



**INTERNATIONAL  
FURNISHINGS  
AND DESIGN  
ASSOCIATION**

# NETWORK

December 2005

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## *A Message From Our International President*

To my Fellow IFDA members,

Seasons Greeting! It is hard to believe that this year is almost over. It seems the holiday season comes faster every year and more hectic. This will be my final letter to you as National President.

To end the year, I would like to take this time to thank all of those who work so diligently to make the year a success. My heartfelt thanks go to the 2005 board of directors without whom nothing would be accomplished. Two of the members will be rotating off the board this year. Barbara Holme who has been in charge of membership this year will be leaving. She has spearheaded several activities to help the chapters recruit members the last three years. Thanks for your service.

Jeanne Matlock took on several large jobs this year and did an outstanding job on all projects. She has published our bi-monthly newsletter of which we can all be proud. In addition to that large job she has also worked long hours with our web master in making the web site more user friendly and more meaningful. Please be sure to update your listings when you renew your membership. Jeanne also had valuable advice and a cool head.

Merv Kaufman served his second year on the board in charge of public relations and marketing. Under his leadership we were able to develop a new public service ad and have it placed in several publications as well as sent to others for publication at a later date. This is also available on a chapter level so you may request a copy of it. He was always a voice of encouragement to me and I thank him for it.

Carolyn Meek also served her second year on the board. She was in charge of the Fellows committee and was the liaison between the national board and the chapters. I hope all that are eligible for fellows in the coming year will take the

time to put together the documentation necessary for the designation. Thank you, Carolyn, for your service.

Joan Croft was a new comer on the board this year and has been working on new member packets for the coming year. She will continue on with membership.

Jennifer Wagner served as Treasure this year after being treasurer-elect last year. Jennifer is always willing to get involved and serve wherever she is needed. She also kept us informed as to our by-laws whenever we had a question.

Many thanks go to Merry Mabbett for chairing our conference in Boston. It was a very enlightening conference with many fun moments as well. That is an enormous job very well done.

Mark Jeross, our president -elect was baptized by fire, as there were many issues to work on this year. He has served by my side and I can't thank him enough for getting involved from the beginning. I know the association is in good hands. I wish him a very successful and productive year.

There were many others too numerous to thank individually who worked mostly behind the scenes to make the association work.

As I close, I want to thank the membership for offering me the privilege to serve as your National President. It was an experience that I will always remember.

My wish will be for a happy and safe holiday for each and every one of you. May the new year be prosperous and happy.

Sincerely,

Lee Coggin, FIFDA



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## Price-less Promotion: Big Impact, Low Cost Marketing

By Fred Berns

Some of the best marketing that design trade professionals can do costs the least. Some of the most powerful promotion costs nothing at all. That's the message I shared recently with IFDA's Illinois chapter in my presentation entitled "Million Dollar Marketing on a Shoestring Budget."

Designers, retailers, manufacturers and others can make a maximum impact for a minimal investment of their time and money by taking advantage of a variety of low cost, no cost marketing strategies. Moneysaving marketing begins with your "commercial." That personal message enables you to stand out as a unique, one-of-a-kind design industry professional, and share your "Only." To be able to say you're the only award-winning interior designer in the area or the only local furniture dealer with 25 years experience, or the only accessories retailer who's been featured in a national publication -- that's personal salesmanship at its best.

Design industry firms can save a bundle by investing in a simple website, rather than regularly spending big money on glossy brochures, promotional kits and other pricey printed materials. The key word here is "simple." Most design industry sites are far too elaborate and wordy at a time when, according to the Direct Mail Association of America, the average website visit is four seconds and two clicks.

The next time you think about dishing out megabucks for advertising in some slick trade magazine, think again. Think, instead, of low cost, no cost marketing alternatives. Think, for example, of writing and distributing articles and news releases about your business. Magazine and newsletter editors, newspaper home and garden editors, local TV news producers, and others are eager for the kind of news you can provide. Offer yourself as an interview source. That will help you get quoted and promoted in the media.

