

The Opal Express

American Opal Society
P.O. Box 4875
Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875



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Without
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Volume #34 Issue #11
November, 2001

Board Meeting – Wednesday, Nov. 2
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Opal Show – Sat. & Sun, Nov. 3 & 4

General Meeting – Thursday, Nov. 15

Speaker – Bonita Chamberlin

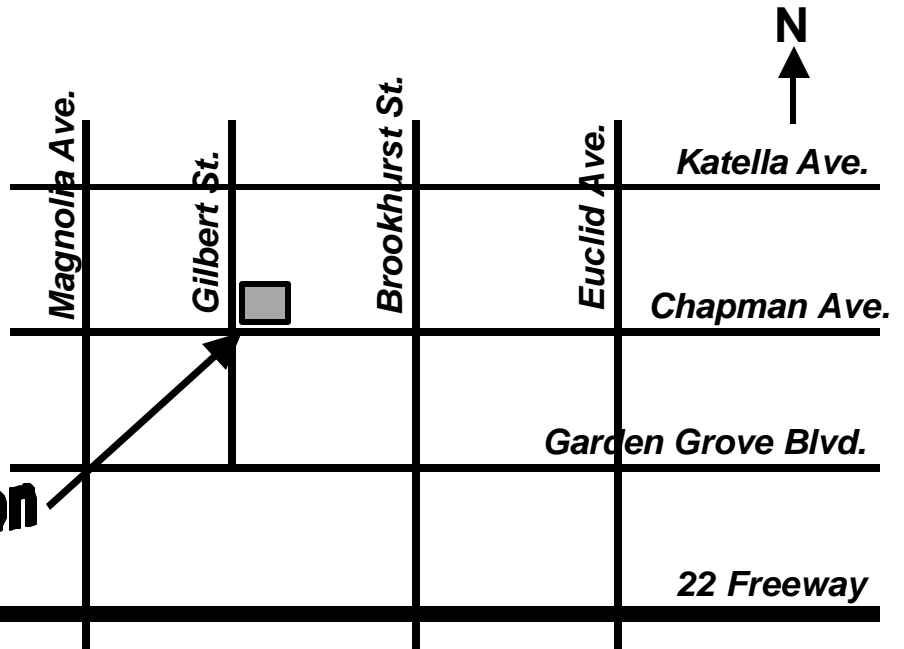
- **Mining in Afghanistan**

TO:

— **GENERAL MEETINGS** —
2nd Thursday 7:00-9:00 PM
Garden Grove Civic Women's Club
9501 Chapman Ave.
(NE corner of Gilbert & Chapman)
Garden Grove, CA

MEETING ACTIVITIES
Opal Cutting Advice Guest Speakers
Slide Shows Videos Other Activities

Meeting Location



The American Opal Society

<http://www.opalsociety.org>

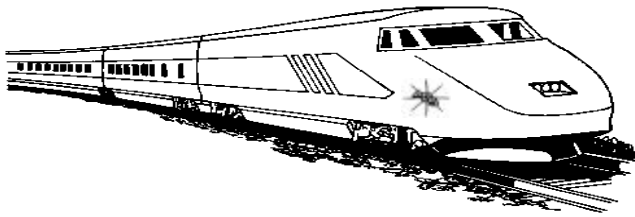
Mike Kowalsky	President	(714) 761-4876	email: mykowalsky@aol.com
Bob Dixon	Vice President	(714) 534-5063	
Bob Olinskas	Treasurer	(949) 786-7291	
Jay Carey	Show Chairman	(714) 525-7635	email: jaycarey@gte.net
Jim Pisani	Webmaster	(562) 797-4986	email: webmaster@opalsociety.org
Jim Pisani	Acting Editor		email: webmaster@opalsociety.org
Carol J. Bova	Editor	(818) 951-1402	email: editor@bovagems.com

The Opal Express

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From Mike Kowalsky

Well its almost show time. We have had some new dealers sign up at this late time. We will have a great cross section of dealers from many parts of the world as well as our many local dealers. We have expanded our area and will have our usual large area for our demonstrators. The Opal books have arrived from Len Cram which we will give as an extra incentive to new members that sign up in November.

