

## **Paul Birnstihl Dies Suddenly**

The HPBA family and the entire hearth industry were stunned to learn that past HPBA Chairman Paul Birnstihl died suddenly on January 5 while playing golf in Florida. Paul selflessly gave hundreds of volunteer hours to HPBA serving on many committees, as a member of the Board of Directors for 14 years and chairman of HPBA in 2005. He started in the hearth industry in 1979 selling wood stoves, and for the past 25 years was owner of Birnstihl Sales, a manufacturer's representative company based in Manchester, NH. Paul's passion for the hearth industry, golf and ice hockey were known to everyone as well as his love for laughter. The industry has sadly lost one its best crusaders.

## **2009 HPBA Board Nominations**

The HPBA Nominating Committee has nominated Ken Belding (Empire Comfort Systems, Inc.), Jim Hussong (Kozy Heat) and Ross Johnson (The Outdoor Greatroom Company) for election to three-year terms as manufacturing directors to fill the three vacant seats. Additional nominations for election to the Board to represent the Manufacturers category may be made by five or more voting manufacturer members and must be received by HPBA no later than February 2.

The following affiliate regions also will elect/select directors to the HPBA Board for three-year terms beginning in March, 2009: Region III (Southeast HPBA); Region VI (North Central HPBA) and Region VIII (Arizona HPBA and Rocky Mountain HPBA). Nominations for election by affiliates in those regions may be made through the affiliates.

## **IRS Delays Tax Credit Guidelines**

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is expected to delay issuing Qualified Biomass Fuel Property \$300 tax credit guidelines until the Obama Administration takes office and can review the regulations. While an unwelcome delay, it is the standard practice when there is a change of administrations. Additionally, Senators Susan M. Collins (R-ME) and Mike Crapo (R-ID) have written IRS Commissioner Douglas Shulman stating "our intent in creating the new credit was to provide incentive for consumers to purchase more efficient and clean-burning wood and pellet stoves and inserts" and "believe these stoves should be tested to the Lower Heating Value" to ensure the "credit is available for efficient and clean-burning wood and pellet stoves, as intended." For more information, contact Seth Voyles at voyles@hpba.org.

## **Vermont Changeout Plans Underway**

NEHPBA and HPBA are working closely with EPA and officials from Vermont to finalize plans for the Vermont wood stove changeout. This changeout is a result of an EPA grant Vermont received two years ago. It will be used to encourage the replacement of old wood stoves with cleaner-burning hearth products, and to encourage the replacement of old catalytic elements in catalytic stoves. Program details are being finalized this month, but preliminary plans are to kick this program off in mid-February and run for up to two months. Retailers and manufacturers will be solicited to contribute some discounts to consumers who surrender their old unit for destruction. For more information, dealers should contact Diane Rossi at Northeast HPBA, [diane@nehpb.com](mailto:diane@nehpb.com), and manufacturers can contact John Crouch, [crouch@hpba.org](mailto:crouch@hpba.org).

## **Associated Press Brings The Heat**

AP reporter Camilla McLaughlin wrote two industry stories featuring HPBA President Jack Goldman and HPBA Director of Public Affairs John Crouch. Both stories appeared in print and online totaling over 11 million media impressions. The first story on wood-burning stoves was published on Dec. 30, 2008 and the second story, on new fireplace technology, was published on Jan. 2. Watch for these and other HPBA coverage in the *HPBA Weekly NewsCast* described below.

## **HPBA Committee Activities**

### **Communications**

- Watch for the first issue of the *HPBA Weekly NewsCast*, a weekly electronic compilation of news stories across the country. HPBA will filter the news stories for you. (Make sure your spam filters will accept electronic mail from HPBA.)
- HPBA contributed editorial content to the National Association of Remodeling Industry's (NARI) new NARI Green website: <http://www.greenremodeling.org/consumer/article.aspx?resourceid=13>, where remodelers and homeowners can get the latest on the industry's hearth products.
- HPBA was asked to contribute articles to *Sierra Heritage* magazine. Watch for our wood and pellet stove article in the January/February issue at [www.sierraheritage.com](http://www.sierraheritage.com).
- Once again, HPBA was the "go to" source for *The Wall Street Journal*. HPBA statistics and tax credit information appeared in the December 31 story, "Taking Credit for Energy Efficiency." The article cited third quarter pellet stove shipments and cautioned consumers on stove eligibility for the pending tax credit.

## **NFI**

Get NFI certified in pellet appliances at Expo, where review courses for the newly-revised manual and exam will be offered. A new "exam feedback report" will give you more specific information on your areas of strength and weakness. Successful examinees get a jumpstart with 1.5 CEUs toward recertification. If you have already registered, you can add the exam by calling NFI at 866-486-0733.

