



# The WAHI Inspector

## From the President: **Is Big Brother Watching?**



Happy Spring Y'All!

*The Farmer's Almanac* said this was to be a harsh winter; there was going to be lots of

snow. Well, like any weather prediction, 50% accuracy is not too bad! Here's hoping spring is just around the corner.

I have had a number of conversations recently with fellow inspectors, realtors and buyers all concerned about "Big Brother" watching. Who

are they referring to? The seller of their potential new home. That's right; the seller is "Big Brother!"

Many felt they were being watched during showings, and saw an abundance of electronic lights on - cameras, computers, TVs - in many different rooms. Not only the interior, but the exterior as well.

About 10 years ago (at least), I was performing an inspection with one of my favorite realtors. The buyers were taking pictures of the house as I did the inspection. Suddenly, a police officer entered the house - scaring us all to death! He quickly took the camera from the buyer and tore the film out of the camera. He

then handed the camera back to the buyer and walked out the door, with the film. No conversation, just one angry look. He was the seller. We later found out his wife was also a police officer. They were "casing the joint!"

I am not bragging here, but I do a lot of high end property inspections, as many of you do - lakefront properties, expensive neighborhoods, vacation homes. Technology is advancing upon us old guys, "big brother" is watching, now more than ever. None of us know what we may face while inspecting - there is so much we do not understand or even see.

*(continued on pg. 3)*

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## 2015 WAHI Spring Training Seminar

It's right around the corner...

# March 13 - 14 Baraboo

*(more details on pg. 14)*



## CHAPTER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



### **NEXT MEETING:**

**Wednesday, March 18**

Social at 6:00 p.m.

Dinner/Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**Palms Supper Club Steak House**  
5912 Business Hwy 51, Schofield

*Speaker:* **The City of Wausau Electrical Inspector.** We will also hold our elections at the March meeting.

*The Madison Chapter meets only during the following months: January, February, May, June, September and October.*

President, Dennis Kruger led a safety discussion on the use of full face masks and Tyvek suits when entering homes with unhealthy air conditions—



*How to Be Safe while Inspecting in an Unsafe Home.* Denny provided inspection pictures and suggestions when dealing with a “cat” house. He provided examples of how he addresses and documents various uncommon situations. He stressed the importance of documents with pictures and shared some disclosures that may be used

in a reports. The other example he shared was a home with bad footings. He provided suggestions on how to document the situation in anticipation of an expert being called in to further evaluate the issues found.

The State Standards of Practice, as well as the WAHI Inspection Agreement were explained. In addition, we discussed what E & O insurance will, and will not, cover. Further discussion covered when a client opts to go the-route of arbitration—what is, and is not, working.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

**Thursday, May 21, 2015\***

Roundtable at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting/Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

**Rocky Rococo's Pizza**  
1753 Thierer Rd., Madison

*\*Please note the next meeting date is May. There are no meetings in March or April.*



Our February speakers were Ned Donnellan from Donnellan Realty and Duane Steinauer of Stienauer Enterprises. Ned is a Real Estate Broker and gave a presentation on home inspections relating to real estate translations, radon contingency, scheduling and general issues relating to inspections. Duane gave a presentation on underground oil tanks, removal and DNR regulations.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

**Wednesday, March 4**

Buffet dinner at 5:30 p.m., Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**Jade Garden Restaurant**

3620 Gateway Dr., Eau Claire

*Speaker:* **Dan Walde**, Owner of **Soot Loose**.

Dan is a licensed chimney sweep and does safety inspections, installs liners and caps, as well as Class A chimneys. Dan will be presenting information on chimneys and fireplaces.

Fox Valley February Chapter meeting recap and picture on page 3.



### **NEXT MEETING:**

**Tuesday, March 17**

Social at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting/Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

**Stone Toad**

1109 S. Oneida St., Menasha

*Speaker:* **Mark Maynard, The Chimney Guy.** Mark will Address fireplaces, chimney issues and inspections.



