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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 26, 2002 - 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Environment Subcommittee Meeting
BIFMA Headquarters, Grand Rapids MI

April 3 & 4, 2002
Chair Standards Document Review
Meeting - Starts at 9 am on Wed., 4/3
Best Western Midway Motor Lodge
4101 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI

April 10, 2002 - 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
BIFMA Ergonomics Forum at NeoCon
South in Atlanta GA

April 17, 2002 - 8:00 a.m. - 12 noon, CDT
Furniture Emissions Standard
Subcommittee Meeting
Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Chicago IL

April 17 & 18, 2002 - 1 pm on 4/17
Engineering Standards Committee
Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Chicago IL

June 12, 2002, 7:15 - 9:15 am
BIFMA International's Annual Meeting
Chicago IL (during NeoCon 2002)

September 11, 2002
Statistical Information Committee
9:00 am to 5:00 pm Eastern Time
BIFMA Headquarters, Grand Rapids MI

January 30 - February 1, 2003
BIFMA Management Conference
Biltmore Hotel
Coral Gables, Florida

NEW MEMBERS:

Regular:
• Concord Products, Inc. - Sewell NJ

Supplier:
• Warvel Products, Inc. - Linwood NC

Service:
• Aktrin-Dossenbach Associates -
Sanford NC
• Saloman Smith Barney - New York NY
• Morgan Stanley Dean Witter - NY NY

International:
• Arkal Plastics Products, Israel
• SGS-CSTC Standards Technical Services
Co. - Guangzhou, China

Washington Works, Defense Bill Reforms Going Forward

Despite rumors to the contrary, the reform of Federal Prison Industries (FPI) achieved in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 is currently being implemented.

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin (D-MI) ushered the change through the U.S. Senate and efforts are now underway in the House of Representatives to pass HR 1577 sponsored by Congressmen Pete Hoekstra (R-MI), Barney Frank (D-MA), Mac Collins (R-GA) and Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) granting all federal agencies the freedom to choose between prison manufactured goods and those manufactured in the private sector.

Administration Indicates Support For FPI Reform

In a letter from Office of Management and Budget Director Mitch Daniels, Jr., the Bush Administration indicated its support for passage of comprehensive reform of Federal Prison Industries. "We are encouraged by this expression of support, and hope it will become a strong force in winning passage

of an FPI reform bill that eliminates FPI's monopoly on the federal market," said Rep. Hoekstra, R-Holland, on February 7. The Administration was encouraged by the initial step to reform FPI in the Defense bill and "believes that all Federal agencies



U.S. Senator Carl Levin briefs industry leaders on Federal Prison Industries reform in Grand Rapids, MI

should have the flexibility through competition to purchase quality goods and services at fair and reasonable prices with the expectation of timely performance," Daniels wrote. "The Administration is anxious to work with the Congress to develop FPI reform legislation. We envision such legislation would establish a comprehensive program that provides the Attorney General with the authority to maintain ade-

quate work opportunities at Federal prisons, that addresses purchases by Federal agencies, and that phases out the mandatory source provision."

The bill is now undergoing consideration in the House Judiciary Committee where the fight to make this reform government-wide continues.

Depreciation Legislation Becomes Law

The U.S. Congress has approved and the President has signed a 13-week extension of unemployment benefits for workers and an accelerated depreciation provision for capital goods purchases.

The measure provides additional support for laid-off workers and provides a needed boost to furniture and other manufacturers. "By making it more economical for businesses to invest in furniture, vehicles and other capital goods, we can get businesses spending again and get people back to work." Congressman Pete Hoekstra said.

Under the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002, businesses will be able to

write-off 30 percent of the value of new purchases in the first year for certain investments made after September 10, 2001, and before September 11, 2004. This provision will save a business \$140,000 on a \$1 million purchase of office furniture, previous industry analysis has shown.

Hoekstra has been pushing for the depreciation provision as a means to help manufacturers since Congress first began debating a stimulus package following the Sept. 11 attacks.

President Bush stated at the bill-signing ceremony, "This measure will mean more job opportunities for workers in every part of our coun-

try, especially in manufacturing." The bill received overwhelming bi-partisan support in both the House and Senate with 417-3 and 85-9 votes respectively.

Though the economy is showing signs of turnaround, capital spending remains well below that of the late 1990s and this legislation will encourage technology, productivity improvement, and stronger economic growth.

(This information received from Rep. Hoekstra and National Association of Manufacturers reports.)

