

TEXAS

the publication of the
Texas Jewelers Association

SPRING 2018
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Jeweler



A natural blue star cut topaz from Texas
faceted by B. Diane Eames, GG.



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SPRING 2018

President's Message "Rex' Corner" 4

Brick and mortar Retail is Not Dying 5

Maintain your studio in good working order! 6

GEM Cutting in America 8

Pass the Buck..... 10

Getting your team to develop personal trade..... 12

Welcome to 2018 15

**Ransomware Protection for Jewelers:
Prevention and Response Tips 16**

Everything Is Sales 17

The 111th Texas Jewelers Association Convention..... 18

**The winners of the 25th Annual Texas Jewelers Association
Design Competition 20**

From the Archives 18

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President's Message

Rex's Corner



175 Members! Wow! With all of your help, Texas Jewelers Association has seen its largest increase in membership and participation over this last year, in over a decade. None of this it would have been possible without the incredible efforts of our dedicated volunteer board. The hard work of immediate Past President Brad Koen and the tireless efforts of Past President Lucinda Rogers, who organized and executed the most well attended and successful Texas Jewelers Association Convention since the early 2000's.

The TJA is the largest state jewelry association in the nation and we are on the path to a solid financial foundation. This magazine is now mailed to over 600 independent jewelers across Texas. More and more jewelers are realizing the benefits of choosing to join the TJA and become active and involved.

During the past year your TJA board has undertaken a number of meaningful projects and programs. The first major project was building an entirely new TexasJewelers.org. The site was designed to provide useful information to the independent jeweler as well as the general public. A major component of this project was digitizing as much of the association archives as possible and posting these items to the site to allow this information to be both preserved and shared. One of the most difficult challenges with the website project was creating a dynamic "Find a Member" function, but we did it!! This function allows a user to see all the member stores on a Google map and find a member that is closest to the searching user. Finally, check out the new Education section of our TJA website, which has pages devoted to regulatory issues that jewelers in Texas need to be aware. Under this section you will also find links to some of the best jewelry research sites around.

The Texas Jewelers Association is a Texas nonprofit. As such, the board advocates complete transparency. One will find posted on TexasJewelers.org current and historical financial reporting, including twenty years of 990 Tax returns. In the archive section board minutes starting from 1966 to the present era are posted. Unfortunately, we are missing items from September 1994 through August 2012 and would welcome any contributions to our archive. All past issues of *The Texas Jeweler* are now posted.

The TJA has earned a Bronze Seal of Transparency from the nonprofit review site Guidestar.org, and is the only state association in the country to have earned a rating!

The TJA is once again an affiliate member of the Texas Retailers Association, and as such TJA members can access the same member benefits as that of individual TRA members. When the Texas Legislature meets next year at this time, we will be working very closely with the professional lobbyist at the TRA to be watchful for issues that could impact the jewelry industry. The board has also decided to create a new "student" category of membership to encourage those who are just entering the profession to be able to participate in our activities such as our annual design competition.

We hope you all will plan to join us at our Annual Meet & Greet @ JCK this year. It will be held in the AGTA Board Room one of evenings during the JCK Show, and like last year, all are welcome to join with us in taking over the Buffet @ Mandalay Bay afterwards...last year they had to turn off the lights to make us finally leave....

Following the tremendous success of the 2017 Convention, this year will be held October 27-29 once again at the Austin Crowne Plaza.... details on both will follow closer to the events.

In closing I welcome anyone who hasn't gotten involved to join us! This has proven to be a wonderful group of peers whom I would never have met had I just focused on my own business. There is a real value in having friends in the industry who have dealt with many of the same issues and challenges that we all face. If anyone would like more information please do not hesitate to reach out!

Rex Solomon
Houston Jewelry

Brick and mortar Retail is Not Dying

Bob Epstein



Brick and mortar retailers are closing in record numbers this year, but if you take a closer look at the list of retailers closing their doors this year you will notice approximately half of all the closures are by national retailers such as Payless Shoes, Radio Shack and The Limited. Many believe that e-commerce is rapidly taking over the retail industry and will eventually lead to the death of the brick and mortar retailer.

E-commerce is definitely growing at record levels, but online sales are still only a small percentage of the total retail picture. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 2016, e-commerce accounted for \$389.9 billion of the total \$4.849 trillion in retail sales, or roughly 7.8% of total retail sales. Nine out of ten of the top U.S. retailers are brick and mortar stores, with Amazon being the only exception. Among those nine retailers, all but one generated sales growth in 2017.

Noteworthy is that the only non-brick and mortar retailer, Amazon, just made a major commitment to brick and mortar with its recent acquisition of Whole Foods.

While most of the top-nine brick and mortar retailers have an online presence, sales at the store location are much more profitable than their e-commerce orders. Average store margins for online sales decreased steadily this year to approximately 9%. Contrary to popularly held belief, the profitability of their brick and mortar locations is helping to subsidize the online businesses.

Millennials and the post-Millennials “Generation Z” prefer to shop at a small local retailer. According to a recent survey conducted by Accenture Research, over 70% of Millennials and Generation Z consumers said brick and mortar stores are their preferred shopping preference. A 2016 Deloitte survey discovered that 4 out of 10 consumers polled planned to shop in local independent stores for the holidays, even if items are more expensive. The publication *Retail Dive* recently performed a survey asking why consumers prefer to shop in stores instead of online. The main reason given was a desire to see and try out products before purchasing, followed by the ability to take home products immediately, return items easily, enjoy the in-store experience, and the ability to pose questions to store associates. Out of all the consumers surveyed, only 7% responded that they only shop online.

Although the reports of the apocalypse of brick and mortar retail may be overstated, we cannot ignore the increase in online shopping. The successful brick and mortar retailer will need to understand the current trends and shopping habits of its customers. Studies show that approximately 80% of shoppers do online research before making a purchase at a brick and mortar store. Having a website is a definite requirement for retailers. The website needs to be user-friendly and detailed as to the type of product carried. By posting videos on websites it is easy to explain the type of product carried and what makes the retailer better than the competition. It also

helps to keep the attention of potential customers researching the retail location. Product testimonials are another important item to add to websites to gain the confidence of the customer.