Think of presenting seminars for prospective clients, and workshops for builders, commercial realtors, and other allied professionals. Think of distributing an inexpensive monthly report – such as an online newsletter - to those you seek to influence. Finally, think of adding marketing messages to your email and voicemail, and including a promotional note on invoices, bills and everything else that you distribute.

Consider these other economical promotional ideas:

- + Create a marketing "one sheet" listing your services, clients and career highlights. It's way cheaper than a pricey portfolio.
- + Offer marketing internships through local schools, in which students earn credit for assisting you with your website, and with various other marketing activities.
- + Ask vendors and suppliers to "partner" with you by financially supporting your marketing efforts.
- + Invite your best customers to a focus group, and seek their advice on how you can promote yourself more effectively and expand your business. Ask them to make calls or write letters introducing you to their associates.

There are plenty of affordable techniques available to design industry professionals who don't have unlimited time and money to spend on marketing. It's never been easier to take the "price" out of promotion.

Fred Berns presents sales and marketing programs for and coaches design professionals worldwide. He's the author of several design industry books and tapes. His monthly Internet newsletter reaches thousands of design professionals around the world. For more information, visit his website, [www.fredberns.com](http://www.fredberns.com), call 303-665-6688 or email him at [Fred@FredBerns.com](mailto:Fred@FredBerns.com).

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## ***CHAPTER NEWS***

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### **SPECIAL CHAPTER NEWS!**

In November, your International Board of Directors voted to approve the formation of a **new** IFDA Chapter in Richmond, VA. This is being spearheaded by Kathy Corbet. If you have friends or colleagues in the Richmond area that could be interested in IFDA membership, please contact Kathy at 603-494-7636 or [kathy@kathycorbetinteriors.com](mailto:kathy@kathycorbetinteriors.com). It's very exciting to see this new growth in our organization and we welcome all the new members in Richmond!

Also in November, your Board approved the request of the North Central Chapter to change their name to the Minnesota Chapter of IFDA. This was the second name change approved this year, the earlier one being the Southwest Chapter changing to the Texas Chapter. In both cases, the new name more accurately describes the main location and majority of membership in the chapter. The Minnesota Chapter includes members from Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota and Iowa.

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### ***Minnesota IFDA***

On October 21st, over fifty IFDA and ASID members and guests joined together to enjoy an educational course on the Selection and Care of Oriental Rugs, by Ralph DeSaia and Antique Furniture Restoration and Care, by Randy Bohn. The Decorative Arts Curatorial Council held the program at the Zuhrah Shrine Center in conjunction with the Minneapolis Institute of Arts Antiques show and sale.

Ralph DeSaia taught us that when shopping for an antique rug, 75-125+ years old, consider the condition of the rug, look at the color of dye - was it re-dyed? Look for alterations or bleached colors or washed to make it look old? Does the wool have a shine? Look at the rug as a piece of art - don't be limited by its size - rugs can be used on the floor or as a wall hanging. Patterns, color and weave determine where the rug originated. Persian and Indian rugs have different color palettes. Urban rugs offer a finer weave whereas rural rugs are more geometric. Dense rugs are better for high traffic areas as they can handle the wear. Cleaning will keep moths from gravitating to the rugs and will keep the fibers from breaking down. Vacuum the rug to keep it fluffy and soft and be sure to quickly wipe up liquid stains immediately. Antique rugs can be sent to Pakistan if they need to be repaired in an effort to maintain the rugs integrity.

