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IFDA INTERNATIONAL FURNISHINGS AND DESIGN ASSOCIATION

NETWORK

Summer 2003

A Message from National President Lynne Forde Breyer

There's been a lot of activity at the National level during the past few months. One of the more exciting aspects has been the great visibility that we have been getting in some important markets. Raising our level of visibility has been a primary concern to all of us in the association for quite a long time. It is an issue that is addressed every year by the sitting Board. A few years ago, we did the "20/20: IFDA's Visions For the Future" survey focusing on trends and technology in home furnishings and residential living spaces. That survey was printed in several leading publications. The Board is considering doing an update to that survey again later this year .

In the meantime, we have been seen in various other high visibility formats already this year. Perhaps you saw our full page ads in various magazines the past few months. *House Beautiful, Window Fashions, Traditional Home, Victoria Magazine* and *Fine Furnishings International* have all run ads or articles on IFDA. In addition, I have just written an article in collaboration with Dr. Wilma Hammett, Carolinas Chapter, to be published in the September 2003 issue of *Intelligent Build & Design Innovations*, a trade publication in London, England. And, plans are in the works to link up with *Metropolis Magazine* and the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) later this year. Each of these opportunities helps to build the image of IFDA as a leader in the furnishings and design industry.

If you were at the spring market in High Point, NC, perhaps you had a chance to visit our hospitality suite in the beautiful new 200 Steele building, staffed by members from the Carolinas Chapter and made possible through the efforts of President Susan Connor and other members of the Carolinas Board. We were mentioned and had an ad in the market copy of *Fine Furnishings International*. In addition. IFDA was involved in two luncheons for various market attendees and was the sponsor of a Sunday morning breakfast for IFDA members, giving IFDA an important presence at this major buyer's market. All told, this is quite a lot of visibility in a short period of time.

On other fronts, the 2003 Conference Committee continues its work toward putting together an exciting program for the *21st Century Business: Consumers, Connections and Communications* conference. Currently, they are seeking sponsors for this event. If you know of a company that you think would benefit from being a sponsor, please e-mail or fax the information to Lynn Russo at IFDA National Headquarters lrusso@cmasolutions.com or (609.799.7032). An ever growing array of exciting speakers, panels and events are on the agenda, and I promise this will be one of the most informative and fun conferences IFDA has ever held. You could even earn your way to a free registration though our Membership Incentive Program. Check out the details by phoning the President or Membership VP of your chapter.

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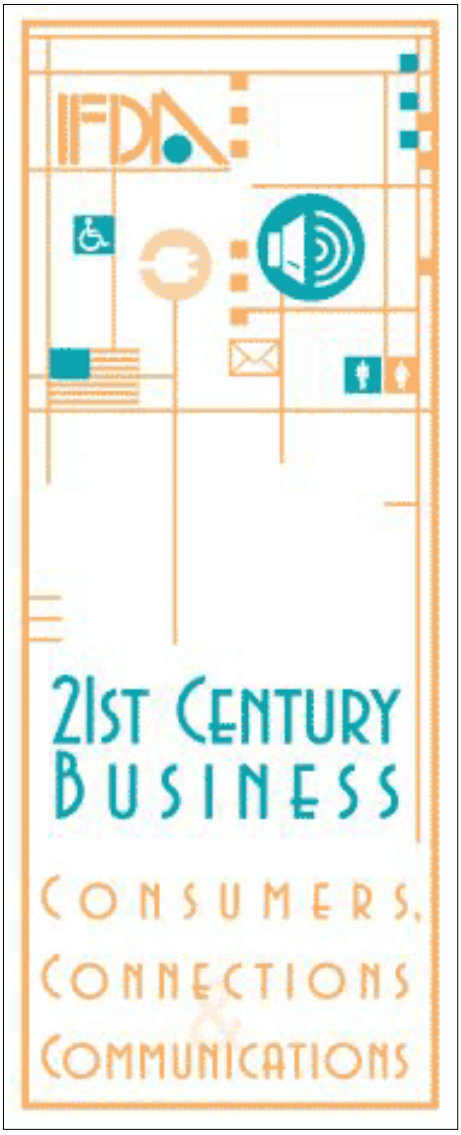
IFDA Conference 2003 Sponsorship Opportunities=Increased Visibility for Your Company

It's not too late! Reach the leaders in the interior design industry by becoming a sponsor of IFDA's 2003 National Conference – *21st Century Business: Consumers, Connections and Communications.* This year's conference, to be held November 6-8, 2003 at the Radisson Resort & Spa in Scottsdale, Ariz. invites attendees to *enjoy education - resort style!* We are delighted with the current line up of speakers, panels, tours and exhibits scheduled for the event and are confident it will be a huge success.

IFDA has also developed a multitude of sponsorship opportunities designed to fit any marketing budget. By becoming a sponsor, your company will receive tremendous visibility not only to those attending the Conference, but throughout the whole year as we launch our promotional campaign to more than 2,000 IFDA members, prospect members and non-member industry professionals. With IFDA's 14 chapters nationwide and highly targeted industry contacts both in the US and abroad, your company will certainly get noticed.

Receive recognition as a Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze or Benefactor sponsor of the Conference. Or, perhaps you would like to show your support by sponsoring one of our speakers, the welcome reception, the special event tour to Taliesin West, conference bags, lanyards and more.

Previous supporters of IFDA Conferences are pleased with the level of increased customer awareness and value they receive for their company's marketing dollar. We are confident you will feel the same. To learn more about all the opportunities available for Sponsorship at this year's conference, contact IFDA National Headquarters at 609-799-3423 or visit our web site (www.IFDA.com).



IFDA Educational Foundation to Sponsor Luncheon, Auction, Workshop at November Conference

Educational Foundation will sponsor several key events at the National Conference slated November 6-8 at the Radisson Resort and Spa, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Shirley Ebert, Educational Foundation Chair, commented, "We are pleased to be playing an important role in this exciting IFDA conference. As the educational arm of IFDA, our goal is to enhance the professionalism of our members as well as provide scholarship support to talented young people who are the future of the home furnishings industry."

