

**National Chimney Sweep Guild
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, July 19, 2005
Galt House Hotel & Suites • Louisville, KY**

AGENDA

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | <i>Steve Pietila</i> |
| 2. Roll Call | <i>Paul Hempel</i> |
| 3. Approval of May 25, 2005 Minutes | <i>Paul Hempel</i> |
| 4. President's Report | <i>Steve Pietila</i> |
| 5. Treasurer's Report | <i>Ron Brigman</i> |
| 6. Executive Director's Report | <i>Mark McSweeney</i> |
| 7. Legal Report | <i>Art Garrett</i> |
| 8. Directors' Reports | |
| • Region 1 | <i>George Stroup</i> |
| • Region 2 | <i>Ron Brigman</i> |
| • Region 3 | <i>Thomas Rhines</i> |
| • Region 4 | <i>John Wharton</i> |
| • Region 5 | <i>Howard Rowell</i> |
| • Region 6 | <i>Bob Burney</i> |
| • Region 7 | <i>Steve Pietila</i> |
| • Region 8 | <i>Randy Brooks</i> |
| • Supplier Director | <i>Robert Huta</i> |
| 9. Committee Reports | |
| • Long Range Planning | <i>Howard Rowell</i> |
| • By-Laws Committee | <i>Howard Rowell</i> |
| • Membership Committee | <i>Randy Brooks</i> |
| • Trade Development | <i>Greg Polakow</i> |
| • Convention Committee | <i>Robert Huta</i> |
| • Government Affairs Committee | <i>Mark Putnam</i> |
| • NFPA 31 | <i>John Pilger</i> |
| 10. Old Business | |
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| 11. New Business | |
| • FY 2006 Budget Approval | <i>Ron Brigman</i> |
|
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| 12. Adjournment | |

DRAFT MINUTES ONLY

**National Chimney Sweep Guild
Board of Directors Meeting
May 25, 2005
CSIA Technology Center, Plainfield, IN**

President Pietila called the meeting of the National Chimney Sweep Guild Board of Directors to order at 11:10 am.

Directors Present: Paul Anderson, Ron Brigman, Randy Brooks, Steve Pietila, Howard Rowell, Mark Putnam, George Stroup, Robert Huta, Hans Marsen, Paul Hempel

Directors Absent: John Wharton, Bob Burney, Thomas Rhines

Staff Present: Mark McSweeney, Judy Thompson, Melissa Heeke, Royal Edwards, Ashley Eldridge and Art Garrett, Esq.

Guests Present: Renee Brigman, Bo Tasso, and John Meredith

A **motion** was made by Mark Putnam and seconded by George Stroup to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2005 National Chimney Sweep Guild board of directors meeting. Motion passes unanimously.

President's Report: Submitted by Steve Pietila.

Treasurer's Report: Submitted by Ron Brigman. A motion was made by Paul Anderson and seconded by Mark Putnam to accept the treasurer's report as presented. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Submitted by Mark McSweeney. A discussion was held regarding progress on launching the online database. He also provided an update on insurance coverage available in New Hampshire and Rhode Island.

Legal Report: Submitted by Art Garrett, Esq.

Region 1 Report: Submitted by George Stroup.

Region 2 Report: Submitted by Ron Brigman.

Region 3 Report: As submitted by Thomas Rhines.

Region 5 Report: Submitted by Howard Rowell.

Region 7 Report: Submitted by Steve Pietila.

Region 8 Report: Submitted by Randy Brooks. He added that NCSG's partnership with liability insurance carrier has proven beneficial for members within the region.

Supplier Report: Submitted by Robert Huta

Long Range Planning: Submitted by Howard Rowell.

By Laws: Submitted by Howard Rowell.

Governance: Submitted by Paul Hempel. He added that regional contacts are the key to succession planning.

Membership: Submitted by Randy Brooks. He provided an update on membership retention procedures and the development of the supplier coupon book.

Trade Development: As submitted by Greg Polakow.

Ethics Committee: As submitted by Thomas Rhines.

Convention & Events: Submitted by Robert Huta.

NFPA 31: As submitted by John Pilger.

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

Meeting adjourned at 1:10pm.

President's Report
Chimney Safety Institute of America
National Chimney Sweep Guild
Prepared for the July 2005 meetings
Louisville, Kentucky

It hasn't been that long since we all gathered in Indy and discussed some of the major issues facing the two organizations and how we plan to address them. Certainly the most challenging has been coming to grips with the financial realities of the CSIA and the certification and education programs. The finance committee has done an exemplary job completing a thorough analysis of what it actually costs the organization to operate its programs (this same process has been applied for the NCSG) and it has developed budgets that are based upon the objective findings of that analysis. Not only has this given us a plan to address the current cash flow crunch, it has included both board and staff in appropriate roles that should serve us well into the future.

