

# FIRESIDE

## UPDATE

A member benefit of MidStates HPBA

AUGUST, 2004 • VOL. 5, NO. 2

## Mystery Shopper - Coming to Your Store in 2004!

Sarah Ammann, Program Coordinator

We are doing it again, and you won't want to miss out! The MidStates Affiliate is proud to bring back the Mystery Shopper program after a successful run in 2003. Don't miss the opportunity to **improve your store through your customers' eyes!**

Last year, more than 500 stores nationwide were "mystery shopped." Custom Fireplace Shop in Canton, Ohio, was one of them. Owner Denise Hill was excited at the opportunity to participate in the MSHPBA-sponsored program.

"We were a little nervous about what the results would be - it's human nature," Hill says. "You want to improve, but you dread having your flaws revealed to you.

We fared a little better than we had expected in some areas and worse in some other areas where we thought we were more professional. That was eye-opening. We definitely want to participate again to see if we have improved."

Participants like Hill have found that a Mystery Shopper service provides a valuable resource that they likely wouldn't have sought out on their own.

"We wouldn't have been able to do this without MSHPBA sponsoring it," Hill adds. "We wouldn't have known where to find anyone to do this, and the cost would have been prohibitive."

The Mystery Shopper program is open to all MSHPBA members for a special rate of only \$45.

Want to find out more? Read the frequently asked questions below. For additional information or to register, call (314) 576-5333. Deadline is August 11.



### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: What is the Mystery Shopper program?**

**A:** Mystery Shopper is a program sponsored by MSHPBA to provide individual store evaluations to its members. MSHPBA hired an independent firm to audit the evaluations and provide individual store results in comparison to others in the region and nationally.

**Q: How does it work?**

**A:** When you sign up for the Mystery Shopper program, a shopper is scheduled to come to your retail store(s) between October 1 and November 15.

You won't know who the shopper is or when he or she is coming to your store, hence the term "mystery shopper." After the visit, a report is generated that compares your store(s) to all other hearth, patio and barbecue stores that were shopped. **Only you** see the individual report for your store(s)!

**Q: Why should I sign up for Mystery Shopper?**

**A:** Mystery Shopper is an ideal way for you to learn how your store compares to your competitors! Your store's appearance and employees are important because you never get a second chance to make a first impression!

**Q: What will my store be judged on?**

**A:** The shopper who visits your store will use a set of criteria approved by HPBA. Mystery shoppers will be instructed to critique the following areas:

- Pre-visit phone call
- Store environment
- Customer needs
- Product knowledge/salesmanship
- Salesperson's closing techniques
- Overall impression of your store

**Q: How do I sign up for Mystery Shopper?**

**A:** In order to participate in Mystery Shopper, you must sign up by **August 11**. Call (314) 576-5333 to register.

**Q: How much will it cost me?**

**A:** By spreading the cost out among all its members, MSHPBA is able provide this service at the lowest possible cost. Mystery Shopper is available to all members for just \$45. 🔥



Cherie Clark-Radovic, President

Our 5th annual meeting, which was recently held in Columbus, Ohio, proved to be another great event for our affiliate. Thanks to co-chairmen John Ashby (Heat Exchange Fireplace & Patio - North Ridgeville, OH) and Dan Maddox (Hearth Products Controls Co. - Dayton, OH), the event was sponsored by 23 distributors and/or manufacturers and was attended by almost 90 people.

Key to the meeting's success was the many display booths, excellent speakers, the fun-filled evening cookout with guest chefs, and the opportunity for members to participate in the NFI certification program for either natural gas or wood burning products.

Prior to the meeting, new members were elected to our board. As your new president, I am pleased to welcome Marty Morrison of Fireplace N Fixins - Martins Ferry, OH, and Ron Johnson of Monsma Marketing Corporation - Grand Rapids, MI. I am so excited to have them as part of your leadership team. If you know Marty or Ron, be sure to give them a call and welcome them. In addition, we thanked Alan Newkirk of Stove Parts Unlimited - Mt. Sterling, KY, and Vicki Harrell of The Backyard - Owensboro, KY, for their dedication and service to the board as they finish their terms.

Speaking of service to the board, another important topic that needs to be addressed is membership. Your membership to the MidStates HPBA and national HPBA is much more than just receiving free admission to the EXPO tradeshow each year. More importantly, it provides resources that many of us could never afford on our own. These include:

- governmental affairs specialists who cover code issues, legislation, lobbying and EPA matters
- legal support
- public and media relations, providing us with exposure through media stories and press releases
- affinity programs that reduce our individual costs on various goods or services
- educational programming
- the opportunity to meet and share with other people who understand our industry and businesses.

