

NATIONAL CHIMNEY SWEEP GUILD
Board of Directors Meeting
May 24, 2006 • CSIA Technology Center

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of April 2, 2006 Minutes
4. President's Report *submitted by Howard Rowell*
5. Treasurer's Report *to be submitted*
6. Executive Director's Report *submitted by Mark McSweeney*
7. Legal Report *submitted by Art Garrett (Keller & Heckman)*
8. Directors' Reports
 - Region 1 *submitted by George Stroup*
 - Region 2 *submitted by Ron Brigman*
 - Region 3 *submitted by Thomas Rhines*
 - Region 4 *not submitted*
 - Region 5 *submitted by Howard Rowell*
 - Region 6 *submitted by Bob Burney*
 - Region 7 *submitted by Steve Pietila*
 - Region 8 *submitted by Randy Brooks*
 - Supplier Director *submitted by Robert Huta*
9. Committee Reports
 - By-Laws *submitted by Randy Brooks*
 - Long Range Planning *submitted by Randy Brooks*
 - Membership Committee *submitted by Randy Brooks*
 - Convention & Events Committee *submitted by Robert Huta*
 - Ethics Committee *submitted by Thomas Rhines*
 - Government Affairs Committee *submitted by Diane Pilger*
 - Trade Development Committee *submitted by Greg Polakow*
10. Old Business
 - None Submitted
11. New Business
 - NCSG Corporate Logo Changes
12. Adjourn

- DRAFT MINUTES -
National Chimney Sweep Guild
Board of Directors Meeting
April 2, 2006
The Galt House, Louisville

President Rowell called the meeting of the National Chimney Sweep Guild Board of Directors to order at 8:15 a.m.

Directors Present: George Stroup, Ron Brigman, Thomas Rhines, John Wharton, Howard Rowell, Bob Burney, Randy Brooks, Kevin DeLucenay, Diane Pilger, Bob Priesing.

Staff Present: Mark McSweeney, Melissa Heeke, Royal Edwards, Manesh Rath, Esq.

Guests Present: Jim Baynes, Jay Walker, Jim Robinson, John Bordelon, Mark Putnam, John Mack.

President's Report Submitted by Howard Rowell.

Executive Director's Report Submitted by Mark McSweeney. Preliminary registration numbers from the convention are 489 total registrants.

A motion was made by Bob Burney and seconded by Thomas Rhines to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2006 meeting. Voting in favor. All in favor. Motion passes.

Region Reports

- Region 1 – Submitted by George Stroup
- Region 2 – Submitted by Ron Brigman
- Region 3 – Submitted by Thomas Rhines
- Region 4 – Submitted by John Wharton
Wharton added an update on EPA developments.
- Region 5 – Submitted by Howard Rowell
- Region 6 – Submitted by Bob Burney
- Region 7 – Submitted by Steve Pietila
- Region 8 – Submitted by Randy Brooks
- Supplier Representative - Submitted by Robert Huta
Huta added an update on trade show feedback.

Committee Reports

Membership – Submitted by Randy Brooks, adding that several new members have joined since the March 28th board meeting.

Convention & Trade Show – Submitted by Robert Huta. Mark McSweeney added his gratitude for the work of two key volunteers, Ginny Heagney and Fred Joy.

New Business

NCSG Trademarks – A discussion was held regarding the use of trademarks on membership materials.

A motion was made by Ron Brigman and seconded by Robert Huta to waive full convention registration fees for past-presidents and their spouses. Voting in favor: All in favor. Motion passes.

A motion was made by Steve Pietila and seconded by Bob Burney to accept the slate of CSIA directors as:

Eric Adair
Randy Brooks
Robert Huta
Steve Pietila
Greg Polakow
Bo Tasso
Ron Brigman
John Meredith
John Pilger
Howard Rowell
Bill Hussel
Erika Schmidt

Voting in favor: All in favor. Motion passes.

Dates for the 2006 board of directors meetings were set as May 22, 23, 24 (long range planning session), August 10, 11 (budget meeting) and November 2, 3.

