



The WAHI Inspector

Vol. XV, No. 9

September 2011

Editor: Nicholas Petrie

Upcoming Meetings

Central Wisconsin Chapter

Wednesday, September 21

Social 6 p.m., dinner/meeting 6:30 p.m.

Palms Supper Club Steak House
5912 Bus. Hwy 51, Schofield

Speaker: Local attorney on Reporting Dos and Don'ts.

Chippewa Valley Chapter

Wednesday, September 14

Dinner 6 p.m., meeting 6:30 p.m.

Jade Garden Restaurant
3620 Gateway Dr., Eau Claire

Speaker: Greg Weiss of Certified Inc. on furnaces, boilers & water heaters. Bring pix!

Fox Valley Chapter

Tuesday, September 20

Roundtable 6 p.m., dinner 6:45 p.m.,
speaker 7:15 p.m.

The Main Event Steakhouse
1727 Freedom Rd., Little Chute

Speaker: A local plumber.

Madison Chapter

Thursday, September 15

Roundtable 6 p.m., dinner/meeting 6:30 p.m.,
speaker 7 p.m.

Rex's Inkeeper
301 N. Century Ave., Waunakee

Bring photos of interesting situations encountered on inspections.

Milwaukee Chapter

Tuesday, September 13

Social 6 p.m., dinner 6:30 p.m., meeting 7 p.m.

Klemmer's Banquet Center
104th & Oklahoma Ave., West Allis

Speaker: Michael Sweeny of Metal Roofing Systems on metal vs. other materials, and what to look for when inspecting.

From the President Client Call-Backs



The phone rings. You answer politely, hoping that someone wants to schedule an inspection. Then the caller says something like, "You inspected my home a few months ago, and I'm having a problem." Your stomach sinks.

Have you ever had a call like that? I have, and it always gets my attention.

That conversation is an important one. Maybe it's professional pride, maybe just embarrassment, but inspectors rarely talk about this topic with each other. I'd like to talk about it today. Mind you, I am not an attorney. I am a simple home inspector. But I have a call-back process that works well for me.

The first thing I do is take a deep breath and ask for basic information: when did I inspect the home, and what is the address? Then I ask the client about the problem, and find a time when we can meet at the property to see the issue first-hand. I always try to be calm. I have also found that courtesy goes a long way at this point.

I also try to ascertain how excited the client is, and to calm their fears. Although it is tempting to get defensive, I have found that it is better to focus on the client. How did he or she become aware of the problem? What are their goals for this conversation? Are they just looking for advice, maybe a diagnosis and a contractor referral? Or are they looking for you, the inspector, to repair and/or pay for the problem?

When I meet the client at the property, I always take a copy of the inspection report with me. This helps to verify whether I actually noted the issue in my report, or if it was not visible or actually occurring during the initial inspection. I always try to be professional in understanding what the problem is, and what a solution for both parties can be.

Most often, the problem was not visible at the inspection. If that is the case I will tell the client that I am very sympathetic but explain – for example – that there is no way I could have foreseen that the sump pump was going to fail four months after the inspection.

continued on p. 2

President

continued from p. 1

I've found that it's my attitude towards the client that is most important. I treat my client as I would like to be treated myself. Common courtesy and good intentions go a long way toward helping prevent or resolve conflict. But what if you get to the property and find that you really missed something?

My suggestion is to be honest. Admit that you missed the item. You're human; you made a mistake. Tell the client that you'd like to be fair with them as long as they will be fair with you.

Find out what the client is asking of you. Do your best to make it right, and learn from the experience to become a better inspector. If your client is asking for a reasonable amount, try to resolve the issue yourself, rather than submitting a claim to your insurance. Many attorneys suggest, as part of the settlement, having the client release you from future harm or claims.

If the issue is more significant and/or expensive, it is best to contact your insurance carrier. (You all have Errors and Omissions and Liability insurance, right? Professional inspectors

carry professional insurance. If you have a big claim, you'll be glad you did.) Read your insurance documentation to learn your carrier's requirements. Some carriers have specific reporting requirements, and if you violate those requirements – by reporting too late, for example – they may deny your claim.

