

BOARD OFFICERS ELECTED

President	Jef Wright
Vice President	Justin Engelmeyer
Secretary	Fred Floyd
Treasurer	Toni Floyd

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (APPOINTED)

CFMS Chairperson:	Toni Floyd
Field Trips:	Melissa Takagi
Parliamentarian:	Chris Toft
Shop Coordinator:	Alan Mazzola
Program Chair	Karen Wagner
Show Chair	Michele Shepard
Newsletter Editor	Carol Hiestand
Website:	Ian Burney
Membership Chair	Lori Goodman

STANDING COMMITTEES (APPOINTED)

Facebook Page	Jeff Fox
Ways & Means	Dawn Wright
Historian	Barbara Bury
Hospitality & Good Cheer	Judy Jessup
Meeting Displays	Barbara Bury
Picnic Coordinator	Moni Waiblinger
Refreshments	Dawn Wright
Redwood Rep	Barbara Bury
Librarian	Chris Toft
Calendar	Justin Engelmeyer

NEXT MEETING:

WEDS NOV 20, 7 PM

**DITTUS HALL, REDWOOD
TERRACE**

710 W. 13TH AVE. ESCONDIDO

ELECTIONS !!!!

BRING A FRIEND!!!

Needed: CFMS Chair

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**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
TO NOVEMBER
BIRTHDAY
MEMBERS!!**

**BIG THANKS TO: JEF, DAWN,
KAREN, BARBARA, TONI AND
EVERYONE ELSE WHO
CONTRIBUTED TO THE SILENT
AUCTION IN OCTOBER!!!**

**It was fun for all and raised \$\$
for the club!! Snacks were
awesome- thank you cooks!**

NOV PROGRAM: The club will vote on the officers for 2020, who were nominated in Oct. The new board will be installed in Dec.

HEADS-UP:

DECEMBER MTG 12/18

**POT-LUCK DINNER &
GIFT EXCHANGE**

Bring a gift (\$20 value or more) to exchange.

Bring something delicious to share with the club.

Bring eating utensils, plate, preferred beverage.

This gift exchange is also called “White Elephant”, and the gift you receive might be traded up to 2 times before it has a final recipient. Some people like to contribute “joke” gifts of little to no value, others might bring something that didn’t sell at their yard sale or cheap jewelry from dollar store, while many bring nice gifts, often exceeding the \$20 suggested min.

Last year I sat next to an elderly couple who did not understand and would not relinquish their gift, even though they could have easily gotten it back again!

Even if you come home with a handful of dogfood and the person next to you has a diamond necklace, the idea is to have fun!

WORKSHOP HOURS:

There have been several changes, please note the new schedule!

Session cost for members still \$7.00

OPEN SHOPS:

Monday 6:30-9:30 PM

Tuesday 6:30-9:30 PM

Weds. 11:00-2:00 PM

Thurs. 1:00-4:00 PM

Metal-Smithing

Thurs. 6:00-9:00 PM

(no grinding)

Open faceting: Sat.
after 3rd Weds of month

Faceting: see class
schedules or contact
Bob Johnson

(760) 809-0152 or

n78532@yahoo.com

****UPCOMING CLASSES****

Lapidary & Silversmith Workshop
2120 W. Mission, Suite S., Escondido

Cabochon/Lapidary Class & Open Workshops – *Note changes

*Monday 6:30-9:30pm

Tuesday 6:30 – 9:30 pm

Wednesday 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

*Thursday 1:00-4:00pm

Learn to cut and polish a rock into a beautiful stone suitable for wire wrapping or fabricating in

metal. A fantastic assortment of material is available for purchase on site.

The workshop is also open for general use. No prior registration needed.

Thursday 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm *METAL SMITHING only - open for to those students who have had metal smithing instruction or experience and/or have instructor approval. Those students who have attended an introductory class may continue to work on improving their skills in this weekly workshop. An experienced metalsmith will be available for consultation.*

Cost: A \$7 shop fee will be collected for regular workshop. Club membership required.



Introduction to Faceting

An informative introduction and hands-on experience in the world of gem cutting. Learn how to

create a gem out of a piece of rough, during a weekend class. No machine required. Return

students welcome with or without their own machine. Each class can accommodate 3 new

students without machines and 3 returning students with their own machines.

Instructor: Bob Johnson

Location: Club Shop

Dates & times: Saturday, November 16, and Sunday November 17, 2019 – 9am -5pm

Cost: \$80 New students. Club membership required. \$70 return students.