The following committee chairs were appointed as:

Executive – Howard Rowell
Bylaws – Randy Brooks
Finance – Ron Brigman
Nomination – Paul Anderson
Legislative – Diane Pilger
Affiliated Trade Development – Victor Imgarten
Long Range Planning – Randy Brooks
Membership – Randy Brooks
Ethics – Thomas Rhines
Internet – Paul Hempel
History – Hans Marsen
Foreign Relations – Victor Imgarten
Canadian Liaison – Yvette and Vince Aube
Trade Development – Greg Polakow
NFFPA 31 – John Pilger
NFFPA 54 – Jim Brewer

Mark McSweeney asked committee chairs submit committee members prior to May 1, 2006. He added that a Supplier Member Code of Ethics would soon be developed. He also encouraged board members to participate in Sweeps Week, July 10-14.

A motion was made by George Stroup and seconded by Robert Huta to adjourn the meeting of the National Chimney Sweep Guild board of directors. All in favor. Motion passes.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00am.

President's Report NCSG

The Long Range Planning session board meeting is one that requires a lot of thought and work by Directors to guide NCSG into the future to meet the goals of our mission statement. It's also a very rewarding work session for the Board as this is the meeting that sets direction for committees, task forces and projects both long and short term.

Some of you have been through the LRP work session before and for some it will be your first experience with a planning session like this. It's important to remember some guidelines to help the whole board to be productive in a session like this. The most important is to remember when offering input and comments to always be thinking what is in the best interest of NCSG as a whole to move forward and offer progressive benefits and opportunities for our members. We all wear different hats so to speak as officers, regional directors, committee chairs, task force leaders, and caution needs to be observed to always be making decisions for what is in the best interest of the membership as a whole. We also need to convey our thoughts and state our case in a concise manner as we cover the many areas we will be addressing at the LRP session. We will be making a lot of decisions that will require directors to commit and move on to other areas in short periods of time. This is where the dashboard area is most beneficial as a working area between board meetings with all projects in one place readily accessible and to ask for more input when needed through the dashboard.

There will be times when we need to agree to disagree and come away from the meeting with a unity of purpose supporting decisions made by the board as a whole. On the first day we will have our facilitator work with us on board development and how to be effective as a board in the decision making process. On day two we will cover what projects we need to be working on and deciding if it is a staff, committee, or task force function as well as if we have the manpower and resources to pursue a particular project.

I'm requesting all directors to check in on the dashboard before Friday to review the Long Range Planning topics list:

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

- Convention – big picture future planning issues (Robert H)

These are 12 areas that have been identified to be discussed at our LRP session. If there are others please post them to the dashboard so we can hit the ground running for the second day of our work session.

Other points we need to keep in mind are the growing need to look for new member candidates through our high school and trade schools through table top career day events. Also through a pilot program to introduce the Sweep Training Academy to guidance personnel at secondary learning schools in the Indianapolis area. This has the big potential of turning into a program to be offered nationally to foster interest in the chimney sweeping trade as an option for students to consider as a career choice. Another area we need to look at is how we can better structure our History Memoirs and look into a secure members only area for members to put their pictures up if they choose to, similar to what we have on the people area of the dashboard.

We also need to keep a very close watch over future trends and government issues concerning efficiencies and emissions. This is an area that has the potential of having a huge impact on sweeps and we need to take a more pro active position on this issue. A good start is through what we are doing with our Government Affairs Committee and the Benefits of Burning Wood brochure. We need to look for opportunities to hold up wood as smart environmental choice for a renewable fuel when used properly and maintained on an annual basis. We also need to be promoting sweeps as the professionals that can identify systems that need to be upgraded to improve their efficiencies and emissions. The strength of diversification within the hearth industry is something we need to keep holding out to members as a smart option to position their companies for future opportunities.

I look forward to seeing you all next week along with your input. Thank you for your dedication and hard work as directors.

Howard Rowell

ESCHFOE

Slovenia 2006

With 28 countries being represented through the European Federation of Chimney Sweeps Conference (ESHFOE) and over eighty participants, there was a lot of information exchanged between countries this year in Slovenia.

There were many reports given by countries and I was surprised at how many face similar challenges regardless of their size or how long sweeps in their country have been organized. Common words came up in reports like, safety, efficiency, flue gas emissions, and modern fuels and appliances.

Emissions and working with their respective governments was common in almost all of the reports. Some countries governments chose to enforce energy standards and emissions shutting down inefficient or high emission type of appliances, including wood burning fireplaces. In Germany open fireplaces are scarce because of their inefficiency of heat gain to heat loss, while emission testing of heating appliances is mandated on an annual basis for all homes. Even the smaller countries had government agencies that are the equivalent of our own EPA.