I also hope that you have the WAHI Arbitration Clause in your contract, to prevent large legal expenses. Remind the client that they signed a legal document stating they agree to binding arbitration. Provide them with Resolute Systems Inc. contact information, and do your part.

I don't get many call-backs, but they are an unavoidable part of our profession. So stay calm and courteous. Find out what the client is seeking, and meet at the property. Try to resolve the issue fairly before emotions get out of hand and the legal process kicks in.

And remember that WAHI members are professionals, and stand behind our work.

Mike Von Gunten

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Chapter Meeting Highlights



Our next meeting will be Wednesday, September 21st. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month at Palms Supper Club Steak House, 5912 Bus. Hwy 51 in Schofield. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. and dinner at 6:30 p.m. The cost to attend a monthly chapter meeting is \$25 with dinner or \$10 without the meal. Contact Rich Duerkop with any questions at 715-241-8222 or e-mail americansentry1@charter.net. Our speaker will be an attorney addressing what we should, and should not, be saying either verbally or in our written reports.



Our August speaker was Dave Paulson, Territory Manager for the Certainteed Company, specializing in fiber cement siding. Dave talked about the manufacturing of their product and how it was made, and gave us a brochure illustrating the different textures and colors available. He also touched on the proper installation method for their cement siding. He handed out a full booklet describing the proper way that the product should be installed. We shared with him some onsite photographs of various improperly-installed cement siding and he suggested ways to relate to our clients as to how these problems could be solve. We followed up with some questions and answers.

continued on p. 4



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Our next meeting will be Wednesday, September 14th at Jade Garden Restaurant, 3620 Gateway Dr., Eau Claire. The dinner begins at 6 p.m., meeting at 6:30 p.m., usually followed by a Q&A period. The cost of the meeting is \$20, which includes a buffet supper (tip extra). Our speaker will be Greg Weiss, with Certified Inc. Greg is head of the HVAC division and will talk on furnaces, boilers and water heaters. Greg has nearly 30 years experience in the HVAC field and has spoken at our meetings before. He is knowledgeable regarding what to look for as a home inspector and how to report on findings that may be incorrect installations. He would like us to bring some onsite pictures to discuss, which helps the whole group visualize potential problems during a routine inspection.



August speakers were Fox Valley members Doug Hoerth and Keith Vanevenhoven, who led a round table discussion.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, September 20th at The Main Event Steakhouse, 1727 Freedom Rd., Little Chute. Cocktails and roundtable discussion start at 6 p.m., 6:45 dinner, 7:15 speaker, meeting to follow. Our August speaker will be an area plumber.



Be sure to attend the upcoming meeting on Thursday September 15, 2011. Roundtable will begin at 6 p.m., dinner/meeting at 6:30 p.m. and speaker at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at Rex's Inkeeper, 301 N. Century Ave., Waunakee. Please bring any pictures you may have of strange situations "encountered" during an inspection you performed. Photos can be emailed in advance to Ron Miller at rminspections@aol.com or brought to the meeting. Hoping for a great turnout as we start meeting again after our summer break!



Our next meeting will be Tuesday, September 13th at Klemmer's Banquet Center, 104th & Oklahoma Ave. in West Allis. Social at 6 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m. Cost is \$25, which includes dinner and the continuing education. Our speaker will be Michael Sweeny from Metal Roofing Systems. The topics covered will be the advantages of metal over other materials and what to look out for when inspecting.

Milwaukee Chapter Visits Foundation Repair Job Site

By Nick Petrie

WAHI's Milwaukee chapter went on the road for its August meeting, visiting a Greenfield job site where over 45 members and affiliates had the opportunity to see multiple types of foundation problems and their repairs first-hand. WAHI affiliate Accurate Basement Repair volunteered the job site to help educate WAHI members.

The 1960s home had foundation issues on all four sides. The drive-in basement had settled by as much as 1½ inches, and soil and water pressure had cracked and pushed in three basement walls.

The exterior symptoms visible to the home inspector were cracks in the corners. On the interior, an inspector would note large stair-step and horizontal cracks, shear cracks where the walls had been pushed out of plane, and migrating cracks where the walls were moving laterally. In one area, the soil pressure was so great that an interior block partition wall over 12 feet long was pushed an inch along its length – something WAHI affiliate Mike Shadid of Shadid Foundation Consulting said he had never before seen in 29 years evaluating basements.