Contact Bob Johnson for more info or to register - 760-809-0152 or email Bob at N78532@yahoo.com

Faceting – Continuation Class

This is a class for continuing students who have completed the Introductory Class and is held once per month, from 9 to 5 on the Saturday following the general meeting, (which is always on the third Wed.)

Instructor: Bob Johnson

Location: Club Shop

Cost: \$35.

November workshop – November 23, 2019, 9-5

Contact Bob Johnson for approval and to reserve a spot - 760-809-0152 or email Bob N78532@yahoo.com

Textured Metal Class



Come and join in the fun, exploring how to texture metal and make one-of-kind earrings (3 to 4 pairs) or a bracelet). They are great gifts. You may also learn how to make your own ear wires.

Instructors: Diane Hall & Annie Heffner

Location: Club Shop

Dates: Saturday, November 9, 2019

Time: 10am-4pm

Fee: \$35 plus supply cost (club membership required - \$25 fee for single membership). You will

need about 1 ounce of silver or copper sheet, which we will purchase for everyone who is signed up by November 1st. Sign ups after that will need to provide their own material.

Sign-up: Call Diane at 760-741-0433 (leave message for call back) to register or email me at dianehall213@gmail.com (preferred). Class is limited to 6 so sign up early.

Tuesday 6:30 – 9:30 pm

Wednesday 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Thursday 2:00-5:00pm

Learn to cut and polish a rock into a beautiful stone suitable for wire wrapping or fabricating in metal. A fantastic assortment of material is available for purchase on site.

The workshop is also open for general use. No prior registration needed.

Thursday 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm *METAL SMITHING only - open for to those students who have had metal smithing instruction or experience and/or have instructor approval. Those students who have attended an introductory class may continue to work on improving their skills in this weekly workshop. An experienced metalsmith will be available for consultation.*

Cost: A \$7 shop fee will be collected for regular workshop. Club membership required.



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El Cajon Valley Gem and Mineral Society's
Annual Rock & Gem Round-Up
November 16 & 17, 2019
Lakeside, CA 92040



2019 Grand Prize



Lost Wax Casting

This is a 3-day class to introduce the student to Lost Wax Casting.

Instructor: John Raabe

Dates & times: Wednesday, December 4, 6-9 Introduction to Lost Wax Casting Procedure

Friday, December 6, 6-9pm –Investment

Saturday December 7, 1:00-? pm Burnout

Cost: \$100. Must be a club member. Returning students \$75

Materials: All required materials will be provided including one ounce of silver

Requirements: Class is limited to 4 members

**Please RSVP by October 23rd, to John Raabe @ 760-749-2749

El Cajon Valley Gem & Mineral Society

proudly presents it's

Annual Rock & Gem Show

Gems, Minerals, Fossils, Jewelry, Beads and Craft Vendors. Free Gem & Mineral Identification. Huge Raffle, Food Booth & Kids Activities. Fun for the Whole Family!

November 16th & 17th, 2019

Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 10am-4pm

Show Venue:

Lakeside Rodeo Grounds
12584 Mapleview St.
Lakeside, CA 92040

Free Admission & Parking!

Info: Contact Mary Ness (619) 449-0759
ecvgms@gmail.com or ecvgms.org

Bring this card back to the show for
FREE Raffle Ticket
Limit one free ticket per adult!



ADVENTURES WITH UNCLE AL

This is the tale of the adventures and escapades of my college roommate and lifelong friend Al, who in later life referred to himself as “Uncle Al the kiddie’s pal”.

In January 1961, I departed New York City in a blinding snowstorm aboard a large propeller driven airplane. The flight took an entire day and upon arrival in Tucson the temperature is a balmy 70°F. With a typical mid-century New Yorker’s view of the west, I expected Tucson to be a cowboy town with wooden sidewalks, saloons, horses, cowboys, and Indians. Tucson in 1961 is not Tombstone in 1885, but a modern city in the desert, which to all New Yorkers means the Sahara Desert with sand dunes. I’m captured by the beautiful Sonora Desert and soon realize that I will never again live in the eastern United States.

In Tucson, I team up with my friend Gail, who is also going to study geology. We meet George, who needs three roommates to share a house near campus. Then a fast-talking Chicago guy comes to the door and I meet Al Buck. That evening, I’m home alone when Al returns in an overloaded 1940’s Plymouth. While helping him move in, he hands me a very heavy metal box. (Gene) *“What’s in here cannon balls?”* Yup, the box contains Civil War cannon balls. Al, who is working on a PhD in physiology, is also a gun dealer.

