

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE

SUMMER 2026

ALABAMA

Jewelers

ASSOCIATION



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AJA President's Message



President

Kim Odom

Doug Doggett Jewelers
Cullman, AL

Dear Alabama Jewelers Association Members,

I would like to thank everyone who attended our 2026 Annual Convention, at the Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham. We had outstanding speakers and a fantastic turnout! A special thanks to Jewelers of America for providing the educational classes at the Learning Workshop. Of course, none of this would have been possible without our wonderful sponsors and advertisers. Lastly, thank you to our AJA board members, past presidents and Nancy Dawkins, our wonderful Executive Director for all they do to make AJA a success.

I was truly honored to accept the gavel from Joseph and serve as your new Alabama Jewelers Association President. I also want to give a big shout-out to our Executive Director, Nancy, for helping me get my "flamingos" in a row as I start this new position. I look forward to helping the association grow during my presidential term.

Now, I'd like to invite everyone to join us for Saltwater 2026, September 24-27, at the Island House Hotel in Orange Beach. Saltwater is all about making lasting memories, enjoying each other's company, and having lots of family friendly fun. I hope you'll make plans to join us... I can't wait to see everyone there!

Sincerely

Kim Odom

AJA President



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SALTWATER

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 & FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

5:00-10:00pm Hospitality Suite

10th Floor

Check-In & Receive Badge. Enjoy Refreshments and Snacks. Dinner On Your Own

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

6:00-10:30am Breakfast

The Beachside Bistro & Bar

9:00am

AJA Board Members and Past Presidents Meeting

If You Presently Serve on The Board, Attendance Is Required - Gulf Room

Free Day

Enjoy the Beach, Pools, Golf, Shopping, Zoo, and Amusement Parks

5:00-6:00pm Hospitality Suite

10th Floor

6:00pm

Cocktail Reception (Casual Dress)

Island Ballroom 2

6:30pm

Dinner (Casual Dress)

Island Ballroom 2

8:00-10:00pm Hospitality Suite

10th Floor

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

6:00-10:30am Breakfast

The Beachside Bistro & Bar





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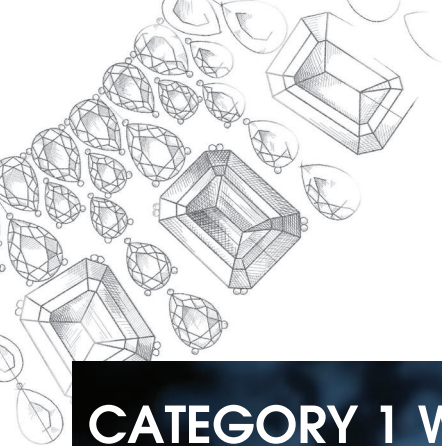
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2026

AGA Design Competition



CATEGORY 1 WINNER

Avani Patel

Avani Rupa
Fine Jewelers
Birmingham, AL

*Custom Cut Obsidian
and Amethyst set in
14kt wg*



CATEGORY 2 WINNER

**Steven Sherrer &
Megan Sherrer-Neel**

Lou's Jewelry
Mobile, AL

*Pearl and Natural
Diamond "Acorn"
Earrings*



o Category 1: Materials cost \$1,000 & Under

o Category 2: Materials cost between \$1,001 & \$3,000

CATEGORY 3 WINNER & PEOPLE'S CHOICE

**Michael Ryan
Snuggs**

Michael Ryan
Personal Jeweler
Birmingham, AL

*14kt white and rose gold
custom cut pink tourmaline,
natural diamonds, pearl
enhancer. Pearl strand with
a custom diamond clasp.*



