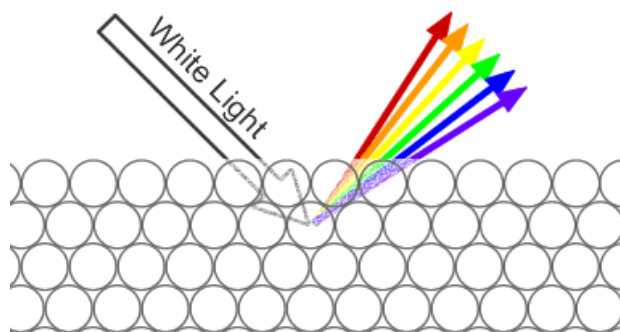
Opal is a very common material, found throughout the world. Most opal is common opal or opal that lacks the colorful flashes known as play-of-color. Some people use the name potch for this type of opal.

Most common opal has an unremarkable appearance and is almost invariably overlooked in the field. It is often assumed to be quartz or a variety of chalcedony - but a surprising amount of common opal exists.

The rare specimens of opal that exhibit a play-of-color are known as precious. If the play-of-color is of high quality and large enough to cut, the material can be used to produce valuable gemstones.

If you examine a specimen of precious opal under bright light, play-of-color can be observed in three situations: 1. when the stone is moved, 2. when the light source is moved, or, 3. when the angle of observation is changed.

The word opalescence is often misused. Some people believe that opalescence and play-of-color are the same, which is not true. The common definition given for opalescence is the pearly luster of common opal. In truth, most common opal does not have a pearly luster, even when it is polished.



Play-of-Color in Opal: White light enters an opal and interacts with the tiny silica spheres that make up its internal structure. The light is diffracted into its component colors and exits the opal in a flash of spectral colors.

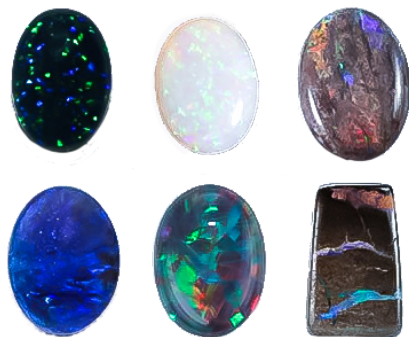
### What Causes Play-of-Color?

Areas within an opal that produce a play-of-color are made up of millions of microscopic silica spheres arranged in an orderly network. These spheres are only about 1/2 micron in size, and they act as a diffraction grating. As the light passes through, it is diffracted into the colors of the spectrum. The size of the spheres and their geometric packing determine the color and quality of diffracted light.

**There is an impressive variety of Opals.**

### Precious Opal

"Precious opal" flashes iridescent colors when it is viewed from different angles, when the stone is moved, or when the light source is moved. This phenomenon is known as a "play-of-color." Precious opal can flash a number of colors such as bright yellow, orange, green, blue, red or purple. Play-of-color is what makes opal a popular gem. The desirability of precious opal is based upon color intensity, diversity, uniformity, pattern and ability to be seen from any angle.



Precious opal is very rare and found in a limited number of locations worldwide. Most precious opal to date has been mined in Australia. Ethiopia and Mexico are secondary sources of precious opal. Precious opal is also mined in Brazil, the United States, Canada, Honduras, Indonesia, Zambia, Guatemala, Poland, Peru, and New Zealand. The accompanying image shows several different types of opal that can be called "precious opal."

### Common Opal

"Common opal" does not exhibit "play-of-color." It is given the name "common" because it is found in many locations throughout the world. Most specimens of common opal are also "common" in appearance and do not attract any commercial attention.



However, some specimens of common opal are attractive and colorful. They can be cut into gemstones of beauty that accept a high polish. They can be attractive and desirable - but they simply lack a play-of-color that would earn them the name "precious." Common opal is frequently cut as a gemstone and can command reasonable prices.

### Fire Opal

"Fire Opal" is a term used for colorful, transparent to translucent opal that has a bright fire-like background color of yellow, orange or red. It may or may not exhibit "play-of-color." The color of fire opal can be as vivid as seen in the three stones shown here.



