



President's Message

Winter is Coming

By WIA President Mike DiGilio, C.P.

Winter is coming. Despite where you might have heard that before, here in Chicago, winter is coming even faster with a few inches of snow on Halloween. As the year closes and we reflect over it, are you doing everything in your business to prepare for next year?

Every wallcovering installer with whom I talk is busy, very busy. Many are booked for months in advance. Business is good. Installers say so and manufacturers say so, too. It's a good time to be a paperhanger. But what of the future? Installers are aging out of the workforce. Where will the paperhangers of the future come from?

At this year's annual convention in Cincinnati, the WIA had more first-time attendees than ever before. Among them were relative newcomers to the field. Some had less than a year's experience: they came to learn and learn they did. The day before the convention started, Bob Banker taught a novice bonus session that covered everything from preparation, liners, pastes, and primers to tools and paste machines. It was incredibly well-received and many thought it could go the whole day. A lot of seasoned professionals said they wished they had taken it, too.

This brings me back to my favorite topic: education. New wallcovering installers as well as seasoned professional want education. Today's wallcoverings are not for the faint of heart. Now, more than ever, the installer must be more closely aware of the exact paper to be installed. The blanket square foot method for measuring is dead. Installers need to know the width and length of a roll, as well as the substrate it is printed on or woven on, the repeat pattern size, the size of the room, and the heights of the room they are going to install. All these factors add up

to a professional installation. A paperhanger who isn't up to snuff on the new wallcoverings can get into trouble faster than a teenage driver with a new Corvette.

The WIA introduced the Wallcovering University at this year's convention. It's online and the first class, available now, is a comprehensive guide to installing metal leaf wallcoverings. Check it out at wallcoveringuniversity.com. The class costs \$280 for two sessions. Convention-goers got a first-hand experience by taking the hands-on version of the class as a pre-convention workshop.

Two more classes are underway: an introduction to residential installations and an introduction to commercial installations. They will roll out early in 2020. Both classes will be taught in two parts. Also coming online will be many different specialty classes, including a textiles course and others that discuss pastes, primers, tools, tips and tricks, and so forth. Costs will vary from topic to topic; but, WIA will keep them affordable.

These online courses will work toward WIA's goal to bring paperhanging education to anyone who seeks it. We hope that they define the WIA as the leader in wallcovering education. ■

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Harmonizing Environments with Feng Shui and Wallpaper

One of the five arts of Chinese metaphysics, feng shui incorporated itself into western interior decorating terminology in recent decades. It makes claims about how the world functions and focuses on manipulating or channeling energy (positive and negative), polarity (masculine and feminine), and astronomy. Polarity also refers to the five Chinese elements: metal, earth, fire, water, and wood.

Although the effectiveness of feng shui eludes empirical testing and the scientific method to determine validity, plenty of anecdotal evidence supports its continued application. As wallcovering installers, your craft fits into the realm of feng shui.

Feng shui practitioner Benna Crawford states, "Decorating with feng shui isn't an exercise in how much white-on-white you can cram into a space. Neither is it as simple as slapping a coat of ruby red paint on the wall that corresponds to your wealth area. Selecting the right wallpaper can remedy problem areas and add vibrant energy to a room." She says that mapping each room for the qualities dominating certain spaces help in selecting the décor and color choices that enhance specific energies.

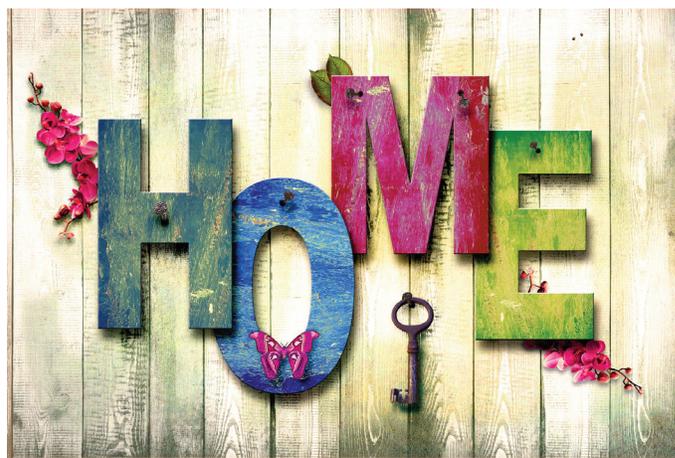
According to The Spruce, murals can add energy or calm to an interior space. A soothing nature scene or stunning city view changes the vibe instantly. Murals of running water or peaceful wooded areas introduce calm into a busy area, such as an entry or foyer, while a vibrant city scene adds verve, a mural of exposed brick brings a grounded feeling of warmth. The play of colors, seasons, and elements greatly affect the mood of the space.