BIFMA Releases Latest DRI-WEFA Office Furniture Forecast

By Tom Reardon, BIFMA Executive Director

Following a disappointing 2001 where office furniture industry shipments declined over 17%, the industry looks forward to 2002 being the year in which the demand for office furniture will stop declining and begin to stabilize. The latest forecast prepared by DRI-WEFA indicates that the outlook for industry shipments will slowly improve during 2002.

The short-term outlook remains very weak due to the deterioration in the labor market

since the September 11 terrorist attacks. Service sector employment was particularly hard hit at the end of 2001, declining by 239,000 in the fourth quarter alone and is expected to further drop in the first quarter of 2002. At the same time office vacancy rates have risen sharply. Together, these two elements suggest that demand for office furniture will remain weak early this year.

However, forces are building for an economic recovery that should begin in the second quarter and accelerate through the year. As the

economy strengthens the outlook for office furniture orders should begin to steadily improve. Year-over year growth rates for furniture orders and shipments are expected to turn positive by the fourth quarter of 2002. On an annualized basis, shipments are expected to decline by 13% in 2002, and grow by 3.6% during 2003.

(DRI-WEFA is an economic consulting organization formed in May of 2001 by the merger of DRI, a unit of McGraw-Hill, and WEFA, a unit of Thomson Corp.)

Annual Statistical Surveys Coming Due

By Michael Reagan, BIFMA Manager of Statistical Information

It is that time of year again where BDO Seidman sends out the packet of annual survey forms for calendar year 2001. We encourage all BIFMA manufacturer members to participate in the annual statistical reports. These reports represent the

best and most comprehensive data available on the office furniture manufacturing industry in the United States, and wide-spread participation can only increase accuracy and a credible depiction of the industry. This is important every year, but the current state of the industry makes participation

even more meaningful. Members are reminded that all company data submitted is held in the strictest confidence by selected personnel at BDO Seidman. Surveys are due back to BDO by March 31, 2002 to insure timely annual report publication by early summer.

Trendway & BIFMA Say "Thank You!"



U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra, seated on right, visits Trendway Corporation in Holland, MI. Company CEO Don Heeringa is shown, seated on left with Trendway employees.

By Susan Zalniz

Trendway Corporation of Holland, Michigan hosted a special event at their corporate headquarters location on February 12, 2002 where U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra participated in an all-employee dock meeting at the facility.

Trendway employees thanked the Congressman for all of his efforts

surrounding the passage of the Defense Authorization Bill which fully opens the Department of Defense contracting process to private competition.

Hoekstra informed Trendway workers of the key changes that this new law provides and how it benefits the contract office furniture industry.



BIFMA Executive Director Tom Reardon (left), Trendway Corporation CEO Don Heeringa, U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra, and Brad Miller of BIFMA at the entrance to the new InterTrend Seating LLC Building in Holland, MI

Entela Opens Sales Office In Wisconsin

In February, Entela, Inc. announced the opening of a new sales office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The office will service clients in the Midwest, including Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota. The phone number is (414) 540-1018 and the e-mail address is tfine@entela.com.

Ted Fine, Director of Midwest Sales for Entela, will manage the office. Mr. Fine has over 30 years of diverse, progressive technical, sales and marketing responsibility in the metals, manufactured goods and engineering services sectors. Ted has an M.S. degree from the University of Minnesota, and is a registered Professional Engineer in Wisconsin. He comes to Entela from a leading engineering services firm where he was Director of Sales and Marketing.

"I'm looking forward to presenting Entela's testing and engineering services to a

broad range of clients in the Midwest," states Mr. Fine. "Entela has expertise in the automotive, IT/Telecom, furniture and manufacturing industries, which fits well with my background in technology, sales and marketing."



"Entela opened the Wisconsin sales office to better service our Midwest customers and to reach new customers with our services. Ted Fine is a welcome new addition to our sales staff and will provide his clients with excellent customer service," said Ms. Kim Phillippi, President of Entela, Inc.

Entela is an international company,

founded as a Michigan corporation in 1974. Today, Entela is one of the fastest growing privately held firms in Michigan. Entela, Inc., provides Full Product, Systems and Material/Component Testing and Failure Analysis, Global Conformity Assessment to International, North American and European Standards, Management System Registration (ISO 9000, QS-9000, TE Supplement, ISO/TS 16949, ISO 14000, TL 9000 and VDA 6.1), Engineering Services, Accelerated Testing and Failure Mode Verification Testing (FMVT®).

In addition to its Grand Rapids, Mich. headquarters, Entela has facilities in Detroit, MI.; Boston, MA.; Toronto, Ontario, Canada and Taipei, Taiwan.