The budget we have laid out is not a retreat from the missions of the organizations in any way, and in fact relies on some significant growth in NCSG membership and a more cost based fee structure for CSIA Certification. It is in fact applying the very principles we need to apply in our own businesses and what we've been preaching to our membership and constituents for years. It is important for each board member to understand the thought and logic that went into this process and we must come out of our meeting with full support for the budget from the entire board. It is very important that each board member reviews the budgets and understands them so that you can make an informed decision in giving your support. Simply going with the majority is never acceptable, and certainly not in this very important area. Remember, this is not our money, and we are elected and/or appointed as stewards over these resources. Formulate any questions you have whether they are general questions or specific to a particular line item.

As one who remains very positive about the future of both organizations, it seems almost ironic that we may face opposition to some of what we choose to do. However, I believe that if it comes it will be from a small (though perhaps vocal) part of our constituents. It will be up to the board and staff to make a strong, honest and clear case for the decisions we are making. If we do this I believe those who truly care and are committed to the missions of the organizations we understand the tough choices we are to making. I believe we are continuing to make great progress in adding value to both NCSG membership and CSIA Certification. We are establishing relationships with other national organizations and agencies that give us great strategic position in furthering the cause of the American chimney sweep and their role in the safety of the consuming public. There is certainly room for improvement in the areas of effectiveness and efficiency both. But I believe that as the role of the board evolves and the staff leadership rises to the challenge that we will successfully navigate this path and that both organizations will be the better because of it. But this won't happen by the board just sitting back and watching the staff take over more and more responsibility – though to a large extent the staff and our Executive Director in particular will be playing a more central role in leadership than in recent years. The board must step much more into an active strategic planning role and develop individual board members with the skills, character and time required to successfully carry out this type of work. Much of this will be done between board meetings and frankly (almost by default) will be conducted by the Executive Committee. There is absolutely no intent to exclude any members of the board from this process, but the reality is that those who are serving on the Executive Committee have demonstrated their willingness, availability and commitment to accomplish this and most others have not yet done so. Now before anyone gets their panties in a not, know that there will soon be room on the EC. My term ends (as do all others) at convention in March of next year – I don't intend to run for any office at that time. Any of you

may run for these offices. If this is your desire or intention, now is a good time to “show your mettle” so to speak. I certainly do not want to minimize the role active board members and committee chairs and members play in moving us forward. We could not have accomplished what we have to date if it wasn’t for individual board members giving up time from their businesses and their families to spend on board projects and attend meetings. And there is still much volunteer work and many hours that will be put in by quite a number of you. I feel very fortunate and often am humbled by the dedication and effort you have put forth to this point. Some of you are new to the board and are waiting to get your bearings. Well, I invite and challenge you to start testing your wings.

Here they come again with some additional comments in red! The stated goals I have for the organizations this year are:

NCSG

- Improved communication system with staff (Executive Director) to provide timely feedback on progress toward written goals & objectives
The dashboarding feature we now have via the internet is a useful tool that should getting us further toward this goal. WE need to make sure that each of our stated (written) goals are included so we may follow our progress toward them.
- 1200 voting member companies (by convention 2006) The primary responsibility of achieving this has been shifted to staff. They are embracing it and I believe should be rewarded if this is achieved.
- 250 participants in insurance program (by convention 2006) I believe this is a very significant addition to the member benefit package and hope we can achieve this benchmark. I think continued promotion and provision of testimonials from the rank and file will help this effort.

CSIA

- Certification standard raised – including requirements for CEUs for recertification I believe we must make progress in this area, it is directly related to the perceived value of our credential by the “affiliated trades”, general public and those that hold the credential. I have spoke with John Pilger the Chair of the Certification Committee and given him the direction I want us to take.
- Completion & adoption of Product Acceptance Program policy **DONE!!**
- Solid and realistic plan to address financial issues of CSIA **DONE!!**

At our planning meeting two years ago the three primary issues we identified for the two organizations were:

NCSG:

- Member benefits My comments above, and the addition of the coupon program begun by Thomas Rhines as committee chair and brought to near completion by Randy Brooks and the committee is very promising.
- Market saturation of membership / increased recruitment This challenge has been given to and accepted by Mark and his staff.
- Development of business training courses To be honest, I’m a bit disappointed with response to our current offerings as well as the lack of expansion of the MIX Groups. I think part of the problem is that there is over-saturation of Tom Grandy’s material. I think we need to expand our thinking in what we are offering in this area as well as to see staff take a more active role in the promotion and expansion of the MIX Groups.

