

# Construction expo at Silverdome

Buyers of equipment, materials and supplies have the opportunity to keep current on changing technology in the building industry during an exposition Feb. 12-13 sponsored by the Construction Association of Michigan.

"Expo '92, CAM's eighth annual show, will take place 1-9 p.m. Wednesday and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday at the Pontiac Silverdome. "It's attended by anyone who will buy equipment or products that are necessary for construction — owners, developers, architects, engi-

neers, contractors, suppliers and individuals looking for specific types of tools and equipment," said Brenda Zimmerman, spokeswoman for the association.

Tickets for the exposition can be obtained free in advance through CAM (567-5500). Tickets at the door will cost \$10.

Upwards of 12,000 are expected to attend.

Several seminars also will be available at an additional charge of \$35 for CAM members, \$45 for non-members. Topics include tax strate-

gies, contracts, quality control, surviving current economic times and lien laws. Again, specific details are available through CAM.

"With the economy so uncertain, people are looking for discounts and bargains on equipment and materials that are essential to their business," said Jim McLaughlin, director of exhibitions for CAM.

"Generally speaking, exhibitors offer reduced pricing during trade shows in order to close more deals in less time. For attendees, that translates into dollar savings," he added.

Ten projects voted by CAM members as outstanding examples of quality design and construction craftsmanship also will be displayed during Expo '92.

A.J. Etkin Construction of Farmington Hills, R.E. Dailey & Co. of Southfield, Payne-Hickey of Livonia, TWP Associates of Bloomfield Hills, Coquillard/Dundon/Peterson & Argenta of Southfield, and Hubbell, Roth & Clark of Bloomfield Hills were involved in some of those projects.

## New products, ideas gleaned at show

By Doug Funke  
staff writer

Serious convention-goers do more than socialize and party.

Just ask area builders and developers who recently attended the annual gathering of the National Association of Home Builders in Las Vegas.

Seminars on issues affecting the industry and exhibits of product lines were the big attractions.

A big part of my time is land development," said Gary Shapiro, president of Ivanhoe Building Co. in West Bloomfield. "I met with national planners to talk about environmental issues — wetlands, woodlands."

"It was interesting looking at case studies on a national basis. It's very

important for me now and in the future," Shapiro said. "The key to more affordable housing is higher density. To do that with environmental constraints is more difficult."

Paul Levine, president of the Irvine Group of Farmington Hills, said he was especially struck by a new soft bathtub on the market.

"Most tubs today are cast iron or steel," he said. "The new product isn't rubber, but it has environmental properties and comes back again."

"It keeps water hot a lot longer and it's safer if a child were to fall in," Levine said. "It installs the same as a regular tub and it's the same price as a fiberglass whirlpool."

SEVERAL THINGS caught the at-

tention of John Bollen Jr., vice president of a Troy building company.

"A lot of home automation was very strong this year — sound systems, intercom systems, heating and cooling systems," he said. "Some companies were even showing systems to control draperies."

"Another thing becoming important is closet systems. Some systems didn't even allow you to slide your clothes all the way across a hanger bar. Now there are some neat systems with hanger bars back. You can pretty well design a closet any way you want now."

Arthur Gerish, president of a Plymouth building company, said he was more interested in product, figuring that he could get tapes of the seminars.

"It seems like I always find new products out there that certainly will be serving the industry if not today, (then) tomorrow or the near future," he said.

"A LOT OF times, I'll see these exhibits and they might be a couple of years ahead of themselves. Manufacturers sometimes put out prototypes that aren't even in production yet."

Gerish said he was drawn to archi-

tectural features of some Pella windows and the attractiveness of Kohler plumbing fixtures.

Two seminars he did attend — designing houses at the more affordable end and builders saving for their own retirement — proved instructive, Gerish added.

Carol Lee, president of Five Star Construction of Livonia, said conventioners seemed to mix more this year in Vegas, probably do to the gambling element, than at last year's show in Atlanta.

"I talked to people from all over the country," she said. "People talked about things being down, but nobody made it seem as bad as everyone is saying," she said.

"The products, even though nothing sticks in my mind, it's good to see new things," Lee said. "Just so you know what's in the market."

Shapiro summarized, "It (convention) makes you focus on things you're doing. You pick up an idea here, an idea there."

## Architecture suffers as business, as art

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"I see two forces pulling on the industry today — one being the financial drain and the savings and loan crisis, and the other the undying cry for quality."

"Design is becoming much more important now that there's less work, and architects have time to really apply their craft."

AS A WAY OF a personal challenge during his term in office, Ziegelman said he would encourage colleagues to view the profession from the eyes of Europeans, who see architecture as one of art and event.

"So many people who travel to Europe are drawn not only by the designs of the past, but the present as well. The expansion of the Louvre (in Paris) is a classic example of that."

Still, Ziegelman, who has spent more than two decades within the profession, and at one time appren-

ticed under Minoru Yamasaki and Eero Saarinen, said in the last few years, American architecture has started to draw from European strengths, where office concrete and glass are being replaced with marble, bronze-finished lobbies and carefully thought-out connections.

And he ruled against architects, as much as possible, basing designs on compromise and barter.

"Architecture in America today is a struggle that mirrors a client's double-edged role as a supporter of the arts and the financier of a cost-effective setting for their endeavors. My only wish is that we would embrace more of the former."

As for when the buildings might again rise with profitable regularity, and in turn renew growth within the architectural industry, Ziegelman projected a conservative estimate of between three and five years.

"It's really tough to say because you don't know when the buildings left from the savings and loan crisis will be absorbed."

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