### **NEXT MEETING:**

**Tuesday, February 10, 2015**

Social at 6:00 p.m.,

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Klemmer's Banquet Center**  
10401 W. Oklahoma Ave.,  
West Allis

*Speaker:* **Joe Martis of Guardian Home Exteriors.** Joe will share his expertise on cement board siding.



Fox Valley's February speaker was member Paul Birschbach. Paul spearheaded an expanded roundtable discussion of a compilation of inspection photos taken by fellow inspectors. The topics focused on were electrical issues and cross connections. The goal for each photo was to answer: What is it? Why is it important? What is the best way to report it ?

### Letter from the President (cont'd)

A realtor told me how he not only lost a listing very abruptly, but was also sued by a seller for being unprofessional during a showing, accused of criticizing the colors and cleanliness of a home. Turned out the seller was "watching." Another realtor explained a sale did not go through because a buyer was observed laughing at the seller's family picture...I kid you not!

Buyers often want you do go outside of your comfort zone and check items you are not required to inspect. We recently had a client that wanted us to review and explain the TV's mounted in the bathroom mirrors. One of my inspectors had been an electrician for 15 years so he accepted the challenge! It only took him a few minutes to show the buyer how to operate the TV's - both were thrilled and entertained. The only problem was, he had to go into the master bedroom night stand drawers to find the remotes. What about the remote for the bedroom ceiling fan? Do you really want to start looking through personal drawers for the remote just to check the fan? Can you say "potential problem"? Maybe, but maybe not.

This is a lot to think about. All I can say is protect yourself. Always, document, document, document.

~Respectfully submitted, Kent Schwanke



## NEW MEMBERS



**Robert Dries (Madison)**  
Dries Building Services  
608-393-0464  
rjdries@gmail.com

**Justin (Scott) Geismann (Milwaukee)**  
Higher Standard Home Inspections  
262-620-5763  
scott@higherstandardinspections.com

**Todd Jones (Milwaukee)**  
Peak Home Inspections  
414-477-3775  
todd@peakhomeinspectionsmke.com

**Tim Menebroeker (Chippewa Valley)**  
TV Home Inspections, LLC.  
715-597-6139  
timvmen@hotmail.com

**Robert Nielsen (Milwaukee Affiliate)**  
Accurate RV Inspection  
262-968-4547  
rv-bob@live.com

**Brec Ohrmundt (Central)**  
Ohrmundt Home Inspections, LLC.  
715-432-6862  
brecohr@gmail.com

**Allan Weiland (Milwaukee)**  
Wall to Wall Home Inspection Services, LLC.  
414-333-6325  
al@walltowallpro.com

# WAHI Arbitration Program



Not every homeowner/inspector interaction goes smoothly.

Although all members are encouraged to make every effort to resolve disputes on their own, we know that is not always successful.

*WAHI's Dispute Resolution Program* is here for you during those difficult times.

The process begins when the complainant (homeowner) contacts the Program Administrator at Resolute Systems by one of the following ways:

**Mail:** 1550 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53020

**Email:** [info@ResoluteSystems.com](mailto:info@ResoluteSystems.com)

**Website:** [www.resolutesystems.com](http://www.resolutesystems.com)

For more information, please contact Arbitration Committee Chair, **David Strandberg** at (608) 255-3966 or [dstrand8@tds.net](mailto:dstrand8@tds.net).

## COMMUNICATION

**All member-to-member or member-to-association disputes must go through the Membership Committee. A member going public, with disputes of these types, risks disciplinary action.**

**The Membership Committee will implement this policy.**

Contact Doug Hoerth at 920-375-0723 or email him at [finallookinspectionsservices@yahoo.com](mailto:finallookinspectionsservices@yahoo.com).

