



NCHPBA

U P D A T E S

B U R N I N G N E W S & I S S U E S



Affiliated with the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association

Summer 2007

A Note from the President

Hi all,

This is your new Prez writing and I feel honored to be your leader for this coming year.

Now on to the task at hand.

The spring conference held in May had a good turnout and everyone had a good time and got their money's worth of education, food, camaraderie and board election results.

Speaking of elections I am happy to welcome new board members Brent Buchan, Joe Burns, Nate Lammers and Alison Van Lammers. In addition I extend a big Thank You and job well done to departing board members Jim Butterfield, Brian Herzfeld, Mike Hauf and Margaret Zalaznik. To these four I say, "your thoughtfulness, input and contribution to the membership is greatly appreciated." I hope you will wish to maintain involvement through committee work.

Last but not least, government. An energy board is being formed in Iowa to deal with future renewable energy in that state. NCHPBA's own Russ Dimmitt is going to attempt to get on that board. Good luck, Russ.

Additionally, there has been a recent request for members to write, call or fax their Senators' on a proposal change to the Renewable Energy & Security Act which would allow up to 30% tax credit on purchases of appliances using renewable energy source.

When you receive this type of notice, do your best to let your Senators' (or House Representatives) know your position. It takes only a few minutes and can make a huge difference.

Remember friends, people get the kind of government that they deserve.

Until next time, keep cool but think warm.

Sincerely,
Gary M. Stanley
NCHPBA President, 2007-2008



Elections 2007-2009

Elections for the Board of Directors for 2007-2009 are as follows:

Retail Category

Gary Stanley, Onalaska Stove and Stone in Onalaska, Wisconsin

Brent Buchan, Energy Products and Design in Rochester, Minnesota

Distributors/Multi-Line

Manufacturer's Reps Category

Nathan Lammers, EvenTemp Distributing, Jesup, IA

Manufacturers/One-Line Manufacturer's Reps:

Rodger Holland, Archgard Industries LLC, Plymouth, MN

At-Large:

Joe Burns, Bernard Dalsin Inc., Farmington, MN

Alison Van Lanen, Truttmann Hearth Ware, Green Bay, Wisconsin

The above represents the elections to the Board of Directors for a two year term (maximum of three consecutive allowed as per bylaws) from the membership of NCHPBA. The Board of Directors is

charged with electing the Officers. At the May 22, 2007 meeting the following were elected to serve as your Officers for a one year term. President: Gary Stanley; Vice-President, Rodger Holland; Secretary, Russ Dimmitt; and Treasurer, Denny Hildebrand.

Additionally, Chairmen are appointed by the Board of Directors. They then appoint members to their respective Committee but those appointments must be ratified by the Board. The Chairmen appointed are as follows: Education – Alison Van Lanen; Membership – Mike O'Rourke; Communications – Russ Dimmitt; and Government – Randy Sauer.

May Meeting Brings Good Things

Despite the woeful year had by many, attendance at the NCH-PBA May Annual Conference in was the second highest ever at 144. In 2006 we had 175. The Stoney Creek Inn was the site in Onalaska, Wisconsin. High evaluations were received on the facility, services, low cost and friendliness.

In 2006, the program was redesigned to offer NFI Reviews and Certification Exams before the "Funday Sunday" events and regular education schedule. This was determined after feedback from attendees that they either couldn't participate (or couldn't have fun) in the social activities and cut out of education programs due to upcoming test anxiety and need for final cramming. Since making the change from your feedback, the evaluations have been more positive about this schedule.

Once again a golf event was held with everyone that pre-registered participating in the event. Not everyone completed the entire 18 holes, but wrapped with blankets they stayed the course.

The planned Steamboat dinner cruise was changed to a paddleboat dinner cruise when the steamboat had to go out of service for major repairs. The lesson in life and any meeting planner will attest, always have a "Plan B". We did and, thus, the paddleboat cruise again.

Representative Ron Kind (Wisconsin Third Congressional District) joined us on the dinner cruise which allowed many the opportunity to talk with him about our industry in the informal setting. Topics included solid and gas fuel products, pending federal legislation and even changeout potentials (he had never heard of a "Stove Changeout"). Rep. Kind sits on the very influential House Ways and Means Committee. Although NCHPBA initiated this meeting, as Tom Pugh says, "All Politics is Local" and we must take every opportunity to get to know our legislators in advance of any crisis for the industry. Much thanks go to new NCHPBA member, Randy Nickerson (Fireside Hearth & Home in Minocqua & Eau Claire) for his help in personal contacts to Rep. Kind to encourage his attendance. Pictured with Rep Ron Kind (second from right) is: Randy Nickerson (right); Rep. Kind; TJ Morice (Marth Wood Shaving Supply); Don Kaiser (HPBA staff); Rick Sutton (Fireside House & Home, Minocqua) and Steve Magnotti (new HPBA Chairman).

