

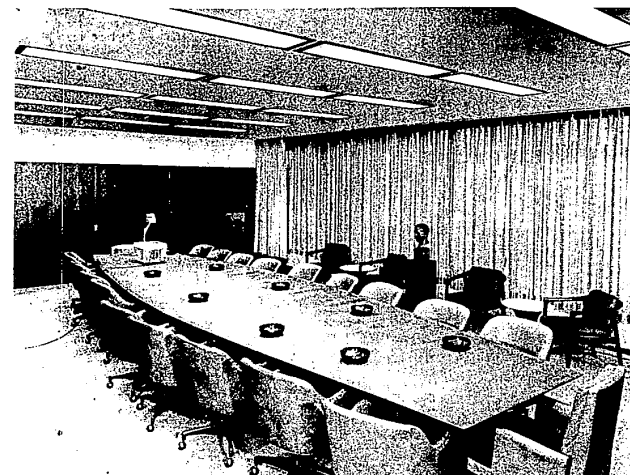


Exhibit A—The traditional board room where Bendix Board of Directors met over ashtrays and coffee cups before President William Age decided that a board room table was a barrier to frank and open discussions.

Exhibit B—The new board room, where Age hopes directors can work without barriers between them. Age sits midway down the right hand row at meetings. Smokers sit on the two chairs at the end beside the ashtray.

What price glory in battle of boardroom?

By IRIS SANDERSON JONES

The Battle of the Boardroom Table rages on, in the Wall Street Journal, in the Chicago Sun-Times, in Bloomfield Hills Lahser High School, but especially in the headquarters offices of the Bendix Corp. in Southfield.

At the eye of the storm, calmly moving and rearranging furniture, is William M. Agee, the 40-year-old chairman, president and chief executive officer of the company, who decided one day to remove the conference table from the board room.

The question is whether to have or not to have a board room table, whether it's nobler in the minds of men to have a piece of mahogany to lean on or whether you should put your coffee cup on the floor.

The second question is whether a board of directors meeting is more intimate when people lean over a table than it is when they stare at one another across a large oriental rug.

The battle began in the Wall Street Journal March 7 when Agee was quoted as saying that a board room table is a barrier to open and frank discussions and that it exists only because of tradition.

THE ARTICLE ALSO quoted startled members of the board of directors who admitted things like "I had to find where to put my elbows," and "The next time they redo the room the table will go back in."

The Herman Miller Corp., which makes office systems, decided in the final paragraph that the table was a

crutch, a big open space is a problem and "eye-to-eye, feet-to-feet contact is somewhat graceless."

Which brought an angry response from New York City, which you will hear after a brief pause.

Meanwhile, back in Southfield, where the board room is repurposed around a huge oriental rug and a facing line of green-cushioned chairs, word came in that the Chicago Sun-Times had taken up the battle by bringing in a psychiatrist to ponder the question.

President William Agee, who lives in Bloomfield Hills, got his first whiff of the battle when he attended what he calls a "daddy-daughter dinner" at Lahser High School the day after the Wall Street Journal fired the first shot.

Somebody stuck their head into the dining room and said with a sigh, "I was afraid that somebody would have moved the dining table out by now."

According to Mr. Agee, who has remained calm, there is history for all this.

"My office at Bendix, and before that at Boise Cascade, has always had a small desk against the wall rather than in the middle of the room," he said. "If I talk to anybody, I don't want a desk between us."

"THE FEWER the objects between two people the better. The more serious or intimate you want to be, or the more you want to make a point, the closer you want to get. That's true of all people. Listen to this letter from a lady in New York City.

The letter was a copy of one sent to Herman Miller, which started a little battle of its own by talking about the gracelessness of face-to-face contact.

"To quote the lady verbatim:

"In reference to your statement quoted in the March 7, 1978 Wall Street Journal article, in which you stated that personal contact is graceless and, 'Your arms become a helluva nuisance,' my personal observation is that if a person is so insecure that he can't bear his own body or handle it 'gracefully,' he is probably not sophisticated enough to be on the board of directors of a major corporation and making major business decisions.

