

# “CUTTING REMARKS”

The Official Publication of the Old Pueblo Lapidary Club  
520-323-9154

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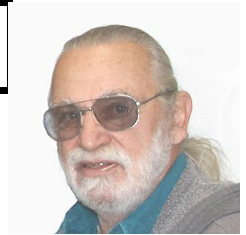
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Please join us **May 14th** at **9:00am** for the monthly meeting. There is an optional social hour that begins at 8:00am followed by an educational program at 9:00am, followed by the monthly meeting. Visitors are always welcome.



Articles or news to be included in the *Cutting Remarks* should be emailed to your Editor, Mike DeMeritt ([silverlininggemstones@gmail.com](mailto:silverlininggemstones@gmail.com)), or feel free to call him at 520-203-8430. Submission deadline is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Thanks!

**THE PREZ SEZ** ..... by John Poole



Hi Folks!

May is here and most of our winter members are in cooler parts. I hope everyone's travels were safe and without incident. We'll be here in the fall to welcome your back.

The Pima County Fair was a great success for OPLC. Thanks to Bob Powell, the Chair, and the many volunteers who gave their time to man the booth. It's always interesting to engage the youngsters while they hunt for their special tumbled stone. As usual, Carlie Reese's sphere making machine was a big hit.

It's a real attention getter and never fails to draw a crowd! And a big thank you to all the members who loaned

us their treasures for display. The glass cases gave a pretty good overview of what can be accomplished at Old Pueblo.

See you May 14th @ 8 am for coffee and treats; and don't forget wear your OPLC badge and get a free raffle ticket with a purchase. We'll have plenty of good stuff out for you!  
-John Poole

*My advice, in the midst of the seriousness,  
Is to keep an eye out for the tinker shuffle,  
The flying of kites,  
And kindred sources of amusement...*

Jerome Bruner

**Front Cover Pictures:** *Beryl colored green by Chromium or Vanadium is known as **Emerald**, May's Birthstone. Top-grade **Imperial Jadeite** cabochon from Burma is as delicious as it gets!*

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## PRIOR MONTH'S MEETING MINUTES... Twink Monrad, Secretary



OPLC MONTHLY MEETING April 9, 2016

The meeting was brought to order at 10:15 by President John Poole as a quorum was present. He thanked Helen Serras-Herman for giving us a most interesting and educational talk on different gems and minerals which may be on the market as natural, treated, lab made etc. She had many photos and it was very enlightening. Helen stepped in for the scheduled speaker who was unable to be there.

Refreshments for meetings: Helen and Andrew Herman were thanked for bringing the donuts. Norma Lackow, volunteer refreshment coordinator, is asking that members call her to fill in for the future meetings beginning with July. Phone: 742-7561. The Club will reimburse up to \$40 each meeting. Can be donuts or anything else that members would enjoy before the monthly meetings.

Eleven new members and guests introduced themselves. Membership chairman Wayne Klement said we are back up to over 370 members again as members are renewing plus we are gaining new members.

Minutes of the March meeting were approved as published in Cutting Remarks.

Treasurer Bob Powell will file his report for audit and said we are 13% into our budget for the year.

Pima County Fair April 14-24th: Bob Powell has the volunteers set for our booth. More jewelry or other lapidary items made by our member is needed for our display cabinet at the Fair.

Field trips: none at this time. In the Fall Skip Barkley is planning a trip in the Pearce area.

Education Chairperson: Ron and Carolyn Graichen said that they delivered 21 rock kits to local schools and mailed 5 kits out of state. He said they were well received and felt that this is a very

rewarding experience to share our love of rocks with school children. Thanks were given to Ron and Carolyn.

Silent Auction: Tom McDevitt is our new Silent Auction chairman and said he is receiving some nice donations and asked for some help from members with open pick up trucks to pick up items.

Maintenance: Dave Schulte and Stacey Brown are rebuilding the covering over the main entrance of our Clubhouse building.

An OPLC member of 45 years, mentor Ron Davidson has passed away. Ron was known for so many things he did for OPLC: Rockhound, monitor, teacher, security officer for Club (he always told us at meeting that no one had gotten in or gotten out!), friend to new members and old ones alike and ever so patient when teaching capping or anything else to a new member. John Poole said that Ron wanted to be remembered as someone whom others would enjoy being around. Ron certainly succeeded in his wish.