CSIA:

- Develop a legal fund for defending our logo *The lack of response to this has been to me especially disappointing. For as much time complaining about logo violators as folks do, I think they really need to step up and put their money where their mouth is. The change in fee structure will address some of this, but if we are to continue taking legal action in the form of civil lawsuits we must have the type of financial support from the chimney sweeps themselves that this fund should demonstrate.*
- Promote further education above and beyond initial certification *This is in the hands of the certification committee.*
- Pursue grant money *I have recently asked Greg Polakow, the fundraising committee chair to concentrate his efforts on this and corporate sponsorship.*

At the board meeting in Myrtle Beach (2004) I indicated a list of priorities upon which I would focus my efforts and also to direct the resources of the organizations. There were:

NCSG

1. Membership recruitment & retention *(performed below my expectations)*
2. Business building training *(met my expectations)*
3. MIX Groups *(performed ok, but results were below my expectations)*

CSIA

1. Marketing – Branding *(continues to be a challenge – Product Acceptance Program may provide a boost)*
2. Refocusing on the consumer *(slower than I had hoped, but meeting expectations)*
 - a) Chimney Check (or something similar)
 - b) Home inspectors
 - c) Realtors
 - d) Insurance adjustors
 - e) Fire marshals
3. Technology Center *(some priorities have changed, need to revisit this one)*
 - a) Testing of products
 - b) Facilities rental
 - c) Classes for related industries

For Both Organizations

Board development *(slow but steady progress being made)*

The comments in parenthesis & italics are my comments on how I think we did. Also in Myrtle Beach I identified the following goals:

1200 members of the NCSG. One of the greatest perceived benefits of membership will be the array of business building resources and training the organization has made available to it's members. Five or six active Sweeps MIX Groups.

For CSIA a new marketing campaign, and a some research into the feasibility of branding. The goal is to increase consumer awareness about the need for CSIA Certified Chimney Sweeps. The effectiveness will be evidenced by higher volume of calls to the 800

number, website activity and use of search engine, and personal testimonials from Certified Chimney Sweeps. The C-DET program will be revitalized and a fresh and broader marketing effort will be made. Ongoing campaigns targeting homeowners, home inspectors, realtors, insurance adjustors, and fire marshals with sufficient resources made available. Greater utilization of the Technology center including product testing, classes for related industries and meeting space rental.

As I review these, I continue to see these as necessary achievements to fulfill our mission and move the organizations forward in the direction I believe we must go. I challenge you to ask yourselves how you might contribute to help us succeed in realizing these aspirations. I believe that we are making progress and that the staff is focusing the appropriate financial and human resources to get us there. But they can't do it alone. The board must also step up, and that includes each individual doing their part to contribute to the effort. My thanks go out to those of you who have faithfully given so much of your time and effort already. You are examples for all, and set a high standard we can all strive for. Let's all take a deep breath, look forward and press on!

Respectfully submitted,

Steven R. Pietila
President

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NCSG & CSIA Boards of Directors Meeting
July 19, 2005 • Galt House Hotel & Suites • Louisville, Kentucky**

As you know, it has not even been a full two months since our last meeting. With that said, I don't anticipate that this report will be quite as long as others you have become accustomed to seeing from me. That should be good news!

The week following our last board meeting and planning meeting, the professional staff met for its planning meeting. In light of the conversations that took place at the board meeting relative to CSIA, a good portion of the staff's meeting centered around the same topic, following a similar outline as that used for the board discussion. The staff understands that significant changes need to be made in our business model, and those changes are likely to impact our administrative operations.

The staff has begun its own self-evaluation process. I had hoped to have that completed by the end of June, however a number of obstacles have delayed the project. Without getting into the details, as the majority of the obstacles are personnel related, the staff executive team is committed to having its portion of this process wrapped up by mid-July so that the final elements are in place by the end of the month.

This "Staff Duties" project, along with four additional public action plans, have been posted to the new NCSG/CSIA Dashboard. As I have indicated in a couple of my Executive Updates, I recognize that the dashboard will take some getting used to for everyone (staff and board alike). The question has been asked about the usefulness of the dashboard versus traditional email correspondence. Currently, there is only a small handful of projects that have been posted to the dashboard. However, as we all get more comfortable with it, we will add more to it. We could easily have 20 different active projects or more posted at any given time, and the equivalent level of communication via email would cause an excessive amount of clutter in your mailbox. The idea is that you should be able to logon to the dashboard at any time (24 hours a day) and instantly get an overview of the activity going on within the organizations that is relevant to you as a board member. The degree to which you choose to review each project is up to you. The point is that the information would be available if you are interested. I do plan on conducting a brief tutorial on the dashboard at the board meeting to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Ultimately, I would like to see committee chairs begin setting up project within the dashboard as well as a means of keeping the board (and staff as appropriate) informed as to their progress and goals.

