

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **SEATTLE GIFT CENTER CELEBRATES 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

**Gala event for buyers at the August Gift & Home Accessories Show**

**SEATTLE** – The Seattle Gift Center announces a celebration to mark the wholesale mart's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of helping buyers to keep up with the trends affecting their consumers. The celebration will be held on Saturday, August 19, 2006 at The Gift Center located in Seattle's Design District. Buyers from throughout the United States attending Seattle Market Week and The Gift Center's August Gift & Home Accessories Show, as well as manufacturers, tenants and sales reps, have been invited to celebrate the anniversary with food, beverages and entertainment.

The party, to be held at The Gift Center in a tented pavilion from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., will provide a respite from busy buying days at The Gift Center and the Seattle Gift Show. Party-goers will be treated to several of the Pacific Northwest's favorite foods and beverages, including local wines and microbrews, an Italian buffet from Ristorante Machiavelli, coconut cream pies by renowned chef Tom Douglas, and a martini dubbed the "Pacific Marketini" and created especially for the event.

Guests can sample the various foods and beverages while enjoying a live Zydeco performance, future projections from a tarot card reader, and the music of one of Seattle's favorite dance bands, Shelly & The Curves. The Gift Center will also provide several giveaways, including a six-day trip to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

A portion of proceeds from the party will be donated to Gift for Life, an organization founded in 1992 by a group of industry professionals in response to the loss of friends and colleagues to AIDS. Gift for Life works in cooperation with The Foundation of AIDS Research (amfAR) to find a cure for AIDS. Tickets for the party are \$10 and are available for purchase at [www.seattlegiftcenter.com](http://www.seattlegiftcenter.com).

The anniversary celebration will also recognize the official launch of "Seattle Market Week," a first-time collaboration of The Seattle Gift Center and the Seattle Gift Show which will be held August 19 to 22 at the Washington State Convention Center. The August Gift & Home Accessories Show will take place from Wednesday, August 16 to Tuesday, August 22, 2006 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at The Gift Center.

"The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary World Party provides the perfect opportunity to honor our buyers and friends and share what's new as we launch a new brand," said Lisa Goodman, marketing director, The Gift Center. "The anniversary also marks the beginning of a new era for us as the sophisticated marketplace for thousands of discriminating buyers who look here first for everything innovative, fresh and unique."

For at least 24 of the tenants, the anniversary has added meaning – they have leased space at The Gift Center for all 30 years of its existence. Doug Pittmon was one of the first tenants and his showroom was the first to open. Pittmon recalls the early days of The Gift Center and still remembers when it was called "the 6100 building" and consisted of only two floors. Pittmon's company, Creative

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Concepts, evolved into a family business when much to Pittmon's delight, both of his daughters, Shannon Kendig and Meegan Etheridge, expressed an interest in working in the business. The sisters now oversee the operation which includes running the showroom at The Gift Center.

"When we opened our showroom, The Gift Center was one of only four or five permanent marts in the United States and our first show opened with 20 showrooms," said Pittmon. "It was a great surprise when my daughters wanted to work in the family business at The Gift Center and have kept the business alive. It's wonderful when you have the opportunity to go to work with people you like."

Western Exhibitors, Production Transport and Group Travel have partnered with The Gift Center to host the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. Event sponsors include: Pacific Rim; Demdaco; ISA; Campbell Associates; Meyer Corporation; Kolibaba; Vera Bradley; Midwest; CR Gibson; Raftery & Associates; Ritz Sisters; Jenny Hammons; Firejewel; Bunches; Sengware; Dover Metals; Rob Brown; Vitamix and; OneCoast.

For more information about the Gift Center, visit [www.seattlegiftcenter.com](http://www.seattlegiftcenter.com).

### **About The Seattle Gift Center**

The industry destination for buyers in the Western United States, Canada and beyond, The Seattle Gift Center offers 100 permanent showrooms on five floors featuring thousands of product lines for a wide selection of merchandise to help buyers keep up with every trend affecting their consumers. The Gift Center draws thousands of buyers from more than 30 channels of distribution including high-end department stores, corporate, specialty retailers, home furnishings, kitchenware, events, gourmet food, hospitality, garden/outdoor living, salons & spas, wineries, Internet, and regional chain outlets. Located in Georgetown, Seattle's Design District, The Seattle Gift Center is open to the trade only. For more information, visit [www.seattlegiftcenter.com](http://www.seattlegiftcenter.com). The Seattle Gift Center is owned and managed by the Benaroya Company.

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