

# THE HELPFUL HOME NEWSLETTER

A NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS & RADIO SHOW LISTENERS

Issue #11

Spring 2004

## About This Newsletter:

Finally... Oh you know I'm truly ready for Spring and warmer weather., What about you? Do you long for the sounds and smells of spring? I really enjoy the thought of getting the lawnmower ready, watching the flowers pop out of the ground and seeing my neighbors working around their homes. Here is your Helpful Home Newsletter. Quarterly, we try to come up with useful information you can enjoy and benefit from. We hope you enjoy receiving it. Is your address is current ? If not, please contact us. This can be a great way to keep you up to date with maintenance and safety tips. Offering you advice that will be useful around the house.



If you need an answer to a particular question or a solution to a task...e-mail your question to us at our web site: [steve@stonehollow.com](mailto:steve@stonehollow.com). Our National ASHI® Members are Steve Gladstone, Andy Kasznay, Robert Camarda & Brian Dunbar, our State Licensed inspectors include SteveGladstone, Mel Wilkes, Andy Kasznay, Brian Dunbar, Matt Gladstone, Robert Camarda, Don Wicks, and Wayne Yablonski. Our newest interns are R.Tom Ackman and Bob Tredennick

## Spring Check List:

Happy Spring ! It'll be hot in no time. As always, we recommend you take a walk around your home looking for things to fix, seal up, put away, or get a contractor to take care of. Spring is a time for re-evaluating where your home is, after a long hard

winter season, now is the time to prioritize the damage, repair needs and need for renovation. For some of you will just need to play catch-up and put some time and effort into doing those repairs. For others you may be contemplating selling your home and deciding what to do to get the most for your home. Regardless...It's SPRING !!! and we can help with good advise and ideas that will help you to maintain and raise the value of your home while making it safer, prettier, more energy efficient, and more fun ! This issue will discuss some ideas on freshening up your home., how to do an inventory, some new developments in the technological arena with garden speakers, and plasma tv, And we'll tell you what's new and exciting with the radio show. And we will suggest some evaluation you need to have done this time of the year to give your home a check up...but Beware: This newsletter can only suggest things to you...many homes suffer from lack of attention and deferred maintenance, if you are not handy, or if you are a procrastinator... remember houses do not heal themselves, putting off looking in the attic will not make possible problems go away! Let's focus on your home for a bit and get a list of needs together. Need a referral for a good person to help you with your repairs? Check out our advertisers on the next to last pages.

Spring Checklist #1 is to look at the roof surfaces. How is your roof doing. How old is it? Most roofs are made to shed water and most use a fiberglass composition shingle to do the job. These typically last 17-21 years. How old is your roof? Are their more granules in the gutters than on the roof? Are the shingles warping or curling? Are there loose shingles or damaged materials? Call a roofer to get a quote. Don't delay...after a tough winter the

**Checklist (continued) :**

Roofer's are going to be busy and hard to hire. Get on those schedules early. If you have wood shingles or shakes have a wood roof contractor look at them carefully to see how they are doing. Warps, cracks and curling are not a good sign. With all roofing you should go look in accessible attic areas and look for water stains. Wood roofs often last more than 30 years but poor attic ventilation and neglected wood preservative treatments can really shorten their life. This can give you an idea how big a problem is brewing. Slate and tile roofs should be looked at annually and many require regular repairs to keep them weather resistant. While slate, tile and cement roofs can last many years (sometimes more than 50, constant checking by a roof expert can assure you the roof is doing fine. Check areas around roof flashings and make sure penetration areas like skylights, chimneys and vents for plumbing and bathrooms are sealed properly. Remember that roof tar is a temporary seal and rarely lasts longer than a couple of months.

#2 Check those gutters... moving water from the roof away from the home is the job of the gutter and leader system. It is so important that when it doesn't work we often get wet basements. So get up there and unclog them. Check the leaders for cleanliness and route the water away from the foundation.

#3 Check to make sure window wells are clean and that the domes over them survived winter. These help to keep water from getting in around the windows and wetting the foundation walls.

#4 Pull back mulch, clean away leaves and debris close to the home.

#5 Watch for bugs ! Springtime look for swarms, termite shelter tubes, foraging ants and carpenter bee holes. Call in a professional to properly spray and treat as needed.

#6 If you have tick concerns get on a contract to spray your property to reduce the chance of Lyme Disease.

#7 Bird feeders typically attract, not only birds, but all types of rodents. Remember that storing dog, cat, or bird food in the garage can provide them with a

constant source of food.

#8 Check those chimneys... make sure you have chimney screens (to keep out the critters) and chimney caps (to keep out the water). Be aware the chimney scammers are abundant this year...don't hire fly by night unlicensed sweeps hire only out of personal referrals or research well established firms.

