

# ISNEWS THE CHIMNEY SWEEP NEWS



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# THE CHIMNEY SWEEP NEWS

*Voice of the Sweep since 1979*

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ON THE COVER  
Sweep couple on horseback.  
Postcard image courtesy of Steve Snyder

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# Addressing Smoke Chambers

*By Marge Padgitt  
Padgitt Forensic Investigations  
Kansas City, Missouri*

One area that we are still seeing missed in the field is the most important of all — the smoke chamber. Why some chimney sweeps/technicians are ignoring this vital part of the chimney is beyond comprehension, since this is where most house fires related to masonry chimneys start.

As a fire investigation company, we are called to investigate structural fires related to chimneys, fireplaces, and heating appliances. What we have found since we started doing fire investigations in 1996 is that by far, the origin of a structural fire is usually at the smoke chamber area.

## Hidden Combustibles

The reason for this is that there are often combustible framing and headers installed behind the face wall and in front of the chamber without the proper clearances. Still today, there are builders who do not read the codes, and building inspectors who don't pay attention to the chimney because they do not have

proper training. These groups of people are sorely lacking in education, but until that changes, we as professional chimney technicians must assume the worst. Every time you inspect a chimney you should assume there are issues with the smoke chamber area and act accordingly.

One easy way to check for hidden combustibles behind the facial wall is to use a gap that commonly exists between



**Charred wood inside a face wall after a house fire.**

the face wall and fireplace. Use a small borescope camera to look in this space if the gap is not big enough to see into without a camera. Borescopes are as inexpensive as \$16 for the type that connects to a cell phone. By using this method, there is no need for demo and it can be a part of your normal Level 2 inspection.

## Parging

Thankfully, the IRC Code and NFPA 211 Standard require that smoke chambers are parged smooth. The exact wording in the IRC is as follows:



**Marge Padgitt**

“R1003.8 Smoke chamber. Smoke chamber walls shall be constructed of solid masonry units, hollow masonry units grouted solid, stone or concrete. Corbelling of masonry units shall not leave unit cores exposed to the inside of the smoke chamber. When a lining of firebrick at least 2 inches (51 mm) thick, or a lining of vitrified clay at least 5/8 inch (15.9 mm) thick, is provided, the total minimum thickness of front, back and side walls shall be 6 inches (152 mm) of solid masonry, including the lining. Firebrick shall conform to ASTM C 27 or C 1261 and shall be laid with medium duty refractory mortar conforming to ASTM C 199. Where no lining is provided, the total minimum thickness of front, back and side walls shall be 8 inches (203 mm) of solid masonry. When the inside surface of the



**Parging in progress.**

smoke chamber is formed by corbeled masonry, the inside surface shall be parged smooth.”

When parging a chamber, the first step is to sweep off all of the creosote. If sweeping with a brush doesn’t get it all, use power cleaning and/or a chemical creosote remover. If the bricks and mortar are not very clean, the parging material will not stick to them.

Next, apply the parging material per the manufacturer’s instructions, being sure to fill in gaps between the bricks or brick cores first. If there is a neighboring flue liner exposed in the chamber, this will also need to be filled in with bricks and/or parging material. We suggest using an insulating mortar, which when used properly provides an extra layer of protection between the chamber and the exterior walls of the chimney next

to hidden combustibles. By parging, the temperature of the exterior of the chimney chase may be reduced by as much as 100 degrees F.

There are several different professional parging products available to chimney technicians, and all are good. We use Chamber-Tech 2000, which is applied by hand. The tech rolls some of the material into a ball and throws it onto the bricks, then smooths it out. For hard to reach areas we use a rubber paddle. Other products are applied by hand or with a sprayer.

Removal of firebrick and cutting out the damper, or cutting out a section of bricks in the exterior chimney may be required in order to reach the smoke chamber, so it is a good idea to have masonry skills in order to do this. Access through one of these areas is often

necessary in order to be able to reach the entire chamber. Some chambers are very tall, so more than one access point may be needed (one at the bottom and one at the back of the chamber on the exterior chimney).

The installation of an access door on the exterior chimney is always an option if you do not want to deal with reinstalling bricks or stones. This makes access more convenient for future cleaning. If install-



**Parging complete.**

ing an access door, cutting straight lines through bricks will work fine. If you opt to extract individual bricks then replace them, be sure to match mortar color so it looks completely original to the structure when you are finished. We save the bricks and reuse them so they are sure to match the rest of the chimney.

If there is a small gap between the face wall and fireplace, fill it with the same insulating mortar while you parge the chamber. Instruct the homeowner to have this checked annually at the time of their annual inspection to be sure the chimney is not moving away from the house. If there is a large gap, the chimney should be checked by a parging company and remedied prior to any repair work to the chamber or flue because damage often occurs during the parging process.

Instruct the customer to wait 48 hours before building a fire. Then have small fires for a few days to cure the insulating mortar.

*Marge Padgitt is the President of Padgitt Forensic Investigations in Kansas City, Missouri. She is a CSIA Certified Chimney Sweep, NFI Certified Wood-burning Specialist, and NFI Certified Trainer. Contact Marge at [www.chimkc.net](http://www.chimkc.net).*

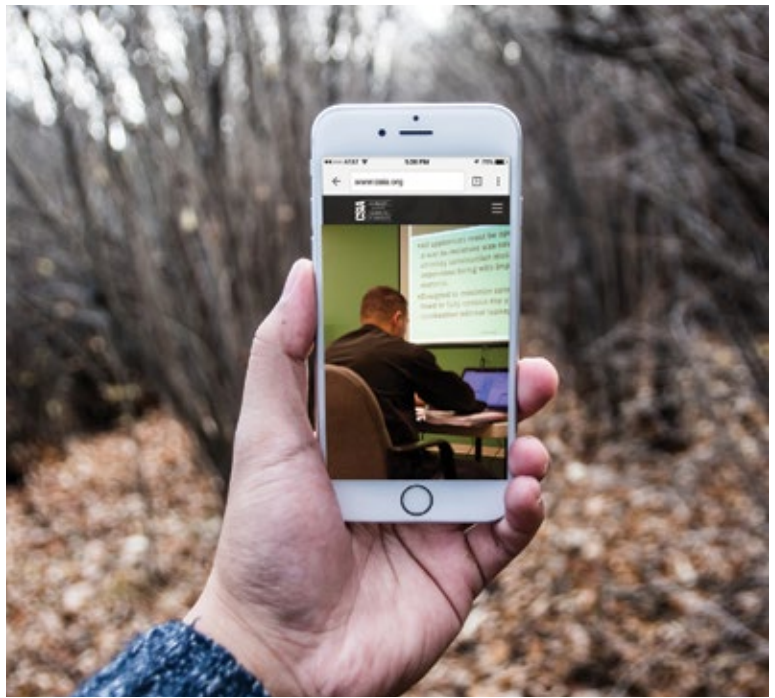


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## FROM THE EDITOR

### *Dear Readers,*

Esteemed colleagues, THANK YOU for your kind words, good wishes and your generous support over the years! As we announced in the last issue, this is our final edition of *The Chimney Sweep News*.

We are still hoping to find a buyer. In fact, we have had several inquiries since we announced the impending closure. Unfortunately, no one has yet stepped up.

When we purchased this business 20 years ago, I said we would do well if we can make it last ten years. When we reached ten years, I set a goal of twenty. Here we are!

I think we have done a lot to uplift our trade through our journalism in the past 20 years, particularly in the realms of chimney sweep safety, business building and international relations. We published 177 issues — all on time — in that span. My good friend, Jeff Gitlin, said, “You can be proud of every issue,” and we are.

I have received a goodly amount of praise for my work on this publication, and I will take it, thank you. However, Harriet is the unsung hero of *The Chimney Sweep News*. She prodded me to buy it from Jay and Tim Hensley in the first place and then kept the magazine afloat behind the scenes. She handled all the financial aspects of the business including accounts receivable and payable, and kept track of the subscribers. She was the main proofreader. She contributed ideas for articles, layout, covers, etc. She was the sounding board for my ideas. She was the lead photographer in our early years and shot 23 cover photos.

Again, we thank each one of you for your support! There are too many



to mention yet I must single out a few for special thanks.

Jill Beddoe was our first and last graphic designer. She is responsible for the clean, graceful appearance of the magazine. Working with her has been easy and a pleasure.

Jen Towner was our graphic designer for about ten years, until her untimely demise in December 2011. Her devotion to this publication was unparalleled.

Rob Lindemann's generous and steadfast sponsorship of our back cover helped get us through a couple of lean years. The insightful articles he and his Lindemann Company colleagues contributed since 2009 have added a lot of substance.

Marge and Gene Padgitt were our leading contributors of technical articles, based upon their extensive experience as chimney inspectors, masons and sweeps.

