

**TEXAS**

the publication of the  
Texas Jewelers Association

Fall 2006

# Jeweler

## **INSIDE THE CRYSTAL**

**RUTILATED QUARTZ  
MAKES ITS COMEBACK**

## **DALAN HARGRAVE**

HILL COUNTRY JEWELRY  
REPAIRMAN EARNS  
**ACCOLADES**



THE  
**MIDAS**  
**SHOW**  
SLATED FOR  
**SEPTEMBER 9-11**

**Q&A**  
WITH **DAVID GELLER**



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**Cover sponsor photo** provided by J. Patrick Diamonds, Inc., which is located in Bedford, Texas. Owner J.P. Volt can be contacted at [jpd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jpd@sbcglobal.net) or 817-318-0089. See page 17.

Doug Jackson

# Re-Price Your Metal Jewelry...Now!



## SUMMERTIME—HAVE

you had your vacation yet? Are you going to take one? Is your vacation going to a trade show? Or do you actually take a week or two and completely get away from business for that period of time? Do you have to close your store for vacation or do you have someone who can “hold down the fort” while you’re gone? We all need to rest and re-charge our batteries now and then, so I hope you get your deserved rest.

I’ll bet we have members who can say yes to every single question—we are a such a diverse group. From small one or two person stores to large multi-million dollar stores with 30 or more employees and everywhere in between, TJA members all have a common thread. Jewelry sales! How to make our stores better, how to hire and train our employees, then retain

them after they become productive. How to improve our cash flow, make more profit and retain it.

Speaking of profit or the loss of profit—how about these metal prices? Have you re-priced your inventory to reflect the higher prices and value of yours?

I have to admit I haven’t done all of mine yet and just today we sold a wedding band that the old cost was \$185. Guess what the new cost was! \$260! Guess who lost profit. So, be sure you are protecting yours—go through your store and re-price or you will come up with a serious case of cash flow blues when you replace (buy) merchandise. You say “I just don’t have the time” or “it’s too much work” or “it’s not worth the effort.” Believe me, it’s definitely worth the effort, the time and if you can’t find the time, make sure you assign that task to someone, even if you have to hire a temporary person to do it. We’re talking lots of money here—your money. So protect it.

The price change is shocking me—how about you? Do we try to maintain our margins or lower margins to improve turn? I know there are different schools of thought on this. I wonder what the national average is on margins. Anybody know?

Two more things and I’ll finish up and sit down.

- 1) Cut grade—pretty high profile here and we’re going to be hearing a lot more about it in the future. It’s important to get and stay up to speed on this issue, so don’t forget the Diamond Cut Grade Seminar” sponsored by Lone Star GIA Associates and Alumni (see page 16 for details).
- 2) Midas Show—Let’s all support our Midas Texas Jewelry Show September 9-11. It’s right here in our own backyard and we’re Texans, aren’t we?

Hope you’re having a great summer. See you at the Gaylord in September!

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## National Conference

# INSPIRES

## Local TJA Member

BY MARK PRIEST  
PRESIDENT ELECT, TJA

### THE INDEPENDENT JEWELERS

Organization (IJO) just wrapped up its summer 2006 conference in Reno, Nevada. From the backdrop of Sierra Nevada Mountains, over 800 jewelers gathered to share ideas, see new product and have fun.

This was a first for me... NOT the sharing, seeing product and having fun... but attending an IJO conference. I arrived as a guest and left as a new member.

My hat is off to IJO jewelers. They know how to have a party. This, boys and girls, is something our own TJA could improve upon. Most importantly, I came back with enough exciting ideas to fill seven pages in my notepad.

I have instituted a Bill of Rights for my employees. I will challenge my own capabilities to achieve new goals. I will look up and reach out every day.

All that from just a jeweler's conference? Yes. And so much more.

So now I sit here in my office... all fired up. But I'm also frustrated. Why? Because we have all this potential within our own TJA group.

Many TJA members belong to IJO. Many of you belong to AGS and AGTA and other great organizations in our industry. These groups exist because of us and our vendors. I am an AGS store, am an associate member of AGTA and have a long time history with the GIA alumni associations in Texas. My affiliation with these groups is about 20% business and 80% personal. Every event I attend, I learn.

I am here to tell you, you will only ever get out of something what you put into it. Heard that before, huh? Son of a gun... it's still true!

For all the benefits that IJO offers, none is more valuable than simply the ideas from other jewelers. I call it sharing. And it's a very empowering gift.

I left Texas feeling a bit burned out. I came back charged up.

I applaud IJO. They truly are a nationwide family of jewelers.

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# HILL COUNTRY JEWELRY REPAIRMAN EARNS ACCOLADES

BY ALICE ADAMS

“Your profession is not what brings home your paycheck. Your profession is what you were put on earth to do. With such passion and such intensity that it becomes spiritual in calling.”

— VIRGIL, ANCIENT ROMAN POET AND AUTHOR

**GROWING UP IN SAN ANTONIO,** Dalan Hargrave may not have realized his true passion, early on, but seeds were definitely planted during his freshman year at San Antonio Junior College.

“Like many college students, I hadn’t declared a major, but knew I was good in math and science,” said Hargrave, who operates Gemstarz Studios and lives on a six-acre spread just south of the Guadalupe River near Bulverde.

In high school, he was also good in art, but since most of the art classes offered at the community college competed with science and mathematics courses, he signed up for the only art course that would fit into his schedule...which turned out to be a silversmithing class. The next semester, he took his first and only lapidary class, which, he said, used silicon carbide wheels, rather than diamond wheels and taught how to cut cabochons.

“I had always enjoyed tinkering with things,” Hargrave said, “and I thought it was exciting to take a chunk of rock and then cut and polish it to reveal its beauty. That lapidary course was a short course, but the instructor was really liberal and opened the lab for us as long as a helper was there, so we could stay as late as we wanted. Sometimes I would spend six or seven hours a day there, just figuring out how things worked.”

Hargrave also realized, almost immediately, that working with stones was something he really loved.

The next semester, he was offered a basketball scholarship by Central Bible College in Springfield, Missouri.