## WAHI Legal Support



**Attorney Roy Wagner of von Briesen and Roper continues to 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.**

**Contact Roy at (414) 287-1250 or [rwagner@vonbriesen.com](mailto:rwagner@vonbriesen.com).**

# WAHI WEBSITE 101

## INSTRUCTIONS TO UPDATE YOUR PROFILE

Go to [www.wahigroup.com](http://www.wahigroup.com)

- From the Home Page - upper right corner, select LOGIN  
Enter your email address on file with WAHI \* and password.  
\*If you have multiple email addresses and are uncertain of your "WAHI email address" contact Julie at [julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:julie@wahigroup.com) - she can provide your WAHI address or update your address for you.
- Once logged in, in the upper right corner you will see your name, Change Password and Log Out.
- Click on your name.
- You should now be on the My Profile page - select Edit Profile in the gray rectangular box.
- After making your changes/updates, scroll down to the bottom of the page - select SAVE in the gray rectangular box.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO SIGN UP FOR THE SEMINAR

Go to [www.wahigroup.com](http://www.wahigroup.com)

- From the Home Page - select the seminar link directly below the picture at the top of the page or select Upcoming Events and Chapter Meetings on the upper right side of the page.
- You are now on the Seminar Information Page, scroll down, select REGISTER in the gray box on the left side of the page.
- Verify your email address - select NEXT.
- Determine your Registration Type (Training Attendee, Exhibitor, Member, Non-member) - select NEXT.
- Verify or enter registrants contact information, choose portions you plan to attend - select NEXT.
- Review and Confirm your registration - select CONFIRM if all correct, select BACK to make changes
- Invoice and Payment Page - select PAY ONLINE and follow the remaining prompts to pay immediately or submit payment by check or credit card via US Mail to the address listed. Your registration is then complete.
- All registrants receive an email confirming their registration and payment/balance due status.

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Month



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If you ever need a chimney contractor, and I can help, I will be more than happy to help you. My field when it comes to chimney repair unfortunately does not have an industry standard, so opinions vary. It is also an industry that most consumers prefer not to spend money on. So, when it comes to fixing the chimney "right", the cost often gets in the way. When I bid the work, I always take those things into consideration and I ask myself what I would do if this was my house. Call me anytime if I can help you or your client.

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**Q: What is the best way to remain safe on a ladder?**

**A:** Here's a quick reminder when ascending or descending a ladder, you should always maintain 3 points of contact at all times (i.e. two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand). I have had many past employees make the mistake of grabbing the ladder rungs with their hands when going up or down. This can lead to not having 3 points of contact unless you are going very slow. It can also lead to a fall. In my opinion, I prefer having my hands wrapped around the back rail of the ladder and glide them as I go up or down, that way, they are never off of the ladder, and I always safely maintain the 3 points of contact.

Happy climbing!

### STATE BOARD MEETING

The next WAHI Board of Directors meeting will be Friday March 13, 2015 starting at 2:00 pm. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the Spring 2015 Training Seminar at Ho-Chunk Casino and Conference Center in Baraboo, WI. All WAHI members are welcome to attend. Contact Julie Arnstein by Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> if you would like to attend - [julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:julie@wahigroup.com) or (877) 399-WAHI



### ANNUAL MEETING



The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with the WAHI Spring 2015 Training Seminar at Ho-Chunk Casino and Conference Center. The meeting will be held during lunch. Members not attending the seminar, but interested in attending the Annual Meeting should contact Julie Arnstein by Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> to ensure sufficient seating in the room - [julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:julie@wahigroup.com) or (877) 399-WAHI



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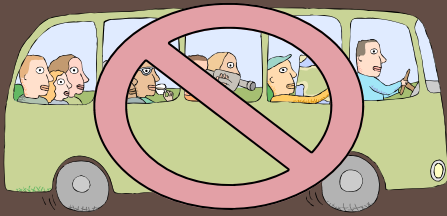
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## WAHI Ride Along

The WAHI Board of Directors has decided to discontinue the Ride Along Program, effective immediately. This was, and remains, a valuable learning opportunity for new inspectors. However, concern has been raised regarding liability issues that come into play with a WAHI program of this nature. Members who wish to offer this to a fellow member on a personal level may certainly do so but it would not be WAHI sanctioned. Our thanks to all of the WAHI members who have offered their time and experience to a new member!



