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# Stouffville lapidaries world class

Chalk up yet another coup for the Stouffville-based brother tandem of Rudi and Ralph Wobito.

The Wobitos' talents as lapidaries - that's the term for people who cut and polish precious stones for a living - are respected worldwide. Nationally, their work sits on display in such renowned centres as the Royal Ontario Museum and the National Museum in Ottawa.

Offshore, their most notable work involved the restoration of a chipped 18-karat sapphire which once belonged to Marie Antoinette.

They have seen their efforts enshrined in Washington's Smithsonian Institute, while they once cut a fine Russian alexandrite that weighed 31.66 karats for a man from Sri Lanka. Thirty karats is considered the benchmark for the world's largest such gem.



From Where I Live

Bruce Stapley

So when the Wobitos decided it was time to get a little extra exposure in the American market, they entered the prestigious American Gem Trade Association Cutting Edge Gemstone

Competition last year. Competing against hundreds of professional gem cutters, their 17-karat blue-green tourmaline was awarded second prize in the creative cutting category.

They were back again this year and were told just recently that their perfume bottle made out of colorless topaz and smokey quartz had placed third in the objet d'art category.

They were the only Canadians to win major awards at the competition, considered the biggest of its kind in the world.

Their award-winning entry now goes into the Las Vegas Jewellery Show later this month. It will also be showcased at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, the biggest show of its kind in the world, next February. The Wobitos will be officially recognized for their high placing at that event, which is attended by roughly 60,000 people annually.

For the Wobitos, precise gem cutting is a continuation of a long and distinguished family tradition. It was one of their ancestors who in 1870 first introduced the diamond cutting trade to Idor-Oberstein, Germany, a centre now recognized internationally as the colored stone capital of the world. Their grandfa-

(Please see page 11)

# S.A.H.L. DRAFT NIGHT

Changed from June 8<sup>th</sup> to:

# JUNE 22, 1995

7:30 p.m.

Stouffville Legion  
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