Having a strong social media presence is also imperative to success. Approximately 40% of individuals between the ages of 25-44 use social media to research products before making a purchase. It is important to use Facebook and Instagram to announce new products and promotions. It's also a great way to get feedback from customers as to what they like or dislike.

Retailers should monitor social media sites and promptly reply to questions to stay in touch with customers. Online blogs are also a great way to stay in touch with customers and to keep them informed of what's happening at the retail location. Most online advertising is very inexpensive and a tremendous way to stay in touch with your customer base. If products are being sold online, it is a good idea to advertise in-store specials to encourage customer visits to the retail location. Once they visit the retailer, it opens other opportunities to sell them even more products.

The successful brick and mortar retailer will need to have a thorough understanding of their customer base and buying habits. This is one area where e-commerce has an advantage and does a much better job than their brick and mortar counterparts. Amazon, for example, does a great job tracking customer purchases and what times of year they shop. Brick and mortar retailers need to put more focus on who their customer is, their buying habits and personal information as well. When is their birthday or anniversary? One way to do this is to offer a discount on a future purchase if they answer a survey. The survey should ask questions to help you understand what the customers preferences are, important dates for the customer, and what they like or dislike about the store.

A recent survey conducted by the National Retail Federation revealed that 85% of shoppers will abandon their intended purchases if prompt assistance is not provided. Many also valued a personalized experience and smart recommendations. The successful retailer must offer their customers a VIP experience. Staff should be trained to engage with customers in a friendly manner. Offer little perks to personalize the buying experience, such as free cups of coffee. Offer warranties and guarantees that let customers know that this is the right place to do business. The return policy needs to make returning product hassle free and quick.

Brick and mortar retail is not dying; however, it is going through a huge transformation. In order to survive, retailers are going to have to adapt to changes required by consumers' buying habits, become proficient in the use of social media and have a better understanding of their customers and their buying habits.

Bob Epstein is CEO of Eaton Hudson Jewelry Advisors. Offering a legacy in sales strategies for jewelers, Eaton Hudson provides guidance to store owners seeking to turn around a business, sell off unwanted inventory, or liquidate an entire store. For more information, visit www.eatonhudson.com or call Bob direct at 1-843-881-3383.

Maintain your studio in good working order!

by Susan Eisen, GG, Master Gemologist Appraiser, ASA



For those of you who are not goldsmiths, keeping up with your store's equipment is something very important for your bench jewelers to do. Keeping the machines you have in your workshop in good condition not only helps them produce high quality work, but also makes them last longer. As a goldsmith and designer who loves working in the shop, it is important to know what should be done on your equipment on a regular basis. Kudos to Stuller for answering my questions on maintenance when I called to get the information on some of the various machines I buy. Here is the information I have received from them and various other sources:

Ultrasonic cleaners - It's best to clean the liquid you use on a regular basis, either daily or every few days depending on how many pieces of jewelry you are cleaning. Keeping the liquid no more than one inch below the top of the unit keeps the motor from overworking itself and turning the unit on and off with the switch instead of the timer keeps the timer from breaking.

Steam cleaners - Depending on how much use your steamer has, the most important tip for keeping it working well for you is the condition of the water you put in. Some jewelers only use distilled water, but that can be costly and inconvenient. Others have told me they use a steamer powder sold by the various supply

houses once a week. Another chemical to use is vinegar every time you fill it up. It all depends on the reservoir in your cleaner and how often you use it.

Torch handles - In school I was trained to release the oxygen and gas out of the hand piece after you close down the cylinder. This eliminates malfunction of the gauges on your tanks and allows them to last longer.

Flexible shafts - Most manufacturers will recommend that you take everything apart except for the motor assembly and lubricate it periodically. The supply houses sell the grease you can use. Not only does it clean the parts but it also helps them run better.

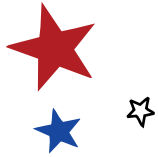
Planishing Hammers - I learned in my metals classes to always keep them impeccably polished so that each time you use them they leave a very clean, bright, smooth finish. This applies also to the stakes and the anvils you use. Otherwise, every little dent on the hammer shows through on the precious metal you are working on. Everyone has their tricks on how to keep them polished, but I have found various grits of sandpaper and abrasive compound works the best.

Rolling mills-The most important things about rolling mills is keeping dust out of them and keeping them lubricated. Just as marks on hammers travel to the jewelry you are working on, every piece of dust or debris can add to the surface of the rollers and cause you major problems later on.

One of the main things I learned in my art metals classes was to buy quality tools, and respect and take care of your tools as you use them. I still use many of the tools I purchased 40 years ago and they are part of my history as a jeweler.

If you have any times to share with other Texas Jewelers, please send them to me (orders@susaneisen.com) so I can include them in my Texas Two Minute Tips I send out often.

Susan Eisen, El Paso, Texas



GEM Cutting in America

by Diane Eames G.G.



What does a jeweler want from a gem cutter? Usually it's to repair a broken gem. Or maybe you want a great custom cut gem for a piece of jewelry you have in mind. So next it's where to find a gem cutter. Did you know there are gem cutters all around you? It does not matter where you live in this country; there are gem cutters around you. But how do you find the right gem cutter?

American gem cutters tend to be hobbyists, though it is an expensive hobby. Gems are cut here on pricey electric faceting machines with high quality lighting. Cutters in Africa, Asia, and South America tend to be professionals but they are usually limited by crude equipment and poor lighting.

Professional gem cutters are not a high percentage of domestic cutters, as most gems are cut overseas, but there is help for the trade. Gem cutters in this country may specialize in gem repair, inlay work, flat faceting, concave faceting, or carving. Some of us are generalists. Google, Facebook, and Instagram are good routes to find a gem cutter. Other sources are U.S. Faceters Guild, the AGTA, and gem dealers.



