

THE DOWNLOAD

calendar BIFMA EVENTS

BIFMA (the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer's Association) had scheduled the following list of meetings and events at press time. Additional events will be scheduled, so continue to watch for meeting notices on the Internet at www.bifma.org.

March 2, 2000
Statistics Committee Meeting
Crowne Plaza
Grand Rapids MI

March 6, 2000
Flammability Standards Subcommittee
Holiday Inn Four Seasons
Greensboro, NC

March 8, 2000
Indoor Air Quality Symposium
Holiday Inn Four Seasons
Greensboro, NC

March 13 & 14, 2000
Ergonomics Subcommittee Meeting
Western Michigan University's Building
Grand Rapids, MI

March 23 & 24, 2000
Engineering Committee Meeting
Denver, CO

March 27 & 28, 2000
BIFMA Product Liability Seminar
Denver, CO

June 14, 2000
BIFMA Annual Membership Meeting
Chicago, IL

June 14, 2000 - 1 pm
Government Affairs Committee Meeting
Chicago, IL

February 1 - 3, 2001
Annual Management Conference
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Product Liability Seminar To Be Held in Denver, Colorado

Over the years, BIFMA has supported the National Association of Manufacturers in search of common sense legislation that would, among other things, prevent the naming of innocent product sellers in lawsuits solely as a way to get "deep pocket" defendants into court. While we still need a national standard



for punitive damages, especially when applied to small companies, education for manufacturers of all sizes is needed in the interim to inform business persons of how the courts work today.

BIFMA is putting on a Product Liability Seminar on March 27 and 28 in Denver, Colorado. It

will be the Monday and Tuesday following BIFMA's Engineering Committee meetings already scheduled at the Denver Marriott Southeast the prior Thursday and Friday. A similar seminar, geared specifically toward the office furniture industry, was held in Chicago in 1997 and many have asked for an

update on issues addressed at that time.

Bruce Preston, formerly of Steelcase, will again leading a group of presenters to focus on product liability issue and specifically how it impacts the office furniture industry. Bruce led BIFMA's first seminar on this topic in 1997 and we look forward to another successful program this year. Those who should attend in addition to

engineers involved with liability matters are litigation managers, industry upper and middle management levels, and suppliers to manufacturers.

Register for this event by faxing a copy of the form posted on BIFMA's Internet site (www.bifma.org) or by calling 616.285.3963.

Annual Meeting Speaker Announced

David A. Wyss is chief economist at Standard & Poor's DRI in Lexington, Massachusetts. BIFMA has announced that he will address the association on June 14 in Chicago.

In his position at DRI, he is responsible for their economic forecasts and publications, and co-authors the monthly Forecast Summary and the weekly Financial Notes. David joined DRI in 1979 as an economist in the European Economic Service in London. He came back to the United States in 1983 as Chief Financial

Economist. Before joining DRI, Dr. Wyss was a Senior Staff Economist with the President's Council of Economic Advisers, Senior Economist at the Federal Reserve Board, and Economic Advisor to the Bank of England.

David holds a B.S. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University. He testifies regularly before Congress and is quoted regularly in the press.

At BIFMA's Annual Meeting during

NeoCon, Dr. Wyss will focus on the economy and the office furniture industry. He will offer an economic outlook and implications for business. To register for this breakfast meeting, contact BIFMA at 616.285.3963 or email@bifma.org.



David A. Wyss, Ph.D.

Rep. Hoekstra Thanked, Ready to Fight

The Competition in Contracting Act Coalition has been holding frequent meetings and a "fly-in" was conducted in February where participants visited U.S. Senate offices to encourage reform of Federal Prison Industries.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce mailed a solicitation for additional funding for the FPI battle. It went to the coalition's mailing list of over 1,500 interested parties.

To show our appreciation for his leadership on this and other issues, BIFMA partnered

with NAM (the National Association of Manufacturers) recently to host a "Congressional Dialogue" with Rep. Peter Hoekstra. Support for the Hoekstra, Frank, Collins, and Maloney legislation keeps building. There are now over 25% of the House of Representatives cosponsoring the reform bill.