The arrangement is Al and I will do the cooking and grocery shopping, while Gail and George are to clean the kitchen. Al is also a lab instructor teaching medical students to dissect cadavers. We don’t let Al cook on the days he teaches dissection lab, because parts from a dead person might be on his hands. To aid our digestion, Al’s dinner conversation often includes discussion of the anatomy dissection class. He gives the cadavers nicknames including a former prostitute, whom he calls Madam La Zonga and a tattoo covered sailor called Popeye.

Al attracts strange characters. Billy, an older married woman graduate student, falls in love with Al. This is an entirely one-sided love affair because Billy is not an attractive woman and her husband is a state highway patrolman. Each morning, Billy parks between our house and the campus, so Al can “walk her to class”. Each morning, one of us climbs to the attic window with binoculars to alert Al where Billy is waiting to waylay him. Al then sneaks out the back door and down the alley taking a roundabout route to class. Eventually, Al

is saved when Billy is expelled from the university after being caught with exam notes hidden in her bra. Just to pull Al’s chain, every now and then one of us says out loud “Saved by the bra”. Al has a bevy of girlfriends, who are unaware of each other. Just to irritate Al, we frequently sing this little jingle “Liz and Sonny, Billy and Honey, Kitty and Bunny all got together and that was really funny.”

In the fall semester, we rent a second-floor apartment. Al found an old 1930’s era bike in a trash dumpster, which he rides to school. Virtually every student, riding a bicycle, has a fancy European bike. Al refers to his bike as a Depression Era Classic. At the apartment Al uses a heavy chain to lock his precious bike to a telephone pole in the alley. I cannot imagine anyone stealing Al’s treasured junk bike, but I will soon be proven wrong. There are a rash of burglaries around the University and the press refers to the robber as “The University Bandit”. Late one-night, Al hears someone in the alley messing with the bike chain. Running down the back stairs, Al takes three shots at the bandit with a 45 Automatic. He misses, but the University Bandit never made another robbery. Al gloats, *“See I told you that was a valuable bike.”* (Gene) *“Al he was after the chain. He would have left the bike.”*

Al and I live on \$5.00 a week, which is barely possible, in the early 1960s. To stretch the food budget, our nighttime recreation is to “explore” the dumpsters behind supermarkets. Supermarkets throw out over ripe fruit and vegetables as well as cans that are badly dented or lack labels. One dumpster is behind a small “Mom and Pop” market that is closed on Sundays. Saturday night they close at 6 PM and throw out the over-ripe fruit and vegetables. One Saturday night the store is closed and I’m standing inside the dumpster pulling out the best stuff, when the owner walks out the back door. He asks what I’m doing. Explaining I’m a poor student, he says, *“Next Saturday look next to the dumpster and there will be a cardboard box with all the best stuff in it.”* After that, on Saturday night I always find a box containing fruit and vegetables. Years later, after finishing college and getting a job, I returned to thank the man, but the market was no longer in business. It always seems that when we really need a break, it is the regular folks who help, while the establishment always views Al and I as too poor and socially unacceptable.

Each semester students pay a \$100 activity fee, which essentially goes to perks for the football team and a few elitist organizations. One evening we're walking to the library and see a party on the library's front lawn. A Mariachi Band is playing music as we inhale the unmistakable smell of steak being cooked over charcoal. A big crowd of students and faculty are standing around drinking and socializing. Al asks what is going on and is told this is a party for student leaders and athletes. Proceeding into the library, Al is grumbling that we were forced to pay \$100 to buy steaks for rich kids. We rarely eat meat and then only chicken and the cheapest ground meat. Soon after, we notice the campus gardeners are cutting dates off the palm trees. We ask a gardener what they do with the dates and learn they are thrown away. Al asks if we can have some dates and the gardener says no. Returning to the apartment, Al is in a foul mood. He types out an angry letter to the college president complaining that he is a poor student, who was charged \$100 to feed steak to rich students, and then when he asked the campus ground keepers for a few dates, which were being thrown away, he is denied even this "garbage." He soon receives a letter admonishing him as a malcontent student. Al needs to be reminded to keep his nobody blue-collar mouth shut.

