

# in the loupe.

April 2010 • ISSUE LXXXI

## Planting Seeds for a Great Fall

**A**cross the nation, seeds are now being sown that will result in bountiful payoffs months down the road. It is no different here at RJO, where plans for this Fall's Buying Show are already well underway.

There are four common elements for any successful harvest: a parcel of **land, air, sunshine** and **water**. As has been announced for some time, the **land** we've selected is Kansas City, MO and more specifically, the Hyatt Regency Crown Center. RJO members will enjoy a terrific mix of business, camaraderie and relaxation.

The **air** in Kansas City will be charged with excitement, as this venue has a history of producing big results. In 2007 this site set a Buying Show record for the greatest number of stores attending, as well as the greatest sales total ever for a show. Expectations are high for this year as well, so be sure to mark your calendars today so you can be here at the end of July.

History shows that **sunshine** should be plentiful during the Show, and we'll make sure there are opportunities to take advantage of such, including our very popular golf tournament to **kick off the show on Saturday, July 24th**. Attendees will also be beaming at the Round-Up being planned for our gala event. We'll celebrate Kansas City's heritage with bull riding, Texas Hold'em, and line dancing to the live sounds of country and western.

**Water's** never too far away at RJO events, but this time we're going beyond thirst-quenching. Kansas City is home to the brand new Schlitterbahn Vacation Village Waterpark, and we'll be offering you a chance to kick off your time at the Show by getting splished, splashed or simply cooled off.

In the weeks and months ahead, you'll be getting more details about the Fall Buying Show, but make sure you put down some roots today to ensure yourself a great Fall.



**Save The Date**  
Please note the  
Day Pattern Change

2010 Fall Buying Show • Kansas City  
**Saturday 7/24 Golf**  
**Sunday 7/25 Seminars**  
**Sunday 7/25 - Tuesday 7/27 Buying Days**

loupe **inside**

• *April Fools*

• *Twists and Turns with Speidel*

• *Marketing: Radio Commercial Dos and Don'ts*

**RJO**

*The Ultimate Jeweler Resource*

THE EXECUTIVE **desk** *from Mary Peterson, CEO, RJO*

## April Fools

It is the first day of April as I sit here and write my piece for *In The Loupe*. Many people enjoy this day to pull pranks, be silly and have some good laughs. As I heard about the shenanigans played throughout the day, it made me wonder how this holiday came to be? So I thought I would share a little bit of history about April Fool's Day.

"Once upon a time, back in 16th-century France, before computers, people celebrated New Year's Day on March 25, the advent of spring. It was a festive time. They partied steadily until April 1. In 1564, when the calendar reformed

and became Gregorian, King Charles IX proclaimed, perhaps pompously, that New Year's Day should be celebrated on January 1 instead of in the spring.

Communication traveled slowly in those days and some people were informed of the change several years later. Diehard conservatives resisted the change (or perhaps didn't hear about it due to the absence of e-mail) and continued to celebrate New Year's from March 25 to April 1. During this period of spring festivity, the more flexible

French mocked the rigid revelers by sending them foolish gifts and invitations to non-existent parties."

It is funny how history repeats itself. Today, in a world where communication mechanisms allow us to deliver messages universally with a click of a mouse, why is it that folks still don't get the information or understand the message? Too many times I hear, "I didn't know" or "I didn't get the message." How can this happen?

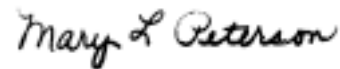
**In a world where communication mechanisms allow us to deliver messages universally with a click of a mouse, why is it that folks still don't get the information or understand the message?**

Even though we have the ability to communicate through many avenues, from regular mail to minute-by-minute internet updates, we still have trouble with our communications. The issue is not the ability to communicate; it is the decisions we make in regards to our responses, as well as the overload of information and communications we receive. Just think, if we went back in time and only received messages or mail once a month, we would certainly look forward to it. And I'll bet we would read everything!

