

## EAGA Business Builder

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## Today's speaker was John Mead—John Thomas Jewelers



Mr. Mead is a native of the northeastern part of the country. Actually, just on the other side of the border near Nigra Falls. He had many challenges during the early growing up years, but the John Mead we know is a testament to the very positive possibilities that can be achieved with some good decisions, and some luck. John says that it was a lot of luck. But 'luck' is just a term for recognizing an opportunity and successfully converting it into a benefit. Mr. Mead's good decisions have brought him to his current bright place (figuratively and literally) in the world. Putting it mildly, he is a purveyor of shiny objects. Putting it more accurately, Mr. Mead is an authority on diamonds and other gems. Over the past lot of years, John's work, training, research and experiences have made him somewhat of an expert in many aspects of the jewelry world. His business, John Thomas Jewelers, is one of the 19,800 jewelry stores in the United States, but it is in the very top echelon when considering product quality, integrity, customer service and positive reputation. This year he, for the second time, will be one of only 160 individual jewelers that have been invited to shop in the Antwerp diamond district. That is a big deal. Antwerp is considered to be the diamond capital of the world. The Antwerp exchange was established about 1500AD and these days, it is where over 80% of the world's rough diamonds are purchased. More than 50% of the world's cut diamonds go through Antwerp each year as well. With that sort of volume, it is understandable that shopping there is an amazing experience. As expected, there is a high level of security...everywhere! There is, obviously, a huge amount of bullet proof glass; and AK-47 toting guards outside; and inside; and in the elevator; and in the room with John as he looked over trays of diamonds. But actually more important than the security, the diamond selection and pricing are incredible. As an example of that: John's initial visit to the Diamond district included a pre-order for a high quality, 1.88 to 1.99 karat diamond. He and his customer had a reasonable expectation for pricing and availability based on the usual research of inventory in the US. (There were actually 17 that fit the desired description). The first day that Mr. Mead was in Antwerp, he was presented with a selection of nearly 200 such diamonds; and the pricing was excellent. John's happy customer was able to get a 2+ karat, excellent quality, diamond that still fit their pricing budget. During that first day of the Antwerp trip, John looked at nearly 2,000 diamonds...and he still had a second bleary-eyed day to search through even more. Needless to say, all of John's customers were very satisfied with the diamonds that he brought back. As noted earlier, Mr. Mead has a high level of expertise in gems, particularly diamonds. During his presentation today, John provided us with some very interesting diamond related information. The term "One in a million" refers the average rate of discovering 1 karat diamonds. All of the 'larger' diamonds are very rare. Each year, the number of 1 karat diamonds mined would fit into an exercise ball. All the 2 karat diamonds mined in a year would fit into a basketball; all the 5 karat diamonds would fit into a softball. The price for a good quality 2 karat diamond is about \$24,000, and if you want to talk about buying a 100 karat diamond, you should bring about \$10 million to the discussion. Diamonds are a very hard material—more than 140 times harder than a sapphire. Only a diamond can cut another diamond. Mining diamonds is one thing, but properly cutting the diamond is another important aspect of a diamond acquisition. A diamond can be 'perfected', or ruined, during the cutting process. There are good cutters that have been performing their craft for over 50 years and in reality, it takes about 10 years of apprenticeship before a cutter is recognized into the industry. John also mentioned the benefit of him being able to review the quality of a diamond by using a "triple hoc loop". A Google search discovered "*The very simplest loupes contain just one lens; better loupes contain two (doublets), very good loupes contain three (triplets) ... These lenses (elements) are placed on top of each other, and each corrects for the distortions of the previous one.*" So it appears that Mr. Mead was actually speaking of a "Triplet Hawk Loupe". (If he weren't such a nice guy, John would probably cringe at the so very amateur level of understanding with which he is regularly surrounded.) But our high level of not understanding doesn't just apply to the jewelry world. It exists for laser engravers as well. In the later part of his discussion he told us about his new toy. A laser engraver that only cost about as much as the price of two 2 karat diamonds. He referenced a camera driven SISMA MOPA device - and therein lies our (my) additional place for ignorance. Turns out that SISMA is a manufacturer of laser engraving equipment, and MOPA means 'master oscillator power amplifier'. So Mr. Mead was trying to tell us that he now has a very impressive machine with which to provide very high quality engraving services for his customers. He can engrave on rounded surfaces, curved surfaces and even straight, flat surfaces. And the materials can be gold, steel, aluminum, tungsten, and darn near any other firm material. He can even inscribe on diamonds. I'm sure that we will be amazed at the different places where we will see the John Thomas logo in the near future. Right now he is still learning the system so it is taking about two hours of software work to set up a 10 minute cut. But even if there is only a slight improvement in that production time ratio, the end product is still quite worth it. For examples of the things he can do, John displayed some engraved metal sockets, and of course rings and other jewelry. He also provided examples of his ability to engrave metal business cards. A rather unique, though maybe slightly expensive, way of impressing your potential customers. If you would like to discuss any of Mr. Mead's areas of expertise, whether it is regarding his vast knowledge of diamonds; his in-depth information about other gems and jewelry; his newly formed ideas about engraving metal business cards to carry for self defense (see Michael Johnson, too), or his thoughts on what it takes for a small business to survive, and prosper, through these somewhat unstable and confusing times, just give him a call at 505-342-9200. But that won't work for a few days around September 21st because he will be back in Antwerp at that time. And maybe not during the first two weeks in October either. That is when he will be preparing the all new, and very unique, John Thomas Jewelers show room. Another special design by the diamond king, who is himself a 5 karat human.

