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NETWORK

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Furniture for the Ages

By Lynne Forde Breyer, IFDA and Dr. Wilma S. Hammett, FIFDA

Baby boomers as a group have been demanding all their life, simply because of their numbers. Now they are approaching retirement. However, other factors about baby boomers may also influence demand for universal design in products. Baby boomers are more knowledgeable and more educated than retirees of the past. They also are status conscious and do not want to admit their shortcomings. Thus, they will be attracted to products that offer assistance without the institutional look.

It is important to note, however, that universal design in furniture is not just for the aging boomers or persons with a range of abilities. This furniture also serves individuals of different ages, sizes, heights and physical conditions. In years past, standards were applied to seat heights and widths, cabinet heights and table heights on the assumption that the user would adjust to these standards. Today, furniture needs to easily adjust to the different users who share both home and office environments and be manufactured in materials that avoid toxic out gassing. Manufacturers are becoming aware that this is no longer just a concept, but a need that must be met.

Universal design assists the elderly to maintain their independence and to "age in place" if they so desire. Physical and sensory changes occur with normal aging. These changes affect a person's ability to interact with the interior environment. As these changes occur, it becomes increasingly important that the interior environment be designed to maximize the older person's capabilities. In addition, certain consumers will lose mobility at earlier ages and these consumers will have a variety of different requirements to meet their changing needs.

As a person ages the eyes change. These changes mean that an older person needs more light to see, requires more time to adjust to changes in light, is more sensitive to glare, and may not distinguish colors with the same precision as they have in their youth. Colors that the elderly see best are highly saturated colors at the warm end of the spectrum, colors with high degree of brightness, and colors with no grayed or muted properties.

What does this mean for the furniture manufacturers and designers? They must be aware of these changes and plan color schemes with contrasts that enhance the elderly person's ability to function in the home. *(continued on page 2)*

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Color contrasts for horizontal surfaces like countertops and floor coverings and chairs and carpet make it easier to distinguish the edges of objects and in the process prevent spills and reduce falls.

Aging causes changes in strength, flexibility and mobility as well. There is loss of strength in the lower extremities and as a result the older person may "drop" into a chair instead of easing into it. There is often less ability to bend at the knee joints, affecting balance when getting out of a chair. Older adults and those who have weakened hip and knee joints tend to use their arms to help lift themselves from a seated position to stabilize the body for transition from sitting to standing. They also experience discomfort faster due to tissue loss. Thus, that favorite chair which has been used for years may no longer be suited to their present needs and fit.

Since many people tend to have a "favorite chair" that they keep for years, the chair that meets universal design standards could be adapted to fit the safety and health issues that accompany the aging process. Poor circulation as a result of chairs that no longer fit can cause a tingling sensation in the feet. That sensation sends a mixed message to the older adult and can cause a fall when weight is applied in getting out of a chair



Lynne Forde Breyer

Furniture is fashion, but it is also function. The home furnishing industry must recognize the need for furniture that can provide stability and support to the older person. Design can be flexible and functional as well as fashionable.

Recliners are thought to be the ultimate in relaxation and comfort. However, they often can be bulky and difficult to get out of. Today's recliners offer a variety of options for anyone of any age or size. Berkline and La-Z-Boy have introduced styles that fit the lady of the house as well as the man.



Dr. Wilma S. Hammett FIFDA

Berkline has the Easylift recliner for those who need assistance in getting into and out of a recliner. With the touch of a button the chair gently rises or reclines. The lift feature is hidden until it is needed and is available in a variety of styles to fit any decor. Easylift chairs are available with optional massage and heat for complete relaxation. Several other companies are also offering lift chairs, including Lane and Sealy.

Have you ever wondered why you couldn't have the flexibility in your chair at home that you have in your motorized car seat? Well, now you can. La-Z-Boy introduced its Power Rocker Recliner at the International Home Furnishings Market in October 2002. This innovative concept combines the rocking comfort with a motorized reclining mechanism that allows for infinite chair positions. It has a convenient hand wand that gives the user complete control over the pitch of the recline and the lift of the footrest. Thus, the user can operate the back and ottoman positioning independently. The Power Rocker Recliner is also available with a Temper-Pedia pillow top seat that offers pressure-free, body-stabilizing foam that conforms to every changing body position. The material distributes a person's weight evenly over the seating surface while being visually appealing.

For the first time in its history, the American Chiropractic Association in February 2003 put its stamp of approval on a line of consumer chairs for home and office use. That line is the Stressless Chair by Ekornes, a Norwegian company. This endorsement comes at a time when baby boomers have increased interest in purchasing home furnishings that balance fashion with comfort and support. The Stressless chair has been manufactured in Norway since 1971. It features a patented system that adjusts automatically, allowing body weight to determine the right level of support.

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....*Furniture for the Ages* (continued from page 2)

Its distinctive features include a glide wheel that lets the individual adjust movement to their own body weight, thus allowing for easy reclining. There are no levers to pull, no defined range of motion, and no need to expend extra energy to lean back. The chair essentially moves with one's body. A patented Plus system moves the head rest slightly forward as the chair glides back, allowing for complete support of the neck for easy reading, television watching, net surfing or eye level conversation even when fully reclined. A quick snap of the headrest and it lies flat for maximum relaxation. The Stressless chair also offers lumbar support in every position. Since 1996, Ekornes has been producing the Stressless chair in various sizes. They are one of the first companies to recognize that people come in different sizes and need different size chairs to sit comfortably. Currently, all chair styles come in two sizes, with some styles available in three sizes. Ekornes also produces several well-designed products that fit the chair and make using the computer or enjoying a favorite snack convenient.

