

# THE J REPORT



Jewelers of America: Education, Professionalism, Responsible Business Practices

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## JA Directors Speak at CIBJO Congress

### Jewelers cite commitment to responsible practices

On March 13, Vicki Cunningham, owner/manager of Cunningham Fine Jewelry, Tulsa, OK, and John Hayes, owner of Goodman's Jewelers, Madison, WI, spoke on a panel at CIBJO, The World Jewellery Confederation's annual congress in Cape Town, South Africa. The two JA board members spoke on the topic of "The Whole Supply Chain Needs to Face its Challenges Together." In addition, Bev Hori, vice president, Ben Bridge Jeweler, representing board member Jon Bridge, also spoke on a second panel addressing the topic, "All Companies can be Responsible and Sustainable."

The jewelers appeared at the CIBJO Congress through the invitation of JA President and CEO Matthew A. Runci, who serves as president of the CIBJO Ethics Commission, which sponsored the panels. Runci served as moderator of one of the panels.

The jewelers, who are all members of the Council for Responsible Jewellery Practices (CRJP), told world jewelry leaders about their growing awareness of the ethical, social and environmental responsibilities that the jewelry industry must shoulder in order to assure continued consumer confidence in the



After addressing the CIBJO Congress, De Beers Group Chairman Nicky Oppenheimer (center) speaks with (L-R) JA President and CEO Matthew A. Runci, JA Board Members John Hayes and Vicki Cunningham and Oklahoma Jewelers Association President Howard Cunningham.

products they sell. Cunningham, Hayes and Hori said it was important for retailers to play a role, since they are the public face of the industry.

Cunningham told the CIBJO audience of her efforts to help her fellow jewelers understand that they must not only consider their own stores' ethical practices, but also press their supply partners to do the same. "From the miners who unearth gold and diamonds, to the manufacturers who cut gems and process gold, to the jewelry makers who craft designs from these raw materials – we are sending the message that responsible practices matter to us, here at the consumer end of the supply chain," she said.

"With every transaction comes the responsibility to be accountable to our customers for the products they are buying," said Hayes, when it was his turn to speak. "Our customers put their trust in us that everything we present to them is true, thus each of us has to do our due diligence, to see that the supply chain is never compromised by any sort of unscrupulous activities."

Hori spoke about how jewelers can differentiate themselves to consumers through their public

[Continued on page 2]



Ben Bridge Vice President Bev Hori chats with fellow speakers South African Minister of Minerals and Energy Buyelwa Sonjica and Abbey Chikane, chairman of the Jewellery Council of South Africa, which sponsored the Congress.

#### ROUTING BOX:

Be sure to initial and pass on among store staff.

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# JA at CIBJO Congress 2007 [Continued]

commitment to ethical, social and environmental best practices, and she showed a variety of pamphlets directed at consumers from other industries, in which they tout their own responsible practices. "As purveyors of a luxury product, we are learning that our customers in the U.S. increasingly expect us to become more conscious of our responsibilities to the wider world," she said.

All three jewelers have been leaders in the jewelry retailing world for their proactive store policies to support the eradication of conflict diamonds, as well as their support for responsible gold mining prac-

tices. These efforts also spurred their decisions to join the Council for Responsible Jewellery Practices, a worldwide initiative that has created a code of responsible

**"With every transaction comes the responsibility to be accountable to our customers."**

— John Hayes

business practices for the diamond and gold jewelry supply chain, from the mines to the retail store.

At CIBJO, the jewelers shared the podium with other trade members who are instituting responsible business practices, such as Nicky Oppenheimer, chairman of the De Beers Group, as well as government leaders such as South African Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka. Representatives of the United Nations also spoke, since CIBJO is the jewelry industry's sole representative on the Economic and Social Council of the UN. ↓



Hayes chats with South Africa's Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, after her speech.

## De Beers Fund: Claims Process

De Beers Settlement Fund Claims Process should be straightforward

JA has learned that those eligible to recover funds from the De Beers settlement will likely begin receiving notice of the settlement, along with a claim form, around mid-year 2007. As class members, jewelers would be allowed to file a proof of claim form through November 2007. *This information should be considered tentative, not final.*

The claims process is expected to be relatively straightforward. A retailer with good recordkeeping should not find the claims process overly burdensome. Therefore, retailers should consult with personal legal counsel about whether to retain specialized legal firms to assist them with claims forms.

