

**National Chimney Sweep Guild**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
*August 11, 2006 – CSIA Technology Center*

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of May 24, 2006 Minutes
4. President's Report *submitted by H. Rowell*
5. Treasurer's Report *submitted by R Huta*
6. Executive Director's Report *submitted by M. McSweeney*
7. Legal Report *submitted by A. Garrett*
8. Directors' Reports
  - a. Region 1 *submitted by G. Stroup*
  - b. Region 2 *submitted by R. Brigman*
  - c. Region 3 *submitted by T. Rhines*
  - d. Region 4 *to be submitted*
  - e. Region 5 *submitted by H. Rowell*
  - f. Region 6 *submitted by B. Burney*
  - g. Region 7 *submitted by S. Pietila*
  - h. Region 8 *submitted by R. Brooks*
  - i. Supplier Director *submitted by R. Huta*
9. Committee Reports
  - a. NCSG ByLaws (submitted by R. Brooks)
  - b. NCSG Long Range Planning (submitted by R. Brooks)
  - c. Membership Committee (submitted by R. Brooks)
  - d. NFPA 31 (submitted by J. Pilger)
  - e. Trade Development Committee (submitted by G. Polakow)
  - f. Ethics Committee (submitted by T. Rhines)
  - g. Convention & Events Committee (submitted by R. Huta)
  - h. Government Affairs Committee (submitted by D. Pilger)
  - i. Foreign Relations Committee (submitted by V. Imgarten)
10. Old Business
  - a. None Submitted to date.
11. New Business
  - a. Approval of FY2007 Budget
12. Adjournment

***DRAFT MINUTES – NOT YET APPROVED***

National Chimney Sweep Guild  
Board of Directors Meeting  
May 24, 2006  
CSIA Technology Center

President Rowell called the meeting of the National Chimney Sweep Guild Board of Directors to order at 1:16 p.m.

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

**Directors Absent:** Ron Brigman

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

**Guests Present:** Bill Hessel, Bo Tasso, Connie Anderson, Kim Stroup and Jim Baynes.

**A motion was made** by Bob Burney and seconded by Thomas Rhines to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2006 meeting as amended. All in favor. Motion passes.

**President's Report** – As submitted by Howard Rowell. He provided an update on his trip to the ESCHFOE business meeting in Slovenia. NCSG has entered a bid to host the 2011 technical meeting.

**Treasurer's Report** – Submitted by Robert Huta in Ron Brigman's absence.  
**A motion was made** by John Wharton and seconded by George Stroup to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.

**Executive Director's Report** – As submitted by Mark McSweeney. He provided an update on liability insurance program participation.

**Legal Report** – As submitted by Art Garrett.

**Regional Reports**

**Region 1:** As submitted by George Stroup.

**Region 2:** As submitted by Ron Brigman.

**Region 3:** As submitted by Thomas Rhines.

**Region 4:** Submitted by John Wharton.

**Region 5:** As submitted by Howard Rowell.

**Region 6:** As submitted by Bob Burney.

**Region 7:** As submitted by Steve Pietila. A discussion was held regarding a new administrative rule from the State of Oregon.

**Region 8:** As submitted by Randy Brooks.  
Supplier Representative: As submitted by Robert Huta.

## **Committee Reports**

**By-Laws:** As submitted by Randy Brooks.  
**Long Range Planning:** As submitted by Randy Brooks. He provided an update based on the previous day's long range planning session.  
**Membership:** As submitted by Randy Brooks.  
**Convention & Events:** As submitted by Robert Huta.  
**Ethics Committee:** As submitted by Thomas Rhines.  
**Government Affairs:** As submitted by Diane Pilger.  
**Trade Development:** As submitted by Greg Polakow.

## **New Business**

**NCSG Corporate Logo Changes:** Howard Rowell has appointed Paul Anderson to head a task force relative to corporate logo use.

A motion was made by John Wharton and seconded by Bob Burney to adjourn the meeting of the National Chimney Sweep Guild board of directors.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm.

