

**National Chimney Sweep Guild  
Board of Directors Meeting**  
April 17, 2007 • Uncasville, CT (Mohegan Sun)

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of November 2, 2006 Minutes
4. President's Report *submitted by H. Rowell*
5. Treasurer's Report *submitted by R. Brigman*
6. Executive Director's Report *submitted by M.McSweeney*
7. Legal Report *submitted by A. Garrett*
8. Consent Agenda

**DIRECTORS' REPORTS:**

- Region 1 *submitted by G. Stroup*
- Region 2 *submitted by R. Brigman*
- Region 3 *submitted by T. Rhines*
- Region 4 *submitted by J. Wharton*
- Region 5 *submitted by H. Rowell*
- Region 6 *submitted by J. Johnson*
- Region 7 *submitted by S. Pietila*
- Region 8 *submitted by R. Brooks*
- Supplier Director *submitted by R. Huta*

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Bylaws Committee: *submitted by R. Brooks*
- Long Range Planning Committee: *submitted by R. Brooks*
- Nominating Report: *submitted by P. Anderson*
- Membership Committee: *submitted by R. Brooks*
- Internet Committee: *submitted by P. Hempel*
- NFPA 54 Report: *submitted by J. Brewer*
- NFPA 31 Report: *submitted by J. Pilger*
- NFPA 211 Report: *submitted by R. Edwards*
- Foreign Relations Report: *submitted by V. Imgarten*
- Ethics Committee Report: *submitted by T. Rhines*
- Government Affairs Committee: *submitted by D. Pilger*
- Convention and Events Committee: *submitted by R. Huta*
- Chimney Academy Task Force: *submitted by G.Polakow*

9. Old Business
  - None Submitted to date.
10. New Business
  - Election of 2007-2008 NCSG Officers
  - Seating of New 2007-2010 NCSG Directors
  - Next Board Meeting: *Sunday, April 22, 8am-11am*
11. Adjourn

## DRAFT MINUTES –NOT YET APPROVED

National Chimney Sweep Guild  
Board of Directors Meeting  
November 2, 2006  
Meeting Conducted Online and Via Conference Call

President Rowell called the meeting of the National Chimney Sweep Guild Board of Directors to order at 2:55 p.m.

**Directors Present:** Paul Anderson, Ron Brigman, Randy Brooks, Kevin DeLucenay, Robert Huta, Jake Johnson, Diane Pilger, Bob Priesing, Thomas Rhines, Howard Rowell, George Stroup, John Wharton, Steve Pietila.

**Directors Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Mark McSweeney, Ashley Eldridge, Royal Edwards, Melissa Heeke, Judy Thompson, Debbie Cornelius, Larry Halprin, Esq. and Art Garrett, Esq.

**Guests Present:** Erika Schmidt, John Pilger and Bo Tasso.

**A motion was made** by George Stroup and seconded by John Wharton to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2006 meeting. All in favor. Motion passed.

**A motion was made** by Paul Anderson and seconded by Randy Brooks to approve the minutes of the September 11-13, 2006 meeting. All in favor. Motion passed.

**A motion was made** by Thomas Rhines and seconded by Robert Huta to approve the consent agenda as presented. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Submitted by Ron Brigman

**A motion was made** by Paul Anderson and seconded by John Wharton to accept the treasurer's report as presented. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Nominating Committee Report:** Submitted by Paul Anderson

A discussion was held regarding identifying potential candidates for the upcoming election.

**NCSG Member Logo Taskforce** Paul Anderson provided an update on the work of the taskforce and made the recommendation that there is no change at this time due to lack of input.

### **New Business**

#### **OSHA Alliance**

Larry Halprin of Keller & Heckman provided background information on rulemaking processes and interpretation of existing rules. He recommended that NCSG meets with Federal OSHA to explore options for cooperation.

A motion was made by Randy Brooks and seconded by Robert Huta to work with federal OSHA to develop guidance for the chimney service industry on alternate fall protection measures and to provide advanced input and comment on proposed standards dealing with fall protection. All voting in favor. Motion passed.

***Officer Intentions for 2007-2008***

President Rowell asked those seeking officer positions in 2007-2008 to announce their intentions:

President – Howard Rowell

Vice President – Randy Brooks

Treasurer – Bob Priesing

Secretary – Kevin DeLucenay and Paul Anderson

***Upcoming Board Meetings:*** Tuesday, April 17, 2007, 1-5 pm AND Sunday, April 22, 2007, 8-11 am at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, CT.

A motion was made by Randy Brooks and seconded by Paul Anderson to adjourn the meeting of the National Chimney Sweep Guild board of directors. All in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:32 pm.

**Not yet approved – Not to be relied upon as official board action.  
- End of Document -**

## **Presidents Report NCSG**

This year's convention at the Mohegan Sun is a special one marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NCSG. It is shaping up to be one of the best-attended conventions in the history of NCSG and will definitely be remembered as a very special convention by all attendees.

I am very happy to announce there will be at least 25 International Colleagues present to help us celebrate this milestone in the history of NCSG.

Over the years we have made much progress to identify what we need to be as a trade association and clarified our goals moving into the future. We have accomplished many goals this past year by bringing more benefits to members than we have ever had in previous years. An even bigger accomplishment is we have developed systems through the combined efforts of the board, staff, and volunteers to proactively increase our membership.

Last year going into the Louisville convention we saw a net increase of 95 members over the previous year representing a 9.7% increase. Coming into the Mohegan convention our total number of member companies is at 1,112 and with their employees represents 3,374 professionals. This past year we also saw a 21% increase in supplier Members, a very good sign of opportunities for our trade show and support for our trade.

Two years ago we introduced a much needed liability insurance program to our members at a time when many were experiencing problems with retaining their current insurance carriers. In short span of only two years there are almost 300 members who are using this benefit that in most instances offers more complete coverage than what they had in place before. We are fast approaching the number of participants where it becomes even more attractive for insurance carriers to bid on a group our size, and we are already seeing a decrease in insurance premiums to members.