As you go through the remainder of the year, I ask that you share the positive aspects and excitement of being a member of MSHPBA and

*(continued on page 7)*



## MSHPBA Office Staff

*Fireside Update is published quarterly for members of the MSHPBA. Submission of articles is encouraged and welcome.*

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# HPBA Board Report



## Pete Anderson Region IV Director

The HPBA Board of Directors met in June in Atlanta. We toured the portion of the Georgia World Congress center where EXPO 2005 will be held. This is a huge facility and EXPO will be using the newest por-

tion. If you are planning to travel to Atlanta by air, be sure to check out the MARTA light rail system. I was able to get from the airport to my downtown hotel without stepping outside. It's faster than by taxi and bargain priced at \$1.75. Check out their Web site, [www.itsmarta.com](http://www.itsmarta.com) for details.

The Government Affairs Committee has reported that several environmental events are happening at about the same time, bringing more pressure on wood burning. The item most likely to affect MSHPBA members is the implementation of fine particulate standards (PM 2.5) in many counties. Mean-while, opportunities are becoming available, including U.S. Environmental Protection Agency support of stove change-out programs and the possible use of applying interstate trading rules. What this means, if approved, is that utilities could provide financial support of stove change-out programs as part of their efforts to remove pollutants from a region.

HPBA is considering the addition of a staff person to be a codes and standards specialist to better support members in these areas.

Our Communications Committee continues to have success in getting the hearth and barbecue messages out to the media. One highlight for the fall will be the "Virtual Tailgating" promotion, encouraging everyone to have the tailgate experience in their own yards.

EXPO '05 is filling quickly and will feature limited indoor burning for the first time and a greatly expanded outdoor burn area. This means even more live products to see. A new registration process is being implemented for 2005 to provide more efficient on-site registration. I recommend using the online registration and having your badges mailed to you so you can show up, pick up

a badge holder and be in the show.

A task force has been appointed to review the current affiliate agreement and explore ways to enhance the relationship between the affiliates and HPBA. I have agreed to chair this task force.

The HPBA board will meet again in November. Topics to be considered will be approval of the 2005 budget and future show sites.

It's my pleasure to serve as your Region IV director to the HPBA Board of Directors. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or comments about any matter relating to the national organization.

Pete Anderson

Pete Anderson  
HPBA Director, Region IV

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# How to Stay Motivated



Kerry L. Johnson, PhD

*This article excerpted from the "The Winning Edge," an e-newsletter produced by author and keynote speaker Dr. Kerry Johnson. You can sign up to receive his newsletter free by visiting [www.kerryjohnson.com](http://www.kerryjohnson.com).*

It's 8 a.m. on Monday morning. You had a great weekend and wish it didn't have to end. Last week was finished with a bang, but today you just don't feel the same motivation to win. As a result, you walk in the office and immediately read your mail. Then you talk to another salesperson for an hour while sipping coffee. It's almost time for lunch. You avoid prospecting for customers due to the lack of time available before you eat. You're back at 1:30 p.m. and realize you have a couple of letters to write. It's time to go home. You just wasted a day. At \$150 an hour worth of lost sales production, your lack of motivation cost you \$1,200.

What happened? You can't afford any more days like this one. But how do you stay motivated all the time? Is it even possible?

Motivation is functionally defined as possessing the self-discipline to do what you need to do when you need to do it. Of course, everyone is motivated. A golfer is moti-

vated to practice his golf swing. A mother is motivated to care for her children. A child is motivated to eat candy anytime it's available. The trick is to motivate yourself to do the things you know you should be doing even when you don't feel like doing them. You'd work 20 hours a day if you were starving. But right now you just aren't hungry enough. Successful people do the things less successful people refuse to do.

Experiencing a lack of motivation frustrates us all. Here are a couple of tips that will help you stay motivated to do the things you need to do.

## FOUR WAYS TO MOTIVATE YOURSELF

### 1) Make time psychology work for you.

If you have ever taken a time-management course before, you have learned how to pack more into less time. But have you ever noticed how difficult it is to leave a project or job incomplete? You can play on this psychology of completion by writing out a to-do list

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# Congratulations!



## THE LONG HOURS SPENT STUDYING HAVE PAID OFF!

The following people recently became NFI Gas Certified professionals during the MidStates HPBA Annual Meeting:

- Richard Szmarra
- William Cull
- Brent Copeland
- Craig McChesney
- Dave Elston
- Steve Harner
- Steve P. Harner
- Mike Darrow
- Jack Evans
- Jim King
- Jeff Evers

The following people recently became NFI Wood Certified professionals during the MidStates HPBA Annual Meeting:

- Eric Haldeman
- John Luce, Sr.
- Tom Stoncheck
- Simon Anderson



# How to Stay Motivated

(continued from page 4)

before you go home at the end of the workday. Chances are if you don't know exactly where to pick up where you left off, you'll have to start over. Before you leave the office tonight, lay out five calls you need to make tomorrow morning. Or go home right in the middle of filling out a prospect contact sheet.

