



Volume 2, No. 2  
3rd Quarter, 2001



Objective: "Professionalism  
Through Education."

## Seventh Annual Convention & Trade Show Program Finalized



At the recent meeting of the Board of Directors, this year's convention and trade show program was presented and received unanimous approval. "We are scheduled for a very full three days," said Jim Lee, FIANA president.

The convention will open at 8:30 a.m. on September 27, 2001 with LaDonna Gatlin, sister of country music stars the Gatlin Brothers. For us, she will present a unique mixture of inspiration and good music. No one should miss this beginning to a great three days.

Seven more outstanding professional speakers will follow Ms. Gatlin during the course of the convention. They will cover

a wide variety of topics, benefiting all who attend. Our final speaker, at the Saturday night dinner, will be Keith Campbell, Chairman of the Board, Mannington Mills, Inc. You will certainly enjoy what Keith has to say about distribution and the future of our industry.

On page 3, you will find the complete program. The only addition that will be made is the selection of topics for the Saturday afternoon program entitled "Tech Seminars "A." This will be a period where a couple of interesting technical educational programs will be presented.

The registration packages will go out by July 1, 2001. When you receive yours, please complete it and return to FIANA as soon as possible.

See you in St. Paul September 26-30, 2001.

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## Terms & Conditions of Membership – *we're serious!*

In a past issue of this newsletter, we ran a copy of the new "Terms & Conditions of Membership," as adopted by the Board of Directors.

It seems, from a few comments that have been brought to my attention, that some of our member companies believe

these terms & conditions are simply paying lip service to the issue, but will not be enforced.

Let me assure you, your Board of Directors is serious about the enforcement of these "Terms & Conditions of Membership." *(Continued on page 6)*

## Floor Installation Association of North America

Floor Installation Association of North America (FIANA) is a non-profit organization whose members are currently from throughout Canada and the United States.

Members must be manufacturers or distributors of floor installation products and/or flooring accessories.

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### Staff

Fran Penniston, Administrative Assistant

# Getting the Competitive Edge

By Michael R. Drinkard, Sales Manager, Crain Cutter Co.

*As an employee of one of the founding members of FIANA, I am very proud to have been elected to the board of this organization. The success of FIANA is apparent by its growing membership, as well as by the success of the trade show and convention.*

I have represented Crain Cutter Company for the last 20 years, mainly calling on distributors in the western part of the US and Canada. In that time, I have seen many striking changes. For example, the one-store "mom and pop" distributor is slowly becoming a thing of the past. Multiple branch operations are either buying smaller distributors, or small distributors are becoming multiple branch operations.

The economics of this makes sense, as greater buying power and customer convenience are required in order to keep our competitive edge. With this rapid growth in multiple branches, the obvious problem becomes qualified personnel to run each location. When mom and pop ran the store, their most important purpose was to sell the inventory on hand, because that inventory was their money.

Far too often, as I travel around the country, I see counter employees taking the path of least resistance. Order takers? Maybe, but certainly not with the knowledge mom and pop used to sell their products. I am constantly amazed when I hear an installer with 15 to 20 years of experience asking a new "counter man" of 2-3 weeks what product he should use for his upcoming job. The counter person's knowledge, or lack thereof, is taken as gospel by many of the floor installers. This can lead to problems, job failures, and, obviously, lost customers.

I believe FIANA can help. We have distributor members who take full advantage of FIANA by bringing all their branch managers to the FIANA convention and trade show. I've had many branch managers who attended tell me they learned more at the FIANA convention than any other show they've attended. With the knowledge gained through our seminars and by talking with the vendors at our show, they can help educate all employees. An educated counter person is apt to be more like "mom and pop" in their approach to sales.

On the other hand, we also have distributor members who only come with the ownership. I know some distributors don't think it is monetarily feasible to bring their entire crew, but I would ask them to think about this. By taking advantage of the numerous specials offered by vendors at the FIANA show, the net cost of attendance can be greatly reduced. In addition, new products shown to the counter person at the trade show can be sold with expertise upon returning to the branch. The counter person who does not attend the FIANA show will sometimes wait months before a representative can get to their branch to demonstrate new products. In the meantime, sales are lost and customer confidence is eroded.

Think about it. Can you afford NOT to bring your branch managers or counter person? The competitive edge we all strive for could be lost to the distributor who does bring his employees.