Although the foundation movement was extreme, examination of the drain tile showed little blockage, despite the large willow tree on the neighbor's side of the property line. Water-seeking willows are known to invade drain tile and inhibit foundation drainage.

Repairs were partially completed so that inspectors could see both the problems and their solutions at once. At the settled garage area, the exterior walls were excavated to the footings, and the floor was removed in selected areas to expose the footings at the interior as well. At those areas, steel brackets were bolted in place to be supported by push pilings – steel tubes driven into the soil by hydraulic pressure, in one case 40 feet down into the soil. When the push pilings can be driven no farther, they are filled with a cement slurry to stabilize those walls in place. When needed, said Fred Mueller, co-founder of Accurate Basement Repair, the push pilings also can be used to lift walls back into place.

At the basement areas where no significant settlement had occurred, soil and water pressure had pushed in three other walls. These walls were also excavated to the footings and were in the process of being straightened with hydraulic jacks, the cracks tuckpointed and broken blocks replaced. Then walls will be reinforced on the interior with steel beams bolted to the footings below and the floor joists above. The block partition wall that had slid laterally will be returned to its original position.

continued on p. 6



Photos top to bottom:

- The Milwaukee Chapter was well-represented.
- Exterior cracks indicate wall movement.
- Interior cracks show wall sliding sideways.
- New steel reinforcement beams and tuck-pointed cracks.

Chapter Visit

continued from p. 5

At all excavated areas, the bleeders had been cleared and old cement drain tile had already been replaced with new perforated plastic. The walls were also coated with damp-proofing material, then covered with plastic sheeting to keep the coating intact and the crew clean. The removed soil will be replaced with gravel to facilitate drainage, with approximately 12” of soil at the top to allow for plant growth.

Clay soil and poor exterior drainage were the chief causes of the problems, said Chris Mancuso, co-founder of Accurate Basement Repair. Poor siting and design was the likely cause of the settlement. The street and driveway directed rainwater to the foundation’s garage area. The homeowner had already installed one large sewer drain at the top of the drive to help collect some water, as well as an exterior sump crock with a long hose to move water from the bottom of the driveway, but neither attempt was ultimately successful.

After the site visit, we went back to our usual meeting site, where Chris Mancuso and Paul Vaccaro, Accurate’s project manager, former WAHI inspector and current affiliate, answered many questions from inspectors.

Many thanks to Chris Mancuso and Fred Mueller, co-owners of Accurate Basement Repair, and to Paul Vaccaro for providing the job site and enthusiastically answering questions. Additional thanks are due to Accurate’s office manager Andrea Sherman for helping facilitate, and to Accurate’s fine crew for letting us stomp through their workplace. It’s worth noting that Accurate also provided the inspection house for the Fall 2010 seminar.

Thanks also to Steve Knoebel, Milwaukee chapter Education Chair, for getting this ball rolling and his other efforts on behalf of the chapter, and to the owner of the home for graciously allowing a troop of curious inspectors to walk through his basement admiring both problems and repairs.

This was a classic WAHI event, where affiliates and inspectors work together to provide great education for both new and experienced inspectors. We look forward to many more of the same.



Photos top to bottom:

- Hydraulic jacks stabilize the settled wall in place. (top two pictures)
- Cement slurry finishes push piling repair.
- New damp-proofing at exterior wall, waiting for gravel back-fill.

Where to Find E&O Insurance for Inspectors

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An Easy Item That is Often Missed

Some of you have heard this before, but I am going to state it again. When inspecting a masonry fireplace, make sure that there are no voids or openings behind the brick/stone facade that meets the firebox.

Often, right behind the metal lintel that holds up the masonry over the fireplace, there is a gap where sometimes you can see directly up to the back of the mantel or even the studs on the ceiling of the first floor. This happens more often than you think. Please take the extra few seconds to examine this area.

