

March 22, 2002

## WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?

Greetings,

It has been a hectic six months since 9/11 and these are interesting times. I have seen a very pleasant change in people's attitudes. People seem much more ready to express their feelings towards their loved ones and I thank all of you who have taken the time to share your thoughts with me. I would like to take a few minutes of your time to share with you what is going on at Winfield's, and of course present you with some interesting opportunities and information.

### Van Graff

One of the biggest changes that I have seen is an increase in the demand for inexpensive items to be given as tokens of love and respect, simple ways of saying "I love you" which while inexpensive are still dramatic.

I have found a way to fill this demand that I think you will enjoy. This is something really beautiful, exciting and as with my other items, having the high quality that will allow you to give this gift with pride.

I am speaking about the Van Graff cubic zirconium. When I was first approached about them I scoffed. "Why would anyone pay so much for a CZ, I can sell them for a fraction of what these cost," I said. "Okay, send me a couple to look at, but expect them in return mail if they are not extraordinary," I grudgingly said when pressed to take a look.

I looked. I was amazed! They really are much prettier than an ordinary CZ. It's the cutting. Just like in a real diamond, the cutting can make **all the difference!** These stones are cut to "hearts and arrows" standards. The hearts and arrows diamonds are considered to be "super ideal" cut diamonds and have a pattern that can be seen in a special viewer. Van Graff has decided that if such special cutting made diamonds more attractive that it would make CZ's more attractive too. They were right! Mounted in a 14kt gold pendant or earrings you have a very nice gift for a **fraction** of what the same item would cost in real diamonds, and they look much better than diamonds of low quality!

Several of my clients have taken advantage of them in earrings and pendants for their daughters, as they make great looking jewelry affordable. Others have purchased them as

gifts for their wives until they can afford to replace that 2ct pendant with the “real McCoy” when they get that next promotion.

Whatever your reason, if you would like to see the current state of the art in inexpensive beauty, please call 208 344-0800 for an appointment to see some of these very impressive diamond simulants.

## **New Web Site to Serve You Better**

Winfield's is currently building a new website to serve you better. You can watch the work-in-progress at [www.winkjones.com](http://www.winkjones.com).

I believe that this will allow Winfield's to serve you better in many ways. First it will allow us to email you with specials and timely announcements. For example, I had Richard Homer cut a dozen 8 x 10 mm oval amethysts last year for Christmas. These were a huge hit with many of you, and yet hundreds of you had no idea that they were here. With the cost of color printing, there was no way I could afford to print pictures of them and mail them out to you without raising the price of them by at least \$50 a piece to cover that cost.

Now I can just hit a few buttons and e-mail you a small picture or a web address to send you to a page on our website with pictures and information about these opportunities.

This site will also serve you better by allowing Winfield's to remind you automatically every six months to have your prongs cleaned and checked. It will not matter where in the world you live or whether or not you have us do the cleaning and polishing, but we will be able to remind you that you need it done. This can help prevent that heart breaking call about a lost item and “Gosh, has it really been six years since I last cleaned and checked the prongs”?”

Oh, and for you “forgetful” husbands out there, how would you like to be reminded a few days early about the birthday or anniversary that is coming up?

So, if you would like to be on our electronic mailing list, please either go to the site and sign up, or just call us here at 344-0800 to give us your email address or better yet, drop us an e-mail at [wink@diamondsandgems.com](mailto:wink@diamondsandgems.com) so no mistakes are made taking your address on the phone.

By the way, we are putting up a LOT of information on the site, so if you want education, feel free to visit and read to your heart's content. Also, any comments you might wish to make are very much appreciated and sought after!

## **Tanzanite Lovers Rejoice!**

If you are one of my many tanzanite lovers, it is time to buy! It has been many years since tanzanite prices were this favorable to the consumer. Not since Tanzania's

disastrous attempt at nationalizing the mines has the price of tanzanite been this low. It is due to a combination of factors.

Factor number one is the economy. Even before 9/11 the price of tanzanite was softening slightly.

Factor number two is the competition from purplish sapphire. There was a find of violet and purplish sapphire in Madagascar and Sri Lanka last year, which put downward pressure on tanzanite, as sapphire is a harder and more durable stone, more suitable for rings than tanzanite.

Factor number three is the alleged Bin Laden connection. The Wall Street Journal came forth with a story about the possible connection between tanzanite and Bin Laden. In spite of a lack of hard evidence and the fact that the Tanzanian government has already arrested those with whom it could establish any terrorist connection, this greatly added to the downward pressure on tanzanite prices. Tiffany and Zales used this as a publicity gimmick and announced that they will no longer carry this "tainted" stone, adding further pressure to the downward spiral. (It does not seem to have played a similar part in the cost of oil, but that is beyond the scope of this letter.) A recent statement was made by our State Department that there is no credible evidence of any large-scale connection between Bin Laden and tanzanite, but I have not seen this in the mainstream press, only in the gem trade magazines.

Factor number four is the fact that there is no large tanzanite cartel to protect tanzanite prices. Prices are down and the (mostly small and independent) miners must continue to sell the product at whatever price they can get to pay the bills. Since this means that what they sell brings less money, they must sell more of it or go out of business. It is a vicious circle causing a temporary flood of beautiful material on the market at very attractive prices.

It is the opinion of at least some of the market experts who deal in such stones that the market will rebound somewhat in the near future, meaning one to two years, but that the price will probably not return to 1990-91 levels in that time. Expect to pay twenty to thirty percent less for some of the finest stones you have ever seen and up to fifty to sixty percent less for poor to medium quality stones. If you have ever wanted a spectacular tanzanite, now is definitely the time to be looking!

We expect to receive permission shortly to reprint a very interesting article about Tanzanite on our website [www.winkjones.com](http://www.winkjones.com) in the near future.

## **Do You Want to Have Lunch?**

I would still like to have lunch with you. Please call and let's pick a day when we can go to lunch and enjoy each other's company. No business, just talk and a good meal. It is a

great way to get to know each other better and it is a lot of fun! This time of year is a great time for this as we have a lot more time now than during the Christmas rush.

It seems that getting involved with our country and our community is becoming even more important to people. I have been a Rotarian for nearly twenty years now, but have recently decided to dedicate myself to being more active and to bringing in new members. It is a wonderful organization and provides service at local, national and international levels. I welcome the opportunity to have you as my guest for lunch any Wednesday at Rotary. We have a great group of ladies and gentlemen in our club, and we make a difference in our community. If you try it, you will like it!

Winfield's is also available to talk to your service clubs, regardless how large or how small. We can do a variety of talks for you, depending on what you feel they would want. We will even bring a few "samples" if you think it appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

Wink Jones

P.S. Congratulations to Doug Colwell who won the \$250 second chance award from our Christmas contest. This was the first year than no one won our \$1,000 or \$500 prizes; let's hope that you are one of our winners this year!

Thanks again for making this a wonderful year and for all of the heartfelt stories so many of you have chosen to share with me since 9/11. I am always delighted to hear them and I enjoy getting to know you better.