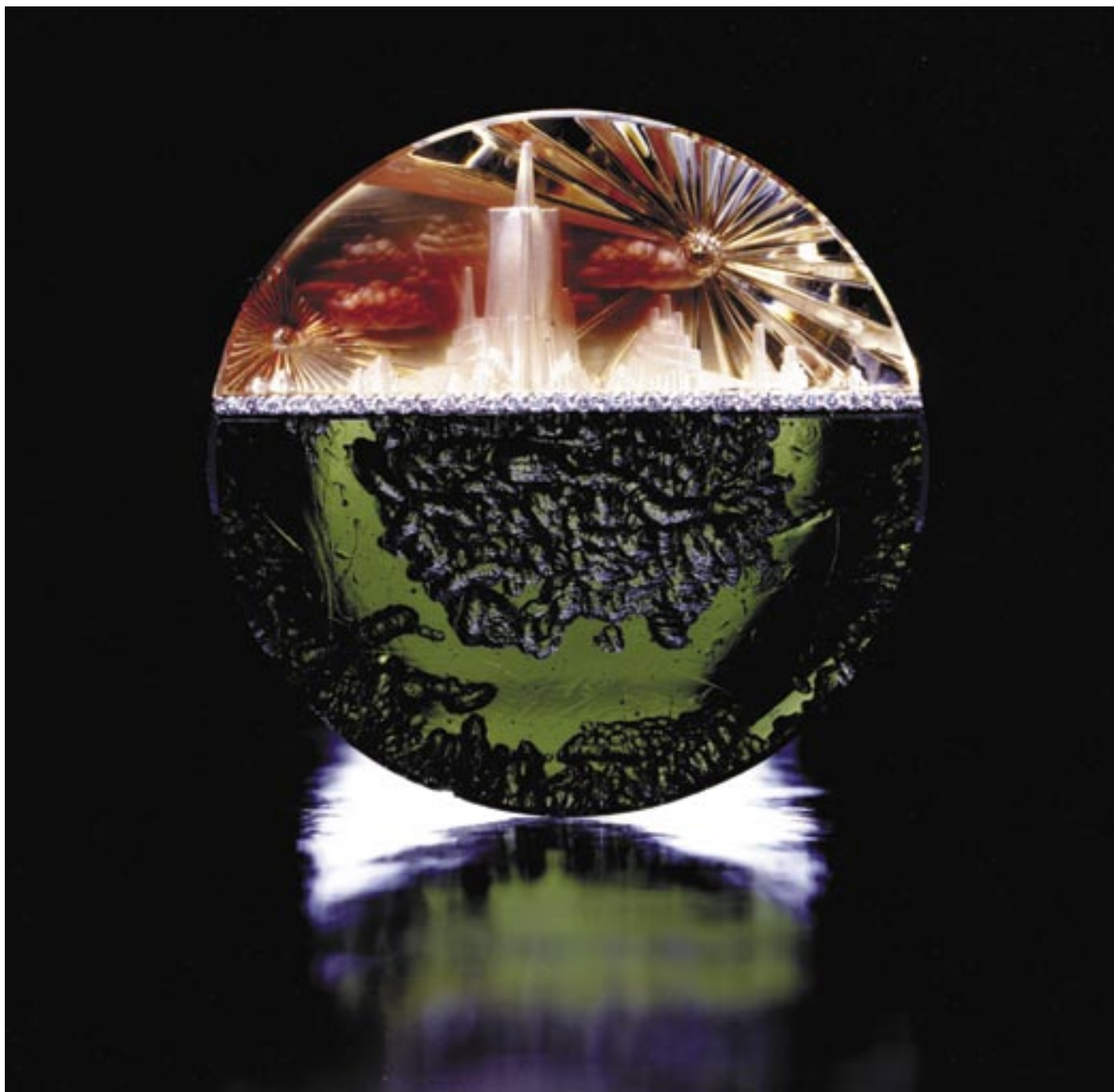
“Central Bible College was well known for the number of ministers and missionaries it prepared, and many of the students married before embarking on those careers,” said the artist. “In fact, some people referred to the



school as ‘Central Bridal College.’”

Although Hargrave focused mostly on his basketball at the college, when his teammates learned he could design wedding sets, his sideline business grew by word of mouth, allowing him to earn a comfortable amount of spending money for his designs. Moreover, his reputation spread to the point that a local jeweler recruited Hargrave to come work as a jewelry repairman, sizing rings, setting stones and repairing chains.

Calling his early career a continual and evolving process, the artist married and later moved to Grand Junction, Colorado, the home of his then-wife. An avid outdoorsman, Hargrave found the area very



appealing and, coincidentally, a new mall was being built, so he easily found work in one of the jewelry stores there, doing jewelry repair and light manufacturing.

As his career continued to evolve, he spent much of his free time reading whatever he could find about jewelry and metal craft. "I've always had a deep curiosity about the craft and a good general understanding of physics," he said. "As I worked in the field, I paid attention to what was new in the way of metals and soldering techniques, and I also have a natural curiosity that motivates

The piece *Celestial City*, a sunstone carving with diamonds and moldavite by Dalan Hargrave of Gemstarz was awarded Best of Show at the 2004 Spectrum awards.

me to try new techniques."

A goldsmith for almost three decades, Hargrave finds it ironic that the majority of his award and recognition in the field has come from gemstone cutting, which he tells people is his "out-of-control hobby."

The "Best of Competition" winner in the Second Annual Gemmys in 2006, Hargrave's interest in gem cutting was

inspired by a visit to a Gemological Institute of America show in Tucson in 1998, where he saw the work of a number of gem artists. "Some of the pieces were specially cut, things you didn't see everyday," he recalled. "As opposed to picking up commercially-cut gemstones, something that has a

*Continued on page 8.*



# CUTTING THE ***SUPER NOVA***

Dalan Hargrave said the time between picking up a stone for the first time to making the first cut is a huge variable, ranging from several hours to anywhere from six months to a year.

"A lot of people buy rough gemstones and start cutting, using not a lot of rhyme or reason," he said. "I'm trying to put some aspect into the gemstone that's unique to me. When I use straight-forward flat faceting, there's a little bit of design, but pretty straight forward. However, when I carve with a specialty

cut, I am able to open a vast gate to design and what's happening in the stone. Once you have a good working knowledge of different techniques, you try to envision how you want the gem to look.

"You're also cutting for weight retention and value, at the same time," he continued. "A long, slender gem is going to require different technique from one that is round and chunky."

He admits his vision for a design often changes, mid-stream. "Frequently, I start in, knowing what I want to do and follow it to completion," Hargrave said. "There's nothing metaphysical about it, but at the same time, if you study a nice crystal, you will get a feel for what shape or what technique you can work in a certain area to maximize weight. Mid-stream, you may find some bad cleavage issues that will fracture

right through the middle...or I may be half-way through a project and another idea will come to mind...so I will change horses."

His work on his award-winning piece, "Super Nova," began with the material, very nice material. "Anytime you have a choice of working with a stone that costs \$50 and one costing several thousand dollars...obviously, the material commands excellence and that one definitely did.

"You recognize it has tremendous potential," Hargrave explained. "You know right away. In terms of sunstones, it's one of the nicest I've had the privilege to cut."

Sent to Hargrave by Don Buford, co-owner of the Dust Devil Mine, the 62.5 ct., slightly domed Oregon sunstone required the artist to remove some slight imperfections by cutting reducing lenses to gather the image from the larger surface beneath. Then, by using spirographic cuts – a series of indexed "v" grooves – and polishing those grooves in the deepest part of the stone, Hargrave then cut a series of graduated spheres, each designed to reflect light. The artist then finished the stone with undulating, concave surfaces designed to reflect across the bottom of the piece and to increase color saturation.



specialty cut has much more allure, and there's been more attention given to carving gemstones and specialty cuts over the last 15 to 20 years."

Later that year, he decided to give gemstone carving a try, creating a perfume bottle and then fashioning a gold stopper. "The majority of my work was on the bottle," he said, "which I put it in the Cutting Edge Competition, just to see how I would do."

The piece earned First Place and Best in Show, which Hargrave said, "wasn't a bad first out of the chute." From that moment, he became more curious about the craft and, in his words, "pretty much hooked."

Since that first creation in 1998, Hargrave has earned 19 American Gem Trade Association Cutting Edge and Spectrum Awards, including three Best of Shows. He was inducted into the National Rockhound/Lapidary Hall of Fame in 2004 and earned the Best of Competition award in the Gemmys, an event sponsored by *Lapidary Journal* and *Colored Stone* magazines, in 2006.

In retrospect, the artist doesn't single out a specific mentor but, instead, attributes the success of his journey from jewelry repair to gemstone carving to dozens of people he's met along the way. "I've picked up techniques from many, but never served an apprenticeship," he admits. "I would say I am 'self-taught,' but that doesn't do justice to the people who have written myriad great books. I guess my mentors along the way would be books."

As he speaks about his artistry and some of his creations, his passion becomes more obvious than his humble nature. "With gemstones, you begin with a rough crystal," he explained. "The crystal, itself, is beautiful, but it's the cutter who brings it to life.

"I've experimented with so many cutting techniques, and what I've learned is there's a lot of design and artistry in gemstone cutting that has yet to be explored," he said. "In gemstone cutting, it's a balance of science and art. Some pick up a gemstone and start cutting at random without paying attention to the physical properties of the stone.

"However, every gemstone has critical angle, below which light will go through





*The GemStarz™ cut, one of Hargrave's two signature cuts, is shown here.*

instead of being reflected,” Hargrave continued. “Each gemstone has hardness and color saturation, and you should pay attention to those qualities because they are not variable. You also have to know what you’re doing to bring maximum performance out of the gem, working within those parameters.”

The most exciting event of his career occurred in 2004. “I titled the work, ‘Celestial City,’ based on Genesis 1:16, that says, ‘Then God made two great lights,’ he explained. “The reason this piece stands out is because the guys who own Dust Devil Mining Company in Oregon had given me a piece of sunstone as scrap. I added a \$5 piece of Moldavite – meteorite glass with a bit of a green cast.