The push to get additional cosponsors for his package continues in the House while the focus of the coalition's efforts in the Senate is to secure an amendment to a Defense Department funding

bill that embodies the Hoekstra language. In November of 1999, a lawsuit was filed against FPI claiming that they illegally expanded in office furniture. Attorney Steve Ryan of Manatt, Phelps and Phillips believes the case is going well. \$450 million is being sought for what the suit contends were unlawful sales and expansions throughout the 1990's. A trial is expected in the spring.

And finally on the FPI front, national news media is interested in this issue once again. The Los Angeles Times carried a story recently entitled "A Nation of Too Many Prisoners?" and the ABC News program 20/20 is investigating the impact of FPI's impact on taxpayers.

As is sometimes said about candidates, there is a great amount of momentum, or, "the Big Mo" on the side of reform at this particular moment in history.

To stay posted on developments as they unfold, e-mail a note of interest to Andrew Fortin at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (AFortin@USChamber.com).

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Rep. Pete Hoekstra and BIFMA Executive Director Tom Reardon (foreground) talk business with representatives of various industries at a Congressional Dialogue co-hosted by BIFMA and the National Association of Manufacturers in Holland, MI on January 21, 2000.

Indoor Air Quality Symposium in NC

BIFMA International, the American Furniture Manufacturers Association, and the Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association are co-sponsoring an Indoor Air Quality Symposium on Wednesday, March 8, 2000 at the Holiday Inn Four Seasons, 3121 High Point Road at I-40 in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Manufacturers and suppliers are invited to register for this event featuring Brock Landry of Venable, Baetjer, Howard & Civiletti, LLP, who will kick off our day with a history of

the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) issue. Other speakers or panel participants that have been lined up so far include Bill Groah; Dan Hare of the Composite Panel Association; Bob Matejka, Environmental Mgr., Akzo Coatings, Inc.; Patrick Toner of the Society for the Plastics Industry (SPI) and Dick Driscoll, Manager of Technical Services for BIFMA International.

This event is designed as a "conversation" and learning experience for manufacturers and suppliers. Issues covered will include:

Formaldehyde & VOCs; California's Proposition 65; Liability Potential; Standards Activity; the Regulatory Picture; Test Methods

The symposium will explore what manufacturers are being asked to do about indoor air quality and discuss what can be done today with current technologies.

Manufacturers are asked to encourage their suppliers to attend this session so that the information shared in North Carolina can be complete. Call 616.285.3963 to register.

San Diego Conference Breaks Records!

The 2000 Management Conference broke all previous attendance records and gave participants a lot to think about upon return to their companies.

"Image" was the topic and it was addressed by the following speakers: Kevin Freiberg - co-author of NUTS! Southwest Airlines' Crazy Recipe for Business and Personal Success; John Izzo - author of Awakening Corporate Soul; Christine Barber of Knoll -

"Competing for Talent"; Photo From San Diego David Loyola of Gensler

Los Angeles - "The Work Environment for Creative Thinking"; Sara Marberry and Jonathan Lehr - "Making the Most of the Internet"; and Anne Aldrich of Wirthlin Worldwide - "External Perceptions of the Office Furniture Industry".

For the first time, BIFMA is making audio tapes of the Management Conference presentations available to BIFMA members who

were unable to join us. These tapes are provided with the permission of our speakers and can be ordered using the form included with this newsletter.

We would like to thank this year's

sponsors of various events at the Management Conference for their support. It would not have been possible without them!

