

Ohio Chapter of ASHI

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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By: Carl Patterson
President

The March conference was one of great success. Tom Horning did a fantastic job of putting together quality speakers that formed very successful sessions for all who attended. Even with last minute changes each session was of high quality with a lot of dialogue. I do believe this was one of the best Spring Conferences presented. Thanks again to all that participated in the planning of this event and a special thanks to Tom Horning. What a success!

There were tentative plans to have another education session in May but this has been changed and one is currently being planned for July. More details will be forth coming

We were fortunate to have Bill Richardson, President Elect, from National attend our conference. This provided an opportunity for members to talk directly with a representative from National ASHI on an individual basis. It also provided Bill with feedback from members and the Board to take back to National. The communication link between National and the Ohio Chapter is one that needs to continually be maintained. We need to give a big thank you to Bill for making the trip from across the country to attend our conference.

Your board has had some changes. We have four new members and these are: Tim Buell, Ken Harrington, Tom Horning and Larry Stumpf (Vice President). Forest Sutherland and Craig Limbach along with me are the other members. Ray Kershaw has accepted the position as Secretary and Rick Szeles has accepted the position as Treasurer. Howard Snyder is our Executive Director. I am quite pleased with the composition of the leadership for the Ohio Chapter.



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Ohio ASHI is your organization. All members need to voice their ideas so the board can continue to best serve individuals and the home inspection industry in Ohio. The Board continues to enhance the chapter while others behind the scene continue to promote ASHI in other ways. It is this combined effort that strengthens the chapter and the home inspection industry in Ohio. The greatest resource of the Ohio Chapter of ASHI is its members. Home inspectors helping home inspectors is one way we all grow.



LOOKING TO MULTIPLY YOUR INCOME? **Tim Buell**

Would you like more inspections? Do you want to increase your income? Do you desire better relationships with the real estate community? If your answers are yes, the chapter PowerPoint presentation is for you!

Marketing is one of the keys to our success. For that reason, the Ohio Chapter has developed a PowerPoint presentation to give you “face” time with the real estate community. In one hour, you become the professional, the expert and the “go to” home inspector. You educate attendees on what a home inspection really is and why they should use an ASHI® Certified Inspector from our chapter. This presentation can be given to Realtors®, bankers, mortgage companies, title companies and yes, even lawyers.

This State of Ohio approved course provides Realtors® with one hour of continuing education credit.

To qualify you must meet the following requirements:

- You must be an ASHI® Certified Inspector.
- The State of Ohio requires 5 years of experience as follows:
 - Possession of a bachelor’s degree in a field related to that in which the person is to teach, from a school listed as an institution of higher learning by the U.S. Dept of Education or from a comparable school in a foreign country, or
 - Possession of a valid teaching credential or certificate from Ohio or another state authorizing the holder to teach in that field of instruction in which the person is to teach, or
 - Five years full-time experience in a profession, trade, or technical occupation in the applicable field, or
 - Any combination of the above which results in a minimum five years of full-time experience relevant to the applicable field.
- The State of Ohio will require a bio from you in order to be certified.

There is a \$50 fee for the PowerPoint training class which includes lunch. For further information on our training class, contact Tim Buell, Chapter Realtor Relations Chair at 614-746-7485 or tim.buell@sbcglobal.net

2008 ASHI Education Meetings

**GREEN BUILDING and UNDERSTANDING
HVAC DESIGN for COMFORT—
STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY—SAFETY and HEALTH
JULY 21, 2008 Conference — Columbus, OH**



Armin Rudd has over 20 years experience in buildings research and consulting including residential HVAC and dehumidification systems. Armin holds 10 patents for HVAC system control methods and building enclosure components. He received the 1997 Distinguished Researcher Award, University of Central Florida, Institutes and Centers.

Issues Involve: Heating/cooling options; calculating heating and cooling loads for home; affective performance; quality HVAC installation; humidity control; basement design; and ductwork issues.

MARCH 8, 2008 CONFERENCE — Columbus, OH



Lunch



**Forrest Sutherland, Ruth Schneider,
Rudy Platzer and Steve Verssen**



Education Session



**Bill Richardson, National ASHI President-Elect, President Carl
Patterson, Secretary Ray Kershaw and Associate Branden Jensen**

OHIO ASHI WORKING FOR YOU

SEPTEMBER 14-17, 2008 — Ohio Association of Realtor's (OAR) Annual Conference — COLUMBUS

For several years, Wes Brendsel has been donating and taking time from his own work to keep ASHI in the Realtors minds. He has been in charge of setting up and tearing down the ASHI chapter booth with banners, and of course, scheduling the inspectors that man the booth. Depending on the location of the OAR conference, he may be away from home for several days. His efforts include answering questions about ASHI and promoting the members of the Ohio chapter. Membership directories are distributed. Wes on behalf of Ohio ASHI is promoting you.