“I am a Christian by faith, and thought it would be a good idea to give the piece a bit of symbolism. Then, I turned it into the AGTA, when they combined the Spectrum and Cutting Edge competition.

“That year, my piece – made of scrap and a \$5 piece of Moldavite – won “Best of Show,” which – to me – was really a high honor,” Hargrave said. “I consider that piece my legacy and I plan to pass it on to my daughter as a symbol of what I stand for, incorporated by the title of the piece and the image I created. ‘Celestial City’ will never be sold.”

## THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

After that first lapidary class, did Dalan Hargrave set his sights on an award-winning career in gem artist?

“When you’re young and stupid, you really don’t plan for the future,” he confessed. “I was fortunate enough to be gifted and artistic enough to be able to sell what I made, early on. So, from the beginning, I was able to turn what began

as a fledgling interest into a profitable hobby...and then fortunate enough to make it my career.”

During his journey from jewelry repair to artist, he described several hurdles he had to clear. “Anyone can call themselves an artist, working with hands to fabricate jewelry or sculpture,” he said, “but the real challenge is making it profitable. As an artist, you always try to put your own free expression into a piece, but – bottom line – is someone else impressed enough with your creation to pay money for it?”

Uniquely, Hargrave has never advertised. “In the beginning – in college, my work was marketed by word of mouth...and that continues to be the rule,” he said.

Yet, each step along his journey, the artist has been fortunate enough to distinguish himself by creating and trademarking his own cuts, as well as winning numerous awards for his work.

For GemStarz, Hargrave’s adaptation of the Lone Star Cut developed in the 1970s, he used the GemCad program, redesigning the flat faceting to capture the brilliance of the stone outside the star. To maximize the physics of the stone, he cuts the star internally so the star intercepts the path of light and uses it to light up the star.

Another of his original cuts, GemHeartz,

*Continued on page 10.*

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incorporates a series of three hearts faceted in the stone. Each facet mirrors each of the hearts to create a three-dimensional reflection.

"If I were to trademark who I am," Hargrave said, "these cuts would be my signature."

Another one of his popular cuts, featured on the Austin Gem & Mineral Society's Web site, is what he calls a spirographic cut. "It's nothing more than what you see in Waterford crystal – some call it the brilliant cut," he explained. "I wondered why someone couldn't do that in gemstone

material and it's application to gemstone is something I introduced.

But, like many artists working in other media, Hargrave's creativity reaches far into the future with sketch pad after sketch pad filled with ideas he's yet to try. "I've also got two different techniques I'm going to introduce this year," he said.

Hargrave explained he never wanted to earn a name as someone who just copied what he saw. "I try to be unique to myself and unique to gemstone cutting. "I may incorporate some techniques other gemstone artists use, but the whole general

## Tips for *Aspiring* Gem Artists

Dalan Hargrave sees sharing what he has learned as his legacy to future gemstone cutters. "Pass the torch! That's my philosophy," he said. "Some don't want to share techniques, but I believe it's your obligation, as an artist, to take the knowledge you gained and pass it along to the next generation. It sums up who I am."

Recently, the artist spoke to students during a series of lectures, sponsored by the Gemological Institute of America in Carlsbad, California. The following are a few of his suggestions:

- Be disciplined in your practice. In gemstone cutting, each different gemstone requires a sequence of steps to take it from rough gemstone to finished product.
- Each step along the way, be disciplined enough to complete that step to perfection.
- Never skip a step or overlook imperfection.
- Operate in an environment that's as contaminate free as possible. One grit on a wheel can ruin a polish.
- Don't be afraid to experiment. Try new things. One of my pieces has a small battery that lights up a lighthouse I carved, some there are few limitations. I like the phrase, "Imagination has no bounds."
- Much of what I do comes from trial and error with an emphasis on error.
- If you can understand what went wrong, you can fix it and skip the problem the next time. It's one of my best teachers.
- Take time to analyze what went wrong – that's how you become more successful.
- The whole process of cutting a gemstone and making it into a beautiful specimen is a rewarding experience that requires a lot of patience.
- Operate with as high a degree of integrity as you can. You're going to have problems and when they do come up, deal with people as straight-forwardly as you can. People will do business with you if they trust you.
- I believe in giving someone a good product at a good price.

Dalan Hargrave – [gemstarz@gvtc.com](mailto:gemstarz@gvtc.com).



*The Watch* – Topaz Carving on Petrified Wood Base

concept will be my own," he said.

In assessing his state of the art, the artist quotes Faberge, who emphasized not the materials involved but the artistry. "The ability to create is a tremendous source of self-esteem," Hargrave admits. "We all have some ego – and I'll admit the awards are fun, but the process is the most fascinating.

"I try to live a humble existence and am grateful for the recognition, but the process is most intriguing to me. I love working with the stone, working with my hands... and I consider myself extremely blessed."

Then he added, "People in jewelry industry have wide knowledge of different styles, but I'm doing everything I can to push the envelope of gemstone design...for the sake of my own artistic expression and to find out how much true artistry you can incorporate within a gemstone."

*Best in Show* – Mint Green Beryl



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# Inside the

# CRYSTAL

## Rutilated Quartz Makes its

### BEAUTY, DURABILITY AND RARITY

top the checklist for most gemstone lovers. That's why emeralds, rubies and sapphires have dominated the color stone market for ages. Lately, an explosion of consumer interest in exotic gemstones has motivated dealers to search for new varieties of color stones and to reintroduce existing gems that have languished in obscurity through negligence.

Rarity or price alone doesn't automatically equal beauty, does it? Let's look at rutilated quartz again with a 'new eye'. The shimmering golden needles seemingly frozen in place

inside rock crystal or smoky quartz are rutile crystals, a titanium mineral that formed in place prior to the transparent quartz ( $\text{SiO}_2$  - silicon dioxide) being crystallized around them. Since these are all naturally occurring inclusions, no two crystals are ever alike, something that clever designers are pleased to exploit. Many gem enthusiasts believe that the finest gem quality rutilated quartz is produced near Bahia, Brazil.

The incidence of massive crystal rough being discovered is somewhat frequent. And as such, rutilated quartz has occasionally become the inspiration for colossal

sculptures. Sculptors fascinated with the complex intersecting patterns created by randomly placed rutile needles, view this mineral as elegant and expressive, naturally contributing toward the entire design.

According to the Museum of Natural History in Los Angeles, CA, an astonishing discovery in 1987 in Brazil befuddled the most jaded of gemstone miners. In a coffee field, miles away from the nearest town, workers noticed a small pyramid shimmering out of the ground. It took 25 people 10 days to unearth the entirety of this and a second giant rutilated quartz crystal.



Gold hair rutilated quartz pendant 34ctw in 14k gold on a 14k Gold 24" length by Andy Götz Fine Jewelry for JewelMak, Inc. ([www.JewelMak.com](http://www.JewelMak.com)).

# COMEBACK

BY DIANA JARRETT, GG, RMV MEMBER NAJA

The crystal originally weighed 812 pounds. The museum later exhibited a gem sculpture named "Bahia" which was carved and polished from the smaller of those two giant rutilated quartz crystals. Expert gem carvers Glenn Lehrer and Lawrence Stoller spent five years completing the project, during which time two natural breaks (or cleavages) occurred causing the crystal to separate into three parts. The carvers worked this to their advantage by finishing each of the crystal segments and then reassembling them in a carefully designed gold plated steel frame

Renowned gem collector Michael Scott, Apple Computer's first president, loans his world-class collection to museums around the globe. He first explored gems in 1984 and began amassing them in 1987. By 1993, Scott had acquired most of his collection, reputed to be the largest and finest private gem collection in the world outside that of the British Royal Family.

When asked about the inspiration behind this unrivaled collection, he was attracted to gem collecting in part, he said, because it gave him the ability to acquire unique and highly desirable items "that Bill Gates does

not have and can never get!" according to the OC (Orange County) Metro Business & Lifestyle Magazine.