As you know, the budget process has consumed the lion's share of my time over the past six weeks. Beyond the structured meetings with the Finance Committee to prepare the budget that has been proposed, there were considerable discussions between myself and Judy, other executive team members, and the treasurers to gather the information and various financial models needed. Assuming ultimate passage of the proposed budget, we will have our work cut out for us moving forward.

For CSIA, the new certification model will need to be handled very strategically. We cannot come off like a bull in a china shop when we make the announcement. The Finance Committee is very aware of the potential reaction and are making every consideration in terms of how we approach this publicly. To the extent possible, we want to control any misperception that this change is solely motivated by CSIA wanting to raise money. We need to make it clear that the change is necessary if we expect certification to ever reach its full potential as a value-added credential to sweeps and a necessity to homeowners.

While it's easy to allow the certification change to overshadow the evolution of CSIA, it's important to remember that we are using this next year to shape the future of technical education for CSIA. There is a lot of work to be done relative to market research and the ultimate determination of the right mix of

programming to make CSIA's education effective and profitable. This project will heavily influence how we utilize our professional and volunteer resources over the next year.

We have also been working hard on pulling together the loose ends on the new Product Acceptance Policy. It was my hope to have an agreement with Joseph Enterprises to report to you by now, but at the time of this report, that was not in place. There has been a combination of factors that has delayed this, not the least of which include suggested changes in our labeling and a request for exclusivity by the manufacturer. The Product Acceptance Review Committee has been understandably tentative about rushing into any agreement given the history with this particular product, and while we are very close on terms, we may simply not be able to meet their initial print run deadline. I hope to have an update for you at the board meeting.

For NCSG, the Finance Committee spent a great deal of time discussing the opportunities the Guild has to become much more aggressive with its core product – membership. With each passing year, it has become more evident that, while well-intentioned, our recruitment and retention goals are unlikely to be met if left in the hands of a volunteer committee. The committee will still be able to assist in certain aspects, but the nuts and bolts of this program will need to be left to the professional staff to strategize and implement. That plan, which will include dedicated staff time toward recruitment and retention each and every week, is beginning to take shape, and I fully expect it to be in full swing by the beginning of the new fiscal year. At the cornerstone of a much more aggressive membership marketing campaign will be the promotion of new member benefits, not the least of which include the liability insurance program and supplier discount program. Taking the key element of Y2Marketing to heart, the message will be made clear that you would be crazy to not join NCSG.

With respect to Sweeps Week, as you likely know the patio project has been postponed until next year. Jerry and Sheryl Isenhour put a lot of work into designing this project and soliciting initial product support, and I know they are disappointed that we were not able to move forward with the financing needed. They certainly understand the situation, but were disappointed none-the-less. If you have the opportunity, please thank them for the time and effort they put into the project. The good news in this is that much of the design ground work has now already been completed, so that should help us in planning for next year. Relative to this year's projects, we will still be moving forward with returning the donor bricks and tiles, as well as the major donor bronze plaque, to a place of prominence. There are a number of other smaller projects that we hope to get accomplished as well while we have the man and woman power available. For those who will not be able to see it first hand, I hope to have pictures to share with you at the board meeting.

As a reminder, we will be hosting four German visitors from ESCHFOE (including their president and executive director) during our August Training School. We have been extending an invitation to this group for the past several years, so we are excited that they are finally making the trip. The official dates are August 17-23, and part of that time will be spent at a MIX Group meeting in Milwaukee to learn more about business operations for sweep companies in the US.

There are some additional comments that I shared with you already via the executive summary to the proposed budgets. Because of the public nature of this report, I will not repeat them here. Suffice it to say that those items will all be addressed as part of the budget approval process.

I look forward to seeing you all in Louisville. Safe travels.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark T. McSweeney, Executive Director

NCSG Region 1 Report – July 2005

Regional Updates

Bill Koehler, from Stratus Insurance states, "filings are still pending in NH and RI. The bureaucratic process takes time," and he asks for patience in this matter.

The Northeast Regional Convention Committee is in high gear again. The January 2006 NER venue is Mystic, CT. The hotel is top notch and has hosted all of the NER planning meetings to date – next meeting to be held in August. The venue has shuttles to Foxwood and Mohegan Sun along with many things to do at the waterfront towns of Mystic, Groton, and Stonington, CT. Registration information is available at www.nerconvention.com. *"Ride the Wave to Mystic, Sail Away with a Wealth of Knowledge"*

MA Guild Director Chris Brown's, aka Brownie, battle with cancer has taken another turn; cancer has spread to his brain. This will necessitate immediate cranial radiation suspending the treatment for cancer in his liver. MCSG hopes to initiate another "Sweep One for Brownie" campaign for the summer.