U.S. jewelry retailers, jewelry manu-

facturers and diamond traders/manufacturers may submit claims covering all purchases of loose diamond and diamond jewelry from January 1, 2004 to the present. The actual dollar recovery of

individual claims will remain unknown until all claims are filed. Members of the trade will share about half of the \$272.5 million fund, after deduction of attorneys' fees, notice costs and claims

administration expenses. *Recoveries in cases like this are likely to be in the range of a few cents on the dollar,* given the large amount of potential claims.

Since the settlement is still at a preliminary stage, JA members should not base decisions on the above information, but use it only as an interim update.

Log in to the Members section of [www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org) for more detailed updates. If signing up for the first time, you will need your JA Store ID. Don't know it? Contact JA at 800-223-0673.

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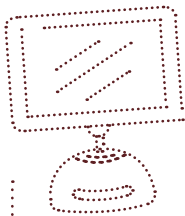
*The J Report* Art Director: Orasa Weldon

JA Board of Directors



## J-Biz New Online Discussion Blog

JA Invites Members to Join Peers Online at J-Biz Discussion Forum



JA has created an online resource center for J-Biz, its educational initiative. The website is designed to connect jewelers nationwide in an interactive network, where they can gain the tools necessary to be competitive in the 21st century. You can find it online by clicking on the J-Biz logo on JA's home page at [www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org).

Initially, the J-Biz website will build upon the issues raised at JA's Town Hall meetings [see side bar], taking place at trade shows in Atlanta, Madison, Las Vegas and New York City. Jewelers who cannot attend the Town Halls – or who wish to gain more information about the topics discussed – can find informative material at the J-Biz website. At the “**Live Learning**” section of the website, JA members can read complete Town Hall transcripts and view event presentations at their convenience.

The essential element of the website, however, will be its **online discussion forum**. The “**Learning by Sharing**” section features a live discussion blog, where jewelers can share business insights, ask questions, and offer suggestions on managing and overcoming the challenges of the modern independent retailer.

The “Learning by Sharing” section will also feature advice from jewelry retailers and industry experts on vital retail topics such as Effective Selling, Shrinking Margins & Profitability, Changing Markets, and Technology in the Store, among others. Visitors can participate in an online industry dialogue by posting their comments and questions relating to these subjects.

“The J-Biz website is focused on connecting industry members – to each other, to J-Biz events, and to essential business-building information,” says JA Vice President David Lafleur. “We’ve designed the website, along with the J-Biz online education program, to provide independent jewelers with dynamic learning modules to transition, build, and grow a successful business in today’s changing retail environment.”

JA will use ideas gathered from the online blog discussions to help develop programs, seminars, and resources that are most relevant to the education and training needs of the industry in the 21st century.

JA envisions the site evolving into a one-stop shop of top business, industry, and management tools to help independent jewelers thrive. Members are invited to visit the site (via [www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org)) to interact with their peers in the online discussions and provide feedback for JA as it further develops its educational programs.



For more information on J-Biz, visit [www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org).

## J-Biz Town Hall Enjoys Successful Debut

The J-Biz Town Hall Forums had a successful debut at the SJTA Atlanta Jewelry Show on Sunday, February 25th. More than 30 jewelers participated in the panel discussion with industry experts John Singer, senior buyer at Charleston Alexander Diamond Importers, and Nick Failla, founder of Premier Consulting Innovations.

Among the topics raised at the event, both men discussed the importance of understanding the competition. Singer stressed going into competitive stores and sizing up their sales, price points, and customer service skills. He also emphasized the value of knowing your own market and inventory to be competitive. As Singer said, “It’s hard to be profitable when you don’t know your best sellers.”

Failla advised retailers to use the Internet to their advantage – rather than competing with it – by marketing online and using search engine optimization for their websites.

JA is inviting members to visit its J-Biz online resource center to share their thoughts about modern retail challenges. The J-Biz website includes complete transcripts from previous Town Halls.

The next Town Hall will take place at the JCK Show in Las Vegas, May 31, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

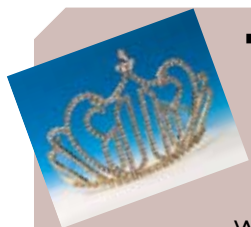
## Tiara Showcase

JA tiaras not only provide invaluable publicity and advertising for member stores, they allow you to uniquely connect to your community. Since JA member stores are entitled to three free tiaras each year, JA wants to know how you have used the tiaras to showcase your store locally.