## Presidents Report NCSG

The August board meeting is the time we focus on the proposed budget from the finance committee. Some of you may remember that up until about four years ago the whole board worked on the budget leading up to our meeting and then continued using our work session day to work numbers until we had a workable budget. The Finance Committee, staff, and Executive Committee work many hours to bring the proposed budget to our August meeting. It is a give and take process to balance our needs and objectives for the year and allocate funds to committees and ongoing expenses.

One area to take note of in the budget is the addition of a staff person to accommodate a full time position of marketing NCSG membership and convention participation. This is an area Mark and I have discussed on numerous occasions as an area to expand with outbound calling and direct mailing outside of our current membership. We have seen good results from staff this past year in this area and feel confident that allocating more funds in this direction will bring a direct return through increased membership and participation in convention and other events.

The first half of our work session day will be focusing on our convention experience and what issues we will face moving into the future. This will be a more global approach with our Convention Committee Chair explaining the challenges we will face and how to format our convention to meet members needs moving into the future. This will be the primary focus of the morning and we will finish with input about what our seminar content should consist of for a well rounded convention experience.

During the second half of the work session we will be going over both budgets answering any questions before the board meeting the following day. This has worked very well in the past so we don't get bogged down during the board meeting when it comes time to approve the budgets by the boards.

Another area of interest will be the report from our Government Affairs Chair and the information learned at the Academy training last week. This is an area that members will need to understand and we need to be in position to help them through action packets. These need to address both action against proposed legislation and action for proposed legislation for those interested in proposing legislation in their state.

The best way we can help members is by a system of alerting them to proposed legislation in their area and action packets for them to address legislation on the local level through grass roots efforts by members. We have seen recent cases of new areas trying to ban burning and expect this activity to increase moving into the future.

Everyone saw the thread on the NCSG member list about growing our membership and the Sweeps Academy. Most members understand the need for growth of our trade and that it will encompass training for someone looking to gain technical knowledge to either start their own company or become an employee for an existing company. As a board we need to be looking and planning for the future of NCSG, where our new members will come from and what we will look like twenty five years from now. This needs to be looked at with our long range glasses. Some of the growth areas that our Trade Development Committee is working on are long term programs that will grow and mature after most of us have left board service.

I look forward to seeing everyone next week and thank you for your hard work between board meetings. It is through your efforts that NCSG will grow and continue to meet members needs moving into the future.

Howard Rowell

NCSG President

**National Chimney Sweep Guild**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
*August 11, 2006 • CSIA Technology Center*

**Report of the Executive Director**

Heading into our 30<sup>th</sup> year, NCSG has a great foundation behind it and we have considerably improved structures in place that can lead to continued growth. As with any growing association, we some strategic decisions to make that will influence how our growth may occur, but I am confident that the opportunities greatly outweigh any obstacles.

As you know, we have enjoyed measurable membership growth for the first time in over a decade. Fortunately, that is not by accident. In other words, we employed some specific strategies to stimulate our growth, and our efforts are paying off. I believe we are all in agreement that we cannot rest on our laurels, but instead need to continue to explore opportunities to continue the growth pattern. The key to success from this past year's new membership will largely be retention this next year. On the surface that may be common sense, however we will need to ensure that we are not only continuing to add value to membership, but we need to remain in a position to properly service that membership.

The budget being proposed by the Finance Committee does address the staffing piece of that equation. Currently, Debbie devotes approximately half of her time toward NCSG "sales" functions and the remainder of her time on other administrative responsibilities; primarily ethics and logo administration for NCSG as well as CSIA, and database management and general member support for NCSG. To capitalize on her sales abilities, I am redirecting that portion of her time currently devoted to those other administrative tasks to sales for CSIA programs. While this will primarily impact CSIA production, the natural flow of cross-selling CSIA programs and NCSG memberships will likely continue to positively impact NCSG and influence further growth. Filling the NCSG administrative void that will be created, the budget provides for the addition of a new support position for NCSG. This new position will not only assume the administrative duties formerly held by Debbie, but will also take back many of the administrative responsibilities that Melissa absorbed upon the elimination of the Communications Coordinator position last year.