*Diane Eames G.G. Faceting
Photo Credit John Mason*



*This is a Facetron, an American made faceting machine.
It is not complex, but makes precision cutting
and polishing possible.*



Photo Credit John Mason

What is the difference between American cutting and Asian cutting? The most obvious difference is the polish. Gems are polished on 14,000 grit diamond in Asia, but in America it is most common to polish with 50,000 grit diamond. Americans also are more likely to use a better quality diamond polish. Until I polished a topaz on 50,000 grit, I had no idea that much light could come out of a topaz. Americans, like the German gem cutters, tend to be more concerned with their facet junction meets as well.

What kind of training should you expect? Because there is little formal training, many of us learn gem faceting from mentors. U.S. Faceters Guild, along with state faceting guilds, help train many of us. There are a few faceting schools. However, know that American gem cutters are a nerdy lot, and we tend to be perfectionists. We seek out the magic of high polish.

The equipment used by American cutters is different than used in Asia. We use machines that allow precise placement of facets, allow very flat facets, and high polish across each facet. Some of us use GemCad, a cad design program that allows us to design gems and test cut them on the computer before cutting on our precious gem rough.



Blue Texas topaz on Facetron, an American faceting machine



Diane Eames cutting Texas topaz at Luckenbach, Texas. A battery in the truck provided power.

*B. Diane Eames, GG
Graduate Gemologist (GIA)*



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Pass The Buck

— David Geller —

Time for a game or two to enthuse the sale staff this weekend. In fact, lets make it for the repair department.

First go over in a sales meeting “How to Sell & Up sell a Repair”.

Selling Repairs:

You want the staff to loupe the jewelry upon take in to “go over your ring with a fine tooth comb.”.

Although you are not looking to charge for things they don't need, most customer have prongs that are very thing and worn, missing, cracks under the gallery, etc.

On most pieces of jewelry there are many stones that “could” become loose in the shop or later. We check and tighten the first 4 melee stones at no charge and guarantee against stone loss for the 1st year. For five or more stones we charge **an additional \$28 in addition to the repair** to check and tighten from 5 to 20 stones.

“Mrs. Jones, for the additional \$28 we will check and tighten the stones and if they get loose while we work on your ring, we will tighten them at no additional charge and further guarantee for the next 12 months if they get loose we'll tighten at no charge and if they **fall out, we'll replace them at no charge**”.

Do this on just 3 rings a day, 5 days a week, 52 weeks a year and you'll gather an additional **\$19,500 a year!** Your losses are less than \$3000 a year!

So let's get the staff involved this Saturday with a game called “Pass The Buck.”

The first sales person to see a repair Saturday morning, you hand them a twenty dollar bill. The next higher repair sale, the sales person take the \$20 away from that sales person and hold on to it. The **next higher repair sales person gets the \$20 from the sales person.**

At the end of the day, the highest sales person keeps the twenty bucks.

Of course all of this money taking and swapping is done in between customers!

Fun game and guaranteed to increase repair sales.

David Geller
www.JewelerProfit.com

Getting your team to develop personal trade

Jimmy DeGroot



"I wish my team created their own personal trade business." As an online jewelry store trainer, this is one of the biggest wishes I hear from jewelers. So I thought I'd create an outline for your store to begin its very own Personal Trade program, enabling your people to bring in scads of business.

Set up the environment

Most jewelers aren't physically set up for their people to individually market themselves. There are no sit-down workstations with computers where a person can work uninterrupted. You need to create an environment that enables a person to sit down at a computer with a telephone and a work area for writing and keeping files and records. This area can be directly on the sales floor or it can be a room in the back, off the floor.

Set aside time

I realize this is retail and retail is chaos. But I've seen successful stores plan their Personal Trade time at certain times of the day such as after set-up and before the store opens or actual scheduled time off the sales floor in a back room where exponentially more work can be done uninterrupted. Though not ideal, but still better than nothing, I've also seen stores economize their time by having a workstation in the "Sweet Spot" so they are able to still be on the floor, ready for customers, yet still be able crank out some communications.

The goal is for a disciplined, scheduled time. Just like anything you want to be successful at, you have to schedule it.

Everybody Does It

A plan will be more successful if everyone is involved, including the manager. It needs to be ingrained into your culture where everyone holds each other accountable. This is a creative process and does not work if it's mandated. Everyone needs to buy into the idea that this is a good thing for the entire store.

Start Small

If it's complicated or too much to do, it won't work.

Pick one thing and perfect it. For example, plan to reach out to your repair customers from the last month with a satisfaction call. A plan as simple as this can really create some great and profitable conversations. Eventually your daily plan can build to something like this;

- Customer satisfaction calls
- Follow up on current projects in the works (Don't let this monopolize your time or be the only thing you do.)
- Facebook/Instagram post about something interesting
- Email past engagement customers about referrals
- Hand out 1 business card outside the store and start 1 conversations about jewelry by asking people to tell their story.
- Create a short video for your store's YouTube channel, Vlog & website about a commonly asked question you get.



Make it part of the Job Description

Developing personal trade should be an integral part of your team's job description. Owners should have an open mind to it and not be too restrictive or demanding of the activities. I mention this because there still are bosses out there that are in the physical production mindset rather than the creative production mindset. They get angry when they don't see their people doing something such as wiping cases or arranging jewelry. The job of creating personal trade is really where the money is made and should be encouraged and rewarded.

A Team Plan

Have a group discussion talking about the importance of people developing their own business within your business. Stress that for this to work, everyone needs to buy into the idea and that they have to work together as a team supporting one another. Although it's called Personal Trade, not everyone is at the store all the time, so they need to be able to rely on one another with good communication and teamwork to get the sale for the store and not just the individual. Also, allow the team to build their own plan. They will be much more effective implementing the plan they create (and also change as they grow) than with a top-down directive.

Get Started Now

Don't worry about a perfect plan. Get started now to get a few wins as soon as possible. This will get your team excited and create momentum for them to continue. The plan will be perfected as they go along. They'll recommend changes and suggest things. One of the neatest things they will excitedly share is "This is what really worked for me!" Those are profitable words to hear.

Reward It

Regardless of how you pay your people, condone and reward this behavior. Contests are always fun and of course money always works. I've always made it my goal as a manager to pay out the highest commission or profit sharing checks possible. You'll find that if people are rewarded generously, they will continue that activity.