The pièce de resistance in Scott's traveling gem show is without doubt a rutilated quartz object so massive it warrants its own room. "This world's largest gemstone invites viewers to sit and meditate on the mysterious forces that create such magnificent stones," observed the OC Metro.

When this mammoth rutilated quartz sculpture, Metamorphosis VI, executed

*Continued on page 14.*



With the creation of the GIA Museum in April 2000, the Carlsbad campus became a living gallery of the gem and jewelry industry. The rutilated quartz carving Bahia, at over 966,000 carats possibly the world's largest cut gem, holds a place of honor in the grand atrium. © GIA

by master cutter Bernd Munsteiner, was exhibited at the Bowers Museum in Southern California, it did indeed have its own staging area. Mounted atop an under-lit base, viewers could best appreciate the rutile needles traversing the human-torso-size 213.4 pound or 485,461 carat carved rutilated crystal quartz. It is believed to be the world's largest faceted gemstone, hewn from a one ton quartz boulder at Bahia, Brazil.

The plentiful rutilated quartz has long attracted jewelry artisans. And, a few

years back, one could readily acquire this material at publicly attended mineral and gem shows on the touring circuit. Visiting a flea market or summer craft fair? There it was—often casually strewn in boxes by rock hounds or wire wrapped in costume jewelry. The problem with those stones was that they had been tumbled into freeform shapes, with little thought given to the inclusion's placement, or its utility to designers. It was inexpensive and under-appreciated.

Revitalization is underway with this

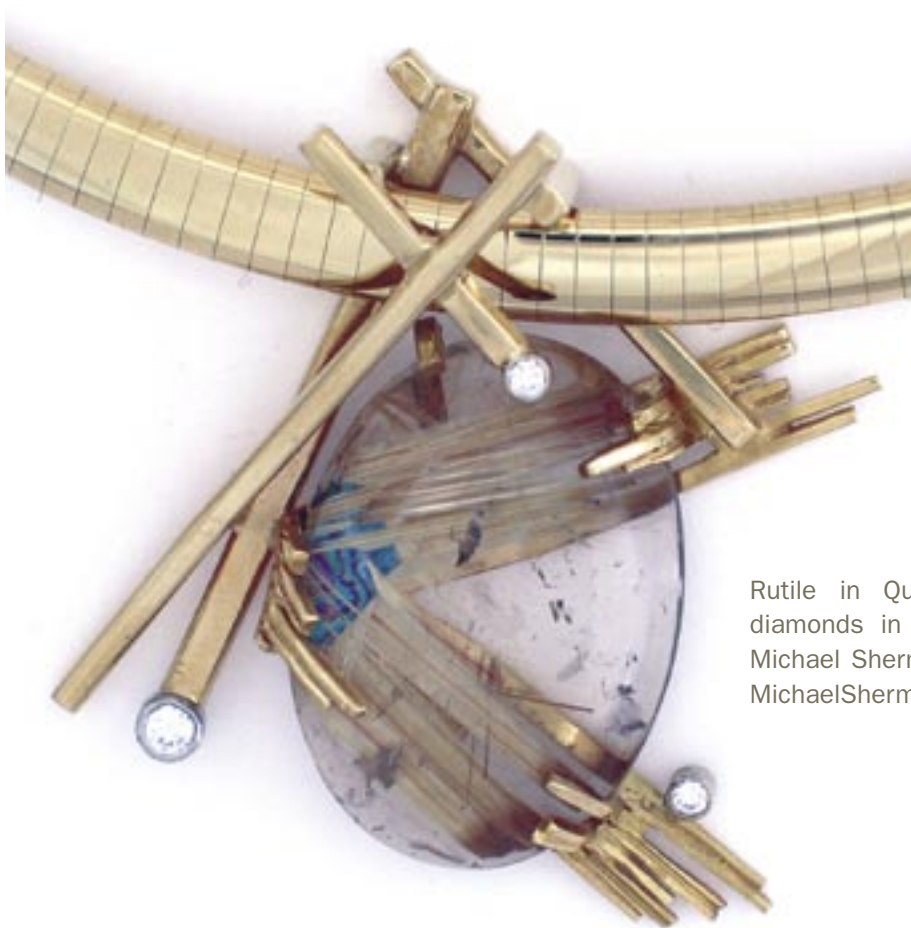
captivating gem, and it's about time. No two stones are alike, the inclusions are naturally occurring, and it is potentially extraordinarily beautiful. Because rutilated quartz is plentiful, this aspect has erroneously led some to conclude that rutilated quartz is not prized.

Today's rutilated quartz is well thought out and designed with respect for the inclusions. They are expertly cut in calibrated sizes, and exacting carat weights. Previously, only freeform random shapes of this stone were available to hobbyists and amateur collectors. Now the trend is toward calibrated sizing in quantity, albeit large carats for maximum viewing of the needles. Stylish sugarloaf cabochons, a popular cut used for translucent-opaque stones, are ideally suited for rutilated quartz inclusions. And because saving rough weight is not a concern, lapidaries select the most dramatic needle arrangement when cutting this stone. The resulting gem is more engaging and highly dramatic. Because this selecting process, precision cutting and calibrating are costly, wholesale pricing will reflect this care in the future.

Young innovative jewelers have little bias as to what defines beauty for them. They spontaneously select what draws their eye. And rutilated quartz is one gemstone that fuels their creative thinking. This season, rutilated quartz is favored in high-end goods, with prices that reflect this new esteem. Rutilated quartz compliments the warmth of yellow gold, and contrasts beautifully with diamonds and colored stones.

Expert goldsmith Michael Sherman, of Michael Sherman Jewelry in Carmel, CA has been designing custom jewels for a savvy clientele for over 35 years. Working with both classic and exotic color gems throughout his career, he includes exquisite rutilated quartz in several of his original designs. Sherman considers the mesmerizing rutile needles to be so integral to the total piece that he carefully considers the placement of the included needles, and works the prongs around them so the whole design moves fluidly as one—between





Rutile in Quartz with Hematite Crystal set with diamonds in 18K yellow gold, a one of a kind by Michael Sherman Jewelry Designs, Carmel, CA. ([www.MichaelShermanJewelry.com](http://www.MichaelShermanJewelry.com)).

gemstone and gold mounting. When he first created jewelry 35 years ago, it was with great difficulty that he was able to acquire first-rate rutilated quartz. Today he enjoys the reaction from his customers who find themselves drawn to the spectacular effects within this stone. "When they discover how this exotic gold stone compliments much of their wardrobe," it becomes easy for them to envision rutilated quartz as their signature piece, he acknowledges.

With all the current interest placed on rutilated quartz, one might be surprised to learn that it has been used for centuries. Dori Paul, of eFiligree, Inc, offers exceptional antique jewelry to the trade. And she recalls one of the most unusual lockets that came into her possession. Specializing in hard-to-find vintage jewels, something about this dainty Victorian locket stood out for her. Memorial jewelry was the rage in sentimental 19th century

Victorian England, and many such pieces included a lock of their loved one's hair. This memorial locket captured a tiny ringlet of golden hair encased behind a rutilated quartz crystal. Ms. Paul speculates that the rutilated quartz, itself looking like it contained golden hair (needles), was cleverly utilized to enhance the impression of housing more actual hair inside, making it memorable to be sure.

This summer, Chanel Fine Jewelry, unveiled their latest line in the New York Times with the "Cristaux Glacé" collection, featuring a magnificent emerald cut rutilated quartz ring accented with diamonds in a sumptuous 18k white gold mounting, with prices starting at \$8,700.

Look for the market to continue its appreciation of this under-exploited treasure, with each stone displaying its own unique glimmering needle patterns. In our industry, beautiful stones routinely

undergo enhancement for maximum salability. Rutilated quartz, on the other hand is completely natural, and free of treatment, which is a valuable sales point. At the moment, yellow and rose gold is soaring in favor, and paired to rutilated quartz, interest in both is maximized. Consumers are enthralled to discover that while someone else may own a rutilated quartz stone, no two are ever alike. And it doesn't take a loupe to see that.



