

TEXAS

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Texas Jewelers Association

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Jeweler



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2018

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President's Message

Rex's Corner



As I approach the half way mark in my term as President of the Texas Jewelers Association, (TJA) I am pleased to report that the state of the association is excellent. The TJA is now the largest state association in the country and continues to grow. Since the second half of Brad Koen's term as President, the number of paid retail memberships has increased 4.5 times. In a trade advocacy group such as ours, the most important element of the membership is the retail membership as that is the group that the vendor otherwise known as associate members usually join the TJA in order to meet and establish mutually beneficial relationships. As an association we encourage each of you to take the time to get to know not only each other but also especially the wonderful associate members who have chosen to support the jewelry industry in Texas.

The TJA continues to further its core mission of furthering the jewelry industry in Texas by forming strategic alliances with allied groups. The TJA has joined the Texas Retailers Association, The AGTA, Jewelers Security Alliance, as well as the Jewelers of America, and all of these organizations have reciprocal memberships in the Texas Jewelers Association.

This last year has been a challenging one in various parts of the state as many of us continue to deal with the aftermath of the destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey, a year ago. In the Gulf coast region, many of our customers are still out of their homes, and it may be a while for them to recover financially to be able to acquire luxury goods. The good news for all of Texas is that the oil industry is growing again now that oil has stabilized in the mid \$60 per barrel range. As upstream production gears back up, eventually that will result in a rebound in the downstream elements of the industry, especially middle management and executive jobs in the industry, which in turn supports a strong and growing national economy, with record low levels of unemployment will be a boost to consumer confidence across the board.

We are pleased to announce the formal partnership with the Select Show Dallas, which will constitute part one of our "Texas Two Step," Annual Convention. You are all invited to attend the Dallas Select Show September 16 – 17 at the amazing Ritz Carlton Dallas. The TJA will be holding an open TJA Executive Board Meeting on Sept 16, 2018 at 1pm; we will be putting the finishing touches on the planning of the 112 Annual Convention to be held on Oct 27 – 29 2018 at the Crowne Plaza in Austin. All members, and prospective members are encouraged to attend this open meeting and to participate!

The 112 Annual Convention, part II of the TJA Texas Two Step will start off with a Texas Shoot Off at the Range in Austin, generously sponsored by Robert Loving & Time Delay, Kent McClenahan and, Steve Konetzke of Jewelers Mutual. Following the Shoot Off we will return to the fabulous Crowne Plaza and hold our annual General Membership Meeting and Board Meeting, both of which are open to all. The Discovery Room will open at 7:00 – 9:00 and dinner buffet will be served with the vendors. On Sunday our keynote speaker Shane Decker, which is sponsored by Malakan Diamonds, will be presented at 8:15 a.m. in the speaker's area of the Discovery Room. The Annual Design Competition, as well as the vendor exhibits and meals will all be in the main area of the Discovery Room.

We are also pleased to announce that the TJA will be honoring Texas jewelry companies that have reached 100 years, or more, of operation with formal induction into the TJA100 Club. The awards will be formally presented at the annual dinner, on Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m., and going forward these awards shall be issued in each year that a company reaches that landmark status.

I would also once again thank the efforts of our board, the executive board, our Convention Chair, past president Lucinda Rogers, and especially the efforts of Immediate Past President Brad Koen, who despite a fighting a tremendous health battle all of this year, has continued to devote time and energy to this organization.

I look forward to seeing you at our next two events in our Texas Two Step... the Select Show Dallas September 16 – 17, and at our 112th Annual Convention & General Meeting October 27 – 29 at the Crowne Plaza in Austin.

Rex Solomon is the President of the Texas Jewelers Association. Rex is a fifth generation Texas merchant and is President of Houston Jewelry

Rex Solomon

Houston Jewelry

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AUSTIN TX



OCT 27 - 29



With Keynote Address By

SHANE DECKER

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A PENNY (WEIGHT) FOR YOUR THOUGHTS!

by Susan Eisen, GG, Master Gemologist Appraiser, ASA



Over the years, I have enjoyed sharing ideas with my fellow jeweler friends that have really made a difference. Being a member of TJA enables you to share these ideas. Here are some of the things colleagues have told me in the past few months.

Tired of paying high telephone charges?

If you are exasperated talking to the big phone companies for hours to get their ever-changing rates reduced, try talking to their retention department. They are empowered to give you the best rates to keep you as their customer.

Want to improve your phone system?