Maryland

There are 6 new CSIA Certified Sweeps for a total of 81 in Maryland. Two MD companies have joined NCSG, NCSG member total 46.

Delaware

There are currently 19 CSIA Certified Sweeps in Delaware, no change since last report. NCSG member total 5 (6 last report).

New Jersey

There are 2 new CSIA Certified Sweeps for a total of 94 in New Jersey. NCSG member total 71 (73 last report).

Pennsylvania

There are 9 new CSIA Certified Sweeps for a total of 158 in Pennsylvania. Four new PA companies have joined NCSG, NCSG member total 84.

New York

Ruthie Francisco, president of the NY Guild, said the Fireguard workshop that the NYSCSG put on was a great success. However, the Gastite Certification/ Eye of the Viper workshops were cancelled due to attendance. Planning and preparation for the summer workshop is in full swing with an all day Stone Masonry seminar, as well as a Tuckpointing seminar, Class A installations, and distributor showcases who are sponsoring world famous "Glengarry Boys" (Celtic rock band). NY's annual summer workshop begins July 29 and ends the 31st.

There are 5 new CSIA Certified Sweeps for a total of 127 in New York. One new NY company has joined NCSG, NCSG member total 85.

Connecticut

Marisa Chirico, Area Vice President said that she has sent out a mailer for a big NYSCSG membership drive to 125 chimney businesses (non-NYSCSG members but some are NCSG) and has already gotten a few responses. The Payton Workshop planned for this month has been postponed until next year due to busy schedules.

CT has 55 CSIA Certified Sweeps (58 last report). NCSG member total 32 (34 last report).

Rhode Island

As you all know, RI Guild President, Mark Putnam is heavily involved in legislative issues; no RI updates were forwarded as of this writing.

There are currently 24 CSIA Certified Sweeps in Rhode Island; 10 Members of NCSG, no change since last report.

Massachusetts

Jeannie Jacobson, president of the MA Guild, reported that those who attended the MCSG's Asbestos Awareness and Lining Installation and Marketing Seminar in May found it extremely informative. MCSG's annual summer picnic and camp outing, August 10-12 in Salem Harbor, will include a general membership meeting. Tom Biscoe and Dan and Jeannie Jacobson will be attending the next Northeast Regional Convention Committee meeting which is in August.

There are 9 new CSIA Certified Sweeps for a total of 94 in Massachusetts. Two MA companies have joined NCSG, NCSG total 50.

Vermont

VT State Guild President, Ian Conway, said that they have nothing planned for the summer and are sort of stalled. Ian is looking for ideas on how to increase membership and get current members more involved.

There are currently 36 CSIA Certified Sweeps in Vermont, no change since last report. Two VT companies have joined NCSG, NCSG total 19.

New Hampshire

The Annual NHACP "Sweep Fest" was a phenomenal success drawing sweeps from RI & Maine, and a few from NH. OSHA's Hazard Communication and the presentations Confined Spaces and Power Vacuum Truck Operations by Guild member Armstrong Heating & Power Vac were the highlights of the day. Overall, there was a lot of information shared!

NH has 38 CSIA Certified Sweeps (39 last report). There are currently 21 members of NCSG, no change since last report.

Maine

There are currently 16 CSIA Certified Sweeps in Maine; 12 Members of NCSG.

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

Region 2 Report

Submitted by Ron Brigman – July 5, 2005

Businesses in Region 2 run the gamut from slow to busier than ever. I'm not sure what the differentiating factor is....one business owner said they have had their busiest June ever, but May was the deadest May they've ever had. Go figure....

I solicited input for this report via e-mail again this time. Response was not as good as the last couple of times, but I did hear from a couple of sweeps inquiring about some specific matters to do with NCSG.

SCSA Convention

The Southeastern Chimney Sweep Association held their first planning meeting for the 2006 convention in Lavonia GA in June. It looks like the SCSA event will be in June of 2006 in Williamsburg, VA. Their revised format (no typical trade show) achieved such rave reviews from both participating suppliers and sweep attendees that it will be repeated this year.

West Virginia

It continues to be a challenge to be in touch with the sweeps in WV. There is not a formalized group there. Most calls to that area are met by answer machines and return calls are not forthcoming. It could be lack of interest...or it could just be that they are really busy.

Virginia

The reorganized Virginia Guild has been busy with workshops and various duties related to hosting the upcoming SCSA convention in 2006. The energy in this group is commendable and it is my opinion that their progressive thinking is a beneficial contribution to the industry.