Developing Personal Trade is not a program in a box for you to buy. It has to be developed and nurtured from within your store. It all starts with the owner and their attitude toward it. Then allow for team creation and buy in followed up with a daily plan. Get a program like this going and watch what happens to your sales and your team's attitudes. I know you'll be very happy with the result.



Jimmy DeGroot owns JewelryStoreTraining.com, a once a week video training jewelry stores around the world on everything from sales techniques, team building and daily operations. Learn more at www.jewelrystoretraining.com

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TEXAS JEWELRY INDUSTRY REGULAR NETWORKING EVENTS:

Houston Area Jewelers Breakfast

Friends in the Jewelry Business:

Second Friday Every Month @ the Egg & I Breakfast Meyerland.

4938 Beechnut St, Houston, TX 77096

Approx 7:30 – 9:00 A.M.

Organized by Amber Gustafson amberdgn@aol.com

(281) 391-6333

The Facebook Group is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/156147236021/>

Houston Area Jewelers Breakfast

Dallas Ft Worth Area Jewelers Breakfast

We will meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 8:15 am at Denny's on Central Expressway just North of Meadow Road, South bound.

There is no agenda, just a cup of coffee or a great breakfast, and get to talk to other jewelers.

We are out of there at 9:00 a.m., time enough to get to your office!

Come see what we are about and do a little networking!

For Questions call Dolores English

or For Snarky Comments call Jeffrey English

at [214-638-1583](tel:214-638-1583)

Austin

Breakfast every Friday at 8 AM. Different locations.

We have been meeting for approximately for 35 years!

Main contact: Robert Harrison jeweler@prodigy.net

(512) 266-1715

Welcome to 2018!

By: George Kelemen, President & CEO – Texas Retailers Association



Welcome to 2018! The 2017 holiday shopping season was, by all accounts, record setting. I hope all of your stores benefitted from the great Texas economy, low unemployment, and nice holiday weather. 2018 is already off to a quick start; state legislative interim hearings are taking place and the election season is already in full swing. Since 2017 was a great year for TRA, we wanted you to have one last look at the

year that was. The TRA staff produced a great 2017 highlight video to celebrate our successes last year. Visit www.texasretailers.com to take a look and relive some of the best TRA moments from last year.

As we wrapped up 2017, Tax Reform legislation was passed by Congress and signed by President Trump. TRA played a key role in the successful Tax Reform effort. Thanks to all of our members who supported the effort through your advocacy. We know that so many of you met with your members of Congress in person, called them, and wrote to them about Tax reform (over and over). We couldn't have done it without you! Many Americans, including those who work for several TRA member companies, are already seeing the benefits of Tax Reform through bonuses, raises and other investments in employees. TRA will continue to keep you updated as the new tax law is implemented over the coming months.

At the state level, legislative interim hearings are already in full swing, highlighted mostly by the varying impact Hurricane Harvey will have on all aspects of state government. We expect interim legislative hearings both here in Austin and across the state during the first part of the year. We will keep TRA members up to date on the interim committee processes, as well as opportunities to tell your story directly to lawmakers at hearings on the various interim issues we will be tracking. If you or your company are interested in engaging in the interim committee process, please reach out to TRA's VP of Government & Regulatory Affairs, Jim Sheer at jsheer@txretailers.org.

2018 will also be a very important election year here in Texas, with all the statewide elected officials up for re-election, as well as most of the State Legislature and our Congressional delegation. The 2018 elections will be one of the most impactful here in Texas in almost two decades. Although, most of the top statewide elected officials will likely win reelection, the changes in the state legislature, as

well as within our Congressional delegation have the potential to be very dramatic. Texas will have a new Speaker of the House and quite a few new members of the legislature given the amount of retirements and intra-party primaries that have materialized. On the Congressional level, we will have at least eight new faces in the Texas delegation because of retirements, an over 20% turnover rate from one year to the next. The fact that 2018 will be such an important year electorally underscores the need for TRA to be active politically. We can only do that when our members support the association's political efforts, through contributions to our PACs (TRAPAC and TRA FedPAC), as well as to our general advocacy fund, the Retail Advocates Fund (RAF). For information on how you can donate to the Texas Retailers Association PACs, visit our website at www.texasretailers.org. Your support of these key tools will help TRA in-turn support those candidates for state or federal elective office, who understand the importance of Texas retail. TRA events such as the inaugural Advocacy Summit, March 23-25, will be a great opportunity for members of TRA and the retail industry in Texas to spend valuable time with key lawmakers from our state. Specifically, discussing the most topical advocacy issues facing the retail industry and networking with Texas's most retail-friendly members of the Texas Legislature and Members of Congress. For more details on how you can participate in the TRA Advocacy Summit, visit the TRA website (www.texasretailers.org).

Additionally, our 2018 Texas Retailers Forum will be in Corpus Christi and will take place at the Omni Corpus Christi Hotel, July 23-24. Our annual educational Forum, hosted by the Texas Retailers Association and the Texas Retail Education Foundation, will provide retailers with timely, topical and quality program sessions and speakers. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet with retail industry leaders from across the state and country at networking functions such as our Awards Dinner, networking breaks, and our popular closing night casino party. Registration and sponsorship details and information about both great events is inside this magazine. Make plans now to secure your spot at these can't miss events.

We hope that your year is off to a great start and we look forward to having all of you along for the ride, in what is shaping up to be a very significant year for Texas. As always, thank you for supporting TRA, please feel free to reach out to the TRA team anytime, and we look forward to seeing all of you in 2018.

RANSOMWARE PROTECTION FOR JEWELERS: PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TIPS

Brought to you by Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group

By Logan Moore – Jewelers Mutual

When most jewelers talk about the security of their businesses, they think in terms of safes, alarms, and vaults.

While robberies, thefts, and burglaries are still the most real threats, cyber-attacks are becoming a major concern. As technology continues to evolve and become more sophisticated, criminals are developing tactics to target your assets without ever stepping foot in your business.

One of those tactics is ransomware and it can severely hinder businesses that are impacted by it. In an age where even the most run-of-the-mill businesses and individuals are targets, ransomware protection for jewelers is an absolute necessity.