The American Opal Society has been invited to be co-sponsors and participate in the Opal Seminars that will be presented by the House of Tibara at the Holidome South in Tucson. I have been invited to present at the Seminars. I will be presenting a slide show of each of the two festivals that I attended in July 2001. The first will be the Yowah festival on Saturday February 9th. The Lightning Ridge Festival will be on Sunday February 10th.

One of the subjects that has been on the seminar agenda in Tucson is pricing of opal. As anyone that has examined opal at shows and other venues knows, pricing of opal is a very subjective matter while it is in the rough. Polished stones are a little easier to judge the price range but it takes a lot of experience, seeing a lot of priced stones and being able to discern the brightness of the stone. Many experts carry an opal of known quality and brightness, perhaps as a jewelry piece, to use as a guide in judging the value of opal. My experience has been that until I had actually seen some opals that were in the brightness

range of 9 or 10 I could not imagine how they appeared. It is rare to see a stone in the brightness range above 6. There will be a seminar at Tucson with some discussions about factors that enter into the pricing evaluation. There are many factors that should be considered in arriving at a price but the best valuations are provided by the people in the trade that deal with opal every day. I have only seen the very bright opals in private collections that were owned by either miners or dealers in the opal trade.

Will see you at the show or our special November meeting on the 15th at the Women's Club in Garden Grove.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOVEMBER NEW MEMBER SPECIAL!!!

As you may remember AOS tries to have some special incentives for new members that join at the November Show. I would like to announce the 2001 New Member Incentive. I talked to Len Cram and he is going to help in the new member drive. The AOS is going to purchase and provide to each new member that joins at the show a new Len Cram book. They will have a choice of the new Coober Pedy book or the Lightning Ridge Book. Either of these new books is worth the year's dues including the initiation fee.

Please tell your friends that this is the time to join. The AOS can only afford to do this because of the generosity of Len Cram in providing this limited set of books at a very reasonable cost. Len has been exceptionally

generous with his time and other ways to help us. I appreciate all your efforts to help the American Opal Society, Len.

Thank you,

Mike Kowalsky – President

OPAL SHOW RAFFLE PRIZES

The American Opal Society has received some wonderful prizes for our raffle held at our annual show on November 3rd and 4th.

Top Prize: A Magnificent Rose “Created Opal” Necklace in a Sterling Silver Setting, donated by Conrad Cone

Second Prize: “A Journey with Color” donated by Len Cram. This is an autographed collector’s item; a new release this year containing history of Queensland Opal; 1869 – 1979.

Other Prizes:

Ironstone Matrix rough opal

Lightning Ridge rough opal

“A History of Coober Pedy”, by Len Cram

Any other donations will be gratefully accepted.

Safety Report

Are You Ready?

By Cathy Gaber

Have you ever taken a first aid course? If you have, good for you! If you haven't, what are you waiting for? Even if you have taken a first aid course, keep in mind what my CPR teacher told us. We were certified to perform CPR, but if we were the ones who NEEDED CPR, we had better make sure that those around us had also been certified. Otherwise, we were not protected at all. I would urge all of you to encourage your friends and family members to sign up with you for first aid classes as soon as possible.

The American Red Cross has chapters and classes around the country, and so does the American Safety and Health Institute. For more information try <http://www.ashinstitute.com/>. Their class offerings include:

- Basic First Aid
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Blood borne Pathogens
- Automated External Defibrillators
- Emergency Oxygen Administration
- Child And Baby-sitter Safety (CABS)
- Hazard Communications
- Emergency Response - coming soon
- Safety Training & Aquatic Rescue Program
- Driver Safety Program

Any of these could save our own or our loved ones' lives.

The American Opal Society

Proudly presents its

34th Annual OPAL & GEM SHOW

Largest Opal show in USA!