*Diana Jarrett (www.DianaJarrett.com) is a frequent lecturer on gem and jewelry subjects throughout the U.S. Most recently she earned*

*the coveted designation of Registered Master Valuer after successfully completing jewelry appraisal certification in the Master Value Program. Photos courtesy of JewelMak, Inc. and Michael Sherman Jewelry.*

# GIA DIAMOND CUT GRADE SEMINAR in Grapevine **Features Four World Expert Speakers**

## Register TODAY for September 8 Event!

### **EARLIER THIS YEAR, IN ADDITION**

to color and clarity grades, GIA released their long awaited cut grade for diamonds. AGS has always placed a major emphasis on the cut grade of diamonds graded by AGS Members and the AGS Lab. Diamond Cut Grade is the hot issue today in the jewelry industry. The savvy consumer now considers the cut grade as important as color and clarity when purchasing a diamond.

With this strong interest in diamond cut grade, the Lone Star GIA Associates and Alumni Chapter\*, (domestic 2005 GIA Chapter of the Year), is pleased to host an all day seminar titled, "Diamond Cut Grade: Comparisons and Pricing for the Jewelry Industry." This seminar will appeal to retailers, wholesalers, and appraisers. The seminar will be a full day event and will include both lunch and parking.

The four world renowned and

distinguished speakers include:

- Dr. James Shigley, Director of Research at GIA;
- Mr. Al Gilbertson, GIA Research Associate;
- Mr. Peter Yantzer, Executive Director of the American Gem Society Lab; and
- Mr. Richard Drucker, Editor and Publisher of *The Guide*, a major gemstone pricing guide.

This seminar will be presented to the industry on September 8, 2006, the day before the MIDAS TEXAN Fine Jewelry Show, September 9-11, 2006. Both events will be held at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center, a few miles from Dallas Ft. Worth International Airport. The seminar will be shortly after the GIA Symposium, August 27-29, 2006.

In addition to the seminar, the Lone Star Chapter will be holding their annual silent



auction during the MIDAS TEXAN Fine Jewelry Show. Proceeds from this silent auction establish scholarships for students pursuing careers in the jewelry industry. Since the scholarships were first established in 1999, 42 recipients have been awarded over \$42,000.

For registration and additional information, please see the web site: [www.lonestargia.com](http://www.lonestargia.com) or e-mail: [info@lonestargia.com](mailto:info@lonestargia.com).

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## **Midas Texan Show** Slated for September 9-11 IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO PLAN A QUICK TRIP TO GRAPEVINE!

**THIS SEPT 9-11 WILL MARK THE** third year for the Southwest Midas Texan Show, held again at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. The Gaylord has proved to be a hit for jewelers, who love the "everything-under-one-roof" venue, in addition to offering world class security and a location that is only six miles from the DFW airport.

The weekend of the Midas Show is also a great time to visit Grapevine. Beginning Friday September 8, The Italian Car Show will be hosted at The Gaylord. Nights can be enjoyed at the World Famous Grapevine Grapefest, where individuals come from all over the world to taste wine and have a great

time. Visit [www.grapevinetexasusa.com](http://www.grapevinetexasusa.com) for more information about the event.

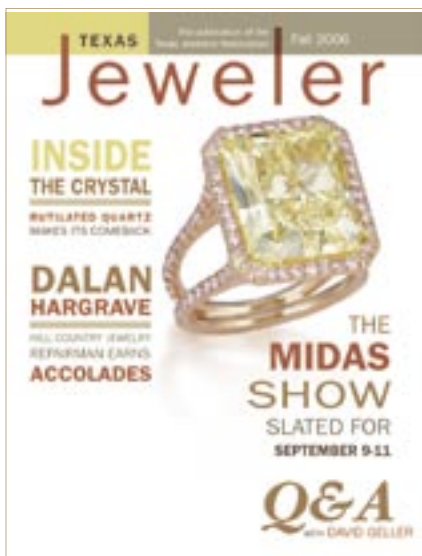
Manufacturers come from across the country and beyond to participate in this event. Southwest Midas Texan vendors are top notch, "de la creme" of the industry, offering great variety for all jewelry retailers. Retailers come from an 11 state area for the show.

According to Janisue Rigel, who organizes the show, the Midas Show is different from many of the national shows. "Some jewelry shows are gigantic," Rigel said. "We specialize in allowing retailers the ability to look, talk, and compare with a varied number of vendors at an enjoyable pace. Vendors love this show by having a

chance to get to know jewelers in a non rushed atmosphere."

Rigel says that 2006 vendors will offer gold, silver, platinum, diamonds, colored gems and a variety of gifts from globes to decorative eggs and stemware. The show will also feature companies that specialize in supplies, computer software and insurance.

For jewelers who want to stay at the Gaylord resort, The Midas Texan Show will pay \$50 of each hotel night booked under the Midas Texan block. Visit [www.midastexan.com](http://www.midastexan.com) for complete details and booking online. Rooms must be booked under the Midas Texan block to obtain the discounted rate.



# Texas Jeweler **COVER SPOTLIGHT**

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### **Tell us about your professional partnerships.**

We have formed partnerships with cutters in Russia, China, India and Israel, providing our customers with vast resources for very well calibrated melee, as well as larger loose. We specialize in Rounds, Princess, Asscher and Radiant cut diamonds ranging from D-J in color, fancy

yellows and better clarities in sizes from .50 to over 20.00 carats. We also provide a wide range of matched pairs for side stones and ear studs.

### **Contact Information:**

J. Patrick Diamonds, Inc. is located in Bedford, Texas. J.P. Volt can be contacted at [jpd@sbglobal.net](mailto:jpd@sbglobal.net) or 817-318-0089.

### **Tell us about the company?**

J. Patrick Diamonds, Inc. has been servicing reputable jewelers and manufacturers in Texas for the last 16 years. We pride ourselves in providing our customers with a combination of the best value and beauty possible to suit each of their customers specific requirements in the selection of diamonds.

### **How did your company get where it is today?**

Service and accurate representation of our product is what has built our company to where it is today. Many of our customers use us for our dependable service, providing them with product on time and at very competitive pricing, allowing them to be aggressive in their pricing or increasing their margin. Being honest with all of our customers and being well disciplined are very important components of our success.

### **Tell us about the person behind J. Patrick Diamonds.**

J.P. Volt, owner and president of J. Patrick Diamonds, Inc., has been in the jewelry industry for 21 years and is a Graduate Gemologist (G.I.A.), holder of 13 diplomas and letters of completion from G.I.A., and author of the book, "The Complete Diamond Guide" published in 1995. Experienced in all aspects of our industry, J.P. likes to work with his customers in a mutually beneficial environment where they work as a team to build both businesses.

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# Creating **BALANCE!**

BY LINDA TALLEY



**IN MY PROGRAM, MOTIVATING** Staff During Tough Times, I talk about 10 different ways to motivate your staff. Now there are certainly more than 10 ways, however, the most important is the one managers tend to shy away from because it's too personal, it's too close to home, and that is to be the role model for your staff. They are going to watch someone and it's usually the boss so watch yourself every step of the way because others are.

## **LEADING BY EXAMPLE IS ABOUT**

1. Working hard goes with the territory,

and the key is to work smarter so your staff does the same!

2. Managing yourself so you don't encounter time problems. Managing your time is about setting priorities and making choices. In other words, it's about eliminating the victim mentality by making choices and then disciplining yourself to follow through.

3. Providing the best service to internal or external customers. Your internal customers are just as important as your external customers so make certain you show staff this key insight.

4. Finding more ways to negotiate benefits/perks in order to eliminate or

stop new entitlement programs at your workplace.

5. Catching people doing things right and acknowledging that rather than focusing on what you don't want staff to do. Yes, give redirection when necessary and recognize if there is a training for attitude problem.

6. Doing the "stuff" that comes with the territory vs. complaining. Being a boss/manager is tough and it means leaving your "old" position behind and taking on the new challenge.

I don't know how many times I have seen staff become resentful because their manager is trying to control everything. If you ever hear yourself saying, "my staff won't/can't" the problem isn't with your staff, it's with you!