Mapping a room for feng shui involves directions and the Chinese elements as well as certain colors and furniture configurations. Wood placed in the east, southeast, and south encompasses greens and browns and supports improvement in health and balance in life. Metals or metallic finishes in the north, northwest, and western corners of a room bring clarity and calm. Wood, candles, and strong colors such as red, purple, orange, and strong yellow represent fire which attracts fame and prosperity when placed in southern spaces. Light yellow, sandy or earthy colors, brick, clay, rocks, and crystals in southwest, northeast, west, northwest, and centrally placed spaces imbue the earth

(Continued on page 4)



Mixing the vibrant energy of spring with the soothing calm of nature, such as in this picture of blossoming cherry trees, can impart positive energy and serenity to a room.



The neutral colors and textures of wood combined with the cool colors of the letters comprising the word HOME complement the metal key to inspire an ambiance of prosperity and calm.

Working with Plaster

Used in construction for thousands of years, plaster is making a comeback in new construction and renovation, especially when restoring historic buildings. The durable hard surface lasts forever if protected and it can be molded into fanciful, decorative shapes that add detail and interest to any room's walls or ceilings. Ornate plasterwork impressed the affluent noblemen and merchants of the 18th and 19th centuries who made a point of impressing their friends and acquaintances with such displays of their wealth and good taste. With its superior insulating, fireproofing, and soundproofing capabilities, plaster beats out drywall in every instance.

Invented in 1916, drywall made primarily of gypsum did not come into common use until World War II when faster, less expensive

construction was needed to offset labor and material shortages, especially in the postwar housing boom. Until then, plaster and lath reigned as the popular choice for interior wall construction. Until then, writes Bambi Turner, "drywall was thought of as a cheap fix, with none of the fine art associated with making plaster. People didn't want to live in homes that were shoddily constructed, so they stuck with the tradition and expense of plaster."

The chief differences between drywall and plaster affect commonality of use today. Drywall is less expensive and less labor intensive than plaster. Many property owners want the high quality look of plaster on a drywall budget and compromise with the application of a plaster veneer over sheetrock panels. Both drywall or plaster readily accept paint. *Revise to "In fact,*



Sue Coulstock applies plaster to the interior wall of straw bale construction in Redmond, West Australia. Photo courtesy of Brett and Sue Coulstock.



Photo of ornate plasterwork in Vienna, Austria. Courtesy of Sophie on Unsplash.com.

pigment can be integrated into plaster for color that becomes integral to the wall, an ancient technique called fresco. Plaster's malleability also allows for great flexibility when covering curved or irregular surfaces. Plaster is ideal for alternative construction techniques such as straw bales or rammed earth.

However, tastes vary and some folks prefer the appeal of wallpaper rather than a painted plaster surface. Bear in mind that not all plaster surfaces are created equal, and it's important to make sure the plaster surface is ready to accept wallpaper.

With fresh plaster, the key to successful walls is patience. A skim coat will dry more quickly than a less common, inch-thick coating



Lucanian fresco tomb painting depicting a quadriga, circa 340-330 BC. Photo courtesy of the Paestum Archaeological Museum.

of plaster. Drying may take days. Plaster dries best when it dries evenly, so avoid using mechanical means to accelerate the process. Spotty drying often results in cracks.

Plaster is porous and hygroscopic. It readily absorbs moisture and must be sealed before painting or wallpapering. When the moisture is absorbed before the paste sets, the adhesive bond between the wallpaper and the wall weakens. To avoid the plaster from sucking all the moisture from your wallpaper paste before it has time to dry and properly adhere the wallpaper to the surface, apply a sizing solution

to the walls. This “essentially acts as a barrier to ensure your wallpaper paste isn't absorbed by the plaster,” advises Graham & Brown. The dried sizing solution's finish allows pasted wallpaper to slide into place for correct positioning.

Because most wallpapers are made of vinyl and are, therefore, nonporous, any dampness present between the paper's outer surface and the wall will be trapped against the plaster. If the installation project takes place where and when the humidity is high, mold will grow. For that reason, the DIY Doctor advises using a sizing solution with a fungicide added to it. ■

Harmonizing Environments (from page 2) element supporting warmth, groundedness, and creativity. Water – running or still – in the north, east, and southeast boosts one's career, improves health, and increases wealth.