North Carolina

The next meeting of the NC Chimney Sweep Association will be held August 19 & 20 in Jacksonville. Pete and Joan Bixby will be the hosts. Activities include a seminar on removing and replacing pre-fab fireplaces. A fishing trip off the Outer Banks is planned and scuba diving for certified divers is also being organized. A "big" auction will be held along with barbecue cooked on site. Sounds like something for everyone. The invitation is going out beyond just NC members.

South Carolina

I attended the SCCSG meeting in Piedmont SC in June. They presented a lively seminar on Ethics in Sweeping. Although I was not able to do the PP presentation, I did have time during their meeting to update the attendees on various aspects of NCSG/CSIA (i.e. Sweeps Week, Louisville convention, Insurance program) and was able to answer questions regarding the adjustments in the CSIA curriculum offering. SCCSG is in the initial stages of working out a way to "contract" some classes at the Tech Center. It was encouraging to see that they did not see the changes as all negative. The group just began trying to figure out ways to get their whole guild membership to the Tech Center for a week of classes. I may be a bit prejudice, but I think

these folks are among the most positive in their perspective that I come in contact with in my various travels.

Georgia

No news from Georgia this time around.

Florida

The Florida guild is small (about half dozen members), but the members are determined to make it as good as it can be. I was able to attend a meeting of the Florida guild in June. They presented a seminar on the cast and carve method of smoke chamber restoration.

I presented a short Power Point program that was prepared by Melissa Heeke. It served as a good outline for some audience discussion about the NCSG. It presented the opportunity for members to make comments about their positive experiences with the NCSG as well as pose questions about their concerns.

Royal and Elayne Edwards attended the meeting also. And Royal made a nice presentation on safety. Total attendance was around a dozen or more with several who were not NCSG members. All in all it was a nice event.

Summary

Visitation with two of the guilds in the region has been possible since our last meeting and it looks like we might get to the other three before the year is out. I am encouraged by the interaction with the sweeps when I go to these functions and I am impressed by their appreciation that NCSG sends representation to their guild functions. They are gracious with providing time for me to say something always. And where possible they seem very receptive to the idea of some kind of a short Power Point presentation as was done in FL.

Region 3 Report

Illinois – 33 NCSG member companies
77 CSIA Certified Chimney Sweeps
1 CDET

Indiana – 32 NCSG - 69 CSIA - 10 CDET

Kentucky – 12 NCSG - 12 CSIA - 0 CDET

Michigan – 23 NCSG - 33 CSIA - 1 CDET

Missouri – 26 NCSG - 49 CSIA - 2 CDET

Ohio – 40 NCSG - 95 CSIA - 4 CDET

Steve Craig of Buck Service in Dayton appreciated time spent with Mark, others and EPA representatives to position NCSG in a proactive light. He also is keeping touch with NARI if any changes in requiring licencing for hearth installers comes back to the forefront.

Gary Spolar of Century Chimney in Bay Village, near Cleveland reports clients appreciating a service company arriving on time and 'sober'. Makes one think?

Was unsuccessful hearing of any official status of the Ohio organization or lack Thereof.

Two sweeps companies are for sale in Michigan one to be sold internally in the Detroit area and one outright between Pontiac and Flint.

A new business in Grand Rapids is a new NCSG member and recently certified. He reports a most helpful staff at the Tech Center with applying, registering and at the review and test. I have alerted Erin of the complement. I hope to see him at his first convention in Kentucky.

I have commitments for a staff of 5-6 from an Indy company to be at convention next year, as well as, a staff of 4 from Illinois business.

Doing all I can to boost attendance for the 2005 convention in our region.

Weather certainly is a non-issue this time of year. Companies experiencing slower time now seem to like it that way. The seasonal aspect of our industry isn't always hard to take.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas Rhines

NCSG Region 4 Report

NCSG REGION 5 REPORT

7-01-05

WISCONSIN

Work load has been down across most of the state in all categories. Cool spring with virtually no rain until very recently. Southeastern WI is being hit hard economically compared to the rest of the country with manufacturing and real estate transactions down as well.

MINNESOTA

Members looking for ways to improve their numbers. Having the opposite problem of WI, too much rain & can't get out to do the work for some. Numbers about the same as last year this time.

North & South Dakota

Hoping the weather will help drive more business. Down from last year and a very cool spring.

Iowa

Sweeping activity is a little below last year at his time.

NEBRASKA

Nebraska state guild is small but stays active promoting CSIA certified sweeps. Experiencing the same struggles as the rest of the region.