Effective immediately! Executive Director, Julie Arnstein has a new email address:

**[julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:julie@wahigroup.com)**

Please update your address book and/or contact list; however, emails sent to [juliewahi@gmail.com](mailto:juliewahi@gmail.com) will still be received for several months.

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## Outgoing Emails Through the WAHI Website

As you know, WAHI has a new website!

The new WAHI website has the capability to send out mass emails, (emails to a large number of recipients), and this is great because we can reach all of you at once!

However, some mass emails get rejected by email accounts because they believe them to be spam. In order to make sure you receive your WAHI emails in your inbox, and they don't return as undeliverable or filter to your junk/spam folders, **the WAHI Website Committee is asking all members to please add [wahinews@wahigroup.com](mailto:wahinews@wahigroup.com) to their email address book or contact list.**



Taking time to do this one easy step, tells your email account to recognize any emails from WAHI as legitimate and safe.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

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**SPECIAL SPACES FOR KIDS**

Longtime Milwaukee Chapter member and Embassy Homes architectural designer, Andrew Risch, is involved in the Special Spaces organization.

Special spaces, is a non-profit that creates dream bedrooms for children with life threatening illnesses.

The program is always looking for volunteers. If you would like to give of your time and talents, please contact Andrew at 262-841-8510 x111 or Andrew@embassyhomes.com

[specialspacesmilwaukee.org](http://specialspacesmilwaukee.org)



Stay in touch with **WAHI's Facebook page**.

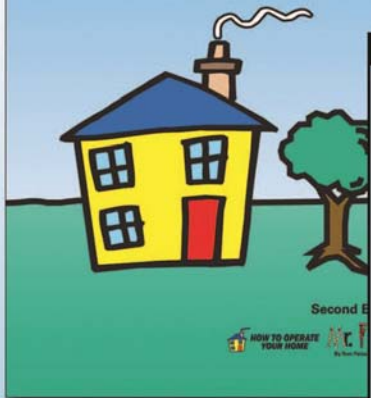
**Our page gives you the perfect opportunity to make chapter announcements, post minutes or meeting changes or just see what your fellow members have been up to.**



**Please contact Bob Turicik with questions at: 920-892-7654 or**

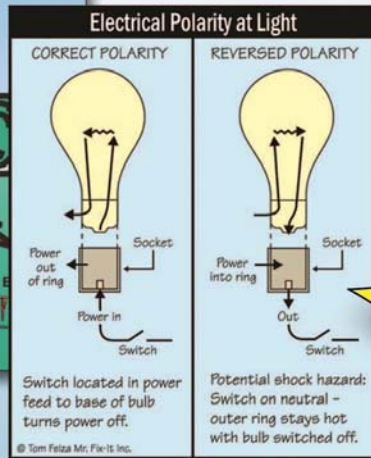
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WAHI is in search of a replacement for the editor of our monthly newsletter, The WAHI Inspector. Nick Petrie has filled this position for WAHI since June 2009. He has done an excellent job - thank you so very much Nick!

This position requires a few minutes each month to share in the final proofing of the newsletter

with Executive Director Julie Arnstein, as well as previewing articles submitted by home inspectors and affiliate members. It's important to have a home inspector member in this position - as you would expect the articles submitted are of a technical nature.

In Nick we had the added bonus of his writing skills, however, do not let that scare you off – many who have come before him did not have that background and they served the association in this position very well. Please let Julie know if you have interest or would like further information – [julie@wahigroup](mailto:julie@wahigroup) or 877.399.WAHI.



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## CHAPTER SECRETARIES

You are reminded to include upcoming speakers and topic information when you submit monthly meeting minutes to Julie Arnstein at [julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:julie@wahigroup.com).

The information will be included in the monthly newsletter and will also be posted on our website at: [www.wahigroup.com](http://www.wahigroup.com).



# OfficeMax®

**Office Max has recently joined forces with Office Depot - that has not affected the discount program offered to WAHI members (see pages 18 and 19 in this issue).**

**If you have recently tried to log-in to place an online order and were unsuccessful, try again! The User Name (wahi) and Password (member1) had gone dormant – too much time had passed since the last WAHI member log-in. They have both been re-established. Don't miss out on this great opportunity for savings! Also, please contact Julie if you find items you frequently purchase that are not included in the program – [julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:julie@wahigroup.com).**

## WAHI Spring Seminar takes place in Baraboo on March 13 - 14, 2015.



Registration has begun on the website for seminar attendees and vendors.

