



NCHPBA

U P D A T E S

BURNING NEWS & ISSUES



Affiliated with the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association

August 2004

A Note from the President



Service and Stewardship: two words that have different definitions, but are connected in application. One without the other loses sincerity. Individually, we have to come to a decision as to how we are going to apply them. ATTITUDE, ATTITUDE, ATTITUDE. Our customers will and have let us know whether or now we are up to the task.

Good stewardship and the NCHPBA are synonymous in our industry—or it should be. It is up to you and I whether they are or not. Becoming involved IS good stewardship.

The NCHPBA promotes service with the “NFI” certification programs. Becoming “NFI” certified is good stewardship. Simple.

Denny

Spring Into Action

The spring annual meeting and conference is over for 2004. We had a record registration of 125. AND these came from every state but the UP of Michigan. Considering the vast geographics of our affiliate, these are very impressive numbers. Plus these numbers represented 54 companies. Our average over the years has been 40.

For those that came, you know what a good event this was. Your evaluations and comments were very positive. The only complaint was the cool wet weather—however, that is totally out of our control. In consideration of the weather, we still got in our 3 outdoor activities between the storms so we managed in spite of the “not-so-great” weather conditions.

Now, for those that did not come...you are missing out on a great education, networking and social experience. You can earn continuing education credits toward NFI re-certification and learn how to improve your business practices which should help you earn more money! That is what this “work thing” is

all about. Yes, we should enjoy what we are doing, but we also should be rewarded in the process with a decent income. The Education Committee works hard to provide members with a variety of experiences. This is done for your benefit. It behooves everyone to take advantage of these opportunities. You really get a great bang for the buck.

This year NCHPBA held a barbecue demonstration for the first time. We wanted to make sure our barbecue members had a chance to learn and grow from our spring meeting, too. So we not only had Jerry Scott from R.H. Peterson Co. provide a presentation on “Selling High End Grills” and using the industry statistics to help sell grills, we had demonstrations that retailers could look at for holding at their stores and the participants got to show their wares. We are thankful to the following (in alphabetical order) that came to demonstrate their grills: Danson’s Group, Empire Comfort Systems, Napoleon Appliances, and R.H. Peterson Co.

MANAGEMENT: New Health Insurance Option for Small Business

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Up on Capitol Hill, Republicans and Democrats in Congress hope a new type of high-deductible health insurance account (Health Savings Account, or HSAs) for the self-employed and small businesses will succeed where Medical Savings Accounts or MSAs failed. HSAs, available as of January 1, 2004, from companies such as Fortis Insurance Co. and Golden Rule Insurance Co., and are more attractive from a tax and operational standpoint than MSAs. In both cases, individuals buy higher-deductible health insurance plans, take a tax deduction based on the dollar level of the deductible, then draw money out of

the HSA account, tax-free, for out-of-pocket medical expenses. But MSAs had problems: leftover money couldn’t be rolled over, and minimum deductibles and premiums were too high. HSAs must have deductibles above \$1,000 for an individual and \$2,000 for a family. Up to 100 percent of the deductible can be put in the HSA, which pays nontaxable interest. Money left over at year-end can be rolled over to next year. And some experts believe the HSA market will be more competitive, meaning lower premiums than for MSAs.

MREA

The Midwest Wisconsin Energy Association (MREA) held another Energy Fair this past June in Custer, Wisconsin. NCHPBA determined to have another exhibit booth but also provide speakers to help spread the message about the viability of our hearth products. NCHBPA submitted speakers in three topical areas to the MREA. They accepted speakers on pellets and wood technologies.

Taylor Martin from *Earth Sense Energy Systems* in Dale, Wisconsin provided two presentations on "Zone Heating with Pellets." Having just completed over a dozen presentations to over 3,000 people in Quebec on wood heating, John Gulland from *Gulland Associates* in Killaloe, Canada provided two presentations on "Wood Technologies."

Envision fifteen tents in a pasture with 60 folding chairs in each one, a table in front and a small screen hanging loosely in the front of the tent with the sides of the tent flapping wildly in a sharp breeze and you will have an idea of what the speakers have to deal with. The attendees at this Energy Fair come to learn. They come with lots of knowledge, but want more and are not hesitant to ask questions. John Gulland's first presentation had standing room only with some attendees lying on the grass or even bringing their own chairs. His last presentation had to complete with first a drum and then a musical band. The tents have no microphone systems so the speakers have a challenge to be heard. Interestingly, no one complains. They take all aspects of the "natural" environment in stride. After all, these are basically naturalists at heart.