To set the stage for IFDA's Special Event at conference, EF is sponsoring an awards luncheon on Friday, featuring Jim Goulka, the director of Taliesin West. He will peak attendees interest by providing a history and overview of famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright and his Taliesin West desert home. That evening, conference participants will be treated to a reception at Taliesin's Sunset Point followed by a guided tour of 'Nightlights on the Desert.'

On Saturday evening, EF will sponsor a silent auction of donated items from chapters, nationwide. Each chapter will provide at least one interesting item for this fundraiser chaired by Katie Goldfarb, who will lead the EF in 2004

New for this conference will be a Thursday afternoon workshop for all incoming chapter vice presidents of the Educational Foundation. Each chapter will be asked to send a representative to this informative session.

"This workshop will be designed to provide insight and information on the mission of the Educational Foundation and the vital role it can play in every chapter. We feel so strongly about establishing better communication with chapters, we are offering a $300 rebate to participants to cover the extra cost of meals and one additional night in the hotel," said Ebert.

The workshop will feature: Ebert, current EF chair; Katie Goldfarb, incoming EF chair; Dr. Wilma Hammett, FIFDA, director of grants; and, Bonnie Peterson, FIFDA, director of marketing and communications.

How To Work with the Media

Presented by the Professional Development Committee of IFDA
Written by: Sarah Smith, *Town &Country Magazine*, New York Chapter; Kerry Touchette, FIFDA, Kerry Touchette Interiors, Washington Chapter; Jennifer Wagner, The Foliage Factory, Arizona Chapter; Leslie Fine, Leslie Fine Interiors, New England Chapter; Vicki Enteen, Stroheim & Romann, New York Chapter
Edited by Vicki Enteen

This is the second in a series of articles to appear in Network that is designed to enhance your professional development. We encourage you to print and save this information for future reference.

No matter what segment of the industry we work in, or what our particular job may be, all of us from time to time can benefit from media coverage. There has never been a doubt of the enormous power of the press to promote a business, a product, a place, an event, or an individual. Positive press coverage can mean the difference between success and failure. Whether we are an interior designer eager to have our work covered in the media to generate more business, a marketer or salesperson looking to expand product sales, an educator eager to garner more attention for our institution, or, for that matter, anyone else in our industry, one can't ignore the opportunities afforded by positive coverage in the press. The Professional Development Committee has interviewed several experts, including trade and consumer editors and public relations professionals, and offers the following tips on how to work most effectively with the media to fulfill your goals.

A NATIONAL CONSUMER MAGAZINE EDITOR

Eliza Alsop, Associate Editor at Country Living Magazine, interviewed by Sarah Smith

Q: Today, we have so many communications options. How do you prefer to receive information for potential stories, by e-mail, direct phone calls, faxes or by mail? Why?
A: I prefer a press kit/proposal that's sent through the mail. Photos are essential for shooting/design editors, but just about any format is fine, i.e., slides, transparencies, CDs, color copies, or snapshots. It's nice if the release is fairly short and to the point, but without omitting any of the essential information.

Q: What are the factors you look for in determining if a story idea is for you?
A: New products are what I look for, predominately. I am always on the lookout for the newest, greatest piece of furniture, tabletop or accessory. I always have to think about whether the product is right for the look of the magazine, and more importantly, its readership, when I am determining if a story idea is right for me.

Q: Do many of your story ideas originate from outside your publication, for example, from public relations people or those who are interested in being featured in your publication?
A: Many of the new products I find for the magazine come to my attention through PR people as well as from those who are interested in being featured in the publication. This is also the case with homes and locations that we feature.

Q: What are your typical lead times?
A: For large-scale stories: at least 6 months. For product it's a little bit less, maybe 4-5 months.

Q: What are some of the "do's" that people approaching you with a potential story should keep in mind?
A: I am always impressed if the person who is pitching me a story is knowledgeable about the magazine. I love to see photos, and it's great if a PR person can write a clear, detailed proposal that I can then work with to suit the needs of the magazine. I really appreciate PR people who know about our field.

Q: What are some of the "don'ts?"
A: I would say that the most important "don't" is to not overwhelm us with follow-up calls and e-mails. Also, understand that while we may be very interested in a story, we may not be able to run it for months and months.

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….Working with the Media, continued from page 3

Q: Are you frequently approached by people who are presenting ideas that are not appropriate for your publication? Are most familiar with the editorial focus of your publication?
A: Unfortunately, I am often approached by people presenting ideas that are not appropriate for my publication. I do, however, work with many PR people who know my publication and the industry inside and out.

Q: Which is more important for you – receiving strong visuals or strong written materials – in evaluating a story idea?
A: I guess if I had to choose one over the other, I would say visuals, but both are very important.

Q: Is persistence on the part of the person presenting the story idea a negative for you? Or do you just wish they would take no for an answer?
A: A follow-up call or e-mail is fine, but beyond that I think it's best if a polite no means no.

A MONTHLY COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Peter L. Wolff, Managing Editor and Publisher, The InTowner (Washington, DC), interviewed by Kerry Touchette.