BEST IN SHOW

Matt Davis

Levy's Fine Jewelry
Birmingham, AL

*Art Deco necklace
centered by one 1.91 pear
shape diamond GIA fancy
light greenish yellow with
24 single cut diamonds.
The clasp has 7 eu
diamonds on a 6x5.5mm
akoya pearls strand.*



o Category 3: Materials cost \$3,001 & Over

o Category 4

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Birmingham, AL

April 24-26, 2026





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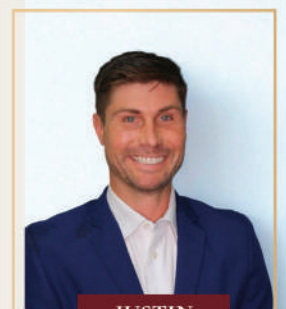
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Alabama Jewelers Association Scholarship Program



The 2026 Winners are...



Grace Kennedy Bagwell
Hayes Jewelers
Mobile, AL



Jordan Carpenter
Doug Doggett Jewelers
Cullman, AL

At this year's convention, the AJA awarded two (2) scholarships in the amount of \$500 each, to two AJA members for their continuing education in the jewelry industry.

The winners were Grace Kennedy Bagwell with Hayes Jewelers in Mobile, AL and Jordan Carpenter with Doug Doggett Jewelers in Cullman, AL.

Congratulations!

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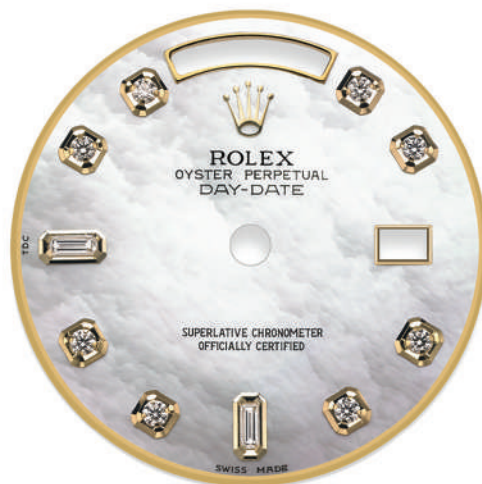
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Sebastian Velasquez -

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Justin Vanmatre -

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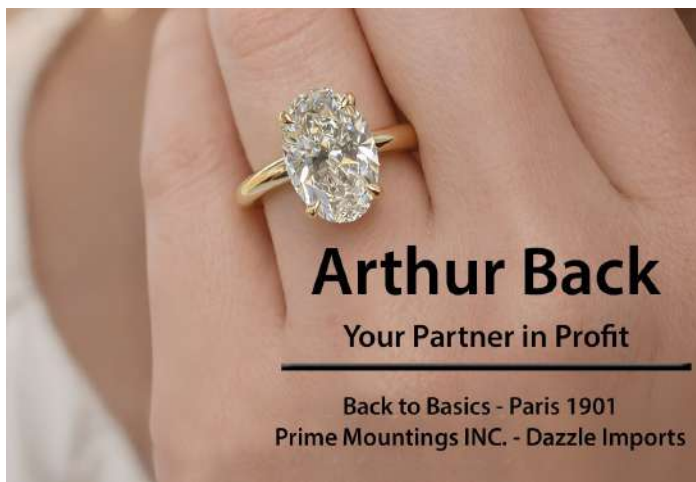


