

TEXAS the publication of the Texas Jewelers Association Jeweler

SUMMER 2020
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- **TJA 2019 CONVENTION VENDORS**

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President's Message

Susan's Corner



From the President, Susan Eisen,

Wow! It has been a real roller coaster since I took over at the beginning of the year. Who would have thought that we would be having to make all these changes and add new procedures in our stores for such a long time?

Those of us on the board are here to help you in any way we can, even if it is a counseling or a “shot in the arm” session. That is why belonging to TJA is so important in our lives as jewelers-for what we can share together. I’ve heard it so much that “we are all in this together”, but no one understands our predicament and what we are going through more than our fellow jewelers. Texas jewelers are different from the rest because we have to deal with so many other things.

We are still **aiming forward** in our plans for a convention this fall, even if it turns out to be virtual! Nevertheless, we are going ahead and planning for bigger and better things to happen this year so we can all benefit from our joining together as TJA members!

Looking forward to a great year,

Susan Eisen G.G.,
President
Texas Jewelers Association



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The Way We Were (pre 02/2020)!

by Susan Eisen, GG, Master Gemologist Appraiser, ASA



Close and touching

Willing to wait in line

Washing our hands twice a day

Using Windex instead of Clorox

Going to JCK for 3 days

Meeting face to face

Not having a mask and gloves in the car

Getting on a plane whenever we wanted

Doing last minute grocery shopping

No empty shelves in the stores

Not caring whether we had 50% or 75% alcohol

Only taking our temperature when we were sick

Webinars were few and far between

Not caring how dirty the jewelry and watches were when we took them in



TJA 2019 CONVENTION VENDORS



We had a great time visiting with each other before we started the Texas shootout.



Alan Lodinger, a longtime supporter of TJA events, came with some exciting new designs by Elle, Ande and Charles Hubert.



Our shootout was a major success! Here are some of the sharpshooters we had at the event.



The design competition included fabulous jewelry designs submitted by our very talented members and students.



Our board meeting was filled with intensive study and consideration of many upcoming projects to assure the success of TJA.



Joe and Judy Meli of Paris 1901 and PAJ Company made a wonderful presentation of their new exciting products for us to sell in our stores.





TJA 2019 CONVENTION VENDORS



Jonah Schwartz of Quality Color Design had some great delivery goods including diamond hoops and diamond studs that were loved by all.



Also participating in the Discovery Room were Dema Sturgeon and Nastia Smith of Southwest Jewel. Their company specializes in wholesale Swiss watches, repairs & diamond accessories.



AMX Gurung showed us some new innovative designs in diamond jewelry that we had never seen before.



It's always great to see David Baker from AGTA representing one of the finest colored gemstone organizations in our industry.



It's always a delight to see Bob Rose of Roseco, one of our longtime sponsors. He showed us his newest findings and tools with specials for the convention.



Erik Schrage of Bulova Watch Company, and his wife, Janice, exhibited his unique watches and men's jewelry so we could take a look.





TJA 2019 CONVENTION VENDORS



Shane Decker, our guest speaker, gave us insights into his new research on improved selling to our customers and we enjoyed hearing all his fabulous tips.



Emi of Almor Jewelry brought his beautiful diamond mountings with colored diamonds and his unique designs for us to dazzle customers.



Angela Gage of Solupay gave us an in-depth presentation of her new and exciting products.



Steve Konetzke and Ryan Hollingsworth of Jewelers Mutual Insurance enlightened us with the new benefits offered to Jewelers Mutual customers.



Regina Ciarleglio, the new association liaison with Jewelers of America, gave us an update on the jewelers' medical insurance program and all the many benefits we get from joining JA.



David Randall of Rolland Solutions gave us some insight into what his company is doing to increase the security in our stores.





TJA 2019 CONVENTION VENDORS



Eric Savoie of High-Level Thinkers let us know how he can help Texas jewelers in their marketing events. We were glad to know there are people like him out there to help us become more successful.



Andrew Richter of Facet Barcelona showed us his new diamond collection.



Robert Loving of Time Delay brought his exciting collection of watch bands, bezels and accessories for high end swiss watches.



Jewelers of America update



Howdy Texas Jewelers Association!