We want you to tell us about the creative ways you’ve used them: did they create a funny or sentimental moment, did you make someone’s special day that much more special or did you provide a small local pageant or event with a glamorous accessory?

Send in your best stories and pictures of tiaras you donated to fairs, pageants, parades, homecomings and other local events, and we’ll publish the winning stories and pictures in our upcoming *J Report*, as well as post favorites at our website.

Deadline for submissions for next month’s JA’s Tiara Showcase is **Friday, June 8**. The showcase is ongoing, so e-mail your stories and digital images (300dpi) to [lthompson@jewelers.org](mailto:lthompson@jewelers.org) or mail them to Jewelers of America at 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY, 10017 c/o Lauren Thompson.



Send in your pictures of JA tiaras at local community events, like the pageants above from Baker & Baker (center) and PMC Jewelers (right).



## A Rose By Any Other Name?

Trade names used improperly mislead customers and leave you with a reputation that stinks

**Q:** One of my customers returned from a vacation in Hong Kong with a sapphire and diamond pendant, and she wanted my opinion. The sapphire was very, very dark – almost black. She said that the salesperson told her the stone was from Ceylon [modern-day Sri Lanka], and that Ceylon sapphires were some of the best in the world. I didn't know how to respond. Her sapphire is obviously poor quality. What should I have said?

While I can't comment on your customer's pendant without actually seeing it, I can share some information about sapphires in general and the use of terms like "Ceylon Sapphire" to describe a gemstone.

The salesperson that sold the pendant to your customer used a "trade name" – Ceylon Sapphire in this instance – to describe the sapphire in your customer's pendant. Trade names are terms – often relating to specific locations or sources for gemstones – used to describe a gem's quality (particularly its color). So when a reputable jeweler describes a sapphire as "Ceylon Sapphire," he or she is saying that it has an exceptional color similar to only the best sapphires from Sri Lanka (Ceylon). But he or she is not saying that the stone actually came from the country. In fact, it could have come from anywhere. Confused? Well, you should be.

Traditionally, trade names were

used to describe only the finest quality gemstones, and they were based upon the gems' most famous source. When a jeweler called a ruby "Burmese Ruby," he was saying that a particular ruby possessed the qualities of the finest examples of rubies from Burma (modern-day Myanmar). It really didn't matter if the ruby actually came from Burma or not, as long as it had the quality factors of a very fine Burmese ruby.

But over the last decade or so, trade names have been misused at all levels of the jewelry industry in an attempt to infer a better-than-actual quality. For example, stores, home shopping companies, and Internet merchants are buying extremely poor-quality sapphires from Sri Lanka and then calling them "Ceylon Sapphires" with the hopes of cashing in on the traditional use of the trade name and the quality factors it implies. This practice is misleading to the customer and considered unethical by most reputable jewelers.

Bottom line: the use of trade names has been so abused by the jewelry industry that it's best to limit their use with a customer. So, if you do choose to use a trade name in your sales presentation, be sure to fully explain what the term means from a traditional perspective. Helping to inform your customer about the history and tradition of trade names will help build your credibility and also help the customer avoid being misled by an unethical or poorly informed salesperson in another store. ↓

### Submit Questions to Ask A Gemologist

Do you need a solution to a store dilemma or does a customer's question have you stumped? JA members can e-mail their questions to [davidpeters@jewelers.org](mailto:davidpeters@jewelers.org) or fax them to 213-607-7655. David Peters will respond to all questions, and selected questions will appear in future issues of *The J Report*.



*David Peters works on the design and delivery of educational services to JA's nationwide membership. He also conducts seminars and educational programs at industry events. He is a Graduate Gemologist (GIA) and a Certified Gemologist (AGS), and has more than 30 years of experience in the jewelry industry.*



Even though this sapphire is from Sri Lanka (Ceylon), it has such a poor color that referring to it using the traditional trade name of "Ceylon Sapphire" would be misleading and unethical. To avoid confusing your customer, it would be more accurate and professional to describe the stone as a sapphire from Sri Lanka.



While actually from Brazil, this magnificent, slightly bluish green emerald is certainly deserving of the traditional trade name "Colombian Emerald" because it possesses the color attributes of the quality emeralds for which Colombia is famous.



This amazing pinkish red ruby from Burma (Myanmar) possesses the fine color traditionally reserved for the trade name "Burmese Ruby." Rubies from other countries can also be referred to as "Burmese Ruby," but only if they demonstrate the rare color and quality of the best Burmese stones.