Relative to our ability to support our growing membership, Royal is currently assessing his needs in terms of the availability of technical assistance. We discussed this issue at our board planning in May, and beyond defining "who" should be provided technical assistance, Royal is investigating "how" this assistance can be provided for efficiently and effectively. It is clear that we will not be able to continue the level of support he provides to a growing membership without making some changes.

Participation in one of our cornerstone programs, Stratus Insurance, continues to increase. At the time of this report, we currently have 150 written policies, with another 188 inquiries at some point in the exploration and/or underwriting process. The written policies represent over \$462k in premiums, which is an 8% increase since my report to the board in May.

We are continuing to investigate the potential of establishing a supplier standard of practice. Unfortunately, our research is not yielding much of a standard in this area among trade

associations out there. However, Debbie and I have begun putting together some bullet points that we will solicit input on from supplier this month. In addition, I will continue searching the industry when I am at the annual American Society of Association Executives conference later this month. It is our hope that we may have at least a draft in place before we launch a supplier member recruitment effort in September.

In addition to membership growth, I am anticipating progress toward increasing trade awareness this upcoming year. Specifically, I look forward to working with Greg Polakow to bring the Chimney Academy to light in the near future. I understand some of the apprehension to this program among members of the Guild (ie. NCSG is creating a program that potentially trains competition for our members). However, as we develop this program, it will be incumbent upon us to be clear to the membership as to the function of this program. It will be geared toward young adults who might consider chimney sweeping as a career path of choice. While the potential of business ownership in the future will be shared, the focus of the Academy will be to provide the technical skills needed to be a valuable employee (not an employer). The vast majority of the program will be technically based. The limited business education will be focused on customer service and sales. It must be underscored that it is the core responsibility of any trade association to develop and further the *trade*. There is a fine but distinct difference between furthering the trade, and exclusively furthering those within a given segment of the trade. Again, I can understand the hesitancy for some, but we need to be clear and consistent relative to our true purpose as a trade association.

To that end, I will be very anxious to see the direction we will be going relative to government affairs. I am encouraged by the efforts Diane has already made to bring herself up to speed in this area, and am excited to explore how NCSG can become more effective with our strategy.

A significant piece to the future puzzle for NCSG will be where we opt to go from the current cross road we are facing with respect to our annual convention and trade show. We have some key questions we will need to answer during our work session prior to the board meeting. The hospitality industry is reporting that they are enjoying their highest room rates in their history, combined with record occupancy rates. What used to be more of a buyers' market in the convention world is becoming more and more of a sellers' market. That, combined with our program structure, is making it increasingly challenging to find properties that can meet our space requirements while offering a room rate that is acceptable to our membership. This will be an important conversation.

On the positive front, our '07 convention is starting to take shape. We already have some decent programming lined up which will be promoted this month, and we expect to have all programming wrapped up by the end of September. We also have a more aggressive marketing campaign provided for in the proposed budget which will help us get our message out with greater frequency and effectiveness this year.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon. Safe travels.

Mark McSweeney  
Executive Director

# NCSG Region 1 Report

## State Guild Updates

**Maine Association of Chimney Professionals** – Maine chimney sweeps recently witnessed adoption and enforcement of NFPA 211 Standards pertaining to inspection of chimneys, fireplaces, vents and solid fuel burning appliances upon the sale or transfer of real estate. It was reported that state building officials sided with chimney professionals and supported NFPA 211 Level 2 inspections for real estate transactions however the bill was *amended* during April's legislative session. The amendment repeals the current directive to the Commissioner of Public Safety to adopt the National Fire Protection Association Standard 211 and replaces that with more general rule-making authority that directs the commissioner to adopt routine technical rules pertaining to the construction, installation, maintenance and inspection of chimneys, fireplaces, vents and solid fuel burning appliances. The amendment also authorizes the commissioner to adopt major substantive rules pertaining to the inspection and maintenance of chimneys, fireplaces, vents and solid fuel burning appliances upon the sale or transfer of property. The purpose of amending the current rule-making authority is specifically to address the current regulatory requirement that Level 2 chimney inspections be conducted upon the sale or transfer of real estate pursuant to National Fire Protection Association Standard 211. The amendment gives the Commissioner of Public Safety the ability to tailor rules to the needs of the state.