What is a Ransomware Attack?

Ransomware is a virus that can attach itself to a very harmless looking email or website, often from a legitimate-looking company. Once opened or activated, the virus infects your files and requires a “secret code” to be removed.

Then, a ransom note appears on your screen, typically demanding a certain amount of money to receive the code. Unfortunately, there’s no guarantee that the hackers will provide the code in return, and even if they do, you won’t know if the code will actually unlock your files until after you have transferred money.

An example is the WannaCry virus, which brought ransomware attacks to the mainstream spotlight in 2017 and has made people in every industry take cyber threats more seriously.

How to Prevent a Ransomware Attack

Aside from the costly implications of a ransomware infection, imagine being unable to process any transaction through your network for days or weeks!

Follow these tips to protect your jewelry business from ransomware attacks:

- Only use secured wireless providers to gain internet access and encrypt your router to protect your connection.
- Computers should be frequently checked with anti-malware, anti-spyware, and anti-virus software.
- If you are on a website that seems suspicious, leave it immediately.
- Run ad-blocking applications on corporate machines.
- Limit employee access to data and information, and limit authority to install software.
- Confirm computer screens and confidential informa-

tion is out of sight of your customers and visitors.

- Properly dispose of sensitive information by destroying or wiping hard drives.
- Back-up your information.
- Create a plan.

How to Respond to a Ransomware Attack

If your business does experience a ransomware attack, contact law enforcement immediately. Any attack on your business should be reported to the police so they can record any hacking incident. If customer data —such as credit cards details — is lost, you will need to notify the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

The FBI also has a website devoted to reporting internet fraud, known as the Internet Crime Complain Center or ic3.gov.

If you believe sensitive information — such as customer data — has been compromised in the attack, you may want to contact an attorney for advice. There are laws that require you to notify your customers and you may face fines as a result of a potential data breach.

Extra Protection from Cyber-Attacks

No jewelry business should be without a properly functioning alarm or fortified safe, and now it’s clear that no business in general should be without protection from cyber threats like ransomware.

Similar to protecting your inventory from a robbery with jewelers block insurance, ransomware protection for jewelers is available with cyber liability insurance.

A cyber liability policy from Jewelers Mutual goes beyond ransomware, too. It also guards against threats like*:

- Phishing schemes
- Income loss, interruption expenses, and data recovery costs
- Fines or penalties due to non-compliance with payment card standards

Discuss the details of a policy with a Jewelers Mutual agent for additional peace of mind.

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EVERYTHING IS SALES

Aleah Arundale



Everything is sales.

You want to get your kid to eat that piece of broccoli, sales. You want that flight attendant to give you a seat upgrade, sales.

The better you become at sales, the easier your life will be. So let's get better at selling.

The first step in winning a sale is to let the potential

buyer know "what's in it for them" You would think that would be obvious, but I can't tell you how many "check out my website or go to my Facebook page» ads I see with no clear reason why anyone would do so. Think about it. Every time you see an advertisement or product don't you think, "how does this benefit me?"

You must make crystal clear "what's in it for your customer."

You need to answer the question how your product benefits them before they even ask it. In order to sell, they just need to know how you provide value to them. I call this your value story.

You must have a direct, well defined value story in every sale presentation.

Why should they shop with you?

Why is your diamond the best deal?

Not every customer is a price shopper, but every customer is a value shopper.

Telling your value story is not easy. There are many messages you want to get across to the customer: Your warranty Your history in the community, Your diamond buying trip to Antwerp. The problem is if you try to give too many messages, they all get lost.

People need short and simple.

Let's say I throw six balls at you. You won't catch any of them.

But if I throw one ball at you, you will catch it.

The same is true in sales.

Pick one strong, clear reason to shop with you and you will sell more jewelry.

The best sales people I know are also the most confident. Remember how I talked about getting your kid to eat broccoli and that flight attendant to give you the seat upgrade? Well confidence will help with all of that. Do you know why Facebook is so popular? It's the LIKES. We are not always sure if we like something, but if Becky likes it and Jim likes it well then we are more confident to like it too. That's why people come into a retail store. They want someone to tell them what to buy. They want a confident person to show them value and trends, so when selling jewelry, do not ask customers if they like a necklace.

TELL them how amazing it looks on them.

Do not ask them what styles they like, tell them what are your hottest sellers. Be confident in what you sell and you will see sales increase.

It might help you to think of sales as a stage. There are many similarities between acting and selling. Both must have the ability to take something that might seem old to you and present it as if it is brand new and exciting. Sales is like theater. People see hundreds of ads all day. If you want to get people's attention, you need to put on a show. Your show is your personality. The more personality and passion you have the more people will want to shop with you. These days when customers can check prices on their phones, your personality or your brand's personality is what sets you apart.

Like actors, we need to practice. Most of us are not born great sales people. Practice your value stories, being confident, and keeping your message short.

Dazzle them not just with jewelry, but with your personality and you will sell more jewelry.

Aleah wants to help YOU sell more jewelry! Sign up for her weekly sales tips by emailing her at Aleah@OlympianDiamonds.com, or join her Facebook group Jewelers Helping Jewelers. Aleah is a 5th generation retail jeweler and a 3rd generation GIA Gemologist turned loose diamond wholesaler. She never lost her love for the retail jeweler and will bend over backwards to help you sparkle.

The 111th Texas Jewelers Association Convention

By Britt Caffarena G.G.

Lots of great new information, a wide variety of top-notch vendors and good times were all part of the 111th TJA Convention in October 2017. **The Crowne Plaza** in Austin was a choice spot for our professional yet casual crowd. They made the whole event flow flawlessly with nice guest rooms, big buffet breakfasts and convenient conference rooms for our quality speakers and cozy round table discussions. The main conference hall was a hit with the vendors and we all enjoyed maintaining the constant camaraderie as the lunches and happy hours were integrated into the shopping zone! Vendors also donated nice door prizes that kept everyone present at the show as the lucky winners names were drawn!