Past Board member, Tony Leggett from *Fireplace Professionals* from Sioux Falls, SD loaned us an 8 x 10 exhibit booth to help us with our display this year. Last year the booth was outside and endured lots of dust from the wind. This year the booth was indoors. A different type of nature was endured. The building was a horse riding academy with stalls along one wall. The horses were kept in the pasture during the Energy Fair but the lingering aroma of their presence was unmistakable. Again, no one complained. A food and dining station was

even contained within this building.

The time and energies of Board members, Gary Stanley (*Onalaska Stove & Stone*) and Bob Marcell (*Marcell's Specialties*) must be specifically acknowledged, spending the Thursday afternoon to set up and then staffing the booth on Friday. Gary Stanley staffed the NCHPBA booth the whole 3 days. Bob Marcell rejoined on Sunday, also assisting with take down. John Pence (*Snowbelt Fireplace & Stove*) helped Thursday with the loaned pellet auger display (by *Hearth & Home Technologies*), as well as staffing the booth. Others that assisted with staffing were Board member, Lynn Meyer (*American Home Fireplace & Patio*) for Friday and Saturday and Adrian Albrecht (*Snowbelt Fireplace & Stove*). The booth had a wood stove and pellet stove and lots of information on renewable heating and efficiencies with hearth products. Directories of members were provided with many many referrals to members.

Hundreds and hundreds of people stopped at the booth with over 17,000 numbered at the Energy Fair in total. Most of these people do walk by all the exhibits so it is not possible to ascertain the exact number of people that saw the NCHPBA display and had some type of heightened awareness of us. Attendees come from 36 states and over a dozen countries. The Board feels that the display and ability to provide information to people is a valuable experience. Plans are to again attend this event next year with a different look and different speakers. We encourage participation at the booth. You talk with people from all over and get the chance to teach about our products. It really is fun to have so many people interested in learning. The questions can also be very challenging so the experience helps you be prepared for anything.

June 17-19, 2005 will be the next Energy Fair in Custer, Wisconsin. Help us spread the word. Contact Gary Stanley, Bob Marcell or Lynn Meyer and offer to help staff the booth. It truly is a unique experience. For more information on this check out the NCHPBA web site www.nchpba.org





The Outdoor Room—CD

If you haven't gotten the message, there is a tremendous benefit to going to the spring program. You would already have more education, the Strategic Plan, and the CD of the Outdoor Room that was exhibited at EXPO 2004 in Anaheim, CA. If you didn't get to the spring meeting – don't fret. A copy of the CD of the Outdoor Room has been included in this newsletter for all those NCHPBA members who did not get to the spring meeting.

Polos Versus Patches

The topic of selling NCHPBA logo polo shirts was discussed at the May meeting. It was further discussed at the July Board meeting. In order to meet member needs, we are asking members to forward their desires on this issue. Included in this newsletter is a brief questionnaire regarding polo shirts, logo patches, etc. Please fill this out and fax it to the NCHBPA office. We can't meet your needs if you don't let us know what they are. Help us help you.

NFI—Gas and Woodburning for 2005

The NCHPBA Board of Directors has determined to hold a NFI Gas and Woodburning Review and Exam on Tuesday, May 24, 2005 in Red Wing, Minnesota. These programs will be held simultaneously so you must choose to attend one or the other. This advance notice is to also help you plan what NFI programs you should take at EXPO in Atlanta next year.

In Memory

One of our members, Virginia Bartlett (*Energy Savers of Minnesota* in Oakdale), died just one short month after our May meeting in Red Wing. She and her husband, Andy, had been the lucky recipients of the Treasure Island suite upgrade drawing the NCHBPA offered this year. Our sincere condolences to the Bartlett family.