Trade Names from Around the World

# Understanding & Communicating Jewelry Repairs

## Common Stone Setting Styles: Bright and Bead and Pave Setting

### Part 4b:

This is the fourth in a series of *Counter Points* articles designed to help you, the professional sales associate, better communicate some of the most common jewelry repair processes and repair quality factors to your customers. The previous *Counter Points*, Part 4a, reviewed the characteristics of flush and channel settings. Part 4b continues the discussion of stone setting styles with Bright and Bead Settings and Pavé settings.

As explained in Part 4a, stone setting is one of the more common bench procedures today. This section will help you evaluate the craftsmanship related to two other popular stone setting styles: bright and bead setting and pavé setting. You'll also learn to recognize some of the common problems with these setting styles to determine if repair work needs to be done.

According to recent research, a large percentage of customers actively seek out a new jewelry store because they are in need of a repair service. Because of this, it's critical that all professional sales associates be prepared to clearly communicate repair processes and repair quality factors in an easy-to-understand and comprehensive manner.

Take the time to become familiar with the information in this article and you'll be better prepared to identify needed stone setting repairs and have the knowledge and confidence to discuss repair options in a way that builds a customer's trust and loyalty. When delivering a piece of jewelry involving stone setting or setting repair, you'll be able to demonstrate and ensure that all expectations were met to the highest professional standards. The result? – Greater levels of customer satisfaction and higher sales and profits for you and your store!

### Bright and Bead Setting

#### What It Is:

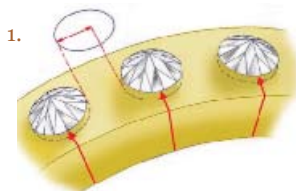
Bead and bright setting creates such amazing glitter and sparkle that it is often difficult to see where a gemstone ends and brilliant metal begins. The process sets stones even with the surface of the metal by raising metal beads to secure the stones in place. Frequently used for smaller sized diamonds and gemstones, bead and bright setting can be done in strips or over large areas of metal.



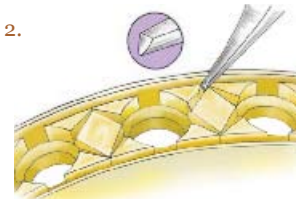
The bead and bright set white and yellow diamonds on the side of this 2003 AGTA Spectrum Award winner add a sophisticated design element and a glittering display of light and reflections. Image: AGTA

#### At The Bench:

To create Bead and bright setting (sometimes referred to as bead and bright-cut) gemstones are positioned table down on metal, so that they are spaced about a half a stone's diameter apart (fig. 1). The jeweler marks their position for the drilling of a seat. The seat must be cut to the exact diameter of the stone. Depth is also important, because stones set too deeply will disappear into the metal losing their opportunity to sparkle to their fullest potential.

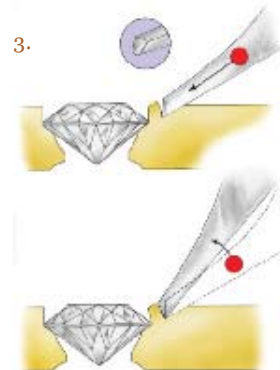


Next, the jeweler uses tools called gravers to cut lines and patterns into the metal between each stone seat (fig. 2). The jeweler will cut frame lines along the sides of the seats and diamond and triangle patterns between the seats.

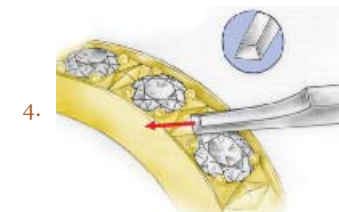


After placing the gemstone into its seat, the jeweler then uses a different type of graver to pick up small amounts

of metal from the previously cut triangle shapes near the edge of the stone and push the metal up and over the very edge of the gem (fig. 3). These rough pieces of metal are then smoothed and rounded into small prongs called beads.



The final step uses another type of graver to cut markings into the metal leaving a bright mirror-like finish (fig. 4). It is from the rounded prong called a bead and the highly polished lines left by the final graver that we get the name "bead and bright" setting. When all the setting work is done, the jeweler will give the piece a final inspection and polish, ensuring that every stone is secure and the entire bead and bright setting area is brilliant and sparkling.





## Pavé Setting

**What It Is:** Similar to Bead and Bright setting, a Pavé setting covers a jewelry surface with gemstones set so closely together that it's hard to see where one ends and one begins. Pavé is the French word for "paved," and gemstones set using this method resemble a brilliant and dazzling cobblestone street.