The conference drew store owners from all parts of Texas and even a few from our neighboring states. After all, TJA is one of the largest, most active and the oldest state jewelers association! Perhaps that's why the **Jewelers of America** graciously offered to underwrite the successful event. **David Baker** was there with the latest news from **The American GemTrade Association**.

As members of the **Texas Jewelers Association** we have the benefit of affiliation with the **The Texas Retailers Association**. Representatives from TRA were on hand to inform us about great opportunities like health insurance options and discounts on a variety of products and services. That's just another reason to make sure you join our growing group or renew your 2018 membership!

There were so many quality vendors but just to name a few. Exhibitors included some large companies such as **Stuller** and **Roseco**, each of whom had some nice new selling systems to unveil. **Jewelers Mutual**, **Hi-Tech Refinings**, **Elemental Refining** and **Rolland Safe** brought the latest news and show specials too! **Podium** peaked everyone's interest with their cyber-savvy tips on growing your small business. Fancy yellow and pink diamonds along with fabulous precious stones were catching everyone's eye at **Shefi**, **Reko**, **Nava Dee** by **AOD Jewelry** and **Shefi Diamonds**, as well as **Merit Diamonds**.

Alan Lodinger stayed busy with his line **ELLE** and **Charles Hubert** watches and fine pens. He also charmed some new accounts with his latest line of vintage reproductions called **Trufili**. **Time Delay** kept up with the times and showed off their latest app that has a multitude of options that can show clients how they can bling out their existing Rolex watches.

Also offered a hands on session during one of the round table discussions. **Co-Star** also shined with their app plus CAD to

Completion B2B branding options.

Members also had a chance to let their talents shine in the annual TJA Design Competition. There are always multiple categories from student to professionals in lapidary and faceting to fine finished jewelry in various price ranges. There were so many great entries! The Best in Show honors went to **Michael Von Krenner** for his 14k white gold and pink gold earrings with Emi Fleishman of Almor/Heskia & TJA President Brad Koen



Stuller Reps: Rhonda Shedrick & Vanessa McBride with Kimberly Keighley of Austin Private Jeweler



Almor Design Rep Emi Fischman with TJA President Brad Koen



The Best in Show honors went to **Michael Von Krenner** for his 14k white gold and pink gold earrings with shine!

So many of our members are not only jewelers or business owners. They are also talented in many other ways! We all got to enjoy great live music from member **Steve Kreichbaum's** fun band called the?? We thank them for volunteering their time and talent as they kept us dancing at our Halloween theme party. After all, what kind of Texas Conference would it be without a bit of hootin' and hollerin'? We are all about building your business and creating new friends and alliances. Set your calendar for our 2018 conference October 27-29th. Whether you have already joined or are considering becoming a new member then please join us. Everyone is welcome!

By Britt Caffarena of Better Bling Studio

2017 Texas Jeweler's Association Design Competition.



25th Annual TJA Design Competition



Shelly Hirsh & Rex Solomon listen to Time Delay's Gregory Vana's Pre Owned Rolex Presentation.



George Prout's Top Ten Jewelry Trends Presentation



Joseph Jenkins leads Podium's round table discussion on on line reviews will Jim & Linda Mills, Mark Priest, Amber Gustafson & Steve Kreichbaum



TJA President Brad Koen being presented with TJA President's Plaque by TJA Secretary/Treasurer Rex Solomon

The winners of the 25th Annual Texas Jewelers Association Design Competition where chosen at the 2017 111th Annual Convention held in Austin

The winners of the 25th Annual Texas Jewelers Association Design Competition where chosen at the 2017 111th Annual Convention held in Austin, Texas.

Best in Show honors went to *Michael Von Krenner* for his 14k white gold and pink gold earrings with diamonds, tsavorite and purple sapphires.



Additional honorees include:

Category 1

Materials less than \$1000

1st place - Michael Von Krenner

14k white gold ring with raw natural diamonds. The center stone spins.



2nd place - Ziad Noshie, Almaza Jewelers

“Bumpy Road” pendant, handmade hammered pendant made of 18k green gold, platinum and 18k rose gold. 3 Japanese Akoya pearls and 16 full cut pavé set diamonds (.023 ctw)

3rd place - Dwayne Bandy, Monkfish Forge

Onyx pendant

Category 2

Materials \$1000 - \$3000

1st place - Steve Kriechbaum, Steve Kriechbaum Goldsmith

Amethyst ring



2nd place - Dwayne Bandy, Monkfish Forge

“Falling Star” pendant, cast sterling silver, 22k yellow gold bezel, 23 keum boo, star rutilated quartz, natural yellow sapphires, single diamonds (.33 ctw.)

3rd place - Michael Von Krenner

14k white gold pendant with raw natural diamonds.

Category 3

Materials over \$3000

1st place - Michael Von Krenner

14k white and pink gold earrings with diamonds, tsavorites and purple sapphires (also won Best of Show, pictured above).

2nd place - Ziad Noshie, Almaza Jewelers

“Full Moon” necklace, handmade necklace made of 18k green gold and rose gold. 3 flat polished pieces of white mother-of-pearl and 156 full cut pavé set diamonds (1.28 carats.)

Category 4

Bench Jewelers Exclusive

1st place - Ziad Noshie, Almaza Jewelers “Great Barrier Reef” necklace, made with 50 pieces of natural red Sardinia coral branches and 76 black Tahitian Keshi pearls. Handmade 18k yellow gold clasp and 18k yellow gold wires wrapped around the coral branches. There are multicolored sapphires, rubies and diamonds set in individual tubings. (84 sapphires, 3.36 ctw; 13 rubies, .43 ctw; 14 diamonds .45 ctw)



2nd place - Dwayne Bandy, Monkfish Forge

Aquamarine Bullet pendant, fabricated sterling silver, 23k keum boo, 22k yellow gold bezel, aquamarine bullet cabochon. .16 ctw diamonds.

Student Category

1st place - Karla Hoover

Abstract leaf pendant in 18k gold and reticulated sterling silver.

2nd place - Carter Porter



Fabricated sterling silver with a round cz.

For more information contact the Texas Jewelers Association at www.texasjewelers.org, info@texasjewelers.org or 512-478-2595.