# 7th Annual Convention & Trade Show

St. Paul, Minnesota • September 26-30, 2001  
 Closed Show - You must be a member of FIANA to attend the convention and trade show

Please watch your mail for a convention registration packet coming soon!  
 Here is the current schedule of events for this year's convention. Programs and activities are still subject to change.

## Wednesday, September 26

12:00N - 4:00P Board of Directors Lunch and Meeting  
 12:00N - 5:00P Registration

## Thursday, September 27

8:00A - 5:00P Registration  
 8:00A - 12:00N Exhibitor Set-Up  
*Breakfast on your own*

8:30A - 10:30A Opening Session  
*Tune Up Your Life*  
 LaDonna Gatlin

10:30A - 12:00N Seminar #1  
*How to Build a Customer-Driven Company*  
 George Hadley

12:00N - 2:00P Luncheon  
*Success From the Inside Out*  
 Suzanne Ziglio, PhD

1:00P - 5:00P Exhibitor Set-Up

2:00P - 3:30P Seminar #2  
*Managing Your Business for Profit*  
 Robert Langdon, CPA

3:45P - 5:30P Distributors & Manufacturer Round Table  
 Discussion & Idea Exchange

6:30P - 8:00P Welcome Reception

*Evening Free* Dinner on Your Own



## Friday, September 28

*Breakfast On Your Own*  
 8:00A - 5:00P Registration  
 8:30A - 10:00A Seminar #3  
*Generation Why*  
 Eric Chester

10:00A - 10:30A Morning Break

10:30A - 12:00N Seminar #4  
*Internet-Interaction*  
 Bill Eager

12:00N - 2:00P Luncheon  
 Getting the Team Together  
 Johnny Miller, EdD, CSP

2:00P - 6:30P 7th Annual Trade Show Opens

*Evening Free* Dinner on Your Own



## Saturday, September 29

*Breakfast On Your Own*  
 8:00A - 12:00N Registration

8:00A - 12:00N 7th Annual Trade Show Continues

12:00N - 2:00P Luncheon  
*Women are From Venus and Men are Still Hunting Big Game*  
 Grady Jim Robinson

2:00P - 3:30P Tech Seminar "A"

3:30P - 4:00P Afternoon Break



Convention Schedule Continued on page 6

*If you have any questions about the upcoming convention, please call us toll-free at 1-888-883-4262. Or fax us at 817-326-4097.*

*Member Opinion***“Competing” with Home Depot**

By **Jim Keenan**, President  
Desoto Sales

There has not been a FIANA convention when I have not heard members discussing the problem of how to compete with Home Depot. It has also been a topic of discussion during our Round Table sessions. I would like to share my beliefs (right or wrong) on the topic.

I consider Home Depot to be a boil on our backsides that comes and goes with different intensities, depending on the attention we give it.

I have personally visited more than 15 Home Depot stores in Southern California and San Diego and, for the most part, they are all the same. They all have 2 9-foot pallet racks dedicated to carpet and vinyl and 2 9-foot racks dedicated to ceramic installation supplies. Both sections are shelved to approximately 6 feet high for display and the area above is for pallet storage, with most of the pallet storage area containing pallets not pertaining to our industry. The area devoted to installation supplies works out to be 216 sq. ft. of floor space with no depth to the inventory that is displayed.

When they first opened in our area, Home Depot created havoc with initial “predatory pricing,” but after a short time, the installers all came back to the professional suppliers voicing the same complaints about Home Depot.

Their complaints are:

- Great pricing on a few items, not all.
- They do not have everything we need and, what they had they didn’t have enough of.
- We had to search for our stuff, then stand in line “forever,” listening to their loudspeaker
- We couldn’t go alone because someone had to stay with the truck.
- The whole episode took 45 minutes to an hour (as opposed to the 10 minutes required at our store)
- What vending machine were we supposed to go to for information and advice?



I have heard members say, “I have to price myself based on Home Depot prices.” My question is *why*? Why give up our margin on an item such as tack strip? Home Depot sells 50-100 boxes a month, each at \$1 less than we generally would. As a distributor, we sell 500-1000 boxes. Should we lose \$500 - \$1000 dollars every month just so we can gain back part of their 50-100 boxes? By the way, I have never seen more than a pallet of strip in a Home Depot at any one time, and when they run out, it generally takes them 2-3 weeks to refill.