November 3rd & 4th, 2001

Saturday 10AM - 6PM

Sunday 10AM - 5PM

Australian Opal: *Lightning Ridge, YOWAH, Koroit, Mintabe, Coober Pedy, Andamooka*

American Opal: *Idaho Blue, Spencer Opal, Mexican Opal, Honduras Opal*

Opal Related Seminars; Demonstrators

Location: Quality Maingate Hotel
616 Convention Way **ANAHEIM**, California
Close to **DISNEYLAND**

One block South of Katella Avenue
On Harbor Blvd at Convention Way

NOVEMBER SHOW DATES

2-4--BLACK CANYON CITY, ARIZONA: Show, “Rock-A-Rama 2001”; Braggin’ Rock Club; Albins Civic Center; Fri. 9-4, Sat. 9-4, Sun. 9-4; free admission; rock show Sat., tailgating and vending Fri., Sat. and Sun behind Blue Mountain; door prizes, crafts, jewelry, minerals, lapidary, rocks, fossils, grand prize drawing Sat.; contact Wilma Flowers, HCI Box 930, Black Canyon City, AZ 85324, (623) 374-5623 or (623) 374-5435; Web site: www.geocities.com/bcrockclub/.

2-4--ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA: 34th annual Opal & Gem Show; American Opal Society; Quality Maingate Hotel, 616 Convention Way, Anaheim, Ca; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; contact Jay Carey, (714) 525-7635 <http://opalsociety.org>

2-4--EUREKA, CALIFORNIA: 47th annual show

Humboldt Gem & Mineral Society; Redwood Acres Fairgrounds, 3750 Harris St.; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; "kids' day" on Fri.; contact Mike Martin, (707) 839-5422.

3-4--FONTANA, CALIFORNIA: 26th annual show; Kaiser Rock & Gem Club; California Steel Ind., 9400 Cherry Ave.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; contact JoAnn Watson, (909) 355-7455.

3-4--OXNARD, CALIFORNIA: Show, "Gems for the Holidays"; Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society; Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; free admission; displays, vendors, demonstrators, silent auctions, games; contact Laura Grayson, (805) 482-3052; e-mail: webmasterc@ocims.net Web site: www.ocims.net.

3-4 -RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA: 46th annual show; Indian Wells Gem & Mineral Society; Mesquite Hall, Desert Empire Fairgrounds, 520 S. Richmond Rd.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; contact John DeRosa, (760) 375-7905.

9-11--PHOENIX, ARIZONA: Show; GeoExpositions; Phoenix Civic Plaza, Hall C, Third St. and Washington St.; Fri. 10-7, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; three-day pass \$5, children under 14 free, seniors (55+) free on Fri.; mineral and gem exhibits, mineral fakes exhibit, geode cracking, silent auction, door prizes, gem cutting demonstrations, gold panning, retail and wholesale dealers; half-price coupons available; contact GeoExpositions, (303) 278-1218; e-mail: GeoExpo@aol.com; Web site: www.mineralshow.com.

10-11--LAKE HAVASU CITY, ARIZONA: 32nd annual show, "Desert Gems Bloom Again in 2001"; Lake Havasu Gem & Mineral Society; Lake Havasu City Community Center, 100 Park Ave.; free admission; exhibits, dealers, craft demonstrations; contact Manny Frisch, (520) 855-9324.

10-11--SIERRA VISTA, ARIZONA: Show, "Rockhound Roundup"; Huachuca Mineral & Gem Club; Oscar Yrun Community Center, Ethel Berger Center, 1001 Tacoma St.; Sat. 9-6, 9-4; free admission; field trips Sat. and Sun.; contact Huachuca Mineral & Gem Club, (520) 378-8470.

17-18--LIVERMORE, CALIFORNIA: Show, "Lithorama 2001"; Livermore Valley Lithophiles; The Barn, Pacific Ave. at S. Livermore Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; admission \$3, children under 12 free; fluorescent display room and a children's area; contact Bill Beiriger, P.O. Box 2936, Livermore, CA 94551-2936, (925) 443-5769, e-mail: xyzzx@best.com.

17-18--VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA: 26th annual show; Victor Valley Gem & Mineral Club; San Bernardino County Fairgrounds, 14800 7th St.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; free admission; contact Gil Gilbert, (760) 868-6900.