Closing the Deal

from SellingPower.com

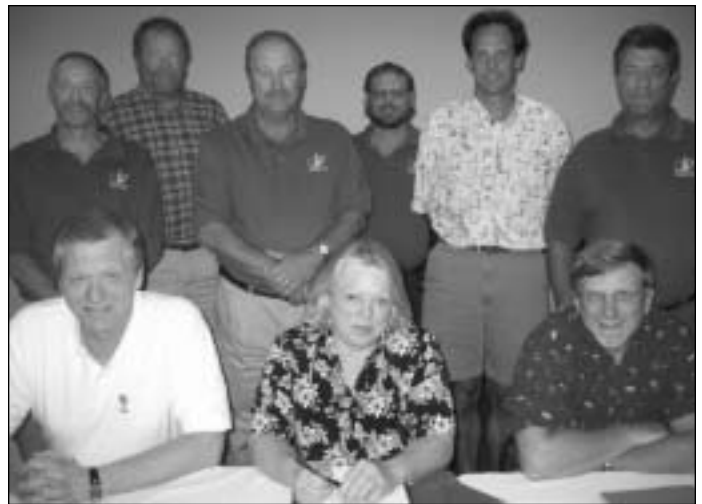
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Closing is not an event, but a gradual process that begins the moment you make contact with potential customers, says Mary Delaney, vice president of sales for CareerBuilder.com. Here are her steps to make closing a natural part of the conversation, instead of a sweaty palm-inducing moment of pressure.

- 1. Earn the right.** In the first 2 minutes you must demonstrate your knowledge of the client, the market and the industry. Establishing trust and rapport early in the conversation sets the tone for the entire interaction.
- 2. Gather data.** Stop close-ended questions, leading questions and manipulative questions before they make it past your lips, says Delaney. Ask appropriate, insightful questions – don't do a data dump. Your goal is to create a need for your product in customers' eyes, and the only way you can do that is to understand what they're facing. Delaney suggests asking questions such as: What top three activities consume

Board 2004-2005

The new Board of Directors met July 13, 2004 in Bloomington, Minnesota and set forth the next 10 months worth of programs and activities. Building upon the Strategic Plan, the Committee structures were expanded to help achieve the objectives. National issues such as PM 2.5 were identified and discussed as to the impact and affect to the affiliate. Additional information on PM 2.5 is found in a separate article in this newsletter.



Standing (left to right) Lynn Meyer, Randy Sauer, Denny Hildebrand, Bob Marcell, John Bergstrom and Gary Stanley. Sitting (left to right) Mike Nordby, Margaret Zalaznik and Russ Dimmitt. Absent from photo: Rodger Holland and Mike O'Rourke.

Committee Help Sought

Anyone interested in getting more involved with Government issues, Education activities, or Communication projects should contact the respective Chairman or the affiliate office.

your time daily? What is the ideal way to spend your day? What would you like to do better?

- 3. Present solutions.** Before your prospects can move to a buying mode they need to understand how your solution fulfills their most pressing business needs. "Realize that the only reason people will buy your solution today is to solve their biggest challenge. If you can't help them with their biggest challenge, they won't have time for you," Delaney says. Take the information you gathered in step 2 and connect the dots for your customers.
- 4. Count Costs.** Costs don't just refer to the price of your product; costs also refer to the expenses prospects will face if they don't buy your product or choose an alternative. "Help them see there's a gap between where they want to go and where they're going to go if they don't change anything," Says Delaney. Delaney says these four steps will lead you and your prospects on the painless road to closing. If you address each step thoroughly, she says, "The closing just happens." For more information, please click on www.careerbuilder.com.

PM 2.5—How it affects us!

What it is

Particulate matter, or PM, is the term for particles found in the air, including dust, dirt, soot, smoke and liquid droplets. Particles can be suspended in the air for long periods of time. You can see some particles such as soot or smoke. Some particles are so small that you cannot see them with the naked eye. Some are only seen with an electron microscope.

According to the EPA and health officials, particulate matter, or PM less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM 10) pose a health concern. This is because they are breathed in and can build up in the respiratory system. Coal miners from years ago developed severe lung diseases because the air they breathed had large and small particles of contaminants. Particles less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM2.5) are referred to as “fine” particles. These are believed to pose the greatest risk. They are so small, (less than one-seventh the average width of a human hair) that they can be breathed deeply in the lungs and lodge there.