A few months later there is another party on the campus lawn. This is a party for all the various religious organizations on campus. One of the girls, running the affair, says this is a free cookout. Each religion has a sign around which their members assemble and socialize while eating hamburgers, fries, and desert. She asks, "*What is your religion?*" Al says, "*We are with the Mystic Knights of the Sea.*" On the old Amos and Andy radio and TV shows, Amos and Andy belonged to the Mystic Knights of the Sea Lodge. The girl of course is clueless that Al is pulling her leg. She looks down her long list of established religions, but can't find us Mystic Knights. She says, "*There are many small religions that only have one or a few members on campus. We have set up a Church of All Nations section for these smaller religions and that is where you should go.*" Al and I wander over to the Church of All Nations section where we meet a guy from India, a girl from some third world Hell Hole, a south American Indian, and two guys from west Africa. As we nobodies are eating the free hamburgers, Al is grumbling that it isn't steak. To pull his leg, I tell him the Episcopalians are eating steak and he starts looking for the Episcopalian sign. I remind

him the Episcopalians aren't going to accept one of Amos and Andy's lodge brothers into their church. Al never got over paying for those steaks and grumbled about it for the next 45 years.

We decide to hunt for meat to supplement our Spartan diet. Al has guns and the desert is filled with mule deer, rabbits, and javelina. We buy hunting licenses, but during javelina season all we see are deer and during deer season only javelina are to be seen. Al shoots a jack rabbit, but no amount of stewing can make it edible. I swear you can make truck tires out of jackrabbit meat. One day, I'm sitting alone on a small canyon rim, when a buck and a doe come slowly walking along the canyon bottom. They pass within a few feet and I could easily kill them with a rock. It isn't sport with a gun, so I don't shoot. Although we were friends for the next 45 years, I never told Al about passing up all that meat. A month later, we are out in the desert on a picnic with two girls. Returning to town, we pass through a roadblock where a game warden is checking hunters. We have no guns. He asks if we have hunting licenses, which we show and are waved through. A week later, there is a knock on the door and there stands the game warden, who says he has a warrant for our arrest for hunting-law violation. This is a mystery? We haven't been hunting for over a month. According to the justice of the peace, we are non-residents and purchased a resident license and the fine is \$50 each (\$429 value in 2019 dollars and 10 weeks of food). The justice and the game warden are splitting the fine. After explaining to the justice that we are poor students, who live on \$5.00 a week, the justice replies, "*I hate students.*" We ask to go to jail rather than pay the fine and the justice says it will be two weeks. We agree if we can go over the Easter vacation, but he says, "*No you go now.*" It isn't possible to miss that much school. The justice and game warden are both trying to talk us into paying the fine, because if we serve jail time there is no profit for their scam. Finally, the justice says he will give us time to "think things over".

Al is dating a graduate student named Kitty, who did her undergraduate work at Vassar. Kitty's grandfather is a very powerful U.S. Senator from a Midwestern state and he is always in the news. Kitty is extremely wealthy and gets invited to many important parties, where Al is often her escort. They attend a garden party in Phoenix at Senator Barry Goldwater's home, where Al explains our legal problem to the assembled politicians. These rich and powerful people don't

understand our difficulty with paying \$50 and Al gets no help. We go to the Dean of Students seeking his help. Dean Slonaker asks, *"What fraternity do you belong to?"* *"We don't belong to a fraternity"*. (Slonaker) *"What do your father's do?"* We tell him both our fathers are dead. (Slonaker) *"You are nobodies and I don't waste time on nobodies."* Eventually, we pay the fine. A month later Al is arrested again and this time he is fined \$100 for being an Arizona resident and driving a car with out-of-state license plates. Al cannot win either way.

The University sends out a questionnaire asking students to provide an estimate of the money they spend on food, clothing, shelter, entertainment, etc. The survey is to be used to estimate average college costs for prospective students. Al and I fill out and return the forms. We are both called into Dean Slonaker's office and chewed out for being wise guys, because no one can survive on as little money as we spend. He ends his diatribe by saying he remembers us and has his eye on us. Apparently, our hunting arrest record, Al's malcontent letter, and now our poverty has established us as hardened criminals as well as nobodies. Slonaker calls me a "mafioso". He will spend the next several years repeatedly trying to get me thrown out of the university and he almost succeeded when my mother died a month before I graduated, but that is another long story.