**Massachusetts Chimney Sweep Guild** – In early June a study session to prepare for CSIA CCS exam was offered; exam proctored by Joe Bento. Later in the month, the Fred Toldo Award was presented during the MCSG Annual General Membership Meeting to guild treasurer Loreen Koubek of Eurosweep Chimney Service, for her outstanding work in the education of sweeps as well as the public. As reported earlier, price increases for CSIA CCS certification renewed questions of “just what standard to advocate for state licensure” and the ever-confusing relationship of NCSG vs. CSIA remain fodder for discussion. As of 1 July 2006 all prevailing rate jobs in Massachusetts require an OSHA 10 certificate. This 10 hr. training certificate is required for all state funded projects over \$10,000 in MA. It is already required in Rhode Island. Each person who enters a jobsite that is a prevailing rate job must have an OSHA 10 certificate in their possession – the prevailing rate jobsite may not pertain to the majority of northeast chimney sweeping companies but it is rumored that this requirement may become required nationwide. MCSG is in the planning stages of making this course available to its membership.

**New Hampshire Association of Chimney Professionals** – In the state of NH, parents of a child who was killed in a propane explosion, concerned that it not happen again, brought the issue to members of the NH Legislature. The legislature developed a law in April to provide for standards regarding education, experience, and testing requirements in order to insure a greater degree of safety with regard to gas installation, particularly in the unregulated propane market. The state fire marshal will implement licensing requirements and appoint inspectors to ensure compliance. A study session to prepare for CSIA CCS exam was offered in May; exam proctored by Phil Mitchell and Bob Pevery. NHACP Board reports what their annual Sweep Fest may have lacked in member participation was more than made up for with enthusiasm... every attendee raved about the day's programming. (Held annually at the end of June, Sweep Fest carried on despite record-breaking rain/flooding on the NH seacoast). Typically a daylong event filled with stimulating seminars, distributor showcases highlighted this year's schedule.

**New Jersey Chimney Sweep Guild** - 2006 Election results were announced at the NJ Membership Meeting in June.

**New York State Chimney Sweep Guild** – At the end of July, a gathering of sweeps hailing from as far north as Canada and from as far down the eastern coast as North Carolina converged in the Adirondack Mountains for the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual New York State Chimney Sweep Guild Summer



Workshop. This phenomenal educational opportunity exceeded everybody's expectations and is truly a Region 1 staple; the highlight of many sweep families' summer.

**Rhode Island Chimney Sweep Guild** – In early June, the RI Guild hosted its' first Reline Workshop which was reported to be a huge success. There will be a membership meeting in August.

### **Membership Outlook**

State Guild growth has been renewed in Maine, VT and RI. Though numbers of NCSG member companies have fluctuated very little over the past three months, I find in conversation that some members approaching their NCSG renewal dates are weighing out the option of not renewing NCSG membership in lieu of recent CCS CSIA price increases. I heartedly advocate NCSG membership and strive to continue to make myself approachable and available at anytime for Region 1 chimney sweeps via telephone at (603) 823-7000 or by email at [stroupco@verizon.net](mailto:stroupco@verizon.net).