Charlie Dunn has traveled the globe to meet and run around with sweeps and shared many of those experiences in these pages.

Steve Snyder contributed numerous articles about chimney sweep lore. He is the source of most of the historical images of sweeps we have published, including the covers of this

and the previous issue.

Karen Foreman wrote many of our Freebie public service articles.

Sooty Bob Daniels contributed a business-building column for many years, first with Jay Hensley as Editor and later for us.

John Meredith made it possible for me to report on four HeatShield Summits from 2012 to 2018. He has given me a lot of encouragement through the years.

Dale Howard contributed numerous articles with sensible, down-to-earth business suggestions.

Jeff Gitlin served as Technical Advisor to Jay Hensley, the previous editor/publisher. He was the one who suggested to Jay that she buy *The Chimney Sweep News* from its founders, Dave and Darla Lamb. He was my confidant for the past 20 years on all matters regarding this publication. With his knowledge of this magazine's past, he provided a sense of continuity.

And of course, we could not have done it without YOU, dear reader!

Chasing *SNEWS* stories, I traveled the breadth of the USA from Huntington Beach, California to Eliot, Maine and Port Orchard, Washington to Orlando, Florida, as well as Amsterdam and Italy. The best thing about it all has been the wonderful people we met along the way. We have formed many solid friendships, which we cherish.

We hope to keep in touch. Contact me at [chimneyjim@aol.com](mailto:chimneyjim@aol.com) or 541-591-1413. Our mailing address is in the masthead on page 2.

Again, THANKS to all of you. Please be safe!

*Chimney Jim and Harriet*

# Goodbye *SNEWS*

Say it ain't so. Somebody please fill these shoes!

Jim Gillam, Harriet Gillam, thank you for contributing so much to our industry. When I see *SNEWS* in my mailbox, I always wonder what cool info was going to be in the issue. I enjoyed each one. Best wishes in retirement.

—Nathan Antrim, Antrim's A Good Sweep Chimney and Masonry Service,  
Pottstown, PA

Thank you for all you have done expanding and improving *SNEWS* over the years. I am sorry you did not find a buyer. I sincerely hope both you & Harriet stay in touch with our Sweep family. You both & *SNEWS* will be missed. All the best,

—Chuck Roydhouse, Clean Sweep of Anne Arundel County,  
Millersville, MD

Mike & I hope that the future for you and Harriet is full of fun and surprises. We will miss *SNEWS*. It is a high quality trade newsletter that we have enjoyed for decades. We knew it would take big shoes to fill your role. Guess no Yeti was available. Cheers and sweeps' luck to you.

—Jeff Charlebois, Boulder County Chimney Sweep,  
Boulder, CO

Sorry you're hanging up the *SNEWS*-spurs, but it's not like you didn't warn everyone. Still, the end of an era is tough. THANK YOU for your years of "labor of love" and God bless you in whatever you do with all your extra time!

—Dale Howard,  
Woodstock, MD

I am at once sorry to see you retire, and pleased to think back on all the years of *SNEWS* I've had the pleasure of reading. Having spent most of my working life writing and publishing, I know that it can be a lonely and thankless job at times. But I haven't heard you complain about all the work and modest compensation. You have focused on your readership and tended to remain in the background, allowing *SNEWS* to speak for itself. It is a sign of good writing that it tends to disappear, leaving the content to stand out. And you have created a publication with a personality that is upbeat, which I suppose your subject area makes a little easier.

So congratulations to you and your contributors for 20 years of quality publishing. You will be missed. Best wishes on your retirement,

—John Gulland,  
woodheat.org

So sad to find that *SNEWS* may have run its course. Thanks for being the one to steer it well through many years and of course the best of luck to you in the future!

—Dan Bortolan, The Chimney Sweep Co LLC,  
Rocky Hill, CT

I could see this was coming eventually but I'm still shocked. And of course I understand. You have poured yourself into this enterprise for a long time and done some great work. A loss for the trade, though. A big loss. Good luck with the wrap up. Thanks for all the great material you have shared with your readers.

—Vick Mickunas,  
Yellow Springs, OH

The very first professional chimney sweep periodical that I ever read was *SNEWS* under Jay Hensley. It has kept that original insightful and interesting flavor all these years. You touched our lives more than you may know. Thank you!

—Bob Ferrari, White Glove Chimney & Air Duct,  
Redding, CA

So sorry to hear you're hanging it up, Jim and Harriet. Good for you, bad for the rest of us! May there be more dogs and music in your retirement! Thanks for 20 years of helping us all!

—Paul Hempel, Brushes & Brooms Chimney Service,  
Brighton, IL

I too am sad to see you leave. I have been a subscriber since Dave Lamb started *SNEWS* back in the early 80s, through the Jay Hensley era into your outstanding joint role as editor and publisher. I have been an infrequent contributor of comments you have deemed to publish prior to my retirement in 2015. Thank you for doing so, and a big thanks to you and your predecessors for the thousands of informative and entertaining articles.

You will be greatly missed. Enjoy your well deserved "Happy Retirement" wherever that may lead to and be.

—Jonathan Lucky,  
Medford, OR

I will certainly miss reading *SNEWS*. What a great loss to the industry. But, you, along with Dave here at Sand Hill, deserve to live life to the fullest. You've worked hard, now enjoy it! Thank you for all that you've done!

—Cheri Hawkins,  
Sand Hill Wholesale Inc.

Jim & Harriet, I wish you the best in your retirement and you will be sorely missed. My hope is someone buys this from you, and continues the love you have for it as well.

—Steven Scally, Fireside Sweeps LLC,  
Fremont, NH

# How to Keep an Exceptional Year Going Strong

By Karen Foreman

There is nothing like a great year to reinforce that you are in the right business. Money coming in. Expenses covered. Happy banker. Leftover money. Is it time to take a month off because you can afford it? Or, what about adding that extra truck? Hmmmm. What to do?

One of the most important things you can do to help guarantee the future success of your company is not to get comfortable or complacent. A good year builds a strong foundation for the future success of your business.

## To Add or Not to Add

If you have extra cash in the bank and are thinking of adding another vehicle, maybe this is the time to do it. The big question to ask yourself is this: “Do you have enough customer base, and do you offer enough services to sustain it, or are there other services you can add on to justify it?”

If you are adding another truck thinking that it will double your earnings, then you need to talk to an accountant or your banker. Along with another truck comes additional labor costs, more equipment, more insurance, more upkeep; in sum you will have more overhead.

Give it some deep thought before jumping into something you may regret, or that could take your business down in a bad year(s). On the other hand, this might be the moment you are waiting for to grow your business. Explore your options thoroughly.

## Adding Conservatively to Your Business – What Services Do You Offer?

**Dryer Vent Cleaning** – One of the hottest add-on services is dryer vent cleaning. When a dryer vent fills with lint, it takes longer and longer for clothes

to dry. The homeowner may think their dryer needs to be replaced. With modern construction, there are longer runs of dryer vents that need cleaned more often.

The investment in dryer vent cleaning is not high, and you already have the customer base. You could make \$60-\$160 or more by adding this service to your offering. How you price the cleaning is dependent on the job, and what the market will bear.

I recommend the CSIA CDET Training and Certification Program. There is a wealth of knowledge in this course.

**Snow Removal** – In parts of the country, sweeps offer snow removal services. They get up on the roof and push the snow off to avoid roof collapse. Some take snow removal a different route and have blades for their trucks to clean driveways. Again, you have the customer base; use it.

## Optimizing Your Potential

**Proposals** – The best time to close a bid is while you are at the customer’s home. Do you have outstanding proposals for jobs like repair work, making that old unused fireplace serviceable, cleaning the exterior of the chimney, crowns, caps, etc.?

Your notes on the work should include any measurements you need, a rating system on how hot the opportunity is, notes on the customers response (hot/cold/pass to your competitor), etc.

Now is the time to sit down and put them on your schedule before next autumn. Will this be more effective ahead of the rainy season?

If you get a “no” it may be a, “No, not right now.” Make sure your customer fully understands the need for the service. Many times a “no” really means, “I don’t understand the need for this work.”



Karen Foreman

**Forward Scheduling** is a simple technique many sweeps use to fill their schedules throughout the year. During your busiest season (autumn for most of you), ask your customers to schedule their next appointment at a time outside the busiest season. Make a definite appointment. Follow up with your customers well before their scheduled next appointment and reschedule if necessary.

Whatever path you decide to take after a phenomenal year, base your decision on facts and history. A five-year average can be sobering or can help you make the decision on how you will proceed with adding a truck. Adding other services and following up on potential work ensures your spring and summer months will be busy and bringing in cash. This can leave you with openings for next autumn when you can continue to add to your customer base with new customers to continue to grow your business, keeping your exceptional year going strong.

