

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

America: A Gem Of A Country

(NAPSA)—Even in the face of the greatest adversities, the spirit of America has remained resilient. In times of unrest, Americans help to maintain that spirit by focusing on things that represent continuity and giving gifts of affirmation.

A watch, ring or bracelet inscribed with a message of endearment can serve as a reminder that life and love must go on.

“A piece of fine jewelry can become one’s talisman—an object that offers not only beauty, but also a sense of comfort or empowerment,” said Elizabeth Florence, executive director of the Jewelry Information Center, a New York City-based nonprofit trade association.

Fine jewelry has always been an inherently emotional purchase.

Marie Gates, 89, underwent severe poverty during the Great Depression and World War II, but she never surrendered several 22K gold bangle bracelets given to her by her grandmother.

Purchased in Lebanon, the bracelets were a reminder of her native country and symbolic of the stability of her family. They are now treasured and worn with pride by her three granddaughters who are 24, 27 and 29. They will one day present the bracelets to their own daughters.

During emotionally wrenching times, experts agree that humans need to connect to other people, but it is also important to remember to nurture yourself and not feel guilty about it.

“Delight in the small things,” said Dr. Gilda Carle, professor of psychology and author of several books on relationships. “If it’s



A quiet yet powerful display may be made by wearing a simple symbol of patriotism or faith.

wearing your favorite watch, if it’s putting on your most glitzy rings, if that’s what turns you on, go for it. The objective is for you to feel good.”

Edna Woolman Chase was editor-in-chief of *Vogue* through WWI and WWII, as well as the Great Depression. She pointed out in the March 1942 issue, “One of the first things we must do is to make sure our own morale is good, and that we have the right kind of perspective about ourselves.”

In uncertain times, people are naturally drawn to items which have intrinsic eternal qualities. Jewelry made with precious metals and gemstones, if well-taken-care-of, will last forever.

Savvy shoppers know that an important element of buying fine jewelry is to find a professional jeweler, someone who is a member of a professional trade association such as Jewelers of America (JA). JA requires high ethical standards of its members and provides them with ongoing education.

For more information on fine jewelry, visit www.jeweleryinfo.org.