Occasionally, we splurge and have a few beers in town. Our favorite hangout is a bar where Air Force B-52 bomber pilots hang out. One night we are sitting at the bar with the Air Force guys. Women did not sit at the bar in those days. Instead women sat at tables located in a back section separate from the bar. A bomber crew has just returned from Alaska with a box containing 2-foot long frozen king crab legs. One guy decides to have some fun. He sneaks into the lady's restroom and fixes two giant claws inside the toilet bowl. The claws appear to be a monster climbing from the toilet. Remember, this is the era of drive-in-movie theaters with "B" movies titled "Creature from the Black Lagoon", "The Thing", "Godzilla", "The Giant Claw", "Mothra" "The Giant Gila Monster", "Tarantula", etc. The crab claws are in the toilet and the guys sit at the bar waiting for the fun. Soon a girl enters the restroom and runs out screaming there is a monster in there. Everyone pretends she is nuts and has had too much to drink. She keeps insisting there is a monster in the lady's room and to go look. Two Air Force hot shots agree to check out the lady's room and they go

inside. There is a big commotion with hollering, screaming, and struggling accompanied by banging against the wall. Finally, they come out. Their clothing is all disheveled and one is holding a single crab leg. They say she was right. They fought the thing and broke off one claw, but it crawled back down the toilet. Not a single woman used the restroom that night.

Occasionally, the Gods of Pure Dumb Luck decide to pay you a visit. Al and I go on a desert picnic with two girls. Al brings a gun planning to show off. Strapping on a pistol, Al says, *"Throw a beer can up in the air."* He fires and he misses. (Gene) *"You are no Roy Rogers."* Al growls, *"Throw it up again!"* He misses again and naturally, I continue the heckling. (Al) *"Can you do better?"* I laugh saying, *"The girls can do better."* This gets Al really angry. Up to that moment, I have only shot a gun once or twice with Al's help. He knows this and also knows that I don't even want to try, but now he shames me into taking a turn. As he throws a can in the air, I figure there is no way I'm going to hit this thing. I fire off a quick casual shot, which blows the can apart. The girls are impressed, but Al knows this was a very lucky shot. Al tries to get me to try again, but I'm not stupid and plan to quit while I'm ahead. The girls insist I do it again. Al throws another can and I fire off another quick No-Chance-in-Hell Shot and again I hit the can. I can't believe it and neither can Al. The girls are now really impressed and no way am I taking another shot. Thinking fast, I say, *"Girls we have been putting you on. Both of us are crack shots and this has been a joke. Now what about a bit of lunch and then we will take you rock collecting."* Al is smart enough to know when to keep his mouth shut.

Al's girlfriend Kitty has been raised in luxury and privilege, but since dating Al, she now is exposed to the real world. Kitty purchases a very expensive dress from an exclusive women's clothing store. The first time she wears the dress, the seam along one side tears open. Kitty is going to throw the dress away, but Al cannot imagine doing this. He also could not imagine paying \$200 for a dress. Al insists she take the dress back for a refund. Kitty doesn't want to do this and Al says he will accompany her. Sensing that this will be an interesting adventure, I tag along. Arriving at the store, the salesman is a snooty overbearing snob with a fake foreign accent, who insists, *"A dress from La Parisian would never tear and regardless the store never gives refunds."* Al tries to talk sense with the man by showing him the three-day-old purchase receipt, but he gets nowhere. Frustrated,

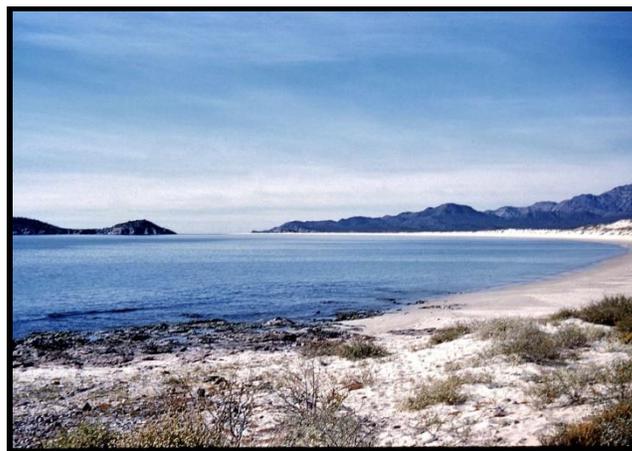
Al grabs the guy, throws him backward over the counter and begins choking him by pulling on his necktie. Al says, *“Just blink your eyes when you are ready to give us a refund.”* Kitty receives a full refund, but insists she can never shop there again. Al can’t understand why she would want to shop there for overpriced shoddy clothing. We buy all our clothing at the army surplus store, where clothing is virtually indestructible and considered haute couture in skid row.