7. Making self improvement a natural part of the work flow. Educational events should be for your customers as well as your staff. And, for the staff, it doesn't always have to be about work issues. Find out what's personally important to staff and bring in someone to educate on that!

8. Appreciating contributions whether from staff or customers. When you appreciate, you acknowledge and when you acknowledge, send a note home or to your customer. This type of follow up is very impressive.

9. Holding the vision till everyone can wrap their arms around it. Until everyone on your staff understands and can tell a story about where you are going, they don't get it and if they don't get it, your customer won't either!

10. Having a "can do" attitude that is positively contagious. This is not about being Pollyannaish or fluffy. It's about positive goal setting where you focus on what you do want and find ways to make that happen vs. talking about what you don't want and getting into the victim mode.

When you can lead the way with these things in mind, you can motivate your staff.

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*Linda Talley, a leadership coach, is a member of the National Speakers Association. For more information you can visit [www.LindaTalley.com](http://www.LindaTalley.com).*

# JEWELERS LOOK FOR A BIT OF COLOR

## AT JA SHOW

### THE TEMPERATURES WERE HOT

outside, but it seemed most of the heat generated at the JA New York Summer Show on opening day was from color.

Retailers shopping the show say color—in particular colored gemstones but also yellow and rose gold—tops their list of must-have items for the holiday season.

“Color is in, there’s no doubt about it. Color is extremely hot,” said Mollie Bronstein, owner of Mollie B Distinctively Different Fine Jewelry in Harrisburg, Pa.

Diamonds also remain strong for the retailer and she says many of the looks she’s buying into combine color with diamonds. Most importantly, she wants something that will set her store apart from the competition.

“We’re looking for lines that will keep us unique,” she said.

Color is also strong for Gary Berezowsky, owner of Garbo Jewelers in Skillman, N.J. He noted pink sapphires, tanzanite, citrine in white and yellow and pink and yellow gold on his buy list.

“Color is very popular now, the big bold looking stuff,” he said. “Big blue topaz (stones are) doing good, the nice citrines are doing really well in yellow and white (gold) and even pink gold has made a big comeback.”

That’s after a couple of years where, despite fashion’s emphasis on yellow gold designs, white gold has ruled the scene for most retailers.

“I’m buying a lot more yellow this year and also trying to mix it up,” Berezowsky said.

Danielle Scott, owner of Danielle Scott Designer Accessories in Philadelphia also said she’s looking for fresh takes on



yellow gold.

“I’m looking for things that have a more modern edge,” she said.

Opening day numbers were on par with last year’s show. Organizers say more than 6,800 buyers and trade guests were registered on day one.

“We were even with our opening

day numbers as compared to last year,” said JA New York Show Director Drew Lawsky. “Given the generally challenging marketplace for most, we are happy with the positive response at the JA summer show thus far.”

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# “RIDING IT OUT”

## Can Cost You...BIG!

BY DAVID D. HARLESTON

independent jewelry stores, and, like me, are generally slow to raise prices. We tend to base our thinking upon the most recent cost for that item in the showcase. In a stable market, this is relatively sound thinking, and much simpler than tracking day to day changes in market prices; particularly, if we have not updated our recordkeeping systems from index cards and ten key adders. However, we are not in a stable market!

For those who have been around since the \$800+ market of the early eighties, you may remember the helpless feeling of that market cycle. We were very naïve and very complacent. There was no internet; there were no computers; there was no method to instantly update anything! We were not riding the wave. We were chasing it as it left the beach, only to have it loom

before us for another round of retreat. It was crazy.

The market that we see now has some remarkable similarities. The difference, for us, is our ability to be current, with our fascinating and endless stream of information; but, all is for naught if we do not act on our increasing pile of numbers. Soooooooo, what do we do?

Check your current cost/dwt(or gram) from vendors, especially those whose product is predominately precious metal (i.e. chains, findings, castings, etc.); compare it to the cost of the item in stock; and update the price. Sound simple? Of course, it is! One year ago, on August 1, 2005, gold was \$432; today, it closed at \$655...a rise of more than 50%. How many of us enjoy a substantial enough mark-up to absorb these cost changes, without changing our selling prices? This is not a lesson in rocket science; it is a call to action!

O.K. O.K. I know I am nagging, but let me give you one more point to ponder. That one gram bottle of rhodium plating solution on your shelf probably cost you less than \$100. Today, depending upon which supplier you use, it will cost you \$350 to \$400! What are you charging to re-rhodium after sizing?

Our strength, as independent jewelers, is our fairness and responsiveness to our customers. However, if we are not fair to ourselves, and fail to respond to market facts, we risk all of that for which we have worked so hard. Let's take care of ourselves so we can take care of others!

*David D. Harleston is co-owner of Lathrop's Gem Shop in Bellaire and a member of the Board of Texas Jeweler's Association.*

**TODAY, AUGUST 1, 2006, ACCORDING** to Kitco (www.kitco.com), the closing "Ask" price for gold was \$655. The closing price for rhodium was – are you ready? - \$4,660! At these prices, if you have not reviewed your pricing on everything, you are losing money.

Most of you who are reading this are

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# Jewelers Inventory Exchange

## New Website Allows Jewelers to Network Their Inventory

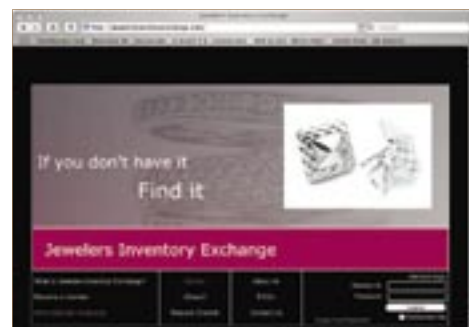
### I HEAR THIS OVER AND OVER.

'I don't have time for networking!' In fact, I used to be the first one to shout it. Until the summer/fall of 2005 (Slowsville), when my cash flow really needed a boost. I began communicating more with fellow jewelers. One happened to notice a piece in my showcase while at my store and said, "I have a customer looking for that piece!" I thought what an opportunity! To sit back and think "lucky you", or maybe hope their customer would find their way to me, would have been self defeating. So I said, "Why not show it to him?" By about the third or fourth time this happened, I was smiling all the way to the bank. With a new source of cash flow, I felt quite liberated.

and heard "No, I don't have that."? Of course not. You get "Let me check and see if that stone is still working. I'll call you right back." Meanwhile, your dealer calls another dealer, gets it from him then calls you back and says, "When do you need it?" Channels for fulfilling the demands of an ever more knowledgeable and ever less patient clientele must be found and used or more sales will be lost.

Sure they make a few dollars less because it wasn't "their" stone, but it frees up their cash to buy more on their next trip – AND they kept the customer, who wanted it now – happy.

Channels for fulfilling the demands of an ever more knowledgeable and ever less



Inventory Exchange. Created by a jeweler in Dallas, Jewelers Inventory Exchange is an internet based company that makes it possible and quite easy for the independent jeweler to accomplish successful 'Inventory Networking.'

Jewelers from all across the country now have access to other members' inventory to fulfill their inventory needs or client requests. If something's not selling in New York it may very well sell in Los Angeles or Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Jewelers Inventory Exchange was developed to help you easily find what you need. It features both a detailed search engine and an 'open request' channel to help you satisfy your customer needs and sell your inventory. Take advantage of this new innovative solution to the age old problem of "too much or the wrong inventory" and prevent it from retiring with you!

Go to [JewelersInventoryExchange.com](http://JewelersInventoryExchange.com), join the network and watch your money and cashflow grow.

Take the time!

## Your fellow jewelers are as valuable to your income as any customer you have!

Your fellow jewelers are as valuable to your income as any customer you have!

On the flip side of that coin, I began helping other jewelers (okay, we were helping each other) by asking them if they had what my customers wanted that I didn't have. Soon we were all selling more and in better shape. Now we had money to pay vendors, buy "new" pieces, remodel or even take a fabulous vacation!

Your fellow jewelers are as valuable to your income as any customer you have! My fellow jewelers and I have bought and sold thousands of dollars worth of inventory to and from each other from which we've both made fair profits. These relationships are a big reason I am still in business today! In truth, my sales have doubled since I've taken networking seriously.

