

Regional Voice

Of the Natural Products Industry

Natural
Products
ASSOCIATION™
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Winter 2008

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Education Day

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For Upcoming
Events
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Natural Products Expo East Introduces Northeast Retailer Workshops in February

Before Natural Products Expo East moves to Boston in 2008, get hands-on experience at the Northeast Retailer Workshops. These one-day workshops give you and your employees the "hands-on" training you need to transform your store into a destination rather than just a retail outlet. Bring your whole team!

The Workshops are designed specifically to help you anticipate your customer's next request while improving your bottom line. The Northeast Retailer Workshops provide a way for category buyers to interact and receive focused, intensive training and advice from industry experts and peers.

Education topics include:

- The Status of Organics and Your Store
- How Happy Staff Improves Your Bottom Line
- How to Attract New Customers & Keep Your Current Customers Loyal
- Closing Keynote: An Overview of the Sustainability Movement and How It Is Changing the Face of Retail

Workshops will be held in the following cities on the following dates:

February 4, 2008: Boston, Massachusetts
Seaport Hotel, 200 Seaport Boulevard

February 5, 2008: Portland, Maine
Eastland Park Hotel, 157 High Street

February 7, 2008: Albany, New York
The Desmond Hotel & Conference Center,
660 Albany-Shaker Road

All workshops are held from 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

The registration fee of \$50 per attendee includes a healthy, natural lunch.

To register or for more information call 1.866.458.4935, visit www.expoeast.com/nerw or e-mail tradeshows@newhope.com.

EAST

President's Letter



Andy Fox

First, I would like to wish each and every one of our natural products retailers a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year from the NPA East Board of Directors. This year will bring us several challenges at both the Federal and State levels and our Association is better positioned than ever to respond to those issues which threaten our livelihoods as natural products retailers.

The year's agenda starts with Northeast Retailer Workshops sponsored by our partner, New Hope Natural Media, in three New England locations in early February. Take advantage of these inexpensive education days right in your backyard! With the change in venue of Expo East to Boston in October, we want to help familiarize our region's retailers with the many educational opportunities available to improve their daily business operations and grow their businesses.

Advocacy is needed more than ever! The New York State legislation is sure to surface

again in early 2008 and other states in our region are primed for new legislation based on the ongoing negative media our industry continues to receive related to our quality and lack of regulatory oversight. Get involved in the NPA East Advocacy network and help us build a first-response team in your state to legislation which may cause your store potential hardships.

With our very busy schedules owning and operating retail health food stores, the thought of potential legislation having an impact on our business success is the farthest thing from our minds. Many retailers also believe that if a significant piece of Federal or State legislation were a threat to their business lives then others would be better positioned to respond in the industry's interests so there is little need to get involved. However, this thought process and retailer apathy is the potential foundation for the natural products industry's demise. Involvement in advocacy on both the Federal and State levels is paramount to the first line of defense for our industry!

The annual Natural Foods Day held in Washington, DC is the best possible way to overcome this retailer apathy and make a difference in the future of the industry. After attending this event for the last four years, I have been provided guidance by the Natural Products Association and learned the professional approach needed to lobby and educate our Congressional representatives on the key legislative issues affecting our industry and the livelihoods of those we employ. The message we have been taught to carry to our U.S. Senators and House Representatives has a clear impact on reinforcing the benefits our industry brings to the health of Americans and helps overcome the negative media which provides a black-eye to our industry on a regular basis. Your involvement is necessary to ensure our doors remain open in the future to continue providing the outstanding products and valuable services our consumers require to optimize their health every day. Come join me at Natural Foods Day in Washington, DC on April 8th, 2008 and help make a difference!!

Retailer Profile

Dan Segal, Healthy Thymes Market, Vernon, NJ

By Bob Kleszics

Do you remember those big belt buckles that were so popular back in the 70s? Dan Segal does. That's how he got his start in the natural products world. As a young entrepreneur, Dan was selling fancy leather belts and ornate buckles at flea markets. One day a man with a suitcase approached him. "Think you can sell these?" the man queried, flipping open the lid. The year was 1975 and the suitcase was packed with Chinese ginseng roots. That encounter "opened up a whole new life for me," says Segal. After a stint selling those roots for the man with the suitcase, Segal started importing product himself and soon was traveling all over the Midwest peddling ginseng roots, capsules, and teas to health food stores.