At the 2002 Fall International Home Furnishings Market, Sauder and Lynette Jennings introduced an innovative Closits Modular Furniture System. The Closits system features various components based on the cube. These innovative cubes are easy to design and install and can be configured to meet changing needs. The Sauder/Jennings modular closet system offers an almost infinite number of storage strategies using fewer than ten components. It is available in a Cassava Maple or white finish. Individual units are attractively priced at approximately \$20 to \$50. The conversion of a standard eight-foot closet retails for \$300 or less. Complete portability, no-stress installation, add-on ease and value pricing make the Closits a great solution for any storage needs.

Hooker Furniture introduced a new category of "motion case goods" at the Spring 2003 International Home Furnishings Market – pop-up television cabinets at a more reasonable price. The cabinets offer hidden storage for the television, including the new Plasma televisions, VCR or DVD player and cable box. A remote control enables the lift mechanism to raise and lower the television. This will make viewing television in bed much more convenient.

AD-AS, a company focusing exclusively on adaptable furniture, has the Approach™ line of furnishings for kitchens and baths. Approach™ for the Wall Cabinet has a motorized adjustment range of 20 inches. It fits standard face frame and European cabinets and is available for under \$1000 US. Approach™ for the Sink raises and lowers the sink from 28 to 36 inches with knee space for wheel chair accessibility or just for sitting. A flexible drain kit is available as a required accessory to ensure proper drain flow. To complete your adaptable kitchen, Approach™ for the Cooktop allows the consumer to use their own cooktop with the system that raises and lowers the top to fit every member of the household and accommodates range tops to fit into cabinets from 36 to 48 inches wide. In addition, AD-AS has a range of desks and workstations for the home office to fit a variety of ergonomic needs and are easily adjusted so that the user can change heights throughout the day to increase productivity and decrease fatigue. Several cabinet companies are now building adjustable countertops to ensure the space is usable for all.

In addition to these innovations, attention is being focused on ergonomically designed office chairs. Whereas five years ago, one would have to search for ergonomic seating for office use, today, many companies have added such chairs to their lines and even more on the drawing boards of major furniture manufacturers. With these changes in design, people will be able to stay longer in the workplace as inevitable disabilities become more commonplace in an aging population not quite ready for retirement.

About the authors:

Lynne Forde Breyer, IFDA, has been a practicing interior and product designer in Scottsdale, AZ, for more than 20 years and is the former owner/buyer for a wholesale to-the-trade showroom. As a member of IFDA, she has held many offices at both the local and national levels and is currently the National President of the association headquartered in Princeton Junction, NJ.

Dr. Wilma S. Hammett, FIFDA, Professor Emeritus, North Carolina State University, is a design and educational consultant. For 30 years, she has written consumer fact sheets on numerous design and home furnishing topics and developed educational programs for designers, educators and consumers. As a member of IFDA, she has held offices at the chapter and national level. Currently she is the Director of Grants for the IFDA Educational Foundation, the philanthropic arm of IFDA.

National Conference Promises Wealth of Information

Register now and enjoy education – resort style November 6-8 in Scottsdale when IFDA presents its 2003 National Conference. Entitled 21st Century Business: Consumers, Connections and Communications, the conference has a plethora of information for the entire membership. Conference Committee Chair Karen Wirrig says, "This year's conference promises a wealth of inspirational speakers, panels and activities with information to improve your business, market your services and make effective presentations."

A welcome reception 5-7 p.m. Nov. 6 at the conference site - the Radisson Resort & Spa - precedes the meetings. After the reception, members are invited to the Scottsdale ArtWalk. Shuttle transportation will be provided.

Friday's schedule starts with Emmanuelle Linard, managing director North American Division, Trends Union Paris. One of Europe's most prestigious forecasters, Linard will discuss "Lifestyle and Color Trends."

At 10 a.m., Fred Berns, president Power Promotions, Inc, will detail how to tap into the power of networking with "Methods of the Masters – Aligning with Other Professionals." Following Berns will be Dr. Stephanie deLuse, deLuse Enterprises, telling how to cut through life's clutter with "Crossroads: Making Better Decisions More Easily."

The IFDA Educational Foundation Luncheon at noon will feature guest speaker Jim Goulka, president and CEO, Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. Attendees will reconvene with a Multicultural Marketing Panel featuring professionals from the Latino, Asian and African-America communities to focus on connecting with the changing face of the American consumer. Following will be a Jewels of the Desert Showcase and a Taliesin West Sunset Reception and Night Lights on the Desert tour.

Saturday's schedule opens with Michael Savoie, president, Tailored Knowledge presenting "Speak Up! – Improve Your Public Speaking and Presentation Skills." Universal Design Panels will then address the growing need for modifying living and work spaces to meet the lifespan needs of consumers, regardless of ability, from the perspectives of consumer, contractor, manufacturer, designer and architect.

A sponsor recognition luncheon will feature guest speaker Charla Lawhon of *InStyle* Magazine with "Why Popular Culture Affects Us and Our Businesses." At 2 p.m., Terri Bowersock, founder and owner, Terri's Consign and Design, will present "Design Your Success."

Closing the conference will be a Gala Awards Reception, Banquet and IFDA EF Silent Auction 6-10 p.m.

Early-bird full conference registration - \$475 for IFDA members until October 10 - includes the welcome reception, transportation to and from the ArtWalk, all speakers and panel sessions, two lunches, Taliesin West Sunset reception and tour and the Gala Celebration Dinner.

Registration materials are available online at www.IFDA.com

EF to Host Auctions

IFDA EF will host festive silent and live auctions at the Saturday night Gala during Conference. Proceeds will benefit the Jeanne Byington Marketing Internship Grant.

Katie Goldfarb, EF vice chair and event chairman says, "Our goal is to raise at least \$5,000 so we can fully seed the fund at \$10,000 and begin awarding scholarships in this new category."

EF traditionally awards scholarships to talented and deserving students entering the field of interior design. "Because IFDA is an umbrella organization encompassing all areas of home furnishings, it's important to open up opportunities for students in other related fields," she says.