With the information overload, how do we decide what is important? What requires our attention, and what can we discard with minimal consideration? Do we give the proper amount of attention to making this decision? Have we missed opportunities or failed to respond in a timely manner because of this? The bottom line is that in our industry, it is essential to use every mechanism possible to tell our story and get the word out. We need to be aware of how we communicate with others as well as how we respond to those trying to communicate with us.

It would be worth your time to re-evaluate how you filter through all the information and messages you receive or send every day. Are there communication mechanisms you aren't using that you need to be? Don't ignore the communication technology we have today ... you don't want to be the fool who was the last to know!

I wish you all a delightful spring season!



Mary Peterson  
RJO CEO

RJO **news**

## Board and MRC Applications Will Be Sought This Month

RJO will be requesting applications for its Board of Directors in late April, with completed applications returned by May 28. Four seats on the Board are up for re-election this year. The Board also will be reviewing applications for appointments to the

Merchandise Review Committee. At this time there are two seats up for re-election. For more information on the positions or the application process, members can contact Sarah Streb at 1-800-247-1774; e-mail: [sarah@rjomembers.com](mailto:sarah@rjomembers.com)

## RJO Website Now Offers Vendor/Jeweler Forum

The last week of March saw one of the most significant changes to the RJO website in years. Visitors to the site's Chat Room noticed a new Forum where both vendors and jewelers could read and post.

"Having a Vendor/Jeweler forum has been on our 'To Do' list for several years," says RJO CEO Mary Peterson, "and we finally found the time, strategy and budget to do it."

Since its inception four years ago, the RJO website has featured a Chat Room, but it has always been open only to Jewelers.

Recent upgrades and streamlining of the feature increased the Chat Room's popularity and use.

"When I took over the site in 2007, one of the first questions I noticed users asking one another was, 'Do we want to let Vendors in the Chat Room?'" says Christopher Green, RJO website administrator. "The sentiment was evenly split, mostly because there were some concerns over a loss of openness, particularly with respect to jewelers talking about their vendor experiences."

RJO administrators eventually approved an approach that kept the Jewelers-only Forums viewable only by Jewelers, while opening up a Forum where both parties could participate. The reaction has been favorable all-around, with more than 50 topics posted in the new Forum in its first few weeks.

Tim Bodis, of Diamond Designs by Bodis, wrote one of the first posts in the new Forum: "We would love to see you here with us; I think we could all benefit from your participation. We could get prices with

a post, you could make sales and there are many other things that could be done."

"I am excited for this additional tool," responded Globe Diamonds' Brian Plante. "To help rebuild the industry it takes all of us working together on the same page. I look forward to aiding everyone in their requests."

If you don't have a website User Name and password (or have forgotten what yours is) be sure to contact RJO at 800-247-1774.

Vendors can contact Mary Harger via e-mail: [mary@rjomembers.com](mailto:mary@rjomembers.com), while Jewelers can contact Kristi Nelson: [kristi@rjomembers.com](mailto:kristi@rjomembers.com)



### RJO SERVICES

Centralized Billing

Patronage Dividend

RJO Website ([rjomembers.com](http://rjomembers.com))

Buying Shows (Fall/Spring)

RJO Chat Channel

*In the Loupe* – RJO's newsletter

Free Print and Radio Ad Library  
(on the RJO website)

Educational Seminars  
(at the Buying Shows)

Member-to-Member Incentive  
Program (Recruitment Program)

Organized Buying Trips to  
Antwerp and Idar-Oberstein

RJO Directory

Peer Performance Program

Travel Vouchers at Shows  
(offered at varying times)

Free Hotel Room Incentive  
(at the Buying Shows)

RJO Informational E-mail Blasts

Purchase Vouchers  
(at the Buying Shows)

RJO Membership Certificate

Hot Tips Website  
([RJOinsideinfo.com](http://RJOinsideinfo.com))