This year's convention will be one of the largest attended in NCSG's 30-year history. There are many reasons why this convention is taking shape so well. One of those is the board had a much larger role with input on seminar offerings at this year's convention early in the planning stages. Through our membership surveys we know that educational seminars are very important to members and the number one consideration for them attending our convention. Staff does a very good job lining up presenters for our convention and the mix of seminar idea input from members, board, and staff is something we need to keep working together on for future conventions.

One of the responsibilities of any trade association is the recruitment of new people into their trade group. As our membership matures this is something we need to be more aware of and seek out entry-level opportunities to perpetuate the continued growth of the chimney sweeping trade. This year we will be introducing our Chimney Sweep Academy through a pilot program to high schools in Indianapolis. The results from this pilot program will help to shape future offerings around the country for following years.

Each year we are facing more government regulation issues on all levels; federal, state and local governing bodies. Our Government Affairs Committee continues to establish networks through EPA and HPBA on the national level representing sweeps and the issues facing our trade. It's through these networks and the Legalert system that proposed state and local legislative issues are identified to encourage a call to action for local sweeps to get involved and present their concerns before code making bodies. This is something we need to make sweeps more aware of through articles in *Sweeping* and use of our member discussion list for calls to action when proposed legislation is identified for swift action by local sweeps. The best way we can assist sweeps is by making action packets available to them on how to address legislators through a grass roots effort and a list of networking contacts on the local level in their area. This will require member volunteers to step forward and be ready to lead the charge in their localities. What's in it for sweeps is the opportunity to effect change by addressing their legislators and the continuance of being able to apply their craft. This vigil must be embraced by sweeps across the nation to deliver the message that homeowners have a right to be able to burn responsibly with the latest technology available without governments dictating what type of fuel they will have to burn. Our Government Affairs Committee will become the go to source for sweeps seeking assistance for the many issues we face as a trade.

Looking towards our Long Range Planning meeting next month, we need to identify how we can provide even more benefits and progressive services to our members. By making members more successful in their businesses, NCSG becomes stronger and able to give back even more to its members.

Howard Rowell  
President NCSG

**National Chimney Sweep Guild Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Report of the Executive Director**  
 April 17, 2007

Innovation is the new theme for the NCSG Annual Convention and Trade Show, and I think that's a very fitting description of the evolution of the National Chimney Sweep Guild over the past couple of years. As Debbie Cornelius will attest, a contributing factor to the successful growth of the Guild these past 16 months has been from former members who are telling us they are coming back because they now see significantly improved value in membership.

Since our renewed membership campaign kicked off in December of 2005 with our new *Sweeps Advantage* member benefits program, membership has grown by 14.5%. Equally exciting is the fact that our Supplier Membership has grown by more than 34% during that same time period.

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Voting &amp; Dual Members</b>	907	996	1028
<b>Supplier Members</b>	38	42	51
<b>Total Membership*</b>	971	1066	1112

*\*Total Membership also includes Affiliate, Canadian, Foreign and Senior Members*

It is also worth noting that in 2006 we began tracking our "employee members" more closely; that is, the total number of employees represented by our member companies. IN 2006, our 1066 member companies represented an additional 1954 employees – or a total of 3020 professionals. By comparison, in 2007 our 1112 member companies represent and additional 2262 employees – or a total of 3374 professionals. These numbers are significant in that, while they do not have a direct financial correlation for NCSG, they do represent the larger sphere of influence that NCSG is generating. 2007 reflects an 11.7% increase in that sphere over this same time period last year.

A significant factor continuing to contribute to our success is the NCSG liability insurance program offered through Security Group International and Stratus Insurance. Unveiled in 2005, we have seen consistent growth in the program since its inception, having had as many as 301 written policies to date.

	<b>2006</b>	<b>Through 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2007</b>
<b>New Policy Premiums</b>	\$329,880.11	\$34,821.62
<b>Renewal Premiums</b>	\$241,634.82	\$140,774.07
<b>Total Premiums</b>	\$571,514.93	\$175,595.69

According to Security Group International, based on past performance and year-to-date activity, total premiums for 2007 are projected to range between \$700,000 and \$725,000.

The other primary component getting attention in the *Sweeps Advantage* program is our supplier coupons. During the past year we have added 9 new suppliers to the program and 16 new coupons/member offers. With the increase in our Supplier Members, Debbie anticipates another substantial increase in participants and offers throughout 2007. Our challenge at this point is simply increasing the awareness of the incredible value of this program among the membership of the Guild. .

Over the past few months we have also added some additional benefits to our *Sweeps Advantage* program...

- **LABORCHEX** – Employee background screening that complies with federal laws and regulations at significant price discounts;
- **DHL Shipping** – A benefit initially requested by our Supplier Members, this program represents customized discounts with DHL, Roadway, Yellow Transportation, USF Companies, New Penn and UPS Supply Chain Solutions;
- **Best Western International** – NCSG members receive up to a 10% discount on over 4,200 hotels in 80

countries;

- **Electronic Clearing House, Inc (ECHO)** – Brand new and being introduced at Mohegan Sun, this is an exciting new program that brings understandable and affordable credit card processing services to our members, regardless of the size and type of their company. Members have been asking for this type of benefit, and ECHO will be represented at our Trade Show to answer questions and start signing members up.

We are expecting a record attendance at this year's convention and trade show. Our previous record was 610 attendees in Myrtle Beach 2004. As of April 6<sup>th</sup>, we already had 612 registered for Mohegan. In the past four years, we have not had less than 45 additional onsite registrations, so we on pace to well-exceed 650 total attendees this year.

2007 will also mark a record year for our trade show. Our previous record was again at Myrtle Beach 2004, where 56 exhibitors occupied 76 booths. This year at Mohegan we are expecting 67 exhibitors in 99 booths.

The staff has begun sifting through the data collected via our 2007 member survey. The results will be reviewed by the full board heading into our annual planning meeting in May. We had an 18.5% increase in our total number of responses over last year's survey (approximately 17% of our voting membership responded). The geographic breakdown of those responding looked like this:

	<b>% of total responses</b>	<b>% of region that responded</b>
<b>Region 1</b>	41%	15%
<b>Region 2</b>	12%	20%
<b>Region 3</b>	21%	23%
<b>Region 4</b>	4%	18%
<b>Region 5</b>	8%	24%
<b>Region 6</b>	5%	14%
<b>Region 7</b>	2%	10%
<b>Region 8</b>	7%	13%

Perhaps one of the more encouraging initial statistics gleaned from the survey was that 60.5% of those responding indicated that their gross income for 2006 increased compared to 2005. The average increase in gross income over the previous year was 18.64%. Of those who reported a decrease in 2006, the average decrease was 7.6%.