Mixed with color psychology, expertise in feng shui can guide clients into achieving the perfect ambiance for every room in their houses. Wallpaper can mask a sloped or slanted ceiling, establish a strong accent color, or relieve an imbalance of color or overstimulation to soothe and relax, add energy, inspire creativity, enhance appetite, or boost romance. The possibilities are endless. ■

Announcing Rate Increases Without Losing Clients

The cost of living and doing business continues to rise and a contractor can only absorb those increases for so long until he or she must raise the fees for service to cover them and still remain profitable. Clients sometimes do not understand the increase and may object, possibly even turning their business over to a less expensive competitor. There are ways to notify clients of price increases without alienating them or dissuading potential new clients.

Example of tiered pricing.



1. Explain the benefit. Perhaps you've provided services that you don't promote. Perhaps the price increase enables you to hire on extra help, which relates to faster completion of projects, extra resources, increased availability, etc. Tell your customers the price increase allows your company to grow without sacrificing the excellent service they've come to expect. Your explanation might include succinct reminders of what you already did for them.

2. Don't beat around the bush. Sometimes, straightforward honesty without any fluff works best. With confident, matter-of-fact explanation that covers three points – you value the client's business, price changes are a part of business, and the price increase is justified – clients face the option of accepting it or not. Do you really want to work with a client who doesn't accept a justified price increase?

3. Consider offering tiered service packages. Perhaps one client wants only a basic installation with consumer grade wallpaper he purchased himself. Perhaps another client has a specialized, upscale installation. Offer price packages that add service options for additional fees. Be sure to factor in the price increases for the services provided and be clear about what each tier does not include. In "10 Ways to Raise Your Prices without Losing Customers," Inc. notes one benefit of a tiered pricing package is that it forces the client to focus on the decision to be made – which level of service to choose – rather than the price increase itself.

4. Give advance notice. If you set a deadline (e.g., "prices will increase on January 1"), that allows clients to take advantage of your current (less expensive) fee structure before that date. They'll feel like they got the best deal and you'll fill up your work schedule. If you don't have a specific date at which the rate hike will take effect, simply stating that prices will increase "in the fall" or some other time will have a similar effect. Regardless, the actual transition to the new pricing structure should be short and defined.

Part of informing clients (existing and potential) of your price increase is letting them know the nitty-gritty fact concerning how much. During the transition, consider charging existing clients the old rates and new clients the new rates to appease older clients and set expectations for new clients.

Don't forget to update your marketing materials and your website with the new rate changes. Email messages and printed letters actually mailed to clients informing them of price increases with succinct – not apologetic – explanations ease the transition. Make sure the message is consistent. In other words, don't announce a rate increase of one number in a brochure and another number on your website. Also conclude each message – printed or digital – with a statement of your appreciation for their patronage and that you'd enjoy to continue working with them.

Business coach Jenny Shih and HubSpot Service Blog writer Swetha Amaresan offer free templates for rate increase letters that notify without apology and without alienating existing clients. Each paragraph addresses a specific purpose and message. Note that paragraphs need not be long. Regardless of what you were taught by your high school language arts teacher, a paragraph really can be just one sentence.

Designer and author of *Work with Clients You Love*, Ian Vadas offers a note of encouragement to contractors nervous about informing their clients of price increases: "The last thing to remember is that you are valuable to your clients... It's a huge pain to find competent people that can do the job." Yes, there are other wallcovering installers out there, but the time and energy your clients must expend to find a competent replacement and the inherent risk in making a bad choice of replacement often deters a client from switching vendors. They've got a good thing in you and they want to keep that good thing going. ■

NATIONAL ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

When you have a choice of vendors, remember to use WIA Associate Members first.