Q: How do you prefer to receive story ideas and/or press releases, news tips, etc.?
A: Best by e-mail. It's more reliable than regular mail and it keeps down the volume of paper that often can overwhelm reporters and editors. It's also better than fax because, again, less paper is best. Another reason is that if a writer or editor wants to use any quotes, it is much easier to cut and paste from an electronic document than to retype the text. One caveat, though: Be judicious with respect to attachments, especially images; they can use up vast amounts of kilobytes and can easily clog the email system (typically, Internet service providers -- "ISP"s like AOL, Earthlink, Yahoo & even regional business-oriented ones -- limit the size of attachments). It's a "bandwidth" issue; e-mail was not originally intended to move huge graphics or data files. So, the better approach if you have something that is huge is to simply identify the item as being available upon request and offer to send it in a format that can be better accommodated, such as a portable document file ("PDF") or even compressed in a "ZIP" file.
What's most important is that the person receiving the information be inclined to want to look at it rather than just tossing it. If the electronic file causes the e-mail to lock up or the computer to crash (and it's not uncommon for attachments because of how they were created), you can be sure the reporter or editor will be sufficiently annoyed to maybe delete the file the moment the computer gets re-booted! Similarly, if something comes by regular mail, keep it short and to-the-point -- and be sure that at the very top it is 100 percent clear what the item is all about (the "who, when, where & why"). This is especially important to keep in mind with e-mail transmissions: The subject line, which is the only thing that is revealed without actually opening the file itself (something savvy computer users are often cagey about doing unless they know the source and thereby have confidence that they won't be unleashing a virus into their hard drive), should clearly state the topic. For example, avoid such labels as "Press Release" or "Important," etc. Make sure that the first few words clearly identify the event or organization -- enough of a clue so that the recipient not be under the impression that it is spam.
Also, it is a good idea that the sender's e-mail system be set so that the "From" line clearly identifies the organization and doesn't show somebody's name, like "Bob Jones," which is not likely to trigger immediate recognition that the message might be one of potential interest.
A word about telephone calling: That should be avoided as much as possible for the reason that if one intrudes on an editor's time, especially when he or she is on "hard" deadline, you will get short-shrift. Even when an editor is not on deadline, calls coming in can be disruptive, just as if you were walking the halls and barged in the editor's office. In the real world, most reporters and editors answer their own phones; there will rarely be someone "guarding the door" -- especially at smaller publications. Telephoning, however, can work, if the caller is someone the editor personally knows or knows by reputation as a likely source for information that can be used. Another "door-opener" is if the caller can -- legitimately -- say he or she has been referred by someone the editor personally knows, such as a mutual friend, etc.

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*.....**Working with the Media....continued from page 4***

Q: What do you look for in deciding whether a story idea being pitched to you is one that has possibilities for your publication?
A: The main thing I look for -- and any editor will say the same thing -- is that the subject be relevant to the reporting mission of the publication. If it is essentially a "hard news," locally-focused publication, like my newspaper, don't pitch me "soft" personality features about Hollywood types or health or consumer news. Unfortunately, both for the one pitching the story idea as well as the editor, most of what we get is not relevant.
Before approaching the editor, do a little "homework." Virtually all newspapers and magazines have websites and they are easy to find using Google or Yahoo or MSN search engines. Check out the website and get a feel for what its focus is; that's even easier to do nowadays because so many of these sites not only have lots of content but even archive back issues. Also, because these websites usually have the dual purpose of interesting potential advertisers to buy ads, there will be a section devoted to information describing the readership demographics, etc. That can give one who wants to pitch a story an excellent insight into whether it might be something that the editor would consider good for his or her readership.

Q: What are the "do's" and "don'ts" that people pitching a story should keep in mind?
A: First off, they should think about what I've had to say in response to your first two questions. Next, if the editor asks a "threshold" question or two, like where is the event going to be held, on what date, etc., and if the answer is, "I don't know, I'm just making calls to get your fax number" or "I'm just an intern" -- and this sort of response is common -- don't be surprised if the editor is annoyed. How can an immediate preliminary decision be made that, yes, this might be something we can use if questions like these can't be answered? PR firms are among the worst offenders in this regard. They tend to work blindly off lists without culling those lists to weed out publications that are not on target for their clients' needs. I am less harsh on staffers at non-profit organizations or even small business establishments for the simple reason that these are matters that I would not necessarily expect them to understand in the same way that professional PR people should.

Another thing to avoid is arguing with an editor who politely (or even not so politely -- remember, you may have caught the editor in the middle of a deadline crisis!) -- informs that the story idea is not for his or her publication. It's unbelievable how many times I have been berated by someone for saying "no" to their pitch – I have even had professional PR people get that way, which guarantees that I will never talk to that person or firm again! I've even had some of these presumed professionals act insulted when I have tried to be helpful by steering them to our own website and the advisory we post there that explains our news focus and what kinds of things we seek out for reporting. Happily, however, the majority of turned-down callers (or e-mailers) seem to appreciate efforts to clue them in on our limitations.
One final "don't": Don't hound the editor about the idea he or she has already rejected or about other ideas that won't be a fit for that publication. Also, when an editor says that the news item or story idea will be used, don't act put out if it doesn't appear in the next issue; things have a way of overtaking an editor's best intentions, such as breaking news, unanticipated space constraints, etc. And, while it is perfectly OK to inquire if the story has actually appeared, it is even better to try to see for oneself before calling the editor with the query. Further, if one is going to call the editor, then don't call a day or two before or even the day of publication. I once had an art exhibit curator phone from Germany following the exhibit opening to wonder why she couldn't find a review of the exhibit on our website. I had to remind her that I had previously said the review would appear in the issue of such and such date, and that was not until the following week!

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AN INDUSTRY TRADE PUBLICATION

Naomi Anderson, Publisher of Sources and Design Magazine, a bi-monthly trade magazine that highlights design-related products and services, interviewed by Jennifer Wagner. (Naomi also does PR for the design community through her company, Anderson and Company).

Q: What is your publication looking for and what do you find the media is looking for from your clients?
A: The newest, greatest most interesting products. The "Wow!" new techniques, materials, new safety or benefits or application of products. New angles. The media is always looking for the new.

Q: How do you want to be approached?
A: Preferably with a package via the mail that includes a press release, one or two pages maximum, highlighting the who, what, when, where and any product description. Good photos should be included. These can be slides, CDs, transparencies or photographs. In the design field, it is a waste of time if you do not include a photo. If you are not plugging a product and/or there are not any photographs, then an e-mail is appropriate. If you want to send your info via e-mail and you have photo images to send, they should be sent separately. It is not fun to have the e-mail system clogged by an image that is too large.

