

# GRITTY GREETINGS



## Waco Gem and Mineral Club

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P.O. Box 8811, Waco, TX 76714-8811

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The program for the August meeting will be an overview of the Denver Gem & Mineral Show, presented by Bob Boyd.

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### Minutes of July 10, 2021 Meeting

Roy called meeting to order.

Bob will give presentation on the Denver Gem and Mineral Show for the August meeting.

Bob is gathering interested people in silversmithing classes. Please contact Bob Boyd or one of the club officers.

Meeting was very brief and adjourned to have our potluck lunch!



**August birthstones: Peridot, Sardonyx, Spinel**

Though **peridot** is widely recognized by its brilliant lime green glow, the origin of this gemstone's name is unclear. Most scholars agree that the word "peridot" is derived from the Arabic *faridat*, which means "gem;" however, some believe it's rooted in the Greek word *peridona*, meaning "giving plenty." Perhaps that's why peridot was, according to lore, associated with prosperity and good fortune.

**Peridot** is the rare gem-quality variety of the common mineral olivine, which forms deep inside the Earth's mantle and is brought to the surface by volcanoes. In Hawaii, peridot once symbolized the tears of Pele, the volcano goddess of fire who controls the flow of lava. Rarely, peridot is also found inside meteorites.

Peridot's signature green color comes from the composition of the mineral itself—rather than from trace impurities, as with many gemstones. That's why this is one of few gemstones that only comes in one color, though shades may vary from yellowish-green to olive to brownish-green, depending on how much iron is present.

Though it is known as "the Evening Emerald" because of its sparkling green hue, peridot looks good any time of day.

Most of the world's peridot supply comes from the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona. Other sources are China, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Africa.

Peridot only measures 6.5 to 7 on the Mohs scale. So, while the raw crystal is prone to cracking during cutting, the finished gemstones are robust and easy to wear.

**Sardonyx** combines alternating layers of sard and onyx—two types of the layered mineral chalcedony—to create a reddish zebra-striped gemstone with white bands.

Its name, similarly, combines *sard* (referencing the ancient Persian city, Sardis—in present-day Turkey—where the red stone was found) with *onyx* (from the Greek word of the same spelling, which meant "nail or claw.")

Sard ranges in color from yellowish-red to reddish-brown, depending on how much iron oxide is present. Sard is easily confused with carnelian, another type of chalcedony that is slightly softer and lighter in color.

Sardonyx, like onyx, shows layers of parallel bands—instead of the chaotic, curved bands that compose agate, another type of chalcedony.

The finest examples of sardonyx, which display sharp contrasts between layers, are found in India. Other sources include Brazil, Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Madagascar, Uruguay, and the United States.

Measuring 6.5 on the Mohs hardness scale, sardonyx is widely available and relatively inexpensive as gems, beads, and jewelry. It is often carved into cameos, intaglios, and brooches to show the color contrast between layers.

The **spinel** is often mistaken for either a ruby or pink sapphire, as it can resemble both. In fact, some of the most famous rubies in history have turned out to be spinel. But its distinguishing features, like its octahedral crystal structure and single refraction, are what sets it apart from other gemstones. Spinel also has a lower Mohs hardness than ruby and sapphire.

Significant deposits of spinel have been found in Cambodia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. It has also been found in Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, Madagascar, Nepal, Nigeria, Tadjhikistan, Tanzania, and the United States.

Vivid red is the most desirable color of spinel gemstones, followed by cobalt blue, bright pink, and bright orange. The more affordable gemstones are often those with paler colors, like lavender. You may also find spinel in black, violet blue, greenish blue, grayish, pale pink, mauve, yellow, or brown.

When shopping for spinel, a high-quality gemstone should have no visible inclusions. The more inclusions, the less valuable the gemstone. Spinel birthstones can be found in various cuts such as octagons, trillions, squares, rounds, ovals, pears, and cushions.

Courtesy American Gem Society - See more at: <http://www.americangemsociety.org/>

## Bench Tips for July

### DRILL BREAKAGE

Using a small drill is difficult for a beginner, especially if it is hand held in a flexshaft or Dremel. They are easily broken if you push too hard or if you tilt the drill while it's in the hole.

Most problems, however, are the result of buying cheap drills that suffer from poor quality steel and/or inaccurately ground cutting edges. A good drill from jewelry supply companies is well worth the price.

Remember that drilling always goes easier with lubrication. A little wax or oil is all you need. Almost anything will work - Three and One, beeswax, mineral oil, injection wax, car oil, olive oil, or one of the commercial cutting waxes. The lubricant helps to move chips out of the hole and reduces friction of the drill against the side of the hole, keeping the drill cooler.



## Notes

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The editor requests news items from any member to be included in the Gritty Greetings.

Deadline for submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the month.

### **Name Tags:**

It is great that we feed the pig at our meetings because we don't have or have lost or forgotten our nametags to drop a quartering the pig. The money from the pig goes toward our Scholarship program, and we really do appreciate every 2 bits, 4 bits, 6 bits or more. However, if you need a nametag you can purchase them at the businesses below!

Waco Gem & Mineral Club nametags are available at **Print Mart**, 202 Deb (behind AutoNation Chevrolet). Cost with a pin back is \$8.00 (with tax \$8.66), and with a magnet back is \$11.00 (\$11.91). or at Award Specialties at 431 Lake Air Dr.

### **Club Dues:**

Annual Waco Gem and Mineral Club dues are \$12.00 for an individual membership or \$20.00 for a family membership. Please check with Jackie if you aren't sure whether you've paid your Dues!

### **Shop Fees:**

Lapidary Workshop fee is \$2.00 per hour. Slab Saw fee is an additional \$2.00 per hour. Class fees are always dependent upon class and instructor.

The Waco Gem and Mineral Club is a member of the South-Central Federation of Mineral Societies; and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month (except July and September) at 10:00 a.m. at the Waco Gem and Mineral Club Clubhouse, 187 South McLennan Drive in Elm Mott, Texas. The lapidary workshop is in the clubhouse.

Our website is [www.wacogemandmineral.org](http://www.wacogemandmineral.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WacoGemAndMineralClub>

### **Club Purpose**

- to bring about a close association of those persons interested in earth science and lapidary arts
- to increase and disseminate knowledge about rocks, minerals, fossils, Indian artifacts and other geological materials
- to encourage lapidary art and the collection and exhibition of rocks, minerals, fossils and artifacts
- to conduct field trips, meetings, lectures, displays and an annual show for the edification of the public
- to cooperate with educational and scientific institutions and other groups in increasing knowledge and popular interest.