(Information from company news release. BIFMA members can send news to bmiller@bifma.org)

Ergonomics Interest Continues to Grow

An Association Forum at NeoCon South on April 10, 2002 will be the eighth of ten scheduled presentations made in the last year explaining BIFMA's guideline on furniture intended for computer use. The NeoCon South forum is free to attend and will receive 0.1 CEU credit from both ASID and IIDA.

The guideline applies the measurable principles and design requirements established by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and was initially released in January of 2001. The official title of the BIFMA document is "BIFMA G1 - 2002, Ergonomics Guideline for VDT (Visual Display Terminal) Furniture Used in Office Work Spaces".

Industry specialists who have volunteered their time to serve as panelists and presenters at these forums include Denny Ankrum of Nova Solutions, Bill Dowell of Herman Miller Inc., Lucy Hart of the Global Group, and Doug Kokot of Steelcase Inc.. BIFMA would like to thank those individuals and the companies that have supported them in getting the word out about this important document.

The guideline's "provisional" status was formally lifted on February 28, 2002 after a canvass period collecting comments on the document had expired and necessary modifications were incorporated. The guideline can also be ordered from BIFMA's website at:

www.bifma.org/secure/orderform.html

A reference document entitled "Ultimate Test For Fit", is available for download without charge at:

www.bifma.org/standards/pdf%20files/ULTI2002.pdf

Meanwhile, work continues at the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES) on revision of the standard. Their 46th Annual Meeting will be held at the Baltimore Waterfront Marriott Hotel in Baltimore, MD from September 30 to October 4, 2002. Interested parties can get more information from:

<http://hfes.org>

Continental Exhibitions, Inc., producers of the National Ergonomics Conference and Exposition, will launch The First Annual Eastern Ergonomics Conference and Exposition this June 25th-27th at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis. The conference will explore new ergonomics concepts, programs and products for improved productivity, safety, quality and corporate profitability. It will offer sessions designed to help keep participants on the cutting edge of the rapidly changing ergonomics industry. Visit their website at:

www.ergoexpo.com

Finally, on the Federal level, Labor Secretary Elaine Chao has not yet announced how OSHA will address the issue. Senator Ted Kennedy may wait for Department of Labor to make an announcement before holding hearings on what the government's role should be in this area.

ASID, IIDA Explore Potential for Single Design Association

ASID and IIDA have entered into discussions about joining forces to become the single voice of the interior design profession. These conversations have been exploratory in nature and designed to discern if one organization representing the interior design profession is best for both organizations' members and the profession as a whole.

A cross-association team was charged by both boards to identify key issues and make recommendations as to whether or not more formal discussions should be pursued. From the discussions, it was clear both organizations seek to advance and broaden the profession of interior design, aid research, forward the right to practice, celebrate design, and provide effective member services.

"At the local level, many ASID and IIDA chapters have been working together for some time. The profession would be better served represent-

ed by one organization," stated Cary Johnson, FIIDA, IIDA president. "The time is right for these discussions."

"Those familiar with both organizations know that our goals and aspirations for the profession are very similar," said Barbara A. Nugent, FASID, ASID president. "Our discussions so far have been very constructive. We are fortunate to have so many talented and dedicated individuals involved in this process."

Both organizations have agreed to continue discussions related to the creation of a single organization. As the discussions move forward, ASID and IIDA are actively soliciting feedback from their members, chapters, the media and other stakeholders. Individuals can provide comments and input by e-mailing asad@asad.org or feedback@iida.org.

(Information from ASID News Release of February 14, 2002)

CAL TB-117 to be revised and updated

By Dick Driscoll, BIFMA Manager of Technical Services

At the March 3, 2002 AFMA Flammability Seminar, representatives from the California Bureau of Home Furniture and Thermal Insulation revealed a proposed draft of a greatly revised and strengthened Technical Bulletin 117, Requirements, Test Procedure and Apparatus for Testing the Flame and Smoldering Resistance of Upholstered Furniture (Dated February 2002). Mr. John McCormack, Manager of Research and Development, and Ms. Pamela Rivette, Bureau Chief addressed the group of attendees at the conference that included manufacturers of both office furniture and residential furniture, and suppliers to the furniture industry.