Between now and the May planning meeting, the survey results will be filtered by various demographics and more deeply analyzed so we have more meaningful data to work with in terms of identifying member priorities and trends.

The staff is looking forward to a great convention at Mohegan Sun. Congratulations to our new directors, and thank you to our retiring directors for your tireless work and dedication toward the ongoing success of the National Chimney Sweep Guild and your trade.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark McSweeney, Executive Director

## Region 1 Director Report

Recent NCSG BOD election results command hearty Region 1 congratulations to Stephen Kuber, NJ. Steve is re-joining the Board of Directors as an At-Large Director. At-Large Directors are elected for a three year term by the entire voting membership to represent NCSG nationwide. Congratulations also go out to newly elected and re-elected Directors in Region 2 -Jay Walker, FL; Region 3 -Jim Baynes, IN and Region 6 -Jake Johnson, CO.

Since the November NCSG Board of Directors meeting, new and renewed NCSG membership remains steady. Current number of NCSG Member Companies in Region 1; CT 38; DE 4; ME 27; MD 42; MA 57; NH 27; NJ 73; NY 105; PA 85; RI 11 and VT 19. I'd like to thank members of Region 1 for the opportunity to continue to serve on the NCSG Board of Directors and I am honored to welcome all to the thirtieth anniversary celebration of the NCSG.

### Regional Updates

As we reunite at NCSG Innovation 2007 and reminisce the past thirty years, please remember the friends and family of Gerry Egleston of the NY Guild, fellow sweep and computer guru, who died suddenly last month. Gerry enriched the lives of many and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

As the Chimney Safety Institute of America continues to make education opportunities available to state guilds via state guild sponsored CSIA Review Seminars, sweeps in Region 1 who are not able to travel to the CSIA Tech Center to participate in seminars are encouraged to visit [csia.org](http://csia.org) for listings of seminars that may be sponsored closer to their home state.

I encourage NCSG members to contact their respective state labor departments to find out if the OSHA 10 Hour Course Card is required for business operations yet or if one will be needed in the near future. NH has the OSHA 10Hr Course Card on the books for January 2008 compliance.

Many NCSG members compliment their CSIA CCS with NFI Certifications -New England HPBA will be hosting safety courses and NFI certification reviews & exams in NY, CT and MA at the end of this month, throughout the month of May and during the month of June. For more information, visit [nehpb.com](http://nehpb.com).

Save the date alert >>> January 23 -26, 2008. "There's a Nor'easter brewing.... don't get left out in the cold" is the buzz from the Chimney Sweep Professionals of the Northeast (CSPN). Several northeastern state guilds have committed to host next year's regional chimney sweep convention and trade show at the Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa in Mystic, CT.

### State Guild Updates

Massachusetts Chimney Sweep Guild – General Membership meeting to be held at NCSG convention site, Mohegan Sun, April 18<sup>th</sup> in the Paugussett Room, 7-9pm. MA Guild will be hosting an OSHA 10hr Course Card Training Seminar May 22-23, 2007 at the Sturbridge Host in Sturbridge, MA. Contact MA Guild President, Jean Jacobson, for more details. Visit the website, [mcs.org](http://mcs.org), for general membership meeting dates and board of director meeting dates.

New Hampshire Association of Chimney Sweep Professionals – NH Guild advises members to contact a member of the NH Advisory Committee for the Voluntary Certification Program for Installing or Servicing of Heating Fuel Equipment for compliance dates. The NH Legislature is also reported to be exploring "Contractor Licensing". You may contact me at [stroupco@verizon.net](mailto:stroupco@verizon.net) for more information.

New York State Chimney Sweep Guild – General Membership meeting to be held at NCSG convention site, Mohegan Sun, April 19<sup>th</sup> in the Paugussett Room, 7-9pm, Officer Elections will be held at that time. NY Guild's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Workshop dates are July 27<sup>th</sup> -July 29<sup>th</sup> in Mosherville, NY. Fellow guild member, Gerry



Egleston was a mainstay of the workshop – NY Guild President, Ruthie Francisco, and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Chris Prior, are putting together memorabilia of Gerry’s life “among the sweeps” to present to his family. For more information you may contact Ruthie at [Windrf@aol.com](mailto:Windrf@aol.com).

Pennsylvania Chimney Sweep Guild – PA Guild will be sponsoring a CSIA Diagnosis and Document (D&D) Course July 30 through Aug 1, 2007 in Harrisburg, PA.

Maine, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Vermont State Guilds are gearing up for a busy spring – updates in May NCSG Newslink.

### **Membership Outlook**

Following a spring-like start to the winter season, the Northeast is experiencing December-type weather as of this April writing. Many sweep companies have reported a slow January, February and March. To help protect assets during Mother Nature’s finicky bouts, their innovative response is to attend some business seminars offered at NCSG Innovation 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

George Stroup  
Region 1  
Franconia, NH  
(603) 823-7000  
stroupco@verizon.net

## **Region 2 Director Report**

Submitted by Ron Brigman

The committee for the Southeast convention has reformed as the Southern Chimney Sweeps Association. It is made up of Virginia, Georgia, Florida and the SACP (Southern Association of Chimney Professionals, comprised of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee.) They have a convention scheduled June 5-9, 2007, at Jekyll Island, GA.

I traveled to Waynesville in January, to attend the meeting of the NC Chimney Sweep Association as well as the meeting of the SC Chimney Sweep Guild.

### ***West Virginia***

No report from W. Virginia

### ***Virginia***

The Virginia guild has reorganized as the Virginia Association of Chimney and Hearth Professionals. Newly elected officers are Kevin Stewart as president, George Anderson as vice president, Jessica Weaver as secretary and Jim Bostaph as treasurer and John Briscoe as Parliamentarian. The next meeting of the Association will be in Thaxton, VA on June 16. A CPR course will be offered at this meeting.

