

Message From Your President



Dear Members,

Hope you're having a great summer!

After seeing the article about Rick Vlahos...learning that he has over 100 online classes for those of us running stores...wow! You have no excuse now not to get yourselves more knowledgeable. I'm a big believer in education and certification. But, I have another reason to encourage you to send your partners and employees to some of these valuable classes.

When I was talking to Pat Rosengren at our affiliate office, she shared that when she sent her employees to educational seminars she could tell that the staff took pride in being able to return and share the new information. They felt good that she wanted to invest in them...and in their futures. Investing in your staff's knowledge is a win-win for everyone.

So, it's not just you the business owner who needs to stay fresh and learning new ways of running a smarter business. It's a way to show your staff you care about their performance and their careers. Everyone feels the pride...and the profit.

Freshen your stores, take a little time off to re-energize over the next month or so as crisp fall air...and consumer needs for a cozy fire...is just beyond.

Sincerely,
Amie Ryan
Ryan Brothers Chimney Sweeping

Spotlight of the Month:

Rick Vlahos

*Director of Program
Development
HPB Education Foundation*



Think you know everything?

"I know members' intentions are good," Rick Vlahos laments, "but in times like these, putting off a better educated staff could make the difference between a business surviving and having to close its doors."

That's pretty direct talk coming from a very knowledgeable and typically upbeat guy. Rick's emails come in from time to time announcing another industry education seminar. But what do you know about him? And, can what he offers really save your business? What if it helped save just one sale? What if it saved your best employee? You can't use "no time" or "too expensive" anymore. Rick's got answers for you. He's been in your shoes.

From 1983 to 2000 Rick was an independent sales rep based first in California, then in the mid-west, covering seven states. In 2000 he took a position with Hearthstone doing their entire dealer training. As HPBA realized not just Rick's value but the inescapable transition to online learning from expensive time in a classroom, he joined the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Education Foundation in 2006 to advance that channel of learning for our industry.

He's been busy. There are now over 100 different online classes available to you and your employees. Want a class just for your company? Rick will deliver it. Need NFI exam study courses in your own office or home? Rick has it for you both delivered live and interactive and recorded so you can take it at midnight.

Rick's biggest challenge? Getting the word out on how easy and affordable a better educated and trained staff is now. So, call him at 703-524-8030 ext 220. It'll be a call well worth making. Isn't your business, your profit, worth it?

Government Relations

- CalGreen recently adopted a new rule that outlaws B-Vent fireplaces in the state of California. Our board and other vital members in the industry are working hard to work with CalGreen on possibly amending this rule. If you would like to be involved in this process or want to be added to the email list, please e-mail kaity@hpbapacific.org and your name will be added.
- Placer County is getting ready to start its third year of change outs. For now, there is \$70K of vouchers available for consumers. There are 42 people on the waiting list now who are approved to receive a voucher. This means that a little less than half the funds are committed to at this point. The voucher amounts still remain at \$750 and \$1500 for income qualified folks. The District will issue vouchers until all the money is spent. Visit www.placer.ca.gov/apcd for more information.

Round Up 2010

Thank you to all the members and exhibitors who made our Regional Round Up in Ontario CA. Whether you came to see new product, attend a class, or enjoy a few beers, we want to thank everyone who was involved in making this happen. Our next event will be the Annual Holiday Dinner held in Sacramento. More info to come very soon.



From left to right: Jay Hanson, Curly Orlando, Peter Ross, Michael Watts, Guy Fasanaro, Jim Merkel and Tom Karow.



Tom Pugh's Seminar "Art of Sales."

Did You Know?

- White page phone books will soon be as rare as 78 rpm records. The web and environmental worries are pushing them into the recycling bin. Their demise will save 5000 tons of paper a year in New York alone, plus energy costs. Few will miss them. Only 2% of phone book users bother to ask for another copy.
- Planning to stock up on those odd looking CFL bulbs? Better think twice. By late summer, the new thing will be bulbs with light emitting diodes. LEDs will last longer (15-20 years), are more efficient (using 80% less electricity than incandescent or halogen bulbs) and in most instances provide better lighting. They'll be more expensive initially\$30 each... but count on prices coming down, and the longer life and energy savings will make them a bargain for offices and homes. Uncle Sam is adding a strong incentive namely a ban on the manufacture of 100-watt incandescent bulbs in 2010. All incandescent bulbs will be gone by 2014.
- Today, 400 million people log onto their Facebook profile at least once every month. 50% are on the site everyday. Those are lots of connections. Where are you in the mix? Your competition is on there!
- 70% of Facebook users are outside the U.S. and the site is available in more than 70 different languages.
- Facebook has become so popular psychologists identified a new health disorder: Facebook Addiction Disorder.
- In Australia, Facebook has infiltrated the court system. Court notices can be served through the site now. A Facebook summons is considered legally binding.

Become Involved!

This isn't an election year for only Politicians! HPBA Pacific will also vote for new board members later this year. Do you have interest in being on our board? Do you want to contribute ideas and give back to an industry that has given to you? There are also committee positions available for anyone who is interested. Get involved! Make our events and other initiatives even better! E-mail kaity@hpbapacific.org if you are interested in participating.

In the News

- Scientific Support for Anti-Texting Laws: The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that 28 states and the District of Columbia have banned texting while driving. A recent Virginia Tech study illustrates the need. Tests show drivers were 23 times more likely to have a collision while texting! The average driver takes his/her eyes off the road for about 4.6 out of 6 seconds while texting. At 55 mph that's more than a full-length football field. Remember this the next time you are alongside a driver who is texting and driving at 70 mph+. It's difficult to legislate common sense, but these test results demonstrate the need to try. Add a ban on texting while driving to your staff policy manual. No message is worth dying (or killing) for.
- Airlines Adding Fees: Just when you might have imagined the airlines had run out of ideas for add-on fees, they came up with new fees for getting ahead in check-in and security lines and now for boarding immediately after first-class and elite level frequent flyers. There are a variety of approaches, including Southwest's "Business Select" package, the new American "Your Choice" package, United's "Premier Line" and "Premier Travel" packages, and on and on. What they have in common is add-on fees if you want to board earlier to ensure access to overhead bins for luggage, aisle or window seats, etc. If low-priced tickets are your primary interest, expect to board last and fight for overhead bin space. Do you suppose someday we may have to pay extra to move up in line for the bathrooms?
- Social Network Venting: Venting on your social media network can be a really bad idea. This may be obvious but we will repeat: Facts illustrate the potential consequences for making statements on social networks that employers may see and act on to the detriment of the employee or job applicant. Once you go public with statements on social networks, you lose control over where they may turn up.
- Try Software to Protect Against Loss of Your Computer: About 12,000(!) laptop computers are lost each week at airports, and those turned in to lost and found departments only a third are reclaimed, according to one recent study reported in the New York Times. Add to that the many that are stolen or left somewhere or misplaced and you can see a developing market for a solution. Enter software providers providing programs that will variously try to locate a missing or stolen computer when it is connected to the Internet, take pictures of web pages visited or even persons using the computer, monitor emails, or lock down a computer to prevent use. Among the better known programs are LoJack for computers, Laptop Cop, GadgetTrak, Adeona, and Undercover, but there are others. Check with a knowledgeable source and consider the potential benefit against the known risks of loss. This may be even more important to do if member data is on your laptop or other portable electronic devices.

Note: Thanks to Howe & Hutton as source of some of this newsletter's content.

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