The weather was not the most cooperative for the Sunday events, but with an enclosed lower level on the paddleboat, most were able to stay warm for the return trip. Other brave souls enjoyed the camaraderie on the open upper level and took full advantage of the sights along the Mississippi. Rep. Kind noted that more people come to this area on the Mississippi every year than go to the Grand Canyon. Young and old



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May Meeting

Continued from page 2

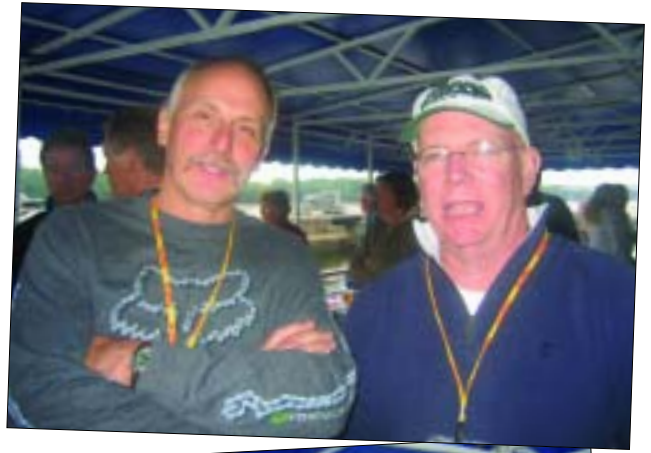
alike enjoyed the trip, well on its way to becoming the NCHPBA tradition and the very best start our annual events.

Over the years, NCHPBA has moved the annual conference to various locations between Wisconsin & Minnesota. Although the feedback on the more northern resorts was favorable for location and beauty, the costs were driving down attendance. Smaller business owners were citing it was too costly for them to come, let alone bring any staff. Thus, five years ago the Board of Directors determined that these annual events need to be in locations with more reasonable costs. The numbers grew to over 100 with the first event in a more "affordable" venue.

By law as an independent corporation, we must have an annual meeting of members. The spring event fulfills that obligation. By contract with HPBA, we must also "provide a forum for discussion of relevant local and regional issues"; as well as "develop and/or obtain educational products and programs, and provide them on a regular basis to members". The spring event also fulfills these two of eight contract obligations with HPBA. An additional obligation is to promote and offer Continuing Education Units for NFI Certification through the National Fireplace Institute® (NFI). Since NCHPBA is the sponsor for the spring program and coordinates all education offerings, we are able to offer CEU programs in all three areas required by NFI, that being: 1) Technical; 2) Health & Safety; and 3) Electives.

The spring program offers 6 Technical and 6 Business/Electives on one day and then 4 hours of Health & Safety on the second day. If you have one NFI Certification, over a period of three years (24 credits are needed to renew), you could obtain 12 hours of Technical, 4 hours of Health & Safety, and then 6 hours of Business/Electives. Then during that same 3 year period, you would just need 2 more hours of Electives to renew your certification through the CEU route versus taking the examination again. You could get those final needed 2 hours at EXPO, the NCHPBA Jamboree programs, your own manufacturer or distributor training programs or even online through HEARTH/NFI. The NCHPBA Education Committee is going to research the spring meeting to determine if offering more CEU's might be possible, since many folks with certifications have to renew for two which necessitates 16 hours of Technical and 12 hours of Electives. The 4 hours of Health & Safety remain the same for one or more certifications.

Okay, now back to the Spring Program. Education rooms for Technical and with two rooms for Electives were well attended. The infamous "Blueprint for Success" by Tom Pugh and Jerome Praught had only 3 of the 37 attending that indicated they had ever taken some of the 4 separate program offerings. As



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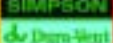
Even Temp Distributing 


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Bronze Level

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always, Dave Pomeroy had a good crowd. This year, we did not overflow the room with attendees thus allowing all time and room to conduct his hands-on portion. Comments overheard from the Generation Y presentation by Rick Dungey (MSHPBA) were that this information was very pertinent and they will make the changes needed to keep up with the evolving desires of consumers.

The Annual Meeting was held during the luncheon break. Members heard reports from the Officers and Chairmen on the activities being undertaken on their behalf.

Mike Nordby had the honor of giving Tom Pugh lifetime honorary membership in NCHPBA. This was followed by awarding Tom with the NCHPBA Meritorious Service Award for 2007. Tom has been a wonderful teacher over the years at nearly every annual meeting. In addition, his development and promotion of "All Politics is Local" is a direct benefit to everyone in the affiliate. For the first time ever at NCHPBA, Tom Pugh became speechless.