*Karen Foreman, an employee at Copperfield, has been in the industry for 27 years. She is also the author of “Design Ideas for Fireplaces” published by Creative Homeowner Press.*





# Dear SNEWS

## Combustor Disposal Question

Our neighborhood fire station has a program once a month where we can bring hazardous waste items for disposal. I took an old catalytic combustor there because I remembered the owner's manual warning that the combustor relied upon heavy metals to make it work. The man at the station looked at it and said, "I think this could be put in a garbage can." I told him no and explained about the heavy metals contained in the disk. The man looked at me and said, "Heavy metal? You mean like Ozzy Osbourne?"

—Greg Duffy  
Boise, Idaho

*Editor's reply: We asked Mike McCue of Condar Company about proper disposal of catalytic combustors. He said, "I asked this question of our supplier of the 'precious metals' coatings not*

*long ago, and he assured me the used combustors can be safely and appropriately disposed of in solid-waste landfills. The metals in the brown 'wash coat' aren't migratory even if the combustor gets wet.*



Dead cat

*"Condar accepts old woodstove catalytic combustors either whole or in pieces for recycling, to recover the metals. This is a lot like battery recycling, you have to get it into the specialty recycling channel and ordinarily it is hard for folks to do that. With shipping costs so high these days, people mostly don't. We do recycle all our production scrap and our returned used catalytic combustors."*





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## New Guild Forms in Arizona

*By Tom Venafrro  
ACV Marketing  
Queen Creek, Arizona*



I reached out to sweeps in Arizona and some of us met in Scottsdale, AZ on September 8, 2018. In attendance were Charles Golden (Golden's Good Air, Glendale, AZ), Becky Derendal (Arizona Chimney & Air Ducts, Phoenix, AZ) and Don Fisher (Chimney Cricket USA, Phoenix, AZ).

We all got along very well and shared stories of life as chimney professionals. Seeing the success of the meeting, I mentioned my hopes of a guild forming in Arizona. All in attendance agreed, and so we formed the Arizona Chimney Sweep Guild.

The goal of our guild is to keep safety, integrity, and ethics at the foundation of the chimney industry in Arizona. We look forward to having future events promoting training and education.

Since September, the Arizona Chimney Sweep Guild has created a website — [azchimneysweepguild.org](http://azchimneysweepguild.org), a logo, and social media pages.

More founding members have joined including George Smith (A Honest Abe's Chimney, Dryer Vent and Air Duct Cleaning, Mesa, AZ) and Curtis Johnson (Chim Chim Cheroo Chimney Sweep and Dryer Vent Specialist, Laveen, AZ).

The greater Phoenix area members voted on their first board of directors this past month. They are Don Fisher, president; Charles Golden, vice-president; George Smith, treasurer; and Becky Derendal, secretary.

Please view our website, [azchimneysweepguild.org](http://azchimneysweepguild.org). We are

linked on the NCSG website on the state and regional association's page. For any inquiries, please contact [azchimneysweepguild@gmail.com](mailto:azchimneysweepguild@gmail.com).

## Midwest Chimney Safety Council May Disband

The Midwest Chimney Safety Council (MCSC) will vote on its future at its conference in May. The MCSC is a not-for-profit regional association of professional chimney service companies in fourteen states. A vote by email in March failed to attract enough ballots to make a decision.

The MCSC Board of Directors is recommending a vote to disband. In an email to members, the Board cited a lack of volunteers to run the association. "Two of our older board members (Gene and Marge Padgitt) are retiring from the MCSC this year, leaving two open seats," the MCSC Board said. Marge and Gene are MCSC's president and secretary, respectively. "There are only a few qualified members who could potentially run for the board of directors, but they are also older, retired, and don't have any further interest in serving. There would be a big problem in trying to fill these spots."

Marge noted that educational opportunities such as hands-on and online courses from various sources are more available than in the past, reducing the need for a regional association.

To legally dissolve the non-profit association, a 2/3 majority vote by the membership is required, the Board said. The membership will vote on the measure at the group's annual meeting at Lake of the Ozarks, May 16-18.

"We've had a good run since the year 2000 when we changed the name from the Missouri Chimney Sweep Guild to the Midwest Chimney Safety Council," Marge reflected, "but times are changing."

## NCCSA Elects 1st Female Prex

Beth Kendall, co-owner and office manager of All Out Chimney Sweep in Charlotte, NC, has been elected as the first female president of the North Carolina Chimney Sweep Association (NCCSA).

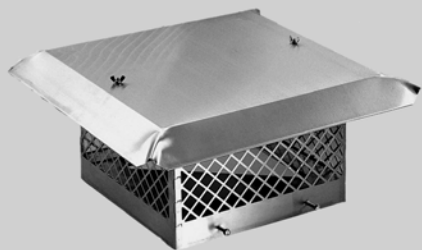
The NCCSA was founded in 1979 and is comprised of chimney sweeps throughout North Carolina and South Carolina.

All Out Chimney is also overseen by Bill Kendall, who has been servicing chimneys in the Charlotte community for over 30 years.





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*By Marshall Peters  
Certified Chimney Professionals*

For those who were able, thank you for attending the Chimney Expo! It is our intention for you to walk away a better sweep! For having invested in the Chimney Expo with your attendance at both the classes and trade show, we hope you left better educated, with better tools, and with a bigger bank account at year's end.

I need to give a major shout out to SaverSystems and Firesafe Industries for their side-by-side presentation of flue re-surfacing products. It was an incredible presentation, which I believe the sweeps fortunate enough to have attended will talk about for years to come. The way the two manufacturers honored each other as competitors shows the tremendous character they each possess and their confidence in their companies and products.

Thanks to Olympia Chimney Supply for hosting Friday night's Open House event! I do not know how anyone can

top the food and speaker they provided. Most of us are still "wowed" as we reflect on Sooty Bob's stories and the journey he shared with us.

Our speakers once again left us sweeps in awe and better for listening. We leave encouraged and with a deeper understanding of our trade and business. Now, if we can only begin to apply a bit of what they taught us.

Thanks to the many of you who stopped by our booth at the Chimney Expo to say hello, greet us so warmly and even to thank us! Our hearts are full.

Thanks to the vendors that participated in the trade show, making it such a success. It was wonderful to witness sweeps walking through the trade show, pausing to look some of the amazing products that our vendors make available to the modern sweep.

Thanks to those who have chosen to certify through Certified Chimney Pro-



**Sooty Bob Daniels of Olympia Chimney Supply.**

fessionals with a CCP, CCR or CMCT certification. I hope that you left the Chimney Expo with a different view of CCP, and yourself!

Thank you for speaking so positively about how you have been helped by Certified Chimney Professionals and the Chimney Expo. It continues to be upwards from here. It is a privilege to play a part in your journey towards excellence. It is our joy to bring the Chimney Expo to you as another source of education and encouragement.

Stay tuned for our upcoming announcement of the training seminars we will be offering this spring and summer! If you would like one in your area, please shoot me an email and let me know.



**Attendees at the 2019 Chimney Expo in King of Prussia, PA, sponsored by Certified Chimney Professionals.**

# Chimney at Providence Academy

By Jim Gillam

The chimney at Providence Academy is a prominent landmark near downtown Vancouver, Washington. It towers over the grounds of the former boarding school and hospital, constructed in 1873-74.

The Providence Academy, built by Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart and the Sisters of Providence, was the largest brick building in the Pacific Northwest at the time. Mother Joseph personally supervised the construction, "even teaching a man named Lowell Hidden, who later founded the Hidden Brick Company, to make the one million bricks needed for the project," according to The Historic Trust, which now owns and manages the property.

Providence Academy is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Known as "The Builder," Mother Joseph and her sisters built numerous hospitals, schools, and homes for orphans and the elderly in the northwestern states and British Columbia. Mother Joseph raised funds for the projects through "begging tours" in mining camps. She designed the buildings and supervised their construction. "Mother Joseph often inspected rafters and bounced on planks to insure their support, climbed to inspect roofs, and knocked down a poorly-made chimney late at night and forced the workmen to rebuild it correctly the following day." [Rosemerena.org]



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Dave Laverdiere - Owner of Boston Brick & Stone - Pasadena California

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# The Pros & Cons of Automated vs. Manual Follow Up Systems

*By Taylor Hill & Carter Harkins*  
*Spark Marketer*

As a business owner, you know that the key to success is working smarter, not harder. But so many of us get trapped in old habits and patterns, and we never take the time to evaluate our systems and see if there's a faster, better way of doing things out there. When was the last time you evaluated your systems?