Q. How would you like follow-ups to be handled?
A. Telephone or e-mail is fine, but just once. It's fine to verify they received your information but bugging the media will not get your story run and it will only be an irritation. Be aware that sometimes it is months before a story is used. I recommend that you send one item a month; if you have 12 new products do not send them all in one contact. All will not be run once anyway and this keeps your name in their head. It is also fine to give a call or e-mail the media and invite them to your place of business, i.e., "I just called because (fill in with product name) is much more impressive in person. While you are out if you have the opportunity to stop by we welcome the chance to show you (mention product again) so you can truly appreciate this great new item." It is also important to make sure the media is included in your database with your customers so they are invited to events, notified of new products, etc.

Q: What trade materials do you like or expect to receive?
A: If you are a new business, send a full media kit, including a mission statement, owner(s) bio(s), snapshot of showroom, press release about business with quotes from owner(s)with what, why and who the primary targets are. If you are an established business, put the information on your letterhead and attach an image of what you are profiling.

Q: How do you feel about being pitched story ideas?
A: It is fine to send story ideas presented in a way that allows the editor to make it their own. It is really great to become an expert in your field and then let the media know. Write and let them know what you do and the experience you have; that you would welcome their questions if they ever needed information on your area of expertise, and to keep your card handy. The media is always looking for expert references to support their stories.

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A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONAL

Erika Brown, Cercone & Brown Public Relations, Boston, MA, interviewed by Leslie Fine.

Q: Today there are so many communications options. How do members of the press prefer to receive information for potential stories, by e-mail, direct phone calls, faxes or by mail? Why?
A: Most publications and editors are well up the technology curve and are responsive to e-mail. But success with the press -- particularly among design writers and editors -- is very much dependent on strong relationships, often built the old-fashioned way. Doing this is about a lot of things. It's about being an avid reader of the publication you're pitching. It's about understanding what the editor is trying to do: give readers a peek into what's happening out there on design's cutting edge.)
And, it's about giving an editor exactly what they need to do their jobs well. People who do that develop strong -- and fruitful-- relationships with the press. Often it starts with simply asking them how they like to get their information, by fax, mail, phone or e-mail.

Q: What factors determine whether a story idea is interesting to the press?
A: First of all, no matter what the press covers -- whether toasters, fashion or interior design -- it's really about the application, the solution. Any editor will tell you it's not about a product or person, it's about what's been done with a product or an expert. It's not that the press doesn't cover products or people -- of course they do -- but they fall in love with projects or an application and only then look to the product or people that made it happen. In the case of the design press, you'll never go wrong approaching an editor with a gorgeous, special project. This is, in fact, why designers have an edge in the press. They are inherently tied to the project or solution.
Another way to determine whether a story idea is interesting can come simply by putting yourself in the position of the editor. Does what you have tie into a hot new trend like wildly bright colors or modular, multipurpose furnishings? If it does, you'll be speaking the editor's language. Start there.

Q: Do story ideas originate from outside of a publication, for example, from a public relations contact or those who are interested in being featured in a publication?
A: Story ideas start with editorial staffs that, after being out in the industry all year, determine the general direction of the publication. This is way out of your direct control and is directed by a well-cultivated network of experts (designers, showrooms, design influencers of all sorts).
Among the high-end design trades, what you can do is tie into existing editorial direction and offer supportive information and examples that can strengthen the stories that have already been considered. Among the smaller trade publications or regional publications, you can offer very valuable story ideas. What they lack in internal resources can be made up for with strong story ideas culled from sources like you.

Q: What are the typical lead times?
A: Lead times vary, but three months is standard for monthly magazines. Weeklies require a one month lead. And daily newspapers vary, from a month lead for special supplements to a week lead for an event.

Q: What are some of the "do's" that people approaching the media with a potential story should keep in mind?
A: Do:
- clearly understand the publication before approaching them
- ask around about the editor you're contacting - and read whatever you can that they're written
- understand exactly what you offer (a project, a product, an expertise) and how it fits into what they're doing
- listen as much as you speak
- be flexible, ask questions
- be respectful

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Q: What are some of the don'ts?
A: Don't:
- contact an editor at a publication you haven't read;
- phone/e-mail during a deadline;
- phone with a general "I just wanted to know if you ever cover design products" inquiry;
- lie - ever;
- take it personally if an editor is brief. They're navigating lots of phone calls and inquiries.

Q: How often is the media approached by people with story ideas not appropriate for their publication? Are most familiar with the editorial focus of a given publication?
A: When approaching the press, it's best to have a clear understanding of who they are (exactly) and why what you have is valuable to them, whether it's a product, project or a perspective. Doing this puts you ahead of the game. The average editor receives more than 100 voice mails from the public pitching story ideas each week. During some periods, that can hit more than 250. It's easy to get lost in the clutter.

Q: Which is more important - receiving strong visuals or strong written materials - when a press outlet is evaluating a story idea?
A: Many will tell you a strong story is about a strong 'story' as in the written one. That's really not the case with the design press. You have a revolutionary product? Great. You have a genius of design to share his/her insight? Super. You have a really unique project that is visually a mind story of color and texture? You're in! Of course the broadcast press in entirely about a visual presentation, but that's another subject.

Q: Is persistence a negative?
A: Persistence is not at all a negative, as long as it's invited and productive. I worked with an editor at the *Wall Street Journal* on a story about lighting. It wasn't quite right - she couldn't in good faith simply cover product for a sophisticated readership - but I could tell there was a kernel worth pursuing. Nine months later I got my story in the inaugural edition of the Journal's prestigious *"Weekend"* section, complete with product photography and several quotes from the lighting designer that really gave the editor that 'real life' dimension the story needed. But persisting with an idea that is not rooted in the mission of the publication and has already been dinged by one editor is usually not a good strategy.