This has been quite a year to say the least and the team at Jewelers of America is here to support you. Here are just some of the things we did and will continue to do during these challenging times

The Coronavirus Resource guide is accessible to all retailers, regardless of JA membership, on our website:

<https://www.jewelers.org/ja/members/coronavirus-resource-guide>.

Even though many of you are back in business, this guide provides useful information for your business. Most importantly, you can access our 30+ recorded webinars covering trends, marketing, employment law, store safety and much more.

Jewelers of America also suspended membership renewals and offered free membership for the remainder of 2020. This promotion ended in June however, if you are still affected and cannot pay your renewal please contact membership@jewelers.org.

A quick reminder that that JA SCHOLARSHIP is open through the end of September. We will cover up to 60% of you or your store associates GIA or DCA training. In many cases, this is greater than the cost of your membership! For more information go to <https://www.jewelers.org/ja/careers-education/continuing-education>.

I look forward to connecting with you all soon – be it virtual or in person, and hopefully the latter.

I'd like to close with a little inspiration, one that I read every day:

The Journey is filled with ups & downs. Don't confuse the two as being everlasting. Get up everyday and apply yourself, be authentic, trust your instincts & know that the more you apply yourself the better you get day by day. The day you are waiting for is the day you want to give up, that is when you MUST keep going. That's the barrier between NORMAL AND GREATNESS. – Jackson Kiddard.

Stay well,

Regina Cialelio

Texas Retail Roundup

By: George Kelemen, President & CEO of the Texas Retailers Association



We are at the half-way point of a summer that has been like no other. I hope this finds you healthy, safe, and still able to serve customers in communities across our state. As has been the case for the past four months, the COVID-19 virus continues to impact our industry and daily lives. The Texas economy remains mostly open, in fact all Texas retailers can operate

at a maximum of 50% occupancy, however given the significant spike in COVID-19 cases in Texas during the past month, the state's reopening has been paused in place -- essentially where it was a month ago.

Throughout the pandemic, the Texas Retailers Association (TRA) team has been a key resource for our members and industry, as well as for local, state, and federal authorities who are making critical decisions for the communities across our state. We have been in nearly daily contact with state and local leaders as they have wrestled with these decisions, to ensure not only that retailers voices are heard, but also to impress upon these officials the essential role retailers play in the communities they serve. We are also keeping members as up to date as possible via the TRA website – www.txretailers.org and suggest you check it often for important updates, details, and resources. We believe that our collective efforts have been effective throughout the pandemic and we are committed to continuing to be your trusted voice.

TRA is continuing to be in close communication with our members, so that we can be aware of your respective needs as you continue to manage through this time, as well as re-open or expand your operations. In addition to keeping the TRA website continuously updated and routinely sending informative e-blasts and disseminating key information via social media, we are also hosting our Tax & Legislative Committee calls weekly (they are typically monthly calls). In fact, we have been periodically hosting Zoom meeting versions of the Tax & Legislative Committee call and have invited state legislators to join us for those, so they can update and interact with TRA members. Additionally, we continue to also remain actively engaged with our national retail industry trade association partners regarding all

that is happening related to COVID-19 on an industry-wide basis, as well as at the federal level.

Although much of our work over the past four months centered on our industry's response to COVID-19, the broader advocacy work of TRA continued. We are pleased to highlight two recent advocacy wins for TRA and our members, one at the state level and one at the federal level. The wins on the Austin Paid Sick Leave (PSL) ruling by the Texas Supreme Court, as well as our successful push for Congressional passage of the Paycheck Protection Flexibility Act are significant wins for the retail industry. TRA continues to be very engaged in the discussions regarding the next federal COVID-19 stimulus bill, in which we are pushing for liability protection for retail workers to be included, as well as on the initial discussions regarding state funding, given that the impacts of the pandemic will be significant to the state's next budget.

Lastly, a reminder that 2020 is an election year, and a very important one at that. Given all that is going on with the pandemic, it's more important than ever to meet and get to know your respective candidates for state legislature and Congress. These will be the lawmakers who make state and federal laws in the aftermath of the pandemic, so it will be critical for them to know the key role retailers play in their communities and that they work with our industry in crafting these laws. Rest assured that TRA is as committed as ever to continuing to effectively represent Texas retailers.