Thirty-three years later—and after stops in distribution and owning other retail stores—Segal is still selling ginseng, as well as thousands of other natural products in the store he co-owns with his wife, Dani. Their store, Healthy Thymes Market, is located in Vernon, New Jersey.

Situated in the rural, northwestern corner of the state, Vernon is a four-season resort community of 36,000 residents. Segal says that Vernon is a good town for his 1,300 square-foot store. "It's a sleepy little town, but there's never a summer slump," he adds. Segal is grateful for

the steady, year-round business. "I feel blessed. I own a home, I have two wonderful children, and I get to go to work every day and do something I love," he says.

Segal also gets to work with Dani, his wife of 29 years. "We're a perfect match," he says of Dani. "I just want to sell wholesome foods and my wife has a hunger for knowledge." Dani Segal has a B.S. in Nutrition and is currently working on a Masters in Holistic Nutrition through Clayton College. As Dan Segal puts it, "I feed the store with my business background and Dani feeds the store with her incredible knowledge of nutrition." Healthy Thymes' customers benefit from both owners' strengths, getting a well-stocked, well-managed store staffed by employees who keep up with current research.

Healthy Thymes' customers also benefit from Dan Segal's de facto mission statement: "Do No Harm." A vegetarian since the age of 15, Segal claims to not jump on fads, adding, "If anything, we undersell." It's a philosophy that sacrifices short-term sales for long-term relationship building and customer loyalty. Both sides win in the end.

About a year ago, Segal was asked to serve on the board of the Natural Products Association's East Region, a position he gratefully accepted. As current chair of the membership committee, Segal notes that serving on the NPA East board "is a good way for me to give back to the industry that has been so good to me." Down the road, he hopes to help NPA East grow and become a more valuable tool to its member-retailers just as he and Dani hope to grow Healthy Thymes to become a more vital member of their community.

NPA East Committees Continue to Build Momentum for 2008

In the fall of 2006, President Andy Fox began the process of reinvigorating the Association's seven standing committees. Excellent progress was made during the past year, including taking over responsibility for producing the NPA East Newsletter; maintaining the Association's website, partnering with New Hope Media on Expo East, and beginning the process of developing an advocacy network.

We are, even now, building on the framework we created last year. All of the Committees have met and developed comprehensive action plans for 2008. What follows is a summary of the activities of each Committee to date. We will provide you with ongoing updates throughout the year.

Advocacy

Karen Clarke, Chair

The Committee is again engaging the firm of Hill & Gosdeck to lobby for the Association in New York State through 2008. Hill & Gosdeck played a major role this year in preventing a number of bills detrimental to our industry from getting out of committee and passed into law. They will continue to monitor and take action on all bills related to restricting our ability to sell dietary supplements and natural foods in our stores.

Chair Karen Clarke has developed a comprehensive plan that covers legislative activities throughout our region. Committee members are monitoring all 12 states and Washington, D.C. and are providing Karen with a weekly report on all legislative activities. The goal of the Committee is to create a virtual early warning system that gives us time to react to any proposed legislation that appears to harm or restrict our ability to do business in our Association's states. This is one of the most comprehensive advocacy efforts ever undertaken by NPA East. Executed successfully, this advocacy effort has the potential to provide our membership with an important benefit for monitoring local legislative activity and taking action before a bill that could do harm is signed into law.

Convention

Jay Jacobowitz, Chair

We are pleased to report that the most recent Expo East Trade Show, co-sponsored by NPA East, was an unqualified success. It received high marks from retailers and suppliers, as well as setting a new record for attendance. The Convention Committee is working closely with New Hope Media to ensure that next year's event will be equal to or surpass this most recent convention. In order to accommodate what we expect to be higher attendance, Expo East 2008 is being held at the Boston Convention & Exhibit Center. For registration information, housing reservations, and more details, go to www.expoeast.com or the www.npaeast.org website.

Education

Mike Pelton, Chair

NPA East Education Day will again coincide with our members' yearly excursion to Capitol Hill to promote advocacy on issues related to the natural products industry. The next Education Day is scheduled for Monday, April 7, 2008 in Washington, D.C. Employing the popular round table format, we have tentatively selected three topics: Effectively Marketing Your Store; Customer Service & Training; and Developing the Optimum Store Business Model. Additional information will be provided to members as it becomes available.