Each chapter is asked to contribute three to five items for the auctions. Interesting small items are favorites and can be easily taken home in luggage but larger items are also welcome. EF hopes companies giving larger items can assist with shipment.

Loren Reid Seaman, Illinois Chapter president, will emcee the live auction; the silent auction will be held during the reception.

Ship items to James Douglass, Different by Design, 770 E. Evans Road, # 102, Scottsdale, AZ 85260. Label boxes: IFDA EF Auction. Fax Katie with a description of the items, value, donor, and shipping details at 301.279.9490 or e-mail goldesigns@earthlink.net

Educational Foundation Awards \$7,000 in Student Scholarships

EF awarded \$7,000 in student scholarships this year and is providing a Universal Design Grant and an Ina Mae Kaplan Historical Preservation Grant totaling \$4000 toward conference educational events. EF also awarded chapter grants of \$3,000 this year.

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Invitation to Conference Extended
to China Chapter

IFDA National President Lynne Forde Breyer has extended an invitation to members of the former China Chapter headquartered in Beijing. A new website: <http://www.ifda.com.cn/> shows reactivation of the Chapter established in 1992 with 100 members countrywide at its peak; the site now mentions 56. Lynne and IFDA Executive Director Lynn Russo have provided all materials necessary for the chapter to get up and running again, including messages of encouragement.

The core group is primarily from China but includes Korean members. Members represent a cross-section of professionals in industries related to the manufacture and promotion of China's furnishings. Reorganization was prompted by the planned 2008 Olympics in China, the developing living standards of its people and entry into the WTO, according to site information.

Yu Yong, general manager of Beijing Jiandea International Decoration and president of *World Decoration News* and a station, World Decoration Network, noted the difficulty of communications between the United States and China served earlier to deter maintaining the chapter.

He indicated, however, that members are working aggressively to promote IFDA in China, learning American technology to stimulate the communication between design and furnishing industries of America and China. Yong also noted the chapter expansion will benefit American members who travel to China for business and pleasure. Yong, the first IFDA member in China, serves as the chapter's current president.

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Written by: Leslie Fine, Leslie Fine Interiors, New England Chapter; Jennifer Wagner, The Foliage Factory, Arizona Chapter; Dave Gilbert, Hi-Fi Sales Company, Philadelphia Chapter; Vicki Enteen, Stroheim & Romann, New York Chapter *Edited by Vicki Enteen*

It is safe to assert that every executive working today has felt the enormous impact of ever-expanding technology on their work life – usually, but not always, for the better. It is hard to imagine how our predecessors managed to survive, let alone thrive, without wireless technology, computers, and all other technical innovations of the past 30 years.

The various gadgets and gizmos on which we depend have been constantly evolving, and will continue to do so at an ever more rapid pace, as innovations in technology make dazzling leaps forward, and become more easily accessible to large numbers of people.

The Professional Development Committee decided to explore some of these innovative products, and interviewed experts in Massachusetts, Arizona, and Pennsylvania. Here is the advice these experts offered to make the most out of the current technological options available to help you work better, smarter, and more efficiently.

These experts include: **WILLIAM T. EMERY - InControl Services, Boston, MA.** Bill Emery is a business consultant to numerous interior design firms of all sizes in Boston, Providence, Maine and San Francisco, consulting on issues such as business planning and analysis, operational procedures, human resource issues, and computers and software. *Interviewed by Leslie Fine.*

DON VANDENBRUL is the co-owner with his wife Phyllis of **Mobile Computer Professor, Scottsdale, AZ.** They are a small business computer support specialist. *Interviewed by Jennifer Wagner.*

LEE JONES – Integrated Solutions, Inc., Phoenixville, PA. Lee is a computer software and networking specialist. *Interviewed by Dave Gilbert.*

SHERRY QUALLS - President of White, Good & Co. Advertising, Lancaster, PA. As a small business owner, Sherry has had to educate herself about technological options by surrounding herself with knowledgeable people. *Interviewed by Vicki Enteen.*

Q. Investing in technology can be an expensive proposition. How do I know when to buy something new and not worry about it becoming obsolete within a short time? How long should one wait when something new is introduced for the prices to come down?

A. The price of technology is at its highest when it is introduced into the market place, and within a year the price usually will drop 20 to 40 percent as more brands enter with similar technology and there is a need to become more competitive. If you are an individual who needs to have the newest and best that is out there and price is not an issue, then you will buy it as soon as it becomes available. Though if you can wait six months to a year, you will still be purchasing something that is current and at a more reasonable price. Most technology will be obsolete within three to five years. *Bill Emery*

Some equipment becomes obsolete very quickly. Sound and graphics devices are changing their standards continually. You have to decide when to buy knowing that some things will be obsolete quickly. As far as new products and pricing, it also depends on the product. Color laser printers took five or more years before their prices became affordable for the average business. *Don Vandenbrul*

Technology today tends to have a lifespan of three to five years. The decision of when to buy depends on a couple of factors. First would be the age of your existing equipment. Second might be a particular feature in a new technology that would substantially benefit your organization. Another thing to consider is the large tax credits available to businesses, up to \$100,000, I believe, which may dictate the timing for the investment. New technologies are always at their most expensive when they are first released. If possible, a delay of six to eight months will usually reduce the price substantially. *Lee Jones*

I typically think in terms of how long I plan to use something. Knowing that many amortization schedules are five or seven years, with new technology we use a 3-year rule of thumb. If I know I'm going to ditch something within a 3-year timeframe, I expense it all at once. If I think I can push its life a bit longer, I'll often lease till I've purchased. If the item has been written off, it is a lot easier to ditch. Don't wait longer than 18 months for prices to adjust.

