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1<sup>st</sup> Place, 2019 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin  
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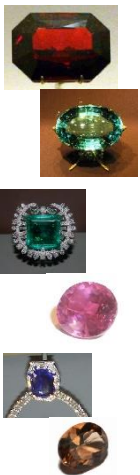
## History of Birthstones

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

To understand the history of Birthstones, one must first understand what a birthstone is. Wikipedia defines a birthstone as “a [gemstone](#) that represents a person's period of birth that is usually the month or zodiac sign.” That is relatively easy to understand, but who is it that determines what stones are to be birthstones and to what period they should be applied? The answer is that anyone can generate a list and defined the period of application. If I wanted to generate such a list for this article, it would become a Birthstone list, but I doubt that anyone would recognize it or abide by it.

In the United States, the National Association of Jewelers met in 1912 to establish a standardized list of Birthstones. This list became the standard, but different Jewelry groups have made changes and additions that have gained popular approval. The following table shows the 1912 Birthstone List and the currently accepted list.

**American Birthstones of 1912 versus Current Birthstones**



Month	U.S. (1912)	U.S. (today)
January	garnet	garnet
February	amethyst	amethyst
March	bloodstone, aquamarine	aquamarine, bloodstone
April	diamond	diamond
May	emerald	emerald
June	pearl, moonstone	pearl, moonstone, alexandrite
July	ruby	ruby
August	sardonyx, peridot	peridot, spinel
September	sapphire	sapphire
October	opal, tourmaline	opal, tourmaline
November	topaz	topaz, citrine
December	turquoise, lapis lazuli	turquoise, zircon, tanzanite



The different groups that have contributed to this list by way of suggested additions, subtractions, or changes to the classification of traditional and modern stones include, in alphabetical order, the American Gem Trade Association, Gemological Institute of America, Jewelers of America, and the National Association of Jewelers. As can be seen, the table is relatively stable. When stones are added, the association claims that it is to provide an alternative to expensive or hard to get stones. I guess that is why they added alternatives for April, May, and July – **NOT**. Most of these groups are jewelers, and they do want to make money. It is interesting that even though the list is seemingly straightforward, in many cases it is ambiguous. Take, for example, October and opal. Almost every picture you will see of an opal birthstone will be a picture of precious opal. However, fire opal and even common opal are still opal and would qualify. A faceted Mexican Fire Opal can be beautiful, as can a cabochon of blue opal. Which one should you select? Another example is September and sapphire. Most pictures of September Birthstones will be of blue sapphire, but occasionally you will see a golden yellow Sapphire pictured. Sapphire comes in every color except red. A red sapphire, by definition, would be a ruby. So which color of sapphire is the “true” birthstone?

Birthstones can trace their heritage back to Biblical days to the Breastplate of the High Priest and the Breastplate of Aaron. There is, however, considerable argument by experts as to the true stones of either breastplate based on translation issues and whether certain stones were even known. Here is a table showing the stones of the Breastplate of the High Priest from different translations.

#### Names of the Breastplate Stones by version

Masoretic (Hebrew) 7000 B.C.	Septuagint (Greek) 1200 B.C.	Josephus (Greek) 90 A.D.	Vulgate (Latin) 400 A.D.	Authorized Version 1611 A.D.	Revised Version 1884 A.D.
Odem	Sardion	Sardonyx	Sardius	Sardius	Sardius (or Ruby)
Pitdah	Topazion	Topazos	Topazius	Topaz	Topaz
Bareketh	Smaragdos	Smaragdos	Smaragdus	Carbuncle	Carbuncle (or Emerald)
Nophak	Anthrax	Anthrax	Carbunculus	Emerald	Emerald (or Carbuncle)
Sappir	Sappeiros	Laspis	Sapphirius	Sapphire	Sapphire
Yaholom	Laspis	Sappeiros	Jaspis	Diamond	Diamond (or Sardonyx)
Leshem	Ligurion	Liguros	Ligurius	Ligure	Jacinth (or Amber)
Shebo	Achates	Amethystos	Achates	Agate	Agate
Ahlahmah	Amethystos	Achates	Amethystus	Amethyst	Amethyst
Tarshis	Chrysolithos	Chrysolithos	Chrysolithus	Beryl	Beryl (or Chalcedony)
Shoham	Beryllion	Onyx	Onychinus	Onyx	Onyx (or Beryl)
Yashpneh	Onychion	Beryllus	Beryllus	Jasper	Jasper