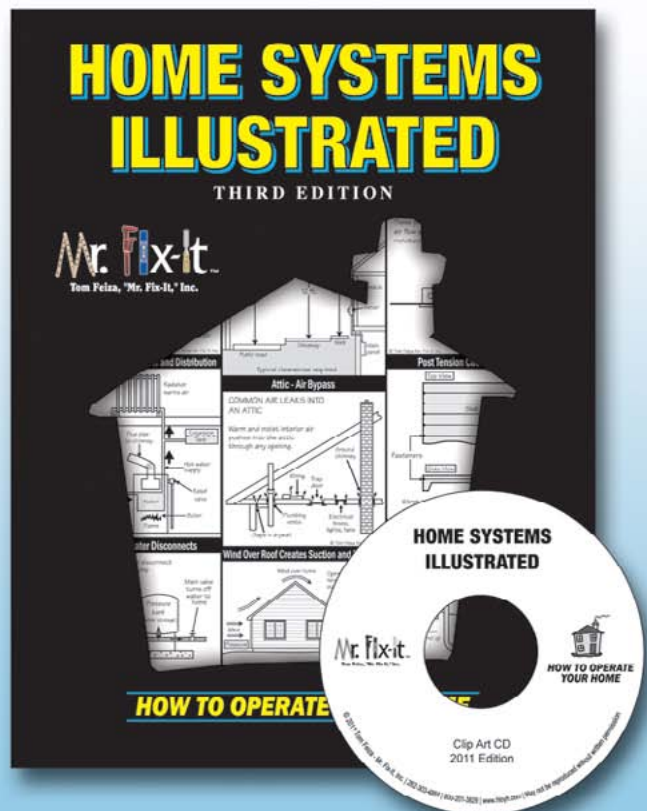
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Tips and Tidbits

2011 Membership Roster

An updated Roster will be completed in August and posted on the WAHI website. Submit all updates (phone, email, website, etc.) to Julie Arnstein by August 10th to be included in the roster – juliewahi@wi.rr.com, (877) 399-WAHI or fax (262) 785-6765. Updates are made to the general website membership listings throughout the year, the roster (PDF) is updated and posted on the website once a year.

The 2010 Membership Roster is available on the WAHI website at www.wahigroup.com. To view the Roster (and print a copy should you choose) – from the home page click on the Members tab, then select Member Roster (PDF) in the drop down menu.

WRA Booth

PR Chair Bob Turicik is again coordinating the WAHI booth at the upcoming Realtors' convention September 13-15. The convention is in Wisconsin Dells at the Kalahari Resort. If you are interested in volunteering your time to help staff the booth contact Bob at 920-892-7654 or homereview@wi.rr.com.

Office Max Discount

President Mike von Gunten investigated an Office Max corporate discount and they have agreed to extend the offer to all members of WAHI. Purchases can be made online at www.OfficeMaxSolutions.com. The user name is wahi and the password is member1. In-store purchases require use of a WAHI Retail Connect Card. Print yours from page 12 in this newsletter. Office Max will laminate it for you on your first visit. See pages 11-12 of this newsletter for further information and happy shopping, happy savings. Way to go Mike!

Fall 2011 Training Seminar

See pages 14-15 of this newsletter for information on the Seminar, coming up on Friday,

November 4th and Saturday, November 5th! This fall we will hold our event at the Holiday Inn Neenah Riverwalk in Neenah, WI. Our Education Committee has finalized the Saturday speaker line-up, as well as our Friday Education House. Hope you plan to join us for the Friday evening cocktail party in our vendor room and WAHI hospitality suite.

Ride Along Program

In October of 2010, the Milwaukee chapter discussed starting a Ride Along Program, intended to assist new members as they embark on their business. Experienced members would allow a less-experienced member to accompany them on a home inspection. The idea was presented to the Board of Directors at the November board meeting and the program was approved. WAHI members interested in sharing their knowledge and experience with a fellow member are asked to contact Julie Arnstein. Julie will add their name to a list given to a member looking for guidance of this type. Contact Julie at (414) 299-9766 or (877) 399-WAHI or juliewahi@wi.rr.com.

Updating Your Contact Info

Please visit www.wahigroup.com and find your listing under the members tab on the home page. If you have recently moved or if your information is not correct/complete, please contact Julie at info@wahigroup.com, (877) 399-WAHI or fax at (262) 785- 6765. Updates are listed every month in the WAHI Inspector.