One of the biggest time sucks for business owners and their teams is following up on estimates. Not every customer is ready to say "Yes" or "No" right away, and sometimes customers need several touches before they make a decision. You could set aside time every week for follow-ups, hire a point person to do it for you, sacrifice a corner of your desk to that "eternal" stack of open estimates, or cover your office walls with Post-It notes reminding you when to follow up and with whom. Or, you could automate the process.

Let's talk about the pros and cons of each.

## Manual Pros & Cons

**Pros:** You already know how things are done because you have always followed up the same way. There is no learning curve while you figure out a new system.

Manual follow up is free, in a sense, because you are not paying for an automated system.

You have total control over your follow up calls and emails, including how they are worded and how often they happen.

**Cons:** While manually following up on estimates is free in the sense that you are not paying for an automated system, you are paying in time if you do it yourself. If you have hired someone else to make the calls, you are paying an employee for that time. And we all know: time is money. If you are the sole owner/operator of your business, you already have the disadvantage of not being able to delegate certain tasks, which in some ways means your time is even more precious. Those costs need to be considered.

Having total control over follow up also means that if you don't have the time or you forget, it doesn't get done.

## Automated Pros & Cons

**Pros:** If it is a good follow up system, it will save you a ton of time. You will be freed up to focus on other tasks and to work on your business, not just in it.

You essentially get the benefit of having an extra office helper, only without



**Taylor Hill & Carter Harkins**

the costs of adding another employee and all the training and HR that comes with that.

Follow up happens without you having even to think about it. It is just something going on in the background to bring you more money by closing those open estimates.

Automated systems can allow you to reach out to a customer several times, which can be a lot more effective than a single follow-up call. And you won't have to feel salesy or do something that you are not that comfortable doing.

**Cons:** You have to research the different options out there, figure out which one is worth the investment, and learn how to implement the system in your day-to-day operations.

You risk investing in something that



is bulky, hard-to-use, and does not really add enough value to make it worth paying for every month.

## Which Makes Sense for Your Business?

Automation may not make sense for everyone. You may not be at a place where you need to automate the follow up task. Maybe other things take up more of your time and need to be improved upon first. Maybe you are a one man/woman business and what you need the most help with is answering phones and scheduling estimates. Would it make sense for you to use a portion of your already limited budget to invest in automating the follow-up, when what you really need to invest in is automating your phones and scheduling? You have to consider where you are in terms of growth and what makes sense for your business.

If you are leaning towards automating the process, before you invest, make sure you know exactly how the system works. Is it a complicated, bulky system that will take you and your team longer to learn than it is worth? Is it something that will conflict with or add more steps to your sales process, or add even more hours to your already long day? Take the time to do the research, and if you can, schedule a demo call to see the tool in action before you hand over your credit card.

We would be remiss if we didn't mention an automated follow up tool that we love (not just because it's our

baby) called Closing Commander™ [recipient of the 2018 Pete Luter Innovation Award sponsored by The Chimney Sweep News — Editor]. It is simple to use, easy to learn, and can be integrated seamlessly with your existing sales system. It has all kinds of features that allow you to set reminders when a customer wants to wait on a project, customize the content of each email and the timing between emails, and easily pause, stop, or start the follow up process — all from your office desktop computer or your smartphone.

If you have taken a look at the numbers and realized how much money you're leaving on the table by not following up on every open estimate, but you have other things you want *and need* to spend your time on, maybe it's time to automate the process.

We would be more than happy to schedule a free demo call to show you how Closing Commander™ works and we will even give you a free 14-day trial. We don't even need your credit card. If you are interested in learning more or you would like to see some testimonials or schedule a demo, just head to <https://about.closingcommander.com/snews/>.

Sticking with your manual follow up system? That is fine, too! However, just because follow up automation does not make sense for you right now doesn't mean there aren't other tools out there that you can use to your benefit.

Spend some time looking at other areas of your business and considering tools and systems you can implement



**Carter Harkins and Taylor Hill of Spark Marketer receive the 2018 Pete Luter Innovation Award for their Closing Commander.**

to save yourself time and improve efficiency. No matter what type or size of business you run, we can all benefit from working a little smarter, not harder.

*Taylor Hill and Carter Harkins are the co-founders of Spark Marketer, a Nashville-based digital marketing company that works primarily with service businesses. They're also the co-hosts of the Blue Collar Proud (BCP) Show, the podcast that's all about having and living the blue collar dream; co-authors of the book, Blue Collar Proud: 10 Principles for Building a Kickass Business You Love; and co-creators of the award-winning app, Closing Commander™, which helps contractors close more estimates effortlessly. Both regularly speak at service industry trade shows and conferences across the nation. @sparkmarketer, @bcpsshow, @taylorkhill, @carterharkins, facebook.com/sparkmarketer, facebook.com/bcpsshow/, facebook.com/groups/bluecollarproudnation/* 🎩

# ***Important Reasons Why Catalytic Wood Stoves Shouldn't Be Operated With Combustors Removed!***

**Catalytic combustor-equipped wood stoves may look like any other wood stove. But they are designed to burn in a special way.**

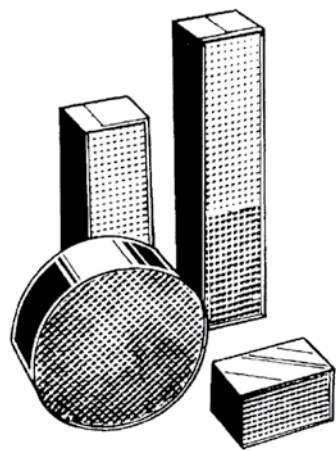
The catalytic combustor is a ceramic honeycomb coated with a "noble" metal catalyst, such as platinum or palladium. Strategically placed in the smoke path inside a wood stove, the catalytic combustor literally causes smoke to burn as fuel, creating more heat from less wood. That means a wood stove can be burned slowly, transferring most of the energy stored in a log to the room as heat, instead of to the outside air as pollution.

## **Efficiency**

The catalytic combustor in your wood stove burns smoke so that your stove produces greater heat. If you operate a catalytic wood stove without its combustor, you cheat yourself out of warmth you would otherwise be getting from your wood stove.

## **Longer Burn Time**

Engaging your combustor properly allows the fuel load to burn longer in the slow-burn mode. This may give you the benefit of heating all night long with one load of wood.



**Catalytic combustors come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes.**

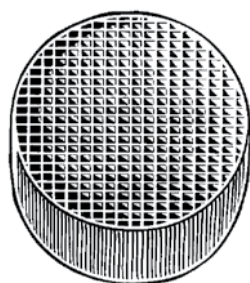
*Illustration courtesy Condar Co.*

## **Safety**

Combustors help prevent build-up of hazardous creosote in flues and chimneys. People who remove combustors risk unexpected chimney fires with damage to property and danger to people in the home.

## **Voiding Manufacturers' Warranties**

Catalytic stoves are designed to operate at high temperatures only with the combustor engaged. If you remove the combustor you may have an uncontrolled fire that may lead to eventual cracking of metal or damage to components, possibly rendering your stove inoperable. If you operate your catalytic wood stove without its combustor, the stove manufacturer's warranty is instantly null and void.



**Round combustor with a diameter of 5.5 inches.**

*Illustration courtesy Storey Communications, Inc. from Jay Shelton's Solid Fuel Encyclopedia*

## **Losing Insurance Coverage**

Operating wood stoves in any manner warned against in manufacturers' manuals, including without the combustor, may cause insurance companies to reject claims for damage or injury.

## **Reduced Air Pollution**

Catalytic wood stoves are specifically engineered to operate properly with a combustor. You will observe dirty smoke emissions from your chimney if you operate your catalytic wood stove without its combustor.

## **Saving Money Over the Long Haul**

Removing or not replacing a combustor is false economy. Over time, the money

invested to maintain or replace the combustor will pay off in improved performance with more heat from less wood and less frequent chimney cleaning.

## **It's the Law**

Federal law requires that EPA-certified catalytic wood stoves be maintained and operated with combustors to reduce air pollution over the entire life of the stove.

## **Maintenance and Replacement**

When using your wood stove, it's a good idea to step outside occasionally to look at the smoke coming out of your chimney. There should not be much smoke except for the first few minutes after you light the fire. If you notice excessive smoke coming out of the chimney, there may be a problem with the catalytic combustor.

Catalytic combustors wear out after extended use, and they may be damaged by contact with direct flame, extreme temperatures or excessive handling. Deactivation may also occur if the combustor is plugged with black soot, creosote or fly ash. Burning large quantities of trash, pressure-treated lumber or painted wood may deactivate the catalyst.

A catalytic probe thermometer used consistently during woodstove operation will let you know when catalytic performance is declining.

Your chimney sweep or hearth maintenance professional has the training and equipment to perform maintenance tasks on your catalytic combustor such as removing soot and ash or replacing gaskets.

