

# GRITTY GREETINGS



## Waco Gem and Mineral Club

Volume 65, Issue 1, January, 2024

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

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Table of contents, upcoming events .....1

WGMC Contacts .....2

Christmas party.....3,4,5

January Birthstone.....6

Brad Smith Bench Tips.....7,8,9

Notes .....11

Club Purpose.....11

## Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year, everyone!

### Upcoming events

~~ OUR NEXT CLUBHOUSE MEETING will be SATURDAY, Jan. 6th, 2024 @ 10:00 am.

East Texas Gem & Mineral Show - 01/26/2024- 01/28/2024

Tyler Rose Garden Center, Tyler , TX

## Contacts

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<b>Vice-President</b>	Scott Halvorson 254-424-8829 Baylordad312@gmail.com	<b>Secretary</b>	Harry Senn senn.harry@yahoo.com
<b>Newsletter</b>	John Langston johnjkbear@aol.com	<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wacogemandmineral.org">www.wacogemandmineral.org</a>
		<b>Club email</b>	<a href="mailto:wacogemandmineralclub@gmail.com">wacogemandmineralclub@gmail.com</a>

## WGM Minutes for December 9, 2023

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Harry Senn, Secretary

President Roy Cooper pronounced the **Call to Order** at 11:07 am.

This meeting was the Annual Christmas Party for the WGM Club. Because food was involved, the meeting began at 11:00 am instead of the usual start time of 10:00.

Roy began by thanking Nelda and Harry for coming in yesterday (Friday) to decorate for the Party.

Roy then announced the **Program** for the **January 6, 2024** meeting will be **"Show and Tell."** Each member who wishes to participate in this program should bring their **most unique, or most unusual, or most rare, etc.** specimen to the meeting and explain what it is and explain their story behind it.

The **Program** for **February 3, 2024** will be a field trip to the **Gallery 11 Crystals & Jewelry** 1319 Austin Avenue, Waco, TX.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 am. Immediately following the meeting Scott led in prayer, and the Club began their annual **Christmas Meal**. Following the meal, the Club had their **Gift Exchange**.

**PHOTOS FROM THE MEETING . . .**



***Nelda and Roy (Club President) Cooper***



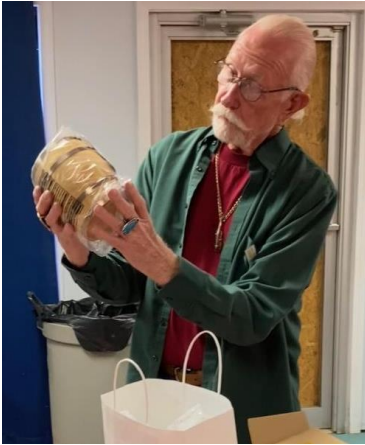
***Gifts Table***

***Group photo (below)***



**(l-r) John Langston, Mollie Smith, Jim Henry, Gene Henry, John Hillman, Johnny West, Rance Dodd, Jan Dodd, Stephanie Robert, Nelda Cooper, Charlotte Halvorson, Scott Halvorson, Roy Cooper, Cody Crook.**

**... AND THE GIFT EXCHANGE**



John was first to select



Cody



Mollie



Roy



Nelda



Harry



Scott



Rance



Charlotte



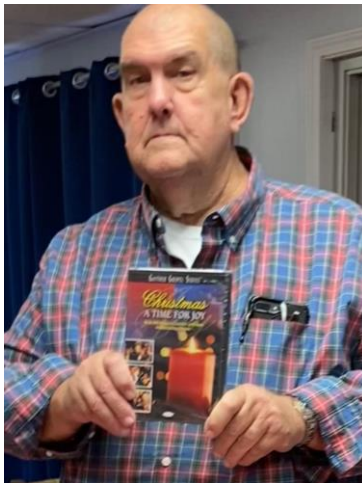
Johnny



John



Jan (reallocated from Rance)



Rance (selected again)



Stephanie  
(reallocated Scott's Chocolates)



Scott (selected again)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Merry Christmas!*

# January Birthstone

## Garnet



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The word “garnet” comes from the 14th century Middle English word *germet*, meaning “dark red.” The word is derived from Latin *granatum*, which means “seed,” and is called so because of the gemstone’s resemblance to the beautifully red seeds of the pomegranate.

Garnet is the name of a group of minerals that come in a rainbow of colors, from the deep red of the pyrope garnet to the vibrant green of tsavorite. Some rare garnets are even blue, colorless, or—most rare of all—change colors in different lights. But the most common garnet color is a beautiful range of reds, from rust colored to deep violet-red.

The garnet is a very durable gemstone, ranking 6.5-7.5 on the Mohs scale. It is found all over the world, including Wyoming, Czech Republic, Greece, Russia, Tanzania, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, and India. Mandarin Spessartite Garnets, also known as Mandarin garnets, are considered to be the most rare and expensive of all garnet gemstones.

This beautiful gemstone is perfect for those who share January birthdays.

- See more at: <http://www.americangemsociety.org/>

## Bench Tips



### TEMPLATES

Whenever I have to make more than 2-3 exact copies of a sheet metal component, I think of making a template. Templates let me easily draw the shape of an item to cut out.

Art stores or online sources like [cooltools.us/](http://cooltools.us/) and [kingsleynorth.com/](http://kingsleynorth.com/) sell templates for common shapes like circles, ovals, hearts, etc. but for nonstandard shapes, I make my own out of a scrap of sheet plastic or sheet metal. My preference is brass. I carefully lay out the shape using a steel ruler, a set of dividers, a scribe, and a fine center punch.

One example is the brass template in the pic below that let's me quickly trace the design of ginko leaf earrings onto silver sheet. Another is the nickel template which makes it easy to drill a pattern of holes for pin inlay into wooden handles.