Sherry Qualls

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.....*Technology Today* (continued from page 6)

Q. Is it advisable to take courses to update one's technological skills? Are the tutorials and user materials sufficient for most people to get up to speed?

A. Most manuals and tutorials are sufficient in getting the average user to speed and there should always be time set aside to explore via hands on, before putting the product to practical use. If you are a true novice, a course may be beneficial. The downfall to most courses is that they usually have so many people of various skill levels; you will find that the new information derived will be limited. If you are going to take a course I would recommend one-on-one with an instructor, or a course which is offered at different ability levels. *Bill Emery*

Courses taught in a classroom setting are very general, but they do give you a good foundation on that basis. Tutorials and documentation are less helpful because there is no one to fall back on when concepts aren't understood. *Don Vandenbrul*

Many of the most powerful features of a technology often go unused due to a lack of user training. For the new user, the included manuals and tutorials are a good place to start, but generally lack the instruction required to get the most from a technology. Unfortunately, most instructor-led course are an inefficient means of getting the training as the courses have to proceed at the level of the attendees and often the courses occur during business hours, requiring time away from work. These days there are a wide variety of sources for online training which allow the user to proceed at a pace that is right for them and at a time that is convenient. Many of these courses provide an instructor who can answer any questions. *Lee Jones*

We believe in taking classes to keep our skill set fresh, however, it is key not to be too wed to certain types of equipment, or courses that are geared to only one type/platform. *Sherry Qualls*

Q. For certain items (phones, answering machines, TVs/VCRs, combo faxes/printers/copiers), is it better to buy combined appliances or individual ones?

A. The real advantage to an all-in-one machine is if you have limited office space. Otherwise I would recommend buying individual machines based on your needs. *Bill Emery*

In general, these multifunction devices have come a long way. There is one caveat: once one part fails, the whole device needs repair. The low prices for these devices make them almost disposable. If it breaks down, buy a new one. *Don Vandenbrul*

Most often, individual devices will have more features. Many combination devices have features that will go unused, so I would recommend the individual for most cases. However, there are often cases when the combination device may fit a particular need or space requirement. For example, where a scanner and printer are separate it often requires a PC to make a copy, whereas a combined unit would not need a PC. *Lee Jones*

We try and bundle when the company is reputable and aggressive. All of our printers, copiers, and fax machines are bundled with one company. Our DSL, fax lines and land line phones are bundled as well. As long as the firm is reputable, bundling can give you great leverage – for service and pricing. *Sherry Qualls*

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Q. What is the latest in wireless technology? How efficient are the combination cell phones/organizers? Are pagers a good idea among a group of colleagues?

A. Wireless technology is a fast growing area of the computer networking market, and that is understandable since no one likes having all those wires running throughout their office and home just to connect all the components of the computers. The combination of organizers and cell phones is also the next step in the cell phone market. It is only logical that two items most people carry with them and which get used in similar capacity should be combined. Of course, size is an issue and they are somewhat bulky and expensive at this time, but even in the past few months we have seen both decrease. With text messaging on cell phones now available, pagers are becoming obsolete.

Bill Emery

Text messaging is what the wireless companies hope that you see as the next frontier. Internet cell phones/PDAs that combine Internet and organization are also looming. Speeds are becoming very fast, making it a much more viable alternative. Be advised though, that providers of these wireless Internet services in places like Starbucks charge by the minute and hour. *Don Vandenbrul*

The PocketPC Phone edition platform can be a very efficient option especially for organizations based on Microsoft technologies. Using Outlook on both the desktop and mobile platforms is very intuitive for users.

Lee Jones

The latest wireless technology is wireless Internet...very cool except for the area restrictions -- you still need to be pretty close to your home satellite. And of course, mobile phones with video/photo capability. Combo mobile phones and organizers I believe to be cumbersome. We use a Nextel mobile phone service that allows us to use the walkie-talkie feature. This is great for keeping paid minutes down and for getting instant access. *Sherry Qualls*

Q. Are PDAs still a wise choice in personal and professional organization, or are there newer, better options?

A. PDAs are still the best choice out there for personal data record keeping. *Bill Emery*

I use my PDA for everything. My clients are starting to adopt the cellphone/PDA with great results. It will be the tool of the future for those who travel a great deal and don't want to drag a laptop through security at airports.

Don Vandenbrul

PDAs have changed the way we keep track of everything today. Many have become more and more advanced, but nothing has taken its place. *Lee Jones*

I'm not a PDA fan. When a total planner, with a stylus to take notes, is available I might change my mind.

Sherry Qualls

Q. Are service contracts a good idea? Or is it better to set up a relationship with a technology consultant?

A. A manufacturer's warranty should be more than sufficient to cover most items; service contracts are just another way for the retail store to makemoney. *Bill Emery*

Both of these options are part of an overall computer strategy. All it takes is one bad component to go sour and you've recaptured the price of a warranty. Your technology consultant can provide you with services outside of warranty issues. These would be things such as networks, software assistance, virus removal etc. None of these are covered by warranties. *Don Vandenbrul*

Typically, service contracts are merely another way for retailers to make money; the manufacturer's warranty often covers the useable lifespan of a piece of technology. *Lee Jones*

Depending on the size of your organization and complexity of your equipment, you might need both an IT consultant and service contracts. We have both. The tech guy troubleshoots our network, suggests when we need hardware upgrades and helps facilitate software installation. The service contracts are a must for our copiers and printers as they are used heavily and we NEED them to be working at all times. *Sherry Qualls*

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Q. Where does one go for the best, unbiased information on what to buy? How do you determine what will work best for your particular needs?