There is still much concern by countries over the de-regulation of chimney sweeps and opening up districts to the open market. Right now focus is on having member countries submit fire safety and emission statistics to show the combined effort of government and sweeps working together and the impact it is having for the safety and environment through these efforts.

Energy supply and renewable resources was another subject that was common in reports and speaking with other sweeps. The spike in energy costs is not just isolated to the USA, it extends globally and they face similar challenges some driven by consumer and some by government regulation.

ESHFOE is growing and at this meeting voted to accept five new members from; Croatia, the UK (England), Italy, Slovenia, and Lithuania bringing the total countries represented in ESHFOE to 28 members.

There was a special recognition given to Vice President Lars-Gunnar Borjesson from Sweden retiring after 28 years of service. Many of you may remember him as a regular attendee of our past NCSG conventions and a big influence encouraging us with our education programs and training school for sweeps in America.

The rotation for their upcoming meeting was voted on. Here is what was voted on for location:
Technical meeting 2007- Hungary
Congress 2008 – Prague/Czech Republic
Technical meeting 2009- Muhlbach/Germany

When asked for countries interested in hosting the 2011 technical meeting we threw our hat in the ring and were given some podium time to express interest in hosting this meeting. There

were no other countries expressing interest to host this meeting at this time. All seemed open to holding it in the USA with the only reservation being cost of travel. For a lot of the countries travel expense would be very close to what they currently pay for a travel to a European congress meeting.

Slovenia is an interesting country, a lively port city on the Adriatic Sea with old world European villages just 10 miles inland. The country is beautiful and the people are friendly and accommodating.

In closing, there are many countries sharing similar issues in ESHFOE coming up with different solutions. The equivalent of a MIX group for chimney sweep associations on a world wide scale. We have a lot to learn from this relationship and a lot to offer back as well. I look forward to next year's technical meeting in Hungary. We are at a major crossroad to address energy and emission issues over the next two years and need to learn how others are addressing the same issues.

Howard Rowell
President NCSG & CSIA

TREASURER'S REPORT

To be submitted

Report of the Executive Director
NCSG Board of Directors
May 24, 2006 • CSIA Technology Center

This board meeting always seems to come up quickly. It has not even been two months since we were together in Louisville.

The dashboard has become rather active since convention, which is very encouraging to see. We have been using this tool for almost one year at this point, and with over twenty active projects listed I hope everyone is beginning to appreciate more and more of its potential. Ideally I would like to see all task force chairs have their projects listed as it is an extremely effective way for everyone to be reminded of the various activities that we have going on. I anticipate that we may be able to input some of our plans during Tuesday's meeting directly into the dashboard while we are all together.

While NCSG's membership growth spurt has tempered a bit in the past two months, we are still showing positive growth since leaving Louisville (currently up thirteen additional voting members since convention). Recruitment is on our list to discuss during our planning session. Beyond traditional voting member recruitment, we are developing plans to enhance our supplier membership as well as increase participation in the member coupon program.

Health insurance continues to be the big nut that needs to be cracked in terms of member benefits. While the association industry continues to find itself out of luck in terms of participation in any kind of true health insurance program, partnering once again with Stratus we are researching opportunities to provide education and services that can assist our members in identifying practical and affordable options. I hope to have more substantial information on this by mid-summer.

Melissa has done a great job in pulling together the first issue of Sweeping Magazine since convention. The May issue, already in the mail, is both timely and more informationally inclusive. None-the-less, this is still a topic that will need to be addressed during planning as prepping the magazine continues to require a disproportional amount of her time, and the lack of enough meaningful content contribution continues to be a tremendous weight on the overall quality of the publication.

As mentioned in a recent weekly report, I am beginning the process of creating a supplier code of ethics. This issue was brought to our attention during the recent convention, largely motivated by the perceived quality of some of our exhibitors on the trade show floor as well as advertisers in Sweeping. My initial attempts at identifying an existing program that we could use to mold our own have not proved as fruitful as I had hoped, but I am continuing to work on it and hope to have something substantial to review by our summer meeting.