In some parts of Virginia, an HVAC license is required to be able to pull a permit for some types of chimney repairs that chimney sweeps commonly perform. Officers of the Association have spoken with members of the Quality Gas Contractors Association, who confirmed that they neither have the training for or desire to perform these type of repairs. Meetings have also been held with the Board of Contractors Committee to present the case for chimney sweeps being able to pull permits without being HVAC certified. The issue was referred to a higher committee.

### ***North Carolina***

The NC Association held its winter meeting January 19-21 in Waynesville, hosted by member Tom Albert. The main program was an NFI Wood Certification review and testing. I understand that some showed up early and enjoyed some skiing as well.

On April 12-14, James Owens will host a meeting near Charlotte. Presentations will be made by representatives of OSHA and Olympia Chimney Supply. Jerry Isenhour will present a class focusing on diagnosing chimney problems and documenting our work. On Saturday the meeting will move from the hotel to the facilities of Whitecaps for a special sale.

### ***South Carolina***

The guild held its quarterly meeting in conjunction with the NC Chimney Sweeps Association, in January at Waynesville. Quite a few SC members attended and many took part in the NFI review and testing. Next meeting will also be held in conjunction with NC at their spring meeting near Charlotte.

### ***Georgia***

No report from Georgia.

### ***Florida***

The Florida Guild has not been very active recently but a workshop is being planned for sometime in May. Details are not yet worked out.

## Region 3 Director Report

April 2007

Numbers

	Members	CCS	CDET
Illinois	34	83	9
Indiana	32	66	17
Kentucky	18	17	1
Michigan	21	29	3
Missouri	20	41	1
Ohio	45	83	5
Totals	<u>170</u>	<u>319</u>	<u>36</u>

Region 3 Director-elect Jim Baynes takes over this seat April 17, 2007  
We will be meeting together at convention to discuss my recent service,  
Jim's future service and all things Region 3.

I will avail myself for any future service to the Board of Directors and NCSG.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Thomas Rhines  
Director Region 3

## Region 4 Director Report

April 2007

Other than we have no new members from this region, there seems to be not much at all happening.

I DO recommend strongly that as many Professional Sweeps as are able make their way to Connecticut to the Mohegan Sun Resort to join the 2007 Convention festivities! History will be made there next week.

I still wait patiently for any member or non-member to call, write or e-mail me regarding their thoughts or concerns regarding Region 4. None have done so.

I have been out of the office for many days these past few weeks. I hope you will forgive me for not being here.

I see there has been a bit of discussion regarding what some fine Sweeps are doing for their local charities and chimney maintenance. Great job, great publicity and many hands making light work. I think we all could stand to donate some of our time to helping out neighbors.

My company has for many years, judged personal income by appearances. (Don't we all?) In such cases where possible, each man and each truck is been given the authority and been encouraged to extend a helping hand to those in need. Either by charging less or by providing more product than paid for. We ask for no rewards nor publicity and in fact, ask that no one be told of our helping hand. (We can't do the whole neighborhood. ;-)

I would suggest that John Pilger and Steve Kuber, (Steve has just been elected to the Board of Directors ) have done some admirable work in the public domain. Lets talk with them and get the details and maybe bring the ideas home to be put to use.

The Mohegan Sun Convention is the next best thing to happen. Let's meet there and enjoy life, it flies by far too fast!

John Wharton  
Professional Fireplace & Chimney Svc.Inc.  
446 So. Cumberland St  
Morristown TN 37813  
423-586-2363 - Fax: 423-585-0855  
CSIA, NFI, HPBA, NCSG, WHERF, LPI, UL  
NCSG Region 4 Director  
[Jwharton@nxs.net](mailto:Jwharton@nxs.net)  
[chimney@bellsouth.net](mailto:chimney@bellsouth.net)  
[John@fireplaceplaceus.com](mailto:John@fireplaceplaceus.com)

## **Region 5 Director Report**

4-04-07

### **WISCONSIN**

At the Wisconsin Guild's January meeting there was a NFI wood Certification seminar given by Dave Pomeroy. It was well attended and had a few sweeps that traveled from outside of the region to take the seminar as well. The summer meeting will be a workshop at a YMCA camp in the northern part of the state with hands on repairs to the existing fireplaces in the cabins. One of the activities will be installation of cultured stone on the interior face of some fireplaces.

Business activity for sweeping, repairs, and relining last year were very close to the previous years activity with retail sales lagging behind activity in 2005. The first quarter of this year started out on the slower side. Unseasonable warm temperatures a few weeks ago helped many to get some repair & relining work done before the temperatures went back to a winter pattern this week. Over the next couple of weeks spring temperatures and rains have most optimistic on the service side of business. Most are still uncertain what to expect with retail sales this year. The housing market for new and existing homes is currently in a slump across the state.

### **MINNESOTA**

Demand for sweeping, repair, and liners were strong in the fourth quarter of 2005 continuing into January. Many sweeps attended the WI Guild meeting in Wisconsin Dells for the NFI wood seminar and test in January. Almost as many sweeps from MN attended as WI sweeps for this seminar. The weather pattern had most reporting that it was hard to get out to do outside work with the colder temperatures. Duluth just experienced 12 inches of new snow this week, but warmer temperatures are expected soon to permit outside work to get accomplished.

### **NORTH & SOUTH DAKOTA**

Sweeping held strong through the fourth quarter with retail sales in a slump like most of the region. Business activity is starting to pick up with warmer weather and homeowners getting outside to asses how their homes faired over the winter.

### **IOWA**

Companies with retail sales experienced lower sales than the previous year. The service side of the chimney market was more stable and in line with the previous years numbers. Most were optimistic about this years retail opportunities and expect 2007's numbers to be better than last fall.

### **NEBRASKA**

The Nebraska state guild is small but stays active promoting CSIA certified sweeps. The service side of business was slightly down to even from the previous year. Most are finally able to get out and start doing exterior repair & relines moving into spring.