If the combustor should need to be replaced, your chimney sweep or hearth maintenance professional can provide and install the appropriate replacement model.

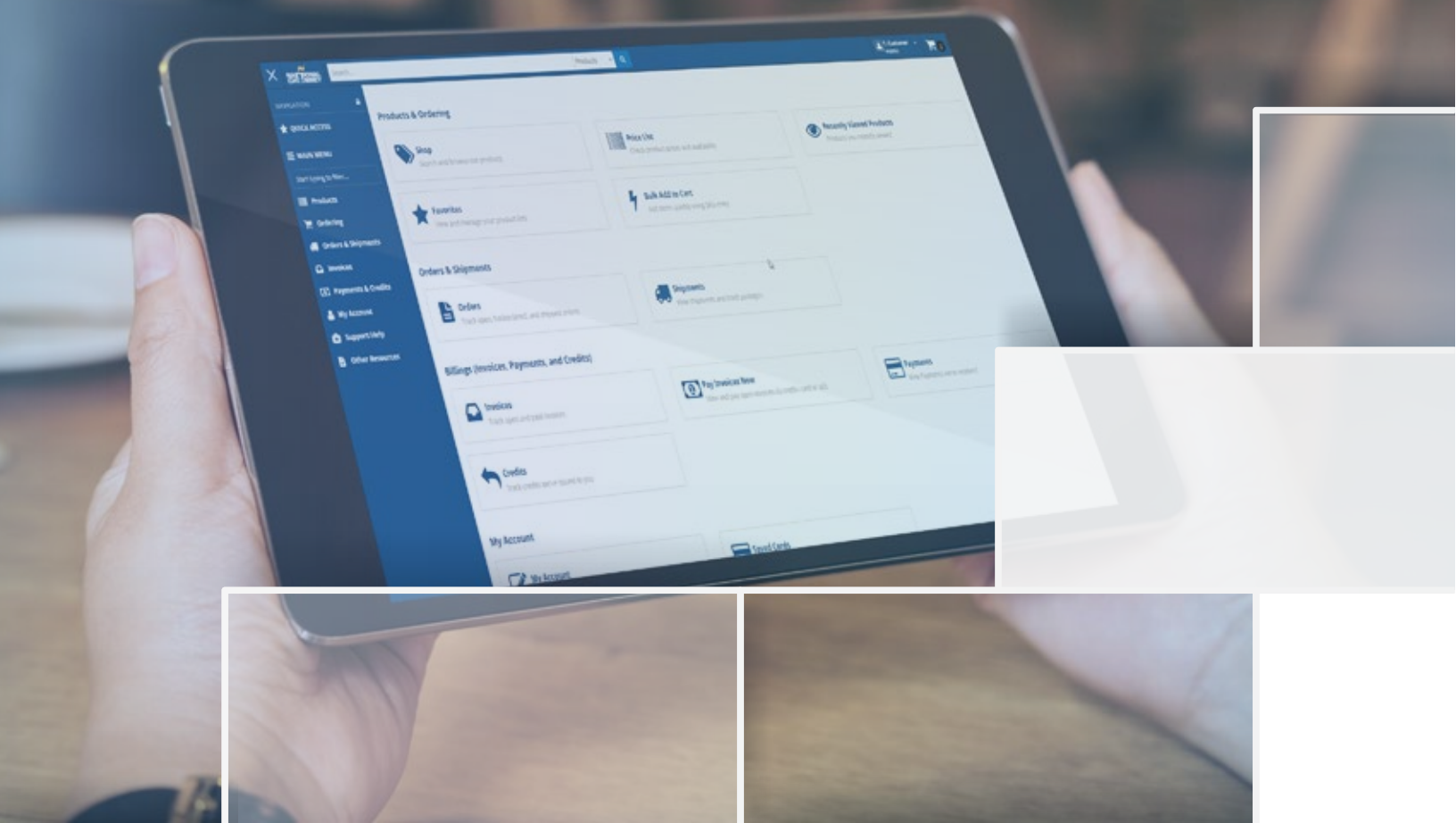
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*Information and illustration courtesy of Condar Company, manufacturer of replacement catalytic combustors.*



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# HOW TO SELL TO WOMEN

By Harriet Gillam

## *Do you know what women are saying about your business?*

There are approximately 135 million women in the U.S., who make 80 to 90% of all purchases. And they aren't just buying groceries, cosmetics and clothes. They are buying millions of dollars worth of products and services. Sharon Roberts, consultant and sales manager, describes how to sell to women in the way they prefer because, she explains, "they represent a huge, growing and powerful buying force, and make many independent buying decisions.

"By understanding and appreciating what women prefer, and then adjusting your business, or the way you treat women just a little bit perhaps, you can make a huge difference in your sales," Roberts contends. "It's very important to step back and ask yourself what sort of mental picture, honestly, do you have of women as buyers of products and services."

According to Roberts, many men these days have a difficult time figuring out what behavior and language they should be using when selling to women. The same applies to women. "We have a tough time finding that balance between being assertive enough and yet maintaining the right amount

of charm," Roberts says. "If we're too charming or too nice," she warns, "then we aren't taken very seriously. However, if we do cross that invisible line and we're too assertive, then you guys know what we get called."

## **R-E-S-P-E-C-T**

Roberts thinks many salesmen do not respect women as serious independent buyers. She says that women complain constantly that salesmen patronize them. She illustrates: "Here are just a few phrases that I imagine you have heard women say – 'He talked down to me...' 'He treated me like I was stupid...' 'He wouldn't make eye contact...' 'He interrupted me over and over...' 'The guy just didn't listen.' Or if the husband is present, the woman might say, 'He ignored me, he just talked to my husband.'"

## **Venus and Mars**

Women and men communicate differently, Roberts emphasizes.

She asks, "how about when your spouse is getting dressed to go out to a special event and walks out holding two dresses and asks you which one would you like her to wear? Those of you who innocently said, 'Oh, I don't care, either one is fine,' discovered that that meant

something very different to you than it did to her. To her it translates roughly to 'I couldn't care less.



Sharon Roberts

It really isn't important to me one way or the other.' Now men explain that isn't what they meant at all. They say that their 'I don't care' simply means, 'they're both great. I like them both.' So it seems that women and men say the very same words, but oh, they do seem to mean very different things!"

Roberts refers to some bestsellers that have been written about women and men and communication differences. In Dr. John Gray's book, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, the author's opinion is that the difference is so remarkable it's as if we are from two different planets. "So, if misunderstandings occur in personal relationships where men and women know each other very well, it certainly should come as no surprise that there are a lot of misunderstandings and confusion between salesmen and women who hardly know each other,"

Roberts concludes.

The confusion manifests itself further. Roberts maintains that men and women also listen differently. She explains, “perhaps you’ve noticed when women are listening they smile a lot, make lots of eye contact, nod their head, and have facial expressions that clearly communicate understanding.” Accordingly, men misinterpret these signals and think that the women want to hear more. “But meanwhile, the woman is thinking, ‘I can’t believe how rude this man is, he is just rattling on and on and hasn’t given me a chance to get a single word in edgewise!’” Roberts contends.

Conversely, men, when listening, tend to have a neutral facial expression and their eye contact wanders. When women observe this, Roberts explains, “We think that means you aren’t interested, that you aren’t listening. Women do not buy from salesmen who they believe are not listening.

“Some salesmen,” she says, “even admit they don’t listen. They say they just ‘tune-out’ and their reasons are things like:

I know what she needs before she finishes talking; or

I just wish she’d get to the point faster; or

I just really can’t help it.”

Women have been socialized to converse politely, to take turns listening and never interrupt. Men are taught differently. Roberts says that when a man wants a turn to speak, he will “just jump right in there and make his point.”

## Women Talk to Each Other

“What do you call it when four or five men are standing around talking?” Roberts asks. “Men always answer, ‘having a discussion.’ What do you call it when four or five women are standing around talking? Invariably, men answer this question: ‘gossiping,’” Roberts tells us. But she believes that this is not so. “I think men would be amazed at how much women discuss their buying experiences. Not just what they buy, but specifically, how they were treated!” she exclaims.

“They value quality treatment as much as they value quality products and services. It’s very important that they feel they are treated with dignity and respect, as serious buyers,” Roberts explains. “Women will continue to shop until they find a company that delivers quality service and quality treatment. The businesses that understand, appreciate and then deliver what she values will prosper even in very difficult economic times because women are very loyal customers.”

Consumer research has shown that 96 percent of unhappy customers do not relate their dissatisfaction

to the owner of the business, though most of them will never use that business again. However, they will tell their friends and family about their bad experience, which Roberts estimates to include at least 15 other people.