Three-month comparison of NCSG Member Companies in Region 1:

June - CT 34; DE 5; ME 21; MD 42; MA 58; NH 25; NJ 68; NY 93; PA 85; RI 11 and VT 24

July - CT 34; DE 5; ME 20; MD 43; MA 59; NH 26; NJ 68; NY 97; PA 86; RI 11 and VT 24

August - CT 34; DE 5; ME 22; MD 45; MA 56; NH 26; NJ 69; NY 98; PA 83; RI 11 and VT 23

Respectfully submitted,  
George Stroup  
NCSG Region 1 Director  
Franconia, NH

### **NCSG INNOVATION 2007**

**Save the date to celebrate NCSG's 30th Anniversary!**

**April 18 - 21, 2007 ~ Mohegan Sun (Connecticut)**

[www.mohegansun.com](http://www.mohegansun.com)

## Region 2 Report

Submitted by Ron Brigman

The Southeast convention was held in Williamsburg, VA in June. Attendance numbers were lower than had been expected but overall the convention was a success. The group did a couple of unique projects that are now permanent features of the hotel. One was an outdoor pizza oven and the other a major renovation of one of the hotels masonry fireplaces. The convention committee will be meeting on August 5 to see where they go from here.

One response that I received to my e-mail request for news from the region, came from a member of the Southern Association of Chimney Professionals (SACP). This includes members from several states outside my region, I think in John Wharton's region. I only realized this as I was writing the report. So I will include the information that should have gone to John or maybe it did. But at this point there is not time to sort it out and I thought it worth including.

The SACP is presently pursuing thru Manufacturers, Fire Marshals and Inspectors the possibilities of getting the word out to the public that prefab fireplaces which may have been underwater during hurricane Katrina and other storms will have damage issues which need to be addressed. They are in the early stages of this research and presently have no definite information or status.

The individual who sent me this information also has raised the question of any concerns around chimneys swifts and the much talked about "bird flu". I think the question has been put to someone in the office. I plan to contact the Driftwood Wildlife Association to see if they have any input on the matter.

### *West Virginia*

No report from W. Virginia

### *Virginia*

No report from VA

## *North Carolina*

**The NC Association had a recent meeting in Lenoir, hosted by member Roger Whitman.**

Upcoming events include a January meeting in Waynesville hosted by Tom Albert. An NFI Wood Certification review and testing is planned at this meeting. Next spring's meeting will be hosted by current Association president, James Owens, in the Charlotte area. He tells me that Jerry Isenhour will be doing a one day D&D. Details will be available later. The Association once again has Gary Chambers in their ranks. Gary is again working in the industry and is now employed by Charlotte based Whitecaps.

## *South Carolina*

The quarterly meeting of the SC guild was held on July 22 at Folly Beach. It was hosted by Ashley Webster. No seminars were planned for this general business meeting. The guild's future role with the Southeast convention committee was among the topics discussed. Representatives will be attending the August 5 meeting of the convention committee.

## *Georgia*

No report from Georgia. But they are next in rotation to host the Southeast Convention. Georgia will be hosting the meeting of the SE committee on August 5 at Lavonia.

## *Florida*

Next meeting of the guild is rumored to be planned for the Bradenton area but I have no details. I heard from one member of the Fla. guild who says business is good but not all chimney related. A good percentage of his business is dryer vent service. There are several other Florida sweeps that do a lot of dryer vent service. Some of them have made repeated requests, over the years, for more support for the CDET program.

## Region Three Report

August 2006

Congratulations to Jeff Gitlin on his recent retirement. I am certain we can all wish him and his family the best for the future and hope to see his continued interest with the NCSG, from ground level.

Stephen Hoover, Lucky Sweep Chimney Sales & Service of Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri has it right to encourage Mr. Gitlin to share his wisdom and method of financing his retirement from a 'one man show.'

New sweep Steve Snyder, Heritage Masonry of Macomb, Michigan jumped right in with the NCSG discussion list and received several good responses to his questions.