All Certified Members and Associates with Logo Use of the Ohio chapter are listed. The directory is updated annually. Information about our Society, Standards of Practice, and Code of Ethics are included. Names are listed in alphabetical order along with your company name and contact information. These directories are free for you to distribute to Realtors and business associates.

Tim Buell is heading a new popular program that the seasoned members of the Ohio chapter can use to gain some face time with those most likely to refer clients to you. This Realtor Continuing Education program provides credits to the Realtors and gives you a great chance to expand your contacts and increase you bottom line. Be sure to read Tim's article on page 2 and see the benefits for yourself.

Tom Horning and others are working hard to find informative presenters for the meetings we have scheduled throughout the year. The education programs are the most noticeable activity presented for and by the membership of the Ohio chapter. An ongoing effort is required to provide top notch, interesting, and timely speakers year after year. Tom spends a lot of time gleaning through the chaff to gather the best presenters available but this is an endeavor that requires suggestions from others. Contact Tom if you know of a presenter that you think would provide useful, well presented, and fresh information.

There are many benefits given by National. The one that puts money in your pocket is the "Find an Inspector " function on the web. This site allows buyers to find an inspector by name, city, or area code. You can put personal information about your business and write a message that will set you apart from the crowd. ASHI National has your information listed but you can take a few moments to make the site personally yours. A few minutes of work can ensure more inspections on your schedule.

Ken Harrington has been coordinating an effort to help a fellow inspector that is facing some difficult times. Andy Shirky was an associate of Ken and has worked with several members of the Ohio chapter in the past. He was attacked and severely injured after work a year ago. Andy has difficulty walking, has memory loss and is not able to talk. The doctors say he will never be able to work again. Ken discovered that Andy had purchased a double that he had started to rennovate. The property was to be Andy's home and to provide some additional income for himself and his two boys during the slow times. He had finished and rented one side. Ken has taken it upon himself to gather personnel and materials to finish this project. Andy will need perpetual attention and the income from this property will help provide him with the care he needs. If you can help, contact Ken. If you have a worthy project, let us know and we will help promote and call attention to your endeavor.

JLC Letter — Legislative Update

Steve Verssen

On May 6, HB 257, a bill to require the licensure of home inspectors and creation of the Ohio Home Inspector Board to regulate the licensure and performance of home inspectors, passed the Ohio House of Representatives.

HB 257 had been introduced on June 5, 2007 by Rep. Michelle Schneider and sent to the house committee on Commerce and Labor where it languished for nearly a year. On April 9, 2008 Schneider introduced a substitute bill which was subsequently amended, passed the full house on May 6th and has now moved to the Senate. We are hopeful we can get the bill through the Senate this year.

As we have discussed over the past two years, there have been many changes to this bill and your legislative committee is very happy with the progress to date. Please understand that does not mean we are happy with each and every line item of the bill, but many of these are legalese and provisions outside of our control or influence. We are continuing to work within the system to fine tune provisions during the approval process.

Your Legislative Committee has spent countless hours and energy in the development of a licensing bill and the political process needed to get it passed. In recent months, we have met with the superintendent of Real Estate and Professional Licensing and her staff for a very informational and productive meeting to clarify and update the bill. We have also met with the bill sponsor Rep. Schneider and a formal group of interested parties who had a desire to modify several key provisions of the bill. We have been in constant contact with our two lobbyists who continue to keep us informed on upcoming hearings, meetings, etc.

More recently, by invitation, we participated in a panel discussion at the Ohio Association of Realtors (OAR) Howard Snyder, Tim Stull, and Steve Verssen in addition to Representative Brinkman, chairman of the Labor and Commerce Committee and Terry Hanker, Comey & Shepherd Real Estate Company made brief presentations and fielded questions from the audience of one hundred plus realtors from around the state. We received a very warm welcome and a thank you letter from Robert Fletcher, Sr. Vice President for Public Policy of OAR which stated "their comments on the issue of Licensing Home Inspectors were very well received and very timely for our members in attendance".

On May 28th Representative Schneider formally introduced the bill to the Senate Insurance, Commerce, and Labor Committee where it was well received by the Chairman and the other members of the committee. This introduction was the first step needed to continue the movement of the bill through the Senate. The JLC is extremely pleased that this occurred prior to the summer recess so that when the Senate reconvenes this fall, this step will be out of the way and the hearings can begin immediately.

It is my personal and professional opinion that the time for licensing is NOW! Our economy is slow; more people will look to enter our profession as corporate downsizing takes place. There are some in our industry that promote avoidance of the licensing issue. This can result in others taking control of our destiny. I have recently seen a publication that stated that in a slow economy we cannot afford the added expense of licensing. Such an attitude is what keeps our industry from growing as a profession. As Executive Director Howard Snyder has taught at several ASHI presentations; this will simply be another cost of doing business for everyone and we MUST CHARGE for this added cost. Do not absorb the licensing costs but make them a positive and a revenue generator because you probably aren't charging enough to begin with.