GENERAL CONDITION

Overall the region is down compared to last year at this time. Cool spring, lack of rain producing some work and local economies were the main reasons. A couple had concerns about industries future feeling the impact of the trend of switching to gas over the past ten years.

Respectfully submitted,
Howard Rowell
Region 5 Director NCSG

NCSG Region 6 Report

NCSG Region 7 Report

July 19, 2005

Submitted by Steve Pietila

Here are the current membership figures for Region 7:

Oregon – 8

Washington – 12

Wyoming – 2

Montana – 0

Idaho – 4

Alaska – 1

Total – 27 (up one from last report!)

I attended the Golden State Chimney Sweep Guild annual convention this past week and conducted a CSIA Certification Review and administered the exam to about 20 attendees. Randy informed me that he signed up three new NCSG members at this event – Great job Randy!

As I mentioned before, I have not been very active in the area of recruitment but do make myself available to members in my region. Most OCSA members continue to be satisfied with the level of involvement and don't wish to join the national organization. OCSA still has it's own certification program, and again most choose to stay with just that.

Business has been above average to busy for most, and despite a relatively mild winter I don't think folks are too concerned about what the fall might hold.

NCSG Region Eight Report

July 2005

Currently, member sweeps total 0 in the state of Hawaii, 2 in Arizona, 2 in Nevada, 4 in Utah and 77 in the great state of California. That's right a grand total of 85 region eight members, .

The "Golden State Chimney Sweep Guild" will have held its annual convention and trade show on Wednesday July 6th, through the 8th, at the Barona Resort & Casino, near San Diego. I will be and or did attend this event, though the deadline for writing this report was 6 days prior to the event, I'm confident a good time was had by all. I will orally report the fine details of the gathering at the meeting.

A workshop sponsored by the GSCSG will be held in the Sacramento area of California on Saturday, August 20th. A large showing is always expected.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Brooks
NCSG Region 8 Representative

NCSG Supplier Director Report

July 2005 BOD meeting

I must admit I've had little contact with fellow suppliers since our last meeting.

The general business climate for suppliers remains good, not great.

There has been excellent support for the coupon book being developed under the leadership of Randy Brooks and the membership committee. At this point the total value of the coupon book / supplier support is in excess of \$4000.00 per member. Considering an average of 1000 members of NCSG annually, this represents in excess of \$400,000.00 of supplier support. I must be honest and admit this support level comes as a bit of a surprise to me. I think a key component in this support level is NCSG approaching this project with the right attitude. NCSG has asked suppliers to develop coupons / promotions which work for them first. This respectful and appreciative attitude is a model for future requests for supplier support of the associations. This program is also an example of the extraordinary generosity of our suppliers.

Repeated from my May report:

With the signing of the contract with the Mohegan Sun for 2007, the NCSG is in a better position to court a more diversified supplier base. Please see my convention and events committee for more information on the property. The nature of its exhibit space allows for supplier to drive in vehicles as well as bring in larger and more elaborate displays. This drive in capacity is a key in our pursuing those who build and customize work vans.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Huta,
NCSG Supplier Director

Long Range Planning Committee

The LRP committee will continue to help identify areas and implement Task Force action plans to achieve our strategic objectives. These will be clear at the end of this budget meeting and Task Force/Committee assignments will take on a more defined role and put into action.

This will be a year of change and we will need all board members to do their part to help complete this transition period. We will be “Dash boarding” all action plans and this should help facilitate in tracking to see where each Task Force and Committee are with their action plans.

I know the Board is anxiously waiting for their assignments and will take them very seriously in service to the membership.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Rowell
Long Range Planning Chairman

Bylaws Report

The Bylaws committee continues to monitor for any proposals that may require a change to the bylaws. There are no recommendations for any bylaws change to recommend to the board at this time.

Further review will continue during and after the budget meeting for any needed changes.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Rowell
Bylaws Chairman NCSG/CSIA

MEMBERSHIP REPORT JULY, 2005

As of July 1st, the much anticipated coupon program is for all intent and purposes completed and ready for implementation this fall renewal and membership drive season. Thanks to the efforts of the membership executive committee and our unbelievably generous vender family, the perceived value of the ever expanding program now exceeds 10 times the cost of NCSG annual membership. After having received the offers from the venders, we have produced the coupons are in the process of getting final approval from the venders. Venders that want to participate at anytime in the future will simply contact the office and have them produce a coupon for the membership to redeem.

I have a commitment from our friends at Y2 marketing to produce a couple of direct mail pieces to present our case for membership and or continued membership in the NCSG. These color ads will be produced and provided to the staff in exchange for advertising in "Sweeping" as well as a booth at convention. I will be working on this diligently until completion as to take advantage of the generous offer by Copperfield to include it in there new catalog mailing due to be sent out in August sometime. This will be most important as there mailing goes out to 5,000+ company's nation wide.

