

Upbeat buyers give opening day a boost

By Henry Howard

AT THE MARKET — Major furniture producers reported Thursday a steady stream of savvy, generally upbeat retailers who were prudently preparing for a long-awaited upswing in business in the weeks and months ahead.

Exhibitors said their innovations as well as proven winners were top drawing cards as the October market officially got

under way.

Late in the day, upholstery giant La-Z-Boy was wrapping up a solid beginning. "We've seen excellent traffic all day long," said Senior Vice President Pat Norton, "and the dealers are here to buy. Our business has been very good and the retailers seem optimistic."

A similar story came from diversified big-hitter LADD Furniture. Vice Chair-
see page 29

FRIDAY

The weatherman says:
Variably cloudy,
40% chance of
afternoon showers
or thunderstorms,
high in mid-70s.



Four industry leaders are inducted into the American Furniture Hall of Fame, page 2.

Bunnies, mice add spice

Animals are on the move at market. The Progressive Furniture Bunny, based on a battery company's television mascot, hopped on down to Progressive to symbolize how that company just keeps going and going. Ridgeway's new national mascot, H. Dickory Dock, an 18th century eccentric mouse (see story on page 37), is at market to urge dealers to run up to Ridgeway.



Seaman emerges from Chapter 11

By Henry Howard

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — New York/New Jersey retailer Seaman Furniture emerged from bankruptcy proceedings this week and immediately installed new top executives.

A reorganization plan that swept away \$356 million of a \$370 million long-term debt burden took effect Tuesday.

The 21-store chain, scaled down from last year's peak of 38 units, began operating Wednesday with Alan Rosenberg

as chief executive officer.

Rosenberg, a Seaman's veteran who left the
see page 36

Rooms To Go to seek retail partnerships

LAKELAND, Fla. — Rooms To Go, the fast-growing Florida chain of upholstery specialty stores, is rolling out a new vehicle for spreading the concept throughout the United States.

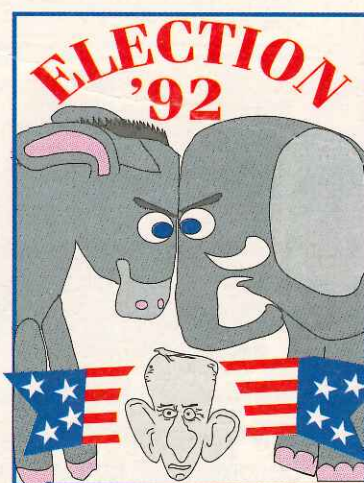
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Retailers pick their favorites in presidential contest



Patricia Atchison
Grand Tradition Interiors
Whitefish, Mont.

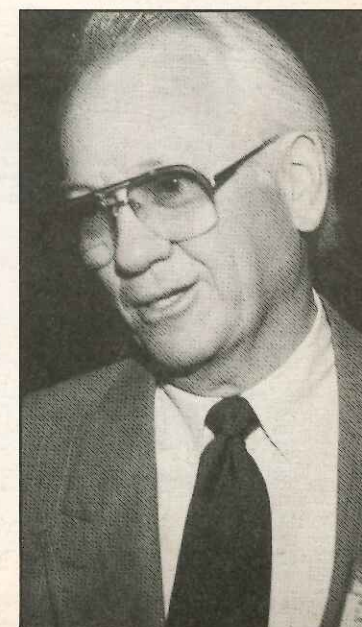
"I'm voting for Clinton. Things have to change, and Bush can't do it. I don't know if Clinton can either, but it's time for the change. We desperately need health care for the elderly and the poor — which is where most of America seems to be today."



More election views
on pages 8-9, 27

Albert McCall
D.T. McCall & Sons
Carthage, Tenn.

"I'm going to vote for George Bush because I'm scared not to. With the last Democrat we had in office, we had 21% interest on the money we had to borrow and 15% inflation. It took the bark right off the furniture. We were paying taxes on profit that was illusionary."



FURNITURE/TODAY

Q&A



Yvonne Babbitt
Patio & Interiors
Corpus Christi, Texas

"I'm going to vote for Bill Clinton because I'm very unhappy with what George Bush has done in the last four years — and I'm a Republican. I was going to vote for Ross Perot before he dropped out the first time. I'm just real unhappy with George Bush. That's the main thing. My business is really worse than it was four years ago. I think Bush is lost in a cloud some place."