Women seek out recommendations from family members or friends and are particularly interested in getting references. “References from other women are extremely important,” Roberts advises, “particularly if your product or service is one of those considered a male product or service.”

“Many salesmen comment that the women are as interested in finding out about them as they are their product or service,” she notes. “Women are concerned about the level of service and how they will be treated after the



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sale. By providing references, you let them know you can be trusted.”

## First Impression

As we know, the transaction begins with the phone call. Roberts cautions that how the woman is treated during this initial call to your company determines whether your company will be employed. Unfortunately, “many times the phone person is taught to qualify the caller” and might ask if the woman is head of the household. Roberts insists that you always treat the caller as a serious shopper who is capable of making a buying decision.

“Women are not likely to buy on the fist call unless two conditions are met. First, she needs a recommendation from a trusted friend or relative, and then she has to be satisfied with the research she’s done,” Roberts explains. She suggests you cooperate in providing information about the service or product and don’t pressure her.

Roberts warns that women may work through their decision process out loud and like to approach the problem at hand from several directions. “Unfortunately, many salesmen deduce that she is a scatterbrain, out of control, etc. A lot of times salesmen will say things like: ‘well, lets just take one thing at a time now.’ Statements like this are so frustrating and irritating to women, they absolutely kill the chance of a sale. Because as far as she is concerned, she is working through a decision process that’s very normal to her.”

## What Women Want

In order to sell to women in the manner they prefer, Roberts offers some guidelines:

- Let her complete her thought or question. Above all, avoid interrupting her.
- Use some facial expression, make steady eye contact and keep it above the neck.
- Ask her some questions, which will indicate that she’s been heard and understood.
- Treat her like the serious buyer she is.
- Provide references.
- Assume she is the final decision maker.
- Avoid a hard sell approach.
- Always answer her questions and concerns courteously and very completely.
- Take a personal attitude check – examine your own beliefs and values.


“Remember,” Roberts cautions, “what you really believe about women and how they make decisions will somewhere, somehow – in what you say, your tone of voice or in your body language – what you’re *really* thinking is going to come out. And that could happen when you’re trying to close the biggest sale of your career.”

In conclusion, Sharon Roberts emphasizes: “Never, ever, underestimate the power of a woman!”

*Sharon Roberts uses a blend of humor and anecdotes to energize her*



Harriet Gillam

*audience and to add relevance to her speeches and workshops. Her message on Selling To Women & Couples has had a direct, immediate, and measurable impact on the profit performance of those who have implemented the principles she presents. She has reached hundreds of thousands of people with her research-based message and has been a featured guest on CNN, Let’s Talk Business Radio, and numerous other mass media forums. Her “At The Table” column is a regular feature in The ACHR News. Sharon is president and founder of Selling To Women, a Texas-based affiliate of Roberts & Roberts Associates. She has held positions with Xerox, Raytheon, and Lennox Industries. Sharon is also the author and co-author of two books, including her path-breaking book on Selling to Women & Couples: Secrets of Selling in the New Millennium – a book that many companies have adopted as “required reading” for their sales force. Her forthcoming book is titled Women Do Not Gossip, They Advertise™. She is happily married to her high school sweetheart, Dr. Lon Roberts.* 



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# Where Are You in Your Entrepreneurial Life Cycle?

*By Ami Kassir*

Just as we experience spring, summer, fall and winter each year, there are a similar number of cycles for entrepreneurs. It's extremely important to understand into which cycle you presently fit, because it determines how you approach growth, helps pinpoint your most comfortable financial options and makes evident your tolerance for risk.

So, what are those four cycles?

Here are some easy-to-remember names: Growers, Gliders, Speed-bumpers and Exiters.

Consider the case of John, a man in his early 60s whose software company has coasted along for years. The business is growing steadily, although at a much slower pace than twenty years ago.

John is financially set for life and wants to enjoy retirement by traveling with his wife and spending time with his grandchildren. Although there's no immediate hurry, he is looking to cash out from his company, which is now largely in the hands of his capable daughter.

As you might guess, John is an Exiter.

At a social function, John strikes up a conversation with a husband-and-wife team named Jason and Tara who run a fledgling software company of their own, although they are not direct competitors. Jason and Tara have just won a significant contract and their products are receiving good reviews, but they

need capital to meet their demands.

These classic Growers ask John for advice, figuring (correctly) that he has seen it all. So what does John tell them?

An aggressive businessman all his life, John essentially tells Jason and Tara to be bold – which is the only way to successfully get through each individual entrepreneurial cycle.

## Growers

A Grower is the type of entrepreneur typically depicted in film, on television, in books and all other forms of media. These are the businesspeople looking to expand their operations, often rapidly. They generally have a healthy appetite for assuming risk and are loaded with self-confidence.

John tests Jason and Tara by asking them what they would do if they received a \$1 million gift. Would they invest all (or most) of that money directly into their business or would they hold on to it, essentially saving it for a rainy day?

John is happy to hear that his new-found friends did not hesitate before saying they were confident in their business and figured that investing the money would go a long way toward solving their growth issues.

John tells them that since their business prospects are solid, there would be numerous financing options available for them ranging from the tried-and-



**Ami Kassir**

true Small Business Administration (SBA) loan to the ancient practice of factoring to everything in between.

While John is speaking, his audience grows, enthralled by the wisdom he's imparting. One of the listeners is a long-time friend named Mary whose small custom-framing chain of stores is stable and profitable. She is a Glider.

## Gliders

Mary tells the group that she has reached a happy point where she is making a solid amount of money, expects her business to remain sound and is loath to wreck a good thing.

John has been somewhat of a mentor to Mary over the years, so he poses the same hypothetical \$1 million gift question he just asked Jason and Tara.

That led Mary to waffle a bit. She first said she would place a significant chunk of that gift into mutual funds, happy with a smaller return, but still available to be used if need be. After more thought, she decided to place about 75 percent in her business because she realized she was already generating a higher return than what a mutual fund offered.

John approved, noting that keeping a business on an even keel is never a bad thing, especially for someone like Mary, who is beginning to consider retirement options. He also pointed out that since her business was doing well, there would be no shortage of palatable financial options available if the need arose.

The conversation lurches in a different direction, however, when a frazzled-looking entrepreneur joins the discussion. That would be Derek, the founder of an online sporting goods store. Derek's business was growing at a double-digit rate, but he overestimated his market and is now stuck with a warehouse full of unsold goods – not to mention his bank wants to pull its line of credit and is demanding repayment.

Derek, a textbook Speed-bumper, asks John what he should do.

## Speed-Bumpers

John points out that a little rain falls on most people's lives at some point and entrepreneurs are not immune.

Again, he brings up the hypothetical \$1 million gift.

It doesn't take long for Derek to gain clarity when he says that he would plunk most or the entire hypothetical \$1 million gift into his business. While some non-entrepreneurs might consider that foolish, Derek realizes that for any business to succeed, it requires the stomach

for at least some risk along with over-riding confidence. By stepping back, he realizes that—missteps aside—his company and business model are viable and will need some fine-tuning.

John cautions that challenges might lie ahead because some financial options will be closed to him. And the options that will be open may carry a greater risk (or interest rate) or even the possibility of surrendering some equity.

Having provided his sage advice to the others, the group of entrepreneurs questions John about his plans.

## Exiters

John replies that even the most-fervent entrepreneur will walk away at some point. The reason why doesn't really matter.

The group then turns the table on John and asks him what he would do with the hypothetical \$1 million gift.

Not surprisingly, he says, he decides he would invest half of it in mutual funds, but put the rest back into the business, noting that it would help his successor daughter.

John points out that succession planning is important, but too many businesses either overlook it or give it short shrift. After all, who wants to be thinking about the distant future when the thrill of running a business still looms?

He notes that eventually that day comes, however, and transitioning power is a delicate process, especially when you consider your legacy, not to mention tax concerns, heirs (whether or not they are taking over the business) and dozens of other things that often aren't considered.

John does say that the exiting pro-

cess, which should be a joyful time, can become burdensome and require professional financial assistance.

With that, the group begins to break up, each having gained a bit of clarity in regards to their particular situation.

## Conclusion

What have you learned from this hypothetical situation?

No matter what cycle they are in, entrepreneurs are a fascinating breed; they represent much of what makes the American business world so great.

That said, entrepreneurs do not know everything and tend to look at the big picture and forgo some of the fine details. That is why they sometimes need outside help.

The key to providing that help is recognizing that no two businesses – and their financial situations – are alike and cannot be addressed with a rote game plan.