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From the Archives

"TEXAS JEWELERS ASSOCIATION NEWS"

The Voice of
The Retail Jewelers of Texas

308 West 15th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
January 12, 1968

CONTENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. NEW OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS | IV. THE JEWELERS HANDBOOK, 1968 EDITION |
| II. TJA AFFILIATES WITH TRF | V. UNIV OF TEXAS, RJA, AND TJA
COLLABORATE ON 5 TRAINING MANUALS |
| III. 1968 CONVENTION DURING HEMISFAIR
AT SAN ANTONIO | VI. MISCELLANEOUS TID-BITS |

I. NEW OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

New Officers and Directors assume the duties of office as of January 1. Since September, President-elect Vim Rye and his committees have been laying the foundations for TJA 1968 activities. The complete list of officers and directors is included on the single sheet of TJA letterhead enclosed.

As Bob Mitchell becomes your immediate past-president after two dedicated terms as chief executive officer for TJA, he may well look upon several major accomplishments among the many satisfactions of his tenure.

Under President Mitchell, TJA membership increased over 20%. Your association's cash on deposit has quadrupled, annual conventions have been scheduled as family events apart from market time, and TJA became an affiliate of TRF as of January 1.

To Bob and Lucille, our deepest appreciation is due. They have labored well and tirelessly; without thought of any reward or recognition beyond the personal satisfaction that comes from work that bears fruit for the future.

(I wonder how many of us might take a moment to write a card or letter to Bob Mitchell today, expressing your thanks for his work? Even if you've never met, you share common benefits. Write: Robert Mitchell, Mitchell Jewelers, Henderson, Texas)

II.

The Texas Retail Federation and your Texas Jewelers Association are officially affiliated as of January 1, 1968. After many months of committee study, and after deliberation of the Boards of both organizations, the decisions of both bodies were unanimous in approving affiliation.

What does this mean to TJA.....to you as a member of the TJA-TRF-RJA team? First, a more professional approach to association management. Second, a greater opportunity for growth in membership and services to members. Third, the opportunity for a more vital voice in shaping the events that affect your business.

TRF is most capably administered by Executive Secretary Michael R. Moore, with offices at 308 West 15th Street, Austin. This office is now your TJA office. Mr. Moore and his full time staff will handle the affairs of your association.

The Texas Retail Federation, with Austin offices, is the state level expression of what the American Retail Federation is at the Federal level with offices in Washington. TRF is the organizational descendent of what was once known as COTRA, the Council of Texas Retail Associations. Your Texas Jewelers Association was for many years an integral part of COTRA, along with the several other retail trade associations in Texas.

Your dues are in no way altered by this affiliation. TJA's relationship to RJA is in no way altered by our new affiliation with TRF. Your association is adding to its sphere of involvements so that your interests may be better served.

Dues will continue to be remitted in the customary manner to RJA. RJA handles our billing by automation and remits TJA dues monthly to your Treasurer. The distinct identity of TJA will be maintained.

I have tried to touch base on the major points of anticipated questions about TJA-RJA-TRF affiliation. If you have others, please do not hesitate to inquire.

III.

The fourth weekend in June, 1968 is TJA Convention weekend in San Antonio. Beginning Friday noon, June 28 and continuing through Sunday noon, June 30, this convention is your once in a lifetime opportunity to combine a business, educational, family vacation, and Worlds Fair, all into one trip.

Last July TJA acquired confirmed space in the new Palacio Del Rio Hotel now under construction, just two blocks from Hemisfair grounds. There are 100 rooms set aside for TJA convention attendees pre-registration.

ALL RESERVATIONS ARE ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS. ALL RESERVATIONS FOR ROOMS MAY BE MADE DIRECTLY TO THE PALACIO DEL RIO, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS. The Hotel is already sold out -- to get a reservation you must state that you are registering for the TJA Convention. A minimum deposit of one nights room rental is required with your reservation.

A card is enclosed for your convenience. If you plan to attend, make your reservation now.

From the Archives

President Vim Rye, Convention Chairman Herb Serota, and committee members will be contacting you further about convention events and programs.
DON'T WAIT---Get your room reservation in now.

IV.

Enclosed with this lengthy epistle are two contracts for page sponsorship in the 1968 Jewelers Handbook. Every member is being asked to sell at least two sponsorships at \$75.00 each. This is your association's sole means of sustaining your convention and other activities. Get the advertising copy, engraving, or glossy proof from your supplier. Get the contract signed. Get all mailed in by February 10. Your TJA office will bill the participating manufacturer, wholesaler, or supplier in June. WE NEED THE ADVERTISEMENTS NOW.

If there are any questions about the space contracts, or if you need more, Contact Al Golding, Hertzberg Jewelers, San Antonio, or President Vim Rye, Tetts Jewelers, Bay City. Bulova, Rolex, Eisenstadt, and Harteveldt are already in.

V.

For about two years, Mrs. Pauline Burbrink and her staff of the Extension Division of the University of Texas have been working on a set of five training manuals for the retail jeweler. It is estimated that well over \$100,000 has been invested in this project.

Myron Everts, Bill Koen, other Texas Jewelers and I have worked with Mrs. Burbrink and her associate, Mr. Robert Later in the development of this material.

Every organization within our industry nationally has cooperated magnificently in this work. Manufacturers, GIA, JIC, the Silversmiths Guild, and, of course, RJA have supplied tons of information.

The product of this effort, the five manuals, is the only comprehensive compilation of its kind. The career guidance committee of RJA considered the project of sufficient merit to recommend a \$7,500 grant from RJA to the University of Texas toward the completion of the books. The grant has now been received by Mrs. Burbrink's office and two of the five books are off the press.

Within a few weeks, it is hoped, you will be able to order these manuals for the more professional training of your employees.

VI.

Jack Barker, Director of Affiliate Services for RJA, visited your TJA office on December 28. It's always good to see Jack and hear of RJA plans for 1968. Among the items of interest...more study by the RJA Committee on Data Processing, headed by Ed Wolf of Pennsylvania; a possible big break in the class ring business for retail jewelers in 1968 (RJA will publish full particulars in due course); a bigger than ever 1968 trade show in New York next August...and a planned RJA Regional Conference in Texas next June.

