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Retailers still find profit from laminate sales

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NEW COLUMNIST



FCNews welcomes Morrow

Design expert Emily Kiker Morrow has joined the FCNews stable of respected columnists to author a monthly column, the first of which appears on page 24 of this issue.



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Area rugs: State of the industry



Oriental Weavers' Tommy Bahama collection, released last year, has been exceedingly popular with consumers.

FIRST HALF OF 2015 OFFERS POSITIVITY, UNCERTAINTY

By Jana Pollack

In the first half of 2015, the area rug market has experienced ups and downs. Most manufacturers reported gains in certain areas, whereas retailers seem to be having more difficulties with the category.

For suppliers, there was a tentatively successful start to the year. "The market does seem healthy and we've had some posi-

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Award of Excellence

Shaw captures trio of honors including Best Overall title

By Ken Ryan

GARDEN CITY, N.Y.—It was a banner evening for Shaw Industries, which was voted the industry's Best Overall Manufacturer in the 19th annual Award of Excellence competition. Best Overall was one of three awards for Shaw; it also earned Best Manufacturer in Carpet Group A as well as the Environmental Leadership award.

Shaw has now won Best Overall six times, capturing the award in four of the last five years. It has won for Environmental Leadership every year since the award's inception in 2010.

"On behalf of Shaw Industries and our 23,000 associates, it was an honor to be recognized as the Best Overall Manufacturer, the Environmental Leadership award winner, the large category carpet manufacturer, and the



small mill carpet manufacturer for our Tuftex division," said Randy Merritt, president of Shaw Industries. "All of us recognize this recognition comes from a vote of our customers, which makes it that much more special as they are the folks who we work hard to service each and every day. So thank you to all of those great customers who voted for Shaw Floors. And

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Industry pitches in to help fire-raved flooring store

By Ken Ryan

CONSHOHOCKEN, PA.—On May 17, the Philadelphia Floor Store's (PFS) entire inventory—encompassing more than 10,000 SKUs consisting almost entirely of hardwood flooring and sundry items—burned to the ground. In addition to the products, all operating equipment, including

trucks, machine repair instruments, computers, forklifts and Internet servers, were reduced to rubble and twisted metal. It was a catastrophic loss for the business.

Co-owner and founder Joe Glavin told FCNews he received the call from the fire department at 4:30 a.m., about an hour after the fire started, and immediately went to the site. "When I got there the crews still had their water cannons going but the roof was caved in. Soon after they brought a wrecker in."

Glavin said his initial reaction was "complete numbness and disbelief" that after 23 years of work "it was all gone. It was disheartening."

And yet it could have been

worse. No one was injured and the company's data was stored at an off-site retrieval center. Glavin had visited the site a

would rebuild," Glavin said.

As the PFS principals set up shop at a command center in a nearby suburb to contact customers, the flooring community and local businesses stepped in to help. A local storeowner with whom Glavin previously conducted business called to say he had 3,000 square feet of open warehouse space nearby in Aston, Pa.—complete with a loading dock, racks and room for inventory that he offered PFS until it got back on its feet.

In the aftermath of the fire, the flooring community offered its support, from direct ship programs and freight assistance to waiving broken pallet fees and extending

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Firefighters battle a three-alarm blaze that destroyed the Philadelphia Floor Store.

month earlier to make sure it functioned properly.

As for the future of the business, "it was unanimous that we

IN THE NEWS

Aquafil celebrates 16 years with second U.S. facility

Haines increases capacity with new Florida location

GLEN BURNIE, MD.—Haines will relocate to a new flooring warehouse in Orlando by the end of this year. The site is less than half a mile away from the current Haines facility and approximately 50% larger. The new location will also house a Supplies Center for customers.

"The additional space will give us the ability to better serve our customers and



grow in the Florida market," said Bruce Zwicker, president and CEO,

Haines. "The brand-new Haines Supplies Center showroom will be located inside the new larger warehouse, which will have a better layout and much more inventory capacity."

Armstrong to invest \$11M in plant

BEVERLY, W.VA.—Armstrong World Industries, one of the largest employers in Randolph County, W.Va., is investing \$11 million at the 75-acre facility for solid hardwood flooring here.

The move was first reported by *Inter-Mountain*, the local newspaper. Work at the site will be done in two phases, according to Steve Bullock, plant manager. The first



phase will consist of the installation of

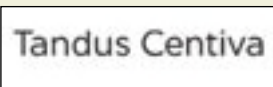
drying technology and rewiring machinery, while the second phase will seek to modernize the facility.

By investing in new vacuum drying kilns and infrastructure upgrades, Armstrong will be able to expedite the production process. Bullock said it currently takes 40 days from the time the plant receives a wood shipment to when product is put into boxes for the customer. The upgrades will reduce the process to four days. "Forty days through the process to four is a huge difference."

The plant currently employs more than 650 workers; local officials said the improvements could create additional jobs.

CARE names Tandus Centiva 2014 Recycler of the Year

DALTON—Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE), the primary non-profit organization charged with advancing market-based solutions for carpet recycling and landfill diversion, has named Tandus Centiva its 2014 Recycler of the Year. The honor was awarded during the organization's 13th annual conference held in New Orleans on May 13 and 14.



