

Douglas Hucker Presents “The Road Back to Burma” at WJA Dallas Event

On May 18, 2017, the Dallas Chapter of the Women’s Jewelry Association (WJA) hosted a special event featuring speaker, Douglas K. Hucker, CEO of the American Gem Trade Association (AGTA). Hucker presented *The Road Back to Burma*, an in-depth presentation of the recent trip to Myanmar by industry leaders. In October 2016, a delegation representing the United States gemstone and jewelry industry traveled to Myanmar to discuss bilateral trade between the two countries with the intent of re-establishing direct lines of commerce between the countries.

The delegation was led by AGTA President Jeffrey Bilgore, AGTA CEO Douglas Hucker, Jewelers of America (JA) President & CEO David J. Bonaparte, and Gemological Institute of America’s (GIA) Dr. Jim Shigley. Also joining the delegation were Timothy Haake of Haake/Fetzer, senior counsel to JA, and the Inle Advisory Group, a Myanmar-centric business consulting firm.

The delegation met with representatives of the Myanmar government, including members of Parliament and Ministerial delegations, members of Myanmar gemstone industry and local representatives of civil society. The delegation also traveled to Mogok, the famed center of gemstone mining and trade, visiting numerous mines, meeting with various groups of miners and dealers.



Doug Hucker presenting “The Road Back to Burma”

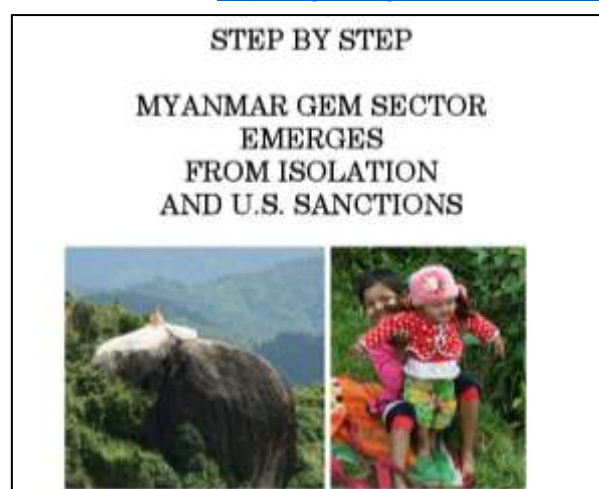
"With the sanctions on the importation of jade and ruby removed," said Hucker, "it was very important for the delegation to get a first-hand look at conditions on the ground and to provide whatever guidance we could to the Myanmar government, and the members of the gemstone trade in establishing a more lasting and responsible gemstone industry."

The presentation, which was attended by WJA Members from Texas, Arkansas and Kansas, was a hands-on experience. As Hucker discussed the different types of mines that were visited and the techniques for culling the gemstones, he passed around a bag of “gemstone gravel” from a Burmese Ruby mine. Attendees pored over the rocks, finding interesting specimens of Ruby, Tourmaline and Spinel.



Event attendees studying the Ruby rough from Burma

The findings of the delegation have been incorporated into a comprehensive authoritative report titled, “*Step By Step: Myanmar Gem Sector Emerges From Isolation and U.S. Sanctions*” which can be found at <http://agta.org/info/docs/burmawhitepaper2016.pdf>.



For more information on the white paper or to receive a copy, contact the AGTA office at 800.972.1162 or info@agta.org

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