Try going voice over IP (VOIP) instead, a computer based phone system. Many law and accounting firms have switched over to this new, advanced system that will save you money every month. Ever thought about converting to cellular? Many companies are switching their services to cellular, getting free phones and saving on monthly fees. Give it some thought and check it out!

Have you checked the new services offered by your alarm service?

No need to have a dedicated phone line anymore, you can switch to cellular and internet backup and save on the extra phone lines you are paying for. They also have remote monitoring, monitoring of you closed circuit cameras, and many other features that are new. Give them a call and find out what's available to you.

Paying excessive fees for your credit card processing?

These companies mostly post these extra fees at the end of the statement hoping you will not notice and when you question them, they say they are required by the credit card companies. Negotiating a better percentage rate as a result of your dissatisfaction has worked for some. Give it a try.

Have you checked your credit card benefits lately?

American Express gives you \$200 to pay for luggage or food on flights. Southwest lets you go standby the same day for travel if you are an A list member with no extra charge. Check out the other benefits you are entitled to that you may or may not be using.

Do you pay interest on your credit card balances?

If you are paying credit card interest on the things you charge each month, call to get your interest rate reduced. They have the authority to lower it if you request it.

Do you have a hard time keeping track of all your appointments and commitments?

Try buying a notebook or an iPad and use the calendar app with google mail. It will allow you to schedule appointments on the sales floor with customers and have them sync with your computer and iPhone so you'll always know where you have to be on what day.

If you have any other suggestions that we can all benefit from please send them to me at orders@susaneisen.com. We are working on making your membership valuable and important!

Susan Eisen, Susan is the Vice President of the Texas Jewelers Association and is the owner of Susan Eisen Fine Jewelry and Watches, El Paso, Texas



Diamond Cutting in Texas!

by Ashley van Creveld



Jewelers, diamond dealers, and all associated with our industry are, by the simple fact that this is our chosen profession, creative by nature. This creativity and talent is evident in not only what we do daily to provide our customers with the creations they cherish, but also in our ability to identify and adjust our businesses to take advantage of every opportunity possible in order to drive revenue and maximize profits.

Out of the 30 years I have had the privilege of working in this industry, the opportunities of the past few years have, in my opinion, been the most significant.

I am referring to the 'gold rush' and our realization that there is very good money to be made in the reusing and the recycling of, either pre-owned or existing inventory.



One of the creative opportunities which currently is significantly underutilized is the ability to have diamonds re-cut. The reasons for having a diamond re-cut should extend well beyond the obvious reason "it's broken." In the past, most of the industry only considered having a stone re-cut, when it was either damaged in the setting process or was an "old cut" brought in

by a customer. When this need arose, usually the stone was sent to your diamond dealer and they would have the stone worked on and returned to you. The interaction with the actual cutter was limited and as a result, the options available to you were also limited.

In recent years, due to both demand as well as necessity, several diamond cutters have made their services directly available to the industry as a whole. This allows you, the jeweler, to be able to speak and interact directly with the cutter to better convey your needs and specific requirements. Similarly, it also allows the cutter to directly assist you and advise you with their expertise. By offering re-cutting options catered directly to your business model, this may include cutting a stone to specific proportions, cutting styles, and makes, customized to your needs.

In today's current competitive market and with so much price transparency and information available to the consumer, the need to set ones business apart is imperative. These distinctions can be as basic as pre-set cut parameters, overall depth, table size, and polish, or as complex as having a stone cut with specific faceting arrangements unique to your business. It is only through direct communication with a cutter that one is able to explore these cutting options.

Founded in 1993, Southwest Diamond Cutters, a Texas based company, seeks to develop close working relationships with local, national, and international jewelers in order to accomplish that mentioned above. As a result of South West Diamond Cutter's extensive knowledge of the national and international wholesale market, as well as employing an on-site team of highly skilled master diamond cutters, they are able to identify potential improvements possible through the cutting process and advise you, the jeweler, how to maximize the value of your existing inventory.

Consider the fact that 20 years ago the most popular fancy shaped diamond, which accounted for approximately 50% of all fancy shape diamond sales, was a marquise. The marquise shape gradually lost ground to the princess cut. Of late, the oval and cushion shape have replaced both the marquise and the princess cut in popularity. This change in popularity, coupled with the "gold rush" and subsequent OTC [Over the Counter] purchases has left jewelers with an abundance of less sought-after diamond

inventory. With a weight loss of 10-20%, a marquise can be converted to an oval or pear shape and a princess cut can be converted to a cushion, asscher, or radiant cut, thereby turning stale inventory into desirable and sellable merchandise.