After these programs are in place, I will move forward with additional benefit programs that have been presented as food for thought by others that share the desire to expand our membership. The actions now being implemented have never before been provided. I am most optimistic of there success in increasing our membership to the stated goal of 1,200 members by convention.

The membership committee and its SOP as they formally existed are now extinct. The personal phone calls to the membership that fail to renew, will now be handled as a staff function. This most important job must be handled in a more timely and efficient manner. The staff will be taking on more of a sales function than go-between with numerous committee members. Given the new and improved case for membership in the NCSG, I believe we have strengthened the pitch that the staff will be presenting.

No longer are we a \$400 magazine subscription as we have been accused of in the past. I can't wait for someone to hit me with that one again. The membership talking points are expanding rapidly and will continue to do so. The new goals of this committee are simple, we will continue to deliver more than we promise, more than is expected and more than anyone can imagine year after year.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Brooks

Trade Development Report

Greg Polakow

The Chimney Academy -- Melissa is going to include the survey questions about this to the members in a longer survey. Once we have their responses we will know whether to continue with this initiative and produce a brochure, etc, or close it down. We are at a standstill for the moment.

NCSG Convention and Events Committee Report

May 2005

Welcome to Louisville and the Galt House. I'm very pleased all of us are gathered here. I hope all of you make it down to 4th Street Live and enjoy yourselves while at our 2006 convention location.

Developments since May:

There is little exciting information to report on convention matters since our May meeting. The preliminary search for our west coast convention (2008) is still currently underway.

Plans for the next 6-12 Months

With the expectation of a site visit to the west coast before the end of the summer and another trip this fall, I'm hopeful we will have sites planned out through 2009 by the 2006 convention in Louisville.

Due to its location and value, Louisville 2006 has the potential to break records in every category. With that said, I can not overstate the importance of promoting this convention early and often. Initial meetings on the theme and timetable of this convention have already occurred at the staff and committee / staff level and I look forward to an aggressive, consistent, sales oriented, and professional marketing effort with the purpose of making this convention the most profitable in the history of the NCSG.

In addition to promoting the Louisville during this time period, NCSG will also begin what might be described as "light" promotion of our 30th Anniversary convention at the Mohegan Sun in 2007. This is unusual for NCSG, but considering Mohegan Sun has its own national marketing campaign I think it benefits NCSG to have its potential attendees aware of our connection to that property. My hope is when Mohegan Sun's television advertising, sports marketing, and other marketing pieces get in front of our target market; it will remind them of our upcoming event and therefore enhance our success.

Convention program assessment:

The overall direction of NCSG conventions is a good one. Although the search for a western location has not progressed as quickly as I would've liked, I still expect two more convention sites to be chosen by Louisville 2006.

I'm excited about the possibilities created with our shift to a more sales oriented marketing program at NCSG which I expect to have a positive ripple effect on our conventions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Huta,
NCSG Convention and Events Committee Chairman

REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

As of now, our committee is still in the stage of forming. There have been a number of people added in June after a post I wrote on the member list. There are quite a few people who are interested in the EPA project with the non-attainment areas.

Mark McSweeney has been in touch with EPA officials and other concerned people from the HPBA about this project. It seems that right now the EPA is focusing its attention on the Libby, MT stove changeout project with an eye toward gathering data so that as they move forward, they have a clear idea of the cost and the benefit of doing this in other areas. Mark, along with several Ohio sweeps represented us well in a meeting with them in Dayton, OH, in which they were very appreciative of our input as they take the woodstove changeout program nationwide. That may not happen, however until the beginning of next year.

As far as the legislative aspect on the state level, there is nothing particularly pressing right now. Efforts continue in MA, NJ, and ME with initiatives to gain state recognition for certified sweeps.

As we move forward, I would like to be proactive in promoting legislation that could be brought forth in all the state legislatures that would establish the CSIA certification as a requirement to do business as a sweep in that state. Several sweeps have already done that in NJ, and as a tool to establish our craft in the public arena, I think it is necessary to have it recognized by all the states. I realize that some anti-government elements of our membership may not approve of this, but I think it is worthwhile to promote it as a NCSG policy and benefit to our membership. Our recognition nationwide as chimney experts will not be complete until this happens.

Mark Putnam
July 5, 2005

NFPA 31 Report

There was no NFPA 31 committee meeting since our last Board of Directors meeting.

John Pilger
NCSG Representative to NFPA 31

New Business

- FY 2006 Budget Approval – *proposed budget was sent under separate cover*