Kitty owns an expensive foreign sportscar that breaks down. She takes it to a foreign car repair shop where Charles, the French mechanic, assures her it will be fixed as good as new. A week later we go to pick up the car and Kitty pays the bill, while Al and Charles are talking. Charles assures Al that he personally fixed the car and it is good as new. Charles says, *“I will kiss your ass if the car does not run perfectly”*. The car breaks down two blocks from the shop. We push the car back to the garage and there stands Charles. Al turns his back on Charles, pulls down his pants, bends over and says, *“Charles kiss my ass”*. I’m laughing and Kitty is mortified. Apparently, they don’t teach that form of social discourse at Vassar.

There are no girls in the College of Mines, but Al and Kitty are in the Life Sciences College where girls are plentiful. Occasionally, they arrange blind dates. One date is with a girl, who is every guy’s worse blind-date nightmare. The next week, they want to fix me up again and I say no way. Al explains she is Kitty’s Vassar college roommate. The girl is coming for the weekend and needs a date. He says, *“You will like her, she is the daughter of the movie actor Henry Fonda.”* (Gene) *“If Kitty is having trouble getting a date for a movie actor’s daughter, she must be a real dog!”* Kitty, Jane Fonda, and Al are gone for the weekend and when Al returns, he says, *“You really blew it, she was gorgeous.”* (Gene) *“You’re just trying to sell me a pig-in-a-poke.”* About two years later, Jane Fonda makes the cult-classic movie *Barbarella* and I then knew Al was right. You can’t make a discovery if you aren’t willing to explore and take chances. The next girl I dated was Betty, who can correctly claim that I chose her over Jane Fonda. I have now been happily married for considerably more than half a century; so, I made the right choice. To my way of thinking Betty won and Jane lost, although our friends may see it the opposite way.

On Thanksgiving and Easter vacations, we drive to Mexico and camp at Ganado Bay, a remote deserted beach in an uninhabited area. The road to the beach is

extremely bad and we always have the place completely to ourselves, except one time we met some people in a Volkswagen. They turn out to be from New Paltz, New York, where I went to college for several years. Although I don’t know these people, we have several friends in common. It sure is a small world.



(left) Ganado Bay, Mexico. (right) Al Buck and Kitty at Ganado Bay 1961.

We drive through Mexico at night, to avoid the desert’s heat, because air conditioning is still uncommon in cars and trucks. Around midnight we stop in Hermosillo for food and a cold beer. Al is sitting in a bar smoking Mexican cigarettes that he bought from a street vendor. We are talking with the local people using a limited mixture of Spanish and English. One fellow says Al’s cigarettes are illegal *“media y media”*, which are half tobacco and half marijuana. The police chief enters the bar and a guy whispers to Al, *“Hide the cigarettes!”* Frugal Al doesn’t want to waste the cigarette. He puts the lighted cigarette on top of the pack and then puts the pack on his head and covers everything with his cap. The police chief walks over to

talk with Los Gringos and everyone in the bar is watching. Smoke is coming out of Al's hat as we sit talking to El Jefe, but the chief never notices the smoke. Finally, he leaves the bar just before Al's hat and hair catch fire.

Eventually, the old Plymouth dies and Al buys a pickup truck. In New York we say *"I got it off the back of the truck"*. That means it is a less than legitimate purchase. Al has a friend working in Chicago's railroad yard. Al tells the friend he wants a certain pickup and when the right model arrives in Chicago, it is slightly damaged while being unloaded. The truck is sold at auction and Al gets a new truck, including the repair cost, for substantially less than dealer cost. Al decides he needs a large wooden crate to put inside the new truck's bed. We will lock stuff inside the crate when traveling. One evening, we are at a large Tucson shopping center that is partly open and partly under construction. In the construction area, there sits a large wooden crate that is a perfect size for the pickup truck's bed. (Al) *"Let's go back late tonight and liberate that crate."* About midnight, on a pitch-black-moonless night, we cruise into the deserted construction area and pull up alongside the empty crate. We each lift one side of the heavily constructed crate, which once held machinery. I'm backing up walking toward the truck when Al suddenly drops the crate, which hits the ground with a severe jolt. I say in a loud whisper, *"Al be careful"*, but he doesn't answer and it is so dark I can't see him. Putting my end down, I walk around the crate and hear him say, *"I'm down here."* The crate had been covering a 12-foot deep hole, which Al fell into as we moved the crate forward. He isn't hurt, but the hole is too deep for him to climb out. Wandering around in the dark, I find a ladder and he climbs out. We have the crate, but Al's misadventures with that crate aren't over. We make a top for the crate with hinges and a lock and hasp to secure the lid. A rope is attached to the lid so that when it is open the lid will not fall completely backward and be difficult to close. You merely pull the rope slightly to close the lid.