Randy Bohn uses old techniques to repair and restore antique furniture. He shared with us that some of the new finishes are causing problems, such as a tough polyester which you cannot strip off the furniture. Many of the imports from China and Europe now have this finish but the EPA won't let the U.S. use this finish. Randy cautioned us that if we import an expensive table and it gets damaged in shipping or the client damages the table, it may be impossible to repair with the new finishes and the table will have to be trashed. French polish is the best technique used for refinishing an antique piece; it takes 18 hours to get a shine. This is used for high-end pieces. When looking for a refinisher be sure to ask:

- Are you schooled to work on antiques?
- What kind of finish do they use on a piece? Shellac is an okay finish but not good for antiques; conventional lacquer will capture moisture and turn white underneath the finish. Catalyzed lacquer and conversion varnish may not allow chemicals to stick to them.
- What kind of glue do they use? Hyde glue can be used on top of other glues; yellow and blue glue may not stick when it's dried or on top of other joints.

A black light can be used to determine if any repairs have been made to an antique piece. For cleaning furniture don't use silicone furniture wax, use paste wax. Be careful with candle wax as it can penetrate some finishes and go into the wood.

After the course we were led by Gep Durenberger, noted historian and antique dealer, on a private tour of the 40 antique dealers who came from around the country. It was truly enlightening and expanded our knowledge and appreciation for antiques.

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## ***Northern California IFDA***

### **Standing Proud in 2005**

The Northern California Chapter of IFDA has been participating in and staffing the Sample Sales at the San Francisco Mart for many years. What have they done with the proceeds from these sales over the years? The answer is simple – they have been used for educational programs, professional grants and student scholarships. This twice yearly event has been the major fundraising endeavor for the educational focus of the organization during this time. Over the last 25 years, this amount has totaled more than \$45,000!

The chapter was the first professional design organization to sponsor a career program, the Interior Design Student Career Forum, for Interior Design students in the San Francisco Bay area (starting in 1966), and has supported it financially with proceeds from the Mart Sample Sale each year it has been involved. Over the past 15 years of this event, now a joint effort between IFDA, ASID and NKBA chapters in the area, the Northern California IFDA chapter has donated an average of \$2,000 each year, with about \$1,000 going toward student design competition awards and about \$1,000 toward general support of the Student Career Forum event.

In 2003, under the leadership of then chapter president Joan Long, FIFDA, the chapter instituted a student scholarship (now the Elaine McCune Student Scholarship in honor of Elaine's devotion and commitment to students, their education and programs) and the Carolyn Thomas Teacher Education Grant for professionals (in memory of Carolyn, a long-time member and educator). This expanded the chapter's financial commitment to interior design and home furnishings education and educators. These scholarships and grants are given to qualified students and professionals who reside within the chapter area, including California, Oregon, Washington and Nevada. During this time, the chapter has given a total of \$4,000 for student scholarships and \$9,000 for Carolyn Thomas Grants.

The 2005 recipient of the Elaine McCune Student Scholarship is Shiny Shyu, an Interior Design student at Ohlone College in Fremont, CA. Previous student scholarship recipients have come from schools up and down the Pacific Coast. Annette DeStefano from Cañada College in Redwood City was the first recipient in 2003. In 2004, two scholarships were awarded, one to Shelley Stuart, a student at the Design Institute of San Diego, and the other to Jeany Kim, a student at Comish College of the Arts in Seattle, WA.

Julie Myers, an instructor at the Art Institute of Seattle, received the 2005 Carolyn Thomas Teacher Education Grant, which she will use to support her doctoral dissertation research involving indigenous cultures and their home product industries. The first of these grants was awarded in 2003 to Gus Vouchilas, a long time instructor at the San Francisco State University, Skyline, Chabot and Ohlone Colleges, and facilities chair for the Student Career Forum for more than 10 years. He put the award toward completing his Doctorate in Education degree at the University of San Francisco. The 2004 award went to Ann Lowry, Interior Design Faculty at Modesto Junior College. She developed electronic materials for her students in historical and period design, as the program lacked adequate resources and access for students in this area and she then presented these materials when she spoke at the October 18<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting.

The Northern California IFDA chapter also has contributed annually to the IFDA Educational Foundation since its inception in 1970. This Foundation's primary function is to provide student scholarships and grants to professionals. The 2005 contribution from Northern California was \$2,000.

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**SEASONS GREETINGS  
&  
A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR**