

GRITTY GREETINGS



Waco Gem and Mineral Club

Volume 66, Issue 8, August, 2025

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

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Table of contents, upcoming events.....	1
WGMC Contacts.....	2
Meeting minutes.....	2,3
August birthstone.....	3,4,5
Brad's Bench Tips.....	5
Notes.....	6
Club Purpose.....	6

Upcoming Events

August 30. 31 CERA Gem Mineral & Glass Show, Ft Worth, TX

August 30. 31 Westfest, West, TX

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Contacts

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Waco Gem and Mineral Club Minutes for July 12, 2025

This day was the Annual Ice Cream Social meeting for the Waco Gem and Mineral Club.

This meeting, thus, was very informal. We had some guests and many members, and we had so many conversations going on at the same time that we really didn't want to interrupt them with a business meeting. So, somewhere about a quarter after 10:00 Roy Cooper finally called the meeting to order.

The first topic of discussion was that we are very seriously looking for a new venue for our club meetings. Our rent per month went up to \$700 and the upkeep on the building and land was placed onto our shoulders. The property owner's hint from last month still lingers in our minds when they suggested we needed to invest in liability insurance for the building.

One of the members wanted to know about how many square feet our building had so we could find a similar building. Someone suggested the Tax Office could give us that information.

Harry suggested we publicize a "contact person" for "property screening" where anyone who spots a vacant building could send this information to this person for follow-up. *Post-Meeting Note: At the time of publishing these Minutes, we would ask you to send this information as an email to the Club Secretary, Harry Senn:*

Email: senn.harry@yahoo.com

Please type "PROPERTY" in the Subject Line of the email

Thank you for your help.

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Roy mentioned that we need to make another trip to Whitney to pick up some more donations to the Club.

As is usual, John Hillman gave a wonderful Treasurers Report. Three CDs were renewed. One of the members identified and collected some scrap pieces of silver and gold items from the donations. He sold them. They brought in \$120 to the Club.

The previous Minutes were published in our July Gritty Greetings Newsletter. By general consent (and because the ice cream was beginning to melt) the minutes were approved as published.

Around 10:44 this informal meeting didn't necessarily "adjourn" as much as the group began migrating over to the tables with the ice cream and sweets.

PROGRAM: The program for today was very delicious!

August birthstones: Peridot, Sardonyx, Spinel



Peridot

Though peridot is widely recognized for 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.

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Sardonyx

An August birthstone, the sardonyx gemstone, 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. The deep red, brown, and yellow color of this stone makes sardonyx jewelry stand out.

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.

Spinel

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, Tadjikistan, 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
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Brads Bench Tips

RAISING A CABOCHON

When a cabochon sits too low in a bezel, the bezel hides a lot of the stone. The solution is to either sand down the bezel height or boost up the stone. But if you choose to raise it up, the question is what's the best material to use ?

I was taught to use fine sawdust but now think that might be a problem when used in rings. I reason that rings will frequently get wet, which would cause the sawdust to swell in size and push the stone against the bezel. Then when the sawdust dries out, the stone would be a little loose.

A better approach is to insert a flat sheet to boost up the stone. It can be a scrap of metal or some plastic from product packaging or old credit cards. In either case, just cut a piece to loosely fit into the bezel and drop in the stone (with some dental floss) to check its height.



TRANSPARENT CABS

When bezel setting a transparent cabochon in silver, I usually cut out the back of the bezel to allow background light to show off the colors and patterns in the stone. If this is not possible or appropriate, I worry that the silver bezel will tarnish under the stone and ruin its brilliance. What to do?

My solution is an extra step before setting the stone. I place a piece of thin silver Mylar plastic under the stone to act as a mirror that will never tarnish. Mylar is readily available in craft and gift wrap stores, or in a pinch from a party balloon supplier. You may even want to experiment with using colored or patterned Mylar (i.e. diffraction pattern) under some stones.

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

See More of my Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making Series

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. 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 John Hillman 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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