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HOW TO ACE AN INTERVIEW
by Vicki Enteen

---Never give out any information "off the record." You can be sure that, no matter what else you may say, that is the information that will be used.
--Keep the focus of the interview squarely on your company and its relation to whatever event or situation you may be interviewed on. Always make sure to mention your company's name as often as possible.
---Give specific facts and figures whenever possible. When it is not desirable to provide specific information, give more general information, such as percentages, approximations, or ballpark figures, rather than refusing to answer a question. If a reporter feels that they are not getting the information they want from a member of the organization, they may go outside for a guesstimate which may be highly inaccurate. In some rare cases, if the reporter senses a lack of cooperation, it may result in a negative slant to the interview.
---Company executives should brief staff members who may be interfacing with the press, for example, at trade shows or events. Determine which are the three most important points to get across and make sure they are covered sufficiently. If there is additional time, other points may be covered.
Don't reference what the competition is doing in any specific way. Avoid comparisons with other companies. Emphasize the superiority of your company's products or services over the rest of the market in general.
Check with the interviewer that you are giving him/her the information or answer that is wanted.
Be concise and to-the-point. Use the time allotted to make sure you are covering the points you wish to emphasize, rather than digressing. Check with the interviewer in advance on how much time you have, so you can schedule your comments accordingly.
---Listen carefully to the interviewer so you know precisely what is wanted. Maintain eye contact. Adapt your tone and level of formality/informality to the style of the interviewer.
---Always emphasize the positive and never dwell on the negative. Do mention obstacles or problems you've overcome to achieve success and any creative solutions you've developed.
---Avoid giving anything too specific about future plans, either from a business, merchandising or design point-of-view. Speak of the future in more general terms.

continued from front page..... President Lynne Breyer's message

We continue to work to build our membership. Think about the numerous business contacts you have in your database. Wouldn't they benefit from becoming a member of IFDA? You have already found that membership in this association is beneficial to you in many ways....professionally, educationally, socially. Don't deprive your business contacts of these benefits....extend an invitation to them to join us. This is your association. Be a proactive part of its growth and help your chapter qualify for up to two free Conference registrations.

I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands.
You need to be able to throw something back.

Arizona President-elect Introduced to IFDA through Educational Foundation Scholarship

The decades of support provided to talented students by EF is reaping direct rewards to IFDA through members now poised to be leaders in the organization.

In this first in a series, Lana Seagren, president-elect of the Arizona chapter - which is hosting the Conference in November - talks about her first exposure to IFDA a decade ago.

She was an accountant in an office cubicle without windows when, one day she decided, "I can't do this for the next 40 years of my life." After some research, she found the area of design challenged her in many ways. "As a child, I always enjoyed painting and drawing so the idea of interior design and drafting appealed to me," she said.

Lana enrolled in Mesa Community College, one of the schools receiving information about student scholarships from the IFDA Educational Foundation. "I remember writing an essay on why I wanted to be in the furnishings and design field as well as providing letters of reference....and I did receive a scholarship." She also participated in a design competition sponsored by the Arizona Chapter with prize money for first, second and third from EF. Lana took the second place prize.

After finishing her schooling, she worked for a window treatment company for three years before opening her own interior design firm serving residential and small commercial clients. Her BS degree in accounting holds her in good stead as her company thrives and grows. In addition to interior design, she custom designs furniture and is currently working on a North Carolina beach home she designed for a client.

Lana joined IFDA 10 years ago as a student member and has served on various committees as well as VP of Communications, Treasurer-elect and now President-elect.

"IFDA has given me an opportunity to meet colleagues, resources and friends - people I can use as a sounding board, which is important since I'm on my own. IFDA gives me the ability to do what I do....and help others through the various charitable projects it sponsors."

Lana Seagren, Arizona Chapter president-elect

Lana is a glowing example of how IFDA supports talented students, mentor them as young professionals and have them join its ranks and become future leaders in the industry...and in the organization.

If you know of a similar story in your chapter, contact Bonnie Peterson, EF director of Marketing/Communications at 336.5454.7532.

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CEU-Accredited WFCP™ Regional Tours Bring the Resources to the Professional, Year After Year

ST. PAUL, MN—Continuing education and industry expertise are on the road again in 2003, as the Window Fashions Certification Program (WFCP™) Regional Tours bring a series of valuable seminars and workshops to a town near you. Ideal for the busy professional, certified instructors offer face-to-face learning in a convenient location. And because continuing education begets higher profits, two all-inclusive days of window-fashions training can benefit the bottom line. Interior designers who want to heighten their skills, design students looking for a specialized curriculum, retailers adding window treatments to their product offering, installers of custom window fashions, and workrooms wanting to enhance their services and profitability should register for one of the following Tour dates:

- August 11–12: Boston, MA
- August 25–26: San Antonio, TX
- September 8–9: Philadelphia, PA
- September 29–30: Chicago, IL
- October 13–14: Clearwater, FL

Deb Barrett, WFCP instructor

New this year is the chance to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs), an important opportunity for designers looking to meet education requirements for licensing and keep ahead of the learning curve. Instruction given at the WFCP Regional Tours has been authorized by the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET) to offer official CEUs to class participants. This is especially significant for designers looking to maintain state licensure, as many of the states and provinces that regulate the practice of interior design require continuing education as a condition of license or title renewal. The shows provide bountiful opportunities to earn CEUs in the window-coverings industry, with in-depth seminars and workshops taught by highly skilled instructors.

During each two-day event, a broad scope of window-fashions subjects is addressed, including: industry issues, colors and trends, historical styles, design solutions, workroom technology, and installation. A supplier showroom gives professionals a chance to meet and network with their local resources. Energizing luncheon and breakfast presentations break up the day.

Diane Burford, WFCP member and allied ASID designer, finds that the three most rewarding aspects of a WFCP show are the networking opportunities, the seminars, and meeting new vendors. "It's always fun to talk to vendors face to face. After all, you're only as good as your vendors. It's finding those connections that is always worthwhile."

Because the program offers an interesting overview of all aspects of the business, even interior designers who only dabble in window treatments will find valuable information to increase their add-on sales and understand the window-covering process.