[CLICK HERE to register and get more details.](#)

### Friday, March 13th - WAHI Education House - (conducted at a Baraboo area home)

We will again be offering Peer Review in the morning (Registration is FULL), followed by the rotation training in the afternoon. If you have not yet attended this program during past seminar weekends, we encourage you to check it out this year. This program has been very well-received each and every time!

### Saturday, March 14th - Classroom Training - (Ho-Chunk Conference Center and Casino)

Our Education Committee has again pulled together a great line up of speakers.

Topics addressed this spring are:

- ◆ **Zonolite Attic Insulation** - General information, as well as current info. on the handling of issues surrounding this product will be presented by a national speaker.
- ◆ **RV Certification** - Ever think about expanding your business to include RV inspections? Find out the necessary steps to obtain that certification.
- ◆ **Siding and Flashing Deficiencies** - Learn what to look for during your inspection and how to report your findings.
- ◆ **In-Floor Radiant Heat** - This presentation will address FAQs by home inspectors, homeowners and more!
- ◆ **Smoke Alarms** - A national speaker will address the serious differences between photoelectric and ionization smoke alarms.

### *In addition to the educational programs above...*

- On **Friday evening, March 13th**, WAHI will, again, be hosting the **ever popular Vendor Room Cocktail Party at Ho-Chunk**. Enjoy appetizers, great conversation, networking, and raffle prizes donated by our vendors. This is a fun, relaxed atmosphere where you can catch up with old friends and meet some new ones - you don't want to miss this!
- The WAHI Annual Meeting will be held on **Saturday, March 14th** during lunch.
- On **Thursday, March 12th**, at Ho-Chunk, longtime affiliate member, **HomeGauge is offering training on their reporting software**. This opportunity will be offered to their existing users, as well as anyone interested in more information on their product. WAHI Spring Seminar attendees will be offered this training at no cost (proof of registration will be required) - \$99.00 for all others. **Any questions, or registration for this software training, is done directly through HomeGauge, contact Shancy at [shancy@homegauge.com](mailto:shancy@homegauge.com).**



Please contact **Julie** with any questions:

Call 414.299.9766, toll-free at 877.399.WAHI or [julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:julie@wahigroup.com).

**See you in Baraboo!**

**\*Important Information Regarding the 2015 State Election\***

The WAHI State Election is upon us.  
The 2015 State Election will address the  
4 Statewide Elected Member at Large positions.

11 candidates have entered the election to serve for the next 2 years. Voting will occur on-line, except for a small number of members without an email address who will receive a postcard and be directed to a website where they can place their vote.

Voting dates are: Saturday, March 7, Sunday, March 8, and Monday, March 9. Please go to the website per the instructions in the email or postcard you receive. Once there, follow the instructions.

Technical questions should be directed to Cassidy Kuchenbecker at (414) 651-6653 or ck@eimidwest.com. All other questions should be directed to Nominations & Elections Chair, Andy Helgeson at (262) 377-0751 or ajhelgeson@wi.rr.com.

Your vote must be cast by **Monday, March 9th**  
to be included in the ballot tally.  
Postmarked by this date for those submitting a paper ballot.

**WAHI sincerely thanks you for your participation!**



## Governor's Budget



*By Kathi Kilgore*  
of Swandby/Kilgore Associates, Inc.

### **2015-2017 State Biennial Budget**

On February 3, Governor Scott Walker delivered his State Budget address and unveiled his proposed 2015-2017 State Biennial Budget. The legislative Finance Committee will begin its review of the state budget proposal by holding public hearings in mid-March and will begin to vote on the State Budget, issue by issue, in early April. The Finance Committee will wrap up its work on the proposal by Memorial Day and then each house of the State Legislature – the Assembly and the Senate – will have their chance to make further changes to the state budget proposal in June. The State Budget will go back to Governor Walker for his final consideration and actions before July 1<sup>st</sup>.