A. Use consumer publications, such as, but not limited to, Consumer Reports, PC World and the like. The Internet also can provide a great deal of information, but always be aware of the source of the information you are reviewing. *Bill Emery*

I like to read what they are saying in the trade publications. I also talk to colleagues, competitors, and other users to get an idea of what they are experiencing and seeing out there. I also search the Web for reviews and technology news. *Don Vandenbrul*

The Web is a great resource for this. To get the most unbiased reviews I would recommend sites like Epinions.com which feature user reviews. Additionally, look for a newsgroup that focuses on the type of product you are researching. Google's Directory is a great place to start. *Lee Jones*

An IT consultant typically will have favorites, but I still find them to be the least biased. A complete evaluation of what you think you want to be able to do will allow him/her to put together a proposal outlining the equipment you'll require. Well worth the investment! *Sherry Qualls*

Q. Are there user-friendly publications geared to small businesses and individual practitioners that are good for keeping abreast of new technology?

A. The consumer publications mentioned above are very user friendly in finding out the newest and latest. *Bill Emery*

My favorite sources for reviews of new technology are *PC World*, *PC Magazine* and *Computer Shopper*. For inexperienced users, *Smart Computing* has good content. I also like to read *Forbes* and *Business Week* for their perspective on business technology. *Don Vandenbrul*

There are many publications that dedicate themselves to a specific industry. I would recommend a Google search on one that matches your specific business focus as they tend to have more information that is relevant to your business. *Lee Jones*

I would say no, though we are a MAC shop and find the catalogues to be a good resource for purchasing. Again the IT consultant I believe is better qualified. *Sherry Qualls*

Q. Is it wise to invest in high-speed cable lines? Which are the best ones?

A. Investing in DSL and high speed cable lines is a must. The time-saving factor over dial up modems alone justifies it, especially if you use the Internet and email on a regular basis. There are so many companies out there - cable companies, satellite companies, telephone companies and Internet providers - that one should go online or use one of the consumer publications and review a price comparison for your geographical area. *Bill Emery*

Adoption of high-speed connections is a function of how dependent you are on the Internet. If DSL or broadband is available, they are more cost effective as they increase productivity at a reasonable cost. Satellite connections can require a landline for uploads and are substantially higher than the others. A T-1 or T-3 line is \$300-800 per month and may be the only alternative if you can't get DSL or broadband into your building. You have to weigh your options. *Don Vandenbrul*

These days, almost no small business should invest in the high priced T-1 and greater speed lines. With the availability of low cost DSL and satellite connections and the ease of implementing VPNs today, organizations should definitely get connected, but they can easily avoid the high-priced dedicated lines. Of the options out there, DSL is the most reliable. *Lee Jones*

Absolutely invest – especially with the column on line. Without a high-speed line you are going to be frustrated with download time, etc. A high-speed line doesn't have to be cable, though. That is somewhat dependent on your market location. We serve 15 people with a DSL line and are very happy. Others may not be able to get DSL and must use cable. Regardless, a separate high-speed Internet access line is a must today! *Sherry Qualls*

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Q. Is there anything happening in web technology that people in our industry should be aware of?

A. The design industry is finally recognizing that the Web is extremely useful when it comes to promoting and selling product. You can now view product, order samples, check stock and order product all online, and it will continue to improve and move more in that direction in the future for almost all vendors. It is definitely providing a major outlet for designers to source through today. *Bill Emery*

The most important thing you can do in terms of Web technology is to get a website. Start by reserving your domain name. Find out who can help you with your website. Make sure it is someone who knows the industry. *Don Vandenbrul*

Many vendors are providing real-time inventory, ordering, online catalogs, and support that can improve response times for your customers and reduce overhead on your end. It is worthwhile to request these features from your vendors if they do not already offer them. *Lee Jones*

Remember that the Web is just another media outlet. Don't be the first on the bandwagon to try new stuff, but don't be last either. Invest in an IT consultant and be sure they are part of your planning process. They are worth the time you would have to spend trying to learn and understand what they already know! *Sherry Qualls*

Editor's Note:

Since many IFDA members find themselves in their cars much of the time in order to do business, a potentially important new technology that may be relevant is the Global Positioning System, or GPS.

This is a constellation of satellites that transmits radio signals that allow receivers on the ground to pinpoint longitude and latitude. They can tell you your location while driving within 10 to 23 feet. This technology has been put into mini-computers with a database of street maps and addresses, and can be installed as an option on new cars. The rate of sale of these devices is expected to more than double by 2006, with prices going down as consumer interest increases. Many of the options available in built-in systems are now available in hand-held devices that cost far less. Some offer routing and mapping functions that give you turn-by-turn directions, tell you when you've gone off the course, and even alert you to nearby gas stations and coffee shops. Portable models with a map database that can plug into your car can run from \$500 to \$1500, and require the purchase of CDs with detailed local street maps for a particular region.

According to Sherry Qualls, one of the most popular brands is Garmin. Hand-held, light and reasonably priced, it's a good way to save a lot of time and trouble. She suggests that the key is making sure you keep the software in the gadgets updated, since it is useless unless it's loaded with the most recent maps, index of locations etc.

For those of you who have gotten lost while driving to the home of a new client, or who have taken a wrong turn while hurrying to an important meeting, this system may be a worthwhile addition to your technological arsenal. *Vicki Enteen*

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Educational Foundation Awards Seven Scholarships

Seven outstanding students nationwide with career goals in the home furnishings area have received Educational Foundation Scholarships, two more than originally planned thanks to the Carolinas Chapter and the family of Charles D. Mayo.

"We are thrilled that two additional scholarships can be awarded this year. There were so many of the 79 students who applied that needed assistance, we on the EF are inviting chapters to follow the Carolinas Chapter lead and provide support this year for a student in their area," said Shirley Ebert, Educational Foundation chair. "We are also grateful to the Mayo family for adding an additional scholarship so we can meet this challenge.

"We are pleased to provide financial support to these talented, dedicated students who are the future of our industry. Those of us on the Educational Foundation of IFDA have been gratified by the response and caliber of nearly 100 applicants for the scholarships we offered for the academic year 2003-2004. We attribute this increase to a greater financial need due to the economy as well as the ease of applying for these scholarships online via the EF website."