### TESTING FOR SILVER

Often you need to identify some of those unknown "silvery" pieces of metal in the bottom of the toolbox or some piece of old jewelry that is not hallmarked. Is it silver or is it something else?

Of course, if you need to know exactly what you have, it's best to send your metals off for refining. But inexpensive silver testing solutions can be used to help distinguish higher silver content alloys from alloys that have the same appearance but with little to no silver content,

Gritty Greetings: Waco Gem and Mineral Club Newsletter

like German Silver or Nickel.

I purchased a half-ounce bottle of JSP Silver Testing Solution #GT41. It's not a rigorous analytic test, but it lets you know if you're on the right track. And it's inexpensive. Mine was only \$3.

With a fresh solution you have an instant reaction after applying it to the metal being tested. The procedure is simple - apply a small drop and watch for a color change. Note that the acid will leave a slight mark, so choose a spot that is out of the way or will be easy to polish.

If you suspect the object is silver plated, you should file a little notch somewhere inconspicuous to expose what metal is below the surface. Otherwise, all you test will be the surface plating.

Here's the reaction I got when testing various materials:

- . Fine silver ..... Red/Orange
- . Sterling silver ..... Brick Red
- . 80% silver 20% copper . Dark red changing to gray
- . Brass ..... Yellow changing to blue
- . Nickel ..... Gray-green
- . Copper ..... Yellow changing to blue
- . Steel ..... Black
- . Stainless Steel ..... No color change

Caution - If you do any of this testing, know that you are handling a reasonably strong acid. The GT41 label says it includes nitric acid and potassium dichromate.

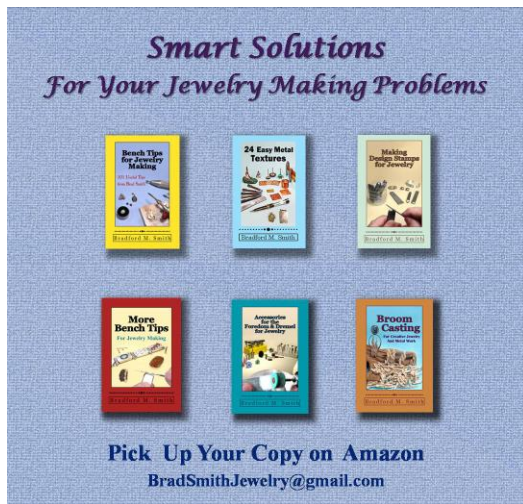
Wear safety glasses.

Do not get any testing solution on your skin.

Use a solution of baking soda and water to neutralize acid.

Wash and clean up well when you're done.





Making jewelry involves a multitude of skills, intricate hand work, and a lot of problem solving. In this series Books in this series help to:

- Broaden your metalworking skills
- Improve productivity at the bench
- Save money on tools and supplies

You'll find hundreds of low cost and really practical tips and techniques that the author uses in his work and teaches in his classes and workshops.

<http://amazon.com/dp/B0BQ8YVLTJ>

Texas Rockhounds,

We are so excited to announce the opening of a new lapidary shop, Texas Lapidary! The shop will be located south of Dallas/Fort Worth in the town of Venus. The address for the building is 9816 E. Hwy 67 Alvarado TX 76009. The area is under a lot of growth, so even though the address for the building is Alvarado, we are officially in Venus.

The shop began with the procurement of Delbert and Joyce Speed's rough collection. Many of you have known the Speeds for many years. They are long-time members of the Arlington Gem and Mineral club. Their collection consisted of over 100 crates of rough.

The second collection procured was a collection of cabs and rough from a friend in Louisiana. He was a long-time collector of Morrisonite, dino bone, jaspers, and agates. He was an amazing cabber and his collection consisted of almost 600 cabochons, a lot of rough, and many polished petrified wood specimens. The Morrisonite collection consisted of 260 cabochons and over 50 pounds of polished specimens.

The third collection procured came from an agate collector from Arizona. It was all self-collected.

The fourth collection came from a collector that died at the age of 47. It consists of a lot of Northwest jaspers and obsidians.

The fifth collection comes from a collector near Austin, Texas. It is an amazing collection that I wish everyone had the opportunity to see. There are two large, framed groupings of Balmorhea agate and two fossilized turtles that we will have on display from the collection. There will be some Texas agate and chrysocolla coming from the collection.

We want the shop to focus on rough, slabs, cabs and we hope that we can always keep the best material in stock for all our customers. Our second focus is Texas material, primarily agate and petrified wood. If you know of anyone who is wanting to move some of their Texas material, please let us know.

Our soft opening date will be November 18<sup>th</sup>, we will be open from 9 AM -4PM. We will also be open on Tuesday, Nov. 21. The week after Thanksgiving, dates that we will be opened will be posted on the Texas Lapidary Facebook page. On November 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be a list posted of the available material. Join our Facebook page, Texas Lapidary, to stay updated.

We have spent ten months collecting and sorting the material. It is our hope that you will find the best material and create something beautiful with it. Be one of the first people to see some of the best material in Texas! There will be a 5% discount for all members of Texas Gem and Mineral clubs! Please bring your Club badge or Card with you!

God bless Texas,

Rodney Parsley

#### **Rodney Parsley**

Our goal is to be the best source in Texas for stone lapidary material, with an emphasis on Texas agate and petrified wood.

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## Notes

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. Contributions to the newsletter are encouraged.

### 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 dollar in the pig. The money from the pig goes toward our Scholarship program, and we really do appreciate every dollar or more. However, if you need a name tag 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 Dorothy 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.
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Gritty Greetings: Waco Gem and Mineral Club Newsletter