Tandus Centiva employs ReStart, the industry's first closed-loop recycling program, through its environmental center here. ReStart is designed to reclaim and recycle post consumer flooring, installation waste, product samples and portfolios. The company has reclaimed and recycled more than 284 million pounds of floor covering and waste to date.

By Nadia Ramlakhan

CARTERSVILLE, GA.—In conjunction with the company's 16-year anniversary, Aquafil USA celebrated the opening of its second U.S. manufacturing facility May 29 here. The inauguration comes on the heels of a recent expansion of the company's first manufacturing facility and U.S. headquarters (located here as well) following a 35% increase in capacity over the last year.

"We have been growing every year for 16 years," said Franco Rossi, president. "At one point you run out of space. Our business model has always been to deliver to our customers a ready-for-tufting product, and our goal is to complement what we were doing in the first facility; it's a way to confirm our business model and our customers' needs."

Joint locations in Cartersville is vital to the company's success, Rossi said. "A large majority of our customers are local in the



From left: Brian Kemp, Georgia secretary of state; Giulio Bonazzi, Aquafil chairman and CEO; Claudio Bisogniero, Italian ambassador to the United States, and Franco Rossi, president of Aquafil USA, at the new plant.

sense that they are driving distance from where we are located. The level of customer service required is such that it would be impossible to deliver without having a local facility. It is extremely important for our success and for the sat-

isfaction of our customers."

The company, known best for its sustainable carpet fiber production and nylon 6 reclamation programs, invested 12 months into the opening of the new plant, during which the building was renovated inside and out to expand into a total of over 300,000 square feet. The site allows for the separation of the fiber extrusion site from the fiber processing facility, both of which are essential to the production of Aquafil's Econyl carpet fibers.

Econyl carpet fibers are made from regenerated nylon 6 and are manufactured using reclaimed nylon waste materials from around the world, including post-industrial and post-consumer carpet as well as abandoned fishing nets, helping to divert them from landfills. Aquafil products can also be returned at the end of their life cycles to be upcycled into new, high quality fibers.

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Carpetland USA teams with industry leaders for installation event

DAVENPORT, IOWA—The Carpetland USA store located here hosted a CFI-Congoleum Installation Training Event earlier this month. The two-day, hands-on class was sponsored by the flooring distributor All Tile and the World Floor Covering Association (WFCA).

Joe Cea, installation specialist for Congoleum and CFI senior certifier, along with members of the CFI team, Tony Buckhardt and Jay Zurn, demonstrated LVT installation requirements including product knowledge, substrate preparation and the importance of professionalism and customer satisfaction.

All Tile, a top-five, full-line flooring distributor, supplied numerous items for the sessions. "At All Tile, we understand how important installers are to the existing and future business in floor covering," said Mike Griffin, account representative. "With all of the new installation technologies that are flooding our markets daily, we need to do what we can to assure that the skilled labor force is educated and masters of their craft. I hope that this event leads to other CFI certification seminars in All Tile's entire 14-state footprint. It's a win-win situation for all involved."

Tom Jennings, vice president of WFCA,

spoke to installers about customer service and the vital role it plays for the dealer in securing return business. "You have to be more than a flooring installer; you must know how to present yourself and your services and pay attention to detail. Good man-



Tom Jennings, vice president, WFCA, addresses installers at the training event about the importance of professionalism and a good attitude.

ners and things like calling ahead to let the customer know what time you will arrive makes your day and [her's] more enjoyable."

Doug Bertrand, executive vice president of Carpetland USA and the Langan Group, coordinated the event with CFI in which 16 installers attended from six of the store's locations. "CFI and the installers

who represent our stores were all extremely professional," Bertrand said. "I was proud that the installers worked so hard and completed all tasks that were required to successfully earn their CFI certifications. The comments I received showed it was well worth the investment, and I look forward to scheduling another product category event in the future."

Bertrand said installers who attended the class left engaged and feeling part of something special. "Working together and being held to the CFI standards was a big plus. We also took the time to have all of our sales associates there for additional training. Carpetland is a stronger company today because we have raised the bar for our installation crew. We will be set with existing crews along with several opportunities to grow crews in the future. We express our thanks to CFI and Congoleum for making this possible along with Tom Jennings and WFCA for their participation, guidance and support. Tom Jennings was a big hit with installers and our sales associates—he simply made our team better."

Bertrand said Jason Neubauer, national sales manager of the Moreland Company, donated the lumber used; Congoleum provided the flooring materials.

SNAPSHOT

Kronotex USA holds charity golf event in memory of employee

BARNWELL, S.C.—Kronotex USA, a leading U.S. laminate manufacturer, dedicated its employee golf tournament to honor a recently deceased member of its team. The Dean Scarbeary Memorial Golf Tournament for Charity is scheduled for June 27 and has already raised more than \$7,500.

Scarbeary was the receiving lead at Kronotex USA's laminate flooring plant here and was one of the organizers of the annual tournament. He worked at the facility for nine years.

The funds raised at this year's golf tournament will be donated to the Barnwell County First Responders who tried to save Scarbeary during the house fire that claimed his life.

Pictured here, from left, are Bobby Moore, Snelling, S.C., fire chief; Timbo Williams, Barnwell County fire coordinator; Brittany Lott, purchasing agent, Kronotex; Bobby Sauls, KT press operator, Kronotex; and Jeff Martin, human resources manager, Kronotex.