Thanks to several Region 3 sweeps, suppliers, staff and friends for the time and support at Sweeps Week

Kevin Delucenay Old Smokeys Ashley, IN - five days + planning  
Jim Baynes Expert Chimney and Fireplace Plainfield, IN five days + planning  
Ken and Caryl Ann Hoelscher Abbey Road Chimney Sweeps Brookville, IN two days  
Jim Pritchett and Pete Wargo Certified Sweeps Brookston, IN  
Thomas Rhines and Justin Williams All-Chimney Cleaning & Maintenance Charlotte, MI three days  
Tim Smith Chimney Sweeps of America Lebanon, IN  
Grahme Wilder Grahme Wilder Chimney Sweep Berea, KY  
Alline Eldridge for help serving food and keeping us refreshed  
Ashley Eldridge for all those things that just need to get done  
Mark McSweeney for sweat equity  
Melissa Heeke for the photography  
John Meredith and Jason Wright Saver Systems Richmond, IN for product and support  
National Chimney Supply with a new warehouse in Indianapolis showed exemplary support with 5 guys working a total of 12 man days  
and for providing a pizza lunch one day. The Men - Evan Havers, Randy Jones, Darien Bibeau, Patrick Messer and John. Wow! Thanks.

Support from outside Region 3 was essential and generous from  
Ron and Renee Brigman Wakefield Brush USA/ Blue Sky Chimney Sweep Laurens, SC three days with Renee in the kitchen and running electrolyte drinks, Ron out in the weather and a very significant donation from the South Carolina Chimney Sweep Guild. Thank You!

Steve Scally Fireside Sweeps Fremont, NH two days and may have traveled the farthest.  
Marion Schroll ret. Riley, KS for sending some tender drop off the bone ribs.  
John and Diane Pilger Chief Chimney Smithtown, NY for NY style hotdogs, spicy sausage with all the fixin's.  
Exhausto Roswell, GA for bottled water.

Region 3 numbers -

	new members 2006	NCSG	CCS	non-member CCS
Illinois	2	36	83	5
Indiana	1	32	67	11
Kentucky	1	18	18	2
Michigan	5	22	27	6
Missouri	1	22	45	9
Ohio	7	42	92	8
	17	172	32	41

Respectfully submitted,  
Thomas Rhines

## **Region 4 Report**

## **NCSG Region 5 Report**

7-30-06

The Wisconsin Guild held a hands on workshop in June at a YMCA camp in the northern part of the state. A number of fireplaces in the camp's cabins were retrofitted by cutting out existing metal fireboxes with plasma cutters and replaced with wood burning fireplace inserts. The new Ahrens masonry fireplace was also installed in one of the fireplaces along with exterior repairs to the masonry chimneys.

The workshop was well attended with strong participation from Minnesota sweeps. This was a perfect location for a hands on work shop allowing attendees to come early or stay extra days to enjoy the camp facilities and great outdoors.

Repair backlogs are a little down in the region compared to last year and sweeping activity is starting to pick up already heading into August. The challenge facing most sweeps right now is dealing with the extreme heat wave and how productivity has slowed down because of it.

Most are optimistic about this fall and are seeing activity starting to pick up early despite the high temperatures with homeowners thinking about getting ready for fall. Those that have been proactive by keeping in touch with customers by mail and calling are having the most success with keeping schedules full. With energy concerns being on most homeowners minds, this fall is expected to be close to last years fall activity.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Rowell  
NCSG Region 5 Director

## **Region Six Report**

August 2006

As of July 31, 2006 there are 72 sweeps in Region 6, with 41 sweeps holding Certified Chimney Sweep status. On July 10, 11, and 12, 2006 the Texas Chimney Sweep Guild held a three day workshop in Galveston, Texas. The Seminars were held in the mornings of each day so that everyone would have a chance to see the sights in Galveston or have fun in the sun. On Monday morning at 9:00 AM I presented a seminar on cleaning pizza ovens which lasted for about an hour. Then the Guild President, Fred Slaback did a presentation on removing a damper blade and reinstalling it back into the fireplace. A short Guild business followed that seminar. On Tuesday Fred did a review on direct connecting an insert in a masonry fireplace. On Wednesday An American Red Cross CPR course was presented by the local Red Cross representative.

Previously there had been some discussion in the Region that the Kansas Guild was going to disband. I had a conversation with Bart Ogden from Wichita, a former NCSG Director. He indicated that the State Guild members felt that they would have a larger voice in local and State matters if they merged with the Midwest Chimney Council. So even though they are not active as a guild, all of the members have joined the Council and are active in that organization.