On the next trip to Mexico, the expedition has a crate to hold the gear. It is 2 AM when we go through customs to reenter the United States. The U. S. custom agent is in a foul mood when he decides to examine the crate's contents. Climbing up onto the truck, he is bent over rummaging around in the crate, when his arm hits the lid rope causing the heavy lid to crash down on his head. He was angry before, but now he is REALLY in a foul nasty mood. People have to have proof of

smallpox vaccination to enter the country, but Al forgot his vaccination card. Climbing down from the truck, the customs agent has to inoculate Al for smallpox. The inoculation method is to make small needle scratches on the upper arm and apply the smallpox vaccine. In a few days, a large scab forms and when it falls off the vaccination is good for many years. The angry custom agent grabs the needle and instead of small scratches, he scrapes a big raw area on Al's arm and applies the vaccine. Al receives a giant vaccination scab and lifelong scar thanks to the crate lid affair.

In June of 1962, Al transfers to Stanford University. Fifteen years will pass before our paths cross once again when Al shows up unannounced on our doorstep out of work, broke, and in the middle of a messy divorce. He will move in with us for six months until he gets back on his feet. During his stay our children and the neighborhood kids begin calling him Uncle Al and soon everyone in the neighborhood knows him by that name, which stuck with him the rest of his adventurous life.

November Birthstone - Citrine and Topaz

November
Birthstone
Citrine and Topaz



It's November, which means Autumn leaves are fading into the coming winter breeze. Along with harvesting for winter, preparing for the holidays and cozying up with your loved ones, it is the birth month for the Sagittarius' in the world. And what better way to celebrate them than with a personalized birthstone gift?

Birthstones are a selective and personalized way of showing someone just how special they are to you. Especially with gems as stunning as the November birthstones! So, what is the birthstone for November?

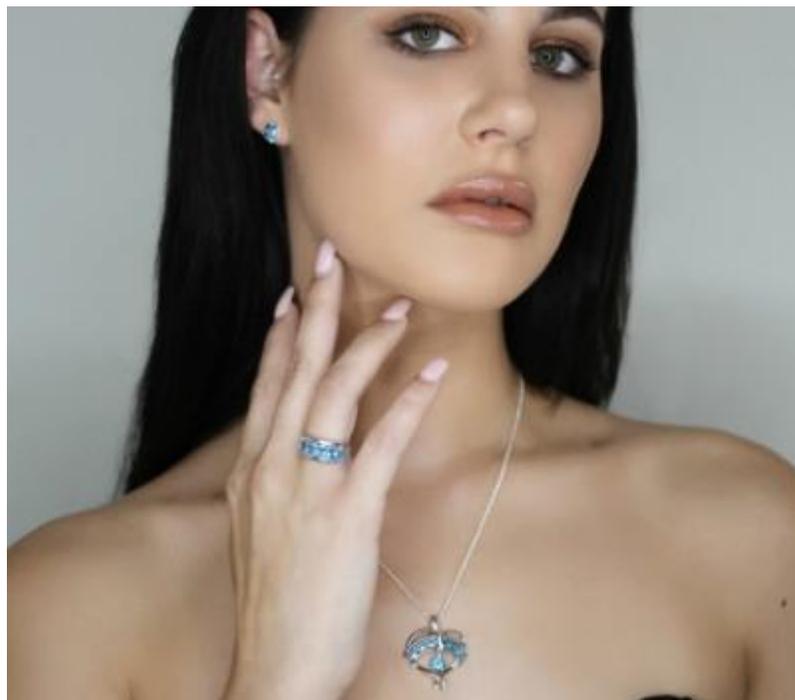
From fire to ice, read on as we explore the amazing birthstones of November!

What is the Birthstone for November?

November is such a special month because it has not one, but two birthstones: [Topaz](#) and [Citrine](#). Each is unique to itself and provides the option of choosing a cool tone, or warm tone.

Topaz comes in a rich, beautiful blue, mimicking the cool winter temperatures.

However, it's also available in a wide spectrum of colors from blue to fiery red and orange. Citrine is naturally a warm orange tone, emulating a crackling fireplace or the fading Autumn leaves.



The depths of each of these November birthstones are rich and intriguing. As the holidays rapidly approach, gifts are naturally on your mind. Don't forget about the November babies! November birthstones make a beautiful and thoughtful gift. Let's take a closer look at each one of these stunning November birthstones.