Where it comes from

Fine particulate matter comes from all types of combustion activities (motor vehicles, power plants, **wood burning**, etc.) as well as certain industrial processes. Even dust from paved or unpaved roads is considered particulate matter. It can also be formed from the chemical change of gases in the air. When gases from burning fuels react with sunlight and water vapor, they indirectly form particulate matter.

Health effects and risk

Studies to date show an association between particulate matter and premature death. There are also claims of aggravated respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, lung disease, decreased lung function, asthma attacks, and certain cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks and irregular heart beat. Those most susceptible to problems with particulate matter are older adults, those who already have heart and lung disease and children. One of three people in the United States are said to be at greater risk because they work or spend more time outdoors. Children are frequently outdoors playing and their lungs are still developing, which makes them at greater risk.

Mystery Shopping

By the time you get this newsletter, the deadline to participate in the Mystery Shopping program for 2005 will be past. If you forgot to send in your forms, and it is past July 31, **CALL** the **OFFICE** immediately. We may be able to accommodate your requests. There is no guarantee we can get you in past deadline since we have a contract for shopping services with an international firm, but we will make the effort. If you sent your form in, you should be on the list. NCHPBA will send you an email or fax to confirm your requests. This year there are chances for multiple visits so we want to be sure we have your order correct. Pre-payment of all shopping visits is necessary so get out your checkbook or credit cards. Yes, we do take plastic.

EXPO 2005 Registration & MARTA

HPBA will be contracting with a new registration company for EXPO this year. This group offers the ability to register online to and including on site at EXPO. It behooves everyone to register well in advance, but for those that don't, this new system should be of great benefit. More features are going to be available and explained to all affiliates later this summer. Keep tuned. This is going to be great!

Nonattainment and designation

The Clean Air Act identifies six common air pollutants that are found all over the United States. These can injure health, harm the environment and cause property damage. PM2.5 is considered a criteria pollutant. The EPA establishes national ambient air quality standards (concentration in outdoor air) for each criteria pollutant. If the air quality in a specific geographic area meets or is cleaner than the national standard—it is called an attainment area. If it is dirtier, it is nonattainment.

States must develop a “state implementation plan” (SIP) to improve air quality. They set up air quality monitors to determine the air quality. States and tribes use the data from these monitors to provide information to the EPA which “designates” the area as attainment (clean air) or nonattainment (unhealthy air).

What next?

By November of 2004, the EPA will have the whole United States designated as attainment or nonattainment areas. Already, 243 counties have been designated nonattainment (unhealthy). So far, there is only one county affected in the NCHPBA region. That is Kenosha County in Wisconsin. All nonattainment areas must be cleaned up. States and tribes must submit a plan to the EPA on how they are going to achieve this. More rules will be forthcoming from the EPA.

We are affected by PM2.5 and can do our part. Changing out old stoves for EPA certified stoves is one good way to help clean up the air. This is a win-win situation. Getting rid of old stoves help cleans the air. Emissions (and therefore particulate matter) drop drastically. You have made a sale and should have some profit from this. If you help the customer get rid of the old stove by taking it for scrap iron—you have provided a great service to your customer and you get money for the scrap iron. The air wins, the customer wins and you win.

For more information on PM2.5 see the current EPA web page www.epa.gov/pmdesignations There will be a new web page later this year for more information. It will be www.epa.gov/woodstoves.

Flying to Atlanta for EXPO this February? Well, we strongly encourage using the train system called “MARTA.” Mike Nordby and staff used this to get back to the airport after the June Board meeting downtown. The cost was \$1.75 per person. This is a no-brainer when cab fare is \$20.00 or more. It is also fun! It makes a number of stops but it took us no longer to get there via MARTA than it took the people that caught cabs. It goes down to Peachtree Street which is right where the HPBA host hotel is.

Scrap Iron for Stoves Attention Stove Retailers

by Randy Sauer

Offer a discount to your customer for the trade in of their old stove when they are purchasing a new stove from you. The customer gets rid of the old stove, which they believe has value. You get the stove which HAS a good scrap iron value now.

You make a sale and profit on a new stove. The environment gains, because an old stove is destroyed and a new clean burning stove is in its place.

Win—Win—Win.

Just think that old stove could become your next pickup truck!