A motion was made to start a small scholarship for one of our classes each year in the name of Ron Davidson, it was tabled until the Board can further discuss it.

Kim Filips was thanked for her successful raffle ticket sales which reached almost \$300 this meeting. She answered that she is not there to sell but to spread her love of lapidary to all who join our club.

Door prize: Linda Pliska

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Twink Monrad, secretary

## My Ron Davidson Quilt

When Ron Davidson was in the Tucson Veterans' Hospital in 2012 for some serious surgery, I went to visit him quite often. One day just before I arrived, some women from a Casa Grande, Az. quilting group had been there to present Ron with a quilt made by the members. On the back is a tag which reads:

This quilt was made for you with love and caring by the Palm Creek Quilters from Casa Grande, Az - 2012

Thanks for all you have done to protect each of us and all that America stands for. The quilt features some red, white and blue patriotic prints plus some folk art such as a cat, watermelon, sunflowers, a bird and some hearts.

Ron asked me to take the quilt home and keep it with my quilts and other things that I have sewn. I told him I would keep it for him until he went home and then bring it to him. I asked him many times after he was home if he was ready for his quilt and he said "no, just take care of it for me." Since 2012 it has been folded on our fireplace in our TV room so Larry and I see it many times a day and always think of Ron. I have shown it to many guests in our home to let them know how the quilters take care of our veterans. I will let the Palm Creek Quilters know what has happened with the quilt that they brought to Ron.

Twink Monrad, April 2016



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Chris	Flanagan	Albert	Ray
Debra	Graves	Alejanda	Ray
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Roberta	Gutierrez	Janice	Vanrikxoart
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Dodi	Jorgensen	Cindy	Webster
Leonard	Kleider	Lena	Winchtock



**In Memory of Ray Pajkos:** Arbor, Faceting Machine, Tumbler,  
Kiln, Torch & Tank, Casting Equipment, Slabs, Miscellaneous, Opal,  
Gold, Silver, other Metals

**Dan Caudle:** Ring Mandrel, Metal Gauge

To donate to OPLC, just see or contact Mike DeMeritt at 240-5133, or Tom McDevitt at 575-0517

# Natural vs. Enhanced – Lapidary gem Materials, Part 1

By Helen Serras-Herman

Complete article published in Rock & gem magazine, December 2015 issue

We all love using natural gem materials for our lapidary projects. We like the organic feel, the symphony of colors, the diversity of textures, the quality, the uniqueness and even the rarity of natural, untreated gemstones. Several materials, however, are being removed from that hypothetical list daily, as some are getting hard to find or become completely unobtainable from the mine sources. Some are unreachable due to rising prices, while many others are treated at the source to enhance their color or durability, long before they reach vendor's booths at shows.

Simulants and imitations of gemstones are nothing new. In fact, some go as far back as the ancient Egyptian times, with blue faience imitating turquoise and lapis lazuli, and the Roman era, with green glass imitating emeralds.

The term "simulants" refers to natural or enhanced materials that simulate another natural gemstone. They vary from the imitation stones, which are mostly man-made materials like glass or plastic imitating a natural gemstone.

There is an endless inventory of gem materials on the market today that are created or enhanced to look like some other natural material, usually one that is rare and expensive. These simulants, or "look-a-likes", provide an inexpensive alternative to the natural gems, and many of them are beautiful and durable enough to be used into jewelry.

The only problem surrounding those stones is disclosure, or the lack of it. Dealers should always let their customers know exactly what they are buying. And, even though many times, the original wholesaler or lapidary may have disclosed information about the nature of the rough, cabochons or beads, somewhere down the line, or online, information gets buried or blurred.

According to the American Gem Trade Organization (AGTA), of which I have been a member since 2002, "in addition to gemstone cutting, over the centuries we have developed other methods to improve upon the natural properties of gemstones and pearls. These techniques are known as enhancements."(AGTA 2015 Gem Enhancement brochure, <http://www.agta.org/info/index.html>).

One of the reasons for disclosure, besides honesty, is for the customer to know how to take care of the finished stones. That customer may be the lapidary, designer or metalsmith, or the final jewelry client or collector. Disclosure helps determine how well a stone will wear once set into jewelry, whether they should be set into rings (which take more abuse) or pendants and brooches, whether they will fade in the sunlight, or how well will they survive in an ultrasonic cleaning machine, or the torch of the jeweler.



