

# NEWS BRIEFS

Newsletter of the Architectural Woodwork Institute

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EXG. MASONRY CHIMNEY

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## AWI NEWS BRIEFS

AWI's monthly newsletter is published as a service for members to help them improve operations and grow their businesses. *NewsBriefs* is also a resource for news and information about AWI's products, programs and publications and other membership benefits and services. •

## COMING NEXT MONTH

- Final Article in "The Exceptional Presenter" Series
- State of the Association Report

NOTE: The information, examples and suggestions presented in this newsletter should not be construed as legal or other professional advice. Neither AWI nor guest contributors accept any responsibility for the accuracy nor completeness of this material and recommend the consultation with competent legal counsel and/or other professional advisors before applying this material in any particular factual situations.

## Wood IS Green™ Industry Campaign Seeks Grassroots Support

“Doesn't anyone know that wood IS green,” Teresa Bell, co-owner of Kentucky Millwork, asked after returning from a GreenBuild Conference and Expo in 2007. What prompted her question was an exhibit hall filled with exhibitors promoting concrete, glass, and steel products as the answer for environmentally sound material resources. Coupled with that reality, a small contingent of wood products suppliers were promoting their particular products that met certification requirements,” Mrs. Bell noticed. “No one was explaining why wood should be THE material resource of choice,” she concluded.

From that experience “Wood IS Green™” started sprouting. “Since construction is driven by the demand from consumers and consumers rely on the design community – designers and architects – to guide them in their material choices, it seemed logical that we need to do all we can to educate them about the marvelous way that wood fulfills so much of the mandate of using environmentally sound building materials and processes,” Mrs. Bell said.



(continued on page 2)

## Cost-Cutting Strategies to Help Prevent Downsizing

As the economy continues to struggle, employers are still faced with a growing number of tough decisions. How can we keep the business afloat in an unstable marketplace? How do we stay ahead of the competition?

“When implemented sooner rather than later, these cost-cutting approaches can help save jobs and the business.”

One of the biggest areas of concern for most companies is how to avoid a layoff. Successful business owners know the important role employees hold in their organization. When it comes to ensuring the company's survival, tenacious leaders will do everything they can to prevent losing valuable employees.

Layoffs have a tremendous impact on employee morale. Uncertainty can create a fearful and oftentimes negative workplace, full of speculation and anxiety. As a result, it's not uncommon for top-performing employees to leave a company with a questionable future.

While downsizing may be inevitable for some organizations, there are other alternatives that have proven to be effective. When implemented sooner rather than later, these cost-cutting approaches can help save jobs and the business.

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## Wood IS Green™... (continued from page 1)

### Campaign Branches

The Wood IS Green™ campaign was launched in July 2009 as an independent industry-wide movement. It has three branches:

1. The Wood IS Green™ grassroots effort, which has a singular purpose of putting that very phrase before as many eyes as possible.
2. The [www.woodisgreen.com](http://www.woodisgreen.com) Web site is a clearinghouse for accurate and new information regarding wood as it pertains to the green building movement.
3. A Wood IS Green™ continuing education accredited module for architects and designers addressing this pertinent issue.



## GREEN SCENE



### Why Participate?

"The proof's in the fruit," Mrs. Bell said. "You are increasing the impact of the message that Wood IS Green™ by encouraging the design community in particular and people in general to be consistent in their stance for environmental responsibility by using the resource that most fulfills the requirement for being natural, renewable, sustainable and carbon-sequestering," she said.

### Benefits of Participation

1. Inclusion of company name and logo (with a link to participant's Web site) on the home page of the campaign site, [www.woodisgreen.com](http://www.woodisgreen.com).
2. Any press releases or articles generated by participating companies that contribute to factual

information regarding wood's great properties, wood products that meet environmental requirements, or environmentally friendly processes (such as wood waste bio-energy) used by participating companies will be linked on the campaign Web site as part of the fact links.

3. Most importantly, through this campaign, the goal is to see wood specified more often in new projects, resulting in increased orders for wood products, finishing material, hardware and related components.

The bottom line? "It means more business for all of us!" Mrs. Bell emphasized.