There are a few items in the Governor's budget proposal that would impact home inspectors IF the proposals were to become law.

#### **Department Merger**

To improve efficiency and save funds, the state budget proposal would merge the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS), which oversees the regulation of home inspectors, with the Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) to form a new state agency that would be called the Department of Financial Institutions and Professional Services (DFIPS). The Governor has referred to this as a "one-stop shop" for businesses and professionals, while also reducing administrative overhead. If the proposal were to remain in the State Budget, the new Department would go into effect on January 1, 2016.

DFIPS would not be the only new example of improved "government efficiencies." The state budget proposal also contains one other state agency merger and consolidates a few other state programs and administrative functions.

#### **Professional Licenses**

Also in the State Budget, there is a proposal to change the length of licensing periods for most professional licenses from two years to four years, beginning on July 1, 2016. Home inspector certificates would be one of the professional licenses and certificates impacted by this proposed change if the proposal were to remain in the budget proposal.

The proposal would stagger license terms so renewal dates for license/certificate holders who have even-numbered birth years are two years apart from the renewal dates for license/certificate holders who have odd-numbered birth years. This means, for example, a home inspector born in 1964 would perhaps renew his/her certificate in 2016, 2020, 2024, etc., while a home inspector born in 1965 would perhaps renew his/her certificate in 2018, 2022, 2026, etc.

(continued on pg. 18)



### State Transportation Funding

In the December newsletter, I wrote that the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) had requested more than \$750 million in tax and fee increases to fill a projected Transportation Fund shortfall of \$600 million. The DOT proposal called for a fee on new car purchases, a new “variable” gas tax, a diesel fuel tax increase and a fee increase for electric and hybrid vehicles.

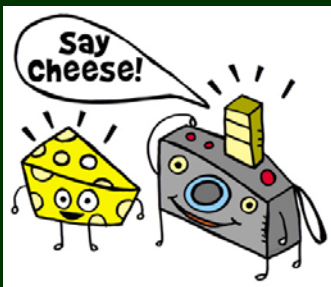
The Governor’s State Budget does NOT include any of these items. Instead, the Governor’s transportation proposal would rely on \$1.3 billion in borrowing to fund transportation projects over the next two years. Under the Governor’s proposal, bonding for transportation would rise by about 30 percent, but the state’s overall borrowing would drop.

This proposal has met with criticism from some legislators, and legislative leaders have called for a review and debate of the options to find a permanent fix for the Transportation Fund shortfall rather than relying so heavily on bonding.

So while the state budget proposal does not currently include a gas tax increase or a vehicle registration fee increase, there COULD be these types of tax and fee increases in the State Budget by the time it goes back to the Governor for his final action in late June. Since your vehicles are truly your “mobile office”, these types of tax and fee increases would impact your business’ bottom line.

### Questions or Concerns

As always, feel free to contact me about any issues related to the State Budget, legislation, laws or rules that may affect you as a home inspector. I can be reached at 608.286.9599 or at [Kilgore@swandby.com](mailto:Kilgore@swandby.com).



**Add a Photo to the WAHI Website and Link to Your Business Site**

**WAHI’s website member database has a new and improved multi-choice search option.**

**Submit photo and/or company web addresses to:**

**[info@wahigroup.com](mailto:info@wahigroup.com)**

### 2014-2015 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

By now you have heard about our new, very user-friendly, web-based Membership Management Program! This program exceeds all past WAHI website database systems!

As a result, the WAHI Board of Directors has decided to forgo posting a printable 2014-2015 membership roster at this time.

let's keep in touch

**We encourage members to keep in contact and keep their information current!**

**We want members and potential clients to be able to contact you. Also, we send interesting, timely emails that you may miss out on if your contact information is out of date.**

**Please contact [Julie](mailto:Julie@wahigroup.com) if your information has changed: [Julie@wahigroup.com](mailto:Julie@wahigroup.com)**



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