So how do we compete with Home Depot? It’s really very simple. Offer reasonable prices, great service, expert information and make the whole process pleasant, easy and fast for the installer.

Home Depot is driven by sales per sq. ft. of floor space and as long as they do not dedicate 3,000 to 4,000 sq. ft. to supplies, they will continue to be just a boil on our backsides that comes and goes.

*This is my second year as a FIANA board member with one more year to go. I am honored to put my two cents’ worth into the workings of the association, and pleased to be working with 11 other professional members. I can assure you that your association is in good hands.*

*By the way, Jim Lee, your President, and his assistant, Fran Penniston, do 99 percent of the work, and what a great job they are doing! I did not realize the scope of it all until I became a board member. When we meet in September, all of you should give Jim and Fran a hearty pat on the back for a job well done.*

*This article reflects my opinion. I’m sure some of you will agree and others will disagree, but the idea of FIANA is to share our views on the subjects that affect us all.*

# WHAT

*new products are out there, is happening with our members*

**Triple Flex™**, a multipurpose waterproofing membrane, crack isolation membrane and flexible bonding mortar from TEC Specialty Products, Inc., has been approved for use as a shower pan liner by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO).

Triple Flex is a cost-effective, timesaving alternative to other waterproofing products utilizing older, more expensive technology, or sheet membranes that are difficult to install. A multi-component system consisting of latex additive, cement powder and waterproofing membrane, it has a smooth, creamy texture that trowels on smoothly, making it easy to apply even in tight corners and around shower seats.

Applied directly to the substrate surface, Triple Flex is recommended under ceramic and stone tile in applications where complete waterproofing is required. It won't sag or slump over vertical or overhead applications, and there are no solvent odors. Triple Flex also dries quickly, ready for tile installation over most substrates in as little as four hours.

Triple Flex waterproofing membrane comes sized for the job. The pail kit size contains sufficient liquid, powder and mesh components to cover approximately 65 sq. ft., ideal for whirlpools, steam baths, showers, tub surrounds, countertops and other small to medium applications. The large size Triple Flex contains a greater quantity of the same components, suitable for waterproofing steam rooms, pools, kitchens, locker rooms, restaurants, shower rooms and other areas up to 160 sq. ft.

Triple Flex is a three-in-one product providing installers with a single solution to multiple installation problems. In addition to its waterproofing capabilities, it can be used as a crack isolation membrane, stopping horizontal breaks up to 1/8" wide at the subfloor before spreading through

to installed ceramic and stone tile. As a flexible bonding mortar, Triple Flex is excellent for residential to light commercial ceramic tile installations, especially over difficult substrates.

Installing ceramic and natural stone tile can now be done with less effort, faster speed and greater accuracy, thanks to **PolyGlide™**, a new, easy-spreading Type II wall and floor adhesive from TEC Specialty Products, Inc. The acrylic-based adhesive features a creamy light viscosity that spreads – not pulls – over surfaces, making it easy to trowel on smoothly without straining. It is ideal for bonding 6" X 6" or 8" X 10" tiles to walls, counters, shower areas, backsplashes and other interiors.

PolyGlide keeps its tack longer without locking up, so installers can apply and readjust tiles before the adhesive sets. When dry, PolyGlide creates a strong resilient bond, so tiles stay exactly where they are placed. There is no slipping and shifting. As an added benefit, PolyGlide has an extremely low odor, creating a more pleasant working environment for both installers and customers.

PolyGlide is perfect for installing ceramic, marble, agglomerate, granite and slate tiles on walls over concrete and cementitious surfaces, cementitious backer units, coated glass mat backer board,

gypsum wallboard, cured Portland cement plaster, masonry and existing ceramic tile. For countertops, PolyGlide is recommended for installing tile over cementitious backer units, plastic laminate, plywood and exist-



**PolyGlide Wall and Floor Adhesive**

# WHO

*is moving around, is being promoted, is being honored, is doing what*

The Floor Covering Installation Contractors Association (FCICA) recently announced its 2001-2002 Executive Board and Board of Directors.