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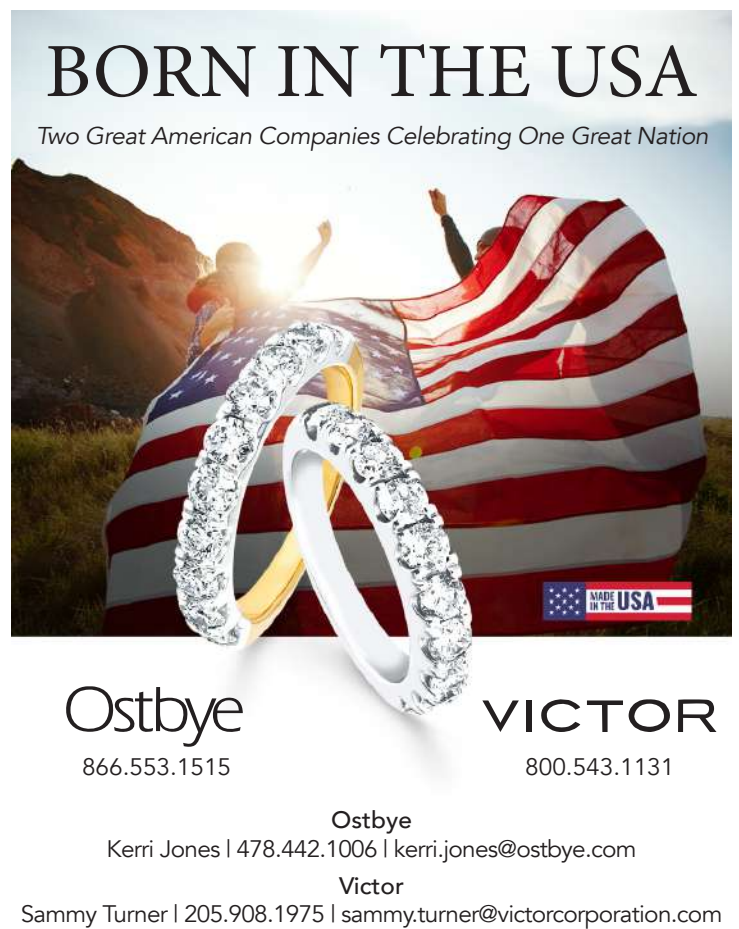


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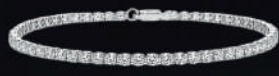
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Selling Jewelry for Christmas:

Making the Most of the Holiday Season

For jewelers, Christmas is more than just another holiday—it is the busiest and most exciting selling season of the year. Customers are looking for meaningful gifts that will be treasured for years to come, and jewelry remains one of the most desired Christmas presents. With thoughtful planning, outstanding customer service, and creative merchandising, your store can make this holiday season both memorable for customers and profitable for your business.

Start Early

Holiday selling begins long before Thanksgiving. By October, stores should have holiday displays in place, seasonal marketing prepared, and inventory fully stocked. Early preparation allows you to promote gift ideas before customers begin shopping elsewhere.

Use email campaigns, social media, and your website to showcase new arrivals and gift collections. Highlight popular price points and remind customers that shopping early provides the best selection.

Create a Store That Feels Like Christmas

Nothing encourages shoppers to linger longer than a warm, festive atmosphere. Decorate your showroom with elegant holiday décor, sparkling lights, and seasonal music. Offer refreshments on busy weekends and greet every customer with a genuine smile.

Remember, customers often purchase jewelry to celebrate life's most meaningful moments. Creating a welcoming environment helps make the experience just as memorable as the gift itself.

Merchandise by Price

Many customers begin their search with a budget in mind. Create attractive displays featuring gifts under \$100, \$250, \$500, and \$1,000. This makes shopping easier and encourages customers to compare options without feeling overwhelmed. Well-organized displays often lead to additional purchases.

Tell the Story Behind the Gift

People rarely buy jewelry simply because it sparkles. They buy it because it represents love, appreciation, celebration, or family traditions. Help customers visualize the moment they'll give the gift. Ask questions like: Who are you shopping for? What does she usually wear? Is this celebrating a special milestone? Would you like something she'll wear every day?

Connecting the jewelry to a personal story creates emotional value that goes beyond price.

Don't Forget Self-Purchasing Customers

Many women purchase jewelry for themselves during the holidays. Showcase fashion-forward pieces near checkout and encourage customers to treat themselves while shopping for others.

Simple messages such as "You deserve something special, too" can spark additional sales.

Promote Services Alongside Jewelry

Christmas is also an excellent time to remind customers about services your store provides, including - jewelry repair, ring sizing, watch battery replacement, custom design, appraisals, professional cleaning and inspection

Customers visiting for repairs frequently discover the perfect holiday gift while they're in the store.