Membership

Dan Segal, Chair

As a result of an extensive and ongoing marketing campaign in 2007, membership in NPA East increased by nearly 20%. The Committee is already developing a multi-faceted plan designed to maintain our current membership and reach out to potential members throughout 2008. This means more networking opportunities for existing members and increased support for our ongoing advocacy initiatives. Thanks to efforts like this one, your association gains strength as your advocate every day.

Communications

Paul Kushner, Chair

The Communications Committee continues to take responsibility for producing the NPA East Newsletter. This second issue completed by the Committee is in your hands. We hope you are as pleased with the results as we are. The Committee also will continue to maintain the NPA East website. Your input is always welcome. If you have questions, comments, or recommendations for either the newsletter or the website, please contact Executive Director Paul Kushner.

Strategic Planning

Donnie Caffery, Chair

A complete review and analysis of the NPA East Bylaws was undertaken in 2007. The revised Bylaws, approved by the NPA Board of Directors, were sent to and approved by the membership in April 2007. The Strategic Planning Committee will continue to review key sections of the Bylaws throughout the year to ensure they reflect the best interests of the membership. If you would like to receive a copy of the current Bylaws, please contact Executive Director Paul Kushner.

Participation in any committee is open to all current NPA East members. Now is the time to get more actively involved, especially with the advocacy and political activism we intend to pursue throughout the year.

For information on how to get personally involved in fighting for your rights, please contact our Executive Director, Paul Kushner, at 856.985.5446, or e-mail Paul at pkushner@comcast.net. You also can go directly to the NPA East website and click on the **Take Action** button at the top of the home page.

Board of Directors

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Dan Segal
Healthy Thymes Market,
Vernon, NJ

Executive Director:

Paul Kushner
Marlton, NJ
e-mail: pkushner@comcast.net
phone: 856.985.5446

Save This Date: MONDAY, April 7, 2008

Jurys Washington Hotel

1500 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington DC

NPA EAST'S FOURTH ANNUAL EDUCATION DAY

You are cordially invited to attend NPA East's Fourth Annual **Education Day**, April 7, 2008, from 2 PM to 5:30 PM at the Jurys hotel in Washington, D.C. Space is limited, so please confirm your registration early. Contact Paul Kushner, NPA East's Executive Director, by e-mailing pkushner@comcast.net or call Paul directly at 856-985-5446.

Admittance to this historically well-attended event is limited to active members of NPA East. To save members time and money, Education Day is scheduled for the day before our annual excursion to Capital Hill to promote important industry issues to our elected officials.

Back By Popular Demand: Round Table Format

Education Day is being presented in a series of round table discussions. The theme for this year's event is *Minding Your Business: Making your Marketing, Staff and Store Work as Hard as You*. After a brief overview and introduction, we will offer three in-depth round table discussions on the following topics:

- **EFFECTIVELY MARKETING YOUR STORE 2:15 PM – 3:10 PM**
(Moderated by Michael Hennessey, owner of Blue Moose Consulting)
This session will cover a variety of effective marketing solutions for retailers of all sizes.
- **STAFF TRAINING, EDUCATION and the BOTTOM LINE 3:15 PM – 4:10 PM**
(Moderated by Michael Pelton, owner of Inner Circle Sales)
This session will cover the importance of a highly educated and motivated staff, especially given the competitive pressures from mass market, the Internet, and other channels of trade.
- **PLAN FOR SUCCESS: CREATE YOUR OPTIMUM STORE BUSINESS MODEL 4:15 PM – 5:10 PM**
(Moderated by Donnie Caffery, owner of Good Foods Grocery)
This session will discuss all areas of your store's business model, including effective advertising and promotions, ideal staffing levels, SKU rationalization, shelf placement and set-up, insurance, etc.

Each moderator will give a 15-minute introduction, followed by a 30-minute round table discussion on the topic, followed by a 10-minute summary and review of the issues. Each round table will be hosted by a current member of the NPA East Board of Directors, and your active participation is welcome and encouraged. We want your input! A summary of each session will be sent to each participant shortly after this event.

Take advantage of this once-a-year opportunity to network with your peers, share new ideas and concepts, and learn how to improve several aspects of your business. Please contact NPA East's Executive Director, Paul Kushner, and reserve your seat at this valuable educational event.

Email: pkushner@comcast.net or phone: 856-985-5446.



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