Perhaps the best part of the Tour is that professionals can attend year after year. As colors, trends, and technologies change with each passing season, the lessons learned through the WFCP are updated to reflect the current climate. Designers hoping to refresh their connections, renew their knowledge, and rejuvenate their skills can reunite year after year at the WFCP Regional Tours.

Contact 651/293-1544 to register for the Tour and start a new tradition. For more information or to register online, visit www.window-fashions.com or e-mail wf@gwmcnamara.com.

Did You Hear This Chapter News?

Arizona Chapter's Membership Drive meeting in March was absolutely what we thought it would be: energetic, fun-loving and member-involved. The meeting at the Dunn-Edwards Showoom on Frank Lloyd Wright in Scottsdale had a wonderful turnout of approximately 50 members and qualified prospective members, including our special guest speaker, Troy Henson of Be! Coaching.

The event started with terrific cuisine and loads of fellowship. President Bill Hartill requested everyone introduce themselves and give a small summary about their business and years with IFDA - it was truly a great opportunity to get to know our members even better. A warm welcome from our hosts at Dunn-Edwards, Dede Radford, who is the Interiors Representative for the State of Arizona, and Berth Korbel, who is the design consultant in the Wallcoverings Dept. at the Frank Lloyd Wright store. They each introduced new and exciting products including Venetian Plaster and Metallic paints and the 2003 Consumer Color Forecast. Henson, a personal success and business coach, discussed how we, as designers and business owners, can facilitate our own greatness and make a positive difference in all of our lives.

Remember to follow up with your prospective new members and keep up the good work by inviting new prospects to join us in IFDA.

Baltimore Chapter has had an exciting spring!

Norma Hoff, Washington Chapter; Hal Happersett, Baltimore; Daphne Bloomberg FIFDA, Washington Chapter; Frank Denzer, Chris Berry and Eileen Brown, all of the Baltimore chapter, at the Trade Show.

Our Sponsor Program had a great start with Chesapeake Home and ChesapeakeHome.com as our Media Sponsor. Our chapter also came into the 21st century by launching www.IFDABaltimore.com to better communicate our events, activities and business to members and non-members alike.

Networking events have been most informative, with a March product seminar at REICO distributors, where members learned about the latest in cabinet products and a wonderful wood raised panel wall system that has a custom look without the custom price.

A combined networking board meeting in April got folks excited about the IFDA Baltimore Market Resources Show and filled them in on the International Window Expo. The chapter gives big thanks to Grace McNamara and McNamara publications for free booth space at the Expo, where we met many nationwide IFDA members and told potential members about the many IFDA benefits. We brought the teal IFDA booth out of storage and handed out plenty of membership packets.

Our annual IFDA Market Resources Trade Show was the best yet, though small, as an effective tool for designers and exhibitors. As one exhibitor remarked, "It would take me four days to talk to as many designers as I did here in six hours." This year, 25 exhibitors showed off a wide variety of product lines. Thanks to all Baltimore chapter members who came out to help with the show.

We look forward to a great summer with new member breakfasts, networking events and summer parties. Stop by a Baltimore event when in the Chesapeake Region or visit us at our www.IFDABaltimore.com website.

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Shirley Ebert, EF chair, Atlanta Chapter; Judith Clark Janofsky FIFDA, Northern California Chapter; and Mary Knackstedt, New York Chapter, at the High Point Market Breakfast at 200 Steele Cafe.

Carolinas Chapter hosted a Hospitality Suite at the beautiful new 200 Steele complex during the April High Point International Home Furnishings Market. Space 140 was available to IFDA members and guests for relaxing and networking.

"We are grateful to the management of 200 Steele for providing this wonderful space to our association. We especially want to thank manager Ann Pickering and our own member Donna Kaiser, who arranged for loans of furniture and art to furnish the suite," commented Carolinas President Susan Connor.

The Chapter also hosted an IFDA breakfast at the 200 Steele Cafe on Sunday morning and nearly 40 members from New York to California attended.

Other activities the chapter co-sponsored with the International Home Furnishings Center included two standing-room-only luncheons. These featured Chris Madden, who has created environments for Oprah Winfrey, and Susan Sargent, color and trend specialist.

The chapter gathered donations of furniture, lamps, accents and accessories for its 10th Benefit Sale the end of May. To enhance participation and proceeds, the chapter joined forces with major beneficiaries, The Furniture Discovery Center and High Point University's Home Furnishings Program, to host a Silent Auction and First Choice Sale. Co-chairing the sale were Dawn Brinson, Dr. Richard Bennington and Joanne Hoover. Bonnie Peterson chaired the silent auction.

Trend and Color Expert Susan Sargent of the Carolinas Chapter is the HFC Market Luncheon speaker

Northern California Chapter garnered two potential members at the third in its series of Breakfast Workshops. One, Susie Sayad, who is a project planner with EXPO, is a former student of chapter president Joan Long. The workshop topic was Designer/Client Relations: Ethical Considerations.

Several board members participated in a special DACOR cooking demonstration that featured convection dining al Fresco; a Mambo Italiano evening will be offered in October.

In June, members will travel to Asilomar near Monterey to hear Leatrice Eiseman as part of their Professional Development Weekend, co-sponsored by the IFDA Educational Foundation. Attendees will receive .5 CEUs for the color specialist's presentation. Also part of the program will be Lee Ann Kleinfelter, whose business, Keeping Order, helps clients organize their lives. She is a member of the National Professional Organizers' Association and specializes in space planning and office organization.

Philadelphia Chapter celebrated its membership drive Mardi Gras style; it was quite a festive evening complete with colorful costumes, fabulous food and wine as well as a special performance by South Philly's own Mummers Band.

It was a well attended event offering vendor members an opportunity to tell the group about their products and services. Everyone had a wonderful time getting to know each other and all are looking forward to a Table Top Event slated in early June at the Design Center.

The winner of the Marketplace Design Center showroom contest will be announced shortly. The showroom with the most signed members will received a $500 gift certificate to the famed Morimoto Restaurant of Philadelphia, complete with a limousine ride and chauffeur.