#9 If you have a forced air heating system have you been changing the air filters monthly? Changing filters monthly improves indoor air quality and may reduce sneezing & allergic reactions. Spring is Pollen & cat dander time.

#10 Clean or even better remove your central humidifier... this basically useless and often destructive appliance, should be cleaned weekly, or you should get rid of it.

#12 Safety...Make sure house numbers are visible in case of emergencies. If your smoke detectors are older than 10 years go buy new ones...if you do not have a carbon monoxide detector, go buy one!

[www.stonehollow.com](http://www.stonehollow.com)

1-800-356-9611

**Are You Listening...?**

Tune in WSTC 1400 am and WNLK 1350 am (Stamford & Norwalk), Saturday mornings for **"Around the House with Steve Gladstone"** from 8 to 9 am. We discuss home issues, maintenance needs and safety, and you can call in! We may just have the answer to the question you've wanted to ask. ...are you listening ?Each week we give away prizes, offer discounts on home improvements, and have lively discussions on topics of interest.

**"Around the House with Steve Gladstone"** from 8 to 9 am. Saturdays !!!!

**The Home Protection Network, Inc.**

“A Higher Level of Service” for our clients.



**THE HOME PROTECTION NETWORK Inc.**  
Please call us for all your home inspection & testing needs

**Stonehollow Fine Home Inspections:**

Stephen Gladstone, Mel Wilkes, Matt Gladstone & Bob Tredennick 1-800-356-9611

**Kaszny’s Fine Home Inspections, LLC:**

Andy Kasznay, R.Tom Ackman, Wayne Yablonski 1- 888-337-1099

**Dunbar Home Inspections :**

Brian Dunbar 800-686-9214

**Cornerstone Home Inspections:**

Robert Camarda 203-259-6363

**Oak Glen Enterprises LLC Home**

**Inspections:** Donald Wicks 1-800-203-2499

**Our Promise:**

“We offer our clients a higher level of service & care”. “We work only for You.” Our aim is to look carefully and systematically; and explain all significant conditions found.

Helping You to know the home you’re buying,  
**WE SPEAK HOUSE !®**

**Stephen Gladstone**  
**Ct. Licensed Inspector #73**  
**Melvin Wilkes**  
**Ct. Licensed Inspector #241**  
**Matthew Gladstone**  
**Ct. Licensed Insp. #110**  
**Robert Tredennick, Intern**

**Tell A Friend :**

Know someone looking to buy a home? We’d be happy to help them get the best home inspection services. If we don’t serve their area we will refer a great home inspector who can. We promise to help your friends with the most important purchase of their lives! If they have us perform the inspection, **we will send you a housewarming gift** to say thanks!

**RADIO SHOW TAPES AVAILABLE:**

Need some guidance on how to do a job, who to hire & what to watch for? Tapes of our shows dealing with these subjects are available for **\$14.95 each with \$3 shipping & handling**, Some of the titles are listed below:

Mold & Mildew 1 & 2, Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning, Generators, First Time Home Buyers, Windows & Doors, Garage Doors, Home Theatre, Pinball & Playroom Equipment, Insulation, Animal Pests, Invisible Fencing, Legal Aspects of buying a home, Getting your home ready for sale, Water Treatment, Faux Painting, Important Papers, Underground sprinklers, Radon Testing, Home Security, West Nile Virus, Ticks, Building Permits, Kitchens, Wet Basements, Energy Efficiency, Exterior Lighting, Bathtub Refinishing, Decks, Oil Tank Testing ...call 327-6824 and order them.

**Strange Sounds in the garden:**

Indeed...Last year was a big year for bringing music, tv and dvds to new areas around the home. From information relayed from Bruce James President of Ct. Audio & Video in Norwalk we found that more people are enjoying fine music in the backyard, on the patios and decks as a result of great new technology. These next generation speakers are weather resistant and sound great. Some even look like garden rocks. Easy to install and easy on the pocketbook. Also very popular are cabinet and wall mounted plasma and LCD flat screen tv’s. The beauty of these new machines is that they take up little room and are beautiful. The most exciting stuff for you movie sports enthusiasts is the HDTV large screen sets that

have hit the market. Bruce says they are like looking out a window they are so sharp and clear. Call Bruce for more about this fun stuff.



**Gladstone 2004 ASHI President**

Stephen Gladstone, long time ASHI Board Member and Officer, was sworn in as the 2004 President of the American Society of Home Inspectors. ASHI headquartered in Chicago, has over 6000 Members & Candidates. Steve is a Past-President of both Connecticut Chapters of ASHI. He has been active in ASHI since 1986, and has been an inspector in lower Fairfield & Westchester Counties for over 21 years. He is a licensed inspector in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Jersey. Steve also carries a Plumbers Sp-1 License and a Supervisory License for Termites & Pests and State Certification as a Lead Risk Assessor & Lead Inspector. He lives in Stamford, Ct.