Not to be outdone, Denny Hildebrand took the opportunity to "roast" Mike O'Rourke with a "grasstops" hat. Either it was to thank Mike (aka "the bald headed Irishman") for his grasstops behaviors or all were being blinded by his very shiny head! Nevertheless, if anyone knows the whereabouts of that wonderful hat, please let Mike know. Apparently the grass was greener elsewhere?

The evening banquet was again well attended. The magic had its moments (ask John Maloney). Others were anticipating who was going to become hypnotized. As with the first time this was offered, people came to the plate and allowed themselves to help entertain the membership. Kudos to all of you! Many of us found ourselves laughing so hard, we nearly fell off our chairs. Not to try to embarrass people too much, but Chad was a GREAT chicken and Randy became quite the dancer. And, yes, Jerome was finally able to get up off the chair. There were stars, but one shines higher than the rest. AND, she said she couldn't be hypnotized! We won't mention her name, but the biggest thank you to her. She not only was a good sport, but she left no doubt of her love for her husband. You touched all our hearts.

Anyone doubting that hypnotism works, NCHPBA once again has the proof with a DVD of the event.

We also want to extend our sincere thanks to all the sponsors for the NCHPBA Annual Meeting. Without their help, we would not have the great "Funday" activities and registrations costs would be higher. They help us to provide you with great education and great fun. Ads from the sponsors are included in this newsletter as well as a list of all. Please review the list and the ads so you can take the opportunity to thank them personally when you see them. The ads will also be posted on the NCHPBA web site. Look for them.

HE@RTH Online Training is Smart, Effective & Made for You

Finding quality training without the hassle of time away from the store and expensive travel has always been a challenge in our industry. For years members of the hearth industry have asked the foundation to help them meet this challenge.

The response is the latest program from the HEARTH Education Foundation, HE@RTH Online Training, and it is off to a great start. A total of six courses on topics ranging from sales to technical offer professionals live, interactive training that they can do from the comfort of their store.

"Courses are designed for sales, service, management... everyone can take advantage of these courses" notes online training leader Rick Vlahos. "New employees are finding the courses give them information to quickly get up to speed in an industry where there's a lot to know and often no one has the time to train them effectively, NFI Certified Specialists have a great way to gain CEUs from home, and owners and managers have courses that help them keep their store profitable. I'm even getting manufacturers and distributors who are signing up their office staff so that when they answer the phone they know what their dealers are talking about."

Once considered to be the realm of the Internet-savvy and techno-geeks, online training is now simple enough for those with even the most basic computer skills. All you need is an Internet connection and speakers. Vlahos notes that while a high-speed connection is preferable, dial-up access works just

fine. He does recommend that you get one extra accessory—a headset with microphone. "Speakers will work just fine, but if you want the best experience, a headset really improves the session." Headsets are available from HPBEF at the reduced rate of only \$15 and, of course, once the course is over, they are yours to keep.

Here's what available right now:

- **Hearth 101: The Fundamentals:** New employees, sales personnel, or office staff
- **Basic Salesmanship (1.5 CEUs):** New and intermediate sales personnel
- **Selling Woodstoves in Today's Market (1.5 CEUs):** All sales personnel
- **Why My Woodstove Isn't Burning:** New installers, service techs, or advanced sales personnel
- **GasTech101:** New installers, service techs, or experienced office staff
- **Managing the Details To Improve Sales:** Owners and managers

For more information, visit our web site at www.hpbef.org. You will find the computer system requirements, course descriptions and the regularly updated schedule. You can even register online through our safe, secure registration system.

NCHPBA's HearthCheck

The HearthCheck program was developed by John Guland (Canada) for NCHPBA in 2000. Since then it has been taught at NCHPBA sponsored events, the NCHPBA Spring Meetings, HPBA EXPO and other forums by lead Instructor, Mike O'Rourke. It has gotten the attention of Rick Vlahos from HEARTH. With the potential of this becoming an online offering, Mike O'Rourke, Education Chairman Alison Van Lanen and staff have launched a major effort to revise the program and re-develop it for online training, onsite training or even a self training DVD program. These efforts intensified just before and after the July 30 Board meeting in Rochester, MN and are now in the phase of re-

designing the PowerPoint presentation with new graphics and photos.

Whenever taught, this program receives accolades as it is the basis for getting hearth products to work in the house as a system, meet codes or to diagnose a problem and recommend solutions. If you haven't participated in this course, you need to. If you have only taken it once, you need to take it again. You absorb much more the second time around. We also strongly recommend getting a manometer so you can test your new houses, your remodels and your problem homes so the result will be a house with appliances that work together, particularly ours!