….Did you hear about, continued from page 13

Southwest Chapter went through a terrible ice storm that shut Dallas down for three days, but members ventured out anyway to meet with the Executive Director of Preservation Dallas, Dwayne Jones, for a show and tell about local architectural styles, preserved and threatened historic neighborhoods and buildings. They learned the differences among restoration, renovation and rehabilitation. They also had a guided tour of the facility that houses an extensive design and architectural library where they could look up historic paint colors or information about reglazing windows. Since 1972, Preservation Dallas has worked to rescue and protect historic architecture, neighborhoods and places through education and legislation.

Another event found members at Elizabeth Brown's own French Brown Floors where they learned about vintage hand scraped, antique reproduction and wood plank flooring with borders, medallions and many other specialties. A private tour with Mitchell Brown and member Cheryl Owe provided data about varied styles and applications of their unique milled wood floors as well as experiences from the company's 51-year history on the blending and finishing technology and patterns for true Old World charm with custom design capabilities.

The chapter's VP of Programs, Cindi Cagle, worked hard to produce a full, sit-down, 5-course dinner catered in a wonderful Greek style at Stone Carvings Unlimited. Forty-two members attended the evening that included a presentation of beautiful stone carvings masterfully carved in Europe and brought to the states by boat. The evening turned out to be a wonderful networking event with several prospective members. Some are even waiting to hear about advertising options for our e-directory.

Washington Chapter President Daphne Bloomberg, FIFDA, envisioned a breakfast panel to involve, educate and attract new members; the April event at the Silver Spring Hilton also provided a timely membership benefit.

As noted by the panelists, and during the 'give and take' following their presentations, not only the ongoing discussions within our own professional ranks but the attention to interior design by the media (such as HGTV's extensive programming) are affecting our marketing and business strategies as well as that of the industry generally. All the attention to design topics is extremely popular with readers and viewers, helping to make consumers more aware of our varied services and products.

Aiming to create a quality program, Norma Hoff, VP of Professional Development, Kerry Touchette, FIFDA, and Daphne assembled an outstanding panel of journalists that was generously sponsored by Shenandoah Shutters.

Moderating was Peter Wolff, publisher and managing editor of *The InTowner*, a community newspaper or 35 years standing that reports on news of the downtown neighborhoods east of the Park and north of M Street. Panelists included: Sharon Jaffe Dan, managing editor, *Home & Design;* Jeanne Blackburn, regional contributor to *Better Homes & Gardens* and *Traditional Homes* , among others; and, Rebecca Kahlenberg, a regular freelance contributor to *The Washington Post*.

Wolff organized the panel discussion based on Bloomberg's three suggested topics: How to plant a story and watch it flower; how to use news to promote your business and how to talk and think in sound bites.

Discussion covered: how to best reach out to the media, how to identify the focus of the publication and the correct person at the publication, and how to best approach him or her without too much advocacy for one's project, product, service or follow-ups that begin to feel like overt pressure for a commitment to write something.

Once armed with that information, how best to proceed: by phone, press kit, e-mail (knowing the traps to avoid such as scanty subject line information, including humongous attachments that could clog the system. Members further learned what makes an effective press release to grab attention while steering clear of offering something as news that is nothing more than a thinly disguised commercial promotion that should be given to the advertising department.

Another part of the presentation covered how to help the writer better understand the subject at hand and possibly even introduce aspects that could make the initial story idea into an even better article, and how to plant the seed for something more expansive than originally intended.

The 'walk-in-their-shoes' approach characterized the interaction between the panel and audience, especially with revelations about do's and don'ts, the practical realities of deadlines, basic requirements for getting attention and numerous aspects of dealing with writers and editors. Thanks to the panel, we were better able to understand such things as a writer's need for careful research, identifying experts and an editor's concern for adhering to journalistic principles regarding appropriateness and the need to ensure balance and objectivity.

In summation, IFDA's niche here in the DC metro area's design community was claimed once again.

How Your National Board Serves You

Ever wonder just what your National Board of Directors does? The following should help answer your questions. Though some of the positions are self-evident, i.e. treasurer and secretary, others may not be. Starting with the treasurer's position:

Treasurer, Frank Denzer. The treasurer succeeds to office after serving one year as treasurer-elect. The responsibilities and duties involve interacting with the management company and overseeing all aspects of IFDA business. A position of significant importance, it is both challenging and enlightening especially if one enjoys the challenges of day-to-day business operations.

Duties include the preparation of a proposed operating budget and capital budget for each fiscal year; this is submitted to the Board of Directors. The treasurer oversees the activities of the Executive Director and staff with respect to collection of funds as well as disbursements authorized by the president and approved by the Board. The treasurer also oversees record keeping of Association accounts and reports their status to the Board and the Council of Presidents. All information is reported to the Board monthly and to the Council of Presidents quarterly.

There is no board position on the National level that offers the opportunity to be more directly involved with all facets of the organization's operation. The treasurer truly has the pulse of the organization, which is rewarding and exciting.

Treasurer-elect, Sheila Cole. This position is a year of working closely with the Treasurer, participating on the Finance Committee conference calls and reviewing all financial information; in other words, a year of training for the Treasurer's position.

Director-At-Large and National Secretary, Janet Brown, FIFDA. My duties are to take attendance and copious notes at the Board of Directors and Council of Presidents meetings. Our Executive Director Lynn Russo sends me her drafts of minutes and I respond with any omissions or commissions that I think should be noted. Since Lynn is 'on top of' everything she does, she makes my job almost a 'piece of cake.'

I also serve as Liaison for the Illinois, Ohio and Michigan chapters. This requires staying in touch with the president, president-elect or membership chair monthly to keep up with what is happening in their chapters. I report the discussions to Juli Ohman, the 2003 Liaison Coordinator, who reports all information to the National Board. All of these communications hopefully, will improve our responsiveness to problems and awareness of successes which can be made known to the entire membership.