"Statements such as yours, though I understand your vested interest in big

board room tables, serve only to promote mediocrity in all levels of society."

When taken to a less executive, more man-on-the-street level, the Battle of the Board Room Table takes on an entirely different tone.

When asked which of the board rooms in the accompanying pictures were more intimate, laymen inevitably chose the one with the table in it. The informal oriental-rug room was summed up by one historically inclined young man like this: "It looks like the court of Louis the Fifteenth."

To have or not to have a board room table. That is the question. The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune are unleashed, but nobody but Mr. Agee knows the answer.

Builder puts up area's first solar-heated home

By JACKIE KLEIN

An Oakland County-based builder will construct the first Detroit-area solar heated home.

Fred E. Greenspan, a board member of Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan (BASM) and a third-generation builder, will construct the house this year in a new subdivision, Northville Colony Estates, south of Six Mile near Brainerd. Greenspan maintains offices in Southfield.

A specially-built scale model of the conventional two-story home, a vehicle for a long-term program of solar research keyed to southern Michigan weather and individual housing tastes, will be on display through March 26 in Cobo Hall. It was built by Edison Co.

working with Greenspan.

The house will be identified as the Jubilee Solar Home to celebrate Edison's 75th birthday in 1978. It will also be the show house for the 30th anniversary of Greenspan Building Co.

Individual solar homes have been built experimentally in other parts of the country, according to John R. Hamann, Detroit Edison president.

"HOMES in other parts of the country," Hamann said, "have been designed with solar possibilities, often with bizarre results in appearance. The Greenspan home will have solar energy designed into the typical well-built suburban dwelling of 1978."

Ground will be broken for the house in April. When it is completed, prob-

ably about the end of this year, it will be viewed by the public for a year under constant monitoring by Edison experts, Hamann said.

The house will then be sold with the provision that the buyer will cooperate in monitoring and recording results for two years after that.

The Greenspan home will be a traditional Dutch colonial with a sloped roof. Solar panels will be on the rear of the roof, not visible from the front. The house will be heated and cooled by a pump, an electric-powered device which takes heat from where it's not wanted and delivers it to where it's needed.

In summer, a heat pump takes indoor air and deposits it outdoors. In

winter, the pump extracts some heat from outdoor air and delivers it indoors. When solar collectors can't supply enough heat, the heat pump will be used as a back-up system.

"EDISON EXPERTS have been involved in other investigations related to solar energy for two years," Hamann said. "They're designing a system of solar collectors, heat storage and instruments that will be compatible with the fine homes nearby and with traditional ideas of how a home should look. It will represent the first industry-wide effort of its kind in the Midwest."

Greenspan is following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather who were both builders. Since 1952,

Greenspan has been associated with Joseph L. Stutz, CPA.

"We are pleased to join with BASM and Fred Greenspan Development Corp. in this major undertaking," Hamann said.

The opportunity to test and monitor the application of solar energy in actual home construction and under normal family living conditions will be most valuable in understanding potential energy sources."

Detroit Edison, Hamann said, recognizes that the sun's energy is clean, free and abundant. It's expected to provide heat and light for millions of years. The sun's energy potential is virtually unlimited, he said.

"FOR ALL its attributes, solar energy is also intermittent, diffuse and

must be collected," Hamann said. "Detroit Edison has established a comprehensive program to determine if solar energy technology can be integrated successfully and economically into a major power system such as ours. It could be a partial answer to our problems of energy and the environment."

Greenspan's home will make an important contribution to Edison's expanding solar research program, Hamann said. Cost, reliability and feasibility studies of solar space heating, solar energy storage techniques and the solar-assisted heat pump will be coordinated by scientists in Edison's recently completed solar research center.



DAVID WILBER

Even accountants have social consciences

By IRIS SANDERSON JONES

Southfield accountant David Wilber is one of several professional volunteers from throughout the metropolitan area who are giving income tax services to low-income Detroiters through special inner city offices.

The offices are established and maintained by the Accounting Aid Society, a non-profit organization which offers accounting and other business-related services to non-profit organizations, to small business and others who would not otherwise be able to afford those services. The service is also open to eligible low-income individuals.