Also heard is the welcome word that Chase Holland is much improved.

Zale Corporation is reportedly negotiating with Butler Shoe Corporation for a stock exchange giving Zale Corp. the additional 200-plus Butler stores to add to its over 700 other retail units.

If you have managed to read to this point, you are aware that there's enough information included for 30 or 40 newsletters.

This is my last newsletter to write for TJA, so perhaps I can be forgiven for its length. I'm writing this on December 31, my last day as your Executive Director. As of January 1, I will begin serving TJA as Secretary-Treasurer.

Since 1954 it has been my pleasure to share intimately in the affairs of our association. The greatest joys have been the personal experiences of working with so many of you.

It's dangerous to single out individuals for special mention, because it's impossible to mention everyone; however, I must pay my respects to a few among the many who have nurtured your association for much of its 61-year history.

To Myron Everts my deepest appreciation for his encouragement and for the personal example of how to live which he sets before all men.

To Bob Armstrong, my thanks for his wise counsel and ready wit.

To Dick Reiner, Bob Morrow, Jerry Fisher, Bob Corrigan, Herb Serota, Dalton Billings and Chase Holland, my thanks for their considered judgements and consistent work.

Bob Mitchell, I have already mentioned, and I must remark again -- it has been an enriching personal experience to work with him.

As a final word, let us all be reminded that the greatest sins are the sins of omission. The most weakening attitude is that of apathy. The most destructive force in the world has always been moral lassitude.

Just as people get the kind of government they deserve....it's nothing more or less than is demanded....., you can have whatever sort of trade association you want it to be. Personal involvement is still the most effective way to have the Jewelers Association you want.

It is my earnest hope that 1967 has been a good business year for you and that 1968 will be even better. Beyond that hope there is an even more important one, the hope that your inner needs of the spirit are met by the life you lead and that you know the One in whom you can place your trust.

DELL M. SHEFTALL



Texas Jewelers Association

Texas Jewelers Association
611 Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

Associate Membership

Business Information

Renewal New Member

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Business Phone: _____ Business Fax: _____

Email: _____ Website: _____

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

EIN: _____ IBT#: _____

Type of Business (Please check all that apply)

Friend of Industry Manufacturer Supplier Traveling Salesperson

Payment Information

Annual Membership Dues - \$95

My check enclosed, payable to Texas Jewelers Association

Please invoice me by Email:

My Email Address is: _____

Please mail this form and payment to the address below.

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Austin, TX 78701



Texas Jewelers Association

611 Congress Avenue
Austin TX 78701
www.TexasJewelers.org

Business Information

Renewal New Member

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Business Phone: _____ Business Fax: _____

Email: _____ Website: _____

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Type of Business (Please check all that apply)

Retail Jewelry Store Leased Department Other _____

Total Number of Outlets _____ x \$50 = Subtotal \$ _____
(Attach a list with complete addresses & phone numbers)

Year Established: _____ Tax ID Number: _____

OCCC CPMR# _____ JBT# _____

List Two Industry References (names, addresses & phone numbers)

1) _____
_____ (_____) _____

2) _____
_____ (_____) _____

I will abide by the TJA Code of Ethics & Standards of Professional Conduct

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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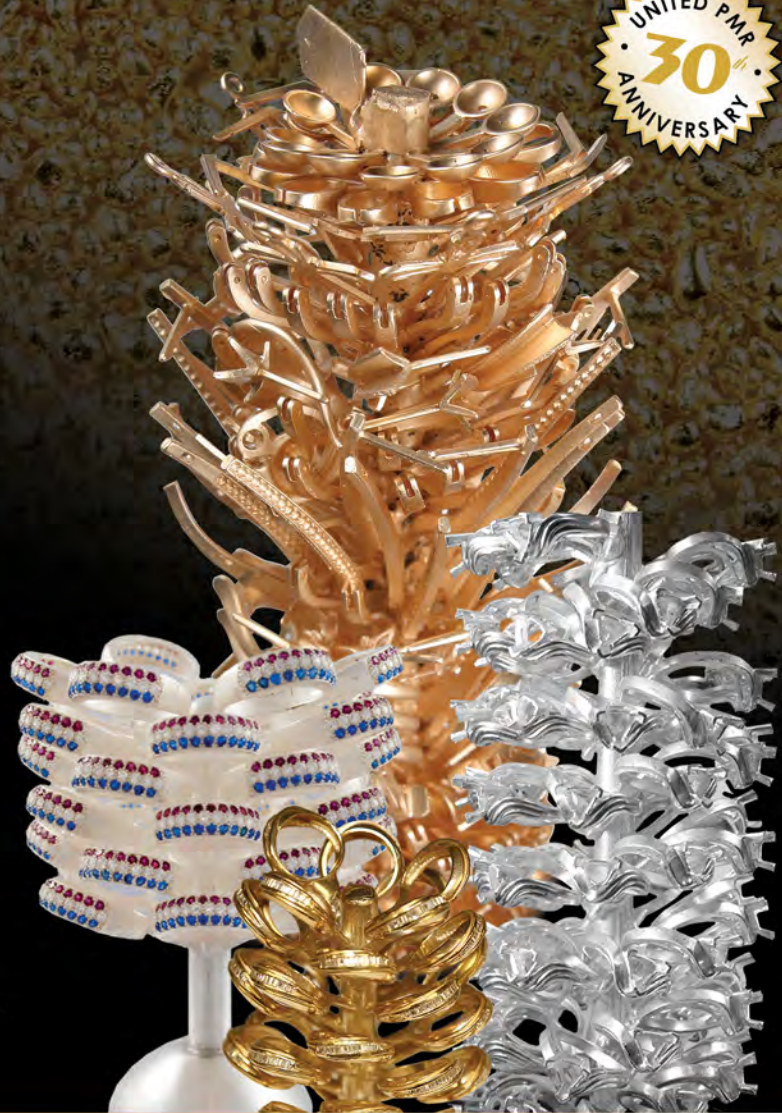
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