

## Mel Koven

“Just look at it, listen to it & live with it. It will tell you how it wants to be displayed.” Those were the words of master jeweler Robert Jones when I asked him how he knew what piece of jewelry to make with each stone he used, when I became his apprentice, oh so many years ago. They have served me well, through the years I spent with him & along the way through my Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Miami, the jewelry courses at the Gemological Institute of America, Pepperdine University & other specialized courses. They also helped in winning several design & jewelry awards & yes, I still have the ribbon from the first one.



As the son of a watchmaker & jeweler, I was certainly no stranger to the jewelry business, but it was gemstones that really grabbed my attention early on & it was fascination with the beauty of them that led me to learn how to best display them in a piece of wearable art.

Regardless of what else I was doing in my working career - from nuclear research, to envelope manufacturing, to a career with IBM - I continued to design & make jewelry.

Eventually my fascination with gemstones proved too strong & I ended up owning & operating a nationwide wholesale gemstone business. While I appreciated the exposure to gemstones from around the world, the business occupied so much of my time, I didn't have any left to do what I loved - namely making jewelry.

And so it was in the late '70s, that I gave up the fast life of Miami, Florida. I sold my business & moved to the quiet village of Chama, in northern New Mexico where for the next twenty some years, I owned & operated “The Jewelers Bench”, a small shop that specialized in unusual gemstones set in unusual pieces of jewelry for customers from literally around the world.

Recently, as winters in Chama seemed to get colder, the wood for stove seemed to get heavier, I sold my business & moved to Albuquerque, where I am now enjoying “semi-retirement” & still doing what I love doing - designing & making jewelry. So if you're looking for that “special piece” or already have a special stone or design in mind,



let me know. “We'll look at it, listen to it & live with it so that it tells us how it wants to be displayed.”

Weems Galleries will be happy to arrange a meeting if you have something special in mind.

# Jewelry Care

by Mel Koven

**KEEP YOUR SPARKLE... SPARKLING!!!**

The following method can be used on all of my jewelry containing faceted gemstones, with the EXCEPTION of Emeralds.

ALSO do not use this on cabochon stones such as Lapis, Turquoise, Pearls or on Drusy Crystals.



In approximately one cup of warm water, add about two tablespoons of ordinary household ammonia, either regular or foamy. Using a soft toothbrush, scrub the jewelry item completely, paying particular attention to the back of any gemstones. Rinse thoroughly in clean water & dry.

The reason the above process works so well is that soap film, skin oils & creams adhere easily to the backs of stones & cause most of the loss of sparkle.

PS... In the interest of today's warning labels... Do not use the toothbrush for subsequent dental care!