*Ami Kassar is the founder and chief executive officer of Multifunding LLC, speaker, and author of the forthcoming book The Growth Dilemma. Heavily involved in business finance for two decades, Ami has advised the White House, The Treasury Department and The Federal Reserve Bank on the state of the financing markets. A nationally recognized expert on business capital, Ami Kassar has helped over 700 entrepreneurs generate over \$300 million for their businesses. For more information on Ami Kassar, please visit [www.Multifunding.com](http://www.Multifunding.com)*





# Your Contribution to Society

*By Michael Stone  
Construction Programs and Results*

Do you ever think about what we do for others? We build homes and maintain them. We fix problems, and if our job is done well, no one ever notices. That's how it should be.

We give others a place to eat, sleep, relax, learn, entertain themselves, conduct business, and fall in love. The work we do keeps everyone warm and cozy in the winter, and comfortable the rest of the year.

If the furnace breaks down, the air conditioning quits, the toilet backs up, the hot water tank dies, or the lights won't come on, do they call their attorney? Notify the government? No, they call a contractor and ask for help as soon as possible. Since we care, we do our best to help them as quickly as possible. I remember spending one Christmas Eve on the roof of a restaurant repairing a heating system. I am sure some of you have similar stories.

I think each of us in the construction and building maintenance trades should be proud of our contribution to humanity. We spend long years learning our trade, and we do it well.

Without us, families wouldn't have a place to get together for the holidays. I don't know how the weather is where you live, but when it is cold, wet, and rainy here, the idea of sharing a turkey with my family in a cedar plank hut over a smoky fire is not my idea of a great time. I am addicted to the creature comforts that my home provides, and so are most of us. Without contractors, it wouldn't be as comfortable.

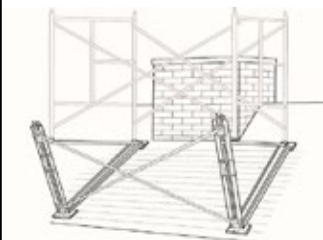
We aren't always appreciated. There is always a blockhead looking to find fault with our work or with us. But have you noticed that when a client tells you what a great job you have done, you forget about the blockhead? I am willing to learn from my mistakes, but I also appreciate a good word from a happy client, and that is where I try to keep my focus.

*Michael and Devon Stone operate Construction Programs & Results, 2818 NE 292nd Avenue, Camas, WA 98607. Michael Stone has been involved in the construction trades for over forty years. He is the author of Markup and Profit: A*



**Michael Stone**

*Contractor's Guide Revisited, available at their website, [www.markupandprofit.com](http://www.markupandprofit.com), or by phone at 888-944-0044. He offers coaching and consulting services for general and specialty contractors throughout the U.S., as well as audio and CD programs for business management. He is also available to speak at chimney sweep conventions and workshops.*



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# PRODUCTS & SERVICES

## Sand Hill's Dave DeBolt Retires

Sand Hill Wholesale has announced the retirement of Dave DeBolt, their General Manager, on March 29.

Dave joined Sand Hill in December 2005 with a past work history in the hearth industry. He has overseen the daily operations of Sand Hill, along with all marketing and trade show aspects of the company. He has been an outstanding leader and valuable, dedicated, and hard working employee.

Dave enthusiastically looks forward to retirement as

he plans to build a new house on property that he recently purchased and plans to spend a lot of time with his grandkids.

Best wishes for this next chapter of your life, Dave. Enjoy it to the fullest!



Dave DeBolt

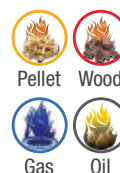


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# Where Does the Vent Go?

*By Frank Ayres  
Ayres Ashes Away Chimney Service  
Chiloquin, Oregon*

Hair Masters, a hair salon in a Fred Meyer store built in 1987, was having trouble with its clothes dryer not working. Our inspection indicated that the dryer vent did not terminate at the rooftop or anywhere outside, but instead terminated in a plenum that is part of the building ventilation system. Not being able to see the end of the vent made it impossible to know how clean or dirty the dryer exhaust pipe actually was.

We contacted the contractor who originally installed it and he said the pipe could very well terminate in the air handling system. We then contacted the county building department and asked if we could cut the 4-inch diameter pipe close to the plenum to be able to fully clean and inspect the interior of the pipe. They said cutting the pipe would be OK as long as the pipe was put back together with 181 tape and free of inside sharp edges.

Upon cutting the pipe we found it 75% plugged. We were able to clean from both ends of the pipe. We could also see inside the plenum and were able to remove five gallons of lint by hand and another five gallons with the vacuum. Since then the dryer has been drying, as it should.



Frank Ayres taping the dryer exhaust duct after cleaning.

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# 30, 20 and 10 Years Ago in *SNEWS*

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## May-June 1989



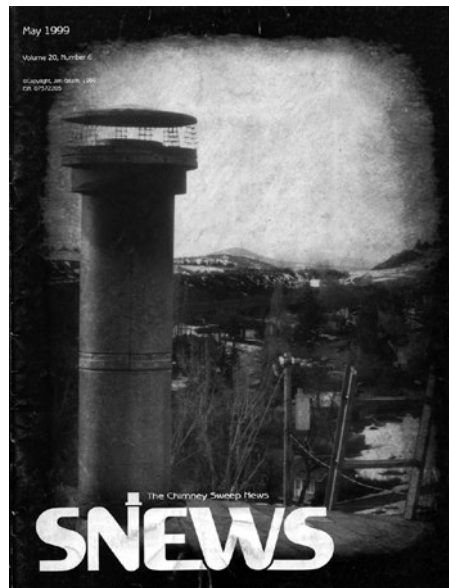
Editor/Publisher Jay Hensley devoted much of the May-June 1989 issue to the recent NCSG convention in San Diego. “Dennis Ranahan coached us on the team concept and inspired us to hang in there to accomplish goals we set for ourselves,” Jay wrote. “Obviously a believer in his own methods, enthusiastic, energetic (and funny, too), he swept us along in his keynote address.”

Dennis Ranahan emphasized the importance of attitude. “Together,” he said, “we’re about the greatest chimney sweep of all times! You need to say to yourselves, ‘I’m here at MY convention to learn MY skills.’”

At the trade show, John Meredith was “flooded” with inquiries about his ChimneySaver waterproofing treatment for chimneys, Jay reported. “Team after team stopped by his booth to get the details. They all concluded that adding waterproofing services is the thing to do as soon as possible.”

Subscriber Gordon Brown offered this testimonial to Jay Hensley: “*SNEWS* has been my single best source of information. I have made just about every mistake a guy can make while in business for himself, and I could have avoided every one of them had I studied the material in *SNEWS* more thoroughly. . . . *SNEWS* is one of the biggest gold mines that a sweep has.”

## May 1999



In the first full issue produced by new publishers Jim & Harriet Gillam, we featured the Weber family of Eugene, Oregon. In 1957, Don Weber began a long career in the duct cleaning and chimney service trades working for R.A. Pringle & Sons in Walla Walla, WA. He worked for Pringle for fifteen years as a

power vacuum truck operator. Don and his wife, Donna, set up shop in Eugene, OR in 1972, using power-vac trucks to clean ducts, furnaces and chimneys. They retired a couple of years ago.

“A lot of chimney sweeps are getting into duct cleaning,” Don observed in 1999. “They are buying what I call ‘inferior equipment.’ It’s portable, but it hasn’t got enough capacity to do what you need to do to get the ductwork cleaned. I’ve had guys call me who’ve had this stuff and they get into a situation where they REALLY have to clean the duct work, and suddenly they are looking into a cleaner truck.”

Editor Emeritus Jay Hensley reported on Ken Robinson’s (Coopertown Chimney & Wildlife Services, Memphis, TN) four-hour Rope Safety and Fall Protection seminar at the NCSG convention in February. She wrote, “In doing repairs on 30-to-50-foot chimneys on homes 100 years old or more in Memphis, Ken found the ceramic tile, asbestos, and slate roofs with their 12:12 to 16:12 pitches were nearly impossible to climb. In many cases, huge oak trees, iron fences and lack of space ruled out the use of scaffolding or bucket trucks. Over the years, he has come to rely more and more on rock-climbing techniques adapted for rooftop and chimney work.

“Ken emphasized that he’s been trained to go up and down on a rope, but not to teach the technique. Which means that watching him do it there in the big ballroom at the Milwaukee Hilton didn’t qualify anyone for going home and trying it on his own! ‘You have to get professional training if you want to go on to do this,’ Ken said. ‘Enrolling in a class on sport climbing would be a good place to start. One-on-one training with your instructor is vitally important.’”

Editor Jim Gillam’s cover photo was the first of 89 covers he shot for the magazine.

## June 1999



We featured Paul Kuhlmann and Julie Ament (Perfect Partners Chimney Cleaning, Eugene, OR) on the cover and in the lead article. “Being a couple has been overwhelmingly positive for our business,” stated Paul. “People remember us so we get good word of mouth. People talk about ‘the couple that came and cleaned their chimney!’”