Most jewelers also face the obstacle of having accumulated an mélange of stones of various sizes, cuts, and qualities. The ability to re-cut this hodgepodge of inventory allows one to combine these smaller stones into consistent makes so they look similar and are calibrated in size. This consistency of makes and sizes not only adds significant value to your inventory but assists in the ability to sell through your inventory much quicker.



Recently, I received an order for an emerald cut eternity band. After placing an order with a manufacturer and receiving calibrated stones at a premium price, we realized that our profit margin on the finished piece was less than 10%. By replacing half of the premium priced calibrated stones with existing stones from our inventory and simply re-cutting them to match the calibrated sizes, we were able to deliver a perfectly matched lay out and increase our profit margins by over 60%.

Recent statistics have shown that the amount of second-hand

diamonds available in the US market is greater or equal to the rough diamonds mined in many well-known mining countries. There is a tremendous untapped market for the independent jeweler to purchase these second-hand diamonds from the public and have them re-cut to meet your specific needs. In this way, you are not only a jeweler, but also a diamond miner in your own right.



I encourage you to tap into your creative talents and form valuable relationships with a cutter in order to explore every opportunity to maximize your profits in this challenging and ever-changing industry of ours.

Ashley van Creveld, a fifth generation diamond cutter, is founder and president of Southwest Diamond Cutters, a Texas based company with strong ties to the European polished and South African rough diamond markets.

Founded in 1993, Southwest Diamond Cutters, has strived to offer the highest level of diamond re-cutting and repair services to the trade. From its humble beginnings, Southwest Diamond Cutters is now one of the largest diamond cutters in the country. This growth is attributed to not only the exceptional level of cutting, but also the attention to detail of understanding each customers specific needs.

For more information, visit www.southwestdiamondcutters.com, or call 972-387-1078

Photo Credits: Nicole Ramirez G.G.



How to sell Repairs and Custom Design

David Geller

You know from my constant preaching that repairs are not *price sensitive*, they are **trust sensitive**. It's a proven fact just from the closing ratio. While the typical store sells 3 out of 10 presentations from the **showcase**, it's typical to sell 9 out of

10 people whom you quote a repair price. 90% of customers say yes no matter what you charge them for a repair.

Custom design comes in close with a 70-80% closing ratio. It's all about trust. If the customer feels like you know what you're doing, they will "trust" you with their prized possessions. But this doesn't mean they still won't gasp when you quote them \$150 to re-shank their ring. Your confidence in answering their objection usually will kill the question and make them feel good about it right away.

Things not to say:

1. "Well that's what we charge".
2. "Well the other jeweler obviously knows the value of his work."
3. "Gold has gone up"
4. "That's the price lady, take it or leave it."

Customers want more information than flippant answers. Without getting too technical, now's the time to share how the job is actually done and to tell a customer some things they didn't even know. One example is you probably have a guarantee on you work but never mention it.

In our price book we charge an additional \$23.00 in addition to sizing the ring to check the stones for tightness (up to 20 stones), make sure they're tight and to guarantee for 1 year that they won't get loose or fall out. If they fall out, we'll replace them. (There are limits to our guarantee, but for the most part we're guaranteeing melec.)

This is addition to the \$32.00 we charge to size a narrow, yellow gold ring smaller. So to size a wedding ring with a dozen small diamonds we would charge a total of \$55.00. We don't ask the customer if she'd like to **pay** the extra money and have the warranty, it's presented in this manner. Read it out loud as you see this paragraph.

"Mrs. Smith, its only \$55 to size your ring down to a 6. Our jeweler will size the ring smaller and do it so you can't tell its been done. Then he'll round the ring up, remove any scratches on the ring and refinish it like new so it looks like the day you received it. Then he'll check each and every diamond to make sure they are tight after the ring leaves the store. We're so confident in his work, we'll guarantee for a year that if the stones get lose, we'll tighten them at no charge and/or if any stones fall out-we'll replace them at no charge. We can have the ring ready for you next Thursday. May I get you to please fill out your name and address here on our envelope please?"

All I've done is to tell the customer exactly what we're going to do and how we guarantee our work. A majority of the time, this type of presentation works and you're off. But what if the customer starts to give you some grief?

You'll find that if you quote a price on **merchandise from the case** and the customer thinks your price is too high, they usually will say **"Thanks, I'll think about it."** They don't argue that your ring price is too high,

But for some crazy reason, when a *repair* customer is given a price, if they think it's too high they won't say "Thanks, I'll think about". Rather they give you the dickens.