The 2001-2002 Executive Board includes: Chairman, Phil Ashley, Bonitz Flooring Group, Greenville, S.C.; Vice Chairman, (Continued on page 6)

**WHO . . .***(Continued from page 5)*

**Phil Ashley, Chairman,  
Floor Covering  
Installation Contractors  
Association**

Dave Stafford, Commercial Carpets of America, Alexandria, Va.; Secretary-Treasurer, Richard Schilling, Gebert Floor Covering, Edina, Minn.; Immediate Past Chairman, David T. Meberg, Consolidated Carpet Trade Workroom, New York, N.Y.; Vice Chairman of Associates, and Tom Guilfoyle, CHAPCO Adhesives, Chicago, Ill. Continuing as Executive Vice President of FCICA is Kimberly E. Oderkirk, West Bloomfield, Mich. Officers are elected yearly by the Board of Directors and the Executive Vice President is hired by the association to manage the daily activities.

The FCICA Board of Directors serve a three year rotational term and are elected at FCICA's annual convention by members in good standing. New to the Board of Directors, serving until 2004 are Pete Austin, Lonseal, Inc., Carson, Calif.; Wally Giambastiani, W.F. Taylor, Dalton, Ga.; and Tim Todd, Specialty Carpet Workroom, Inc., Jefferson, La. Continuing their term

as Board of Directors are Jim Acton, Acton Flooring, Inc., Birmingham, Ala.; Virgil Berry, Certified Floorcovering Service Inc., Indianapolis, Ind.; Joseph Choflet, Michael Halebian, N.J. Inc., Carlstadt, N.J.; Bill Dietrich, Sherland & Farrington Inc., New York, N.Y.; Lori Dowling, StarNet Commercial Flooring, Ridgefield, Conn.; Tony Prince, Tony Price, Co., Inc., St. Louis, Mo.; Bruce Newborough, Ardex, Inc., Coraopolis, Pa.; Rip Sanders, Furniture Services, Inc., Columbia, S.C.; William Schleis, Schleis Floor Covering Inc., Green Bay, Wis.; Eddie Shultes, The Carpetman, Inc., Schenectady, N.Y.; C. Dave Sutton, Superior Carpet Shop, Washington, D.C.; and Bob Zajdel, Orcon Corp, Union City, Calif.

FCICA, headquartered in West Bloomfield, MI, is an international association organized to promote and protect the best interests of floor covering installation contractors, large and small.

**Terms and Conditions . . .** *(Continued from page 1)*

At a recent board meeting, the first reviews were made of some member companies who have been brought to the attention of the board as possibly being in violation. These are being investigated and, if the allegations are factual, the memberships of these

companies will be canceled.

FIANA was founded to foster a closer relationship between the manufacturer and the distributor. This can only be done if we work together with a common objective. Our future requires it.

**7th Annual Convention & Trade Show Agenda . . .** *(Continued from page 3)*

4:00P - 6:00P      **Tech Seminar "B"**  
*Using the New FIANA  
Interactive Web Page*  
Tom Jeffreys,  
FIANA Webmaster

6:30P - 7:30P      **Peer Interaction /  
Happy Hour**

7:30P - 11:00P      **Closing Session and Dinner**  
*Distribution Now and Then*  
Keith Campbell  
Chairman of the Board,  
Mannington Mills, Inc.  
Manufacturers of Carpet,  
Wood, Sheet Vinyl, Resilient  
Tile and Laminate Flooring

**Sunday, September 30**

8:30A - 10:00A      **Heading Home  
Breakfast Buffet**

*Have A Great Trip Home, and don't forget to  
plan on our 2002 Convention and Trade Show  
in San Antonio, Texas September 18-22, 2002*

# 7th Annual Trade Show

## Exhibitors as of June 22, 2001

Closed Show - You must be a member of FIANA to attend the convention and trade show

Advanced Adhesive Technologies  
 All American Wood Reg.  
 All Purpose Adhesive Co.  
 Alta Industries  
 AMCO Tools/Color Caulk  
 American Bultrite Ltd.  
 American Safety Razor  
 Ardex, Inc.  
 Astor Blade  
 Bengard Manufacturing, Ltd.  
 Bostik-Findley  
 Burkemercer  
 C-Cure Custom  
 C.F.I.  
 CST/Berger  
 Capitol USA, LLC  
 Cargo Gods, Inc.  
 Chembond, Ltd.  
 Chemrex  
 Chicago Adhesive Products  
 Crain Cutter Company  
 Dancik On Disk International  
 Dependable Chemical Co.  
 Dri-Tac Adhesive  
 Eclipse, Inc.  
 E-Z Cut  
 Filmtech, LLC  
 Flexco  
 Fluid Forms  
 Fortifiber Corp  
 Futura Industries  
 A.J. Gallagher Co.  
 G. E. Sealants & Adhesive  
 Genotek  
 Glitza American, Inc.  
 Beno J. Gundlach Co.  
 Halex Corp  
 Heritage Cutlery, Inc.

