

DINNER MEETING REVIEW - Wednesday, April 28th

Our April meeting featured an excellent presentation on the wide variety of fireplaces now on the market. Our guest speaker, Terry Hicks of Napoleon Home Comfort in Barrie, was a most knowledgeable spokesman on installation, safety and current regulation. Our appreciation to Grant Ivens (Home and Cottage Centre) for making these arrangements.

Mary Campbell (Wyevale Concrete) did an excellent job on the 50/50 ticket sales and Rob Schryer (The Sarjeant Co.) won \$100 with the lucky number. Other prizes were won by Geoff Myers, Grant Ivens, Jason Vanderkooy, Kurt Baumer, Rob Martin and John Rumble. Door Prize donors were Gord Gardner (Clair's Fine Wines), MPDBA and Jeff Hodges (Muskoka Windows and Doors).

MAY DINNER MEETING - WEDNESDAY, MAY 26TH

We are all vulnerable to identity theft! Paul Hamelin will present insights into the high-tech world of credit card theft, computer scams, ATM abuses and stuff you haven't even thought about yet. Should be a great program and we are delighted Paul will share his knowledge and expertise with us. Bring your questions.

As always, guests are welcome - \$15 per person.

HOME AND LEISURE SHOW

Thanks to everyone who participated in the April 23 - 25 event and particular thanks to Don Bryant, who acted as coordinator on our behalf and dealt with all the vagaries of space, displays, logistics, etc.

Despite the obstacles of the "under construction" limitations, the traffic was excellent each of the three days, and many "business-building" contacts were established.

We have tentatively reserved twelve booth spaces for 2005 and we will be happy to know of your interest in participating. Of course, all details will be forthcoming in due course with respect to dates, rates, etc.

PLEASE NOTE: all payments are now due on your 2004 booth reservations.

NEVER SACRIFICE THE PERMANENT ON THE ALTAR OF THE IMMEDIATE

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY

Since our last newsletter, we are pleased to report the following membership activities:

NEW! We welcome Johnathan's Contracting to our membership list. This firm is owned and operated by Johnathan Pridham (528-8690) and is in the business of landscaping and snow removal. Johnathan will welcome your call at the above number.

RENEWALS. A warm welcome back to:

FIRST FOR SAFETY - Pat Watson - 526-3853

APEX - THE COUNTERTOP SHOP - Doug Parker - 322-3819

RONA-BUILDING CENTRE - Larry Cowan - 526-3748

RONA-CASHWAY RENTALL - Jack Bertram - 526-2297

LAFARGE - (Rep. TBA) - 734-3600

We Encourage Everyone to BE A MEMBER - SUPPORT A MEMBER

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, May 19th - 7:00 p.m.: MPDBA Board of Directors meeting at 297 Hanly Street

Wednesday, June 30th from 5:00 p.m.: Our World Famous Builders BarBQ at Wenneker Woodworks, 9000 Co. Rd. 93. Your membership covers the cost of two people for this event. Reserve the date now and stand by for registration information. We encourage you to bring staff, clients, etc. (cost per meal after the first two- \$15)

Friday, July 9th15th Annual MPDBA Golf Tourney: All information will be issued 2 weeks prior to the tourney for all golf 4-somes. If you are a sponsor, please arrange to have your construction site sign delivered to Brooklea Pro Shop, to Dave Giffin, to Don Bryant or to Austin Matthews by July 7th. We can then plan for the most strategic placement of your sign and its promotional value. If you are a silver, gold or platinum sponsor, how about some creative thinking to maximize your sponsorship opportunities. (Product display, promotional handouts, "golf girls", etc.)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3 (IT'S CONFIRMED!): This is the date for our Annual Builders Xmas Xtravaganza - not Xpensive! The location is the Best Western Highland Inn. We are still working on the per person price. It's likely to be in the \$30 - \$32 range. Sandy (planner Xtra-ordinaire) Templeton is working on your behalf to make this dinner, dance and entertainment evening and Xceptional event. Watch for specific registration details, but budget now to bring your staff. No reservations are confirmed without payment, but early indication of intent and numbers will aid in the planning process. Call Sandy at 527-4642 or Austin at 526-6907 for preliminary bookings. We are also in need of door prizes for our mega draws. Your contributions will be most welcome and properly acknowledged.

NO MATTER WHAT TEMPERATURE YOUR ROOM IS, IT'S ALWAYS ROOM TEMPERATURE.