Absecon Mills
Byrne Electrical Specialists
Counter Point Furniture Products
Group Dekko/Pent
Interface Interior Fabrics Light Corporation
The Merchandise Mart
Milliken Contract Fabrics
Morton Powder Coatings
Plastic Prescriptions Ltd.
Suspa
Teknion Corporation and The Global Group
Waterloo Furniture Components
Wilsonart International

The dates have already been set for next year's Management Conference. It will be on February 1st to the 3rd in

San Juan, Puerto Rico. Mark your calendars now for what will be another exciting opportunity for BIFMA members to meet on common ground, contemplate burning issues, and enjoy networking opportunities in a new part of the world.

IN REVIEW

In Review is published quarterly by BIFMA International to provide a brief update of committee and association activities.

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Michael Volkema, Herman Miller, Inc.

CALENDAR of industry events

Updated regularly on BIFMA's Internet Site: www.bifma.org

March 9-10, 2000 - DesignFest/NeoCon South 2000 - Miami Beach, FL; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Telephone: 312.527.7600

March 13-16, 2000 - National Manufacturing Week - Chicago, IL; Contact: National Association of Manufacturers at www.nam.org

March 15-19, 2000, Furnidec 2000 - Thessaloniki, Greece; Internet: www.helexpo.gr

March 18-21 - China International Furniture Fair - Guangzhou, China; Internet: www.ciff-gz.com

March 22-23, 2000 - Industrial Strength Woodworking Expo & Conference - Milwaukee, WI; Telephone: 888.903.9663 or 630.323.7214

March 29-30, 2000 - NeoCon West 2000 - Los Angeles, CA; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Telephone: 312.527.7600

April 3-5, Hotel 2000 Trade Show - Dubai, UAE; Internet: www.direct.ca/cosmos/hotel2000.htm

April 10-21, 2000 - International Home Furnishings Market - High Point

April 26-29, 2000 - International Wood Products Association (IWPA) 44th Annual Convention - Tucson Arizona; Internet: www.ihpa.org/convention.html

May 9 - 11, 2000, Meble 2000 - Poland; Contact: JC Exhibitions Inc., 14652 Quail Trail Circle, Orlando FL 32837; Internet: www.mtp.com.pl

May 10 - 11, 2000 - GSA's National Product Expo - San Diego, CA; Internet: www.nfc.fss.gsa.gov

June 5-7 - FM World Africa 2000 - Gallagher Estate, Midrand; Internet: <http://www.aic-africa.com/aicworldwide/exhibition/E201>

June 12-14, 2000, NeoCon World's Trade Fair 2000 - Chicago, IL; Internet: www.neoconwtf.com

June 15-17, 2000 - International Furniture and Equipment Show for the Office - Buenos Aires, Argentina; Internet: www.soempro.com.ar

July 6 - 8, 2000, Techno Mueble - Guadalajara, Mexico; E-Mail: asamjal@asamjal.com.mx

July 20-23, 2000, Furniture & Office Facilities China 2000/ Office & Automation China 2000 - Shanghai, PR of China; Internet: www.wes-expo.com

August 24-27, 2000 IWF 2000 - The International Woodworking Machinery and Furniture Supply Fair - Atlanta, GA USA; Contact: <http://www.iwf2000.com>; E-mail: iwf@sprynet.com

Sept. 13-16, 2000 - Furniture China 2000 - Shanghai, China; Internet: www.globexpo.com

September 17-19, 2000 - World Workplace 2000 - New Orleans, LA; Telephone: 800-677-6278

September 28-29, 2000 - IIDEX/NeoCon Canada - The National Trade Centre at Exhibition Place, Toronto, ON, Canada; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties Inc.; Telephone: 800-677-6278 or 312-527-7598; Internet: www.iidexneoconcanada.com

October 19-24, 2000 - ORGATEC 2000 - Cologne, Germany; Telephone: 212-974-8837

November 1-3, 2000, Interplan/NeoCon East 2000 - New York, NY; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties Inc.; Telephone: 800-677-6278 or 312-527-7598

November 10-11, 2000 - Midwest Industrial Woodworking Expo (SM) and Plast*Fab (SM) 2000 - Grand Rapids, MI; Internet: www.tsiwoodworkingshows.com.