Installers Best Adhesives  
 Janser Manufacturing  
 Johnsonite  
 Laser Products Ind. Inc.  
 Loxcren Co, Inc.  
 Macklanberg-Duncan Co.  
 Mapei Corp  
 Marshalltown Trowel  
 Mercer Abrasives  
 N-C Carpet Binding  
 National Carpet Equipment  
 National Metal Shapes  
 No-Muv Corp, Inc.  
 Orcon Corp.  
 Para-Chem Southern, Inc.  
 Pathways International  
 Plywood & Door Manufacturing  
 Poly-Tak Protection Systems  
 R&J Leathercraft  
 Reliance Carpet Cushion  
 Roberts Consolidated  
 Roppe Corp  
 Seam Masters Industries  
 Sentinel Products  
 Shur-Fast Fasteners, Inc.  
 Silpro Corp  
 Sinclair Equipment Col.  
 Super Tek Installation Pro  
 Surface Shield, Inc.  
 Taylor Tools  
 W.F. Taylor Co. Inc.  
 TEC Specialty Products  
 Tennessee Adhesive Co.  
 Texas Cement Products  
 Titan Laboratories  
 Tramex Ltd.  
 United States Gypsum Co.  
 X-L Corp.





## FIANA NEWS

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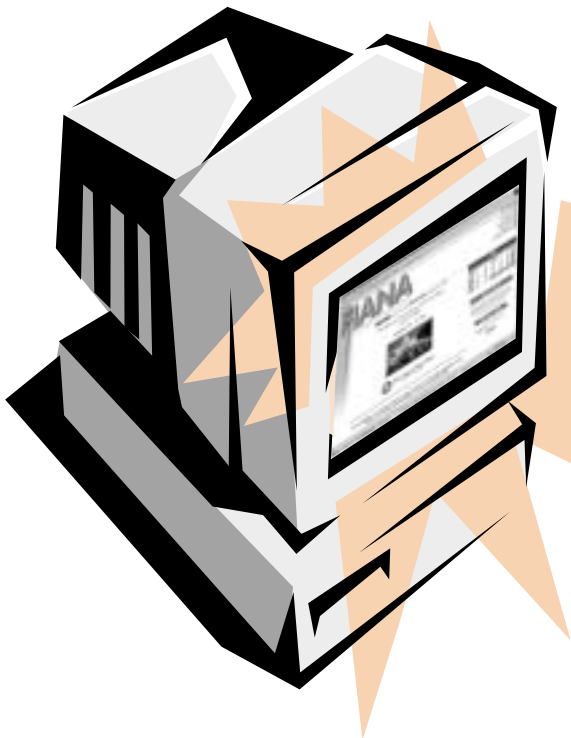
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## ***Catch the excitement:*** **Another benefit of FIANA membership**



As mentioned many times in the past, if you and your company are not already deeply immersed in the world of high-tech, cyberspace, gigabytes, etc., you will soon lose market share to your competitors – if you haven't already! Today's speed of analyzing information quickly is the name of the game.

In keeping with FIANA's desire to bring speakers, seminars, etc. to our members on this subject, we are pleased to present to you an in-depth presentation at our convention in St. Paul by our webmaster Tom Jeffery. He'll give you a look at the all-new FIANA website. This new website will be presented to you at the same time it goes online – September 29, 2001.

There will be many features that you will be able to utilize when you return home. Some of the features will be accessible only to FIANA members. For instance, a Question & Answer page where you can ask questions of other members and receive their replies, a page where you can post overstocks, etc. that you want to sell and will be accessible only to other FIANA distributor members. Don't miss this presentation showing you how to use the new FIANA website to your advantage. It's a member benefit just for you!