*This 2004 AGTA Spectrum Award winning piece features pavé set rubies, sapphires and diamonds. Image: AGTA*

### At The Bench:

When beginning a pavé setting, it's critical to position the gems equal distance apart. The process begins with the jeweler positioning stones table down onto metal and carefully marking their positions. Any gaps or unevenness at this stage will result in unwanted spaces between stones or stones overlapping each other. However, stones should not be so close that there is not enough metal showing for the final prong building steps in the process.

After the layout process is complete, the jeweler cuts seats for each individual stone. This process is very similar to cutting seats for bead and bright setting. Seats must match the exact diameters of each stone. Once the seats are cut, framing begins. Framing is the process of defining sections of metal using a special type of graver to isolate the areas that will become prongs. Small triangles of metal are created between seats that will later be used to make

three small prongs.

After positioning the gems in their seats, the jeweler next uses a round graver to raise prongs from the small triangular areas of metal between stones. The graver acts as a tiny bulldozer, first picking up a small amount of metal, then bending it over the edge of the gem.

Once the gems are held roughly in

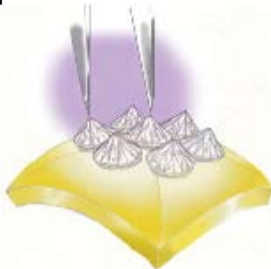
place by tiny bits of metal, the jeweler will use a beading tool to polish and round out the small prongs so that they are smooth and bright. When the pavé work is completed with a high level of craftsmanship, the entire area will resemble a sparkling cobblestone street. All the gemstones will be precisely spaced, no stones touching or overlapping. ↓

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN BEAD AND BRIGHT & PAVÉ SETTINGS

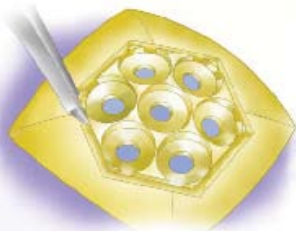
- **Beware of loose-fitting stones.**
- **Make sure beads and prongs are evenly spaced** and that their sizes match.
- **The bright cuts should not be rough,** show tool marks or have different angles.
- **There should not be excess metal between beads.**
- **Stones should all be set at the same height.**

## Pave Setting: Step By Step

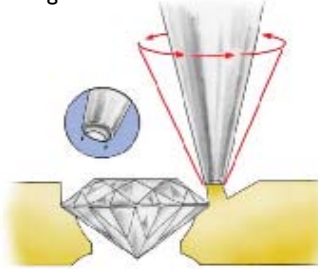
Precision in the layout process is critical to the success of the pavé setting process.



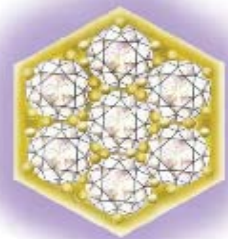
The process of framing (above) uses a graver to isolate small triangular areas of metal that will become prongs.



The beading tool is used to smooth and round out the small pieces of metal created from the triangular areas between stones.



A well executed area of pavé will look like a single sparkling area of light and brilliance.



## Got Skills? Get Certified: Bench Jeweler Certification

Bench Jeweler Certification clearly illustrates your skill and professionalism to the industry and customers



As a professional bench jeweler, certification enhances your professional identity and informs peers and customers of your skill set. The **JA Bench Jeweler Certification program** is available in four levels: JA Certified Bench Jeweler Technician; JA Certified Bench Jeweler; JA Certified Senior Bench Jeweler; and JA Cer-

tified Master Bench Jeweler. JA Certification assesses existing expertise through an exam process, and is not a course. Each level requires a written and practical bench test.

The Bench Jeweler Certification program is open to all industry bench jewelers. Jewelers may enter the certification program at any level, but the Master Bench Jeweler designation requires a

prerequisite exam, if the Senior Bench Jeweler tests have not been passed.

Certified Bench Jewelers receive a certificate, distinctive lapel pin and press release for their local media from JA.

For pricing information, visit [www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org) and click on "Professional Development" or request a Bench Jeweler Certification Guide at 800-223-0673.

# 2007 JA Affiliate Design Competition Winners

Jewelers from Arkansas, New Mexico, and South Dakota take home top prizes

The 17th annual Affiliate Design Competition, held January 21-23, featured beautiful jewelry from across the nation — with rings in colored gemstones, big bold brooches, and dazzling necklaces filling JA's display case at the 2007 JA New York Winter Show. Twenty-three designers submitted unique jewelry, which had won design contests sponsored by JA's affiliates throughout 2006.