Wilber works regularly at one of the six inner city tax program sites established by the society for the second year in Detroit.

Clients range from those who earn

less than \$7000 a year with a single dependent deduction to those earning more than \$12,000 a year with six or seven dependents, but Wilber says most of his clients earn only a few thousand a year.

Wilber is a graduate of Western Michigan University and is presently employed as a junior accountant at Snyder Company of Detroit.

He works at his regular job until noon on Saturday and then spends the rest of the day, without lunch or dinner breaks, filling out other people's income tax forms.

"Most of the people who work at the tax sites are students. Every form is reviewed by a professional before it is signed and submitted, but I feel a very strong sense of responsibility for these returns because the money means so much to the client," Wilber says.

"Most of them don't owe any tax, but their employers have withheld tax and they must file before they can get it back. I look for every tax credit or other means I can find to save them even a few dollars. Most go away with anywhere from \$200 to \$1000 in rebates due from the Internal Revenue Service."

OTHER VOLUNTEERS working in the program include William Redmond and David Dutton from Westland, Bob McKenna of Farmington Hills, and David Walodok of Livonia, as well as many from other parts of the metropolitan Detroit area.

"It is very satisfying to use the skills I was trained for, and to use them in such a worthwhile way," Wilber says. "This isn't just a question of filling out a form. We get involved in their

lives and their problems, so that it becomes very important to each of us to save them money."

"To give you an idea of what I mean, I haven't met one client who had any interest income to declare, which means they don't have any savings at all."

"I have not filled out a single long form so far, because they don't have any income-related deductions like stock or capital gains."

The Accounting Aid Society provides this service as part of its ongoing goal of offering business-related services to people who need them. Most of their work is done with non-profit organizations who need accounting, legal or management services, or with small and minority-owned businesses.

Wilber considers his original instructions from the society to be the

essence of the income tax problem for the poor.

"The society told us that most of these people would have money coming back from the IRS but that they wouldn't get it because they wouldn't file the forms," Wilber said.

"The reason they don't file is that the whole thing seems complicated and they don't understand how to do it. It's a great feeling to offer skills that are 'everyday' skills and find them so useful."

The tax sites are open on Saturdays in various parts of the downtown Detroit area. For information contact the Accounting Aid Society at 232 W. Grand River or call 961-1840.

Other services of the society are available throughout metropolitan Detroit and in other parts of Michigan, usually to non-profit organizations or to small business firms.

Income tax turns 65, but it has no retirement plans

Looking for an excuse for a celebration? How about this: the federal income tax is celebrating its 65th birthday.

Unfortunately, wouldn't it be nice if they restored the 1913 rate; a flat one per cent on taxable incomes up to \$20,000.

Above \$20,000 there was something called a "super tax," which rose to a

whopping six per cent on incomes above \$500,000.

The Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants, based in Southfield, which provided this historic lore, also supplied the following nuggets:

• There had been income taxes before 1913. President Lincoln for example, paid \$1,297 tax in 1863 on his

\$25,000 salary plus \$1,183 outside income.

• The tax was revived in 1894, but was challenged successfully on constitutional grounds. —"The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes on income"—to clear the way for the tax law that took effect March 1, 1913.

• That law called for withholding at

the source of income from investments but not on salary or wages, the reverse of the system today.

• Only about one person in 270 had to pay income taxes in 1913. A third of the taxes collected that first year came from persons in one state—New York.

• For the first 30 years of the income tax law, taxes on ordinary

earned income were paid when the return was filed. As the government became involved in World War II, millions of middle and low income earners were affected for the first time and many had set nothing aside to meet their new tax obligations.

• Most of today's deductions applied even then, but not medical expenses or charitable contributions; those came later.

• In response to their cries of pain when they discovered what they owed, Congress instituted the withholding tax on salaries and wages and to prevent double tax bills at the start of the pay-as-you-go plan it forgave most of everyone's 1942 income tax bill.

• One final bit of nostalgia from the Michigan CPA Association: instructions for filling out the 1913 Form 1040 took up just one page.