Karen Duke (Victorian Fireplace Shop, Richmond, VA) reported on a

meeting of the previously dormant Virginia Chimney Sweep Guild. “John Storch (Chimney Chap), the new president, explained proposed legislation in Virginia that would require sweeps to be certified to conduct business in VA,” she wrote, “and legislation that would require chimney inspections at the time of a home sale.”

Sooty Bob Daniels announced the combination of the Lyemance and Lock-Top damper enterprises under the Copperfield umbrella. His two-page article detailed the history of the two companies.

We interviewed Paul Hempel (Brushes and Brooms Chimney Sweep, Brighton, IL) about chimney swifts. “Swifts are important to humans mainly because they eat a tremendous amount of mosquitoes during the summer months when we all want to be outside,” Paul said.

## May-June 2009



Will Kozlansky, founder of Olympia Chimney Supply, displayed the company’s new Ventis Black™ non-fume stovepipe on the cover. Will was at the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Expo in Reno, NV.

“Wood and biofuels returned to the fore at the downscaled 2009 HPBExpo,” we reported.

Rob Lindemann of Lindemann Chimney Company wrote, “The good news is the recession is not mandatory. You can make the choice right now not to participate.”

“Trees are nature’s perfect solar energy collector,” declared Dan Henry of Hearth and Home Technologies at the Renewable Heat Symposium in Salem, OR. SNEWS had the only reporter there. “Wood pellets, made from trees, are nature’s perfect solar battery!” Dan exclaimed. “All the energy is contained in the pellet until I want to use it.”

Editor/Publisher Jim Gillam wrote, “The pellet industry needs to decouple itself from sawmill waste and learn to bid and harvest timber sales themselves. This is probably the only way to provide a market for the enormous amount of dead and overcrowded timber stock that currently exists in the continent’s forests. This biomass is likely to burn one way or another. We have the choice to consume it in clean-burning heating appliances, burn it in the forest in fuel reduction programs, or let it go up in flames in wild conflagrations.”





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iprior@nycap.rr.com for more info.



## *Upcoming Events*

*Information subject to change. Please confirm dates and locations of any events!*

**May 16-18: Midwest Chimney Safety Council conference — Sweeping the Lake II**, Lake of the Ozarks, MO. Masonry finish work w/ river rock, Class A installation, Chimney Access using scaffolding and fall protection. Likely the last MCSC conference. All instruction at the Matthews' house, 59 Roaming Ln, Sunrise Beach, 65079. Lodging and banquet at The Lodge at Port Arrowhead, 3080 Bagnell Dam Blvd., Lake Ozark, 65049. To register, go to [mcsc-net.org](http://mcsc-net.org). Contact Marge Padgett for more info, 816-461-3665 or [margepadgettmcsc@gmail.com](mailto:margepadgettmcsc@gmail.com).

**May 17: CSIA Certified Chimney Sweep Review & Exams**, Scranton, PA. Hilton Scranton Conference Center, 100 Adams Ave, 18503. Call CSIA at 317-837-5362 or visit [csia.org](http://csia.org) for more info.

**May 20-21: Masonry Chimney Diagnosis & Analysis course by CVC Success Group**, Poughkeepsie, NY. Learn the background of failure of masonry chimneys due to building practices, material failure, sudden occurrences and water entry. Jerry Isenhour, instructor. \$499 includes lunch and refreshments. To register, contact [training@cvc-successgroup.com](mailto:training@cvc-successgroup.com).

**May 21-22: Grandy & Associates Planning for Profit Workshop**, Greenville, SC. \$2650 per company/up to 3 people. Training and coaching, manuals, TEAM Solutions behavioral assessments, tax tips, Labor Pricing For a Profit software, customized Customer Response Cards, maintenance agreements, more. Call Grandy & Associates at 877-202-8891 for more info or visit [grandyassociates.com](http://grandyassociates.com).

**June 3-4: Pellet Diagnostics and Repair course by Chestnut Hill Chimney & Hearth**, Farmington, NH. \$600 includes breakfast and lunch. Lodging at Holiday Inn Express, 77 Farmington Rd, Rochester, NH, 603-994-1175. To register for the course, call Laura at 603-775-4835.

**June 3-7: CSIA Installing and Troubleshooting Gas Hearth Appliances course**, Plainfield, IN. CSIA Tech Center, 2155 Commercial Dr, 46168. This 5-day course covers the service and installation, including appliance standards, combustion requirements, pipe sizing and installation, troubleshooting, carbon monoxide testing, and fuel conversion. Contact CSIA at [csia.org](http://csia.org) or call 317-837-5362 for more info.

**June 12-13: Grandy & Associates Planning for Profit Workshop**, Green Bay, WI. \$2650 per company/up to 3 people. Training and coaching, manuals, TEAM Solutions behavioral assessments, tax tips, Labor Pricing For a Profit software, customized Customer Response Cards, maintenance agreements, more. Call Grandy & Associates at 877-202-8891 for more info or visit [grandyassociates.com](http://grandyassociates.com).

**June 17: CSIA Certified Chimney Sweep Review & Exams**, Plainfield, IN. CSIA Tech Center, 2155 Commercial Dr, 46168. Call CSIA at 317-837-5362 or visit [csia.org](http://csia.org) for more info.

**June 18-19: Grandy & Associates Planning for Profit Workshop**, Tampa, FL. \$2650 per company/up to 3 people. Training and coaching, manuals, TEAM Solutions behavioral assessments, tax tips, Labor Pricing For a Profit software, customized Customer Response Cards, maintenance agreements, more. Call Grandy & Associates at 877-202-8891 for more info or visit [grandyassociates.com](http://grandyassociates.com).

**June 22-23: Northeast Association of Chimney and Hearth Professionals Sweepfest**, Newmarket, NH. Mitchell Homestead, 52 Bald Hill Rd. Speakers include Bill Ryan, Chuck Roydhouse, Taylor Hill & Carter Harkins, Stuart Karanovich and Jesse Doucette. Onsite camping available. Visit [neachp.org](http://neachp.org) to register.

**June 26-27: CSIA Rope Access and Safety course**, Bell Buckle, TN. Tennessee Fire and Codes Enforcement Academy, 2161 Unionville Deason Rd, 37020. Please bring your harness and any other fall protection you use! You will be able to start checking in on June 25. Dinner provided on 25th and 26th. Breakfast, lunch provided on 26th and 27th. Cost is \$799, includes the accommodation for those two nights and meals. Lodging at Tennessee Fire and Codes Enforcement Academy. Contact CSIA at [csia.org](http://csia.org) or call 317-837-5362 for more info.

**July 8-11: Golden State Chimney Sweep Guild convention**, Oceanside, CA. Oceanside Marina Suites, 2008 Harbor Drive North, 92054. 760-722-1561. [omihotel.com](http://omihotel.com). Contact Michaele Dempsey for more info, 559-732-6200.

**July 22-27: CSIA National Chimney Sweep Training School**, Plainfield, IN. CSIA Tech Center, 2155 Commercial Dr, 46168. Six-day course includes classroom and field instruction. Sponsored by Copperfield Chimney Supply. Visit [csia.org](http://csia.org) or call 317-837-5362 for more info.

**July 26-28: New York State Chimney Sweep Guild Summer Workshop**, Galway, NY. Chris & Ingrid Prior's hacienda. Hands-on masonry, family fun! Contact Ingrid at [iprior@nycap.rr.com](mailto:iprior@nycap.rr.com) for more info.

## *Unclassified Ads*

*The Chimney Sweep News* is seeking a new owner. Contact [ChimneySweepNews@aol.com](mailto:ChimneySweepNews@aol.com).

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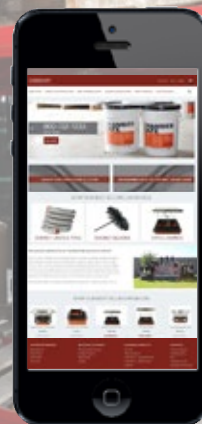
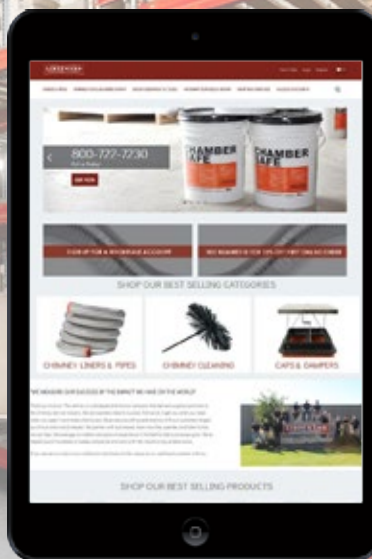


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