Advance Equipment
Manufacturing Company
AMBTRA, Inc.
Atlantic Wallcovering and Décor
Bradbury & Bradbury Art
Wallpapers, Inc.
Cavalier Wall Liner
Designtex Group (The)
Experience49
Eykon Design Resources
Fabricmate Systems
Fidelity Wallcovering, Inc.
Gardner-Gibson, Inc.
Heritage Wallcoverings Ltd.
(Lincrusta)
Hytex Industries, Inc.
Jacaranda, Inc.
Jack Loconsolo & Company, Inc.
Koessel Studios
Len-Tex Wallcoverings
LSI Wallcovering
Maya Romanoff Corporation
MDC Wallcoverings
Pacific Laser Systems (PLS)
Painters & Allied Trades LMCI
Phillip Jeffries Ltd.
Presto Tape
R37 Inc.
Roman Decorating Products LLC
Roos International, Ltd.
Wallcovering
Rust-Oleum Corporation, Zinsser
Brands
Steve's Blinds & Wallpaper, LLC
Textile Wallcoverings
International, LTD (TWIL)
The Paint Store Online
Thibaut Wallcovering
Vahallan Papers
Wallauer's
Wallpaper Boulevard
Wallpaper Direct
Wallpaper Warehouse
Williamson College of the Trades
Wolf-Gordon, Inc.
York Wallcoverings, Inc.

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Congratulate WIA's 2019 Awards Recipients

The 2019 Annual Convention, held in Cincinnati, Ohio, highlighted the best and brightest of the industry with the association's annual awards presentation.

Craftsmanship Award entries are reviewed by wallcovering industry experts and judged on difficulty, expertise, and creativity in four categories: specialty, small spaces, commercial, and residential. These are the projects that transcend the mundane: they truly have that "wow" factor, whether the "wow" comes from colleagues impressed by the incredible organization and efficiency with which a nominee completed a practically impossible project or the sheer, undiluted creative genius used to tackle a challenging space with equally challenging materials. Craftsmanship Award entries are ranked and sorted into first place, second place, and honorable mention.

Without further ado, following are the recipients of the **2019 WIA Craftsmanship Awards**:

Specialty

First Place - Michael Baughman

Second Place - *Cliff Hayes*

Honorable Mention - *Bill Armstrong*



Small Spaces

First Place - Michael Baughman

Second Place - *Scott Kitchen*

Honorable Mention - *Brad Bachtold*



Commercial

First Place - Michael Baughman

Second Place - *Carolyn Greene & Sean Greene*

Honorable Mention - *Craig Bjorndahl*



Residential

First Place - Heidi Mead

Second Place - *Steven Terranova*

Honorable Mention - *Jeanette Gilbreath*



In addition to recognizing excellent craftsmanship within the industry, the WIA also honors those who put in extraordinary effort

to support the association and wallcovering industry and who serve as examples of exemplary service. The WIA's continued health and growth depend upon people like these. Recipients of the **2019 National Awards** are:

Bob Isenberger Member of the Year Award - Heidi Wright Mead, CP

Patricia Niehaus Leadership Award - Pam McCartney

Sam Kovnat Outstanding Achievement Award - Steven Kaye, CP

Guy Cooper Golden Plumblines Award for Outstanding Chapter of the Year - Chicago Chapter

Skip Lowe Memorial Award for Associate Member of the Year - Koessel Studio

Innovative Service Award - Greg Laux

Download qualification information, entry requirements, and nomination forms for all WIA awards from the WIA website. Craftsmanship Award entries require photographs of the finished installations. Check the website for nomination deadlines. ■



New Members

New Members August – November 2019

Installers

Annalee B Studio

Annalee Bohon, Knoxville, TN

Ruth Bowen Fine Wallpaper Installation

Ruth Bowen, Philadelphia, PA

JPG Hawaii, Inc.

Jean-Paul Gedeon, Honolulu, HI

Juliano & Co. Painting and Decorating Contractors

Peter Juliano, Vallejo, CA

Style Home Décor Inc

Ajitpal Kahlon, Calgary AB

Dave Morse Paperhanger

David Morse, Swampscott, MA

East Coast Paper Hanging and Paint

Phil Parrillo, Ladson, SC

NW Wallpaper Installers LLC

Nelli Pavlenko, Portland, OR

LaBrant & Associates

LaBrandt Pikaleka, Milwaukee, WI

Williams Painting

Gregory Williams, Bay City, TX

Associate Member

Real Wood Veneer Wallcovering

Paul West, North Port, FL

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Color Psychology Part 2: Practical Applications in Décor

According to Freshome.com, researching colors helps one comprehend what they do for a room. Bear in mind that colors affect emotion and function in various ways. If you or your client needs help in deciding which colors to choose, various websites, blogs, decorating books, and magazines offer informed suggestions to suit one's preferred color palette. Bear in mind that dark colors imbue a room with charm or passion and make large rooms seem more intimate. Light or bright colors are breezy and bracing.

Set the Mood

Since tile, furniture, rugs, and fabric don't present as many choices as paint, it's best to coordinate those choices before choosing a paint color. Paint need not be expensive and it can instantly change the room's mood, so don't be afraid to experiment.

