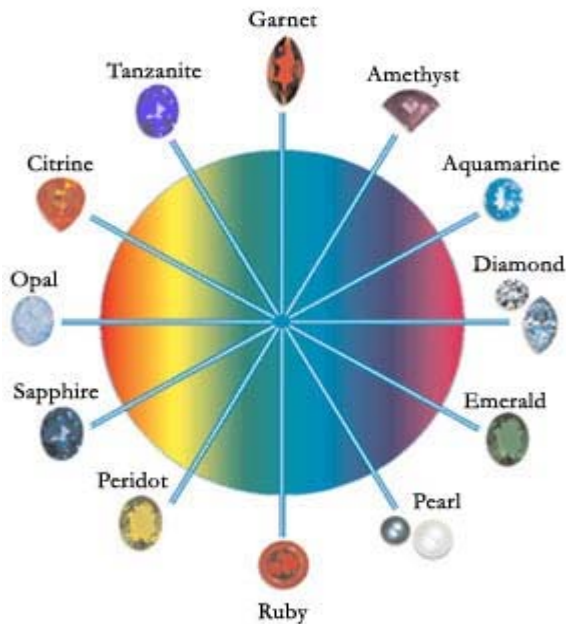


JIM C'S QUIZ OF THE WEEK

MONDAY - 7/16/2007



The birthstone for July is the red ruby.

HOW DID "BIRTHSTONES" ORIGINATE?

Encarta: "A precious or semiprecious stone that is popularly associated with the month in which somebody was born."

The true origin of birthstones is a bit cloudy and a matter of debate.

- **3000 BC:** Early civilizations in both India and Babylon invested rare and beautiful gemstones with magical properties. They also linked the ruling planets with their corresponding gems.
- Moses selected twelve colored stones for the breast plate of the Jewish High Priest that represented the twelve tribes of Israel.
- **8th-9th Century:** Interpreters of the Book of Revelations ascribed the attributes of the twelve apostles to each of the stones.

People used the colored stones as a magical charm, wearing one for each month. Over time, this gave way to wearing only his/her own stone of birth, which evolved into the present twelve birthstones.

The word *birthstone* (birth + stone) originated around 1905-10; whereas the contemporary list of birthstones was developed by the American National Association of Jewelers in Kansas City in 1912.

Conventional Wisdom: Birthstone = A Modern Day Talisman

Moment of Zen: Jewelers are to gemstones as Hallmark is to cards