The present edition of Technical Bulletin 117 is 25 years old, and is in need of revision to achieve the results sought by the CAL BHFTI. The goal is to make upholstered furniture resistant to ignition by a small open flame source as well as a smoldering cigarette. Upholstery fab-

ric and polyurethane foam that will pass the present version CAL TB-117 will most likely not pass the proposed revised edition of this test. The revised test targets the fabric in upholstered furniture as the "first line of defense" against ignition by exposure to a small open flame ignition source such as a lighter, matches or candles. Fabrics may have to be flame retardant treated and polyurethane foam supplied in Fire Retardant formulations to pass the requirements of the proposed TB-117. Further, testing of composites of fabric and foam that simulate a finished upholstered product will have to be tested to ensure that a combination of materials is capable of withstanding the open flame ignition source.

Presently, most manufacturers rely on their suppliers to supply them with TB-117 compliant materials. Manufacturers will also need to test products, i.e. fabric and foam combinations, to verify that the upholstered furniture they sell in the State of California meets the requirements of the

new TB-117.

At the AFMA Conference, Mr. McCormack and Ms. Rivette advised those in attendance to review the document and provide the Bureau with comments. A time table of July 1, 2002 for receipt of comments was suggested. The Bureau would like to begin holding public meetings to discuss the proposed revisions to TB-117 in the Fall of 2002. A copy of the document can be obtained from the BIFMA website at the following address:

[www.bifma.org/standards/pdf%20files/TB117RevDraft\(2-2002\).pdf](http://www.bifma.org/standards/pdf%20files/TB117RevDraft(2-2002).pdf)

The document can also be obtained by contacting the Bureau of Home Furnishings at:

www.dca.ca.gov/bhfti

BIFMA will be discussing the potential impact this proposed change will have on our industry and what our response(s) should be at the annual Engineering Committee meeting held April 17 & 18, 2002 in Chicago, IL.

Woodworking Expos in Oregon & Texas

Building on the success of previous Industrial Strength Woodworking Expos and Conferences in Dallas and Chicago, Vance Publishing Corp. announces plans for repeat performances in Oregon and Texas. The Pacific 2002 Northwest ISW Expo & Conference will take place October 11-12, 2002, at the Portland Convention Center. The 2003 Texas ISW Expo & Conference will follow March 21-22, 2003, at the Market Hall of the Dallas Market Center.

Co-sponsored by Custom Woodworking Business and Wood & Wood Products magazines, the Portland and Dallas Expos will offer an interactive exhibit hall featuring the newest wood-

working machinery, furniture components, woodworking supplies, tools and software. The events will also feature a wide range of educational seminars on such topics as:

- Management & Finance
- Estimating, Costing and Bidding
- Marketing Your Company & Designs
- Wood Adhesives & Gluing
- Finishing & Sanding
- Computer-Aided Design Manufacturing
- Working with Laminates
- Veneering

For more information about either show, contact the ISW Conference Office, 475 S. Frontage Road,

Suite 101, Burr Ridge, IL 60527-6282. Phone: 630-323-7214 or 888-903-9663. Fax: 630-323-6989. Email: isw@bacon-hedland.com.



Hafele's New York Showroom named "Manufacturer Showroom of the Year"

By Philip Martin

Hafele America's new showroom on Madison Avenue (25 E. 26th St., New York, NY), which opened spring 2001 was named "Manufacturers Showroom of the Year" with a 1st place award in the annual Institute of Store Planners (ISP) Store Design Awards Competition. Studio's Architecture, of New York, NY, was the Architectural Firm responsible for the project.

A six member panel received nearly 170 entries in 20 categories. Judges selected 20 First Place awards in various categories and 35 Awards

of Merit.



The winners were announced January 14th, 2002 at a special ISP banquet and ceremony at the Puck building in New York. The showroom, which opens to Madison Park, is located in the Flat Iron district of New York City. Open weekdays and Saturdays to designers, architects, customers, and trade referenced customers, the showroom features many Hafele products and applications on display.

This is the first award for Studios Architecture in Retail Store Planning and an honor for Hafele to receive this prestigious award.

Contract Furniture Purchasers Reveal Buying Plans In Magazine Survey

By Robin Melichar

Over 85% of American facility managers plan to purchase contract furniture before June, 2003.

That is one conclusion reached in a survey conducted by Buildings magazine. Of the 266 executives responding to the survey, 85% will be working on new construction, while 91% will be working on modernization/retrofit projects.

Building owners and facility managers who comprised the survey

sample were chosen at random from a list of subscribers to Buildings. About 76 % of respondents said that they or their firm determine the brand of contract furniture chosen for new construction projects, while the percentage for modernization projects increased to 80%. Other significant buying influences mentioned in the multiple response question were: tenant or occupant 40%, outside

interior designer 27% and outside architect 23%.