Some people are confused when they hear the name "fire opal." They immediately expect the "play-of-color" found in precious opal. The word "fire" is simply referring to the red, orange, or yellow background color.

Fire opal might exhibit play-of-color, but such a display is usually weak or absent. Fire opal is simply a specimen of opal with a wonderful fire-like background color. The color is what defines the stone.

### Solid Opal

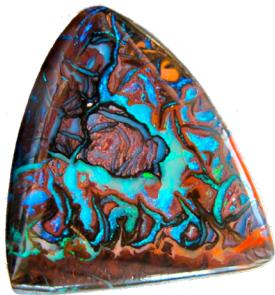
"Solid opal" is a name used for a rough or cut stone that consists entirely of opal material without any host rock or other significant inclusions contained within the stone. Solid opal can be a combination of precious opal and common opal.





## Boulder Opal

"Boulder opal" is a term used for a rough or cut opal that displays precious opal within its host rock, or precious opal attached to its host rock. Much opal forms within the voids and fractures of its host rock, and specimens of boulder opal can reveal this aspect of opal's origin. Some boulder opal occurs in thin seams and layers that can be cut into a stone that displays only precious opal in the face-up position.



of

The contrast of color between opal and host rock can be striking. Bright flashes of precious opal are enhanced when seen within dark brown sandstone or with a backing of black basalt. Red fire opal flashing from pink rhyolite is also an impressive sight. Many people enjoy the natural appearance of boulder opal and find these gemstones to be beautiful, interesting, and educational.

## Matrix Opal

"Matrix opal" is a name used for rough or finished gemstones in which precious opal is in an intimate mixture with the parent rock instead of the opal being confined to seams and patches as in boulder opal.



In opal formed from sedimentary rocks such as sandstone or ironstone, precious opal can precipitate within the interstitial spaces between sedimentary particles. In some cases it replaces sedimentary material. Andamooka, Australia is a famous locality for this type of opal.

In igneous rocks such as basalt, andesite, or rhyolite, precious opal might occur in tiny vesicles. Much matrix opal in igneous rocks is found in Honduras, Central America.

## White Opal

"Light opal" and "white opal" are names used for precious opal with a white, yellow or cream bodycolor. These are the most common bodycolors for precious opal - especially in the early opal that was mined in Australia.



Until the last few decades, white opal was what most people in the United States thought of when they heard the word "opal" - because other varieties of opal were seldom seen in jewelry stores in the United States.

Coober Pedy, South Australia is the most famous locality for producing white opal.

## Black Opal

"Black opal" is a term used for opal that has a dark bodycolor, often black or dark gray. The term is also used for opal that has a dark blue or dark green bodycolor. The dark bodycolor often makes the play-of-color in black opal more obvious.



The contrast of play-of-color to bodycolor makes black opals very desirable and able to be sold for high prices.

## Crystal Opal

"Crystal opal" is a name used for transparent to semi-translucent opal that flashes play-of-color surprises from within the stone as it interacts with light.



Crystal opal cabochons make a beautiful collector's stones. Crystal opal is a challenge for a designer because they must produce a setting that allows light to enter and exit the stone in a variety of directions to take full advantage of its colorful display - but dangle earrings are a favorite.

Australia was the first abundant source of crystal opal. In recent years, more is being produced in Ethiopia.

## Blue Opal

Many people have never seen blue opal and are surprised to learn that such a material exists. It is often cut into beautiful beads and cabochons.

Blue common opal is a highly regarded variety of common opal best known from sources in Peru, Oregon, and Indonesia.



Owyhee blue opal mined in Oregon ranges in color from a light to a dark pastel blue. Blue opal beads from Peru sometimes contain tiny translucent zones with play-of-color. The blue opal found in Indonesia is usually associated with opalized wood.

## Pink Opal

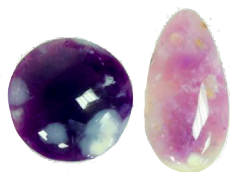
Opal also occurs in shades of pink from nearly white, through carnation pink, through lilac.