"Mrs. Smith, a new 1/2 shank on your ring will be \$154.00" Repair customers yell at you instead:

**"Are you nuts? I don't want to make your car note, sonny."
"I didn't pay that much for the whole ring, are you out of your mind?"**

Repair customers are vocal. But don't let one or two out of ten who walk change your whole mindset. 80-90% of customers will just say "O.K., when can I pick it up.

You should go right now and ask your jeweler 3 questions:

1. How long have you been a jeweler?
2. How long have you worked here?
3. What is the most expensive piece of jewelry you ever worked on?

You might get these 3 answers:

1. 32 years
2. 9 years
3. \$285,000

Several paragraphs up I gave you a good selling tip on ring sizing. What if the customer balks at the prices even after such a smooth sales pitch as that? Use your 3 answers for giving the customer even more confidence.

"Mrs. Smith, you are standing in one of the best shops in the city. Our Jeweler Melvin has been a jeweler, repairing and making jewelry for over 32 years! He's worked for us for over 9.

We usually can't hire 3/4 of the jewelers we interview; they just can't meet our standards. Melvin is an excellent jeweler who has worked on other people's jewelry, even valued up to \$285,000 for a single ring. **You do want that kind of expertise when we fix your ring, don't you?"**

That usually wins them over. I have met one store owner that after one more rebuttal will tell the customer:

"Melvin's our best and he doesn't come cheap. We do happen to have an apprentice that Melvin is training and the apprentice can size your ring for only \$42.00 if you like."

No one ever wants the apprentice to work on their jewelry, everyone chooses Melvin!

DAVID GELLER is a consultant to jewelers on store management. Email him at <mailto:dgeller@bellsouth.net>



Call for Entries Opens for 2019 Saul Bell Design Award Competition

AUGUST 2018 — Rio Grande announces its call for entries for the 19th annual Saul Bell Design Award, an international design competition that challenges jewelers and metalsmiths to pick up their tools and seize their moment.

“The Saul Bell Design Award Competition offers designers a challenge unlike any other,” says Rio Grande Creative Director Jamie Gros, “to compete on an international level, to have their work judged by iconic names in the jewelry industry, and to be celebrated alongside a list of amazing winners and finalists.”

One of the jewelry industry’s foremost design events, the Saul Bell Design Award competition is unique for its intensive judging process. Two rounds are judged by a total of 10 jewelers and industry leaders who are masters of their craft. In the initial round, five judges look for originality of design, proposed use of materials, and aesthetics to select finalists. In the final round, a second panel of five judges examines completed finalist pieces up close, in the hand, and on model, looking for successful incorporation of materials, wearability (except in the Holloware category) and quality of workmanship.

2018 winner Sophia Hu says receiving the Saul Bell Award has been “such a highlight in my life—a milestone in my career.” Her beautifully inventive “Origami—Window with a View Collection” received the Saul Bell Award’s 2018 Best of Show special distinction. “I really appreciated the two rounds of judges in the competition, since they have the eyes and tastes to see deeper, to identify and appreciate all the design efforts I put into each design in this collection.”

Matthieu Cheminée appeared as a finalist in the 2017 Silver/Argentium Silver category; he returned to win First Place in that same category in 2018 with his “Itado” cuff. “I actually designed that piece as I was in Albuquerque last year after the ceremony of the Saul Bell Award,” he says. “I had so much fun, and I thought it was such as good experience, that I had to come back.”

There are nine categories in the 2019 competition: Gold/Platinum, Silver/Argentium® Silver, Enamel, Holloware/Art Objects, Alternative Metals/Materials, two categories of Emerging Jewelry Artist, and two categories of Jewelry Collection.

The Emerging Jewelry Artist categories encompass two age ranges: 18 years old and younger (high school age), or 22 years old and

younger (college age) as of October 25, 2018. The two Jewelry Collection categories invite designers to create a cohesive set of wearable pieces (such as a coordinated necklace, bracelet and pair of earrings). Jewelers can compete in Jewelry Collection Couture/Fine, representing a line of luxury jewelry, or Jewelry Collection Fashion/Bridge, representing a line of trend-setting jewelry.

Entrants can pay a discounted early-bird fee of \$75 for work submitted through September 17, or the regular \$125 fee for work accepted through the final October 25 deadline. All Emerging Jewelry Artist submissions are just \$25 through the final October 25 deadline.