Angela Hagedorn, a sophomore at Spokane Community College majoring in Landscape Design-Horticulture, will receive the second Mayo scholarship. The Carolinas Chapter is donating \$1,000 to EF, to be awarded as a scholarship for Bronwen Leigh Keller, an interior design major at Salem College with a 4.0 grade point average.

Two IFDA scholarships were awarded this year to student members of the association. One is Cheryl Ann Kempton, an interior design major and rising senior at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, with a 4.0 grade point average. Having earned both bachelor and master's degrees in educational administration, she is returning to the classroom to pursue her dream of interior design. The second is Iveta Svareniece-Abolina, a junior at Parsons School of Design, New York City, with a 3.68 GPA. A native of Latvia, she is majoring in Design and Technology. She arrived in the United States in 1997, learned English and overcame many obstacles to pursue her career path.

Two Vercille Voss scholarships for graduate students were awarded to IFDA student members. Larisa McShane, a native of Russia, will pursue further interior design studies at Drexel University in Philadelphia. With a GPA of 3.94, she is a single parent with two children, has an engineering background and is pursuing a new goal: to become a design professional. Jessica Ahnert has been accepted into the master's program at the New England School of Art and Design at Suffolk University, Boston. With a GPA of 3.8, she is interested in a design career bridging Western and Asian cultures.

Students and parents interested in information about upcoming scholarship opportunities through the Educational Foundation of IFDA can go on line at www.ifdaef.org

IFDA Educational Foundation Receives 79 Applicants for Charles D. Mayo Scholarship

The Educational Foundation of EF received a surprising number of applicants for this year's Charles D. Mayo Scholarship established by the Georgia Chapter in his memory. A total of 79 applications arrived from around the country...many via the EF web site.

Wilma Hammett, FIFDA, EF Scholarship/Grants Chair, commented, "We can attribute this response to a slower economy causing financial problems for students and their families, and the user-friendly website the Foundation developed last year. Also, this scholarship is open to all students, not just IFDA student members."

Winning the \$1,000 scholarship was Neelanjana Sen, who earned 39.25 of a possible 40 points from the EF trustees. A native of India, she is a senior at Pine Manor College, Chestnut Hill, MA, majoring in Visual Arts with a grade point average of 4.0.

"Our task was very difficult...there were so many bright talented, dedicated and deserving students," Wilma said.

For example, Suzanne Storm, a senior in Interior Design at Mount Mary College with a GPA of 3.883. She is involved in creating a design concept for Serenity Inn, a facility for men recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. She has also worked with a non-profit providing safe transitional housing for young women exiting foster care. She wants to educate others "that your space in this work, however small, is important and has the positive capacity to heal, nourish and encourage personal growth."

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Rachel Thomasee, a senior at LSU in Baton Rouge, LA, is the single mother of two young boys. Since returning to school in 1999, she has never received a grade lower than a B, has kept her children on the honor roll, been fighting Crohn's Disease and renovated a 100-year-old farmhouse. She must purchase a new computer but lacks the funds.

Kristen Turner, a sophomore at Savannah College of Art and Design majoring in Visual Arts, has a 3.96 GPA and says, "I simply cannot express the pure delight I have in just going to class. I regret that I am often not able to put more money into many of my projects. Sufficient funds would have a vast influence on the material quality and presentation of my art."

Tiffany Adams, a senior at Brigham Young University, has a 3.870 GPA and is focusing on Kitchen and Bath and Health Care. She wants to "create a more comfortable environment for those who need assisted care, whether in a hospital, an elderly home, or children's care facility." She has earned 100 percent of her educational costs through summer jobs – this year at a kitchen and bath design store – and part-time work during school.

Inna Smertenko, a junior in Interior Design at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, has a 3.3 GPA. She says, "As a novice I pay more attention to 'green design' so that our environment can be better for future generations." As she works on a dorm room redesign, she is concerned about "toxic substances that are present in most products and will try to use green" products for this assignment.

A native of Yugoslavia, Sladjana Baranac is a junior at Syracuse University with a 3.63 GPA and majoring in Environmental Design. She feels the "need to make a contribution to my country of origin while doing the same thing here, in the country that allowed me to fulfill my dreams and aspirations." Her goal is to focus on relevant design issues in developing countries.

Kevin Williams is a sophomore at Prairie View, A&M University, Prairie View, Texas with a 3.25 GPA. He is majoring in Architecture/Construction Science and has a minor in Urban and Inner City Planning. Because of a medical condition, he is unable to attend a college further than 50 miles from his physician. Once he earns his Masters, his goal is to "go into my community and give my time and effort to see my community prosper." He has already given some 2000 man hours of community service to his neighborhood.

Shannon Figgins is a junior with a 4.0 GPA at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles. As a research intern at the school, she has "demonstrated ability to supervise, research, interview and expand the horizons of the project...and other departments have asked for her demonstrations of research data so that they may better help students." Due to family hardships, she receives only \$30 a month from her parents. Her goals include to "buy my mom a running car and help people who are less fortunate than myself."

Kendra Clemons earned an associate degree in Graphic Design/Interior Design at Platt College in San Diego with a GPA of 3.67 but does not have the financial resources to work toward her goal of a bachelor's degree. While making only enough to support herself, she still heads many charity groups. She organized a special Christmas for a mother and her three sons...one had been shot in a drive-by shooting at the age of 4 and was confined to a wheelchair.

Kathryn George has spent one year at Emerson College in Boston but is now a junior because of advance placement credits from high school. With a GPA of 4.0, she is majoring in Marketing and Communications with a goal of working in a firm specializing in promoting the arts. She earned the highest percentile grade in her Communication, Media and Society course...and her "involvement in the Emerson Community has been invaluable." She is involved in a non-profit program entitled Arts in Education, culminating in an event for the city of Boston to showcase the program and seek potential sponsors.