### RJO Chat Channel Code of Conduct For Jeweler/Vendor Postings

- 1) This joint forum was developed to encourage dialogue between RJO retailers and RJO vendors in order to:
  - a. Search for products and services quickly and easily.
  - b. Share information regarding general vendor issues .
    - i. NOTE: Vendor issues must be discussed in a respectful manner. This site is not intended for harsh criticism or "bullying" of certain vendors and/or products.
    - ii. See item #2.
  - c. Inform retailers of specific vendor promotions.
    - i. This forum should not be used for repeated advertisements, but rather promotions containing relevant specials to help the independent retailer purchase vendor product and/or market the product to the end consumer.
    - ii. If repeated advertisements are posted, please report your findings to RJO management. Management will review the posts and take necessary action.
  - d. Introduce NEW products and/or services.
  - e. Build strong relationships among all members.
- 2) Topics and/or posts that are hurtful in nature, negatively reflect a certain product, company, store and/or person or deviate drastically from items listed in item #1, will not be tolerated. We ask any such posts be reported promptly to RJO management. Management will review the posts and take necessary action. This could include termination from the chat channel.

## From the RJO Chat Room The Chat Room on the RJO website ([www.rjomembers.com](http://www.rjomembers.com)) hosts dozens of interesting discussions each month. Here's an edited post and two of four responses from earlier this month that can be found in the RJO Vendor-Jeweler Forum area, under the heading "Vendor calling."

**Post 1 (by a Jeweler):** *Vendors, may I please offer my feelings on a major pet peeve of mine and many other retailers? Phone call selling!!! Cold calls and calling to see if we need anything, calling just to say 'hi,' calling to be an advertisement to us, calling for whatever ... please STOP!*

*Think about us ... we don't have the choice to not pick up the phone, but when we do, and it is the 10th, 20th (or more) time that day a vendor has called, we have just spent the day getting nothing done but talk to vendors that we had no need to talk to. I must say I will go out of my way to NOT do business with vendors, even if I know and like them, if they use calling as a form of doing business.*

*The time I should be on the phone to a vendor is when I call him and need something. If you are not the one I call, then you need another way to meet and advertise to me other than the phone.*

*Please put me on a don't call list!!! Thank you.*

**Reply 1 (by a Jeweler):** We agree on the phone calls; it often takes you away from your work or a customer. Right before shows we get several vendors a day calling to see if we will be going to the show. If every vendor called, that's all we would be doing—answering phone calls.

Vendors that stop in the store to meet without an appointment is another pet peeve that many jewelers have and that vendors should know about.



**Reply 2 (by a Vendor):** I understand, but there are instances when we really must call. If I know that one of my better customer uses a certain type of goods, I owe it to him and myself to call and tell him when I receive a fresh shipment. I also have customers that appreciate "beautiful and unusual." I call on these also. Now, bothering store owners with banal, 'Do you need anything' is always deserving of a 'Don't call me.' response.

## Put Antwerp and Germany on Your Fall Agenda

For more than two decades, RJO and participating jewelers have experienced ongoing success buying diamonds and colored gemstones directly from the source. Antwerp is the world's diamond capital, and these trips offer you the opportunity to hand-pick gorgeous diamonds for your customers — all at competitive prices.

In addition to Antwerp, these trips also include a stop in Idar Oberstein, Germany, the world's undisputed capital of fine colored gemstones. Past attendees have treated these excursions as more than mere buying trips, but rather the cornerstone of year-long promotions.

Traveling to Europe with the RJO group takes the intimidation out of world travel so you can relax and enjoy an experienced tour to the heart of the Diamond District as well as the Colored Gemstone Capital of the world.

For more information, contact RJO's Antwerp Coordinator Connie Matsen at the RJO Office at: 800-247-1774 or via email at: [cmatsen@rjomembers.com](mailto:cmatsen@rjomembers.com).