Spring 2005 at Red Wing

The evaluations are in. People want to go back to Treasure Island...for the great room rates... for the geographic location...for the FOOD! The Education Committee is already busy trying to provide for new educational experiences. They are cognizant that those that took NFI exams in 2002 have to have their CEU numbers or must take the exam to recertify. All

efforts will be made to have each offering provide Continuing Education Credit towards NFI recertification.

Anyone interested in working with the Education Committee on programs and events should contact the Chairman, Rodger Holland.



Sponsors Acknowledged

The members of NCHPBA want to once again thank the compaies that helped with sponsorships to help keep the fees of the program nice and affordable. The events sponsors are:

SPECIALTY /EVENT

The Fire Place LTD.

Golf Luncheon

Wilkening Fireplace

Golf Refreshments

American Energy Systems

Mississippi River Cruise

Brownstone Distributing & CFM Specialty Home Products

Cruise Dinner

PLATINUM LEVEL

Hearth & Home Technologies, Inc.

GOLD LEVEL

Even Temp, Inc.

Kozy Heat Fireplaces

Travis Industries

SILVER LEVEL

Robert H. Peterson Co.

Hearth Products Controls

BRONZE LEVEL

Central Boiler



May Golfers are quite the Duffers

Despite the rumors, NCHPBA President, Denny Hildebrand, did not try to purposely harm the newly elected Chairman of HPBA, John Adams. He thought golf carts were supposed to do spins on a hill headed for a lake! Since Denny Hildebrand is an expert at motocross, why not try some of those moves with a golf cart! John Adams did remark that it was quite a "thrill," or at least that was the kind word he used. Staff is now checking into getting more liability insurance and having a videographer at the next meeting. "While well insured, we can send videos like this to *America's Funniest Home Videos*," she said, "and maybe win \$100,000." Could be a unique way to get non-dues revenue.

The wetness of that weekend did make golfing quite an experience no matter who you were paired up with. No one came back dry (on the outside). Most claimed they did have fun, despite the cool wet weather. The hole prizes were announced during the annual meeting. Yes, we did have some repeats. See the list across:

Team High Score went to: Mike and Leah O'Rourke from *Wilkening Fireplace* and Lynn and Cheryl Schrupp from *Brownstone Distributing*.

Team Low Score went to: Dan and Jeremy Parseneau from *LaCrosse Fireplace* and Brian Herzfeld from *Hearth & Home Technologies, Inc.*

Most Putts per Team went to: Adam Lee from *Brownstone Distributing*; Tim Snyder from *Snyder & Associates*; Dave Kenagy from *CFM Majestic*; and Brent Buchan from *Energy Products & Design*.

The Longest Putt this year went to Randy Sauer from *Hearth & Home Technologies, Inc.*

The Closest to the Pin went to John Adams from *The Adams Company* (HPBA Chairman).

The Shortest Drive went to Mike Nordby from *Brownstone Distributing*.

The Longest Drive went to Leah O'Rourke from *Wilkening Fireplace*. Ask her directly how she managed to achieve this prize.

Strategic Plan

The 2004 Board of Directors spent two days last September to set a new forceful direction for the affiliate. Mindful of wise stewardship of member's dues money, goals were set to move the organization forward in the areas of Education, Communications and Government. Maintaining members and recruiting new members is always a crucial element of any association, therefore new goals were set for this Committee as well.

Those that attended the May meeting in Red Wing, Minnesota have already been provided with a copy of the NCHBPA Strategic Plan. This newsletter mailing includes a Strategic Plan for NCHBPA members that were not at the May meeting. If you have misplaced your Plan and want another copy, please contact the affiliate office. If you have any questions about the Plan, contact a Board member or the affiliate office.

BUILDING OFFICIAL HANDBOOKS: order forms or consignment

The HEARTH Education Foundation developed and produced a Gas and Solid Fuel Burning Handbook for Building Officials. A flyer regarding those handbooks is included in this newsletter. Also included is an order form whereby you can purchase the handbooks from NCHBPA for yourself or any officials in your area. The Board of Directors has just authorized a consignment program so members can order up to 6 Handbooks that they will sell to their local building officials for their use.

The checks will still need to be made payable to NCHBPA and all the contact information provided as we are trying to keep track of who gets these manuals. Credit cards may be used for payment as well. Anyone who wants some of these Handbooks on consignment should contact the affiliate office. You must sign an agreement for the consignment program in advance of receipt of the Handbooks.



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