As can be seen from the table, the stones vary from translation to translation. The names in the 1884 version of the Bible are sometimes based on Greek names, sometimes on Hebrew names, and sometimes it is impossible to determine the origin or the type of stone based on the name. George Frederick Kunz, an early American gemologist, undertook a study to identify the Breaststones using not only translation issues but also whether the stones were known in the Biblical Lands at the time of the Breastplates existed. The following table shows the results of his study:

#### George Frederick Kunz Study of Breastplate Stones

Breastplate of Aaron	Breastplate of the second temple		Breastplate of Aaron	Breastplate of the second temple
Red Jasper	Carnelian		Brown agate	Sapphire or Jacinth
Light-green Serpentine	Peridot		Banded agate	Banded agate
Green Feldspar	Emerald		Amethyst	Amethyst
Almandine Garnet	Ruby		Yellow jasper	Topaz
Lapis-lazuli	Lapis-lazuli		Malachite	Beryl
Onyx	Onyx		Green jasper or jade	Green jasper or jade

The efforts of Mr. Kunz help bring some sense to the Biblical stones. Similarities to current Birthstones can be seen for the names but not for the ordering.

The current fashion of wearing a birthstone dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The trend started in Poland and spread from there. The Polish list has a lot of similarities to the current American Birthstone list. The first published list of Gemstones in America was by Tiffany and Company in 1870. That list was based on the Polish Birthstone list. The Tiffany list also included a short poem about the metaphysical properties of each stone. The following table shows the Tiffany and Company list, and the current List.

#### Tiffany and Company Birthstone List

Month	Tiffany and Company	Current American Gem Society		Month	Tiffany and Company	Current American Gem Society
January	Garnet	Garnet		July	Ruby	Ruby
February	Amethyst	Amethyst		August	Sardonyx	Peridot, Sardonyx
March	Bloodstone	Aquamarine, Bloodstone		September	Sapphire	Sapphire
April	Diamond	Diamond		October	Opal	Opal, Tourmaline
May	Emerald	Emerald		November	Topaz	Topaz, Citrine
June	Agate	Pearl, Moonstone, Alexandrite		December	Turquoise	Zircon, Turquoise, Tanzanite

Shortly after the Tiffany and Company list was published, George Frederick Kunz, a Vice-President at Tiffany's, generated a Birthstone List using stones found in America. The table below shows his list.

The list has several birthstones that are common to the current Birthstone List, and many that are unique. Note that he picked Kunzite, a pink variety of Spodumene that he identified and named after himself, as the September Birthstone. Not surprisingly, Mr. Kunz was born in September 1856 – perhaps a little vanity showing up in the list?

#### American Gemstone Birthlist by George Frederick Kunz

Month	Birthstone	Where found
January	Garnet, Rhodolite	Montana, New Mexico, Arizona, North Carolina
February	Amethyst	North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia
March	Californite	California
April	Sapphire	Montana, Idaho
May	Green Tourmaline	Lake Superior
June	Moss-agate	California, Montana, Wyoming, Arizona
July	Turquoise	New Mexico, California, Arizona
August	Golden Beryl	California, Connecticut, North Carolina
September	Kunzite	California
October	Aquamarine	North Carolina, Maine, California
November	Topaz	Utah, California, Maine
December	Rubellite	Montana



Birthstones do not necessarily have to follow the month in which you were born – there is also a list of birthstones that is for the astrological sign you were born under.

#### Birthstones for Astrological Signs

Astrological Sign	Stone		Astrological Sign	Stone
Aquarius	Garnet		Aquarius	Onyx
Pisces	Amethyst		Pisces	Carnelian
Aries	Bloodstone		Aries	Peridot
Taurus	Sapphire		Taurus	Beryl
Gemini	Agate		Gemini	Topaz
Cancer	Emerald		Cancer	Ruby

As with many of the Birthstone lists, there is a commonality of the Birthstones, but the period to which they apply is not consistent.

There also exists birthstone lists for different cultures. Many of the birthstones for the different cultures are the same as the current American list. However, the period to which the stone applies is often different. Some of the cultures for which Birthstones are aligned with the months of the year were examined. include were Arabic, English, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Polish, Roman, Russian, and Tibetan cultures. However, not all cultures have a birthstone associated with the months of the year or even the astrological signs. One such culture is the Chinese. It is not the month in which you were born that is important, but rather the year in which you were born. Every year the Chinese celebrate a New Year, but it is not on January 1<sup>st</sup>. The Chinese New Year is based on a complicated formula involving Full Moons and the Equinox. There is a power figure for each Chinese year, and there is also a stone associated with that power figure. Most of us have heard of the Chinese power figures. They repeat on a 12-year cycle. The year 2021 is the Year of the Ox.