Entries are accepted through October 25, 2018. Finalist pieces are due by January 25, 2019. The entry form and detailed information about the competition, including submission guidelines and information about each of the categories, are available at saullaward.com.

In Memoriam



Bill Ward
1950 - 2018

The Texas Jewelers Association mourns the passing of Bill Ward, one of the true old school, jewelry road warriors of the Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas region.

Bill was a historian with a deep love of Texas and its unique history. We shall greatly miss his enthusiasm and good humor. The Texas Jewelry industry has lost one of the people who made it just a little bit more interesting. He was enthusiastic about the merchandise that he represented, and cared about the stores he serviced. Bill always had a joke to tell and was connected to the trade and shared his passion of jewelry with all in the industry.

Texas Retail - Governmental Affairs & YOU!

By: George Keleman – President Texas Retailers Association



Texas retailers recently gathered in Corus Christi for the 3rd annual Texas Retailers Forum. Our annual educational Forum provided retailers with timely updates on the advocacy issues at the federal, state and local levels.

This summer has been particularly full of blockbuster developments on the ad-

vocacy front for retailers at all levels. In late June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the retail industry on the e-fairness case (*Wayfair v. South Dakota*), essentially leveling the playing field for all retailers when it comes to collecting sales tax, regardless of physical presence. Now, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar and his team have begun the work on how the State of Texas will implement the Court's ruling in Texas. TRA has met directly with Comptroller Hegar since the ruling was announced and we are in close contact with his office as the implementation process unfolds, to ensure the smoothest transition for Texas retailers. The current timing is for full implementation to be complete by early 2019.

On the state level, the retail industry recently scored a major legal victory through the Texas Supreme Court's ruling that plastic bag bans are illegal according to Texas law. This ruling effectively rescinds all the local plastic bag bans that have been in place - most notably in Austin. Most of the cities that had bag bans in place, including Austin, have now rescinded the bans. I am pleased to report that TRA members impacted by this ruling have shown extraordinary professionalism and community awareness in their respective statements and decisions regarding how they will proceed in the communities that they serve where bag bans had previously been in place. This is consistent with both TRA's, as well as our industry's, long stated position of being good stewards of our communities through education and promotion of recycling efforts.

We also continue to educate state lawmakers on our priority

issues going into the next Texas legislative session: the inventory tax and why it is so detrimental to business in Texas, preempting the Austin Paid Sick Leave ordinance and other burdensome wage and labor initiatives like it, and Dark store taxing issues. All these issues were discussed in depth at the Texas Retailers Forum in late July, where we hosted several key members of the Texas Legislature who are poised to champion these issues on our behalf during the next session, which begins in January. That said, NOW is the time to invite your local legislators into your stores for a tour and an opportunity to discuss the issues that matter most to you and your business. Additionally, we encourage you to get to know your candidates for elective office, at all levels, so you know where they stand on your key issues. If you are able, consider contributing to the candidates of your choice, or to your industry Political Action Committee (PAC), the Texas Retailers Association PAC (TRAPAC) so we can help support retail friendly elected officials. Lastly, **SAVE THE DATE for the Texas Retail Industry Lobby Day in Austin – Wednesday, March 20, 2019**. Make plans to join your fellow retailers in Austin to lobby the Texas Legislature on behalf of the retail industry. You can get the latest information on TRA's advocacy efforts by visiting the TRA website at: www.txretailers.org.

As always, thank you for supporting TRA and please feel free to reach out to the TRA team anytime, or stop by the TRA booth at the TJA Convention in late October.

George Keleman is the President of the Texas Retailers Association, The Voice of Texas Retail. He can be reached at (512) 472-8261 www.TXRetailers.org



Marvelous Member News

Member News By Susan Eisen

Congratulations to the following Texas Jewelers Association Members!



National Jeweler Names **Zadok Jewelers** Co- Founder **Helene Zadok** as **Hall of Fame Inductee**. **Helene Zadok** will also be inducted into The National Jeweler Retailer Hall of Fame alongside husband **Dror Zadok**. This award was launched in 1989, as a tribute to honor jewelers who have continued to stand out in the industry year after year. Together, **Dror** and **Helene** opened **Zadok Jewelers** over 42

years ago in Houston. Over the years, their hard work and industry expertise have never gone unnoticed. “What I think separates us is that we are locally owned, managed and operated. This is a family business in every sense of the word,” said **Helene Zadok**. **Zadok Jewelers**, still in its original location, was approximately 1,200 square feet when it opened in 1976. Now, over four decades and several expansions later, this iconic jewelry store encompasses over 12,000 square feet.