24-25--BARSTOW, CALIFORNIA: Show; Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society; Barstow Community Center, 841 S. Barstow Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; contact Bob Depue, (760) 255-

1030.

-----Opal Express Advertisement-----

AUSTRALIAN OPAL MINES
P.O. Box 345
Magill, South Australia 5072
Email address:

palmine@austopalmines.net.au

website:

<http://www.austopalmines.net.au>

and

<http://www.shed.com/aom/home.html>

OPAL SOCIETY WORKSHOP

The workshop at Walker Jr. High is available for the use of AOS members on Wednesday nights. Please call Stan McCall at Gems & Opals (714) 827-5680 if you plan to attend a shop session.

WORKSHOP RULES

1. Shop may only be used by AOS members.
2. Shop users must sign liability waiver.
3. Shop users must sign in. Shop supervisor will maintain sign-in list and collect usage fees.
4. Shop usage fee is \$3 per session.

To assist us in scheduling, please call Stan or a board member in advance to reserve shop time. Thank you!

Australian Calendar of Events

Coober Pedy Festival; May, 2002

Yowah Festival; July 19-21 2002

Lightning Ridge Festival; July 24-28 2002

Fossickers Convention and Festival; Sept. 6-19th 2002, Newman, WA

Newsletter Archives Online

There is one password for all members: the password is "opalsrus". (Do not touch the member box and just type the password.) The newsletter archives have been just recently been made to work, and more articles will be added in the future.

-----Opal Express Advertisement-----

Excellent Retail Opportunity!
Mintabe – Coober Pedy –
Lightening Ridge – Yowah
Cut and Rough at Cost Prices
Opal Beads, 14K, 18K, GF & SS Jewelry
White, Crystal, Blacks, Brilliant Doublets
Assorted Len Cram Collector's Books
Call 661-944-1250
E-Mail: TomQuiring@earthlink.net

WARNING OPAL POX

SYMPTOMS:

Faraway look in the eyes and is inattentive.
Mumbles to self.
Compares all sunsets to opal.
Makes secret phone calls to opal miners.
Tells lies and tall stories about their opal.
Gets lost for hours staring into opals.
Constantly scratching around in old buckets in the garage, cutting room, and yard.
Medication is useless.

CURE:

Disease is not fatal to body but is deadly to savings account.
Victim should head for opal fields, gem shows, and rock shops frequently and work up a sweat shoveling huge amounts of dirt in opal bearing areas of the outback.
The afflicted need to swallow black flies that are found in places called Koroit, Blackgate, Duck Creek, Mintabe, Andamooka, Coober Pedy, Lambina, White Cliffs, Lightning Ridge, Grawin, Opalton, Eromanga, Quilpie, Mainside, and Kyabra Hills, etc.
Instant improvement can be attained by licking rough opal and pressure relieved by standing in the smoke of campfires while expounding personal opinions and theories on where opal can be found.
From *"The Nutcracker", the Yowah Annual Magazine, July 2001.*

Petrified Wood

by Helga Wagener

The large quantity of petrified wood in the West is due to the tremendous amount of volcanism, which occurred during the Tertiary period. Volcanoes produced basalt flows, which covered large areas. Unbelievable amounts of volcanic ash were blown out of the earth, smothering everything and cutting off the oxygen. Whole forests were buried where they stood. Lakes and swamps were filled in.

Later, ground water percolating through the alkaline ash picked up silica and other minerals, which were deposited under acidic conditions. The wood, thus

impregnated (petrified), was preserved.

from *"The Nugget", Culver City Rock & Mineral Club, November 2001*

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Editor – Carol J. Bova
Please address all inquiries and exchange newsletters to:

The Opal Express c/o
Carol J. Bova
P.O. Box 5388
Glendale, CA 91221-5388
Email: editor@bovagems.com

Article Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to each issue

NOTICE!!!!
THE NOVEMBER GENERAL
MEETING WILL BE ON
NOVEMBER 15TH
FOR
BONITA CHAMBERLIN
ON
GEMS OF AFGHANISTAN
MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!