The Gift They'll Never Forget

Christmas is filled with memorable moments, and jewelry has a unique way of preserving those memories for a lifetime. Every necklace, bracelet, ring, or pair of earrings becomes part of a family's story. By preparing early, creating an inviting shopping experience, and focusing on meaningful customer relationships, independent jewelers can make the holiday season both successful and unforgettable. After all, while many gifts are opened on Christmas morning, the gift of fine jewelry is cherished for years to come.



Mark Your Calendars!



Calendar of Events

<u>Atlanta Jewelry Show</u> Atlanta, GA August 21-23, 2026	<u>Select Jewelry Show</u> Nashville, TN October 25-26, 2026	<u>Atlanta Jewelry Show</u> Savannah, GA April 3-5, 2027
Deadline Room Block for Saltwater August 24, 2026	Deadline AJA Winter Newsletter Ads January 30, 2027	AJA Annual Convention Birmingham, AL April 17-18, 2027
Deadline Saltwater Gear September 7, 2026	RJO Grapevine, TX February 19-22, 2027	JCK Las Vegas, NV June 4-7, 2027
AJA Saltwater Orange Beach, AL September 24-27, 2026	IJO Charlotte, NC March 6-9, 2027	RJO Kansas City, MO July 23-26, 2027
JIS Miami Beach, FL October 16-19, 2026	JIS Miami Beach, FL March 7-9, 2027	IJO Washington, DC July 24-27, 2027



2027 ANNUAL CONVENTION

FEATURING
JA LEARNING WORKSHOP

HELD AT THE

Wynfrey Hotel

BIRMINGHAM, AL

APRIL

16-18, 2027




EDUCATE ♦ NETWORK ♦ GROW



2026 ALABAMA JEWELERS ASSOCIATION SALTWATER REGISTRATION FORM

Island House Hotel– Orange Beach, AL September 24 - September 27, 2026

ROOM RESERVATIONS at www.alabamajewelers.us or Call (251)981-6100 Group Code 90L
AJA Special Convention Rates starting at \$179.00 **ROOM BLOCK DEADLINE AUGUST 24, 2026**

Name _____ Spouse or Guest(s) _____
Company _____ Phone# _____ Mobile# _____
Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

FULL CONVENTION REGISTRATION:

_____ @ **\$150.00 each** = \$ _____
(Full Registration includes: Hospitality Suite Thursday, Friday & Saturday Nights, Saturday & Sunday Breakfast and Saturday Night Dinner)

Thursday or Friday Night Only (Hospitality Only)

_____ @ **\$45.00 each** = \$ _____

Saturday Night Only (Hospitality & Dinner)

_____ @ **\$85.00 each** = \$ _____

Saturday & Sunday

(Hospitality & Dinner on Saturday Night and Sunday Breakfast)

_____ @ **\$100.00 each** = \$ _____

Full Registration for Children (2-12 years)

_____ @ **\$65.00 each** = \$ _____

DIETARY NEEDS:

Total Registration \$ _____

Please list names for additional badges _____

GOLF TOURNAMENT: Location & Time TBA Please indicate # of Players _____

Get your Saltwater Gear! Last day to order is September 7.



Beach Towels - \$25 Each

Quantity _____

Total \$ _____



20oz Tumbler - \$20 Each

Quantity _____

Total \$ _____



**Neon Blue w/ Tassel Design
Patch**

\$25 Each

Quantity _____

Total \$ _____



**Navy/Stone Stitch w/ Circle
Patch**

\$25 Each

Quantity _____

Total \$ _____

PAY OPTIONS: Check Enclosed _____ Quickbooks Invoice _____

ALABAMA JEWELERS ASSOCIATION

Attention: Nancy Dawkins 2802 Lurleen B Wallace Blvd., Northport, AL. 35476
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