

# Four Corners Gem and Mineral Club

## July 2024 Newsletter



### Message from the President

The Gem and Mineral Show is coming soon!! I hope you can attend, and if you are interested in volunteering then please visit <http://www.durangorocks.org/gemshowvolunteers.html> or scan the QR code below. The website lists all of the activities that need volunteers both before and during the event. Your help is greatly appreciated.



### Classes in July

A class on Lost Wax Casting is scheduled for July 27-28. These classes are a great way to learn a new skill or just have fun being creative. If you are interested, check this link to <http://www.durangorocks.org/events.html>.

### Open Shop

A full schedule of Open Shop is listed at <http://www.durangorocks.org/events.html>.

### Field Trips and Lectures

Bob Cuffney is leading a field trip on July 20<sup>th</sup> to explore some of the geology on Wolf Creek Pass. To learn more about field trips and sign up for them go to [Four Corners Gem and Mineral Club Field Trips - Four Corners Gem & Mineral Club \(durangorocks.org\)](http://www.durangorocks.org)

### Events Around the Region

**July 6, Johnston, Colorado:** 1:00-6:00 pm, Roosevelt High School, 3349 Roosevelt Parkway, [Johnstown, CO | Official Website \(johnstownco.gov\)](http://Johnstown, CO | Official Website (johnstownco.gov))

**July 13-14, Colorado Springs, Colorado:** 10:00 am to 8:00 pm, Colorado Springs Event Center, 3960 Palmer and Park Boulevard, [The Crystal Festival | A Rock, Gem, Mineral, and Crystal Show](http://The Crystal Festival | A Rock, Gem, Mineral, and Crystal Show)

**July 25-28, Fairplay, Colorado:** Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Fairplay River Park Event Site, 200 Platte Drive, [HOME | fairplay \(abqfallshow.wixsite.com\)](http://HOME | fairplay (abqfallshow.wixsite.com))

Other events in the area <https://www.rockandmineralshows.com/>

### **New FCGMC Steward Coordinator**

Charlotte Lenssen has offered to serve as the Steward Coordinator for the Club. If you have question Charlotte or want to become a shop steward the please contact her at [charlotte\\_lenssen@yahoo.com](mailto:charlotte_lenssen@yahoo.com)

### **Reminder about Club Access (from the Bylaws, posted on the Club website):**

The use of the shop facilities during non-published hours shall be allowed so long as: 1) there are a minimum of two members present at all times, 2) the members sign the attendance form and pay the applicable shop use fee, and 3) at least one of the parties in attendance is trained in and responsible for the same opening, closing, safety and operations procedures followed during published hours.

**Please do not work in the Club alone.** This is a safety issue. Recently, equipment has been left running with no person is in attendance. This is fine for the tumbler, but all other equipment must be shut off.

### **You are Invited**

I am also the President of the Four Corners Geological Society. At a recent meeting we decided to invite members from the FCGMC to the annual picnic on August 25<sup>th</sup> starting around noon. RSVPs are requested. The event is catered and the Society provides burgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, salads, chips, soft drinks, water, and beers. You are welcome to bring a dessert or side dish. The picnic is held at the Junction Creek Campground (day use site). There is a horse shoe tournament with a \$20 entry fee (or four raffle tickets). There is a raffle with lots of great prizes is; tickets are \$5 each and help support activities of students in the Department of Geosciences at Fort Lewis

College. If you are interested in hanging out with a bunch of geo nerds then please RSVP to me at [gonzales\\_d@fortlewis.edu](mailto:gonzales_d@fortlewis.edu) before August 20.

## **Bad Luck Stones?**

There are many minerals, gemstones and natural materials that are believed to bring good luck and fortune to a wearer. But what about stones with a reputation for bad luck? I recently went on a search to find out, and learned there are several “stones” which allegedly bring misfortune: opal, pearl, black diamond, turquoise, emerald, hematite, moldavite, lava stone, petrified wood, black tourmaline, malachite, and auralite 23 (variety of amethyst). Yes, even the beloved turquoise!

Of course, the belief that any natural material brings good or bad luck is based on human lore and mythology derived from events and experiences. The one material that is consistently at the top of “bad luck” stones is opal. This mineraloid (does not meet all the criteria of a mineral) has been associated with misfortune and negative energy for centuries. But why?

According to the sources listed below, there are several reasons why opal is considered “evil” and sometimes referred to as the “stone of tears.” During periods of the “Black Death” opals were thought to lose color when a wearer was stricken by the disease. And, supposedly, opals turn pale in the presence of poison, losing their shine once the wearer dies. Medieval Europeans also believed that opal resembled the “evil eye.” In the 11th century in Europe, some people thought opals could make a person invisible, so the stone was linked to criminal activity.

In the 19th century, opal was called the 'witch stone', possibly because it resembles flames and sparks linked with the practice of witchcraft. Another story tells of jewelry set with witch's opal being a sign of service to dark forces. If a stone lost its luster, it was meant that the demon was expelled.

In the novel Anne of Geierstein or The Maiden of the Mist written by Sir Walter Scott in 1829, Lady Hermione wore an opal in her hair that changed colors with her moods. When doused with few drops of holy water the opal lost its “fire” and caused Hermione to die. An excerpt from the book states, *“The opal, on which one of these drops had lighted, shot out a brilliant spark like a falling star, and became the instant afterwards lightless and colourless as a common pebble, while the beautiful Baroness sank on the floor of the chapel with a deep sigh of pain.”* In the book her supernatural abilities and association with the occult implies she is a witch or demon, further promoting opal’s association with evil. I have not read this story, but now I am curious.

In the late 1800s the curse of opal was believed to cause the deaths of four family members of Spanish royalty. King Alfonso XII gifted an opal ring to his grandmother who died soon after followed by the transfer of the stone and subsequent deaths of his sister and sister-in-law. The King himself died shortly after wearing the ring.

A belief was circulated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that opal should not be worn by anyone who was not born in October. Another idea is that opal should not be given or received as engagement rings or the bride will become a widow.

There is also a more positive part of the lore of opals. Allegedly, if a person wears a diamond with opal, then the bad luck is negated. Are opal and other stones imbued with negative energy that brings bad luck? Probably not, but the history and lore of opal is still fascinating, and maybe it is worth considering the potential bad luck before you wear one.



This photograph illustrates Chilean blue opal distinguished by bands of blue and green. This beautiful stone might curse an owner with back luck and misfortune according to some legends. Photograph taken from <https://www.gia.edu/gems-gemology/spring-2024-gemnews-blue-opal-from-chile>

### **Sources of Information**

<https://blacktreelab.co/blogs/news/controversial-and-evil-gemstones-that-bring-bad-luck>

<https://gem-a.com/why-are-some-gemstones-associated-with-bad-luck/>

<https://blacktreelab.co/blogs/news/controversial-and-evil-gemstones-that-bring-bad-luck>

<https://www.blackstaropal.com/blogs/news/the-bad-luck-myth-about-opal>

<https://consciousitems.com/blogs/lifestyle/bad-luck-crystals-are-some-gemstones-unlucky>