### **GENERAL CONDITION**

Right after labor day business activity was strong in most all areas with sweeping, repair, relines, and retail sales. Towards the end of September the national media reported energy costs were anticipated to be lower than the previous year and really took a punch out of the fall market compared with backlogs from the prior year at the same time. Most in the region relied heavily on their sweep/service side of the business to offset slower than anticipated retail sales. No one really knows what to expect this year with retail sales, but are optimistic about early buy incentives from manufacturers. Most were in agreement the companies that concentrated on the service and repair side were able to report better numbers than those with larger retail operations. Over the past six months there has been increased interest in retail hearth shops looking to supplement lagging sales and competition in the new housing market through sweeping and service. A common question I heard from hearth shops was, "Can someone really make a profit from servicing chimneys and what do I need to get started."

Respectfully submitted,  
Howard Rowell, Region 5 Director NCSG

## Region 6 Director Report

Region 6 contains 67 members from Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado and New Mexico. This is a decrease from 75 members at the last Board Report.

The current totals by State are:

Texas	19	(down from 25)
Colorado	18	(down from 20)
Kansas	17	(down from 17)
Oklahoma	9	(unchanged)
New Mexico	3	(up from 3)

Winter weather was harsher than normal, particularly with regards to deeper snowfall and accumulation, throughout most of the Region.

Although Jake Johnson was elected as Region 6 Director, he has expressed to the Executive Committee that personal and business commitments prevent him from adequately serving in that capacity. It is recommended that Guild members throughout the Region be queried regarding possible willingness to fill the Director's seat.

The entire roster of Region 6 sweeps were again queried within the last month for input regarding concerns or problems within the Guild and/or the industry as a whole. Remarkably few sweeps have provided any input or requested any information during the last quarter. Obviously, the Region as a whole lacks a sense of involvement and/or commitment to the Guild.

No additional information is available regarding the disbanding of The Kansas Guild of Chimney Professionals and their goal to donate organizational funds to the National Guild.

Further efforts to contact any member of the Texas Guild were unsuccessful and the effort has been halted. No State organizations exist in Colorado, New Mexico, or Oklahoma.

Semper Fi!

Jake

### **Jake T Johnson**

CSIA / NFI / FIRE  
Mountain Man Fireplace and Chimney, Inc.  
Mountain Hearth & Patio  
HPBA / NCSG / BBB  
7001 Highway 73  
Evergreen CO 80439  
303.674.5377 / 838.3882  
303.956.8933 (spotty cell reception)  
303.679.1592 (fax)  
[Jake@MtnManChimney.com](mailto:Jake@MtnManChimney.com)  
[Jake@MtnHP.com](mailto:Jake@MtnHP.com)  
NCSG Region 6 Director

## **Region 7 Director Report**

April 2007

Submitted by Steve Pietila

Here are the current membership figures for Region 7:

Oregon – 8  
Washington – 13  
Wyoming – 3  
Montana – 1  
Idaho – 6  
Alaska – 1

Total – 32 (up two from last report)

There are 38 CSIA Certified Chimney Sweeps in the region.

We have had several new members, but unfortunately have lost almost as many.

The OCSA will be holding it's annual May Day Conference in Portland next month and I am involved in some of the planning. The dates will be May 3-6, 2007 and it will be held at McMenamins Edgefield where we've had it a couple of times previously. This is a great venue converted from an old county work farm to a bed & breakfast with amazing artwork throughout the complex which features a movie theater, 18 hole golf course, several pubs, a fine dining restaurant, a winery, a brewery, a distillery, and much more. Dave Pomeroy is one of the slated speakers so it should be a great program and will also include a guided to of Omni Laboratory for some education on the testing and listing of products.

A bill to reinstate the requirement that a chimney sweep have a contractor license put together by OCSA members has passed the Senate and is now in the House where there is no known opposition. It is anticipated that this will pass and put back into law. The OCSA believes licensing should be required to protect homeowners from companies without appropriate insurance and worker's compensation coverage.

Most companies in the region reportedly are experiencing a very good year for repairs and are booked out for several weeks. Sweeping is taking its seasonal downturn but there does not seem to be the overall decline in business that other regions are experiencing, at least in the more populated areas.

## **Region 8 Director Report**

April 2007

Currently, member sweeps total 2 in the state of Hawaii, 4 in Arizona, 3 in Nevada, 4 in Utah and 89 in California. That's a total of 102 region eight members. That's a one member increase over the 101 members I reported on last March. California currently has the second largest number of NCSG members from any one state! I feel and have been told that the new member benefits are a huge reason for the increase and retention of members in this region.

The "Golden State Chimney Sweep Guild" remains the only state guild within region 8. The GSCSG is holding its 27<sup>th</sup> annual convention and trade show in Buena Park, CA this July. There will be four days of education available to sweeps from all over the country.

Business was down across the board for region 8 this past year. Many say that the increased awareness of the need to have hearth products serviced and inspected has increased the inspection portion of their business throughout the region. Many more home inspectors are recommending NFPA-211, level II inspections as a way to limit their liability in real estate transactions. This is due in large part to many within the industry that frequent the monthly meetings of the home inspectors in many different areas of the region.

I will continue my efforts to increase membership within the region and make myself available to the members.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Brooks  
NCSG Region 8 Representative



## **NCSG Supplier Director Report**

April 2007 BOD meeting

Now is not the best of time for hearth and chimney suppliers. They face the after affects of a difficult 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006 and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2007, dramatically increasing stainless steel prices, a soft new construction market, and in some case hyper-competitive conditions. To elaborate, the late arrival of winter had a tremendous negative effect on sale, leading to excess inventories, layoffs, and tightening of budgets. To compound this situation, stainless steel prices are rapidly increasing. Some venting manufacturers have already announced price increases, in some cases over 10 percent, and most others surely will follow their lead. I would not be surprised to see even more price increases later in the year as projections right now are for stainless steel to go up even more. Chimney Sweeps should prepare themselves for these price increases and pass them one. Venting product production and distribution continues to be extremely competitive. There is some good news. A late blast of winter combined with high oil prices should lead to a rebound later in 2007.