### Join the Grassroots Campaign

"Spreading the word that Wood IS Green™ benefits everyone involved in wood-related industries. The more the phrase is seen, the more the concept is imprinted in the minds of those decision-makers of new building and remodeling projects – the owners, designers and architects," Mrs. Bell said. She emphasized that this independent campaign can be successful as a grassroots movement. "It just requires industry-wide adoption and use," she said.

The end goal is the dissemination of accurate information regarding wood as a superb environmentally sound building resource and its acceptance among building owners, designers, and architects.

### Who Should Participate?

- Wood industry associations of all kinds and their member businesses
- Lumber and plywood suppliers
- Composite wood panel suppliers
- Wood finish companies
- Hardware and fastener suppliers
- Distributors
- Wood technology schools
- Woodworking companies
- Woodworking Media organizations
- Carpenter unions
- General contractors

### First Steps

1. Download the Wood IS Green™ logo from the campaign Web site, [www.woodisgreen.com](http://www.woodisgreen.com), and use it in as many applications as possible: e-mail signature; fax cover sheets; letterhead; brochures; product fact sheets; etc.

(continued next page)

“The logo says it all. The image stimulates decision-makers to think about wood; it raises the profile of our industry’s resource. To be effective, it needs to be adopted by everyone in our industry,” she said.

2. Spread the Word: Encourage fellow association members, distributors, competitors, and customers to join the campaign.



### Campaign’s Root System

“National organizations are the campaign’s root system,” Mrs. Bell emphasized. “While those of us involved in the wood and wood products industries understand there is a need to stand up and set the record straight regarding the facts of wood’s environmental advantages, there has yet to arise a battle cry that all of us can rally behind – until now,” she said.

Wood IS Green™ sums up the issue. “It encapsulates the facts we know and communicates a simple concept that easily enters the consciousness of the reader,” Mrs. Bell said.

“There are thousands of wood related companies and hundreds of industry associations that are looking for a way to communicate the message about wood. “Wood IS Green™ is it,” Mrs. Bell said. “The power of the message is amplified by our unified voice.”

AWI Sustainability Representative Rob Ziegelmeier applauded the value of grassroots dissemination of the campaign logo. “Hats off to Teresa Bell on a new and creative way in getting the good wood message out to the public. Everyone in the wood industry must have this information,” Ziegelmeier said.

“Along with marketing plans that each company already has in place to promote wood, the addition of the Wood IS Green™ message enables all of us to join together with one voice and multiply the effect of the message. If ever there is a cause that all of us relates to and the wood industry can agree upon, it is that Wood IS Green™,” Mrs. Bell said.

### Coming Soon – Takin’ It to the Streets!

The campaign is seeking Corporate Sponsors to provide window clings, hats, and tee shirts for students in wood technology schools, as well as for other outreaches. Their support will help defray the modest out-of-pocket expenses for the campaign. Proceeds, if any, will be used for building grassroots support,” Mrs. Bell said.

Campaign participants will be notified when the Wood IS Green™ products are available to elevate the profile of the theme.

For more information and to participate in the Wood IS Green™ campaign, send an e-mail request to [info@woodisgreen.com](mailto:info@woodisgreen.com), and type “woodisgreen” in the subject line. •

## New AWI Members

### Manufacturing Apple Contractors

Houston, TX

### Custom Cabinet Shop, Inc.

Greenwood, DE

### Mr. O’s Custom Millwork & Store Fixtures

North Canton, OH

### SCS Architectural Caseworks, Inc.

Memphis, TN

### Swiss Woodcraft, Inc.

Rittman, OH

### TDS Custom Cabinets

Westerville, OH

### Suppliers

#### Fastcap, LLC

Bellingham, WA

#### Lamin-Art

Schaumburg, IL •

## AWI Member Milestones

**C**ongratulations to the following long-standing AWI members on their anniversaries.

### 25 Year Member Recognition

- Amherst Woodworking & Supply, Inc., Northampton, MA
- Architectural Doors, Inc., Garden Grove, CA
- Charles F. Shiels & Company, Cincinnati, OH
- Federal Millwork Corporation, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- Grass America, Inc., Kernersville, NC
- Indiana Architectural Plywood, Trafalgar, IN
- Ohio Valley Door Corporation, New Albany, IN
- Riverside Millwork, Inc., Mt. Vernon, WA
- Signature Interior Woodwork, Summerville, GA

