

GRITTY GREETINGS



Waco Gem and Mineral Club

Volume 62, Issue 2, February, 2021

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

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The majority of the board has voted to have a meeting in February. Face coverings and social distancing will be required. If you know you have Covid, have a fever or other symptoms, or have been exposed , please stay home. Hand sanitizer will be available. Please bring payment for your 2021 dues, which are due in January. If possible RSVP the number in your group to John so that we can set up the meeting room.

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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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Febuary Birthstone *Amethyst*

Amethyst is purple quartz and is a beautiful blend of violet and red that can be found in every corner of the world. The name comes from the Ancient Greek, derived from the word *methustos*, which means "intoxicated." Ancient wearers believed the gemstone could protect them from drunkenness. statement piece.

Throughout history, amethyst has been associated with many myths, legends, religions, and numerous cultures. Ancient Greeks and Romans believed this gemstone could ward off the intoxicating powers of Bacchus and keep the wearer clear-headed and quick-witted. English regalia were decorated with amethysts during the Middle Ages to symbolize royalty. Amethyst jewelry has been found and dated as early as 2000 BC.

Some historical accounts say that Saint Valentine had an amethyst ring carved with an image of Cupid. For those familiar with Old Testament history, amethyst was one of the twelve gemstones that represented the twelve tribes of Israel.

For many years, amethyst was held to be one of the most precious gemstones, often favored by royalty or exclusively by the clergy as a symbol for the deity of Christ. It was even held for many years in the same regard as the diamond. It wasn't until the discovery of more abundant supplies of amethyst that it became a gemstone enjoyed by more than just the wealthiest buyers.

Many wearers of amethyst throughout history and even today prize the gem for its symbolism as well as its beauty. Leonard da Vinci once said that amethyst helps to quicken intelligence and get rid of evil thoughts.

Today, many wearers simply prize the amethyst gemstone for its beautiful shade of purple and the way it complements both warm and cool colors.



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

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Brad's Bench Tips

BEZEL CLOSER

A bezel closer is a steel punch that makes quick work out of pushing the metal down over a round stone and burnishing it. It works with regular bezels, with tube settings, and with prong settings. Stones can be set in as little as 30 seconds.

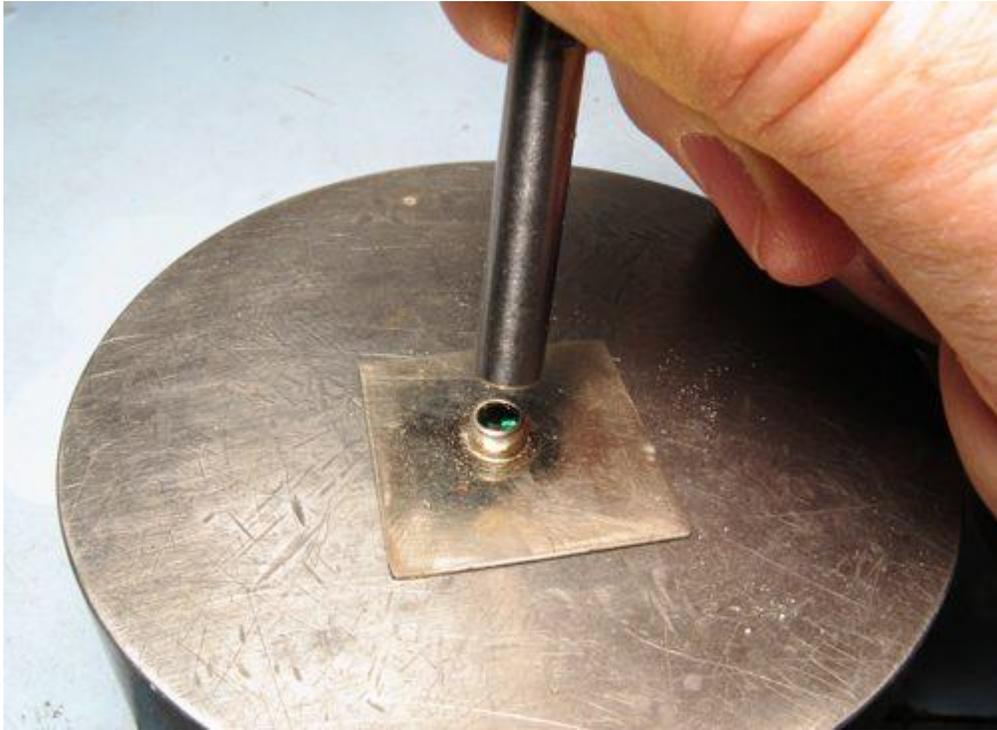
The working end is a concave cavity that fits over the bezel or prong setting and is pushed and twisted to capture the stone. Sets can be purchased but are expensive and contain many sizes you will probably never use. If all you need is one or two sizes, here's how you can make them yourself.

Find a round steel rod or bolt a little larger in diameter than your bezel cup or prong setting. Cut a 5 inch length. File both ends flat. Locate the center of one end, centerpunch a divot, and drill a small pilot hole about 5 mm deep. Remember to use a little oil as lubricant when cutting steel.

Select a ball bur a bit larger than the bezel. Enlarge the pilot hole to a full hemispherical cavity. Test for proper fit with your bezel. Bezel should first contact the cavity about a third of the way in. When the size is correct, polish the cavity using Zam on a length of chopstick in your flexshaft. If the tool is not polished, it will leave scratches on your bezel or prongs.

When using the tool, the first step is to capture the stone correctly. I usually work by hand and push the punch straight down over the bezel or prongs. This causes the metal to start bending over the stone. Next, if it's a small stone, I inspect with a lens to be sure the stone is staying level. This is repeated until the stone is seated on its bearing and can't move anymore.

Next you want to force the metal down onto the stone uniformly all the way around. While this can be done by hand, I often gently tap the punch with a hammer. Finally, I burnish the bezel by twisting the punch around.



BENCH SHEARS

When cutting sheet metal, it's quicker and easier to use a set of shop shears as compared with using a hand saw. The cut is not as precise, but many times you don't need that. Shears will easily cut up to 24 gauge sheet, and some will cut 22 or even 20 gauge.

Current prices for shears run from \$13 - \$36 in jewelry catalogs, and the Joyce Chen scissors recommended on some jewelry blogs run more than \$20. But we found a cheaper alternative at the 99 Cent Store - some gardening utility scissors that were only \$1.07

I buy a half dozen of them at a time for use in my jewelry classes. They're great for cutting bezels, trimming around a bezel cup and cutting a piece off a larger sheet.



Gritty Greening

A gorgeous new blue mineral has been discovered in Russia



<https://bgr.com/2020/11/19/new-mineral-petrovite-russia/>

(Via Cowtown Cutter)

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.

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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.