NOVEMBER SPEAKER - "DANGER IN THE MINES"

BONITA CHAMBERLIN ON AFGHANISTAN

In an unusual coincidence with world events, the American Opal Society has been able to reserve Bonita Chamberlin as November's monthly meeting's speaker on her experiences in Afghanistan, which she had to flee due to the Taliban's horrific control and extreme violence towards women.

Billions of years ago, and on the other side of the world, in one of the most geologically dynamic regions of the world, two crustal plates collided, giving rise to the Himalayas. This activity resulted in the vast mineral and gem deposits, spectacular finds, many only located during the past 20 years. It is Afghanistan.

Although a San Diego native, Bonita Chamberlin has lived, worked, and lectured in many countries in Latin America, Africa, Europe and the Middle and Near East. She has spent the past 24 years developing a relationship with first, the Afghan

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Ministry of Commerce while living two years in the capitol of Kabul; and since 1983, during the Soviet conflict, with the famed Mujahideen, or Freedom Fighters. Her hard work and persistence has born fruit. Working in the Hindu Kush mines of Afghanistan under very primitive conditions, she assists the locals in the establishment of a viable postwar economy through the mining, marketing and sale of gemstones and minerals. She is also an expert on blasting techniques, as the Afghans have a tendency to use too much dynamite or blasting material, destroying the valuable crystals, and many times endangering themselves.

Although Afghanistan has historically been known for its lapis lazuli deposits, significant amounts of tourmaline, kunzite, aquamarine, emerald, ruby, sapphire, spinel and amethyst have also emerged from the embattled nation. Much of the wealth was unknown until the Soviets began bombing, and the bombs exposed the crystals.

Come hear her tale of walking over the Hindu Kush mountains from Pakistan, covering over 500 miles, 6 passes over 14,000 feet, tip-toeing through mine fields, avoiding bandits, dodging bullets and bombs, and the usual challenges of a country with precious little food. Trying to communicate in a country with over 20 languages, and a 5% literacy rate presents an additional challenge.

Bonita is a major international player of more than 30 years, working with diverse cultures, and within various political and economic situations. She holds a doctorate from the Universidad de los Andes in Biological Sciences, and is recognized as a specialist in training people in Lesser Developed Countries.

Join us November 15 to hear the whole story - it's an extraordinary one - shared by an extraordinary woman.

Oregon Thunderegg History

The Thunderegg was designated Oregon's official state rock by the Oregon Legislature in 1965 (Senate Joint Resolution No. 18). Its selection was supported by a 2-to-1 vote by members of the mineral and gem clubs of Oregon and by the patrons of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (<http://www.oms.edu>).

The Thunderegg has long been important to Oregonians. According to ancient Native American legend, when the Thunder Spirits living in the highest recesses of snowcapped Mount Hood and Mount Jefferson became angry with one another, amid violent thunder and lightning storms they would hurl masses of these spherical rocks at each

other. The hostile gods obtained these weapons by stealing eggs from the Thunderbirds' nests, thus the source of the name "Thundereggs." The mountains are still key landmarks in the beautiful Cascade Mountain Range, and millions of Thundereggs are on the lower lands as evidence of the legend and for all to enjoy.

The Thunderegg has been highly prized by collectors, lapidarists, jewelry makers, and interior decorators for nearly 100 years. In 1893, Dr. George F. Kunz, Tiffany's famed gem authority, estimated that as much as \$20,000 worth of opal-filled eggs from one Oregon deposit had been marketed in 1892. Since the mid-1930's, thousands of visitors from every state in the Union and many overseas countries have come to Oregon to hunt Thundereggs. Many Oregonians have also joined them.

Thundereggs are made into beautiful jewelry, especially bob ties and pendants, pen stands, bookends, and decorator pieces. Their value ranges from about \$1 per slice or half egg to well over \$100 per slice or single cabochon. Thundereggs and their products can be purchased through magazine ads, at gem or rock shows, from tailgaters at outdoor events, at gem or lapidary shops, and at airport, motel, hotel, and restaurant gift shops or counters.