“Turquoise Sky”, HSH, Hatchita Mine, NM; Natural, untreated turquoise, HSH, 112.0-carat carving, Sleeping Beauty Mine; 55-carat sugilite, HSH

According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Guides for the jewelry industry, with the exception of normal fashioning (cutting and polishing) it is the seller’s responsibility at all levels of commerce to clearly disclose to the buyer at the time of the sale whether the stone is natural or not. The seller must also provide all pertinent information about any enhancement process when A) the treatment is not permanent and its effects are lost over time, B) the treatment creates special care requirements for the gemstone to retain the benefits of the treatment, and C) the treatment has a significant effect on the value of the gemstone.

**AGTA Gemstone Enhancement Codes**

N = Not Enhanced	B = Bleaching	C = Coating	D = Dyeing	F = Filling	H = Heating
H&P = Heat & Pressure	I = Impregnation	L = Lasering	O = Oiling/Resin	R = Irradiation	U = Diffusion
SC = Special Care	W = Waxing/ Oiling in Opaque Stones				
ASBL = Assembled	CMP = Composite				

Codes and type of treatments must only be used as directed in the *Gemstone Information Manual (GIM)*, available at [www.agta.org/info](http://www.agta.org/info)

Many of the enhanced materials on the

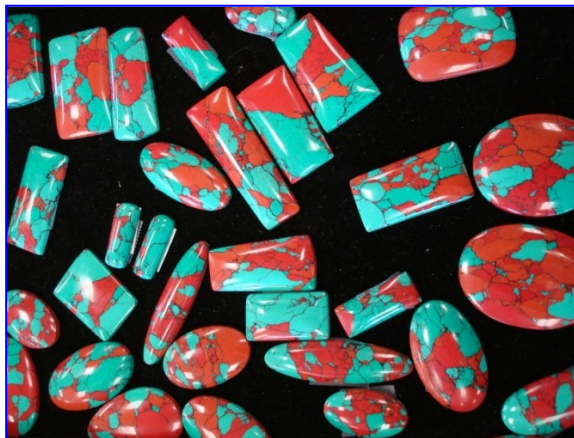
market today are natural material that has been dyed, compressed or irradiated, while some others are partly natural stone and partly other materials, such as resins, metals, etc. There are also natural materials that have been dyed to a completely different color in order to look like another natural material, which we could call “look-a-likes”.

**Sonora chrysocolla vs. simulant Sonora chrysocolla**

Sonora chrysocolla, also known as Sonora Sunset or Sonora Sunrise chrysocolla, and chrysocolla cuprite, is a copper-based rock composed of blue or green chrysocolla and red cuprite, a copper oxide mineral. It may also contain the orange-red chalcotricite, blue brochantite, and black veins of iron or tenorite.

Sonora chrysocolla has been mined since 2006 at the Milpillas Mine- the same copper mine near the town of Cuitaca in Sonora, Mexico, very near the Cananea copper mine, that has produced stunning azurite-malachite crystals. It is reported, however, that since 2011 all copper

ore at the Milpillas mine has been exhausted.



Sonora chrysocolla, cab by HSH; Sonora “chrysocolla” simulant cabs

The hardness of the Sonora chrysocolla is around Mohs 3 and Mohs 4. Great quantities of rough have come out and may still be available, but it is getting harder to find good quality rough material, with even portions of the ingredients. What made the material famous was a symmetry and balance among the blue, red and black colors. The brilliant red-only rough material and designer cabs are referred to as “crimson cuprite”.

Sonora chrysocolla is one of the most desired new stones, and it was only inevitable that an imitation would show up on the market. The simulant version of Sonora chrysocolla has similar coloration, mostly turquoise blue and bright red. The material is crushed natural turquoise, dyed, compressed and stabilized, and sold in a block form or slabs. It is manufactured and sold by Fred Thiele of Natural Expressions, Inc®, a company in Gilbert, Arizona.

The advantages, of course, in purchasing a compressed block- besides the price difference-are the ability to cut even slabs with very little waste, and don't need any special orientation of the rough, except your desired shape.