The issue of NCSG's corporate logo is on our agenda to discuss. As I shared with the Executive Committee this past month, the board's part in this should be relatively simple. The Bylaws already provide that the board has control over our marks, so moving forward we merely need to be sure it is clearly denoted in the minutes if the board authorizes a change. I further advised the

Executive Committee that I do not think it is necessary for an organization of our size to carry more than one logo, as doing so does have a tendency to dilute the public benefit intended to be derived through the use of such an identifiable mark. Our impetus for creating a new logo remains the same as it was two years ago. That is, the “umbrella” logo is dated in terms of its representation of the modern chimney sweep. With that said, I would recommend that the board establish a group of some sort to resolve the issue and design something that the board can officially adopt and present to the membership.

We have put site selection for the 2009 convention on hold temporarily, pending some exploration Robert, Royal and I would like to do with the board at this month’s meeting. As we have reported previously, the NCSG convention is in a somewhat awkward position in terms of its size and relative space utilization. We are too large for most third-tier convention cities. We are well suited for some second-tier cities, but our competitive options are limited. We are too small to effectively compete in traditional first-tier convention cities. The cities and properties we consider for 2009 need to be governed by the type of event we agree we want the NCSG convention to be for the long-term. Are we expecting to grow to a larger, more truly national-oriented event that appeals to a broad spectrum of sweeps from across the country? Are we expecting to remain a national-oriented event with the look and feel of an intimate regional conference? Are we wanting to see our trade show grow? What role do we expect the trade show to play in our annual convention? These are just some of the questions worth considering as we determine the future direction of the NCSG convention & trade show.

I was honored to join Howard Rowell in representing the US chimney sweeping industry at ESCHFOE (the European Federation of Chimney Sweeps) earlier this month in Portoroz, Slovenia. Howard will be providing you with a more thorough report of the proceedings, but I was struck by the common threads that we share with the over twenty European nations that reported during the conference. Among the most prevalent common themes were influences from national environmental agencies, emissions, and the impact of fuel on the economy (as tough as we think we have it hear, the Europeans report paying on average the equivalent of \$6.00 per gallon!). The Europeans are attempting to work together to share their successes and experiences relative to their dealings with governmental agencies and controls they hope to develop to lower emissions from appliances. It’s hard to know with any degree of accuracy how long these development processes will take, but we are undoubtedly in a position to learn a great deal from our experienced counterparts across the ocean.

I look forward to a productive three days with all of you. Safe travels.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark McSweeney

Executive Director

NCSG Region 1 Report

State Guild Updates

Massachusetts Chimney Sweep Guild will be hosting a CSIA Review & Exam in Falmouth, Ma on June 10th, Joe Bento proctor. MCSG Annual General Membership Meeting / Summer Picnic will be on June 23rd at the home of President Jeannie Jacobson in Kingston, MA. Election results will be announced at the meeting. MA Guild members have been kept in the information loop but others may not be aware that over the past 18 months representatives from MCSG have approached the Board of Building Regulations and Standards to recognize CSIA CCS as the standard for state chimney sweep licensure. Within the guild, recent price increases for CSIA certification have renewed questions of “just what standard to advocate for state licensure” and defining the ever-confusing relationship of NCSG vs. CSIA is paramount. It is recognized that NCSG is a member trade organization; each member company has one vote. NCSG promotes public awareness of chimney related issues and represents chimney sweeps to the organizations that determine the codes to be used in the chimney profession. And it is also recognized that CSIA has no membership; CSIA devotes its resources to educating the public, chimney and venting professionals and other fire prevention specialists about the prevention and correction of chimney and venting system hazards. And as a measurement of technical expertise, the CSIA certifies chimney and venting professionals. As precursors to state licensing, some municipalities currently license chimney sweeps and in most of those, the criteria for licensing is the CSIA Certified Chimney Sweep credential... however, as far as many MCSG members feels, it remains unclear why neither organization help them move forward with their endeavor.

New Hampshire Association of Chimney Professionals hosted a very successful two day Reline Workshop in April. All materials were generously donated by Ahrens Chimney Technique and Elmer's Pipe. Instructors Steven Scally, Phil Mitchell and I were honored to work with sweeps from MA, ME, NH, VT, CT, RI, NY, and NJ. All attendees participating in CSIA's CEU recertification program earned 11.50 CEUs.

May 20th, NH will be hosting a CSIA Review & Exam, proctored by Phil Mitchell & Bob Peverly.