Member News

Share your Member News – joys, recognitions achieved, temporary setbacks (be they illness or injury), etc. Privacy should be recognized, and information provided must be okayed by the person involved. Send submissions to Julie at juliewahi@wi.rr.com. Deadline for inclusion is the 20th of the month before the newsletter (ie. March 20th for the April issue).

continued on p. 10

Tips and Tidbits

continued from p. 9

WAHI Legal Support (WLS)

Attorneys Roy Wagner and Gregory Kotsonis of von Briesen and Roper offer risk-free initial counseling to members with legal concerns. If further legal assistance is requested, the cost of the initial consultation will be included in the bill. Call (414) 276-1122. Note: The WLS program is completely independent of the WAHI Arbitration System.

Chapter Secretaries

Chapter Secretaries are reminded to include upcoming speaker and topic information when submitting monthly meeting minutes to Julie Arnstein. The information will be included in the newsletter and will also be posted on our Web site at www.wahigroup.com.

Chapter Presidents

Please give your WAHI Board Member-at-Large an opportunity to share information from recent Board meetings. They are the liaison between your chapter and the WAHI Board.

Communication

All member-to-member or member-to-association disputes must go through the Membership Committee. A member going public with a member or association dispute will be grounds for disciplinary action. The Membership Committee will implement this policy. Members are to contact new Membership Committee Chair Rob Fischer at (414) 476-6879 or inspectbyinsight@yahoo.com.

WAHI Arbitration Program

All members are encouraged to make every effort to resolve homeowner/inspector disputes without outside help. When that is not successful, know that the WAHI Dispute Resolution Program is there for you. The process begins when the complainant (homeowner) contacts Resolute Systems, the program administrator,

via mail at 1550 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee 53202, e-mail at info@ResoluteSystems.com or their Web site at www.resolutesystems.com.

For more information contact Arbitration Committee Chair Tom Feiza at (262) 303-4884 or tom@misterfix-it.com.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline of the 20th of each month for submissions to the newsletter will be strictly enforced, with the occasional exception when a chapter meeting falls after that date. Chapter secretaries should provide the minutes as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

Add a Photo to the WAHI Web Site & Link to Your Site

WAHI's new Web site is up and running. We've been adding member photos and are now ready to add your company Web site to your member profile. Submit photos and web site addresses to juliewahi@wi.rr.com.

The WAHI Inspector is the official publication of the Wisconsin Association of Home Inspectors. Published monthly, deadlines are the 20th of the month before publication (ie. May 20th for the June issue).

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Wisconsin Association of Home Inspectors Inc. tm (WAHItm)

Fall 2011 Training Seminar - 15 Credits

Friday November 4 and Saturday November 5, 2011

Friday November 4th (up to 7 credits)

Saturday November 5th (8 credits)

Education House

7:30 am Registration
 8:00 am **Inspection Review Begins**
 12:00 pm Inspection Review Concludes
Break for Lunch (on own)
 1:00 pm **Training Rotation Begins**
 5:00 pm Education Rotation Concludes
 Distribution of CEU Certificates
 (See event details and registration form on the back of this sheet)

7 - 9 pm Vendor Room Cocktail Party
 Holiday Inn Neenah Riverwalk

Classroom Training

7 - 8 am Registration and Breakfast
 8:00 am **Paint Problems**
Mark Kowald & Steve Olsen, Lindsay Hallman Paint
 9:45 am Break and Visit the Vendors
 10:15 am **Radon Testing and Mitigation Standards**
Nancy Schatzman, American Radon Testing
 12:00 pm Lunch and Visit the Vendors
 1:00 pm **Electrical Inspections - Part 1**
Steve Preins, Quality Education Group, Inc.
 2:45 pm Break and Visit the Vendors
 3:15 pm **Electrical Inspections - Part 2**
Steve Preins, Quality Education Group, Inc.
 5:00 pm Distribution of CEU Certificates

Friday November 4th, 7-9 pm Cocktail Party in the Vendor Room!
 Door Prizes and Appetizers too!