Further, I am the Fellows Chair for 2003. I formed a committee consisting of one former committee member and two others, all of whom have been named Fellows. I work with all Chapter Fellows Chairs to keep them abreast about any criteria revisions and our schedule for the completion of applications. After all the applications have been received, the committee will review each application and approve or reject them.

Director-At-Large – Professional Development, Vicki Enteen. The focus of the Professional Development Initiative this year is to help our members enhance their professional skills as a means to expand career opportunities, grow businesses and achieve personal goals. The means that IFDA is offering is a series of professional development articles on topics of broad interest to the membership, published in each issue of *Network*, and culled by members of the Professional Development Committee through interviews with experts in their regions of the country.

The current issue includes an article on how to work with the media - based on interviews with a wide variety of editors and media professionals. It is available on pages 3-9. We urge you to clip and save it for future reference.

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Director-At-Large - Marketing and Public Relations, Jeanne Matlock. My goal is to carry forth the Strategic Marketing Plan developed in 2002 by Vicki Enteen, with particular emphasis on the vision that IFDA be the pre-eminent professional organization of home furnishings and interior design professionals representing a diverse range of functional specialties within the industry. To achieve that goal, we must work toward increasing membership, the visibility of IFDA both nationally and locally among potential members and sponsors, and expanding IFDA publicity to the public.

One step includes increasing the distribution of the public service announcement seen in the December and February issues of *House Beautiful*, the March issue of *Victoria*, the June issue of *Traditional Home* and the upcoming editions of *Fine Furniture International* (November/December 2003) and *Window Fashions* (December 2003).

Please contact me at jmatlock@pro-ns.net to advise of other trade publications related to the many specialized fields we represent. The public service announcement is also available for chapters to use for local publications. More specifics will be sent to our chapter presidents .

Director-At-Large - Liaison Coordinator, Juli Ohman. This position is a conduit for communication to keep information flowing in a timely manner between the Board of Directors and individual chapters. As an organized system for gathering and disseminating information, it helps collect good ideas, answer requests for help and address problems monthly.
We also use liaisons to distribute information to the chapters, ensuring the organization has a constant and successful method to share information.

Director-At-Large – Membership, Barbara Holme. I see my duties being accomplished in three main parts*: compiling, developing* and *offering.* This can only be done with lots of ideas and information from chapter leaders, past and present.

Compiling involves gathering a menu of methods for growing our numbers, from the smallest idea not yet tried, to fully developed strategies that have proven effective for dramatic and/or steady growth.

Developing includes not only the above strategies but also national incentives. Watch for incentives that are truly attractive for both chapter and individual members making the effort to win new members and retain existing ones.

O*ffering* entails helping individual chapter choose and fine tune what strategies will work now. I expect to keep up with what is happening in each chapter and to listen, listen, listen and communicate winning strategies. I'm always looking for ideas. Nothing is set in stone – our ideas must evolve as IFDA grows and changes.

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.....How Your Board Serves You, continued from page 16

Director-At-Large – Newsletter and Website, Sarah Warnick, FIFDA. Have you visited your website recently? As overseer of the IFDA.com website and editor of *Network*, it's my job to present you with information you can utilize and enjoy. Thanks to a great committee, there is a new and improved, user-friendly website that debuted in late 2002. Check out the Member Services section, especially.

NETWORK is your newsletter. We welcome your comments, suggestions and chapter news, especially about successful programs and membership drives. We want to hear from you. I'll be in touch with all chapter presidents about the next NETWORK deadline but if you want to relate information before then, contact me at 916.408.5689 or swarnick@starstream.net

National Programs Co-ordinator, Dave Gilbert. I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself and tell you about my position, which is new. There is no history from which to work, therefore all of you have the opportunity to help me make this a useful resource for all chapters.

I see this as an opportunity to identify useful programs that will interest our members and help in bringing us potential new members. I also want to pass along hints and tips for running successful programs.

First, a few words about myself. I am currently the Chapter Advisor for the Philadelphia Chapter. Last year when I was Chapter President, our group put on some great, well-attended programs and events. These provided good information and brought out the membership to interact and network.

I am a vendor member of IFDA, not a designer. From my perspective, it is important to examine programs that benefit our entire membership. This can be a challenge. Of course, not every program has to be like a college lecture; they can also be fun and different.

If you are on your Chapter board, or program committee or just interested in bettering our unique and diverse group, I'd love to hear from you. Tell me what is – and isn't – working for you, what you think would be some good topics, and what things you do before, during and after your programs. For example, do you have a tip on a mailing that worked? How about an icebreaker or gimmick that caught attention and got someone out to your program? I want to hear about them all. Even if it is an idea that you have been holding on to and haven't yet tried. Maybe it is something you observed successfully used by another group. I want to hear about it. Along with my ideas, I'm going to distribute this information out to all the Chapter so we can all benefit. Isn't that what IFDA is all about?

Please send me your thoughts and ideas, preferably by e-mail to dave@hifisales.com or by fax at 856.486.4455. You can also phone me at 856.486.7600. As I said, there is no history for this position and therefore it is up to you, our members, to make it one of value. I'm here to help get this going.

IFDA Educational Foundation, Shirley Ebert. A member of the Georgia Chapter, Shirley chairs the IFDA Educational Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the association. She is responsible for the governance of the Foundation and serves as ex-officio of the IFDA Board. Working closely with the Council of Presidents and the VP of Education at the chapter level, she focuses on raising funds and promoting the Educational Foundation's scholarship and grant programs. These programs include Chapter Partnership Grants designed to increase education programming at the chapter level, and several grants aimed at professional development such as the Ina Mae Kaplan Historic Preservation Grant, and the Marketing Internship Grant. The EF goal is to enhance the professionalism and visibility of IFDA and IFDA EF within the industry.

IFDA EF is a nonprofit 501 (c) 3 organization and is fully funded by personal contributions. We encourage you to think of your Foundation when you want to make a personal donation or your chapter wants to establish a grant of scholarship in memory of a loved one or a respected colleague. More information is available at www.ifdaef.org