

## EAGA Business Builder

eaganm.com

August 24, 2021

## Today's speaker was Soren Thomsen—TEMA Furniture



Mr. Thomsen was born in Brønderslev, Denmark. Denmark is a country of about 5 1/2 million people, including a few forward thinking government officials. They are now in the process of building an island that will be used as the site of their electrical energy generating facilities. The plan is to use wave motion, solar panels, and wind turbines to generate enough electricity to power about 5 million homes. Denmark also has a good education system and Soren had planned to study science at their university. There was a problem though, in that Mr. Thomsen did not have any income at the time.

So his thoughts of a university education gave way to a vocational school education instead. There Soren learned all about the furniture retail business. At the end of that training, he came to the United States as part of an exchange type of program. Taking rhyming methods of transportation, Mr. Thomsen used trains and planes to travel from Brønderslev, Denmark to Brussels, Belgium then to the USA (Minneapolis to Dallas to El Paso). As the plane was arriving on the last leg of his trip, Soren could see the inviting lights of El Paso...and the shacks of neighboring Juarez. He questioned his good judgement. Mr. Thomsen spent a few months working with a furniture company in El Paso before he had to return to Denmark. By then, he had enjoyed the furniture business experiences, and the company of a particular young lady, and was no longer questioning his good judgement. Years before the Terminator spoke, Soren was already using the phrase "I'll be back!". As soon as he could arrange things, Soren was again El Paso bound. This time it would be for a longer stay. Fate had also arrived in El Paso around the same time, making the journey from Portland, Oregon in the company of a young hot dog cart owner. Soren was living in the sandy southwestern USA, but probably missed the ocean proximity of his home in Denmark. So he often traveled to the nearest body of water (the pool at his new apartment) to spend time swimming and visiting with friends. That is where fate brought the hot dog cart owner (Barbara) and the furniture entrepreneur together. She was not the young lady noted in Soren's earlier trip...Barbara was so much more special. After about a year, they were married and are now 33 years into their journey toward forever. The Thomsen's also have a son, now grown, and out on his own as a member of the "tech-guy" world. Although El Paso had been a good place to meet, Soren and Barbara were not all that happy with the business opportunities that existed there. They heard that the owner of TEMA Copenhagen Furniture in Albuquerque was interested in retiring. They did a bit of investigating. And in 1993 the Thomsen family arrived in our city to take advantage of an opportunity they hoped would lead to them having their own business. Soren became the Sales Manager of TEMA. In 2000 he became a partner. Then in 2011 bought the company outright. Over the years, TEMA has continued to grow and to develop a great reputation. They primarily sell furniture manufactured in North America. There are bedroom sets from Canada; American Leather furniture from Texas; Copeland brand solid wood (oak, cherry or walnut) furniture from Vermont; and other lines from Mexico. Stickley furniture manufacturer from New York has been in business since 1898, but their line was primarily of a mission style. They have recently begun making some more contemporary styles, so TEMA will be some Stickley items now, too. TEMA also has suppliers from European and Asian countries, though only a very small percentage of those items come from China. Some of TEMA's office furniture comes from Viet Nam, and there are recliner chairs from Norwegian manufacturer, Stressless. These chairs have been approved by the Chiropractic Association. TEMA is also offering some good quality, but lower price point options for the 'entry level' buyers who are just starting to furnish their first new homes. Manufacturers in Ukraine provide a few of those items. The furniture industry is no exception to the onslaught of new challenges that have appeared since the beginning of the pandemic. Supplies of needed materials are caught up with a lot of other products and materials in the fractured supply chain. Right now, special orders for furniture could be delayed by 10 to 12 weeks. The cost of transporting items from European suppliers has substantially increased. Shipping via container that previously cost \$7,000 to \$8,000 have increased to \$25,000 - and that does not include fees for inland transportation to get the products to Albuquerque from various ports. There are other problems that cannot be reasonably blamed on the coronavirus, or its related restrictions and complications. Last winter's ice induced power outage in Texas caused the shutdown of a foam manufacturing plant, and those materials have not yet come back into the pipeline. The overall effect of everything will cause about a 30% increase in the cost for quality furniture in 2021. TEMA has been doing what it can to minimize the burden on their operations, and their customer's experiences. They are trying to reduce cost without reducing quality. TEMA is part of a nationwide group that provides help via large volume benefits for services like credit card processing and financing opportunities. Soren and his team have spent the last many years developing a very good reputation as the best source in Albuquerque for higher end furniture. That has allowed them to substantially reduce their advertising budget (down from 6.0% of operating budget in 2019 to just 0.5% now) while maintaining, and even increasing, revenues. This year looks to be their best year yet. If you want to see the quality furniture that TEMA has to offer, you should stop by their facility at 7601 Montgomery NE and check it out. You can always call Soren at 505-275-2121 to discuss furniture products, suppliers, or the items that he has available. But it is much more informative to actually see and touch the individual pieces of furniture to better understand the value and quality. When you drop by the business, you'll see that they are freshening up their presentation a bit. TEMA is dropping the 'contemporary' reference since they are also offering traditional furniture, too. And there is an updated logo (see it at the top of this article). The design of the E represents the drawers of a dresser, and the design of the A represents a chair. Interesting. A great business, with a great reputation, doing very well in Albuquerque New Mexico. What magic there can be when fate puts a Danish furniture expert and an American hot dog cart aficionado at the same place, at the same time, near a concrete pond in El Paso, Texas.