June 24th NH will be hosting its Annual Sweep Fest at the Mitchell Homestead. This is typically a day long event filled with stimulating seminars, vendor showcases and marvelous networking opportunities.

New Jersey Chimney Sweep Guild has a membership meeting coming up in June.

New York State Chimney Sweep Guild President Ruthie Francisco wanted recognition to go to the State Guilds of the Northeast Regional Convention Planning Committee whom all contributed so CSIA could have a presence at the upcoming NAOSHM conference. She and NYSCSG Communications Officer Frank Francisco, CSIA Director & Representative to NFPA 31 John Pilger and NCSG Technical Director & Representative to NFPA 211 Royal Edwards will be representing northeast sweeps interests at the conference in Hartford, CT – May 16th and 17th.

July 28th – 30th will find many sweeps up and down the east coast gathering in the Adirondack Mountains to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the New York Guild's infamous Summer Workshop! For more information please visit the guild's website www.nychimneysweepguild.com.

The PA Masonry School will be offering a complete course in Advanced Fireplace Construction at the Pennsylvania College of Technology June 12th – 16th. For more information call Denny at 1-800-722-9202 or you may reach him by e-mail at greatautotrainer@aol.com.

Rhode Island Chimney Sweep Guild will be hosting its first Reline Workshop on June 3rd. Rich Rua will be the instructor. A General Membership Meeting will be on June 25th at Mike McGinn's home.

RI Guild's Annual Meeting (with election of officers) is in the planning stages for late August.

Vermont Guild of Chimney Professionals hosted a meeting at National Chimney Supply in Williston, VT (new officers were elected).The Guild is starting a membership drive and looking to renew activities.

A mid-June CSIA Review & Exam hosted by VT Guild at National Chimney Supply is in the planning stages.

Membership Outlook

Business growth is strong in the Northeast thanks to last season's insatiable appetite for supplemental heat and our nation's fuel debacle.

State Guild growth has been renewed in Maine, NH, VT and RI.

Current numbers of NCSG Region 1 member companies have remained fairly static since my last report: CT 34; DE 5; ME 20; MD 42; MA 55; NH 24; NJ 71; NY 90; PA 85; RI 10 and VT 24.

Respectfully submitted,
George Stroup
NCSG Region 1
Franconia, NH
stroupco@verizon.net

NCSG Region 2 Report

May 11, 2006

Greetings to all Guild members in Region 2.

There are a couple of things on my mind, at the moment, which I hope all of you, as members, will also be interested in. For one, many of us attended the NCSG Annual Convention and Trade Show in Louisville recently. As board members, we are always asked to critique the convention with the goal of improving the next event. As members your thoughts on this are important. If you attended the convention and have any thoughts about the location, the facility, the program or trade show or anything else, please share them with us. We want to hear what you liked and what you did not like. And we want to hear what you may wanted to have seen but did not. Please share anything that you might like to suggest or comment on concerning the convention. Even if you did not attend the Louisville convention, you may have thoughts based on past experiences. Or if you did not attend for a specific reason, let us know why.

If you were in attendance at the general membership meeting in Louisville, you may recall that there was a discussion about the NCSG logo or logos. We have the original logo that I'm sure you are familiar with. We affectionately call him "Umbrella Man". But we also have a newer, alternate logo. You may or may not have seen this one. It is a more modern, corporate looking logo based on the twisted chimney that adorns the Tech Center. It was created to be used primarily on correspondence with others that are outside of the chimney service industry. For example, government officials, media and key people in industries etc.. Some members feel that the new logo has become commonly used beyond this and has overshadowed the original logo. Due to the concern over this, it has been a subject of discussion among the Board of Directors and will be on the agenda for the upcoming Board meeting. It appears likely that a committee or task force will be put together to consider this issue and make a recommendation as to what the course of action should be. Some of the choices are, keep both logos and use them as intended. Do away with one of them and have only one. Create one or more new logos to be used for different purposes. One thought is that we like Umbrella Man but he seems a bit old fashioned. So maybe he could be updated so as to be acceptable as a logo presented to the public and for organizational correspondence and also be suitable for the more "corporate" type of correspondence.

If you have interests in either of the subjects above and would like to express your thoughts, please pass them on to me. You can e-mail or call me or you could send them directly to the office by the same means. I look forward to hearing from you.