Peru is the best-known source of common opal with a pink color. Small amounts of pink opal is found in Oregon. Some people call the rhyolite-hosted fire opal of Mexico a "pink opal".



## Morado Opal

"Morado" is the Spanish word for "purple." Some common opal with a purple bodycolor is produced in Mexico it is widely known as "Morado Opal" or simply as "Morado". In the world there are very few sources of opal with a rich purple color.



## Harlequin Opal

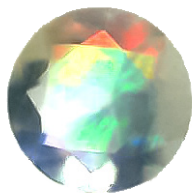
"Harlequin opal" is a name given to an opal that displays patches of color in the shape of rectangles or diamonds.

The "Harlequin" color pattern is normally exhibited in two dimensions on the face of the stone. However, less often the color patches can be seen within a transparent stone - in a three-dimensional display.



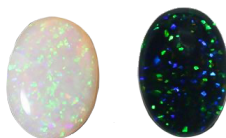
## Contra-Luz Opal

"Contra-Luz" is the name used for specimens of opal that display play-of-color when the light source is behind the stone. This effect only occurs in stones that are transparent or nearly transparent. Utilizing Contra-Luz opal in jewelry can be a challenge.



## Pinfire Opal

"Pinfire opal" is a name used for opal that has pinpoints of color throughout the stone. The opal on the left is a pinfire opal cut from material mined at Coober Pedy, Australia.



## Andamooka Opal

Andamooka is one of the early mining districts of South Australia. Commercial production began there in the 1920s. The area is famous for its matrix opal.



## Opalized Wood

Opalized wood is a type of petrified wood that is composed of opal rather than chalcedony or another mineral material. It almost always consists of common opal, without play-of-color, but rare instances of petrified wood composed of precious opal are known.



Petrified wood composed of opal is often thought to be composed of chalcedony because many people do not know that petrified wood can be opaline. These two types of silicified wood can be easily separated by testing their hardness, specific gravity, or refractive index.

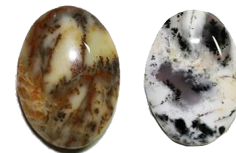
## Mookaite Opal

"Mookaite" is the trade name for an opaque gem material with spectacular color patterns that is mined in Western Australia. Gemological testing identifies most mookaite as a chalcedony. However, some mookaite has the refractive index and specific gravity of opal. The cabochon on the left has the familiar color pattern of mookaite.



## Opalite

Opalite is a name given to an impure variety of common opal that can contain plumes, moss or other inclusions. The name "opalite" can be confused with plastic or glassy materials - imitation opals - that are sold under the same name.



## Opal Sources:

### Australian Opal

Australia has been the world's leading source of opal for over 150 years. It has produced ten times more opal than the rest of the world combined. Numerous world-famous localities in the country produce distinct varieties of opal. Precious, black, matrix, water, boulder, jelly, common, and other types of opal are all found in Australia.



Shown in the photo, clockwise from top left: Precious white pinfire opal from Coober Pedy; matrix opal from Andamooka; crystal opal from Lightning Ridge; mookaite common opal from Western Australia; boulder opal from an unknown locality; black opal from Lightning Ridge.

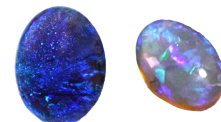
### Coober Pedy Opal

Coober Pedy is a small town in South Australia that was first settled in 1916 when mining for opals began. It was one of the early prolific producing areas and has earned the nickname of "Opal Capital of the World." Coober Pedy is famous for producing white base-color opals, and production has continued uninterrupted since 1916.



### Lightning Ridge Opal

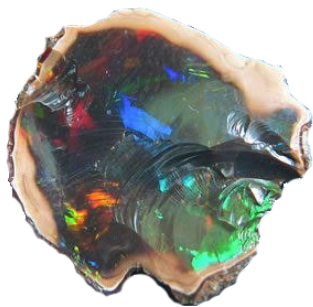
Lightning Ridge is a town in New South Wales, Australia that has become world-famous for its deposits of black opal. More black opals have been produced at Lightning Ridge than at any other location in the world.