**2010 Fall Dates**  
**Antwerp: Oct 2-7; Oct 9-14**  
**Idar-Oberstein: Oct 7-11; Oct 14-18**

VENDOR **spotlight**

## Speidel Springs Back to Life with New Owners

Speidel, known for more than a century as an inventive maker of watchbands—notably the Twist-O-Flex—has gotten itself out of a big knot. After having drifted through a number of owners in the past few decades, and feeling the effects of reduced consumer spending, Speidel found itself in receivership last year. Stepping forward to purchase the company’s assets and to start to revitalize the Speidel brand were a sister and brother team.

Lynn-Marie Cerce and her brother Gennaro, principals in Cerce Capital LLC, paid \$1.65 million in August 2009 for what was left of the 105-year-old Rhode Island-based Speidel.

Cerce Capital has a long history in the jewelry and accessories industry. The duo’s father, Jerry, started with a small jewelry manufacturing company in 1972 and built it into AAi.Foster Grant, a multinational accessories company with sales in excess of \$250 million. Lynn-Marie brings important management and marketing skills to the company having worked for more than 14 years in consumer products at Gillette/Procter & Gamble. Gennaro brings turnaround experience, having worked for the past eight years at Patriarch Partners, a nine-billion dollar distress debt fund. Lynn-Marie and Gennaro are running Speidel’s daily operations.

“We acquired all inventory and account receivables,” says Lynn-Marie, “and we endeavor to create a streamlined customer service organization that puts our customers first.”

Interviewed after the purchase, the siblings explained the strategy of their new venture to a local newspaper reporter:

*‘This company went bankrupt for a reason,’ said Lynn-Marie, who commutes from Boston daily to Speidel’s Cranston base.*

*The upheaval has left Speidel’s latest owners the task of rebuilding relationships with retailers—big and small—that carried the company’s products.*

*‘You have to first fix the foundation,’ said Gennaro, who lives in Pawtucket [RI].*

*One way, her brother said, is simply making sure the right product shows up at the right place at the right time. The company is housed in 38,000 square feet of space at the Cranston Print Works in the city’s Knightsville section, which the siblings say gives them ample room for inventory.*

*They have 13 employees in Cranston and contracts with 30 independent sales representatives across the United States. Repairing relationships comes first, building new relationships*

*follows. The Speidel brand is ‘over-indexed’ to men older than 50, Lynn-Marie said. The translation: freer-spending young adults don’t know Speidel from Zippo—another iconic product from an earlier era.*

*‘It will take time,’ Gennaro said. ‘We have nowhere to go but up.’*

In chatting with *In The Loupe*, Lynn-Marie noted that part of that moving up includes participating in RJO Buying Shows. “We participated in the Savannah show,” she says, “and we will be participating in future shows as well.”

With the tagline, “The One to Watch,” Speidel is currently promoting a new Father’s Gift Set, which includes a watch with two straps, along with a tool to change out the watchband, all in a designer gift box. Later this summer, they will be launching a new men’s jewelry collection, as well as a new line of extensions for their watches and watchbands.

Speidel is located at 1425 Cranston St, Cranston, RI. Phone: 800-221-4400. Website: [www.speidel.com](http://www.speidel.com)



Siblings Gennaro and Lynn-Marie Cerce recently purchased the Speidel brand and are revitalizing the company driven by a blend of innovative designs, a focus on operational excellence, and a passion for customer service.

# Security Tips for Buying Metals Over-the-Counter

The initial gold-buying frenzy may have passed, but many jewelers continue to buy scrap jewelry from consumers on a regular basis. It can be more than a little confusing trying to comply with local, state, and federal requirements. For example, many localities require a secondhand dealer's license. Or, if you purchase more than \$50,000 from the public in one year, you will need to comply with the USA PATRIOT Act's anti-money laundering program. While more regulation information is available from the Jewelers Vigilance Committee ([www.jvclegal.org](http://www.jvclegal.org)), here are some other tips to help you with these transactions.