Ron Brigman
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Region 3 Report

May 2006

Recent weather has proved unsuitable to sustain exterior masonry and repair work. This has been true over the entire region.

Somewhat perplexing during typically slower schedule. It can only get better.

Overall positive response from Louisville convention. Some first timers got a lot from the seminar offerings and plan to continue

attending and bring more employees. The "Monopolize Your Marketplace" class has at least one new devotee and is working

with them to improve his business. On the subject of volunteers it has been suggested to try and get local members involved

to do some of the early needs with set-up etc. Request for more serious business content to seminars.

One sweep bemoaned

the dry delivery of a couple of technical presentations. I was in one of those too! A dual member felt hostage to the hotel for the

extra cost for tables / electricity etc. at their booth. West Tower accommodations due to remodeling and charges to use the

exercise room were minor negatives. With the good turn out at the Fireplace Restoration workshops and masonry workshops

at several industry conventions some sort of class at the Technology Center would likely be well attended.

Still too few using or knowing about the coupon program and other newer member benefits. The insurance program is being

well received with more companies applying for coverage. There appears to be a good understanding and acceptance of the

wisdom behind the new price structure for Certified Chimney Sweeps. I found no one splitting ranks or certifying fewer sweeps.

Regional membership numbers (+/- from last report)

| | NCSG | CSIA |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Illinois | 36 +1 | 80 |
| Indiana | 33 -1 | 66 -2 |
| Kentucky | 17 | 18 +4 |
| Michigan | 21 -1 | 27 -2 |
| Missouri | 23 -1 | 45 |
| Ohio | 41 -1 | 97 -2 |
| | <hr/> 171 | <hr/> 333 |

Annual meeting and workshop for Midwest Chimney Safety Council July 14-16, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Rhines

Region 4 Report

NCSG REGION 5 REPORT

WISCONSIN

Four weeks ago work loads were showing signs of a steady ramp up into spring. A cold rainy weather pattern set in the last couple of weeks in the region and slowed things down quite a bit all the way around. The good news is that next week the weather will break out of the 40's and rainy, turning to sunny skies and high 70's pattern. Much more spring like weather for this time of year and activity is expected to increase back to regular activity.

The Wisconsin Guild has a hands on summer workshop planned for June 9-12 at a YMCA camp in northern Wisconsin. There are about 18 fireplaces in the cabins that are in need of repair. The scope of repairs will be installation of the new Ahrens masonry insert, new Valor retrofit gas fireplace system installed into a prefab wood burning fireplace, and other exterior repairs as well.

MINNESOTA

Mixed reports depending upon area of the state. Experiencing a cold weather pattern for this time of year and below normal backlogs for this time of year. Looking for a break in the current weather pattern of the last couple of weeks.

North & South Dakota

Cleaning and repair activity is slowly building moving into spring. Business is a little softer than usual and harder to acquire than last year same time.

Iowa

Slightly less cleaning activity and gearing up for what is expected to be another robust year for stove sales going into summer and fall this year.

NEBRASKA

Nebraska state guild is small but stays active promoting CSIA certified sweeps and issuing white paper to inspectors, fire marshals, ins. Adjustors. Business backlogs have shrunk and is off a bit from preceding year's spring time activity.

GENERAL CONDITION

Business activity has been less moving into spring with most attributing it to the recent cold rainy weather pattern for this time of year. With the weather pattern for the region finally breaking next week most are optimistic that business will increase back to normal levels for this time of year.

Respectfully submitted,
Howard Rowell
Region 5 Director NCSG

Region 6 Report

There are 85 Certified Sweeps and 60 members of NCSG. Other than the Texas Guild meeting in July that I reported last meeting, there is no new activity in Region 6.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Burney
Region 6 Director

NCSG Region 7 Director's Report
May 2006
Submitted by Steve Pietila

Here are the current membership figures for Region 7:

Oregon – 10
Washington – 10
Wyoming – 2
Montana – 0
Idaho – 5
Alaska – 1

Total – 28 (up three from last report!)

There are 38 CSIA Certified Chimney Sweeps in the region.

I recently attended the annual May Day Conference of the Oregon Chimney Sweep Association, and proctored one exam there. I also was given the opportunity to display membership recruitment packets at the table-top “trade show”. Several folks picked up packets and I explained many of the new benefits. It was probably the most encouraging response I’ve ever gotten from folks.