Ziad H. Noshie of Almaza Jewelers celebrates 50 Years in Business

Local family-owned and operated business commemorates milestone with a year full of celebrations

Almaza Jewelers, Inc. has reached an exciting milestone this August, celebrating 50 years in business in Houston. **Almaza** is one of the oldest family-owned and operated jewelry stores in Houston offering custom design work with and strong emphasis on customer service.

Ziad H. Noshie, owner, jeweler and award-winning designer, stated, “Through perseverance and dedication, I was able to reach this milestone which reflects years and years of hard work. Although it has not been an easy 50 years, it has been extremely rewarding.” **Noshie** says he feels blessed to have his wife and two daughters working with him and the family business makes many clients feel “at home and comfortable” doing business with them.

Just last October, **Almaza** moved to their new location after months of planning and building. The family is very proud of the new store and larger workshop and says it has given them more space to work collaboratively with designs, repairs, appraisals, and customer service.

To celebrate the anniversary, **Noshie’s** wife and daughters are throwing him an intimate surprise cocktail hour at the shop, and in November the family will host a dinner party with their closest, most loyal clientele. The **Noshie** family will continue to celebrate throughout the year and will reflect on previous years of business and look at what they have achieved as well as make plans for the future.



Houston Jewelry September 18, 2018 will mark 25 years that **Houston Jewelry** has been open at its current location on Westheimer. **Houston Jewelry** moved to this location when it redeveloped its former building on the next block which **Houston Jewelry** built in 1973 which was **Houston Jewelry** first opened a location outside of downtown Houston. – **Rex Solomon**



Alonso Jewelry Designs’ Marc Alonso ran a promotion for the July 4 for a vote for your favorite hero the winner was a gentleman named Brad Phipps who was burned severely over 60% of his body trying to save a fellow firefighter who perished in the fire, and had to have several fingers amputated. The way the contest worked was that people would write a story about their favorite hero rather it be a first responder or active military person. Mr. Phipps had multiple nominations and therefore was selected as our winner of the \$2000 giveaway.

Greg and Kanae’s Jewelry and Art opened a new jewelry store in Georgetown last October. Since then they have had an article in Stuller’s “From the Bench” magazine in May. **Greg Neeley** won a finalist placement in the Saul Bell Design Awards 2018 in the gold and platinum category.

Gold n Carats and the **Rogers' family** are happy to report that **Jim** has been declared Cancer Free. He is getting stronger every day and only missed 3 days of work throughout his treatments.

Jim and **Lucinda Rogers** are thankful to announce that **Gold n Carats** has again received "Irving's Best Jeweler" award (Living Magazine). We are thankful to all of our customers for this award, again.

Gold n Carats, in support of JCF and David Rocha, were thankful to participate in the granting of a Make A Wish event in Irving. The young lady wished to be a Pop Star so after a whirlwind trip to Los Angeles and star treatment, she returned to Irving for a Birthday Cake at Gold n Carats, a birthday gift of Elle Jewelry so she could continue to look like a pop star and that was finished by an a cappella performance by the young lady.

Reigning Jewels Fine Jewelry - Jackie & Traci & Garrett Wilkes: We started our journey around June 2013, Traci finished the GIA AJP, by the first part of 2014 and we opened our store around July in the first location after almost a year at this location we knew we needed to relocate. We will have been at the present location for 3 years next month. We recently expanded adding about 1000 square

feet to our existing 840 square foot store. This past Monday we had our Chamber ribbon cutting for the new expansion and finished the week having a two day Wilkerson Co. trunk show sale with a Chamber business after hours event as well. We are happy to be a part of this industry our only regret is not starting sooner! Counting the two of us, we have 5 staff members, Traci sales, custom designs, Jackie books, PR, watches, Garrett Apprentice bench, watches, sales and two sales associates in training

I am a retired building contractor, Traci left the oil & gas industry as a land man from Midland Texas. It is quite a mystery as to why we have found our way to Athens Texas start a fine retail jewelry store and our youngest son Garrett decided to leave the Air Force after 11 years to join us in the store. We are blessed.

Texas Jewelers Association is on the move! After one year, the association has grown from 30 members to 54 associate members and 125 paid retail members and is now the largest state jewelry organization in the US.