Elom Ketoglo, a junior majoring in interior design at The Art Institute of Phoenix, has a GPA of 3.7. Her goal is to work with architects in developing countries, helping in the field of construction and design...but currently lacks the financial resources to achieve it. Student loans are no longer sufficient to pay for her tuition and art supplies.

Melissa Crookston, a senior in interior design at Brigham Young University, has a 3.7 GPA. She wants to be a designer concerned about the function of space, about clients being able to age in place, be a contributing designer to the community and also be an educator. She provides 100 percent of her educational costs.

Aleksandra Furman, a junior at Harrington Institute of Interior Design, Chicago, has a GPA of 3.77. A talented artist, she has taught high school and children's art classes, painted murals for private clients, and become involved with the Supporting of Spirit Foundation. This influenced her goal. Now she wants a career path in nonprofit design as she learns to use her skills to improve her community through design. Ultimately, she hopes to become a professor of art, design and history.

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Did You Hear About

Arizona Chapter is heading back to Mexico this November for its 14th annual 'Shop 'til You Drop' shopping spree to Nogales, Mexico. After a two-year hiatus, during which shopping took them only to Tubac, members will be off and shopping again on November 11, just days after the national conference in Scottsdale. Make reservations at Hotline: 480.303.1515 for the daylong adventure that begins at 7:30 a.m. sharp with a continental breakfast aboard luxury motorcoaches. Fee for the excursion is \$68.50.

While enjoying a festive atmosphere and renewing friendships, participants will receive hot tips on what's not to be missed in Nogales and maps detailing where the best treasures and foods can be found. An afternoon of bargain hunting and soaking up local culture will provide a relaxing day for participants who can also indulge in early holiday shopping. Prior to arrival, the restaurants and shop vendors will be advised of the annual IFDA arrival.

After stuffing the cargo bays with everything from Peruvian pottery to contemporary art, the jubilant group will leave Nogales at 4:30 p.m. sharp aboard the coaches. On the return trip, passengers can savor a plentiful snack and view a current movie video. They can also relax, triumphant in another successful shopping spree. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Chrysalis Shelter. Funds are provided to IFDA local and national design scholarships and educational programs.

Baltimore Chapter enjoyed the lovely summer breezes of the Chesapeake Bay and that is when members were working, so imagine what it must be like when the chapter plays!

For the work portion, Baltimore had a great summer starting with a potential new member breakfast hosted by Sofa's Etc. This was a chance to corral all those 'hit list' folks for a morning of networking and telling about the many benefits of IFDA membership. This event was quite successful and the chapter is now working on holding them quarterly around the region.

An IFDA Designer's Salon was featured in early June where networking was at its best! Baltimore and Washington members – and others within the business – met and talked business in an informal setting while sampling six fabulous wines and great nibbles.

Expo Design Center, the upscale part of Home Depot, recently opened a trade services office in Columbia, Md. and invited Baltimore members to learn more about the store, its services and trade discount program. After all, so many members' customers shop there, why shouldn't the chapter benefit as well.

July brought a time to kick back and relax on the waterfront with a Lawn Party hosted by Bozek Builders of Queenstown on Ice House Point overlooking the Wye River and Chesapeake Bay. What a great day it was, with fine food, libations and company rivaled only by the beautiful day and light sea breezes in the afternoon.

Baltimore is looking to the fall for more exciting events, including some quality time in Scottsdale, AZ at the conference. See you all there!

Carolinas Chapter raised more than \$30,000 at its Market Furniture and Accessory Benefit Sale. The 10th Sale, held May 30-21, provided the public with a unique opportunity to obtain home furnishings at bargain prices. The event was held at the Radisson Hotel Ballroom in downtown High Point, NC, site of the giant International Home Furnishings Market each April and October. This year, the chapter held a preview party and silent auction the night before the sale.

"We are always gratified by the wonderful support we receive from manufacturers and other companies who provide donated items for the sale. This year, we raised over \$30,000 - the most we have ever made," commented Susan Connor, Carolinas Chapter President.

Each year, the event attracts repeat customers who have furnished entire rooms, second homes or the first apartments of grown children.

For more than a decade, the Carolinas Chapter has solicited donations of showroom samples, closeouts and slightly damaged items in the area known as the Home Furnishings Capital of the World." This year, the Chapter worked closely with two beneficiaries, The Furniture Discovery Center and High Point University, to maximize donated items and consumer participation. Net proceeds from the sale will benefit the Furniture Discovery Center, a hands-on museum of furniture manufacturing and HPU's Home Furnishings Program, which continues to provide graduates who successfully pursue various careers in the home furnishings field. Funds will also bolster a number of the chapter's educational endeavors, including scholarship support for the interior design program at East Carolina University and the Ruth Clark scholarship for furniture design. Co-chairs were Dawn Brinson, Dr. Richard Bennington and Joanne Hoover.

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....Did you hear about, (continued from page 13)

New England Chapter celebrated with a Summer Soiree in late June. The party was held at the gracious Eastern Point, Gloucester, Mass. home of renowned designer Peter Niemitz of the Niemitz Design Group and Icon store owner Paul Gaucher. Unseasonably cold and rainy weather simply served to fuel the chapter's determination to have a great time and with attendance near 200 members and their guests, a fantastic time was had by all.

The Chapter has also enjoyed great attendance at its workshop series focusing on critical business skills, helping membership acquire and improve their organizational skills in and out of the office. Topics have included crafting an effective letter of agreement, establishing billing rates and handling the organization of office paperwork. Upcoming workshops will include getting up to speed on the latest computer hardware, peripherals and software, marketing practices including utilization of the internet, effective client presentations and sourcing and vendor issues.