## 2) Give yourself daily and hourly goals.

Very few of us have the ability to stay disciplined all the time. Yet studies have shown that a big difference between those who succeed and those who fail is constant and concentrated activity. Big hitters report such behaviors as not taking lunch until they make a pre-set number of phone calls. They don't allow themselves to play golf until they sell a certain number of units. Sure, they make sacrifices. But in the meantime, they also make sales. Most who practice this method of self-denial say that when they do earn a lunch or a golf game, the taste is very sweet when linked to a successfully accomplished activity.

## 3) Make selling a game.

When you take your sales career too seriously, it becomes drudgery instead of enjoyment. Most top producers say that their income takes a back seat to how much fun they have on the job. Interestingly, many poor producers look at their paycheck as being the biggest motivator. The problem is that your sales production will fluctuate. You may go from "who's who" to "who's he" in the space of a year. So, try to enjoy yourself at work. Play golf more often with your best customers. Send out birthday cards to prospects or customers you care about. See how many phone calls you can make in an hour or a day without caring particularly about the result.

## 4) Reward effort.

Avoiding burnout is a key factor in maintaining motivation. A great way to avoid the symptoms of burnout is to link rewards to activity instead of success. One way to kill motivation is to increase your frustration and isolation. You have probably at one time already done this by withdrawing from the people in your life you love. But a great way to create motivation is to give yourself a reinforcement gift that comes as a result of superior effort. Effort always results in success if it is maintained.

A manager once asked me to speak at his conference after dinner on the last night. As the president was speaking, the manager told me that he was cutting his salespeople's commissions, increasing their quotas, and taking out all perks and financial overrides. He then looked at me and said, "We'd like you to go out there now and give them a big motivational send-off." Motivation doesn't come from a rousing speech or a drug that works for an eight-hour period. It is a by-product of your desire to be successful. 🔥

# Web site Update

## ***New and Improved!***

The Web site has recently been updated with pictures from the MSHPBA Annual Meeting, new board member information and important Legislative & Regulatory issues.

Visit the MSHPBA Web site at  
[www.midstateshpba.org](http://www.midstateshpba.org)

Get information on the upcoming EXPO, sponsorship updates, member benefits, legislative issues, affinity programs and much more!

While you're there, be sure to join the MSHPBA Yahoo group message board. It's easy - simply click on the Yahoo Groups icon from the home page and enter your e-mail address.

# MSHPBA 2004 Annual Sponsors

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## Thank you 2004 Annual Barbecue Sponsors!



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SAVE  
 THE DATE!

**February 23-26,  
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**Georgia World Congress Center  
 Atlanta, Georgia**

**EPA News Alert  
 UPDATE!**

MSHPBA is urging its members, particularly State Code Coordinators, to take steps to familiarize themselves with local air regulators and work to make sure that banning woodburning is not the only option on the table when it comes time for each state and county to make its reduction plans.

MSHPBA members should be particularly alert because 65 of the 243 counties on EPA's list - or 27% of all non-attainment areas - are located in MSHPBA states.

- Kentucky – 13 counties
- Michigan – 7 counties
- Ohio – 33 counties
- West Virginia – 12 counties

To view a complete list of counties, visit:  
[www.midstateshpba.org/legreg.htm](http://www.midstateshpba.org/legreg.htm)

**President's Letter**

(continued from page 2)

HPBA with your fellow retailers, distributors or manufacturer representatives. Encourage them to become active members of our organization and to participate in the various events that we host throughout the year.

And be sure to actively participate yourself. Let your board members know of issues that are impacting your business - areas of concern that you may have and ways that we as an organization can grow and improve to better serve all members.

I am honored to be the current president of this organization and pleased to follow in the footsteps of Dan Maddox. He, along with Bill Kiefer and Pete Anderson, has provided the leadership and guidance needed for a start-up affiliate such as ours. Now, it is my responsibility and that of your board to see that we continue to grow and thrive as an organization.

On behalf of the new board, we look forward to working with all of you over the coming year. 🔥



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# A Smokin' Success...

*...Scenes from the MSHPBA Annual Meeting at the Columbus Marriott Northwest  
For more information on the Annual Meeting visit our Web site [www.midstateshpba.org](http://www.midstateshpba.org)!*



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