

THE CUTTING EDGE NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2016



Midwest Jewelers Association
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TOC

A Message from the president

Mary Husar Martin
Husar's House of Fine Diamonds



"The Midwest Jewelers Association", working for you -- a new association coming together to meet the needs of its members. Formerly MN-ND JA and WI JA, MJA is looking to the future. These jewelers have combined to bring you additional member benefits and services. The jewelry industry has changed and it has become more difficult to sustain an association merely through membership dues. By combining, you have increased your membership base and the opportunity to work closely with vendors to bring everyone together for networking opportunities, education and industry events. In order to accomplish this, we are going to need each of you to be an active member of the association and take part in special events planned to strengthen your bottom line and your association.

Your current Board of Directors are a combination of the former boards who begin the process of finding out what you need and expect from your association because without MJA, you would not have a voice in your industry, state or region. Participation will be key to growing MJA and making it your source for information.

You will continue to receive four newsletters a year, however that will eventually turn into electronic communications. The cost of producing a newsletter has become prohibitive.

Sending out monthly electronic information will eventually take the place of paper newsletters. You have already been receiving correspondence through Constant Contact eblasts. Please do not "opt out of" receiving those because once you do, it is difficult to get you back on the list. You will be able to select the topics of interest you want to receive.

MJA has a list of member benefits some of you are not familiar with. We will touch on a member benefit in each mailing to familiarize you with what MJA has to offer. One of the most beneficial benefits is our Security First! Alerts. Eight of them have already been sent out since the first of the year. To make these Alerts work, we need your support and help. If you or your store has a security breach, robbery or bad checks being presented, please contact the MJA office **immediately**. It has been proven that these Alerts have prevented similar events from happening at other member stores. It is a link that needs to grow. "Thank you all for your 2016 dues." We value your membership, input, opinions and comments. This is your Association and we are here for you.

Mary Husar Martin
MJA President

Jewelers for Children awards \$35,000 grant to Fox Cities CASA

In May, Avenue Jewelers of Appleton, presented a check on behalf of Jewelers for Children to the CASA of Fox Cities, WI. CASA's mission is to advocate for children in their local courts, with community volunteers, to achieve placement in safe and permanent homes. It is one of only 14 CASA programs across the country to receive the Jewelers for Children Champions of Children grant through the National CASA Association for 2016. The \$35,000 in funding will assist CASAFc in serving more children who've been harmed by abuse or neglect. To do that, a campaign to raise awareness to recruit more volunteers, as well as engage more funders has been

under way since the onset of 2016 with great success. Already, there are 14 new advocates sworn in 2016 and another 11 going through training. The program is serving 81 children. CASAFc thanks Jewelers for Children, the Midwest Jewelers Association and all the local jeweler members who've generously supported these efforts.

Posted by Jenni on February 17, 2016 *posted by Jenni on February 17, 2016*



Engaging Millennials in the Workplace

According to a survey by Elance-oDesk and Millennial Branding in 2015, Millennials (Generation Y or Gen Y) were the largest generation represented in the workforce. If you are an employer who is aware of the stereotypes of the Millennial generation, you are probably a bit frightened that your office will soon be dominated by an entitled, technology dependent staff. I would like to reassure you that your office will be filled with goal-oriented, technology savvy, hard-working and loyal employees IF you find ways to engage them in the workplace.

In order to engage Millennials in the workplace, you need to remember that they go about work a lot differently than the generations before them. Keeping that in mind, here are a few tips to help engage Generation Y.

1. Meet with them to discuss their performance and ideas. Millennials really thrive on appreciation and positive feedback. By holding a set meeting, you are able to provide praise for the things they are doing well and to hear any ideas they would like to share with you. Being able to engage with a manager or mentor is more likely to make the employee want to engage with the company and company culture.

2. Promote a sense of community within the workplace. Millennials are known to crave a team-based culture to contribute to their happiness in the workplace. A sense of community fosters the collaboration and promotion of ideas, which can also lead to positive business outcomes. If an idea progresses into a positive business outcome, the team that developed the idea will be more likely to remain engaged and see the idea through.
3. Create a more flexible work environment. Work-life balance is a top priority for Millennials and supporting that balance is a key to having an employee that is engaged. You can create a flexible work environment through flexible start/end times, providing personal time/flex time and allowing for remote working to accommodate certain schedule needs.

The number of Millennials in the workforce will continue to increase over the next few years and there is definite need to keep up with their expectations in order to keep them engaged.

Article provided by: Svinicki Management Association – Jenni Kilpatrick



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Number of US Jewelers Closing Climbs 24%

By Michelle Graff
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Warwick, R.I.--The Jewelers Board of Trade's final statistics for 2015 show that the size of the industry is continuing to shrink slightly, with those who have decided it's time to exit simply ceasing operations rather than filing bankruptcy or seeking out a sale or merger. According to JBT data, 760 retail jewelers/repairers in the

United States ceased operations in 2015, up from 612 in 2014. While there are a number of factors contributing to this continuing trend, the main one is succession. Many business owners are reaching retirement age and don't have children who are interested in continuing the family business.

Membership Dues & Directory

The membership directory is scheduled to be sent out in June. You must be a member in good standing to be included in the directory

and on the website. Please make sure your dues are paid in full. We value your membership, input and comments.

Board of Directors

The 2016 board is comprised of the board members from MN-ND and WI boards and the officers were determined by an organizational committee. At the end of 2016, there will be an election for a new board which you will vote on. If anyone is interested in serving on

the board of directors, please let the MJA office know. We are always looking for committed members interested in the association. It is the intent of MJA to serve as your industry consultant by keeping you informed of current affairs.



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Security Alerts

Eight Security First! Alerts have been sent to you since the first of the year. They are an important part of the association and serve to keep you informed of security issues that might affect you and your business. As a member benefit, the alerts are only as effective as you make them. As soon as you know, hear about, or are the victim of a

security breach, please immediately notify the association offices so we can get the information out to the members. The latest alert we sent told about 7 violent robberies in California. This is becoming more wide-spread. Make sure you have talked to your staff about what to do if someone comes into your store to rob you.

Scholarships

The MJA awarded six scholarships to members with a value up to \$500 each. These scholarships can be used in a recognized course of jewelry study, such as a GIA course. The scholarship recipients for 2016 are: Todd Baumann, J. F. Kruse Jewelers, St. Cloud, MN; Casey Brueggen, Howes Diamond Center, La Crosse, WI; Peter Grams,

Melgram Jewelers, Little Falls, MN; Marcus Hargett, Jayandee Services, Mendota Heights, MN; Nils Hawkinson, Trisko Jewelry Sculptures, Waite Park, MN; and Brittany Holton, Holton's Jewelry, Winona, MN. A big Congratulations to you all! MJA is proud to assist these fine employees in furthering their industry education.

GIA Lab Sessions Offered

The MJA is sponsoring three GIA lab classes in 2016. The Gem ID class, which was scheduled for March, has been rescheduled for June 6-10. The classes are held at Jewelers Mutual Insurance Co. in Neenah, WI. Colored Stones will be offered October 17-19 and

Pearl lab will be offered October 20. If you are interested in any of these classes, let the MJA office know and we will put you on the class list. Scholarship dollars can be used for these classes. The class course work is not a pre-requisite to taking the lab sessions.



Tim Marr
Territory Manager

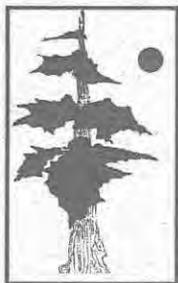
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