A new hot issue and topic of discussion which the Oregon Sweeps would like the CSIA or NCSG to address is a new administrative rule from the State of Oregon which states an individual that only performs chimney sweeping no longer is required to have a contractor’s license. One would still be required to perform inspections or repairs. We believe this is a problem since a Level I inspection is required with a chimney sweeping and also is not good for the consumer. We would like to see a position statement addressing this issue from either the CSIA or the NCSG.

With the impending implementation of PM 2.5 air quality standards there will again be areas in Oregon that will not be in compliance. There is currently a locally sponsored stove change-out program being conducted just outside of Eugene, Oregon. Contact was made with the State DEQ official in charge of this at the HPBA Expo in Salt Lake City, and I look forward to developing that relationship on behalf of the NCSG and OCSA.

Next years May Day Conference will be held in Portland, Oregon and I will be assisting in putting the program together. I would like to see some involvement this year from the NCSG or CSIA staff if possible. I will also be contacting John Pilger to see if he would be available to conduct a seminar on oil flue servicing and perhaps relining.

Region 8 Report

May 2006,

Currently, member sweeps total 2 in the state of Hawaii, 3 in Arizona, 3 in Nevada, 4 in Utah and 92 in the great state of California. That's right a grand total of 104 region eight members. That's a three member increase over the 101 members I reported on last March. California currently has the 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 26th annual convention and trade show in Sacramento, CA this July. There will be four days of education available to sweeps from all over the country.

The wood-stove shortage affected sweeps this last season that sell and install hearth products. Many say that the increased awareness of the need to have hearth products serviced and inspected has increased 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

May 2006 BOD meeting

I stated in my last report “Continued high Fuel Oil, Natural Gas, and Propane costs are expected to continue to drive demand for alternative fuel heating.” To date this expectation has ringed true. Early buys are up and this off season has been a time of preparation for a fall which, if not equal to last year, will be in the same range.

The feedback from suppliers from the Louisville tradeshow has been generally good. While traffic in the tradeshow ebbed and flowed, a number of suppliers told me of having “their best show ever”. There is much anticipation for next year at Mohegan Sun.

Repeated from my March report:

There has been some progress on the clean burning prefabricated open fireplace front. Hearth and Home Magazine issued a challenge in the form of a category in their VESTA award program to the hearth industry to develop such an appliance. While there were no entrants this year, a number of fireplace manufacturers reported they have fireplaces in the works for this category. Considering this news, I expect to see new models of next generation of prefab open fireplaces in the marketplace next year. Should this new type of fireplace come into the marketplace, I feel it is the type of product the NCSG should promote to its members.

The coupon program is entering its second year with Suppliers who participated in the coupon program committing to re-up. While I have heard little from suppliers on the success of the NCSG member coupon program this repeat support indicates that while it may not be a home run success for suppliers, it is not a negative.

The subject of a supplier code of ethics has been brought up and I support the concept. While little has been done on this front since convention, this will be a priority for the next few months. I would like to enlist the input of a small number of leading suppliers to shape this policy.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Huta,
NCSG Supplier Director

Bylaws Committee

May 2006

Randy Brooks

There are no recommendations for bylaw changes at this time.

May 2006 Long Range Planning Committee Report

Randy Brooks

These are areas that the committee specified as “Priorities” for this years meeting.

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

CSIA

- Hearth Sales Designation
- Alternative certifications
- Updating CCS exam
- Online course offerings
- Class offerings back to the regions – at regional events, etc
- Accepted Product Program marketing
- Future marketing plan for certification
- Requiring CEUs for re-certification
- CDET
- Benefits of wood burning
- Sweeps Week involvement

Other

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

Membership Report, May 2006

With the member numbers moving upwards so rapidly, it's hard to give an accurate report. As of the date of this report, 5-12-06 we have 1011 voting members and 1090 dues paying members. We still have post card mailings to send out over the summer and look forward to adding benefits to membership at the LRP meeting. Membership SOP is on the dashboard.

Randy Brooks

NCSG Convention and Events Committee Report

May 2006

Louisville Wrap-Up

We had a solid convention which was well received by nearly all of our attendees. There were a few places where there was room for improvement and the lower than expected attendee turnout was a disappointment. More details on the Louisville convention will be presented at the BOD meeting.