© Mr. Paul F. Lawson, Oregon Department Geology and Mineral Industries (ret.)

From Curragh Rocks and Gems
(<http://www.curragh-web.com>)

-----Opal Express Advertisement-----

YOWAH OPALS LTD.

Jeff Chappell

Yowah Nuts - Matrix - Rough Opal - Seam Opal

**P.O. Box 609
Mildura, Victoria
Australia 3502**

**Phone: 61 50 234 695
Fax : 61 50 235 980**

**E-Mail: Jeff@yawahopals.com.au
<http://www.yawahopals.com.au>**

**American Opal Society's 34th Opal & Gem Show Dealer List
November 3rd & 4th, 2001**

Business Name	Contact Name	Specialty	E-mail	Phone	Website
Academy Enterprises	Duke Davey	Stones, Boulder Opal From Koroit, Yowah, Quilpie		909-679-5600	P.O. Box 208 Sun City, CA 92586-0208
Australian Opal	Larry Hoskinson & Leslie Neff	Australian Opal of all grades & types		310-318-2170	
Australian Opal Imports	Geoffrey Genzmer	Australian Opal - finished & Rough	ejjd@charter.net	805-689-9050	http://australianopalimports.com
Bova Gems	Carol Bova	Gems & Minerals	bova@bovagems.com	818-951-1402	http://www.bovagems.com
Casa del Lumbre	Salvador R. Chavez	Mexican Opal		408-926-7261	
Dandi Designs	Jesse Aguilar	Custom Wire Wrapping	jewelrybiz@aol.com	562-498-1751	http://internationaljewelrybiz.com
Freeform Creations	Steve Solovieff	Select Fire Agate - Rough & Polished		909-735-9191	
Gems & Opals (Lapidary International)	David Burton	Opal & Gemstones, & Jewelry	gemsandopals@earthlink.net	714-827-5680	1228 S. Beach Blvd. Anaheim, CA 92804
Greg Howell's Quality Gems	Greg Howell	Opal, gemstones, finished & rough	ghowellqg@earthlink.net	949-366-0864	P.O. Box 221 San Clemente, CA 92674-0221
In A Flash	Tony Thurber	Australian Opal & Inlay Jewelry	tthurber@xmission.com	801-743-0458	
J & J Gemstones	Joyce Sessions	Gemstones		562-868-1503	
KP Custom Design Jewelry & Lapidary Studio	Ken Pleasants	Custom Design Jewelry		707-552-3689	
Land of Wonder	Eric Scott	Australian Opals, All Fields, Calibrated & Freeform	eric@land-of-wonder.com	818-785-7394	http://www.land-of-wonder.com
Lasco Diamond Products	Donald Schultze	Diamond Products for Foreom tools, etc.	lasco@lascodiamond.com	800-621-4726	http://www.lascodiamond.com
Norscott Scandanavian Designs	Eric Dolvik	Exquisite Jewelry	norscott@bigplanet.com	818-880-1450	http://www.norscott.com
Opal and Opal	Richard F. Miller	Opal rough, finished, jewelry	mintabie@aol.com		http://www.opalandopal.com
Opal Traders International	Walter & Joan Skinner	Opal	joanhinmanskiner@msn.com	415-589-3505	P.O. Box 282041 San Francisco, CA 94128-2041
Opalcutter	Wes Roth	Opal rough, finished, jewelry	wesroth@earthlink.net	714-897-2843	http://www.opalcutter.com
The House of Tibara	Tim & Barbara Thomas	Opal rough, finished, jewelry	info@opal-tibara.com	(209) 299-5123	http://www.opal-tibara.com
Tikka Opal	Mattie Tikka	Lightening Ridge Black Opal	mattitikka@one.net.au	61-2-9651-4705	77 Quarry Road Dural, NSW 2158 Australia
Velvet Hammer	Jessica Smith	Discount Jewelry & Gemstones		818-700-1964	468 San Marcos Pass Rd. Santa Barbara, CA 93105
Rena Schmidt	Rena Schmidt			520-648-6226	