Three designers from Arkansas, New Mexico, and South Dakota took home the first place prizes in three categories, determined by cost of materials used.

A panel of industry experts judged entries on craftsmanship, marketability, practicality/wearability and overall design. JA New York attendees determined the fourth honor, the Buyers' Choice Award, with a separate ballot. This year, show attendees agreed with the judging panel, choosing the first place winner in the "\$1,000 and Under" category — a geometric multi-stone pendant — to receive the Buyer's Choice Award as well.

"The contestants in this year's affiliate design competition exemplify the talent and fine jewelry craftsmanship that JA's membership produces," says JA Chairman John Cohen. "Together with our affiliates we congratulate all of the contestants on their award-winning designs."

JA awards the winners with an engraved trophy and a framed certificate.

## For Your Consideration: Participating in the 2008 Competition

The JA Affiliate Design Competition is open only to JA members and their employees. Any JA member interested in participating in next year's competition must first enter the design competition held by their state or regional JA affiliate in 2007. For more information, check with your state association, visit [www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org) or call 800-223-0673.



### CATEGORY I (\$1,000 & UNDER) & BUYER'S CHOICE AWARD

David Holloway, Swift's Jewelry,  
Fayetteville, AR

#### Arkansas Jewelers Association

Pendant in 14-karat yellow and white gold, with amethyst trillion, tanzanite and 16 diamonds.

## 2007 JA AFFILIATE DESIGN COMPETITION PARTICIPANTS

Virginia Anderson, T.K. Anderson Jewelry, GA  
Joe Bacher, J Bacher Fine Jewelry Designs, IL  
Don Baide, The Gem Gallery, MT  
Scott Bohall, Treasures Custom Jewelers, AZ  
Joseph Bonasso, JAB Jewelry, PA  
Sharon Choisser, Goodman's Jewelers, WI  
Sara Commers, Studio C Designs, MN  
Sharon Curtis-Gal, The Gem Vault, NJ  
Joe D'Onofrio,  
Mount Dora Estate Jewelry Co., FL  
Gerard Faini,  
Faini Designs Jewelry Studio, SD  
Peter Fusaro, Bella Jewelers, CT  
Marcus Gillihan, Shelton Jewelers, NM  
Rhonda Henson, Kelley Jewelers, OK  
David Holloway, Swift's Jewelry, AR  
Solon Holt, Cox's Gifts & Jewelry, TN  
Brandy Hurt, AVA Goldworks, MO  
John McFadden,  
Lindenwold Fine Jewelers, OH  
Ziad Noshie, Almaza Jewelers, TX  
Jimmy Patterson, Patterson Jewelry, MS  
Michael Ponthieux,  
Ponthieux's Jewelry Design Studio, SC  
John Purvis, Purvis Jewelers, CO  
Brent Selke, Reis Nichols Jewelers, IN  
Kim Teft, Kizer-Cummings Jewelers, KS



### CATEGORY II (\$1,001 – \$3,000)

Marcus Gillihan, Shelton Jewelers,  
Albuquerque, NM

#### New Mexico Jewelers Association

Ring in 14-karat white gold with  
tourmaline and diamonds.



### CATEGORY III (\$3,001 & OVER)

Gerard Faini  
Faini Designs Jewelry Studio,  
Sioux Falls, SD

#### Nebraska/South Dakota Jewelers

Ring in 18-karat white and yellow  
gold, with natural fancy yellow  
diamond oval center stone and  
diamond side stones.

Photos by Alfredo Parraga

# JANY AD

## Upcoming Events

### J-BIZ TOWN HALLS

LOOK FOR TOWN HALLS AT THESE  
UPCOMING SHOWS:

#### **JCK Show**

Thursday, May 31, 2007

#### **JA New York**

Sunday, July 29, 2007

### AFFILIATE CONVENTIONS

#### **Oklahoma Jewelers Association - Spring Seminar**

[www.oklahomajewelers.org](http://www.oklahomajewelers.org)

Tulsa, OK

April 14-15

#### **Alabama Convention**

Birmingham, AL

April 14-15

#### **North/South Carolina Convention**

Myrtle Beach, SC

April 13-15

#### **Tri-State Jewelers Association Convention**

Annapolis, MD

May 20

#### **Mississippi Jewelers Association**

Philadelphia, MS

June 9 - 11

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