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## SOE Honorees – Correction

AWI NewsBriefs editors apologize to two “Standard of Excellence” Award honorees announced in the October issue. Montbleau and Associates, Inc. received a SOE Award in the Hospitality category and Calmar Manufacturing Company received an SOE Award in the Health Care category as was stated, but the photos representing their projects were inadvertently transposed. •

# Everyone Can Be...An Exceptional Presenter

In this fifth article in our series on presentation skills we discuss two more of the six characteristics of an exceptional presenter: being Natural and Understanding Your Audience. Exceptional presenters appear to be relaxed, sound conversational (not formal), and understand their audience.

## LEARNING FORUM

The techniques which media training specialist Tim Koegel shares with AWI members can be applied in a myriad of situations, including presenting the new *Architectural Woodwork Standards* to colleagues and customers.

### Natural Speaking Style

Exceptional presenters have a speaking style that is neither forced, fake, nor artificial. "When making a presentation, the more conversational you sound, the more you look and sound relaxed, the more you appear to be at ease with your material, the more comfortable you will be with the audience," Koegel recommends.

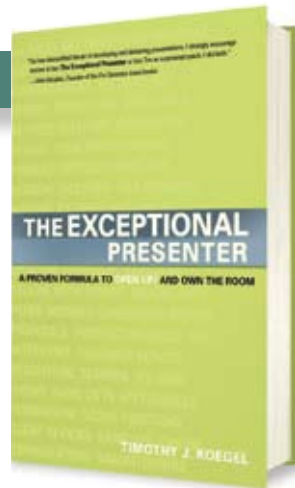
"Practicing your presentation multiple times does not make your delivery sound rehearsed. But rehearsing makes you sound more familiar with your material," Koegel says.

Becoming an exceptional presenter is acquired. It takes an ongoing commitment to improvement over time. In Malcolm Gladwell's latest book, *Outliers: the Story of Success*, research indicates that it takes 10,000 hours to achieve true expertise. That's about 20 hours a week of practice over 10 years.

"This sounds daunting, but our normal daily personal interactions give us hours of opportunities to improve our naturalness every day, during phone discussions, lunches, family conversations, meetings. All of these situations offer opportunities to be as conversational as possible," Koegel says.

"Here's an example. When thinking about who is more natural, who would come out on top...Bill Clinton or Al Gore?" Koegel asks.

"An engaging presenter has the ability to draw the audience in and create a conversational atmosphere. Engaging presenters sound as though they are having a lively conversation with friends instead of sounding scripted, didactic or speechy," Koegel writes in his book, *The Exceptional Presenter*.



### Does your audience see you as "Natural?"

Conversational • Off-the-cuff • Open  
Quick to respond • Engaging • Captivating smile  
Spontaneous • Comfortable laugh

### Or does your audience see you as "Not So Natural?"

Scripted • Talking points • Guarded • Hesitant • Distant  
Forced smile • Programmed • Strained laugh

"Don't make the mistake of thinking that a well-rehearsed presentation is unnatural. You need to practice. Don't think of your presentation as a big formal event. Try to think of it as a lively conversation with friends, rather than an address at a forum," Koegel advises.

### Understand Your Audience

The next characteristic may be the easiest for AWI members making presentations about the new *Architectural Woodwork Standards*...because you already understand your audience of colleagues. But, don't take for granted that you know what your customers want: the architects, designers and general contractors who are not as well acquainted about architectural woodwork or the new AWS as you are.

"While you are familiar with your audience, the face-to-face knowledge you can acquire onsite just prior to your presentation is important for becoming an exceptional presenter. Get to know the names of people in your audience, learn the specific issues with which they deal," Koegel says.

"As you prepare your presentation, ask yourself the following questions. Who is in the audience and what is of most interest to them? What is in it for them? Why is it important? The quickest way to connect with an audience is by demonstrating that you understand their business, their issues and their concerns," Koegel emphasizes.