GAA

The 2007 Government Affairs Academy was hugely successful! A total of 20 affiliate members (representing every affiliate) participated in an intense training academy July 8-11, 2007 in Kansas City, MO. Everyone was trained in areas such as media, lobbying, on-line advocacy tools, negotiations and hearings. The results of the 2007 Government Affairs Academy have been overwhelmingly positive. HPBA looks forward to the past participants becoming vital roles in all the affiliates.

Brian Herzfeld (American Energy Systems) found the Government Affairs academy to be extremely helpful and he has already put the practices to work. He was able to meet in person with several dignitaries at a recent expo with a political forum to promote renewable energy. He met with the following legislators individually to promote renewable energy and corn/pellet stoves.

1. Collin Peterson—US Congressman & Chairman of the Agriculture Committee & the Farm Bill
2. US Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns
3. US Senator Norm Coleman
4. US Senator Amy Klobuchar
5. US Congressman Tim Walz—on the Agriculture Committee
6. Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty

Herzfeld states that access to politicians is not the problem, but follow up with their schedulers and advisors is critical. Extra time is needed with their staffs to get renewable energy for home heating on their radar screens. They all like to promote renewable energy and HPBA can show them a way to do so.

NCHPBA's second GAA graduate from the 2007 program was Rodger Holland with Archgard Industries, LLC. Holland reported to the Board that it was intense and even grueling and Tom Pugh has a wonderful ability to find your weaknesses and "dig in". Although exhausting, he learned a lot and even by the second media video, he felt everyone had improved significantly.

Holland further states the Government Affairs academy was very enlightening and filled with great information about the way our Government works and how we are affected by it. The testimony and media training was a great skills builder and will be something I will be able to use in my day to day life and will be better equipped to help with matters that concern our industry. I would like to thank all of the HPBA staff and Tom Pugh for putting in so much effort and making it a valuable experience.

NCHPBA graduates from the GAA now number 7. This is an excellent program—totally underwritten by HPBA. It clearly shows the team relationship with HPBA and the affiliates. We need each other.

Jamboree 2007

By now you know that due to low pre-registration numbers by attendees, we had to cancel the event scheduled for August 8-9 in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The cancellation was two-fold: 1) to reduce costs to vendors when the potential benefits of contacts they came to see would be negligible compared to their expenses, and 2) reduce the costs to NCHBPA when only few of the members would be trying to take advantage of this unique opportunity.

This was a difficult recommendation from the Education Chairman to the Board. It was a difficult decision to make by the Board and in 27 years of serving associations and coordinating meetings for NCHPBA and other clients,

it was the first time a program was canceled by staff.

A survey will be developed and research will be conducted to ascertain the reasons for the sad outcome for Jamboree 2007. The vendors had reached an all time high of 14.

After contacting the vendors, a quote by one echoed the sentiments of most. It was, "Be assured of our company's complete support of your decision. Let's have a great Jamboree in 2008".

The Board did cancel for 2007, but did not determine to discontinue with Jamboree's for good.

Capwiz

No, this is not CheeseWiz® with a cap on it. This is the new legislative/regulatory program from HBPB to help ALL affiliates and HBPB with Rules, Regulations and Legislation. Allan Cagnoli, HPBA Director of Government Affairs, states that HPBA has acquired a brand-new online advocacy service, called Capwiz, for our federal, state, and local legislative efforts. It replaces HPBA's old advocacy program with a Web-based combination of tools, such as research, zip code search, communications, legislative monitoring, list building and reporting, to name a few, that will allow (and help) all of our members become effective grassroots participants, and more.

MREA 2007

NCHPBA once again had a booth (actually two) at the Midwest Renewable Energy Association "Energy Fair" held June 15-17, 2007 in Custer, Wisconsin. The evaluations from the booth staffers indicated the crowd was good, especially intense after the "Wood Technology" presentations given this year by Gary Wilkening from Wilkening Fireplace Company. Renewable

energy is fast becoming mainstream America. It is not just for the Flower Children anymore. The recent attention to global warming issues has more than a few paying attention. The numbers attest to this. Just in. This was their best ever. 232 exhibit booths, 236 volunteers, 170 workshops and 19, 500 total attendance.

Extensive directories of federal and state legislators and agencies, the media and local elected officials are also provided in this new program.

HPBA is continuing to get Capwiz running at its full strength. At the Government Affairs Academy, attendees participated in a training session in how to use Capwiz.

HPBA will be providing training sessions either online and/or onsite, for interested affiliate staff and members. If you have questions or for more information, contact the NCHPBA office at 608-829-2580.

Officers and Board 2007-2009

Officers – 1 year term, May 2007-2008

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