Please send any announcements or member news for future issues to: MemberNews@TexasJewelers.org

The World is Nuts. This will be Your Rock

Aleah Arundale



In diamond sales we are told not to call diamonds rocks. I'm here to argue just the opposite! After all, what is a rock? A rock is something stable, solid, dependable. Isn't that what couples look for when they commit to each other? When a man gives his Love a diamond he is saying I will be your rock. He is saying that this world is big and crazy and dangerous, but I will be here for you. I will be your rock. And how does a he promise to be her

rock? By giving her a rock! This perfect analogy is missing in diamond sales. Comparing diamonds to the rocks that they are, may be the best way to sell engagement diamonds.

When a man gives his true love a rock, he is promising stability, dependability, and most importantly, security. Men do not realize how important security is to a woman. A man does not clench his keys tighter as he walks to his car on a dark night. That's one reason why Facebook is so popular; for the likes. The 'likes' help women feel secure. What can make a woman feel more secure than receiving a diamond?! It's eternal and represents his willingness to sacrifice for her. Her rock symbolizes his eternal love; a physical reminder that she carries with her always.

When selling a diamond, you can also reassure the man that he is

buying a bit of security for himself as well. A man can feel secure knowing that anywhere he goes diamonds have value. House and stock values fluctuate, but gold and diamonds have always had real tangible value the world over. They are a secure purchase lasting for generations.

Jewelers are told we need to sell emotion. We are told we are not in the jewelry business as much as we are in the love business. The problem is love over used. People love a cup of coffee or a pair of shoes. How can we sell true love when the word love has lost so much meaning? On the other hand, if we sell security, we offer something very powerful that is less abundant. When showing a diamond, remind the guy how meaningful this purchase is to her. How every time his woman looks at her hand (which is about a million times a day), she will feel secure. In every sense of the word this diamond will be her rock.

People might think that selling jewelry seems frivolous when there is cancer, war, and hunger in this world, but really it's just the opposite. In this chaotic world we could all use more stability. We could use a rock. The next diamond that you show, try selling it as the rock that it truly is.

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

GIA Scholarship Available!

(CARLSBAD, Calif.) - GIA (Gemological Institute of America) has \$2 million in scholarships available for established and aspiring gem and jewelry professionals. Those interested in GIA gemology and jewelry manufacturing arts programs, distance education courses and lab classes can apply for scholarships offered in the application cycle opened on August 1.

Applications for 2019 scholarships are available at www.GIA.edu/scholarships and are due by September 30, 2018. GIA has awarded more than \$8 million in scholarships to more than 1,500 students globally since 2014.

“With changing consumer trends and technological advancements in the industry, it is now more important than ever to have professional qualifications,” said Duncan Pay, GIA vice president and chief academic officer. “These scholarships help people follow their dreams and pursue their passion in gems and jewelry.”

Scholarships funded by the GIA Endowment Fund and private donors are available for distance education eLearning courses and lab classes, and for programs and classes at the Institute’s schools in Bangkok, Carlsbad, Dubai, Hong Kong, London, Mumbai, New York, Surat and Taiwan.

For more information, call 760-603-4131 or e-mail scholarship@gia.edu. Learn more about GIA at www.GIA.edu.

Texas Jewelers Association Design Competition

It is that time of the year again and the deadline is to enter your finest designed pieces in to the annual Texas Jewelers Associations design competition is fast approaching. We shall stop accepting entries is September 30, 2018. Texas Jewelers Association Members! This is your opportunity to present your very best jewelry creations to a very large group of jewelers, and have them vote – Best of Show and, the possibility of having those items featured in a variety of jewelry trade magazines. This is a tremendous opportunity for Texas jewelry designers, to show their talents to a large audience. If you’ve entered this competition, or similar competitions before, this is simply too great an opportunity to miss. We look forward to seeing the wonderful entries into this year’s design contest! Just think of the publicity you could get out of winning one of the special design categories! For more information please call 512-842-6728.

Rex Solomon, President, Texas Jewelers Association.

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Planning Exit Strategies

by Bob Epstein



You've finally decided to reap the rewards of all the time you spent building your successful retail business. You've determined it's time to sell. Now comes the most important decision of your life ... how to maximize your assets and convert them to cash. There are typically two choices, sell your store as a going concern with inventory or convert your assets into cash through

a professionally conducted sale event.