### Natural turquoise vs. stabilized and compressed turquoise

Turquoise is a beautiful gemstone that is found in several places around the world. The Southwestern states of Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico have produced high quality turquoise for many centuries. Turquoise has always been very fashionable for Southwestern-inspired jewelry, but in recent years it has reached a global popularity. Turquoise jewelry pieces make a bold statement, and are in-style for a wide-spread clientele.

As one by one the famous turquoise mines are closing – Bisbee, Sleeping Beauty, and so on, there are not too many options left for all-natural material, which is sought after and appreciated by gem collectors and jewelry lovers alike. Hard and all-natural turquoise is probably less than 3% of the turquoise sold today.

“To improve color and durability, turquoise is commonly stabilized with polymers, a permanent enhancement. It is also sometimes permeated with colorless oil or wax, which is considered not as stable as polymers, as well as dyed.” (AGTA 2015 Gem Enhancement brochure).

The vast majority of the turquoise on the market has been stabilized in order for the stone to maintain its beautiful color. In most instances, stabilization also deepens the color. It hardens



the stone, helping it survive the lapidary processes, without falling apart. This stabilization occurs under high pressure and the resin is absorbed into the rock permanently. When dyes are added to the resin, then the turquoise is referred to as “treated” instead of “stabilized”. Sometimes, the turquoise matrix can be dyed in order to achieve a higher color contrast.

Reconstituted turquoise is natural material, usually of low grade, ground up into powder, mixed with resin, often along with dyes, then poured and molded into blocks.

Another form of turquoise comes in a compressed type. Small, natural nuggets of quality turquoise are compressed with resin into blocks. The outline of each nugget is still visible. There are no dyes in these blocks. These compressed turquoise blocks are created by Colbaugh Processing, Inc. (<http://www.colbaugh.net/>), a very-well known company that mines the only active mine for turquoise in Arizona: the Mineral Park Mine at Turquoise Mountain a few miles north of Kingman. The company is headed by Marty Colbaugh, the grandson of the original mine owner, S.A. “Chuck” Colbaugh, who first mined turquoise there in 1962.

Besides the all-natural turquoise blocks, he also creates compressed blocks of natural turquoise nuggets infused with bronze or zinc that offer a very unique look, simulating natural turquoise with golden inclusions from the Kingman mine or the Hatchita mine in New Mexico.

In addition, Colbaugh Processing now offers a bright green dyed turquoise block, with or without infused bronze, simulating the rare nickel-colored bright green gaspeite from Australia.

Howlite and magnesite are two more materials that are commonly treated with dyes and stabilization, especially to imitate turquoise. They are widely offered on the market as beads and cabochons, along with plastic imitation “turquoise”, and their low price per strand or per cab should be a red flag and indicator for their origin.

With all these types of turquoise available to shoppers, a visual identification is seldom accurate or reliable. It is always a good practice to ask the vendor about the material, and preferably have the answer in writing. My best advice is to trust your sources and buy from reputable vendors that will stand behind their products, and are able to supply information on the identity of the materials.

### Sugilite vs. Mohave blue turquoise

Sugilite is a pink to purple cyclosilicate mineral with the complex chemical formula  $K(\text{Na}, \square)_2\text{Li}_3(\text{Fe}, \text{Mn}, \text{Al}, \text{Zr})_2[\text{Si}_{12}\text{O}_{30}]$ . It is most commonly found in a massive form, not single crystals. It mainly comes from the Wessels Mine, in Northern Cape Province in South Africa, although it was first found in Japan by petrologist Ken-ichi Sugi (1901-1948). The hardness of sugilite is around 5.5-6.5 on the Mohs scale. The color may include lavender, purple, lavender-pink, and dark purple. The brighter the purple color and the more translucent sugilite is the rarer the material is considered, and the price jumps considerably. A banded variety with black inclusions is also available. In rare occasions, bright blue veins of richterite (or rictorite) are associated with sugilite and make a stunning color combination.

The Mohave purple turquoise, offered by Colbaugh Processing, almost imitates that very rare sugilite/richterite combination. The Mohave purple turquoise is made from natural turquoise compressed with resin, dyed and stabilized. The result is a material with brilliant coloration

and in many instances with the original natural blue natural color still visible. It is also offered with bronze infusion inclusions with a visual look of golden webbing throughout. It has now become very popular, and it is sold as blocks, cabochons and bead strands.