Similar ratios were reported for choice of furniture type.

Almost two thirds, or 61%, said that their organizations select brands from a list of "approved" contract furniture manufacturers. The

BUILDINGS

average number of approved manufacturers is five per item.

Facility managers were also asked to indicate which manufacturers they were aware of and which ones they prefer, Their responses included more than 24 prominent firms in the contract furniture industry, listed in order of preference.

In an unaided recall question, respondents were asked to indicate which manufacturers they prefer as suppliers of each of nine categories of furniture: desktop storage and paper management; ergonomic computer accessories; filing & storage cabinets; freestanding furniture (desks etc.); furniture-enabled cabling; moveable partitions; office furniture systems; seating/chairs and tables.

Survey participants reported that they are responsible for an average

of 170 buildings and 8,594,155 sq. ft. each. Copies of the Furniture Survey may be requested from:

Buildings Magazine
P.O. Box 1888
Cedar Rapids IA, 52406-1888
1-800-553-8878 Ext. 5053
robin-melichar@buildings.com

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CALENDAR of industry events

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

April 10-11, 2002 - NeoCon South - Atlanta, GA; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Telephone: 312.527.7598; Internet: www.merchandisemart.com

April 10-15, 2002 - International Furniture Exhibition - Milan, Italy; Internet: www.cosmit.it

April 12 & 13, 2002 - New England Industrial Woodworking ExpoSM - Hartford, CT; Internet: www.tsiwoodworkingshows.com.

April 18-25, 2002 - Spring International Home Furnishings Market - High Point, NC; Telephone: 336.889.0203; Internet: www.furnituremarket.org

May 1 - 4, 2002 - Woodworking Industry Conference (WIC) - San Antonio, TX. For more information call 410-931-8100. Internet: www.wmia.org

May 21-23, 2002 - GSA's National Product Expo - San Diego, CA; Internet: expo.gsa.gov

June 6-9, 2002 - China Wood, Furniture and Woodworking Machinery 2002 - Dalian, Liaoning Province, China; Internet: <http://iwzhx.51.net>

June 10-12, 2002, NeoCon World's Trade Fair - Chicago, IL; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Telephone: 800-677-6278 or 312.527.7599; Internet: www.merchandisemart.com

June 12, 2002, BIFMA International's Annual Meeting - Chicago, IL; Internet: www.bifma.org

July 11 - 13, 2002 - ISOT 2002 - Tokyo, Japan ; Internet: <http://web.reedexpo.co.jp/isot>

July 14-16, 2002 - World Workplace Europe - Paris, France; Internet: www.worldworkplace.org

August 22-25, 2002 - IWF 2002 - The International Woodworking Machinery and Furniture Supply Fair USA - Atlanta, GA; Internet: <http://www.iwf2000.com>

September 19-20, 2002 - IIDEX/NeoCon Canada - Toronto, ON, Canada; Internet: www.iidexneocon-canada.com

September 30-October 4, 2002 - Human Factors and Ergonomics Society 46th Annual Meeting - Baltimore MD; Internet: <http://hfes.org>

October 6-8, 2002 - World Workplace 2002 - Toronto, Canada; Contact: IFMA; Telephone 713-623-4362; Internet: www.worldworkplace.org

October 17-24, 2002 - International Home Furnishings Market - High Point; Telephone: 336.889.0203; Internet: www.furnituremarket.org

October 22-26, 2002 - ORGATEC 2002 - Cologne, Germany (biannual); Internet Site: www.koelnmesse.de/orgatec

October 31-November 2, 2002 - Architectural Digest Home Design Show - New York, NY; Internet: www.merchandisemart.com/homedesignshow

November 9 - 12, 2002 - International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show - New York, NY; Telephone: 800-272-SHOW; Internet: www.glimshows.com

November 12 - 14, 2002 - School and Home Office Products Association (SHOPA) Show - Atlanta GA; Internet: <http://www.shopa.org>

November 20-21, 2002 - NeoCon West - Los Angeles, CA; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Telephone: 312.527.7600; Internet: www.neoconwest.com

Nov. 27 - 30, 2002 - International Furniture Fair Tokyo (IFFT) 2002 - Tokyo Big Sight, Japan; Internet: <http://idafij.com>

January 9-13, 2003 - Le Salon du Meuble de Paris - Paris, France; Internet: www.salondumeuble.com

January 30-February 1, 2003 - BIFMA International's Annual Management Conference - Coral Gables, Florida; Telephone: 616.285.3963; Fax: 616.285.3765; Email: email@bifma.org; Internet: www.bifma.org