## The Buying Process

Investigate local, state, and federal requirements to learn whether you need to:

- Obtain a secondhand dealer's license
- Request identification of the seller
- Keep a log with a detailed description of each item purchased and the seller's name and identification
- Hold items for a specific time period
- Comply with the USA PATRIOT Act

## Documentation

"If you have a robbery, burglary, or other loss, you will need documentation to prove your claim to the insurance company," explains Jeff Mills, Jewelers Mutual's vice president of Commercial Lines. Ask your insurance agent what is needed for your policy, but expect to keep a daily log that includes:

- Purchase date
- Total weight of scrap gold and other metals purchased that day
- Market value as of that date

## Insurance

Ask your insurance agent about coverage for scrap gold and metals:

- Does my policy cover items that I buy from consumers and send to a refiner as scrap?
- What documentation would I need to prove a loss?
- How would the insurance company value scrap gold and other metals if a loss occurs? Would it pay only my cost to purchase the metals (i.e., the amount that I paid each consumer), the spot metal price on the day of the loss, the spot metal price on the day I purchased the items, or some other value?
- If the scrap metal is lost in shipment, would the insurance company pay the price quoted by the refiner?
- Do I need to report scrap metal as part of my inventory to assure that it's covered? If so, how should I list it?

## Shipping scrap metals

Jewelers Mutual recommends shipping gold via Registered Mail with the United States Postal Service. "In our experience, Registered Mail offers the highest level of security. Express Mail is another option, or choose a service such as Parcel Pro, which combines shipping, insurance, and enhanced tracking," Mills says.

## A Few More Issues

**Peak Season Coverage:** If you plan a major gold-buying event, contact your agent about whether you need a "peak season" endorsement to ensure an adequate policy limit.

**In-Safe/Out-of-Safe Limit:** Scrap gold and other metals usually are considered inventory covered by your policy's in-safe or out-of-safe limit when closed for business. Keep gold and other precious metals in a locked safe or bank safe deposit box at all times.

**Cash:** Be aware that local ordinances may prohibit cash payments. However, if you are paying cash for over-the-counter purchases, you may have more cash on hand than normal. More frequent cash deposits or withdrawals can assist you in managing the amount of cash on premises. Talk with your agent about increasing your insurance limit for cash if necessary.

Jewelers Mutual offers a handy explanation for "Documenting cash and checks" on its Web site at: [www.jewelersmutual.com](http://www.jewelersmutual.com); click on "Business Jewelry Insurance," then "Industry Resources," and then "Inventory Record Keeping."

**This article is provided by Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company, the only company specializing exclusively in jewelry insurance in the United States and Canada. The company's strong financial position is reflected in its continued A+ Superior rating from A.M. Best. Visit the Jewelers Mutual Web site at: [www.jewelersmutual.com](http://www.jewelersmutual.com).**



# Support Encouraged for Sales Tax Fairness Bill

The fact that sales tax must be collected by “mom and pop” and “brick and mortar” stores, while internet sellers have no such burden is a hot issue. In the RJO Chat Room, there are several threads on this topic, with many posts on the subject.

Jewelers of America is urging legislators to reintroduce and pass a sales tax fairness bill in the U.S. Congress. Previous legislation was introduced in the 110th Congress, but the issue fell to the wayside in 2009.

Jewelers of America notes on its website that it believes what's really missing is the political will to implement this important legislation, and it is encouraging those interested to write to their legislators. To help with this, they have provided a writing guide that combines a personal message with a number of the suggested Jewelers of America talking points listed on the site.

These points include:

- Brick-and-mortar jewelry businesses continue to lose sales to Internet and remote sellers, who have an unfair advantage—especially in this tough economy—by being able to sell jewelry without charging sales tax.
- Sales tax fairness legislation would permit states that become voluntary signatories to the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement to require that remote sellers collect and remit sales and use taxes.
- Please act now to close an Internet sales tax loophole that is adversely affecting jewelry businesses. Countless sales are lost when consumers gain education and information at a brick-and-mortar store, but then purchase their items on the Internet—because they are not required to remit sales tax.
- Sales tax fairness legislation will allow revenue-starved states to collect tens of billions in tax revenue annually,

which is already owed to them under existing tax law. A University of Tennessee study has estimated a revenue loss to state and local governments of more than \$30 billion a year in uncollected sales taxes for remote sales.