I'm pleased to report, even with some difficult business conditions, booth sales for this convention are strong. The feedback I've received from suppliers indicates a great deal of excitement for this convention. Rightfully so, they expect great attendance numbers and a full tradeshow. That excitement is tempered by their disapproval of the added expense of not being able to bring in their booths without purchasing assistance from SER Exposition Services. This is an unfortunate situation that our suppliers will run into more often as our convention grows and must be located at larger convention venues.

I am disappointed to report use of the member discount coupon book is less than expected. While the program has tremendous perceived value for our members, is seems only a small portion are taking advantage of it. While suppliers are not complaining about this situation, I think it is something the board and our staff should know about.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Huta,  
NCSG Supplier Director

## **Bylaws Committee Report**

April 2007

There is no mandate by the BOD or recommendations for bylaw changes from the committee at this time.

Randy Brooks

# Long Range Planning Committee Report

April 2007

The following areas are the current “Priorities” as specified by the BOD following the May, 2006 meeting. These “Priorities” will be reported on independently by there task force leaders. Future “Priorities” will be added prior to the May, 2007 meeting. Collectively these “Priorities” are the driving force behind the BOD productivity during their term. Combined with dedicated “Dashboard” participation, these “priorities” will have a successful end.

## NCSG

- Sweeping Magazine – content, timing etc.
- School career day tabletop
- Technical Assistance
- Convention agenda planning
- New member recruitment
- Supplier Code of Ethics
- History memoirs
- Annual Survey results
- Convention attendance building
- Goals to improve membership benefits
- Relationship to regional and state guilds

## Other

- Futures Task Force
- CSIA Safety mission vs. NCSG trade mission
- Board Recruitment

Randy Brooks

## **Nominating Committee Report**

April 4, 2007

### **Official results of the 2007 Election for the NCSG Board of Directors**

Region 1      George Stroup

Region 2      Jay Walker

Region 3      Jim Baynes

Region 6      Jake Johnson

At-Large      Steve Kuber

### **% of Total Ballots Received by Region**

Reg 1 - 43%

Reg 2 - 11%

Reg 3 - 24%

Reg 4 - 2%

Reg 5 - 7%

Reg 6 - 6%

Reg 7 - 2%

Reg 8 - 6%

The only region with a contested position was Region 3. Marge Padgitt was the other candidate.

Congratulations to all the new Directors.

Respectfully submitted.

Paul Anderson  
Secretary

## Membership Committee Report

April 2007

As of the time of this report, we have approximately 1,021 voting members of the NCSG. This number is up nearly 13% from the 907 voting members we left Texas with in March of 2005 and more than a 3% increase following Louisville a year ago. As for Dues paying members, we have approximately 1,105, this is an increase of better than 14% over the 970 in San Antonio and 3% again over the 2006 convention. I am encouraged with the progress but know we have room for additional growth as well. I will come to the meeting in Connecticut with updated totals provided by the staff.

Our membership message now packs quite a punch. The coupon program, liability insurance, CSIA discounts and the many other services we provide, save NCSG members many times the cost of the membership per year. We shouldn't stop here.

We must continue to:

- 1) Expand the benefits of NCSG membership.
- 2) Find new ways to deliver more than is expected by the members, to the members.
- 3) Explore new ways keep the NCSG membership message in front of the non member and achieve a minimal attrition rate that is significantly lower than the association average.

Over the last two years, the membership committee as it previously existed, prior to the San Antonio convention, has been dissolved. The critical task of personal contact with the membership as well as the task of personal contact with the non- member sweeps has been shifted to the staff. This was done out of respect to the limited time resources of the volunteer committee members to:

- 1) Respond to the expired members in a timely manner.
- 2) Make contact with members during the business day, during the busy season.
- 3) Deliver a uniform message, have a good understanding of the multiple benefits of NCSG membership and articulate them to the member.

The development of the coupon program and staff involvement has been key, to the benefit package that already existed. Aside from the progress made in making liability insurance available to sweeps, technical support, CSIA education discounts and numerous other benefits, the coupon program put the package over the top. Any business in America that offers chimney sweeping as a service is loosing money not being a member of the NCSG.

The development of the marketing program has been and will continue to be the foundation of membership retention and expansion. This program currently consists of

direct mail. I would like to see the delivery of these direct mailing pieces included with our vender partner customer mailings. I would also like to see even more vender participation in the coupon program.

This has been a productive year for the expansion of NCSG membership. I look forward to the continued expansion of the benefits and number of members. It has been an honor to serve the NCSG membership this last year.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Brooks  
NCSG Membership Chair

## **Internet Committee Report April 2007**

**CSIA:** As you no doubt have heard the CSIA site passed the half million visitor mark this year. This is fabulous news as it shows the organization is finally becoming a serious player on a national scale, and our Internet presence is a large part of that overall success. As I write this report the site is being tweaked to be more consumer friendly, and other improvements are always on the radar screen.

This is an opportunity beyond anything we had hoped for not many years ago but is by no means the end of the story. I hope the CSIA board will continue to support the efforts of the staff along these lines and strategize how to integrate all the organization's efforts to complement this very important piece of the puzzle.

**NCSG:** The NCSG website is in the process of a much needed complete overhaul similar to what was done to the CSIA site a few years back. While the present site served us well for a starting point, it has been up and just patched together for ten years, which is an eon in Internet Time. There is a lot of potential for this site mainly in the area of member services, and we intend to bring it back as the one, central point of information and reference for all chimney sweeps.

This is a very labor intensive process and Melissa is spending as much time and energy on it as she has available considering that convention is also taking up much of her time. She is heading this project and again, I hope the board will support her fully while she takes this on.

The design has been selected, the provider is selected, navigation has been vastly improved, and the process is finally well on the way. There should be teasers available at convention. The anticipated Go-Live date for the full site is mid May.

**EMAIL LIST:** The number of members on the email list continues to grow in great part due to recruiting efforts by Outreach Coordinator Debbie Cornelius. She has sent me over 30 people that asked to put on the list in the last two weeks alone.

While the list is occasionally contentious and certainly has its ups and downs, I believe it continues to be a very valuable, up front member benefit that really helps the membership feel plugged directly into the organization. It also continues to be an almost immediate road to needed technical questions with answers, that saves Royal and Ashley countless hours dealing with members every month.