NOTEWORTHY

- **PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS:** Patti Gilpin (Compusolve), Garry Beutler (Water Depot) and Dave Sheldon (Interior Design) were in our April Dinner Meeting crowd. Great to see you folks! Hope we can welcome you as members in the future.
- **MOVIN' ON:** Two of our Design and Décor members are leaving the area and relocating elsewhere in the very near future. Kasha (Always Kasha Website Design) is going to the U.S. and Yvonne Bush (Watercolours by Yvonne) is heading back to her Nova Scotia property. We wish both these creative ladies the very best in the future and an assurance that you will be truly missed in our Georgian Bay area. Bon chance!
- We are pleased to announce that Yvette Aube (Aim Chimney and Hearth) is the first female president of the Chimney Safety Association of Canada. Term runs for one year from May 1, 2004. Way to go, girl! - and for the CSAC - "fasten your seatbelts!"
- **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE:** (Could this be you?) Unpaid Home and Leisure Show space invoices, along with golf foursome fees and golf sponsorships are now payable. Please accept my thanks in advance for your prompt remittance.
- Mary Campbell (Wyevale Concrete) won a digital camera as an early bird prize in the Y's Men's Club Fantasy Sweepstakes. Early bird prizes every week until June 25th - which is the date for the major \$25,000 value draw. Need tickets (\$20) or more info? Contact Austin, Don Bryant, Pauline Robitaille, Rene Ouellet, Antero Kontkanen, Heather Gonneau, Pat Watson, Sandy Templeton, Harry Huizinga, Leigh Gate, Jurgen Pape or Tim Dunlop, all of whom are helping with this Y's Men's Club fundraiser.

IF YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR PASSPORT PHOTO, YOU ARE TOO ILL TO TRAVEL

FACTS ARE STUBBORN BUT STATISTICS ARE MORE PLIABLE.

IN THE NEWS,.....

BUILDERS STRUGGLING TO FIND SKILLED WORKERS

Mark Parson
Bricks and Sticks

The shortage of skilled, tradespeople is an ongoing source of difficulty for the home building industry as we strive to meet the strong demand for new housing to serve growing populations in Toronto and beyond.

A recent report by Toronto-based housing analyst Will Dunning, entitled *Skilled Trades Needs Assessment*, found the shortage of skilled tradespeople in the GTA could get worse in coming years as the average age of the workforce increases and retirement numbers rise accordingly.

Released last month, the report was commissioned jointly by the Greater Toronto Home Builder's Association and the Construction Recruitment External Workers Services, a program that helps recruit tradespeople from other countries.

The report found labour shortages in the GTA are pervasive in 12 skilled trades - occupations no home could be built without.

Of builders and contractors surveyed, 69 percent reported extremely high levels of difficulty hiring bricklayers, framers, and site superintendents.

Slightly more than 40 percent of home builders and contractors reported quite high levels of difficulty when trying to hire cement finishers, concrete-form workers, window installers, carpenters and general labourers.

For heavy equipment operators, roofers, drywallers and tile setters, 30 percent reported lower, but still significant levels of difficulty when trying to hire for these positions.

The irony is that in the GTA's robust, highly competitive home-building market, all these occupations are good, well-paying jobs. The majority in the skilled trades enjoy long, productive careers characterized by higher-than-average wages.

Going back to Dining's reports, it's mystifying to see that one of the positions builders have difficulty finding is that of site superintendent.

A site superintendent is one of the most critical players in the whole construction process, not only in construction but also in human resources, health and safety and critical path planning.

The competition among builders for experienced site superintendents is fierce, illustrating how widespread the problem of labour shortages has become.

As for finding a solution to the shortage of skilled trades, the construction industry can't solve it alone. We need an overhaul of immigration policies that favour entrepreneurs and business people at the expense of the skilled workers, who historically came to Canada in large numbers to meet needs.

We also need more focus on the residential construction industry from the education system. We are not getting enough young people into construction and that's partly because students are not being made aware of the opportunities that exist.

We need parents, teachers and career counselors, at both high school and post-secondary levels, to inform students of the many and varied career opportunities existing in the skilled and technical trades.

It's not as though we have much choice. By 2030, the GTA population is expected to have increased by another 2.4 million people. Accommodating that population growth will require construction of about 1 million housing units.

Homebuilding, renovation and related fields employ more than 250,000 people in the GTA, generating billions of dollars yearly in wages and taxes.

Given the growth that's coming in the GTA and the economic importance of the residential construction industry to the region, we need to have the education system and the home building industry in sync. Maintaining our successful and diverse economy, and the high standard of living that economy in turn provides us, depends on it.

SUCCESS IS NOT THE RESULT OF SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION - YOU MUST SET YOURSELF ON FIRE