Contact information for Executive Director: Mario Hernandez

Phone: 505-239-0259 email: eagaed@gmail.com

8100 Wyoming Blvd NE; Suite M-4 #35 Albuquerque, NM 87113

## Leads:

- Hearing Aid Center is opening at 10301 Cottonwood Park NW.
- Chase Bank branch opening at 11004 Montgomery (the old Weck's location at Montgomery & Juan Tabo).  
- Lionel Specter—ZEON Signs

If you have information that you would like published in the bulletins, you can submit it in person at the meeting, or via email to [bmac@swcp.com](mailto:bmac@swcp.com). (Please note the email subject as "EAGA")

- ◆ **Please note that there will not be a meeting on September 7th. Sleep in for a few extra minutes to celebrate an extended Labor Day Holiday.**
- ◆ The Jim Fanning Memorial Trap Shoot has been scheduled for Friday, September 24th. 8:00am for burritos and a mandatory safety meeting. Since there is a short supply of shells, the event will be limited to 50 participants (Members only. No guests at this time). If you are going to attend, please sign up at our Tuesday meeting. When you sign up, you can note if you have a team preference. There will be a raffle - grand prize is a \$1,000 gift certificate from Los Ranchos Gun Shop. Tickets are \$100 each and will be available at the Tuesday breakfasts. All proceeds from the raffle will be used for the event.
- ◆ We need speakers and greeters for our last 2 meetings in October...and all meetings in November. Please contact Mario ASAP to get your preferred date. His contact information is at the bottom of this page.
- ◆ We will soon print a new EAGA Roster. Please make sure that Mario's file has your correct information. Remember—the roster is a paper document, so cannot be readily changed after it has been printed. If you have edits to data in the last roster, or if you are just not sure, send Mario an email ([eagaed@gmail.com](mailto:eagaed@gmail.com)) with your correct information. Please do that as soon as possible. Also note-information in the roster may be different from that on our website. If you made changes to your data on the website, you still need to give Mario those changes.
- ◆ Attendance has been great the past few weeks. Hardly any seats have been left available. That is a GREAT thing.

## Badge Board Greeters

Sept 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Meeting Labor Day Holiday</b>
Sept 14 <sup>th</sup>	Soren Thomsen—TEMA Furniture
Sept 21 <sup>st</sup>	Lance Darnell—Darnell Cable & Fasteners
Sept 28 <sup>th</sup>	Kale Isaacson—Fyzical-Albuquerque
Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Hass Aslami—Pizza 9 Franchise System
Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>	
Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	
Oct 26 <sup>th</sup>	
Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	

## Upcoming Speakers

Sept 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Meeting. Labor Day Holiday</b>
Sept 14 <sup>th</sup>	Kale Isaacson—Fyzical-Albuquerque
Sept 21 <sup>st</sup>	Rich Rosley—A-TECH Security
Sept 28 <sup>th</sup>	Guest Speaker Carla Sonntag—New Mexico Business Coalition
Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Kevin Lorenzen—Aflac
Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>	
Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	
Oct 26 <sup>th</sup>	
Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	

Contact information for Executive Director: Mario Hernandez  
Phone: 505-239-0259 email: [eagaed@gmail.com](mailto:eagaed@gmail.com)  
8100 Wyoming Blvd NE; Suite M-4 #35 Albuquerque, NM 87113