An especially active and effective committee of the Chapter has been the Community Service Committee, which since January has undertaken the refurbishing of apartments in the Ronald McDonald House affiliated with Boston's Children's Hospital. The Chapter is especially proud of the positive impact its members efforts will have on creating comfortable, updated apartments for families in times of medical crisis.

In addition, membership in the Chapter continues to grow; it currently stands at 158 members. Potential new members are encouraged to attend monthly Networking Luncheons, where they can meet long standing members and find out about how IFDA can enhance their working lives.



At the New England Chapter Summer Soiree are: Leslie Fine, chapter president; Paul Gaucher and Peter Niemitz. (Photo by Jacqueline Becker IFDA)

Northern California Chapter continues its educational bent with programs at local companies:



Northern California Chapter President Joan Long FIFDA with a carpet restorer at a Claremont Rug Company presentation.

Berkeley Mills, which provided furniture manufacturing; Claremont Rug, offering informative seminars on Oriental rugs; AST fabrics and Dacor, a culinary experience amid learning about upscale appliances.

The chapter awarded its first Carolyn Thomas Teacher Education Grant to Gus Vouchilis, who is pursuing a Doctorate in Education at the University of San Francisco. Gus, a longtime assistant at the chapter's annual Student Career Forum, received the \$3,000 grant at a reception hosted by Lee Jofa in its San Francisco Design Center showroom. Amy Thomas, daughter of the late Carolyn Thomas, made the presentation on June 10, Carolyn's birthday.

Operation Experience has returned to the chapter which seeks employers willing to hire design students on a part-time basis. The chapter assists in payment to the students in the 3-month program. Operation Experience has proved to be an excellent way for qualified students to 'learn the trade' from knowledgeable and sharing employers.

The chapter is also planning a directory of members including a special section for suppliers that have been recommended.

With the year more than half over, **Philadelphia Chapter** has maintained a steady, forward, focused pace. In June, members held a very successful Vendor Expo at the Marketplace Design Center. This year, participants included a variety of vendors from window treatment specialists, fine cabinet makers and electronic sound specialist to artists and craftspeople. Many vendors represented became IFDA members; they were very encouraged by the great attendance and interest at the EXPO.

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....Did you hear about, (continued from page 14)

Philadelphia Chapter's general meeting and network event and new member welcome reception is planned for early September at the Adobe Gallery in Philadelphia. The evening will include a drawing for a free registration to the November conference in Arizona.

The chapter's charity project, Domestic Abuse Women's Shelter in West Chester, PA, is well under way, including redecorating the foyer area. Many of the products are being donated and members are volunteering their time to paint as well as doing handy work. Project completion is slated for October, at which time there will be an open house.

"I would like to thank my board, their committees and everyone involved in our charity project, for their dedication and support," said Chapter President Sharon Houck. "We are looking forward to an exciting second half of the year."

Southwest Chapter's late spring was graced with a wonderful program put on by the Toastmaster group to which several members belong. In that early morning group are Elizabeth Brown FIFDA, Peggy Koskiniemi, Susan Thornton and Carolyn Jefferson. The presentation focused on success in life and how much it depends on your ability to communicate well with clients, co-workers, friends and family. Quick tips were also given to help improve one's speaking skills, reduce anxiety and lose any fear of speaking in public. The agenda included several 'improv' performances by members of the Sunrise Toastmasters. (They do mean sunrise as the group meets at 7 a.m.)

In June, during the Dallas World Trade Center's Summer Market, members set up a booth on a prominent floor to let attendees learn more about IFDA. The chapter even had a potential - and very enthusiastic member - help out. Exposure to 'who we are' seems to be the thing people need the most, reports Cheryl Beenken, Southwest Chapter president.

Chapter Programs Director Cindi Cagle took a turn in a different direction for the July program with legal knowledge for design professionals. The program covered intellectual property issues, contracts and letters of agreement for working with clients and producing designs as well as copyrights and trademarks. These included issues from the designer's and manufacturer's point of view. The speaker, an attorney with design community experience, has an antique business in one of the local galleries. The Belles Artes Gallery, featuring Peruvian, French and Italian antiques, proved a wonderful venue for the presentation.

Washington Chapter held its popular Resources 2003 TableTop Trade Show in early June, in response to a membership survey response requesting the show. Five years had elapsed since the Chapter provided the show. Resources 2003 did not disappoint the participants or those who attended. The show provided an excellent opportunity for both vendors and attendees to network and develop business contacts.

Participants included vendors from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Georgia. The show was a vendors sellout a month prior to the date; the design trade actively participated by attending.

Resources has been, and is, an outstanding fund raiser for the Chapter. More importantly, the show has generated a very large prospective membership list for the Chapter to work with for its fall membership drive.

Washington Chapter would like to acknowledge all of the IFDA members participating in the Resources 2003 and express its pride in the positive business benefits it has yielded for all IFDA members and the design trade in the Washington area.

What's Happening

Window Fashions Certification Program (WFCP™) is offering education to industry veterans and newcomers.

Ideal for anyone serious about wanting to grow their business and make an impact on the window coverings community, the Program will be held in Chicago on September 29-30 and in Clearwater, Fla. October 13-14. The Program, that provides Window Fashions Certification and up to 1.5 IACET CEU credits in two days, features more than 100 window-treatment samples with an opportunity to meet local vendors selling those products.

For further information phone 651.293.1544, fax 651.653.4308 or visit www.fcpro.com to register.

The Gallery of New York School of Interior Design is presenting The American Frame: From Origin to Originality, a unique exhibition exploring the inspiration and innovation of American frame design.

The 68 American and European frames from the collection of Gill & Lagodich Fine Period Frames, New York City, will be shown through December 20 at the design school, 161 East 69 Street.

The Gallery is open to the public, free of charge, Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information phone 212.472.1500, ext. 9.

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