Bob Burney  
Director  
Region 6



# NCSG Region 7 Director's Report

## August 2006

Submitted by Steve Pietila

Here are the current membership figures for Region 7:

Oregon – 10  
Washington – 11  
Wyoming – 3  
Montana – 0  
Idaho – 4  
Alaska – 1

Total – 29 (up one from last report)

There are 38 CSIA Certified Chimney Sweeps in the region.

More OCSA members seem to be aware of the added value of NCSG membership and I believe more will join. The OCSA still has its own certification program, and again most choose to stay with just that.

The OCSA will be holding it's annual May Day Conference in Portland next year and I will likely be involved in some of the planning.

One big item of discussion is the recent decision by the Oregon Construction Contractor's Board to remove the requirement of a contractor's license for a chimney sweep. This is something that the OCSA worked very hard to have put into place many years ago. There is still a requirement for a sweep that does inspections or repairs. With the NFPA standards that means that all sweeps should be doing at least a Level I inspection which I'm sure will create some confusion for homeowners. The OCSA has written the CCB and asked for (and received) a letter of support from the CSIA.

Most companies in Oregon seem to be experiencing a very good year for sweeping and repairs. Most were having difficulty scheduling their time off and finding extra help for the fall season.

## **Region Eight Report.**

August 2006

Currently, member sweeps total 2 in the state of Hawaii, 3 in Arizona, 3 in Nevada, 4 in Utah and 90 in the great state of California. That's right a grand total of 101 region eight members. That's a three member decrease over the 104 members I reported on last May. 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 overall in this region.

The "Golden State Chimney Sweep Guild" remains the only state guild within region 8. The GSCSG held its 26<sup>th</sup> annual convention and trade show in Sacramento, CA this July. There were four days of education available to sweeps from all over the country.

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 there 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

August 2006 BOD meeting

## **General Business Climate:**

Preparing for this upcoming busy season has been the focus of our industry suppliers since we last meet. While this year has had some sales ups and downs largely due to weather in different regions, the expectation is for a strong fall and winter busy season which will equal or exceed last year.

## **Coupon program:**

I'm happy to say that supplier participation in the NCSG member coupon program has grown from last year. I am pleased that our suppliers found the first year of this program to be a positive experience. This member benefit should continue to be valuable to both our sweep and supplier members alike.

## **Supplier code of ethics:**

Discussions continue on this subject, but there is little concrete information to report at this time.

## **Industry trends:**

Alternative fuels are popping up like crazy. I just saw pellets made from used diapers. High oil and gas prices are driving a gold rush mentality in product and fuel design. As venting experts this is both exciting and frightening. Inevitably there will be both innovations and disasters that come to market from this alternative heating climate. Sweeps will be asked to install and maintain products where there is little or no testing to support the product or installation. We must be careful about what we as an organization and industry support or promote.

With awareness increasing of indoor air quality issues, the open fireplace could be under attack in some areas by state and local officials. It will be critical to follow these political trends which could greatly effect the installation, maintenance, and use of the open fireplace which is still a critical to nearly all of our members.

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.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Huta,  
NCSG Supplier Director

## **Bylaws Committee Report**

August 2006

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**

**August 2004**

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

### **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

Randy Brooks

## **Membership Report, August 2006**

---

NCSG membership has grown steadily but less rapidly as it has in past months; this due in large part to the summer season and a lapse in post card mailings. When the member numbers were moving upwards so rapidly, it was hard to give an accurate report. As of the date of this report, 7-18-06 we have 1023 voting members, up 12 from last report. Dues paying members are up five members to 1095, from the 1090 reported in May of this year. We still have post card mailings to send out over the summer and look forward to adding even more benefits to membership through the vendor coupon program.

The committee also plans a special mailing within the north east region exclusively to bolster participation at convention and membership alike. I will keep you posted on that mailings success.