Edward Rosenfeld
Int'l Furniture Rentals
New York

"I'm going to vote for Bill Clinton and Al Gore. The reason ... is twofold. I think the last 12 years of trickle-down economics has bankrupted the country. I think it's time we paid more attention to investing in our future both in our children and in our infrastructure. The second main reason is because of social policy. The government shouldn't be in the bedroom.... I think the Republican Party has been captured by the religious right."



Sam Skierski
Live Oak Buy & Sell
Live Oak, Fla.

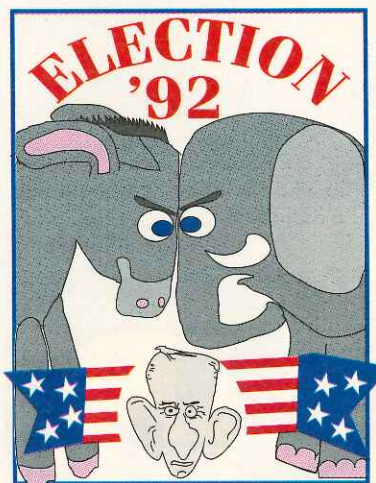
"I don't know. I'm still fussing with it, but I would venture to say I'll probably be a Bush/Quayle fan before it's all over with. I trust them. My businesses have done extremely well in hard times. Taxes haven't increased in four years. I just think (Clinton) is your typical liberal candidate looking to make a change, and I don't think the change would be a positive change. And I'm a registered Democrat."



Carolyn Davis
D&D Interiors
 Mooresville, N.C.

"I'm still undecided pretty much. I'm unhappy with the status quo. I definitely don't like Clinton. I like Perot, but I think...he makes it sound too simple. On Clinton, I don't like tax and spend. I don't like bigger government, therefore I will probably vote for Bush."

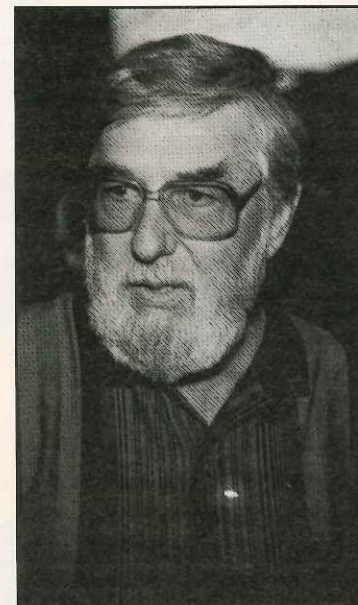
Which presidential candidate are you voting for and why?



Interviews conducted
 by Clint Engel

Charles Franklin
Franklin Furniture
Lenoir, N.C.

"I haven't fully decided. What bothers me is the three or four classes of people in our country and how we're not treated equally. I like what (Perot) says and his stance on what's going on in Washington. I'm not going to say I'd vote for him, though. We need doers. Anyone can say anything."



Jane Wordsworth
The Rain Thatch
Clearwater, Fla.

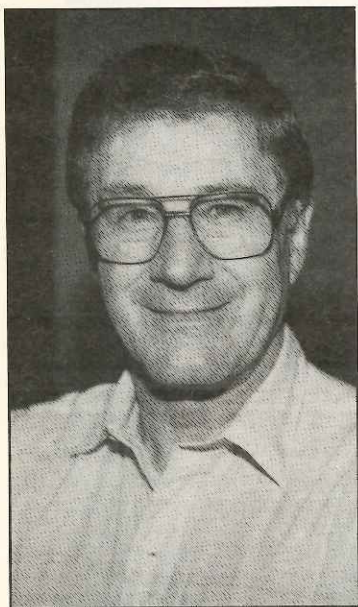
"I'm going to vote for George Bush because I feel he is the best person for the small-business furniture people. We don't need any more taxes, and I feel the economy will come along no matter who is president. I don't think the economy is George Bush's fault. I think (Clinton) is too programmed. I don't like the tax and spend I think he's going to come up with. His economic program is unrealistic."



