

EAGA Business Builder

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Today's speaker was John Thomas Mead—John Thomas Jewelry



Mr. Mead came to Albuquerque in a round-about way from New York state. As a youngster, he lived in a very picturesque and romantic sounding place - the Love Canal area of Niagara Falls. John Thomas does not remember it as being 'picturesque' or 'romantic' at all. The canal was a mile long, 10 to 40 foot deep divot that was initially intended to be a water way between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. It was planned and started by William Love. Hence the name. The financial crisis of 1907, and the change in need for that water way, caused the project to be abandoned. Over time, the hole became a landfill and in the 1940s, the property was sold to a chemical company who used it as a place to dump their toxic waste. After about 10 years, the company 'sealed' the contents inside a clay enclosure and covered it over with dirt. As the city of Niagara Falls expanded, that property was acquired for schools and housing. As bad as that idea sounds, it was actually worse. Mr. Mead remembers the days of infamy. Construction of the school, and work related to utility infrastructure, punctured the clay enclosure, and also damaged some of the old containers. After a heavy rainfall one year, green slim began to ooze from the ground in the school yard. Politicians, doing what freaked out politicians do, took action to address the obviously undesirable situation. They, again as politicians usually do, were very slow and incomplete in their actions. Ultimately, there were some evacuations, but John Thomas had already lived in the area for too long. Obviously he didn't play in the goop, but he had to breathe the air and was exposed to other related hazards. Time moved on and in 1990, Mr. Mead found himself working as a relatively successful broker at EF Hutton. But his past was not totally behind him. That year he became one of the data points in the statistics showing the Love Canal area to be one of the unhealthiest places to have lived. John was diagnosed with a type of lymphoma. Subsequent treatments took him away from his good job. When the medical visits were finally at a stopping point, he decided to find a job in an industry that he had often thought about. He became a bar tender. Mr. Mead was actually enjoying the work, but it was not quite the rewarding experience that he was looking for. A friend owned a jewelry store and needed assistance, so he asked Mr. Mead to come help out in the store a little. John agreed to help, and, even after finishing close up chores at the bar at 4:30 AM, still made the 8:30 AM opening shift at the jewelry store. The experience was enlightening. He found the job to be really enjoyable. People that came into store, were cheerful, and there was always a happy atmosphere in the place. More than a subtle difference from investment broker and bar tender. This new world just may be the one that John Thomas Mead was looking for. He continued helping his friend for awhile, then, in 1995, relocated to the glitter and shiny object capital of the country - Las Vegas - to operate a jewelry store there. In 2003, he came to Albuquerque with J Edwards Diamonds. The business increased to a point where, in 2008, Mr. Mead and his partner moved into a new, huge, free standing building. The year 2008 is also memorable because it was the start of a major economic downturn. Business slowed and in 2010, the company began its clearance sale. Over time, various situations generated some internal conflict. Mr. Mead preferred operating an ethical company, and in 2011 the partners split up. As John Thomas began operating on his own, one of his first priorities had to be getting out of the long term commitment on the large facility. He knew that it would be much less expensive to operate from an office space than it is to operate from a retail space. In 2012, John Thomas Jewelers moved to an office location on the third floor of a high rise (high for Albuquerque) building, cutting that part of his overhead to a fraction of the former cost. That definitely matters when trying to stay competitive. JTJ is every thing you would normally think of as a jewelry store...only more versatile. They have many samples of jewelry to choose from, including about 1,400 bridal ring styles. But JTJ certainly doesn't subscribe to the WYSIWYG philosophy. They prefer the WYWIWYG (what you want is what you get) form of operation. Like rings: you can bring in your own design; modify one of the sample designs; or start from scratch and have the JTJ staff use their leading edge software to create a 'just what you want' design, right before your eyes. And when it looks perfect, they will 3D print your ring; set the diamonds; and create a never ending pile of smiles and hugs for you and your loved one. JTJ also has a 1,000 sq ft repair facility right on site. They can repair a wide range of jewelry, and they regularly fix items originally sold by the competitors. Since 2012, JTJ has doubled its revenue every year (except in 2017 when it was only up a paltry 56%). They are innovative, creative, competitive and downright good at what they do. They offer an exclusive collection of anniversary bands; bridal jewelry; certified loose diamonds; pendants; earrings; diamond rings; engagement rings; wedding rings and gemstones. If you would like a piece of quality jewelry, give John Thomas Mead a call at 505-342-9200. He and his staff are in the Relationship Insurance business, and have some very impressive policies available, at a very reasonable price. Mr. Mead presented the specific example of a ring they recently sold for \$3,509, when one of their competitors quoted the same ring (with probably less quality diamonds) for about \$8,000. Really, if you want quality jewelry, for a very reasonable price, give John Thomas a call, or stop by his shop on the 3rd floor of the Lewis University Building on Louisiana. Mr. Mead's presentation was done in a very professional manner and nothing observed in his short EAGA membership time would indicate anything other than professional behavior... but still be cautions of random practical jokes or pranks. Tuesday's presentation contained a picture of John Thomas Mead sporting his natural bright red hair. He lost his hair during the lymphoma treatments. It has since grown back, but now it is brown. In spite of the obvious professionalism, we're concerned that the impish demeanor often stereotypically associated with red haired folks is still just hidden below the surface and it may come out at any time.

Business Leads:

Farmer's Insurance is opening at 5740 night Wisper NW, Suite 110.

Blo Blow-dry-bar is opening at 6400 Holly. [probably a beauty salon]

Sweat Bootcamp is opening at 7200 Enchanted Hills Blvd, Rio Rancho.

- Lionel Specter—Zeon Signs

Reciprocity:

None today

◆ Welcome to our newest member

Crane Services, Inc

Representative: John Scott Wilson

- ◆ EAGA golfing event will be this coming Friday. Everything is ready to go with about 50 participants, but still a couple of unsponsored holes. If you want to contribute to that, please contact Jerry Becker ASAP - 505-991-4708.

Badge Board Greeters

May 1st	Mike Deveraux—Document Imaging of the Southwest
May 8th	Patrick Wallace—NM Solar Group
May 15th	Steve Grant—Downtown Bed & Breakfast
May 22nd	Raul Rodriguez—Kings of Wrap
May 29th	No Meeting—Memorial Day Holiday
June 5th	John Thomas Mead—John Thomas Jewelers
June 12th	Paul Jew—Moji Studios
June 19th	Mark Tobiassen—Action Coach Business Coaching
June 26th	Kit Turpin—HUB Insurance

Upcoming Speakers

May 1st	Jukka Jumisko—WSI Web Enhancers
May 8th	Terry White—Sunwest Trust
May 15th	Scott Peck—MP Group
May 22nd	Adam Tafoya—New York Life
May 29th	No Meeting—Memorial Day Holiday
June 5th	
June 12th	
June 19th	Guest Speaker
June 26th	

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