Energize and stimulate. In her article "How Room Color Affects Mood," Tonya Lee states red imparts high energy, passion, and romance, which makes it an ideal color for rooms where energy is needed. Red, she says, stirs the emotions, sparks conversations, and increases appetite, heart rate, and blood pressure. Corroborating Lee, Kerry Harrison's article "Color Psychology in the Home" states red works particularly well in dining rooms, because of its stimulating effect upon the appetite. Take a look at the interior décor of Burger King and Pizza Hut: they know this well.

Calm and relax. Blue, says Lee, acts as a calming influence upon human emotion. Simply put, blue helps a body relax and unwind. This makes blue an ideal color for places like examination rooms in a doctor's office or a child's bedroom. Blue can help soothe the anxious patient or relax the child resisting his bedtime.

Welcome – not overwhelm. Somewhere between stimulation and relaxation, yellow's brilliance can be hard on the eyes when covering large areas. However, it imparts a



Greens and blue with cool undertones impart a feeling of serenity and relaxation.



Nature colors add energy and refresh a neutral palette.

feeling of welcome and cheer and serves best in limited application where there's plenty of other color to contrast and complement it. For that reason, yellow works particularly well in kitchens and bathrooms.

Soothe and think. According to Kendra Cherry, human psychological behavior is often associated with inspirational significance, personal background, and the density of color. In her article "The Color Psychology of Green," Cherry notes that, associated with nature, green is considered both serene and invigorating which makes sense when one considers the effect of the natural world upon the human psyche. Further research shows that green also symbolizes fertility and sex and lends itself to increased read speed and comprehension.



Bright, sunny yellow imparts cheer and energy to a room.

People who work in green spaces also experience lower incidences of illness. The psychological effect of green makes it perfect for use in areas where one studies or exercises.

Reassure and protect. From light and sandy to deep and rich, brown offers a sense of security and reliability. The color reminds us of Mother Earth and soil that nourishes us and the stability of the ground that supports us. Brown also imparts the natural feel and richness of wood. According to scientific data, both men and women choose brown as their second highest color preference for bedrooms.

Impress and seduce. Scarce in the realm of home decorating, purple's rarity may linger from ancient times when it was reserved for royalty due to its high cost. Symbolizing wealth and romance, this strong color is best blended with light greens and soft yellows for the most potent effect. Its romantic attributes make it well-suited to bedrooms and its use in a bathroom can impart a luxurious, spa-like ambiance.

Impress and assert. Related to yellow, gold takes the hue in an entirely different direction with its blatant association to affluence and luxury. Long attributed to male energy and the strength of the sun--the moon and silver are typically associated with the feminine--the color gold manifests as indication of wisdom, luxury, elevated social or political prominence, and success. These attributes make gold well-suited

to the décor of an C-level executive's office walls.

Clean and pure. There's a reason Ivory soap is white: the color supports the claim of it being 99-¼ percent pure. Associated with cleanliness and purity, white requires maintenance to remain unsullied and, used as an accent color, adds a bright and fresh aspect to any room. Too much white, however, takes "clean and pure" into the cold realm of "sterile." Use white sparingly.

Tranquilize and sedate. In the 1970s, law enforcement experimented with using the color pink in holding cells to reduce aggression in those arrested. Sports teams take advantage of pink's relaxing effect in the locker rooms of opposing teams to inhibit their opponents' energy. A pink room can work wonders for relaxation and meditation by evoking emotions of peace and tranquility.

Energize and inhale. Orange's energizing effect on human emotion has long been recognized and used by fast food restaurants to hasten their customers inclination to eat and leave, thereby making room for more customers. That stimulating effect makes it particularly suitable for exercise rooms and, surprisingly, has been shown to help individuals combating asthma breathe more easily.

Enlarge and refine. The sophistication of gray, a neutral color, lends itself well in making a room appear larger than it really is. Like white, it can be easily misused. Improperly used gray creates a hollow or depressing feeling, rather than one of refined sophistication.

Reduce and darken. When a rebellious teen expresses a desire to paint his or her bedroom black, suggest a nighttime scene. Unrelieved black makes a room feel cramped rather than intimate. Best used as an accent color, black can add sophistication and drama when used properly.

While color psychology does not operate in a realm of absolutes, the effects of color upon the human psyche are well known and well documented. Mix and match, dilute and saturate to create the perfect effect desired in your clients' rooms. ■