## Ethiopian Opal

Gem-quality opal from Ethiopia began entering the market in significant amounts starting in 1994. Since then, additional opal deposits have been discovered that might be large enough in size to take significant market share away from Australia, which has supplied nearly 100% of the opal market for over 100 years. Precious opal, fire opal, and very attractive common opal are all being produced in Ethiopia. They are becoming more abundant in the gem and jewelry market and more popular with consumers.



## Honduras Black Opal

Honduras is well known for producing a black, basalt-matrix opal that contains tiny vesicles filled with play-of-color opal.



## Mexican Opal

Mexico is famous for being the world's most important source of fire opal. Mexican fire opal is known for having the most saturated and purest hues. Mexican fire opal is cut into beautiful cabochons, and much is cut into brightly-colored faceted stones. Mexico also produces beautiful precious opal. A unique cutting style, known as cantera, yields cabochons that display pockets of fire opal in their rhyolite matrix. They are bright red, orange or yellow background color.



## Louisiana Opal

"Louisiana opal" is a quartzite cemented with precious opal that has been mined in Vernon Parish, Louisiana. On close examination you can clearly see quartz grains with the spaces between them filled with a matrix of clear cement that produces a play-of-color in incident light. It is a stable material that can be cut into cabochons, spheres and other objects. Some of the material is brown, but it also occurs in a gray to black color that makes the play-of-color easier to see.



## Virgin Valley

The Virgin Valley area is part of a 68,000 acre area set aside for entry under the general mining laws. The opal-bearing areas are spread out over a large area, but the precious opal occurrences are smaller isolated deposits within the region. Common opal is just that, "common," and

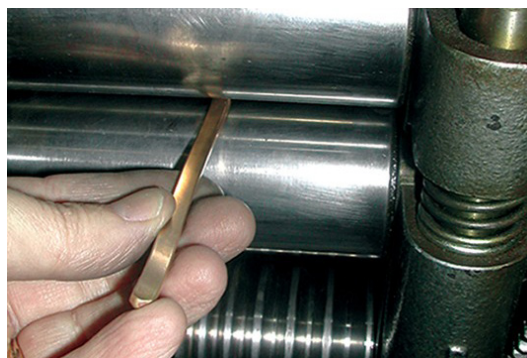


can be found throughout the area, along with petrified wood, agate, and obsidian. Most precious opal producing ground is covered by valid mining claims. Very few of the nearly 200 claims in the Valley actually produce precious opal. Virgin Valley precious opals are considered to be the brightest and most colorful opals in the world, and on many occasions, have been found in remarkably large pieces. The world's record-size precious opal weighed 130 pounds and was found in the Northern Lights Mine of the Royal Peacock Mine group in Virgin Valley. However, Virgin Valley opals have also gained the notorious reputation for cracking or crazing and being unstable for gems. It is true that the majority of opal found in Virgin Valley is not suitable for cutting or polishing. Rough stones are best placed in liquid-filled display domes which make breathtaking display specimens. Nothing can compare to a precious crystal black opal specimen from Virgin Valley, but few stand up to the test of time as gemstones.

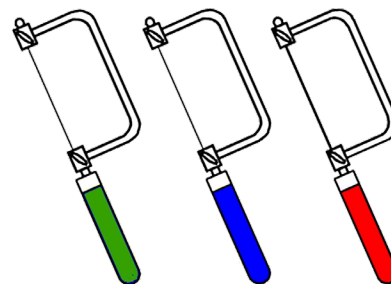
Source: Geology.com, wikipedia, and Virginvalleyopalmines

## Bench Tip:

When using a rolling mill always place the metal being rolled in the center of the rollers. This will ensure even pressure on the metal and cause less wear on the rolling mill.



Keep two or three saw frames at your bench with different size sawblades in each one. Color-code the handle with spray paint so that you can easily keep them separate. Then, regardless of the work, you will always have a saw with the proper size blade ready to use.