It has been interesting to watch the list participation evolve. Some of the older, more experienced sweeps are backing away from it to some degree as they see the same questions surface every so often, and they find the information on the list less valuable to them as they and their businesses mature. I think it's very important that we keep in mind that a large part of the audience is the new members and less experienced sweeps that find it to be a gold mine of good information. This is much the same as the balancing act for the Guild at large as we try to service both the older sweeps and the newer generation of less experienced members. As much as possible, I would like to see us try to keep the experienced guys around and the board member participation high so can continue to present real value to some of our newer members.

There is still the occasional round of discussion about moving it to a bulletin board format. After careful consideration, and as Internet Committee Chairman, I hope the board will not decide to go

this route. In spite of the occasional headache the “push” format email system causes, it is by far the best way to serve the membership when all the ramifications are analyzed.

**IN CONCLUSION:** Overall I think the Guild’s internet presence is doing all we had originally hoped it would and has surpassed our expectations on many fronts. With the complete overhaul of the NCSG site I think we will be in good stead all the way around.

My direct participation is substantially less than it has been in the past. Staff has taken over the websites to large degree and they are doing a great job with them. Please continue to give them your full support. My duties are mostly advisory though I continue to administer the email list on a daily basis.

The loss of Gerry Egelston will be felt by us all. He was an incredibly valuable member of the internet team and a good friend to many. We will do our best to plug the hole left by Gerry, but there will be no replacing him.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Hempel  
Internet Committee Chairman



## **NFPA 54 Report**

April 2007

The NFPA 54, National Fuel Gas Code, has met twice already this year, a January meeting in New Orleans and a February meeting in Ft. Lauderdale. The purpose of those two meetings were committee discussions and actions on proposals for the next edition, which will be in 2009. I attended both meetings and provided input on a number of the proposals. We will have one more meeting this year, October 16 & 17. The purpose of that meeting will be to hear challenges to the committee actions just completed. I will attend that meeting if it appears that there are items of interest to the Guild membership under consideration.

In the Code seminar at the Convention I will provide more information on the committee actions.

Jim Brewer

## NFPA 31 Report

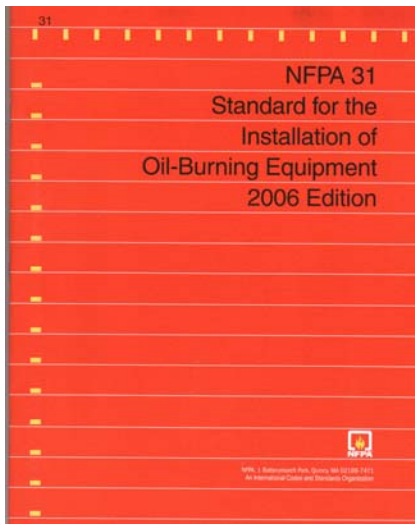
There has been not meetings since my last report. The full committee will likely meet this fall, sometime in mid-September to mid-November. There might be a Task Group meeting before then, as we're going to ask John Batey and his committee ( I am on that task force) to begin work on some combustion venting guidelines.

I have some proposed changes to the code which I will be introducing at our next meeting. I am working with Royal on the wording.

Respectfully submitted,

*John*

John Pilger



## **NFPA 211 Report**

REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: Royal Edwards

Re: NFPA 211

The closing date for proposals is May 25,2007. This is the first step towards the next scheduled edition of NFPA 211 in 2009.

Blank proposal forms are available from NFPA and there is one on the next to last page in each 211. This can be copied for multiple proposals.

## **NCSG Foreign Relations Committee Report**

April 2007

I am proud to say we will have 30 guests in attendances from around at convention. This is the second largest number of foreign guests in our history and the largest mix of countries ever.

All the attendees have been contacted by myself and the staff several times to make sure their trip is a enjoyable one.

I have recommended that we go back to our original plan of having the next president attend the ESCHFOE meeting in advance of becoming president. This will translate into higher costs to attend the conference on certain years and should be budgeted in the next cycle. Some saving can be obtained by having the executive director attend on a every other year basis.

Submitted by,  
Vic Imgarten  
Chair

## **Government Affairs Committee Report**

I will be starting a grass root effort. Since LegAlert limits my ability to monitor Local Legislation and State Regulations, I will be contacting members to join in the effort to monitor Local Legislation and State Regulations in many areas/states. I will be collecting contact names and E-mail addresses so I can form a Yahoo group. Some have already stepped up to the plate and I would like to thank those of you who have already volunteered to be part of this effort.

I will try to work closely with the membership as it seems to me they very concerned with local and state regulations. They very rarely comment or contact me regarding the House and Senate Bills that I get through LegAlert and post to the Government Affairs page on the NCSG website. However, the members can get very vocal when it comes to Local or State Regulations. I feel if I focus on working with the membership on this issue it will get them involved in the process, and position this committee for the future.

I have been working very closely with Tim Webb, Chairman of the Government Affairs, NEHPBA. This has turn out to be a great benefit to me. I will be contacting other HPBA regions, as each region in the HPBA, has their own regional Government Affairs Chairman. I feel these contact will help both organization work together for the greater good of both industries.

I plan to contribute a Government Affairs article/column in the very near future to Sweeping.

I would also like to congratulate and welcome all the newly elected NCSG directors!

Respectfully,

Diane Pilger  
Chairman - Government Affairs

# **NCSG Convention Site Selection Committee Report**

April 2007

## **Developments since November:**

Where do I start...? I'll give you the condensed version.

These have been exciting times for the convention site selection committee. The Riviera in Palm Springs, our 2008 convention site, was sold. This eventually led to the cancellation of our contract with them and our need for a Plan B. I'm pleased to inform you that our Plan B is well underway and I expect it to be finalized soon. This could come prior to our meeting at the Mohegan Sun or shortly thereafter. It was a priority for our committee to keep the 2008 convention in region eight and therefore has chosen the Grand Sierra in Reno, NV. This facility handles all of our space needs well and provides us with a room price that will please our members. Reno is easy to get to and, combined with the Lake Tahoe area, provides excellent recreational opportunities for our attendees.