Developments since March

Since March this committee has focused on the promotional timeline for NCSG conventions and that is in the process of being modified.

Plans for the next 6-12 Months: *Unchanged from March Report*

As determined but the current rotation, we are already making plans for 2009 in the southeastern portion of the country. That search will begin in earnest sometime this summer.

Considering the convention rotation dictates the NCSG convention and tradeshow will return to the Midwest in 2010 and there is a natural draw for us to bring our convention back home to Indianapolis, the site selection committee will also begin preliminary research for the 2010 convention this year.

Convention program assessment:

The comments posted to the dashboard which critiqued and praised the Louisville '06 convention were excellent and much appreciated. This type of discussion is important for the continued improvement of our convention. I want to hear more from the board and the membership in terms of what makes a great convention to them. Without the budget to do in-depth professional focus group or polling work the convention committee needs input even if it is a bit informal.

The following bears repeating from my November Convention Committee Report:

We do have a problem I think the NCSG will need to deal with within the next 3 to 5 years. We host a convention which asks a great deal from the properties which host us. Simply put, we do not sell enough room nights compared to other events which demand the same amount of tradeshow and breakout space we demand. We will either need to increase the number of room nights we sell, or trim the size of our convention space needs if we are to have plenty of site options in the future. After an extensive search for a west coast site we had only three options, and one of them simply was not viable once we had a chance to see it.

I would add that from a site selection standpoint, the NCSG site selection committee needs to have more flexibility with regards to rotation. While the current rotation has given our convention program stability which was much needed. I think it is time to discuss other rotation

options. I have no recommendations at this point in time for a solution; however, we must act to give ourselves more options for any given planning year. Also, I would like to see us bring into our list of city options locations which skirt our traditional regions. Should we not be able to deal with our large space requirements relative to our number of room nights purchased problem, flexibility as to which part of the country we will go to in any given year will help with finding good sites at better prices and in turn help with the success of those conventions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Huta,
NCSG Convention and Events Committee Chairman

Government Affairs Committee Report

Mark Putnam and myself met with John Crouch from the HPBA and Larry Brockton of the EPA, while at the NCSG Convention in Louisville. We discussed several issues including the non-attainment areas. One thing John Crouch mentioned, is that there is a HPBA Government Affairs Academy. Information on this is as follows.

Applications for the new HPBA Government Affairs Academy is set for July 23-26, in Lakeville, MN. HPBA's most comprehensive training seminar ever will target approximately 20 of the most committed volunteer leaders in our industry and train them in local lobbying, media management, preparing and delivering effective testimony, installer licensing, and air quality issues. Travel, lodging and meal expenses will be covered by HPBA. For an application, contact your local affiliate office or Vanessa Golembeski at golembeski@hpba.org. Applications must be received by June 1.

I would like to see someone attend this Academy if space is available. Needs to be done ASAP! There is no expense, other then time involved. So I think I'm within budget on this request :p))

I have put in place a committee. This committee will be working together to address issues as they arise. The members are: Jim Gillam, John Wharton, Ruth Francisco, Kim Stroup, Mark Putnam and myself. I do not see more then one or two additional members being added to this committee in the future.

I plan to work with Melissa in the near future to arrange a way that we can update the NCSG Website in a timely matter to reflect current legislative actions taking place in the different states, without consuming too much of anyone's time.

I have also finished the SOP for the Government Affairs committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Pilger

TRADE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

I have reconvened this committee in order to revive the project that had been set aside during the CSIA financial restructuring last year.

That project was one to recruit HS seniors into the sweeps trade via courses they would take at the Technology Center. We made considerable progress down this path but ultimately dropped the project when the Board decided to cut back the educational offerings.

It's time to revive this project and we will shoot for a starting date of August of 2007. We need considerable lead time to restructure the program. We also need a full year's lead time to have any hope of recruiting qualified and interested students. Usually one begins courting HS seniors in the fall of their senior year.

Fortunately, we have a good rough draft of a flier already and it should not take too much work to put on the finishing touches and have a final recruitment product available for this fall.

The outcome of this project should be to create qualified, intelligent, trained entry level sweeps that NCSG members can hire right out of the school into their businesses.

Current committee members:

Ashley Eldridge

Mark McSweeney

Melissa Heeke

Greg Polakow