Think about it. Our suppliers have worked like this for a long time. Have you ever called a diamond dealer for a stone

patient clientele must be found and used or more sales will be lost. Also inventory that isn't selling prevents you from acquiring new inventory that does sell. With 10- 25% of your inventory tied up in un-sellable or under selling pieces, the potential to change your sales is tremendous!

Now let's get to the solution – Jewelers

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# Future Making the **RIGHT MOVES** for the **FUTURE**

BY JIM LEIGHTY, PHD., CPCU, CLU, CHFC

than 65% of the yearly net gain in employment in our nation.

These facts present all of us who care about a thriving America this major question: "When you step out, who will step in?"

## A CERTAINTY

You see, you absolutely *will* exit your business.

You can either exit vertically through selling or bequeathing it according to a competent plan, or you can exit horizontally, through a totally unexpected death or disability.

Of course, what you want as a successful business owner is to make sure that the transfer takes place how you want it to happen. And you, no doubt, want your business and its legacy to transfer to whom you want. That takes pre-planning.

## A SAD WAY TO EXIT

When James Binger, former Chairman of Honeywell and past owner of the Minnesota Vikings, died, his estate paid a record \$112 million to the State of Minnesota and a like sum to the Federal Estate Tax. His granddaughter lamented "He would have given it all to charity anyway – but not to the government."

## AN EXPERT'S ADVICE

Barry Schalke, an estate planning attorney in Minneapolis says, "The average family business owner spends over 90,000 hours throughout a lifetime creating wealth – and a mere four hours planning how to dispose of this wealth." Because of this, only 30% of family-owned businesses survive for more than *one generation*! Only 10% make it to a third generation and figures show that less than 3% make it to the next generation.

Barry's advice: "Assess how your current arrangement has you leaving your business." My advice: "See if you are making any mistakes."

## ARE YOU GUILTY OF ANY OF THESE?

There are 10 common mistakes that prevent people from getting proper planning done.

Here are what I call the "10 Deadly Sins" of Planning:

- 1) Procrastination.
- 2) Wishful thinking.
- 3) Saving money by not getting advice.
- 4) Trying to beat taxes.
- 5) Confusing equality with fairness.
- 6) Management by committee.
- 7) Not sharing philosophies.
- 8) Failing to teach and test.
- 9) Outdated planning.
- 10) No outside review.

When proper planning is done, assurances can be made that assets will be distributed as desired, estate taxes and expenses will be paid, liquidity will be assured and the business will have every chance to remain intact. Most importantly, your family's financial security will be maintained and confidentiality will be strictly protected.

## OF VITAL IMPORTANCE

- Plan - both competently and continuously!
- Take action.

Continued procrastination and wishful thinking will leave your family and loved ones in a state of chaos if planning is not completed in time. **MAKE THE RIGHT MOVES - NOW!**

## SOME INCREDIBLE FACTS

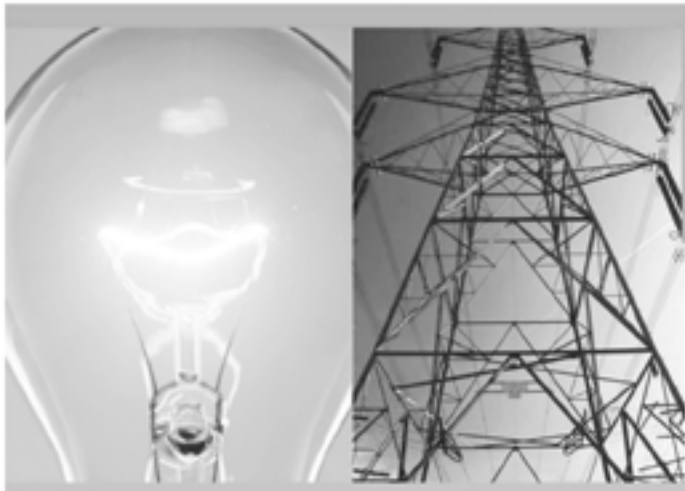
As a businessperson, you are truly unique in our society. U.S. census figures show that only 1 in 45 people have ever owned a business and only 1 in 125 have ever owned a business that employed more than 5 employees.

## AND YET,

- Small businesses account for 95% of all firms, many of which are family-owned.
- 50% of the private sector workforce is found in family-owned businesses
- Small businesses account for better

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# SECURITY

## Selling with Security:

### Three Basic Habits

BY STEVE KONETZKE

#### WHEN LOSSES IN THE JEWELRY

industry are reviewed, it is apparent that instilling basic security habits with your employees can significantly reduce the risk of theft losses.

The three habits are: meet and greet; one-on-one and turn the key.

#### MEET AND GREET

This habit emphasizes the importance of greeting each customer who enters the store, making immediate eye contact and engaging them in a brief and friendly conversation. For an example, ask who they are shopping

for today or show them a piece of jewelry.

Customers will appreciate your interest and attention. On the other hand, criminals who may be casing the store will feel uncomfortable and may appear to be nervous knowing that an employee is paying attention to them.

#### ONE-ON-ONE

One-on-one means waiting on one customer at a time and showing one item at a time.

Focusing your attention on one customer at a time accomplishes several things. It

makes the customer feel important and well served. It also helps you focus on that one individual and resist other distractions. If another customer enters the store, inform the individual that someone will be with them in a few minutes, whether that is another sales associate or yourself when you finish with the first customer.

Showing one item at a time reduces the opportunity for a theft of an item when looking at several other jewelry pieces. Also this practice limits the amount of loss in a "grab and run" situation. If your customer wants to compare two items, place one on the customer and the other item on yourself or another sales associate. Also consider showing the ring on a ring holder. Finally, if available, you can move to a more private part of the store to show several items at a time, with minimal risk of a grab and run.

#### TURN THE KEY

Keeping showcases locked when unattended is one of the most important habits you should impress on the employees. Have showcase keys on wrist bands or key chains that are worn by the employees. Be careful never to place the keys on the counter where they could be taken.

Instill in all employees the importance of keeping the showcases locked when they are unattended.

A great loss prevention tool is the Jewelers Mutual DVD "Selling With Security". This DVD is available from Jewelers Mutual at [www.jewelersmutual.com](http://www.jewelersmutual.com)

*Questions or comments regarding this article can be addressed to Steve Konetzke at Sleeper Sewell Insurance, 210-490-6611 or [konetzke@sbcglobal.net](mailto:konetzke@sbcglobal.net).*

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# When Does “PEAK SEASON” Begin?

**FACT:** a jewelry store's inventory is the highest in December. What's not always apparent is when additional insurance coverage should take effect to cover that seasonal increase in merchandise. Consider the schedule for this typical, upscale jeweler.

By July, Kay has ordered her holiday inventory. By September, she wants it in her store to be inventoried and priced. Why so early? Kay wants her staff to learn all about the new merchandise BEFORE it hits the showcases. By October, she will begin to introduce the new pieces to her clients so that by December 24 the store is almost sold out.

Many jewelers think they save money by buying “peak season” insurance for just a couple months of the year. Indeed, that may be true for some jewelers. But what happens if the inventory arrives a week before your “peak season” coverage kicks

in? You could be vastly underinsured.

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# Do you Need a 99¢ Chicken Sandwich?

## How to make customers react positively to your business

BY BOB JANET

### THE OTHER DAY I SAW A WENDY'S

commercial advertising their 99¢ Chicken Sandwich and wondered why they are advertising that price point. After all, in our part of the country you have to spend \$2.89 a gallon for gas to get to a Wendy's. So, the cost of a sandwich will not stop a customer from buying.

I drove to eight different Wendy's restaurants and observed very few customers purchasing a 99¢ Chicken Sandwich. Plenty of chicken sandwiches crossed the counter, most of which were combo meals for \$3.89 to \$4.89.