## **HPB Education Foundation**

Two new courses have been added to HE@RTH Online Training, bringing the total number of courses available online to 16! *Fundamentals of BBQ Technology* debuts on February 24 and *Selling Pellet Appliances* is being offered on January 13 and 27. Visit [www.hpbef.org/online](http://www.hpbef.org/online) to see a list of all of the course offerings and to sign up for a course.

A complete list of Expo Education sessions is available on [www.hpbexpo.com](http://www.hpbexpo.com). Over 40 sessions with over 75 NFI CEUs are offered with the industry's best technical, sales and marketing, business management, outdoor living and safety/health/liability topics. An Education Passport for just \$79 (member) or \$229 (non-member) provides access to all of the sessions. To purchase your Education Passport, select Education Passport when registering.

## **Government Affairs Committee**

The 2009 Government Affairs Academy will be held in the Washington, D.C., area April 25-29. The program will include a combination of class-room lectures and roll-playing. For more information, contact John Crouch at [crouch@hpba.org](mailto:crouch@hpba.org).

## **Membership**

When registering for Expo, have your six digit HPBA member ID number handy in order to receive HPBExpo badges and to sign up for education sessions. If you do not know your ID number, please contact Antonio Jackson at 703-522-0086 or email at [jackson@hpba.org](mailto:jackson@hpba.org).

## **Industry Statistics**

- The HPBA Quarterly Industry Survey of hearth appliance manufacturers has been distributed. Please respond as soon as possible. Firms that supply their data will be invited to a complimentary Statistics Invitational Breakfast at HPBExpo.
- The U.S. state and Canadian province Regional Hearth Appliance Sales Statistics Survey has also been distributed. Hearth appliance manufacturers who receive the survey should respond as soon as possible. Hearth appliance manufacturers who did not receive the survey should contact Don Johnson at [johnson@hpba.org](mailto:johnson@hpba.org).



# HPBE expo Report

Reno, NV • March 18 - 21, 2009 • [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com)  
Innovations & Ideas for Indoor-Outdoor Living

**The Early Birds Got the Giveaway!** The winners of the Early Registration Prize Giveaway will be posted mid-January on [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com). Congratulations to all the winners!

**Expo Registration Reminder.** Avoid registration lines and receive your badge in the mail. Registration is easily completed online at [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com). If you prefer to fax your registration, forms are also available on the website; simply click on "Register" and download the form and instructions. The registration brochure, recently mailed to all members, includes housing information and a special brochure with Expo Education details.

**Entertainment in Reno!** Catch Howie Mandel's comedic performance at the Peppermill on Saturday, March 21, at 8:00 pm. Howie is currently the host of two NBC shows: "Deal or No Deal" and "Howie Do It." HPBE expo participants will receive a 20% discount on ticket purchases. For further details, go to [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com).

**New Planning Tool.** A new interactive floor plan will go live on January 19 on [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com). This navigational tool will better prepare you, the buyer, with the barbecue, hearth and patio sellers you need to see. You can schedule exhibitor appointments in advance or search for items by product and brand. Make efficient use of your time at the show by locating the folks on the floor you need to see.

**Expo Housing.** The HPBA Reno hotel block continues to fill up quickly. Reservations can be made online at [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com) or through the HPBA Housing Connection at (866) 365-1113 (Domestic Toll Free) or (801) 505-4139 (International).

**Expo Exhibit Space.** For space availability and contracts, contact Amy Jackson at [amyjackson@hpba.org](mailto:amyjackson@hpba.org), or visit [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com) and click on "Apply to Exhibit" under the Exhibitor's section.

**Increase Your Exposure!** Promotional opportunities for exhibitors are available. Contact Betteanne Leahy at (800) 404-5461 or go to [www.hpbeexpo.com](http://www.hpbeexpo.com) and click on "Exhibitor Services" to download the Promotional Opportunities brochure for information on a wide range of promotional opportunities.

**Reno Fun Fact Winner:** The November Reno Fun Fact Winner is Bud Piland of Travis Industries, Inc.

## HPBE expo Important Dates

- January 26:** Refund /Cancellation Deadline. Refunds for registration, education, and certification (less a \$10 administrative fee) will be made if the request is received in writing.
- February 13:** Last day to receive a hotel room in the HPBE expo block at the special, discounted Expo prices
- February 23:** Registration deadline to receive badge(s) by mail. International companies must pick up badge(s) on site.
- March 16:** Final Pre-Registration deadline. After this date, you must register on site.



1901 North Moore Street, Suite 600,  
Arlington, VA 22209

## HOTNEWS

Published monthly to provide Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association members with timely news and information