Continuing Education Credit

This seminar is approved for up to 15 continuing education credits with the State of WI,
 Up to 14 with ASHI and NAHI

Location: Holiday Inn Neenah Riverwalk, 123 E. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah,, WI 54956

To reserve a room, call 1-800-725-6348. A block of rooms is being held for Friday November 4 and Saturday November 5 at a rate of \$89.00 per night. Be sure to mention the WAHI block when reserving your room.
Room block expires on Friday Oct. 14th

-----Please Submit **Saturday** Registration Form-----

Name and Company Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

Make checks payable to: WAHI
MasterCard or Visa: _____ **Exp:** ____ / ____

Circle Your Registration Fee: **Saturday ONLY, (Friday Registration Form on back)**

	By 10/20	After 10/20	On Site
Member	\$145	\$175	\$205
Non-Member	\$200	\$230	\$260

Return this form, with payment, to:
 WAHI, c/o Julie Arnstein
 4590 S. Raven Lane.
 New Berlin, WI 53151

Fee includes the Friday Cocktail Party, Saturday Breakfast and Lunch.

Fax (262) 785-6765
 Email: juliewahi@wi.rr.com
 Questions? (877) 399-WAHI

- I plan to attend the Education House on Friday Nov 4th. (Complete form on other side)
- I plan to attend the Friday Night Cocktail Party, 7 - 9 pm in the Vendor Room
- I plan to bring a guest on Friday night

Education House - Inspection Review and Training

Friday November 4, 2011

This on-site inspection event is comprised of 2 parts – an inspection educational *review* in the morning, followed by inspection *training* in the afternoon. WAHI has obtained the use of a home in the Neenah area for this program.

Inspection Review

This peer review event is an opportunity for you to evaluate and refine your inspection skills with the aid of a panel of your peers, rather than a person with a black robe and a big “hammer” (i.e. gavel). Results will be kept strictly confidential.

Participants will have two hours to complete their inspection (electrical panels will already be removed, ladders in place, cover off the furnace, etc. to aid in the time limit) The first group will inspect from 8:00 am until 10:00 am, the second group from 10:05 am until 12:05 pm. Upon completion participants will immediately present their findings and their completed report to the panel as if to a client - the panel of judges have inspected the house and identified defects. Participants will be required to bring 2 additional inspection reports (recently completed) for review by the panel to see if they are meeting state standards. There will be “must find, must report” items (previously identified by the review panel) that the panel will be looking for. The panel will be focusing on the identification of major defects, not issues such as windows or doors sticking. During the inspection process communication between participants will not be allowed as this event is intended to help participants evaluate their personal skill level. The morning session will be worth 3 continuing education credits and is limited to the first 10 registrants.

Inspection Training

The afternoon session will be inspection training at the same property. Experienced experts will be posted throughout the house in numerous locations to provide approximately 45 minute presentations on how to inspect various components, focusing on the WI Standards of Practice. Participants will then rotate to the next area/presenter. The training will take place from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm and will be worth 4 continuing education credits. The afternoon portion will be limited to the first 40 registrants.

WAHI Member cost to attend this event is as follows, non-members add \$30.00:

Inspection Review (morning) **or** Inspection Training (afternoon) - \$50.00

Review **and** Training (all day) - \$75.00

All participants must preregister as space is limited – no on-site registrations.

All participants will be notified by a member of the Education House Committee with the specific location.

Lunch break from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm for all day participants - on own.

For further information contact Mike von Gunten at (262) 945-2446 or mike@lahigroup.com

-----Please Submit **Friday** Registration Form-----

Name and Company Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- I plan to attend the Inspection Review Only (Morning) - \$50.00
- I plan to attend the Inspection Training Only (Afternoon) - \$50.00
- I plan to attend all day - Review **and** Training - \$75.00
- Nonmembers add \$30.00

Return this form, with payment, to:
WAHI, c/o Julie Arnstein
4590 S. Raven Lane.
New Berlin, WI 53151

Fax (262) 785-6765

Email: juliewahi@wi.rr.com

Questions? (877) 399-WAHI

Make checks payable to: WAHI

MasterCard or Visa: _____ Exp: ____/____

Circle Your Registration Fee: **Friday ONLY**; (Saturday Registration Form over)

	By 10/20	After 10/20
Member	\$50 or \$75	Add \$25
Non-Member	\$80 or \$105	Add \$25