"You heighten your odds of connecting when you 'Know Your Audience,'" Koegel concludes. For more ways to engage the audience, consult *The Exceptional Presenter*. You, too, can master the art of being an exceptional presenter. •

*Tim Koegel has conducted workshops for the White House, members of Congress, press secretaries, and government agencies. He provides media training for corporate executives, politicians, athletes, coaches and authors. He is author of the New York Times and Wall Street Journal best selling book, The Exceptional Presenter. He is founder of The Presentation Academy in Annapolis, MD. Visit [www.timkoegel.com](http://www.timkoegel.com).*



## Mark Your Calendar For Next Executive Briefing Conference



What's Now  
What's New  
What's Next

Stiles Machinery Inc. has announced that the Executive Briefing Conference (EBC) is now scheduled for February 28 through March 2, 2010 in Dallas, TX.

Highlights of the 2010 event include two manufacturing plant tours, renowned keynote presenters, and briefing topics focusing on solutions for what's now, what's new, and what's next. Program details and registration information will be distributed in the next few months.

New to the 2010 event is a special offer for EBC alumni who have participated in multiple conferences. Stiles will provide this group with additional opportunities to connect with the presenters as well as other unique benefits for their continued support. Personal invitations outlining this new program will be sent to qualifying alumni.

Stiles Education, in cooperation with industry partners and network supporters that include AWI, designs the EBC as a learning opportunity that also offers a dynamic group experience. The EBC is a not-for-profit educational event. Any profits will be donated to advance the efforts of WoodLINKS USA, an industry education partnership that certifies entry-level skilled workers so they can become the future leaders of the industry.

For more details about the EBC or Stiles Education, visit Stiles at [www.stilesmachinery.com](http://www.stilesmachinery.com). Stiles has been an AWI Supplier Member since 1996. •



### BUSINESS TOOLS

## Five QCP Projects Win AWI "Award of Excellence"

The AWI *Design Solutions* fall 2009 issue showcases five AWI Quality Certification Program (AWI QCP) projects that were selected as winners of this prestigious national award.

### Fall 2009 AWI "Award of Excellence" Honorees

<b>AWI Member:</b> Ebenisterie Beaubois, Ltee.	Saint-Georges, QE, Canada
<b>Project:</b> Worcester Trial Court	Worcester, MA
<b>AWI Member:</b> Nikolai Manufacturing, Inc.	New Westminster, BC, Canada
<b>Project:</b> Oregon Convention Center	Portland, OR
<b>AWI Member:</b> Stephenson Millwork Company, Inc.	Wilson, NC
<b>Project:</b> Raleigh Convention Center	Raleigh, NC
<b>AWI Member:</b> TMI Systems Design Corporation	Dickinson, ND
<b>Project:</b> Mandan Middle School	Mandan, ND
<b>AWI Member:</b> Westmark Products, Inc.	Tacoma, WA
<b>Project:</b> Skagit Valley Hospital	Mount Vernon, WA

Congratulations to all of the honorees. Check out their magnificent projects in the fall edition of *Design Solutions* now available online at [www.awinet.org](http://www.awinet.org).

All AWI Manufacturing Members are eligible to participate in this quarterly program. The deadline for submissions for the winter AWI "Award of Excellence" program is December 1, 2009. Full details and submission forms are available online at [www.awinet.org](http://www.awinet.org). •



## Cost-Cutting Strategies to Help Prevent Downsizing... *(continued from page 1)*

**Reduce travel expenditures.** When possible, try to minimize non-essential business travel. Offering gas mileage reimbursement may help trim travel costs over flying, particularly for nearby destinations. A cost-effective option for traveling is videoconferencing, which still allows for face-to-face communication at a minimal price.

addition, many employees may be willing to take a temporary leave of absence until the company is able to bounce back. Providing incentives for employees who chose either option may help enhance the deal.

## Tips for Handling Layoffs

While there is never an easy way to handle layoffs, there are approaches companies can take to help the process go a little more smoothly and to keep it as professional as possible.