Congratulations to our 2019 Design Competition winners

Best in Show

- Tourmaline and diamond ring
- Amber Gustafson of Amber's Designs, Katy, TX

Category 1 – Materials less than \$1,000

First Place

- Double Tahitian pearl and diamond earrings in 14K gold (Item 3)
- Steve Kriechbaum Designer Goldsmith, Austin, TX

Category 2 – Materials from \$1,000 to \$3,000

First place

- Tourmaline and diamond ring
- Amber Gustafson of Amber's Designs, Katy, TX

Second place

- Onyx and diamond, 14K yellow gold pendant
- Susan Eisen of Susan Eisen Fine Jewelry and Watches, El Paso, TX

Category 3 – Materials over \$3,000

First place

- Amethyst, diamond, pink tourmaline, 14K yellow gold pendant
- Susan Eisen of Susan Eisen Fine Jewelry and Watches, El Paso, TX

Second place

- Opal and diamond ring in 18K yellow gold
- Amber Gustafson of Amber's Designs, Katy, TX

Category 4 – Bench Jewelers exclusive

First place

- Bolder opal and diamond 14K white gold ring
- Jim Rogers of Gold N Carats, Irving, TX

Student Competition

First place

- Silver and opals mask pendant, untitled
- Tandi Vandenberg, ACC student

Second place

- Kingman turquoise ring
- Janie Armstrong, ACC student

Third place

- 14K white and yellow gold ring with blue topaz
- Drew Smith, Paris student

Fourth place

- Sterling ring
- Terrod Villarreal, ACC student

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 is 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.**

Summer 2020



Fall is Harvest Time. Time to harvest dollars from CUSTOM BRIDAL!

David Geller

Farmers are harvesting wheat, corn, and vegetables right now. Soon Pumpkins! Time for you to make hay and harvest money from Cus-tomized Bridal.

Once jewelers started opening back up after the initial pandemic mostly what I heard was that most stores were doing as well if not better than same month over last year. You read that right.

We spoke to one jeweler in North Carolina who had the best answer as to WHY stores were doing so well with so many folks on furlough. Two good answers:

1. Many people with government unemployment assistance were doing better than when they were gainfully employed. But more importantly:
2. The couple looking to get engaged have obviously discussed their future together and in 2020 they know this to be true:
 - a. There probably will be **no large engagement party**.
 - b. There will probably be **no large wedding, if at all** (many might put this off)
 - c. If engaged/married in next 6 months, great chance no honeymoon anytime soon.

That leaves **A LOT OF SPARE MONEY TO SPEND ON HER RING** and jewelry in general.

I agree with the jeweler who told me this tip. In addition, you probably know I'm really big on tracking closing ratios. "How many people out of 10 will buy?"

Seems as though a lot of "time wasters and just lookers" aren't coming out. There are more higher percentage closing ratios! Time to reap the harvest.

How you ask? Although not a majority The Knot surveyed couples and a full 33% of the ladies went along for the store visit to pick out the ring.

Easy...offer the possibility of a really unique design, something with more diamonds, more flair.

Design the wedding band for her at the same sale. It's a known fact that the wedding rings are not always bought from the same store.

It's time to change that by **starting that design** when picking out the engagement ring. Make the suggestion to the man and/or couple (doesn't have to be male/female) that designing the bands now is

- Easier
- With masks and such, less trips the better.
- The rings will match better being made at same time.
- One less thing to plan for and take stress off of them.

Don't let the word "custom" scare you at all; I'm talking about either the manufacturer in the case, your shop or an outside shop can make them a spectacular ring.

But what can you do to make this even more special? My friend Dave Richardson (sales trainer) suggests always ask "how do you intend to propose to her?" It gets the subject of money and the burden of choosing the ring off the table for the moment and now we can chat about fun and romantic things. So, ask that question "how do you plan to propose?"

You probably have past couples who shared with you some unique ideas you can share and some people/friends still get together with social distancing. But here's an idea YOU can do to help make it special. Restaurants are open and of course that's an option but you might suggest YOU PROVIDE THE PRIVATE DINING EXPERIENCE. How?

There are plenty of restaurants who will deliver scrumptious meals to someone's door. If venturous you can have a perfect dinner delivered from www.InsteadOfFlowers.com. All the groom has to do is setup the time and place. You can provide personally when delivering the ring the bottle of wine or champagne!

See how you can help make this a special time, even with what's happening in the world. They will appreciate it, talk about it and open their wallets for you

David Geller

Department of Ring Design



Texas Jewelers Association

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