- E-fairness legislation will eliminate an inequality in the tax code that for too many years has penalized consumers who wish to shop with Main Street retailers. Particularly in the midst of a negative economic environment, being able to sell a product minus a sales tax provides a major advantage for the remote retailer. Jewelers and other business owners should no longer be burdened with this competitive disadvantage.

For more information, or to participate in the discussion, visit the Jewelers of America website ([www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org)) or find a thread in the Chat Room on the RJO website.



## milestones

**Margaret Ayres**, of Ayres Jewelers in Casper, WY, was awarded the 2010 Woman of Distinction award presented by Casper's Downtown Development Authority. Congratulations, Margaret.

**Donald LeStage III**, who served as president of LeStage Manufacturing Co. in North Attleboro, MA, passed away on Valentine's Day at the age of 70. Our thoughts go out to the LeStage family.

**Phillis W. Russakoff**, of Russakoff Jewelers in Skowhegan, ME, died on March 22, 2010. Donna Russakoff sent along this note: "Although Phillis was never able to attend any of the RJO shows, she always enjoyed hearing all about the vendor specials, seminars and especially the entertainment. She was very proud of our affiliation with RJO." Our thoughts go out to the Russakoff family.

# Marketing Matters:

## *The Dos and Don'ts of Effective Jewelry Radio Advertising*

**R**adio has a unique ability to create what is called a “theater of the mind” experience. The best radio commercials can transport your mind to different times and different places. It has a wonderful ability to ignite the senses and to invoke great emotions.

I've been working in radio and advertising for three decades, and I have a set of tips, specific to advertising jewelry on the radio that I'd like to share with you.

**Describe the reaction not the gift!** How did he/she react to the new piece of jewelry? It is the emotion of that event that will drive customers to your business, not a description of the gift.

**Get the listener's attention right away and keep them engaged. Tell them a story!** Testimonials are tremendously powerful. Have your customers describe their personal experiences with your store.

**Have a consistent message.** Targeted to the right audience with a good level of frequency, a consistent message will grow your business. If the message is changed often, not directed to the right demographic group or not heard enough, the campaign will struggle to succeed.

**One commercial, one message.** Your goal is to be able to ask the viewer after the commercial ends, what the message was, and for them to get the right answer. If you have a second message that is important, then do another commercial.

**Give your ads time to work.** Listen to different radio stations and find an ad or two that you like. Try to duplicate the feel or attitude. Stick with it long after you are tired of it. Typically, when the owner is getting tired of the commercial, it is just beginning to resonate with your customers. One of the biggest pitfalls is to over-produce commercials. Produce with the thought that this commercial should be able to run for three years. Most radio ads are

done by the station at no charge. Make sure that the level of quality is up to your standards. If not, find a production house to help you. It is money well spent.

**Establish a consistent (and meaningful) tagline that brands your business in your customers' mind.** Not everyone can get away with “Just Do It!” but anyone could come up with something like “Have a Coke and a Smile.” Use that tagline in every radio commercial, TV commercial, print ad and in-store display. It won't be long before listeners start to recognize it.

**Longer commercials are okay.** A typical radio commercial is sixty seconds in length but they are moving toward the 30-second model that TV has used for years. If you can make your point (create the emotion and tell the story) in less than a minute, do it, but don't be afraid of a longer message.

**The pace of your commercial is important.** You will need to determine whether it is a slow- or a fast-paced commercial. The age of your best customer will determine that pace most often. The younger the customer, the quicker the pace.

**Find a signature voice.** Use that voice for your radio commercials (and on-hold messages, too) to establish an identity and have all of your marketing efforts dovetail well. That voice could be the owner's. That voice could also be a local celebrity who does business with you and is willing to be a spokesperson for you.

**Find a signature piece of music.** You will not be able to use a licensed song, but if you can tell the radio station what kind of music you'd like, they should be able to find several to choose from. If you don't hear what you like, ask for more. This music, much like the commercial voice, should be used in multiple places.