#### Chinese Birth Years and Birthstones

Year	Stone		Year	Stone		Year	Stone
Rat	Aquamarine		Dragon	Opal		Monkey	Peridot
Ox	Sapphire		Snake	Aquamarine		Rooster	Citrine
Tiger	Pearl		Horse	Topaz		Dog	Diamond
Rabbit	Amethyst		Sheep / Goat	Emerald		Pig	Ruby

## From the Desk of the {AFMS} President

Judy Beck, AFMS President 2020-2021  
From the March AFMS Newsletter

Greetings Fellow Rockhounds!

Well, March is on its way, and by the time you are reading this, we'll be starting to have some warm days that promise spring is on its way! By the end of the month, we'll be able to get our camper out and enjoy some days out in nature. Even with COVID, it is possible to do some "socially" distanced field trips and explore new areas. Our club, McPherson Gem & Mineral, has a newsletter, Facebook Group Page, and we have done a few "social" Zoom meetings to stay connected. What has your club been doing to maintain that connection to its members? Shoot me an email, and I'll share some of your ideas in my next newsletter article.

Plans are proceeding for the convention, June 17- 20 at Big Piney, WY. I've been told that there will be field trips on the 15th & 16th and also on the 21st & 22nd. I can't wait to see what treasures we can find on this trip! So, while the winter wind is blowing, I sit back and dream about Wyoming and petrified wood and fossil fish...well, you get the picture! Immediately after the Big Piney Show, we're planning to head out to catch the California Federation Show the following weekend. It is fun to start thinking about some travel plans again!

We continue to have Zoom meetings with the groups that are looking at how we can increase the visibility and usability of our website platforms. Thanks to all that participated in the survey that was sent out;- the committee received some GREAT feedback! One of the nice things about our "virtual" meetings is that we are able to bring people together all across the United States to share ideas. I'm in awe of the wonderful volunteers and their expertise as we tackle these projects! We'll look forward to bringing you all a progress report in June at Big Piney!

Have a wonderful spring and may all your finds be keepers!

## Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

**Please note that many shows are being canceled in response to health concerns associated with COVID-19**  
**Check with the show contact to verify the show status**

### April 2021

- APR 7-18, Tucson, AZ, JOGS International Exhibits, Tucson Expo Center, [www.jogsshow.com](http://www.jogsshow.com)
- APR 10-11, Abilene, TX, Central Texas G&MS, Taylor County Expo Center, [ctgmw50@gmail.com](mailto:ctgmw50@gmail.com)
- APR 25, Dallas, TX, Dallas G&MS Rock Swap, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas, 75238, <https://www.dallagemandmineral.org>

Ref:

- January - February SCFMS Newsletter
- Rock & Gem Show Dates, <https://www.rockngem.com/ShowDatesFiles/ShowDatesDisplayAll.php?ShowState=ALL>

### VISIT AN AREA CLUB

[Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX  
[Cowtown Gem, Mineral, & Glass Club](#), meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm, CERA 3300 Bryant Irvin Rd. Fort Worth  
[Dallas Bead Society](#), meets 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00 am at The Point at CC Young, 4847 W. Lawther Dr., Dallas, TX  
[Dallas Gem & Mineral Society](#), meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, American Legion, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas (next to their shop)  
[Dallas Paleontological Society](#), meets 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:00 pm, Brookhaven College, Building H, 3939 Valley View Lane, 75244  
[Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 3545 Bryan Avenue, Ft. Worth  
[Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc.](#), meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 3839 W. Keist Blvd, Dallas,  
[Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Thur. of each month at 7:30 pm, Garland Women's Activities Bldg., 713 Austin, Garland  
[Wild West Bead Society](#), meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30, Wild Beads, 2833 Galleria Dr., Arlington, TX



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ling Shurtz, POGMC President

Welcome to our new members, Amy and Eden Vulk. New members are appreciated, and it is nice to have a Junior Member (Eden) again. IGEM will be March 26 – 28, 2021. Plan for setup on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, starting early afternoon.

## CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2021

President: Ling Shurtz  
1st VP, Programs: Carolyn Grady  
2nd VP, Field Trips: Open  
Secretary: Cheryl Ogletree  
Treasurer and Editor: Don Shurtz  
E-mail: don.shurtz@gmail.com,  
L.SHURTZ@gmail.com

## MEETING MINUTES

March 4, 2021

POGMC President Ling Shurtz called the March 4, 2021 club meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Quorum: We have a quorum.

Sunshine Report: Warner is recovering from back surgery

Visitors: There were no visitors

Minutes: We reviewed the minutes of the February meetings as printed in the March 2021 Chips and Chatter. Hatt made a motion to accept the minutes. Carole seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Don read the Treasurer's Report. Hatt made a motion to accept the report and Amy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Old Business:

- The next IGEM will be March 26 – 28, 2021. Plan for set up on Wednesday, March 24.

New Business:

Shows:

- March 26-27, Ada, OK, Ada GM&FC, Ponotoc Agri-Olex, [melody.ulanoski@gmail.com](mailto:melody.ulanoski@gmail.com)
- March 26-28, David Dobson rock sale in Murphy, 1409 Oak Hill, Lane, [rocktrading@aol.com](mailto:rocktrading@aol.com)
- April 7 -18, Tucson, AZ, JOGS International Exhibits, Tucson Expo Center, [www.jogsshow.com](http://www.jogsshow.com)
- April 10 – 11, Abilene, TX, Central Texas G&MS, Taylor County Expo Center

Break:

Presentation: Video from the Great Courses series, Uluru/Ayers Rock, Sacred Nature of Rocks was scheduled but was unavailable. Instead, we watched Digging Up Dinosaurs

Raffle: We had the raffle

Ling adjourned the meeting at 8:50 pm.

## Presentation Review:

### Digging Up Dinosaurs

Don Shurtz, POGMC member

Digging Up Dinosaurs was a chapter in the CD, The Amazing World of Dinosaurs. The series is hosted by two teens, Anna and Tyler. This chapter was about going on a dinosaur dig. A young lady named Joey joined Paleontologists to dig at a fossil quarry in the Bad Lands of Wyoming. After touring the quarry and being introduced to the tools needed, Joey and the paleontologist started brushing away overburden looking for bones. After a long day of no luck, they suddenly found several bones in the waning hours.

Also on a trek for dinosaur bones was the son of Dr. Sheets who was looking for dinosaur bones and eggs in an undisclosed area of the Southwest. Their team also had no luck most of the day, but just before quitting time, several members of the team started finding bones. This team needed only their eyes to find the specimens – they were on the surface eroding out of the soft soil. The team also gathered buckets of sediment to wash in a nearby stream and to continue the washing after they returned to the museum.

## MEETING

The next meeting will be on April 1, 2021, starting at 7:30 PM at the Garland Activities Building. The presentation will be Uluru/Ayers Rock, Sacred Nature of Rocks. The May meeting will be on April 6. This is close enough to Cinco de Mayo, close enough for a Taco Thursday potluck dinner. The meeting will start at 7:00 for a meet and greet session; dinner will start at 7:30. The club will provide the Taco meat.

## VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

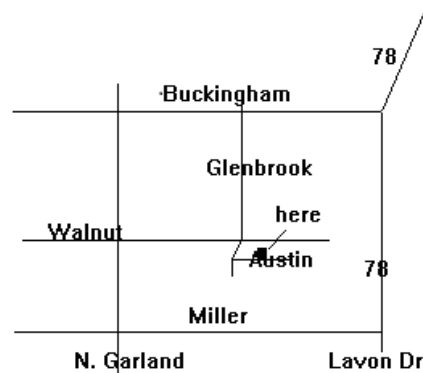
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**PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of Dallas**



Meetings  
 First Thursday of each month, 7:30 PM  
 Garland Women's Activities Building  
 713 Austin St., Garland, TX  
 (Northeast corner of Austin & Glenbrook)

Membership  
 Single Adult: \$16.50,  
 Junior: \$5.00, Family: \$27.50  
 (Plus badge fee for new members)



**PURPOSE:** The Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is organized for charitable and educational purposes to promote interest in the various earth sciences, particularly those hobbies dealing with the art of cutting and polishing gemstones, the science of gems, minerals and metal crafts, as well as their related fields. Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is a Section 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization

CHIPS AND CHATTER  
 Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club  
 PO Box 831934  
 Richardson, TX 75083-1934

To

**VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME**

**The next meeting is on April 1, 2021, starting at 7:30. The Presentation will be a DVD - Uluru/Ayers Rock, Sacred Nature of Rocks.**

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