

AGA

NewsWire

News for the Accredited Gemologists Association

In This Issue: An Awesome 1997 Seminar!

Tucson Seminar Makes BIG Impression though small attendance

Although attendance was at an all time low, the 1997 Tucson Seminar, "The Science of Color", with Frank Mazdab of the University of Arizona, was an incredibly stellar presentation. David Harris did a marvelous job. Don't take our word for how good it was:

"The AGA Science of Color" was so relevant. Day one set the pace with theory as well as practical hands-on work lasting well over the time allotted. Day two analyzed the color systems on the market new and old. Great to know that the industry is moving very fast towards the 21st century." -- **Barbara Leal (England)**

"We couldn't believe our eyes when we saw the program for the AGA conference. Having to decide what color system to use for the IBGM Laboratory Network, it was most fortuitous for us to find in two days all the relevant information we needed to make that decision. I am particularly delighted with the group I met at Tucson. I must

confess, I am most proud to become an AGA member! Thanks to all for the warm welcome." --

Angela De Andrade (Brazil)

"To put the accent on color for the 1997 AGA Conference was a courageous decision amidst all the controversy surrounding the various grading systems available and the very different 'expert opinions' on the subject. The first day, whilst heavy going initially, turned out to be remarkably informative and most enjoyable. The second day, was action packed and gave participants a valuable insight into the various grading systems and their uses along with a final on the changing faces of Diamond Grading which will change with the advent of the millennium."

-- **Peter Buckley (England)**

"Impressive Conference on Color. I was grateful to have been able to meet Frank Mazdab and to be able to learn from him so much as to the causes of color in gems and minerals in a one day presentation. he was excellent!" -- **Tom Tashey, GQL (Los Angeles)**

Why the heck, we would have such an esoteric workshop anyway?

Frank, himself, is the best one to tell you why this seminar was an important one for those of us serious about understanding the technology of color. His workbook is a great resource. Here is a bit of the introduction. Look for more in the upcoming Cornerstone:

The interaction of light with gem materials is the foundation behind the beauty and value of gemstones. Whether one treasures the fire of a brilliant diamond or the rich pure colors of a bountiful myriad of gem minerals, it is these optical effects that draw us to them. Whereas in gemology the optical properties of gems and gem materials take center stage, the importance of optics in modern mineralogy seems to be declining. This is unfortunate, not only because optical mineralogy has traditionally been an important tool in mineral identification, but also because the interaction of light with minerals provides a valuable

insight into their structure and chemistry.

This is the focus of this workshop. We begin our look at optical mineralogy with an overview of crystallography. Indeed, the crystal structure of a mineral is one of the most important features governing its optical properties. Surprisingly enough, many students in a mineralogy course who "suffer" through the first few weeks of crystallography typically comment that they do not see the significance of crystallography to identifying minerals or to studying mineral properties. It is unfortunate that these students fail to realize that many mineral properties ultimately are a function of crystal symmetry. This is well-known in the gem and jewelry trade, for example when orienting cutting rough to "eliminate" undesirable dichroic colors, but even in gemology this relationship of mineral properties, particularly optical properties, to crystal properties, to

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crystal structure might not be explicitly stated.

After crystallography and a brief look at the nature of light itself, we immediately delve into the many different interactions that are possible between light and minerals, including in general terms, refraction, reflection, transmission and absorption. Not only will we summarize *what* these interactions are (and what properties they yield), but hopefully we will also gain some insight into *why* and *how* these properties arise. Interspersed amongst these discussion are tables of data on the optical properties of many common transparent gem minerals, along with some more unusual gems.

That is the workshop in a nutshell. At the conclusion of the lectures, is a "hands-on" laboratory exercise which will give workshop participants an opportunity to play with some fun and educational optical experiments, and to sample optics from a mineralogists' point of view.

More to come in
CORNERSTONE!

Dues Notices were sent out!
If you DID NOT get yours yet, please call us and let us know!
(619)286-1603

Did you see.....

It was on the Galleria and you had to have been looking pretty hard but it wasn't hidden.....

Gemvision jewelry designing software - the boys from the midwest have managed to create a software that is much more user friendly than what we have seen before. If you know of someone who missed it, e-mail them at Gemvisin@netins.net.

Ruby & Sapphire by Richard W. Hughes is such a beautiful book. Richard is one of the most respected writers in our industry. Large, filled with incredible photography and rich in references and information you can use. Then of course, there is the way he writes which entertains, educates and puts life into perspective. Look out for chapters in Cornerstone and some of his writing in our publication!!!

Gemprint ...if you haven't had a chance to see their latest version, you missed a hands on opportunity at the workshop.

Lamda Spectrum was also a speaker at the two day event. They presented good detailed and useful information about their system, focusing on color grading of diamonds.

What was hot?

Imaging was hotter this year at the AGTA. GIA hurried and showed a flexcamera at the show. Cute little camera. Richard Drucker uses it in his lab. He also used it for his presentation at the Orlando Show.

Off the top of my head: **A message from the President**

First, let me thank David Harris. He was patient, thorough and provided a forum for the AGA that was top-notch. This reflects great on our organization when we can easily put together a professional and useful seminar.

Now, let me take a moment and thank the board for their support during this time of transition. Every board member has been helpful, committed and a great resource for me during this time.

Ok . Enough. Here we go. This is going to be a great year for AGA!

We started with an incredible conference, meaningful board meetings and now here we are communicating with you, our membership in a way that keeps you alert to what is going on with this newswire. And there will be more information and

news coming to you over this year.

NOTEWORTHY:

- We have a new phone number - tell your friends to call it (619) 286-1603.
- We have lots of new members. In fact over the past month, inquiries about the AGA have increased dramatically!
- We are going to be on the Internet . Thanks to POLYGON we will have a website for basic AGA information and membership information as well. We really appreciate their support. The Website should be up by April 1st. We will alert you. Every member will be listed on the site with links to their home page if they have one. If you wish to have a link, please call us or e-mail me at thomu@earthlink.net
- In fact, you may e-mail me just to discuss concerns or let me know what you think the AGA should be doing.
- We are looking for members to help us organize an event at the JCK-Las Vegas Show. If you are willing to help us, please call me at (619) 286-1603. Thanks!

REMEMBER:

The AGA is YOUR organization. Help us make it work for YOU.

Thom Underwood