**Find a spokesperson.** Consider using yourself, but be very open to the fact that you might not be able to do it well. Many

local business owners do a great job on the radio. Many don't. Know which category you fall into.

**Always include some type of a call to action or urgency to your message.** “Sale ends this Saturday,” “Limited quantities are available,” or “First come, first served” are examples of adding urgency to the event or sale. Customers will typically act if you ask them to. Remember to ask them to.

**Your advertising should reflect the personality of your store.** Is it a fun creative environment? Traditional and conservative? Make sure that comes through in your marketing efforts.

**Create a campaign, not just a commercial.** Focus on creating an image, a brand, for your business. Nike runs campaigns, not commercials. Ford runs campaigns, not commercials. They seem to be doing okay. You also should run a campaign, not commercials. All spots should have the same look and feel, voice, music and a consistent message, even though that message might be different in each commercial. You could have a watch sale one month and a loose diamond sale two months later. Two different sales, but the commercials should have a similar look and feel so people begin to identify with your look and your message, and they will begin to pay more attention when they hear it.

**Michael C. Woody is President and Chief Idea Officer of Capital Ideas. He has nearly 30 years of experience in television advertising and loyalty marketing. Phone: 515-556-5373. E-mail: [MichaelC@ideas2burn.com](mailto:MichaelC@ideas2burn.com) Website: [www.ideas2burn.com](http://www.ideas2burn.com)**



## Take Full Advantage of Your Computer's Software

A few years ago, I got a call from a jeweler in the Midwest seeking my help in designing a newsletter template for her store. The idea was that I would provide a look and style for this newsletter by selecting its paper, size, color, fonts, approach to images (photos versus illustrations) and other qualities.

I was pleased to send her a quote for the project, and I could tell by the length of the pause in our follow-up phone conversation that this was more than her budget allowed. She wondered if I had any alternatives for her, and I did. I told her to check out her copy of Microsoft Office.

Yup. While many of us equate getting in-application support for Word with Clippy the Paperclip, Microsoft has—over the years—built up a significant library of materials to help small business customers. I encourage you to poke around your Office files (those installed and those on the installation disks) to see what you might find. From clip art to fonts, to photos and templates, you might be surprised.

Depending on the version of Office to which one has access, the quantity of support materials varies. To avoid this crapshoot, I recommend a visit to the Microsoft website, which has been pleasantly re-designed in the past year and is more complete in its selection than whatever might be able to be installed on a computer.

Here are some of the most useful offerings:

### - Clip Art and other Media

This treasury contains more than 150,000 media files for your use, including art, photos and sound files. I find the quality to vary greatly, but there are some excellent pieces in the grouping. My suggested approach to learn more is to go to the collection's blog at: [http://blogs.msdn.com/clip\\_art\\_and\\_media](http://blogs.msdn.com/clip_art_and_media)

### - Fonts

This section features a variety of fonts that you can download and install on your computer. The site currently only offers some barcode fonts, which very few people would want. But if you check around holidays, you can often find some fun typefaces. <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/marketplace/CE010737471033.aspx>

### - Newsletter Templates

While a majority are for Microsoft's Publisher software, many are for Word. <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/CT101043281033.aspx>

### - Small Business Templates

Nearly 50 common templates, including agendas, contracts, expense reports, inventories, job descriptions, statements and time sheets. <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/FX100595491033.aspx>

### - Corporate ID Templates

While the current featured template is invoices, there are samples of letterhead, envelopes, brochures, business cards, newsletters and flyers. You'll also see non-categorized links to small business templates for items such as: business plans, bank loan requests, profit and loss projection, start-up expenses and competitive analysis, among dozens of others. <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/FX102637461033.aspx>

Sometimes I just pop up for no particular reason, like ... now.