Topaz Birthstone

Topaz is a diverse gemstone that exists in an array of beautiful colors, from colorless to pink. This means you're not limited when hand-picking a topaz birthstone. Whether your favorite color is blue, yellow, orange,

red, pink or champagne--there is a topaz gemstone with your name on it.

What is Topaz?

Topaz is a dynamic gemstone that is highly valued and prized for its hardness, clarity and stunning beauty. With a [hardness of 8 on the MOHS hardness scale](#), topaz is 3rd in hardness next to Sapphires (9) and Diamonds (10). There are two different types of topaz, so let's have a look at each one.

1. Topaz - A precious and intensely saturated yellow gemstone from Brazil that is color-treated to transform into a radiant blue
2. Imperial Topaz - Originally discovered in Russia as a red crystal. Its name comes from 17th-century Russian Tsars who claimed ownership over this sunset-hued gemstone. Imperial topaz comes from both Russia and Brazil.

The most famous and readily available color of topaz is a beautiful, watery blue. However, it can also be found colorless or with champagne hues. These types of topaz gemstones are often mistaken for Quartz because of the similarities in coloring. Modern testing is required to distinguish between topaz and quartz because they are so commonly confused.



How does topaz get its water blue hue? With special treatment to transform the natural brown color of topaz to a bright, brilliant and sparkling blue, like the glistening surface of the ocean. It's no surprise topaz is a beloved gemstone, especially by people with November birthdays!

So, what special meanings does topaz have?

Meanings of Topaz

There is lovely symbolism surrounding topaz. The name "topaz," is derived from the Greek word "topazion," which came from the Sanskrit word for "fire." Why would a blue gemstone be named after fire? Well,

remember that topaz comes in many colors, and blue topaz is treated. Still, topaz has significant spiritual meanings.

Topaz symbolizes love, affection, and sweetness and has a vibrant history that spans centuries and cultures. During medieval times, Saxon rulers wore topaz jewelry and breastplates. And even far before that, ancient Egyptians wore yellow topaz which represented the sun god, Ra, due to its fiery yellow tone. Through millennia, topaz has held special meaning and significance to all walks of life.

Presently, topaz is the November birthstone and invites creative energy, concentration, and good fortune. This dynamic birthstone has many powerful healing properties and is believed to help heal depression, promote productivity and balance emotions.

Now that we've covered one November birthstone, let's have a look at the next one!

Citrine Birthstone

If topaz is cherished for its bright blue color, citrine is equally adored for its intense warm hue. Citrine is exclusively available in an intensely saturated, soft yellow tone. Let's explore the unique qualities that make this November birthstone so appealing.

What is Citrine?

Citrine is part of the Quartz family, with a hexagonal crystal structure. Originating from countries like Brazil, Africa, and Spain, there is an ample supply of this beautiful gemstone. While the most prized citrine gemstones are a warm yellow, there are hues available from pale yellow to honey and

golden yellow to nearly brown. The most cherished and sought after citrine color is fiery orange. One of the most captivating qualities of citrine is the rainbow sparkle that reflects from within the gemstone.

Citrine comes from the French word, "citron," which means (no surprises here) lemon. Who doesn't love a sparkling lemon-hued jewel? This durable gemstone ranks number 7 on the hardness scale and makes for eye-catching jewelry.



Meanings of Citrine

Known as the "Light Maker," Citrine represents vitality, promotes health and is used as a healing crystal. Citrine is the Zodiac sign for Sagittarius, making it a beautiful gift for the Sagittarius in your life! This healing gemstone is filled with bright, exuberant energy. Citrine is also treasured as a healing aid for the circulatory system,

cleansing the blood, kidneys and vital organs. In Feng Shui, citrine is believed to generate prosperity, wealth and abundance.

November Birthstone Jewelry

The wonderful thing about these November birthstones is that you have the option to choose which one you love best! Topaz and Citrine are each unique and beautiful in their own special way, just like you are! Whether you choose to wear a matching topaz jewelry set, a gorgeous citrine ring, or mix and match both gems together, the possibilities for wearing November birthstone jewelry are plenty!

Whether you're buying birthstone jewelry for yourself, or want to give a gift to someone special, you can't go wrong with these stunning gemstones. To personalize your birthstone jewelry, buy loose topaz or citrine gemstones and have a custom jewelry set created!

SHOP FOR NOVEMBER BIRTHSTONE



Citrine