Sharlene Hellberg, a talented gem artist based in Kingman, Arizona, carves the Mohave purple turquoise. She says that the bronze infusion does not seem to cause any problems for sanding or final polishing.



Compressed turquoise blocks with bronze and without bronze. Mohave purple turquoise carving by Sharlene Hellberg, Photos © HSH

Simulants and imitations can be good options for getting the color or pattern you're seeking for a piece of lapidary art or jewelry. Disclosure, however, is important so that the gem cutter and the final purchaser know exactly what they're getting for the price.



**Helen Serras-Herman** is an acclaimed gem sculptor with over 33 years of experience in unique gem sculpture and jewelry art. Her award-winning artwork has been exhibited world-wide and published in over 170 trade magazines and books. See her work at [www.gemartcenter.com](http://www.gemartcenter.com) and her business Facebook page at Gem Art Center/Helen Serras-Herman

## MAY GEMSTONE: EMERALD



6.84 Carat Fine Gem Emerald

From the Author's Collection

May's birthstone is the fabulous variety of Beryl known as **Emerald**. Beryl forms commonly as simple, prismatic, hexagonal crystals, whose prism faces are often vertically striated or grooved. It has indistinct cleavage on the basal {0001} plane, and conchoidal or uneven fracture. Hardness varies from 7.5 - 8.0 on the Moh's Scale, with relatively-fragile emerald usually coming in closer to 7.5. It has a density of roughly 2.7. It has a vitreous luster, is transparent to translucent, and large crystals can vary in transparency. This is especially true with emerald, whose formation happens in such violently magmatic conditions as to virtually assure a variety of inclusions (emeralds are known for their *Jardin*, a French word for "Garden"- the mass of inclusions leaves the impression of a painted garden landscape...)

As I explained for Aquamarine (another form of beryl) in the March issue, the crystal structure of beryl is characterized by sixfold rings of [SiO<sub>4</sub>] tetrahedra that lie on top of each other and thus form endless channels along the c-axis of the crystal. The rings are linked by [BeO<sub>4</sub>] tetrahedra and [AlO<sub>6</sub>] octahedral. In addition to the main elements of beryl, minor amounts of Li, Na, or other alkylid metals can be present (like H<sub>2</sub>O or CO<sub>2</sub>, they can be accommodated in the channels.) Color is caused by chromophores in the form of transition elements, and typically, Chromium (as Cr<sup>3+</sup>) is responsible for the deep-green in emerald. Vanadium may also act as a chromophore, either by itself, or in concert with the Chromium. Though Iron may color beryl green, it is not considered an emerald unless the chromophore is Chromium or Vanadium (Iron-green beryls are simply called "Green Beryl" or even labeled as aquamarines...) With aquamarines, the crystals are often long; by contrast, pink beryl (Morganite) typically assumes short, stubby, tabular crystals. Emerald falls in between these ranges, with mostly shorter, smaller crystals that are very rarely tabular.



Emerald Rough from Muzo, Columbia

Most beryl is found in granitic pegmatites, but emerald is an exception - it most frequently occurs in mica-schists, or veins and cavities in bituminous limestone (like the famous emerald mines of Muzo, Columbia.)

Emerald is found in few places, and important deposits include Muzo and Chivor, Columbia; Bahia and Goias, Brazil; Pakistan; Afghanistan; and Hiddenite, North Carolina. There are African deposits as well, though many of these really only produce green beryl (colored by Fe<sup>2+</sup>). Fine, gem-quality emeralds are exceptionally rare, and rank among the most expensive and sought-after of all gemstones. Those with May birthdays couldn't be prouder!

-Written/Compiled by Mike DeMeritt, 2013



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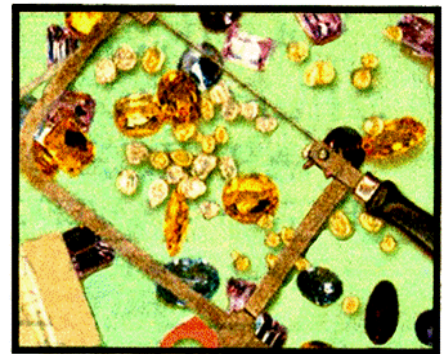
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## **DON'T FORGET**

Please don't forget to continue to bring in **YOUR** (or anyone else's for that matter) aluminum cans to the Club for recycling. Your contribution would be greatly appreciated to help add \$'s to the Club's treasury. **Thanks!**