## Leads:

- BREAKMASTERS will open in Las Estancias Shopping Center in the south valley.
- SAKURA SUSHI will be opening at 2323 Isleta Blvd SW
- QUILT WORKS will be opening at 11105 Menaul Blvd NE
- LYNX HEALTHCARE has opened an office at 3864 Masthead NE
- CHEBA HUT specializing in sandwiches, is opening at 6902 Menaul NE, Suites A & B  
- Lionel Specter—Zeon Signs

If you have information that you would like published in the bulletins, you can submit it in person at the meeting, or via email to [bmac@swcp.com](mailto:bmac@swcp.com). (Please note the email subject as "EAGA")

- ◆ The Jim Fanning Memorial Trap Shoot has been scheduled for Friday, September 24th. Please mark your calendar now so that you can be available to participate in this always fun event. Loaner shotguns will be available if you don't have one of your own. More information will be provided as we get closer to the date.
- ◆ We are in need of speakers for all of our September meetings, beginning with the 14th (first meeting after the Labor Day holiday). Almost all of the meetings in October are available as well. If you can make a presentation, a sales pitch, or provide something informative for us, please sign up to speak at one of the available meetings. Contact Mario to get your name on the list. His information is in the box at the bottom of this page.

## Badge Board Greeters

Aug 17 <sup>th</sup>	Kit Turpen—Berger Briggs Insurance
Aug 24 <sup>th</sup>	
Aug 31 <sup>st</sup>	Miguel Mendoza—Perfection Pools & Spas
Sept 7 <sup>th</sup>	No Meeting Labor Day Holiday
Sept 14 <sup>th</sup>	Soren Thomsen—TEMA Furniture
Sept 21 <sup>st</sup>	Lance Darnell—Darnell Cable & Fasteners
Sept 28 <sup>th</sup>	Kale Isaacson—Fyzical-Albuquerque
Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Hass Aslami—Pizza 9 Franchise System
Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>	
Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	

## Upcoming Speakers

Aug 17 <sup>th</sup>	Paul Wynn—Acme Iron and Metal
Aug 24 <sup>th</sup>	Paul Jew—Moji Studios
Aug 31 <sup>st</sup>	Soren Thomsen—TEMA Furniture
Sept 7 <sup>th</sup>	No Meeting. Labor Day Holiday
Sept 14 <sup>th</sup>	
Sept 21 <sup>st</sup>	
Sept 28 <sup>th</sup>	
Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Kevin Lorenzen—Aflac
Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>	
Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	

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