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THE SEATTLE GIFT CENTER ANNOUNCES SPEAKER LINE-UP FOR AUGUST GIFT & HOME ACCESSORIES SHOW

Seminars include nationally-recognized speakers to address current trends and tips to improve business

SEATTLE – The Seattle Gift Center announces a diverse, compelling and informative speaker line-up for the August Gift & Home Accessories Show, the Pacific Northwest's premier week-long buying event. Speakers will conduct seminars that will allow buyers to take advantage of the expertise and professional insights presented at these practical sessions to sharpen competitive skills, improve retail strategies and learn how to better serve customers.

Speakers include:

- **Jim Sinegal**, President & CEO, Costco
- **Leatrice Eiseman**, Executive Director of Pantone Color Institute
- **Lynni Megginson**, Retailer and author
- **Louis Richmond**, Chairman & Founder, Richmond Public Relations
- **Harry Thomas**, Generational marketing expert
- **Becky Boswell Smith**, Editor in chief, *Home Accents Today* and *Casual Living*
- **Kathy Casey**, Celebrity chef and entrepreneur

All seminars are free and begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. and end at 9:30 a.m. With seating for 150, the seminars fill up quickly and advance registration is required.

"We are proud to offer such an impressive line-up of speakers for this year's Show," said Lisa Goodman, director of Marketing at The Seattle Gift Center. "The speakers will offer a broad array of expertise and each seminar will provide practical advice and knowledge that will be both relevant and beneficial to the buyers."

The Show's featured guest speaker is Costco President and CEO Jim Sinegal. Sinegal's seminar, "Costco: 23 Years Later," will be held Wednesday, August 16. Named one of the world's most influential people, the dynamic founder of Costco will share how Costco has consistently maintained its reputation for superior service and outstanding business ethics. Sinegal will also share how buyers can achieve the same standards of excellence, regardless of the size of their business. With more than 40 years of merchandising and operations experience in retail mass merchandising, attendees will not want to miss Sinegal's presentation.

Leatrice Eiseman, an international color guru and executive director of Pantone Color Institute, will lead Thursday's seminar, "Color Trends for 2007." Eiseman has authored five books on color and has been named one of the top 50 style makers by *Home Furnishings*. Eiseman has helped many companies make the best choices for buying, branding and merchandising and her seminar will highlight the color trends that impact consumer buying. Eiseman's seminar is co-sponsored by Bettencourt & Domestique.

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Lynni Megginson, retailer and author, will lead Friday's seminar offering attendees expert advice on hosting successful events, setting businesses apart from competitors and making stores an "in place" to shop. Megginson's talk, "Conducting Successful Events in Your Store," will advise attendees how to create events that grab attention, attract new customers, and establish a store as the "in" place to shop. Megginson's seminar is co-sponsored by OneCoast.

Saturday's seminar, "Creating Buzz for Your Business," will feature Louis Richmond, chairman and founder of Seattle's Richmond Public Relations. Richmond's eclectic background, wit, creativity, and entrepreneurial skill combine to create an unusual, unorthodox, and highly successful approach to the field of public relations. Voted The Best Public Relations Person "hands down" in the *Seattle Weekly*, Richmond was also dubbed "promoter extraordinaire" in *Pacific Magazine* which included Richmond in a poll of "100 People of Influence" in Washington State.

Harry Thomas, a young baby boomer who has marketed to every generation from young children to seniors, will lead Sunday's seminar, "The Generation Gap – Marketing Across Generational Lines." Thomas' seminar will help buyers to bridge the gap by learning to adjust communications for different generational audiences. His talk will provide insight into gaining the tools needed to help define the different generations in various customer bases and learn how to reach them, especially the younger, digital consumer.

Monday's seminar features speaker Becky Boswell Smith, editor in chief of *Home Accents Today* and *Casual Living*. A highly regarded expert in the furniture and home accessories industry, Smith has been widely published in consumer magazines and will lead a seminar titled "Who's Shopping Now." Smith will advise buyers how to find out what is needed to make a business appealing to the target customer base and stay one step ahead of the curve.

Celebrity chef and entrepreneur Kathy Casey will lead Tuesday's entertaining seminar, "Make Your Gourmet Product and Houseware Sales Shine." Casey will use her humorous style and philosophy to demonstrate how to make food sales shine. She will offer tips for planning retail events that come alive with gourmet tastings, cross promotions, and demonstrations of housewares and gadgets. Casey's seminar is co-sponsored by Murdock & White.

This year also marks the 30th Anniversary of The Seattle Gift Center and we will be celebrating with a party on Saturday, August 19 at The Seattle Gift Center.

The Seattle Gift Center offers buyers a premier collection of 100 permanent showrooms set in a boutique environment and located in Seattle's Design District in Georgetown. The market of choice for buyers in the Pacific Northwest and beyond, 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.

The August Gift & Home Accessories Show will take place from August 16 to August 22, 2006 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day at The Seattle Gift Center. For complete seminar information and to register, please visit www.seattlegiftcenter.com or call (800) 433-1014.

About The Seattle Gift Center

As the only Class A regional wholesale mart in the United States, The Seattle Gift Center offers 100 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. Located in Seattle's Design District in Georgetown, The Seattle Gift Center is open to the trade only. For more information, visit www.seattlegiftcenter.com. The Seattle Gift Center is owned and managed by The Benaroya Company.

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