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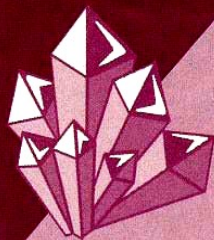
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### MEMBERSHIP

Wayne Klement 954-6298

### SECURITY

John Poole 777-5588

### SILENT AUCTION

Mike DeMeritt 240-5133

Tom McDevitt 575-0517

### BUSINESS MEETING REFRESHMENTS

Norma Lackow 742-7561

**WEEKLY WORKSHOP SCHEDULE Phone 323-9154**

**Mondays**

9AM - 12PM **Cabbing**

Monitor - Gloria Jean Dana

1PM - 4PM **Silversmith Lab**

Monitor - Terry Cox 296-4949

5PM - 9PM **Cabbing**

Monitor - Joseph Blackcoyote 891-6822

6PM - 9PM **Beginning Faceting**

Monitor - Earl Zoeller 886-3518

**Tuesdays**

9AM - 1PM **Cabbing\***

Monitor - Mike DeMeritt 203-8430

9AM - 1PM **Beginning/OpenLab Faceting\***

Monitor - Mike DeMeritt 203-8430

9AM - Noon **Silversmithing Lab**

Monitor - John Poole 777-5588

9AM - Noon **Rock Sawing**

Monitor - Tim Rose

Noon - 3PM **Casting Open Lab**

Monitor - Ron Brooks 520-378-2592

1PM - 4PM **Cabbing**

Monitor - Jerry Glazman 860-689-3432 **LAST LAB UNTIL FALL MAY 24!**

**Wednesdays**

6PM - 9PM **Beginning Casting**

Monitor - Chuck Lundstrom 241-9262

6PM - 9PM **Cabbing**

Monitor - Keith Haubert 784-8283

6PM - 9PM **Silversmithing Lab**

Monitor - Bill Penrose 544-7517

**Thursdays**

9AM - 12PM **Cabbing**

Monitor - Bob Powell 403-8980

9AM - 12PM **Rock Sawing**

Monitor - Pete Peterson 886-9021

1PM - 4PM **Silversmithing**

Monitor - Giac D'Aquisto 207-6219

6PM - 9PM **Silversmithing**

Monitor - Bill Cascio 638-8144

**Fridays**

9AM - 12PM **Cabbing\***

Monitor - Mike DeMeritt 203-8430

1PM - 4PM **Silversmithing**

Monitor - Terry Cox 296-4949

5:30PM - 8:30PM **Cabbing**

Monitor - David Schulte 954-8554

**Saturdays**

10AM - 3PM **Silversmithing**

Monitor - Terry Cox 296-4949

9:30AM - 2:30PM **Cabbing\***

Monitor - Jeff Hanson

**Sundays**

10AM - 3PM **Cabbing**

Monitor - Dennis Murphy 490-9188

10AM - 3PM **Silversmithing Lab**

Monitor - Giac D'Aquisto 207-6219

Old Pueblo Lapidary Club  
 (Cutting Remarks - May 2016)  
 3118 N. Dale  
 Tucson, AZ 85712  
 (520) 323-9154

OPLC Membership Application - Please Print

Name1 \_\_\_\_\_ Name 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Local Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

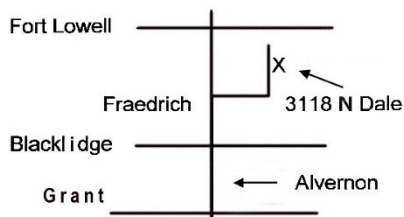
Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Summer Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership:	<u>1st Quarter</u>	<u>2nd Quarter</u>	<u>3rd Quarter</u>	<u>4th Quarter</u>	<u>Annual Renewals</u>
Single Member	\$25.00	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$20.00
Couple (same address)	\$35.00	\$27.00	\$22.00	\$15.00	\$25.00
Junior	\$12.50	\$10.00	\$7.50	\$5.00	\$10.00

Mail to: Membership Chairperson, Old Pueblo Lapidary Club, 3118 N. Dale, Tucson, AZ 85712



The Business Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month. A pre-meeting social hour (except for the December meeting) is at 8:00 a.m., followed by an educational program, and ends with the monthly meeting. Visitors are most welcome.