On behalf of the Legislative Committee we ask for your continued support. It is now time to ask your State Senator for support and quick passage of the home inspector licensing legislation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact an Ohio Chapter Committee Member: Mike Metzger, Howard Snyder, Forest Sutherland, Tim Stull or Steve Verssen for further clarification.

EDITORIAL

David Argabright

According to the latest figures the sale of existing homes in Ohio is at it's lowest volume in the past ten years. Combined with the inflow of new inspectors during the last decade this makes everyone compete harder for a piece of a shrinking pie. There will be some whose businesses will fail. Many who were hanging on by the skin of their teeth are dropping out of the inspection business or taking a regular job and performing inspections part time. We are in a cleansing period which can work to your benefit. Those who are not serious and expect things to fall into their laps without putting forth the required effort are beginning to wake up to reality. THINGS ARE TOUGH and only the best will survive.

What are you doing to ensure that you keep your business alive and your family fed? The Ohio Chapter of ASHI is helping you in these challenging times? See prior articles.

Newsletters are a great way to keep in touch with both prior clients and Realtors. A quarterly newsletter with tips about seasonal maintenance and updates about your company, educational conferences and what you learned can keep those referrals coming and bypass the price shoppers.

Business cards reflect your professionalism. You get only one chance to make a good first impression. If you aren't adept at creating professional looking advertising consider having a professional create your cards. Carry the theme into your brochures. Decide what you need to say that will separate you and your services from you competitors. Promote your superior service, ASHI membership, and years of experience.

Make visits to the realtor offices. Talk to one of the Realtors that you have worked with before. Ask them what their clients thought about your inspection and report. Become a familiar face but don't make a pest of yourself. Get a web site if you don't already. Fill it with information and avoid the look-alike sites that are one size fits all. Have a professional design a custom site and make it personal. Include referral letters from satisfied clients and an example of your report.

Business meetings are another way for you to get inspections. Be sure to bring lots of cards with your web address and pass them out at every chance. Everyone has issues with their homes. Ask them about the problems they have had or heard about. Listen and perhaps offer advice or provide examples of what you have seen and advised your clients to do. What you want to be doing is creating an image in their minds that you are the helpful inspector in the area that is easily approachable and knowledgeable.

Volunteering to help in community projects gives you another opportunity to market yourself. There may be a neighborhood housing committee in your area. Call and volunteer to do some simple consulting and offer suggestions that will help guide them in their housing upgrade projects.

Answer your phone promptly. Use an answering machine only as a last resort. People want to speak to someone now. When they sign a contract on a house the clock starts ticking. Getting an inspection scheduled is at the top of their list. If you don't answer when they call they will call the next inspector on their list. If you can't take the time at that moment to explain what you do and why they should hire you when they call be sure to get their contact information and call them as soon as you have the time. While they are on the phone asking about your price you should educate them about the inspection process and convince them that they should hire you. Try to give them the price after establishing a connection with them. Work around the clients schedule. Be genuine — most people can sense counterfeit friendship very quickly. Be more professional, knowledgeable, accessible, harder working, easier to understand, responsive to their needs, and more sensitive to their concerns than they expected.

Have your clients get you more work. Follow up with a thank you note and some cards for their friends. Spend some down time on improving the appearance and content of your report. Do some research on some of the items you're not real insightful on. Don't just to be their inspector, be their champion.

Take a hard look at your expenses. Are the things you're paying for working as hard for you as you are to get them? This is especially true in advertising. There are many places that you can invest with little return. Those things may not be useless but are not aimed at a buyer that only needs your services every 5-7 years. That same buyer only takes a couple minutes trying to find an inspector that can get it done quickly. Use your advertising dollars wisely. Target your past clients. They are your best source of future clients.

Hopefully your business is starting to pick up as it usually does this time of the year. It's an ideal time to separate yourself from the pack and incorporate some of these and your own ideas into your marketing plan. Many of these projects don't require a lot of time or money but will pay many times over in referrals. As things slow down in the coming year, you might tackle some of the more detailed and time consuming tasks. Doing the small things and a few of the more industrious projects will give you a solid foundation of referrals that will support you when other inspectors are waiting for the phone to ring.



From left to right, we have Board members: Butch Sutherland, Craig Limback, Rick Szeles, Treasurer; Tim Buell, Board member, Howard Snyder, Executive Director; Carl Patterson, President; Ray Kershaw, Secretary; and Bill Richardson, ASHI President-Elect.



This was not a house I was inspecting, but I could not resist
What you cannot see is that both ends of the gutter are in a puddle.

Photos Courtesy Of:

Mike Duncan
One To One Home Inspection
Columbus, Ohio



"Freeze dried fish" or "Somethings fishy here". I thought I'd seen everything there was to see in an attic until I saw this on a cold morning in January.

THE STRENGTH OF ASHI LIES IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF ITS MEMBERS.

If you need an answer to a specific issue,
use this valuable resource to resolve your problem

Use the information at ohioashi.com to contact a member.

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***Educating
And
Assisting Home
Inspectors***

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