**Some companies go the extra mile by contacting similar businesses that may be able to provide a comparable position for a laid off employee.**

## BUSINESS TOOLS

**Cut back on company perks.** While no one wants to give up a company car or health club membership, it's much better to let go of those luxuries than to lose a job. Freezing benefits like 401(k) matching, child care and discontinuing free beverages may result in a significant savings. Management can even give employees an opportunity to choose the perk they can do without. Some perks could be earned back by employees as part of an incentive program.

**Try job sharing.** This flexible work arrangement involves two employees working part-time to cover one full-time position. Employers can reduce headcount without interrupting productivity and service. In addition, employees can enjoy more work-life balance.

**Supplement pay freezes with paid time off.** Many companies are putting a temporary halt on pay increases to help reduce costs. Employers can help boost morale by substituting with paid time off until the company can afford to provide monetary increases again.

**It makes a big statement when management takes a cut in their salaries first.**

**Minimize work hours.** In order to avoid overtime costs, business owners can decrease the number of hours employees work. While you need to make sure you are following federal guidelines to ensure the minimum requirements are met, there's no reason you can't put a halt on extra hours worked. Some employees may also be willing to voluntarily work fewer hours, including four-day work weeks, to avoid losing their jobs entirely.

**Reduce salaries.** It makes a big statement when management takes a cut in their salaries first. Trimming salaries should be made across the board both to avoid having a disparate impact on any particular protected class within the workforce and to diminish backlash from employees when only a few are affected.

**Offer early retirement or voluntary layoffs.** With the growing number of the workforce approaching retirement age, employees within this group may be interested in early retirement. In

- **Seek counsel from professionals.** Many experts recommend having a human resources professional and/or an employment attorney present during a layoff, particularly during the meeting with the affected employee. Prior to a layoff, these professionals can help provide appropriate guidance and advice on how to avoid sticky situations and potential litigation.
- **Meet with the front-line manager or supervisor first.** The person who will be delivering the news to the employee will have the most difficult task. Managers and supervisors need to be coached on how to handle the situation. While no one can be completely prepared for the actual circumstance, it's important to provide as much guidance and help as possible.
- **Tell the employee first.** In order to avoid potential legal issues and to maintain professionalism, the employee being laid off should be told first. Not only is it inappropriate to discuss this with others, but it will also ignite emotions if the employee finds out that co-workers knew beforehand. Employers should be sensitive during this difficult time and respect the employee's feelings.
- **Don't take it personally.** Expect an emotional reaction. Don't try to offer your own story or take on the situation. Allow the employee to express his/her feelings without letting yours interfere. The best thing you can do is to listen and offer your support.
- **Don't make promises you can't keep.** While emotions may run high for all involved during the meeting, it's important to maintain a professional demeanor. This means not offering to do things, such as rehiring the employee. You don't want to offer false hope, especially since you don't know what tomorrow may bring for the company.

*(continued next page)*

## Finishing Support for AWI Members

By Chuck Susnis, The Sherwin-Williams Company

For nearly 25 years, Sherwin-Williams has been a Supplier Member of AWI. Like all members, we understand that the finishing of architectural woodwork is an exacting craft. When you need support, we're there with products that meet or exceed AWI standards, and complete support services.

We were the first to introduce a comprehensive stain-matching program using STAINWARE® Software for mixing and matching stain in-house. We offer a wide range of coating systems ideal for architectural woodwork, including a selection of lacquers and varnishes, and SHER-WOOD® *Simplicity*™ Stain, a wiping stain that lets finishers create deep, brilliant colors on various wood species in fewer steps than traditional methods, typically streamlining a six-step finishing process to four steps.

To make it easier for you to select environmentally preferable products, we are introducing the GreenSure™ designation. Coatings identified with the GreenSure symbol are most likely to contribute positively to a finished product's eligibility for LEED® points. Demonstrating our commitment to this market, our very first finishing system to bear the GreenSure designation is Sher-Wood® Ultra-Cure® Waterborne UV coating system, which is ideal for architectural woodworking applications.