During this time period, work on 2009 has also been moving forward. The site selection committee waded through options throughout the southeast and has planned site visits to Virginia Beach, Virginia and Winston-Salem, North Carolina for the first week of May. I should have more to report to you on 2009 planning by our May meeting.

Also during this time period, Jay Walker has been added to this committee. I envision him as becoming the next Convention Site Selection Committee chairman after I step down next year.

## **Plans for the next 6-12 Months:**

This committee will solidify our 2009 plans and then begin our 2010 search. As a reminder, 2010 will be located in the Midwestern part of the country.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Huta,  
NCSG Convention Site Selection Committee Chairman

## **Chimney Academy Task Force**

April 2007

1. We did our initial mailing of a flier to Indiana high school guidance counselors and have only a minimal response so far
2. We are planning to send the same mailing out again and follow up with phone calls in May.
3. Our goal is to have 3-10 students in August.

Thoughts: What we are proposing/introducing to these counselors is a really a radical departure from what they are used to. The chimney industry is for all practical purposes invisible to them. Also, this is a busy time of year with graduating seniors, etc. The only way to really judge the efficacy of this strategy is to call these guys after a second mailing. The problem is, who will call, and that will have to be decided in conversation with Mark. But if anyone wants to volunteer to make a few calls, let me know. There are about 180 counselors and it will be a pretty big task unless we have a lot of people joining in the fun.

Greg Polakow  
Chair

## **New Business**

### **Election of 200-2008 Officers:**

From the November 2, 2006 DRAFT Board Minutes...

#### ***Officer Intentions for 2007-2008***

President Rowell asked those seeking officer positions in 2007-2008 to announce their intentions:

President – Howard Rowell

Vice President – Randy Brooks

Treasurer – Bob Priesing

Secretary – Kevin DeLucenay and Paul Anderson

### **Seating of the new 2007-2010 Directors:**

Official results of the 2007 Election for the NCSG Board of Directors as reported by the NCSG Nominating Chair:

Region 1	George Stroup
Region 2	Jay Walker
Region 3	Jim Baynes
Region 6	Jake Johnson
At-Large	Steve Kuber

**Next Board Meeting: *Sunday, April 22, 8am-11am, Mohegan Sun***



## May 23, 2007 Meeting Agendas (& Annual Planning Mtg)

### Annual Planning Meeting Overall Schedule

*Please contact the Wingate Inn for room reservations & airport shuttle scheduling: (317) 279-2500 (reference "CSIA" for discounted room rate of \$69).*

- **Sunday, May 20, 2007:** If flying, plan to arrive in Indy in the evening.
- **Monday, May 21, 2007:** Board Development Workshop 9am – 5pm. Board dinner to follow.
- **Tuesday, May 22, 2007:** Annual Planning Workshop 9am – 5pm. Board dinner to follow.
- **Wednesday, May 23, 2007:** CSIA and NCSG Board Meetings 8am – 4pm. Please do not plan departing flights prior to 6pm.

### NCSG Board Meeting Agenda

Please email reports and agenda items to my attention no later than **Friday, May 11, 2007**. It is my plan to have the agenda packets posted to the dashboard by Tuesday, May 15.

Thanks,  
Mark

### NCSG Agenda – Wed. 5/23/07 – Begins immediately following CSIA Board Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of April 22, 2007 Minutes
4. President's Report *to be submitted by H. Rowell*
5. Treasurer's Report *to be submitted by R. Priesing*
6. Executive Director's Report *to submitted by M.McSweeney*
7. Legal Report *submitted by A. Garrett*
8. Directors' Reports
  - Region 1 *to be submitted by G. Stroup*
  - Region 2 *to be submitted by J. Walker*
  - Region 3 *to be submitted by J. Baynes*
  - Region 4 *to be submitted by J. Wharton*
  - Region 5 *to be submitted by H. Rowell*
  - Region 6 *to be submitted by J. Johnson*
  - Region 7 *to be submitted by S. Pietila*
  - Region 8 *to be submitted by R. Brooks*
  - Supplier Director *to be submitted by R. Huta*
9. Committee Reports
  - Committee: *to be submitted*
10. Old Business
  - None Submitted to date.
11. New Business
  - Next Board Meeting: *Budget Approval – July 19-20, 2007 – CSIA Tech Center*
12. Adjourn

## July 23, 2007 Meeting Agendas (Budget Approval)

### Budget Approval Workshop

*Please contact the Wingate Inn for room reservations & airport shuttle scheduling: (317) 279-2500 (reference "CSIA" for discounted room rate of \$69).*

- **Wednesday, July 18, 2007:** If flying please plan to arrive in the evening.
- **Thursday, July 19, 2007:** Budget Workshop 9am-Noon; Board Development 1:00p-5:00p; Board dinner to follow.
- **Friday, July 20, 2007:** CSIA and NCSG Board Meetings 8am-4pm; Please do not schedule departing flights prior to 6pm.

### NCSG Board Meeting Agenda

Please email reports and agenda items to my attention no later than **Monday, July 9, 2007**. It is my plan to have the agenda packets posted to the dashboard by Wednesday, July 11. Thanks, Mark

### NCSG Agenda – Friday, July 20, 2007 – Begins immediately following CSIA Board Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of May 23, 2007 Minutes
4. President's Report *to be submitted by H. Rowell*
5. Treasurer's Report *to be submitted by R. Priesing*
6. Executive Director's Report *to submitted by M.McSweeney*
7. Legal Report *submitted by A. Garrett*
8. Directors' Reports
  - Region 1 *to be submitted by G. Stroup*
  - Region 2 *to be submitted by J. Walker*
  - Region 3 *to be submitted by J. Baynes*
  - Region 4 *to be submitted by J. Wharton*
  - Region 5 *to be submitted by H. Rowell*
  - Region 6 *to be submitted by J. Johnson*
  - Region 7 *to be submitted by S. Pietila*
  - Region 8 *to be submitted by R. Brooks*
  - Supplier Director *to be submitted by R. Huta*
9. Committee Reports
  - Committee: *to be submitted*
10. Old Business
  - None Submitted to date.
11. New Business
  - FY 2008 Budget Approval
  - Next Board Meeting: *TBD*
12. Adjourn