So why does Wendy's spend so much money advertising a 99¢ Chicken Sandwich? At each Wendy's restaurant I asked the manager why they advertise a 99¢ Chicken Sandwich when very few are actually sold. Two managers told me, "To compete. The competition has a 99¢ menu." Two others told me, "So we do not lose the low price buyer." And one seasoned veteran told me, "To create the perception that Wendy's offers VALUE!"

Of course all three reasons are valid. You may not want to, or need to, compete against low price sellers, and your industry may not cater to low price buyers. But you do need to constantly give the buyers the perception that your products and services give them VALUE!

### WHAT IS YOUR 99¢ CHICKEN SANDWICH?

***Six Perceptions customers react positively to:***

- **Businesses that look Successful** – People like to do business with successful businesses.

No one wants to take the chance of

buying from a business that may not be there tomorrow.

- **Businesses that look Busy** – People like to buy from businesses that look busy.

When we have sales in our retail businesses we hire people (usually college students) to walk around the showroom to give the perception something really big is going on. In our wholesale businesses we always load our truck to capacity even if everything was not sold.

- **Businesses that look Clean** – People would rather buy from businesses and business people that look clean and neat. We gave customers the perception of quality in our retread tires by making sure our manufacturing plant was clean enough to eat off the floor.

- **Businesses that look like they care about their customers** – *'Be 100% Customer-Centered'*

Everything you say and do is about your customer, not you or the business.

- Answering the telephone on first or second ring

- Return telephone calls and messages quicker than promptly

- Greet everyone that comes into the business immediately

- Solve the customer's problems, needs and wants even if it creates more work for you

- **Businesses that stay in touch with their Customers** – "Stay in touch with your customers and they will stay in touch with you when a buying decision is made."

It is estimated that your customers are inundated with 2500 to 3500 advertising messages a day. They become confused. If you are the seller that has been the constant in staying in touch with them, you will be

their seller of choice. Stay in touch with your customers through advertisements, thank you cards, holiday cards, personal cards and letters, information that will improve their lives and/or business.

- **Businesses that take the FEAR out of buying** – One of the four biggest fears a customer has that causes them NOT to make a purchase is the FEAR OF LOSS OF THEIR MONEY. And it is so simple to diminish the fear of loss of money. Give your buyers a money back GUARANTEE. Not just the manufacturer's guarantee on the products you sell. Your competitors are offering the manufacturers guarantee. Be different, be aggressive, be the one that gets the sale by giving your personal and your business guarantee.

Recently I was shopping for a new mattress. We were looking at those Tempur-Pedic foam mattresses that they, the manufacturers and sellers, claim is the greatest thing for your back and restful sleep since the invention of the innerspring mattress. They sell for \$3,000. When I asked about the guarantee if the mattress did not help me I was told by one seller, "Once you use it you cannot return it." A second seller will allow me to return it if I pay \$250. I was not willing to take the chance. Then, when I was about to purchase an innerspring mattress, I saw a TV commercial by Tempur-Pedic offering 100% money back after a 90 day trial. They took the FEAR out of buying. I am awaiting delivery now.

**Make sure your 99¢ Chicken sandwich bring you increased sales and profits.**

---

*Bob Janet is a sales consultant, trainer, speaker and author of "Join the Profit Club." You can read more about Bob at [www.BobJanet.com](http://www.BobJanet.com).*



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# Working **TOGETHER** on Sales

BY BRAD HUISKEN

**AS WE ALL KNOW, THE FIELD OF** sales is one where a salesperson often is working alone yet in many cases, competing with their co-workers. That aspect makes the field much different from other areas of expertise. For example if one doctor is having difficulty solving a tough case, he or she may call in a colleague for a second opinion. Salespeople, however, are generally competing with one another even if they are working for the same company. Hopefully, it is fun and healthy competition, but it is competition, nonetheless. While competing with other salespeople is a part of the sales field, teamwork can and should be a part of selling.

Let me share with you a story that was told to me by a friend to help illustrate this point. My friend was interested in setting

up a completely new computer and phone system for his business and began the process of talking with salespeople and so on. After two or three weeks, he found a system and a salesperson that he liked and after many decisions and negotiations, he decided to buy this particular system. As it turns out the salesperson that my friend was dealing with really only had an expertise in the computer end of the deal, so once the computer came in another salesperson handled the phone part of the deal. No problem, my friend thought, as long as the transition was smooth and seamless. Unfortunately it was neither, my friend had to go back over every single detail with the new salesperson and in the end found out that the phones he wanted were not a good match with the computers he had

just bought and installed. In the end, my friend probably got what he wanted and needed but it took an excessive amount of time and far too much effort.

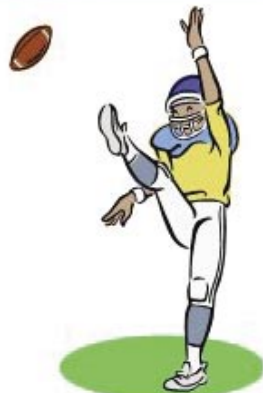
So where was the ball dropped? There is nothing wrong with teamwork, but the new salesperson needs to know everything previously discussed and decided upon before diving in. This brings me back to the beginning, sales is a competitive field but when teamwork is needed to provide the customer with the best possible service, then working together becomes imperative. Also, do not confuse teamwork with turnovers – those are two completely different issues.

*Brad Huiskens is president of IAS Training. For more information visit: [www.iastraining.com](http://www.iastraining.com).*

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# Q&A with David Geller

## Questions & Answers with the Man Who Wrote the Book

### HOW MANY JEWELERS HAVE LASER WELDERS AND WHERE DO THEY GET THEIR TRAINING?

I can't answer the question as to how many jewelers have a laser, but I'm going to guess 15%. Virtually the entire laser company field offers training; it's a must. The unit sold by Stuller has training in house at the Stuller facility in Louisiana. Just being able to view the Stuller facility is an awesome event (I went several years ago).

Most of the other Laser companies will offer to have a trainer come to your store, many charge an extra fee and you should have that budgeted in for your laser purchase. A few have training facilities in their offices.

Training on a laser is 2-4 days and once you've done a few days, you'll be able to

attack most repair problems that come your way.

### IS IT JUST TRIAL AND ERROR OR LEARNING ON YOUR OWN?

Like a computer, it's a technical object and you must be shown how to use it. Unlike a computer, it's not complicated to learn at all. Think about how a car radio was 20 years ago and today. That's right—just a few dials and adjustments. Depending upon the size of the object being repaired and what kind of metal, you're adjusting the power you'll be using. No reason to shoot a small bird with a 12-gauge shotgun!

Most jewelers figure after four months of owning a laser they've seen about most of what will come across the bench and have mastered it. In fact I've spoken to many,

many jewelers who've said they **rarely** use their torches anymore. It's so much faster and easier; you're going to be amazed.

By the way, many of the laser machines have a computer modem installed in the machine and if it needs service the factory can dial in and find out what part the laser might need and ship it to you. Easy to pop the new part in place.

When I was in training as a teenager I was told by my mentor there were only two things to master in being a fine jeweler:

- A. Master the torch
- B. Master setting of stones.

The laser machine has made having to master a torch the thing of "yester year".

If you're looking at a laser machine and see a price tag of \$29,000, "forgetaboutit". A laser doesn't cost money, it makes money. Would you have not bought \$29,000 worth of showcases? Ready to give up your steam machine? It's an investment in your business and INCOME STREAM. A real stream of money.

First off, you probably will lease one and that's give or take \$500 a month. You'll have use of a full time "torch expert" for 4 weeks a month for the pay of just one week for hiring another jeweler. If you're busy now and could use a "part time" jeweler to help you out more work, go with a laser machine first. At \$15 per hour for a part timer, you'll spend \$1200 a month for 4 weeks, 20 hours per week.

The laser will cost 60% and won't take any smoke breaks!

This is one of the few "techy toys" you can buy for your store that is a large investment that will pay back, make you a profit and will be easy to use within 30 days. Cad/Cam will take 6 months or better and computer engraving machines will need a lot of work sitting on your desk to be done. This techno marvel will make you money the very first job you do.

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Michael Straub, owner of Treveler and Straub Jewelers in Brookfield, WI, enjoys riding his motorcycle.

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