GreenSure is applied only to Sherwin-Williams finishes with very low or no VOCs and formaldehyde – finishes that have been identified as utilizing more sustainable raw materials, are as efficient as possible in terms of consumption of energy and natural resources in their manufacture and application, and offer customers more environmentally responsible coating options from raw materials to distribution to final disposal, all the while ensuring excellent coating system performance.

Sherwin-Williams serves AWI members in all major markets from custom blending facilities located throughout North America. If you'd like more information about any of our products or services, call 1.800.524.5979 or visit [www.sherwin-williams.com/oem](http://www.sherwin-williams.com/oem).

Often referred to as the “survivors,” employees who remain after a layoff may also go through an emotional rollercoaster.

- **Offer extended services.** The best way to help an employee affected by a layoff is to offer any assistance to help them find a new job. Many companies provide outplacement or transitional services to help employees find work. Writing personal letters of recommendations also shows your support. Some companies go the extra mile by contacting similar businesses that may be able to provide a comparable position for a laid off employee. For example, through a program called Project Match, IBM gives recently laid off North American employees an opportunity to find a job in one of the company's developing overseas markets.
- **Keep the lines of communication open.** This is important for employees leaving the company as well as those who are staying. Try to stay in touch with top-performing employees you would want to consider rehiring should the opportunity arise.
- **Take care of the remaining employees.** Often referred to as the “survivors,” employees who remain after a layoff may also go through an emotional rollercoaster. Employers should be prepared to help them deal with their emotions, which may range from survivor's guilt to uneasiness. It's important to help them cope with their feelings and continue to make them feel appreciated, valued and motivated.

Ongoing communication with the remaining employees is critical, especially to help put rumors and tensions to rest. Be as open and honest as possible, and allow employees to express their ideas. Layoffs are stressful for everyone at the organization, and employers can't afford to lose their best employees.

Savvy business owners stay ahead of the competition by remaining proactive and trying everything possible to retain their valuable employees. When a layoff is unavoidable, companies should do everything they can to help employees transition during this difficult time and still maintain professionalism moving forward.

Article provided by Administaff (NYSE: ASF), the nation's leading professional employer organization (PEO), serving as a full-service human resources department that provides small and medium-sized businesses with administrative relief, big-company benefits, reduced liabilities and a systematic way to improve productivity. The company operates 51 sales offices in 24 major markets. For more information about Administaff, call 800.465.3800 or visit <http://www.administaff.com>.



# Tops in Safety Errors of Omission

## SAFETY MATTERS

The editors of *AWI NewsBriefs* apologize to two AWI members for inadvertently omitting the companies from the list of winners of the prestigious safety awards announced in the October issue.

**Luttrell Architectural Woodworks, Inc.** of Birmingham, AL was honored with a "Zero Lost Time Accident Achievement Award" and a "Safety Improvement Recognition Award." In addition to recognition with a "Best Safety Achievement Award," **S & H Cabinets & Manufacturing, Inc.** of Fontana, CA was also honored with a "Zero Lost Time Accident Achievement Award" and a "Safety Improvement Recognition Award." Both companies are in the 20,000 to 99,999 hours category.

Congratulations for your exemplary practices that put the safety of your employees first. •



## Save the Date! April 29 - May 1, 2010



## Powerful Programs • For Profitable Results

### AWI Member Milestones... (continued from page 3)

- Southern Indiana Millwork, Inc., North Vernon, IN
- Sweetwater Lumber & Land Company, Inc., Austell, GA
- Weinig Group, Mooresville, NC
- Wyatt Incorporated, Pittsburgh, PA

### 50 Year Member Recognition

- Boyertown Planning Mill Company, Boyertown, PA
- Louisville Lumber & Millwork, Louisville, KY

Congratulations to all and thanks for your ongoing support. •



## 2009 AWI Sponsors

Thanks to all of the 2009 AWI Sponsors whose support helps to fund association programs and services that benefit all AWI members. Support these members; they are supporting you through their 2009 sponsorship commitment. Visit [www.awinet.org](http://www.awinet.org) to contact these suppliers the next time a need arises for their services. •

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Challengers Award  
Winner**



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WOOD FINISHING SYSTEMS

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