

GRITTY GREETINGS



Waco Gem and Mineral Club

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

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The March meeting will take place on Saturday, 6th, at 10:00 in our clubhouse in Elm Mott. Scott will give a presentation on his trip to Quartzite in January. Please be courteous with distancing and face coverings.

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Contacts

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61st Annual Waco Gem and Mineral Show

The 61st Annual Waco Gem and Mineral Show will be held on May 1 and 2, 2021.

Currently, some spaces are available for vendors as there have been some cancellations.

If you have any questions, please contact **2021 Show chair Alison Redding** or email: wacogemandmineralclub@gmail.com. Visit our website for more information and to download your application. www.wacogemandmineral.org

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March birthstones: Aquamarine, Bloodstone

The serenely colored aquamarine invokes the tranquility of its namesake, the sea. In fact, the name aquamarine is derived from the Latin word aqua, meaning water, and marina, meaning the sea. This gemstone was once believed to protect sailors, as well as to guarantee a safe voyage. The serene blue of aquamarine gems was said to cool the temper, allowing the wearer to remain calm and levelheaded. In the Middle Ages, many believed that the simple act of wearing an aquamarine stone was a literal antidote to poisoning. The Romans believed that if you carved a frog into a piece of aquamarine jewelry, it would help to reconcile differences between enemies and make new friends. Still, other historical groups took this lore even further, using aquamarine jewelry as gifts to the bride at a wedding to symbolize long unity and love. Some even believed it could re-awaken love between two people. The Sumerians, Egyptians, and Hebrews all admired aquamarine gemstones, and many warriors would wear it into battle to bring about victory. Many ancient medicines used powder made from aquamarine to help cure all manner of infection, but it was thought to be particularly good for eye ailments.



The second birthstone for March is bloodstone, a dark-green gemstone flecked with vivid red spots of iron oxide. Generally found embedded in rocks or in riverbeds as pebbles, primary sources for this gemstone are India, Brazil, and Australia. This ancient gemstone was used by the Babylonians to make seals and amulets, and was believed to have healing powers, especially for blood disorders. It is sometimes called the "martyr's stone", as legend tells that it was created when drops of Christ's blood stained jasper at the foot of the cross. Many other ancient cultures believed bloodstone gems had magical powers, with some references to its ability to heal dating back to 5000 BC. The Babylonians used bloodstone in their divination, and the Egyptians prized bloodstone because they believed it helped them to defeat their enemies. They also believed it increased their strength or made them invisible. Still, others believed that bloodstone could help control or change the weather, win legal battles or give the gift of prophecy. It was so loved for its properties, many used the gemstone in jewelry, signet rings, and even small cups or statues.

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

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Brad's Bench Tips

SHARP KNIVES FOR CUTTING MOLDS

Cutting molds is easier and more precise with a sharp blade. A new Xacto blade is sufficient for cutting RTV molds but is usually not sharp enough for vulcanized rubber. For that it's best to use scalpel blades available from most jewelry supply companies.

The #11 blade is triangle shaped, and the #12 is hawksbill shaped. I find the hawksbill is particularly nice for cutting the registration keys of the mold.



USE YOUR THUMB

When using multiple bits in a Foredom, we often have to deal with several different shaft sizes - the usual 3/32 inch burs, the larger 1/8 inch shaft sizes and of course the many different sizes of drills. For some reason I really dislike having to turn the key multiple times to open or close the jaws of the handpiece chuck.

So I have two ways to speed up that task. For opening up the jaws, I just remember "four", the number of turns I have to make to open the chuck just enough from the 3/32 bur shaft size to the larger 1/8 bur shaft size.

For closing the jaws around a smaller shaft, there's a neat trick. Hold the new bit in the center of the open jaws of the chuck, put your thumb lightly onto the outer toothed collar of the chuck, and gently start up the Foredom. As the chuck turns, it will naturally tighten the jaws around the bur shaft or the drill bit. Then all you have to do is a final tightening with the key.

Learn New Skills with Brad's "How To Do It" Books
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



On-line jewelry classes from Brad:

[Are you Missing your Jewelry Classes? Try an online session at home](#)

Online Class - Castellated Bezels - March 13th 10am - 4pm EST

The castellated setting is a fabulous way to show off a larger cabochon in a fresh, bold, and beautiful way. It works particularly well for larger stones in both rings and pendants. The setting is formed from heavy gauge 14 or 16 thick material with equally spaced cuts cut all around.

Join me for this online class to learn the tricks of working with thick bezel material. This setting is worthy of your best cabochon. It makes stones up to a inch or more look great in a ring design and larger ones in pendant or bracelet designs - your choice after completing this bezel.

Class fee \$85 Registration closes March 5th

Contact: BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com -----

Online Class - Adding Textures Without a Mill - March 27th 10am - 4pm EST

Jewelry makers use textured surfaces to add depth, complexity and elegance to their designs. We all have our favorites, but this session is bound to turn up a few new ones for you, all without the need of expensive equipment like rolling mills or hydraulic presses.

The online session will feature 20 different techniques for adding texture - including a variety of simple punches, hammers and rotary tools. Some are applicable to raw sheet material while others can be used on partially fabricated pieces.

Class fee \$85 Registration closes March 25th

Contact: BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com -----

Notes

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

Deadline for submissions is the 20th 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

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.

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