<http://benchmagazine.com/benchtips>

# We always welcome new members!



Date \_\_\_\_\_ Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society

<a href="http://www.mgcgms.org">http://www.mgcgms.org</a>		Application for Membership
Individual: \$16.00	Individual +1 relative Same Address: \$20.00	Junior Under 18: \$6.00
Name: _____		Cell: _____
Name: _____		Cell: _____
Address: _____		Home Phone. _____
City: _____		
State: _____	Email 1: _____	
Zip: _____	Email 2: _____	
<b>Members Birthdays</b>		
Adult: _____	Birthday M/D: _____	
Adult: _____	Birthday M/D: _____	
Junior: _____	Birthday M/D/Y: _____	
Junior: _____	Birthday M/D/Y: _____	
<b>Please Check All Applicable Interests</b>		
<input type="radio"/> Beading	<input type="radio"/> Cabbing	<input type="radio"/> Jewelry Making
<input type="radio"/> Chain Mail	<input type="radio"/> PMC	<input type="radio"/> Lapidary
<input type="radio"/> Field Trips	<input type="radio"/> Faceting	<input type="radio"/> Minerals
<input type="radio"/> Fossils	<input type="radio"/> Wire Wrapping	<input type="radio"/> Silver Smithing
<input type="radio"/> Others: _____		
<b>How did you hear of us?</b> _____		
<b>Please check the following:</b> <input type="radio"/> I understand that my picture or likeness may be used in Society promotions. <input type="radio"/> I authorize MGCgms to include my contact information be included in Society listings for members to contact each other only.		
Signature: _____		
Signature: _____		

Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society Inc.  
P.O. Box 857 Ocean Springs MS 39566  
[mgcgms@bellsouth.net](mailto:mgcgms@bellsouth.net)



**Snoopy Gems**  
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The Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral  
Society, Inc.

#### AFFILIATIONS

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.  
The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.  
S.C.R.I.B.E. (Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors)

#### OFFICERS 2018

President	Patrick Barrett (228) 596-8270
Vice President	Open
Treasurer	Barbi Beatty (228) 238-9900
Secretary	Cheryl Rodriguez (773) 504-4939
Parliamentarian	Dave Cook (228) 875-2570
Editor	Barbi Beatty (228) 238-9900
Web master	Barbi Beatty (228) 238-9900
Member at Large	Harvey Marcum (228) 875-0450
Member at Large	Natalie Webb (228) 355-4100

#### COMMITTEES

Membership	Barbi Beatty (228) 238-9900
Vendor Chair	Vicki Reynolds (228) 872-9286
Historian	Lettie White (228) 875-8716
Librarian	Liz Platt
Sunshine	Reba Shotts (601) 947-7245

#### AFFILIATIONS

ALAA	John Wright: Director
SFMS	John Wright: Past President
SFMS	Barbi Beatty: Treasurer & Insurance Liaison
SFMS	Buddy Shotts: Long-range Planning, Past President, State Director

Annual dues are:  
\$16 Individual  
\$20 (2) Members in same house hold  
\$6 Junior

## 2019 Workshop/Meeting Dates

January 12 OS Library 9:30-3:45  
February 9 Pink Rooster 9:30-3:45  
March 9 OS Library 9:30-3:45  
March 30 Club Picnic Seashore Methodist Pavilion 11:00-4:00  
April 13 OS Library Mini Show 9:30-4:00  
May 11 OS Library 9:30-3:45  
June 8 OS Library 9:30-3:45  
July 13 OS Library 9:30-3:45  
August 10 OS Library 9:30-3:45  
September 14 OS Library 9:30-3:45  
**October 5th El Saltillo's 11:00 till**  
November 7 After Vendor Dinner 5ish  
December 14 Christmas Party OS Library 11:00am-3:30pm

**Dates subject to change.**

**Be sure to check each month!**

The November meeting is the Thursday evening of the gem show after the dinner for the dealers at the Jackson County Fairgrounds Civic Center Building.

December will be our Christmas Party and Installation of Officers

## Oct 2019

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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<http://www.mgcgms.org>



The Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society is a Non-profit Organization Dedicated to Education, Science, and the Lapidary Arts and Crafts

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P.O. Box 857  
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