Overall, membership is up significantly from the start of this current program. The NCSG membership has grown from 907 voting members, and 970 dues paying members, up nearly 13% from March of 2005.

Randy Brooks

## **NFPA 31 Report**

August 2006

No meetings scheduled. Next meeting will be in October

John Pilger  
NCSG Rep to NFPA 31



# **Trade Development Committee Report**

## **Chimney Academy Progress Report:**

1. the chimney academy will consist mainly of the chimney sweeping school and the exam.
2. we may add in a sales CS component for an extra day but have not decided on this
3. graduates who pass the exam will be eligible for hiring by member companies
4. all graduates will receive a frank written recommendation from us
5. we will ask employers to pay for the employee to return to CSIA Technology Center after six months for at least one additional course
6. we will mail our flier and a cover letter to IN high schools this fall
7. financial aid will probably be Sally Mae loans, if needed. We are looking into this.

Greg Polakow, Chair

# NCSG Convention and Events Committee Report

August 2006

## **Developments since June**

Much progress has been made in the areas of seminar suggestions via the dashboard. A number of seminars are now secured to the point where the NCSG can begin promoting them along with other more general promotion of the event.

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

The site selection committee continued to work on a site for 2009 in the southeastern part of the country. As noted in past reports, we have convention needs which give us limited options in convention hotels. The problem has shown itself again. To date, our options have been limited; at the time of this draft we are continuing our search. I hope to have more information to present to you on this subject when we meet in person.

*Repeated from my May report.*

*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 discussion:**

As you all know, we will be discussing convention matters at length during our work session. I would like to work towards modifying our convention business model in such a way to give us more lower cost hotel options. Included in this discussion should include such topics as shrinking the tradeshow and brake out space needs, increasing total room nights purchased by our attendees, increasing our F&B budget, eliminating the current rotation to provide more options in any given year, etc.

## **The following bears repeating from past Convention Committee Reports:**

*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.*

*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**

John Wharton and myself attended the HPBA Government Affairs Academy, or as they came to refer to it as “boot camp”. It was held at the Home and Hearth Technology Center in Lakeville, MN, July 23 – 26. There were 23 volunteers, who attended from all over the United States and Canada. It was an excellent and eye-opening experience. We covered Media Training, Issues Facing The Industry, Negotiation Tactics and Styles, and Testimony Training.

Bob Guyer who is the author of the book, Guide To State Legislative Lobbying, spent a day and a half with the group going over the who, what, where, when and whys of lobbying.

I also learned how the HPBA uses the Leg alert system within their organization and will try and model the use of the system in a similar way, so it will be a useful tool for our membership. I gained knowledge that will help me to have a working and functioning committee in the future.

I have been in contact with Tim Webb, the NEHPBA, Leg/Reg Committee Chairman. There was a bill introduced in the town of Huntington, New York, that would basically ban burning. I attended the meeting and learned the bill had been table to a future date. The town board was contacted and a meeting was requested. The Town Board agreed to a close meeting. Two members of HPBA were allowed to address the board.

Representatives from the Lung Association, the Long Island Breast Cancer Coalition and one homeowner were also present. The homeowner was allowed to present his position on why he should be able to burn. Then the two members of the HPBA followed. The Lung Association and Breast Coalition did not address the board at all.

By meetings end the bill had been amended and everyone was satisfied with the results.

I will be working to set up this kind of exchange of information and ideas with other HPBA regional Leg/Reg Committee Chairmen. I believe there is strength in numbers and I believe with all the issues out there the HPBA has this same belief.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Pilger

## **Foreign Relations Committee Report**

August 2006

I have been in contact with several different countries over the last four months as to how they evolved with their logo changes over the years. I hate to open this can of worms again, but it appears every year it gets brought up and this is from the last time it was on the list.

I should be able to give some kind of report and a history lesson by the next meeting. Just to set the tone it was a battle in two of the countries I have been in contact with, so I figure were no different in the old vs. new thoughts. No recommendations however from this committee of one then or now.

Vic Imgarten  
Chairman