Josie Kuhn
R.H. Kuhn
Pittsburgh

"I'm going to vote for George Bush. I think he's done a good job. He's trustworthy. I think Perot is very good. He's got good ideas, but he doesn't know much about Washington, I don't think. Clinton — I like him, but I think Bush is the man. I like the vice president. I think he's doing a much better job than they're giving him credit for."





Bernard Schad
Almlie Furniture
Tracy, Minn.

"We're going to stay right where we're at. We're going to vote for George. I just think he's the better candidate of the viable two. We like what we're hearing from (Perot) but he's telling us what we want to hear. I guess the thing that concerns me about Bill Clinton is I just don't think a small-state governor can come to Washington, and sit on the most important chair in the world and get the job done."



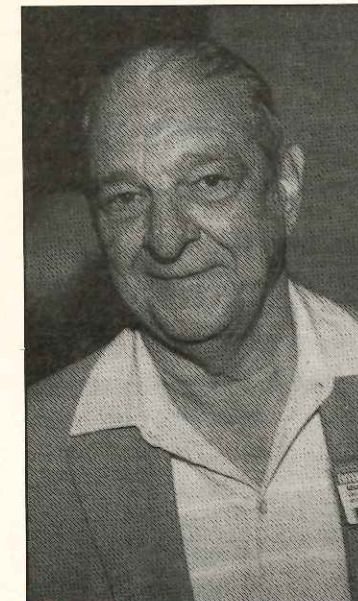
Nancy Swann
La-Z-Boy
Furniture Gallery
Oceanside, Calif.

"I'm not sure. I guess my preference would be George Bush because of his world leadership ability. And I'd like to have Ross Perot in his cabinet for his great ideas. I don't think Bill Clinton has the leadership abilities that we need. If taxes are increased tremendously, it's not going to help the economy. I don't really know how to take (Perot). He was most impressive (in the debate). That's part of the reason for the indecision. But I think I would rather have the stability of George Bush's leadership."



Dione Kleinendorst
Modular Office Design
Raleigh, N.C.

"I haven't fully decided. Bill Clinton at the moment, but I'm still (open). I think we need some changes. Actually I was really impressed with Ross Perot before he dropped out. I felt when he dropped out of the race, if something drastic happened to the country, he'd drop out (again)."



George T. Condeelis
Carl's TV & Appliance Rental
Hollywood, Fla.

"I'm probably going to vote for Bush. I know what I've got. I don't know what I've got with the others. Bush has got the experience for the economy. Besides that, I happen to be an American POW myself, and I detest any demonstrating. I can't stand anyone who would demonstrate against his country under any circumstances."

Pat Deeter
Resort Furnishings
Bethany Beach, Del.

"Bush, because I don't like the other two choices. Personally, I think whoever gets in, things are going to get better....I still think (Bush) has some good ideas, he just needs to implement them. He needs to get a Congress behind him that will implement them. I'd rather stay with someone who has the experience. We won't even discuss Perot. I really think Clinton lacks experience. He's taking an unrealistic approach to the economy."



Carl Childre
DanLor Furniture
Douglas, Ga.

"I'm voting for Bill Clinton, because he can read and write and because he isn't a radical. He doesn't believe in Jerry Falwell and neither do I. I thought Dan Quayle looked like a fool (during the debate).... (As for Perot), I don't believe computer people anymore than used-car salesmen. There's more to government than just...breaking even. I think (Bush) belongs to the country club set. He's afraid to stand up to the radical right. I don't think he has any concept of the economy and what it needs. I believe Clinton will make us feel good again."



Kathryn Evangelista
Lista's
Virginia Beach, Va.

"I'm going to vote for Ross Perot because the whole world has recessed and depressed and we need a good comedian. CNN did a rerun of the 1984 vice presidential debates in which Bush took part, and he sounds and looks exactly the same. I'm not sure he's a real person anymore. I feel he hasn't learned anything in the past couple of years. I think (Clinton's) looks are going to hurt him. Lawyers are one of the most hated professionals in the country right now, and he just looks like the head lawyer."



Larry Allred
Montgomery Furniture
Candor, N.C.

"I'm not going to vote for any of them because they're all crooks — all three. The only difference is some of them haven't got caught yet. Anyone who says one of these men is going to save the country needs to see a psychiatrist....When you live in a situation we're in, one man is not going to make a difference. The No. 1 problem the country has is it's not buying furniture from me. I'll solve their problems."

