

## Message From Your President



Members,

It's spring! This cold, rainy season brought sales up for many of us and will help our bottom lines. While the economy is still getting it's footing, many in our business have done all the right things to stay healthy. If you haven't already, consider counter seasonal products and accessories you can promote for Fathers Day, Mothers Day and even for grads! Umbrellas for summer? Grill tools and incredible barbecue sauces?

Even with tight budgets, investments that help your business grow are certification programs like NFI, taking advantage of business and technical seminars, and participating in association activities. You will want to come to the Dealer Round Up, held this year in Ontario, California, July 18, 19 & 20. Along with NFI, attendees will be able to check out indoor and outdoor product displays and participate in other seminars offered by respected professionals.

Check out our web site [www.hpbapacific.org](http://www.hpbapacific.org) for more information and plan now to bring others in your business to the event. As always, I welcome your call with any question, concern or suggestion: 916-339-2220.

Amie Ryan  
Ryan Brothers Chimney Sweeping

## Spotlight of the Month: Jason Woodruff Sooty's Chimney Blue Jay, CA



Q: How did you get into this business?

A: I purchased a sweeping business when I moved back to California. I went to school out of state but wanted to move back to California where both my wife and I have family. I never intended to continue in the chimney industry, but here I am.

Q: What is the hardest/worst job you have ever encountered? How about the best?

A: I'm pretty comfortable with hearth work. The hardest job I have is being a father, but it is the most rewarding. To raise kids today with honesty and integrity is the most difficult job that I have. To raise kids with character is difficult in today's culture where anything goes. I enjoy the time my wife and I spend camping, hunting, trap shooting, and many other activities with the children.

Q: What keeps you going each day?

A: My responsibility to my family and my faith in Christ keeps me going each day. I get home and I hear my 3 year old daughter say "Daddy's home, Daddy's home, Yea!" It makes the day's work worth it. The fact that I know that each day the Lord will take care of me and my family is the support I need to make it through difficult times.

Q: Do you see the economy loosening up in your marketplace?

A: The winter is the most difficult time of year for me, since many of the properties in my area are under snow. In the last couple of weeks, the requests for work have increased significantly. This may be seasonally triggered rather than economy-based since we have had some destructive storms here. Either way, I'm happy.

## Careful Out There!

With the number of mobile smart phones proliferating in the U.S...Cybercriminals are coming out of the woodwork looking for sensitive info on sophisticated mobile phones packed with tons of special apps and web access. Criminal activity ranges from stealing information from smart phone memories to relaying viruses from phones to their owners' company networks. Mobile phone security will become big business in coming years, offering a variety of security options, including a remote program that will wipe out all of a phone's stored data if the phone is lost, say, at a conference or in a cab.

## Government Relations Update

To date, Sac Metro AQMD has changed out 2731 units. This program continues to promote the positive impact change outs have on the community to clean the air. In San Joaquin 330 vouchers have been issued with \$227,800 funds left.

## A Sign of the Times

Disability, religion and/or national Equal Employment Opportunity Commission claims were at all-time highs. Race (36%), retaliation (36%) and sex-based discrimination (30%) claims were most frequently filed. The EEOC said the high number of claims may be due to economic conditions, increased diversity and demographic shifts in the workplace, employees' greater awareness of their rights, and changes in EEOC procedures making it easier to file charges.

*The EEOC statistics illustrate the need for employers to be vigilant to avoid practices that may be alleged to be discriminatory. It is easier than ever to file discrimination claims under federal and state laws and regulations, especially retaliation claims, and more expensive than ever to defend against them. In hard economic times, discrimination claims are more common, as the EEOC points out.*

**COBRA PREMIUM ASSISTANCE EXTENDED FOR TWO MONTHS** - *H&H Report Update* - The federal subsidy paying 65% of an eligible former employee's COBRA medical insurance premium was extended for two months to an expiration date of February 28, 2010 as a provision of the 2010 Defense Appropriations Act signed into law on December 19, 2009. (Terminated employees taking advantage of the subsidy are responsible for the other 35% of the premium payable to their former employers which pay the insurer for the coverage.) The benefit is available to employees involuntarily terminated between September 1, 2008 and February 28, 2010 who were eligible for COBRA coverage under their employers' medical insurance plans. Subsidized coverage now extends for up to 15 months.

*Employers are required to tell employees terminated through February 28, 2010 of the extension of subsidized benefits, including those whose subsidized coverage may have run out before the latest extension.*

Report courtesy of Howe & Hutton

## Round Up 2010

Round Up 2010 is around the corner. Mark your calendars for July 18, 19, and 20 at the Ontario Convention Center in Ontario, CA. Don't miss local NFI certifications, business seminars and product displays. Dealer registration forms will be sent out soon.

## Attention!

If you are currently working with a company named Choosedirect.com, please call the affiliate office. While they are displaying an HPBA logo, they are not paid members.

## NSPS Schedule

An updated NSPS schedule is on our site. Thanks again to all the members who have participated in this important industry matter. Please check out [www.hpbapacific.org](http://www.hpbapacific.org) to download the form.

## Upcoming Election Information

Doing business in California? Stay current on the important issues and see how candidates for Governor stack up. [www.CalChamber2010.com](http://www.CalChamber2010.com) has all the info you need to compare candidates, get facts and to be informed.

If you are in Nevada, check out this website for your candidates information:  
<http://nvsos.gov/index.aspx?page=337>

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