**Christopher Green is editor of *In The Loupe*, and he oversees the design and maintenance of RJO's website. He runs his own design studio in Iowa City—Sheridan Avenue Design.  
E-mail: [sheridanavenuedesign@earthlink.net](mailto:sheridanavenuedesign@earthlink.net)**

**For Sale:** Presidium® Pantograph-Engraving Machine. The Presidium® Pantograph-Engraver is manufactured to the highest standards. This machine is user-friendly and includes a stylus, complete set of instructions, set of six male pins, two-piece end stop, dust cover and test plate. Engraving type is not included. Features Phantograph ratio from 2.5:1 to 6:1; Adjustable type

holder; 360° rotating vise with eight indexing positions; height adjustment up to 115mm; weight 20 lbs.; easy type insertion. (Stuller product #26-3860). Asking \$195.00 (does not include shipping). Contact Kim Lindberg at Loch Jewelers: 763-295-3771. E-mail: [sales@lochjewelers.com](mailto:sales@lochjewelers.com)

FREE **classifieds**

To place your FREE classified advertisement in the next issue of *In the Loupe*, send your items by June 1, 2010, to Christopher Green via fax: 800-597-2107; via e-mail: [sheridanavenuedesign@earthlink.net](mailto:sheridanavenuedesign@earthlink.net); or via mail: RJO, P.O. Box 1045, Newton, IA 50208.

# Snow Promotion Pays Off Big for Iowa Jeweler

Nestled a few miles south of Interstate 80, smack dab between Des Moines and Omaha, you'll find Atlantic, IA, home of a jewelry store whose Christmas wish came true.

RJO members Nedra and Rich Perry, owners of Geis-Perry Jewelry, ran a month-long promotion that offered customers, in effect, the opportunity to get their holiday purchases for free. The promotion promised that if it snowed more than two inches on Christmas Eve during prime Santa-delivery time (i.e., 6 p.m. and midnight), customers would be able to get a cash refund on previously purchased items.

The promotion cost the store a few thousand dollars, most of which went to an insurance policy ... just in case.

Well, Christmas Eve came, and so did the snow. Rich, who was obviously watching the

weather closely, told a local news station that the town received 7.9 inches of snow, nearly half-a-foot more than the promotion's rules required. The Perrys became local celebrities, and their story made headlines to the east and the west.

In the interviews for those news stories, the Perrys provided the numbers from the promotion:

- Christmas sales were up 60 percent.
- 400 customers participated in the promotion.
- Nearly \$100,000 was returned to customers.

Perry also shared that while some customers will cash their checks, others will use it for further purchases in his store. Noting that this was the first year the store had tried the promotion, Perry also said that he's pretty sure they'll try it again next Christmas.



## CALENDAR OF events

### April 15

All payments must be received in RJO Office.

### April 23

All invoices due in RJO Office

### May 1

May Day

### May 9

Mother's Day

### May 14

All payments must be received in RJO Office.

### May 17

Fall Buying Show Registration Packets mailed.

### May 21

All invoices due in RJO Office.

### May 31

Memorial Day—RJO Office closed.

### June 14

Flag Day

### June 15

All payments must be received in RJO Office.

### June 20

Father's Day

## NEW members

**Gerald's Jewelry**  
David & Jane Fikse  
Oak Harbor, WA

Referred by Jeff Krekeler  
Krekeler Jewelers (Farmington, MO)

**Johnson's Jewelry**  
Tony & Kim Johnson  
Moscow, ID

**Lewis Custom Jewelers, Inc.**  
Scott, Christine & Jason Lewis  
Clinton, UT

**Storey Jewelers**  
Paul Neuse  
Gonzales, TX  
Referred by Wales Jewelers  
Scottsboro, AL

**Thompson's Jewelry**  
Curt, David & Bernice Thompson  
Batesville, AR  
Referred by Leslie Chain

**William Howard's Jewelers Inc.**  
Linda & Tracy Fairfield  
Sanford, FL

Thank you to the jewelers referring new members to our group. These jewelers will receive a \$1,000 finder's fee for their referral, payable after a new member has been in good standing for six months.