If you first want to explore the possibilities of a sale as a going concern, there are several things you need to do to prepare for the sale:

- 1) Compile yearly financial records.
- 2) Compile annual tax returns.
- 3) Set a realistic price. This may be the most difficult as you do not want to set a price that is too high. Most buyers will want to pay an amount that is less than the original cost of your inventory and very little for the furniture, fixtures and equipment. Very little consideration is given to goodwill. You may want to speak with a business broker to help in determining a fair value for your business.

The major difficulty with selling your store as a going concern is the lack of qualified buyers. Many buyers do not have adequate financing and may want you to hold a note. The note may become useless if the jeweler does not run a successful operation, meaning you never get paid. Many buyers will only offer you a percent of your cost for the inventory, claiming that they would just as soon invest dollars in fresh inventory of their own choosing rather than in your dated stock.

Some stores are just not saleable as going concerns and many that are, have difficulty finding buyers with cash. What are your alternatives? First, separate your store's assets. Obviously, inventory is the biggest asset. If you could get better than dollar for dollar on cost, in cash, you'd surely take it. Then you could sell the store, without inventory, as a going concern. This strategy breaks the impasse of waiting for the perfect buyer to come along and write you a check for the whole thing.

How do you get better than dollar for dollar for inventory? A professionally conducted sale will often generate as much as 1.25 on the dollar for inventory and achieve close to your annual volume in as little as 8 to 10 weeks. It then will become much easier to find a buyer for the business since you have already converted your inventory to cash and now you are only searching for a buyer for the other remaining assets, which won't require as large a financial investment. Conducting a sale to the public will generate cash quickly and in most cases achieve much greater returns than you may achieve by selling to an interested buyer.

The better you prepare for your exit strategy, the more success you will have. Use all of your resources if you decide to sell the business. Call upon your attorney to draw up the purchase and sale agreement, and have your accountant establish values on assets and make certain that tax implications are considered. Your business broker will help coordinate the efforts of these professionals for you. While negotiating, remember that the best strategy for selling a retail business is to be conservative. Keep an open mind about the worth of your business. Carefully evaluate all prospective buyers.

If you decide to liquidate because you can't find a qualified buyer look for a professional consulting company that has a successful track record and several references. Ask the right questions: How long have they been in business? How many sales have they run? Can they supply additional merchandise that is priced right and of the same quality as your existing goods? What is the background of the professionals that will be involved in your liquidation? You only have one opportunity to run a successful liquidation so make sure you choose the right professional for your situation.

Bob Epstein is CEO of Eaton Hudson Jewelry Advisors. Eaton Hudson provides guidance to store owners seeking to turn around a business, sell off unwanted inventory, or liquidate an entire store. Recruited from his longtime CEO role at Silverman Consultants, Epstein has over 25 years of experience in finance, operations, strategic planning and corporate accounting. He also has extensive experience in the areas of inventory evaluation, restructuring, bankruptcy, crisis management, budgeting and financial planning. For more information, visit www.eatonhudson.com or call Bob direct at 1-843-881-3383.



Texas Jewelers Association

611 Congress Avenue
Austin TX 78701
www.TexasJewelers.org

Business Information

New member Membership renewal Associate new member Associate renewal

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 Traveling Sales Person
 Supplier Manufacturer Friend of the Industry Other _____

JBT # _____ OCCC PMR # _____

Total number of outlets _____ x \$50 = Subtotal \$ _____

(Attach a list of the outlets with complete addresses & phone numbers)

Year established: _____ Do you collect sales/use tax? _____ Tax ID Number: _____

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: _____

Annual Membership Dues for Associate

\$95 + \$ _____ = Total \$ _____

Annual Membership Dues

\$135 + \$ _____ = Total \$ _____

Payment Information (Annual year starts on join date)

My check is enclosed, payable to Texas Jewelers Association
 Please invoice me by email at _____

Please mail this form and payment to:
Texas Jewelers Association - 611 Congress Ave. Austin, TX 78701

TEXAS JEWELRY INDUSTRY REGULAR NETWORKING EVENTS:

Houston Area Jewelers Breakfast

Friends in the Jewelry Business:
Second Friday Every Month
Approx 7:30 – 9:00 A.M.

Organized by Amber Gustafson Amber@TexasJewelers.org (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

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The Select Show is the Official Kick Off event for the TJA Annual Convention... a Texas Two Step. TJA will be having an open executive board meeting at the show, Sunday at 1 pm.

Be sure to join TJA members at the cocktail event Sunday evening co-sponsored by the Texas Jewelers Association.

September 16-17, 2018 Ritz-Carlton Hotel Dallas, TX



Register to attend at www.SelectJewelryShow.com • 844-285-1103