**For your protection:**

Hire an inspector who has experience, technical knowledge, attends annual training & seminars, and belongs to the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI)

**HIRE ONLY LICENSED INSPECTORS !!!!**

All our inspections follow the State of Ct. & ASHI® Standards of Practice & Code of Ethics. WE do not work on houses we inspect, nor do we offer sales commissions, or take referral fees for

inspections.



After a tough inspection in Wilton the crew mugs for the camera! Bob Tredennick our new intern is on the left, Mel Wilkes center & Matt Gladstone.

**Stonehollow Inc. Fine Home Inspections  
Environmental Testing Services**

1-800-356-9611



Mel Wilkes, State of Ct. Licensed Inspector, received his home Inspector Training from Inspection Training Assocs. in Virginia. He has been inspecting for 5 1/2 years.

**Mold...Test or not ?**

Inspectors across the country are recommending that you look carefully for any signs of Mold in your living environment. Mold can cause allergic reactions such as sneezing and runny eyes, but some forms can make you really sick or worse if you are sensitive to them. Some people are very

concerned about the deteriorating air quality within their homes. Testing for Mold seems like a good idea when you experience moldy conditions. Most mold testing however can be expensive and not very helpful. Even the EPA doesn't recommend mold testing but rather that you follow this course of action:

Fix any leaks, points where water enter, and repair any areas that are damp or exhibit standing water in your home. Dehumidify areas of your home that are damp. Raise temperatures in areas that feel clammy & cool. Maintain dry conditions and immediately clean up spills and leaks. Where the moisture grows mildew and mold, clean these areas and remove any damaged material immediately. Use your nose...if it's musty check to see if mold is the cause. Throw away wet boxes, stored materials damaged by water and mold and old carpet.

**Testing often entails taking indoor and outdoor comparison air samples. Indoors swab samples are taken of visible mold as well as carpet samples.**

**The EPA recommends cleaning mildew & mold with detergent not bleach, as more people are hurt annually by bleach than by mold !**

## **ADVERTISERS:**

**Please let our sponsors know you heard about them on the radio or in the Newsletter.**

### **Sandi Gladstone- Realtor®**

#### **William Pitt Real Estate**

**If your buying, selling , or just thinking about it...call me for exceptional service and great customer care. Long Ridge Parkway Office 203-322-1688 office, 203-536-0498 cell**

### **Karps Truevalue Hardware**

**Since 1926 633 Hope Street Stamford  
Stamford's Hardware Supermarket  
203-327-0460 7 Days a week**

**Great Selection , Personal Service, Friendly,  
Professional Do-it-yourself Advice.**

### **Standard Oil Company Heating Oil, Service & Repairs, Maintenance Agreements, Tank removals, Security Systems & Monitoring.**

**A family run business Since 1913  
800-822-3835 203-334-5532**

### **NaturaLawn of America**

**The leader in Organic Based Lawn Care  
203-348-7665 [www.nl-amer.com](http://www.nl-amer.com)**

**Doing the right thing has never been this easy !  
Natural Organic care for your Lawn**

### **All County Pest**

**Effective environmentally responsible protection  
for your home and business**

**888-327-0259 toll free**

**Member Ct Pest Control Assoc.**

**Member National Pest Management Assoc.**

**State Licensed & Insured**

### **Wells Fargo Home Mortgage**

**David Reynolds, loan officer**

**The #1 Leader in Home Mortgages**

**Call for a free Quote: 203-849-3556**

### **Almstead Tree & Shrub Care Co.**

**For tree care and shrub great advice.call the  
experts at Ahmstead**

**The most trusted name in the area with 40  
years of experience. Call for a free property  
inspection today: 203-849-3556**

### **Roccies Asphalt Paving**

**Drives, Walks, Belgian Block edging &  
landscaping , Parking lots & more...**

**Call for a free Quote: 203-324-0311**

**Steve say's "My driveway is wonderful..."**

### **Resource Systems**

**Computer Consultation**

**Web Design & Site Maintenance**

**Computer Software & Hardware**

**Troubleshooting Ed Kivell 203-329-3660**

**Please visit or give our advertisers a call. They help  
to make this newsletter reach your door !!!**

## Ticks don't play with Lyme Disease risk...

Guy Carroll has been on my radio show many times over the years. He offers this advice to my listeners. Do not allow warm blooded critters to drop ticks that will reproduce in the rough areas and gardens around your home. A regimen of periodic spraying can greatly reduce the chance of your pets or your family getting bitten or worse developing Lyme disease. Call All County Pest for a free evaluation of your home for termites, carpenter ants, ticks and rodents. Call them at 888-327-0259.

## Inspector Announcements:

**New Intern Bob Tredennick joins Stonehollow:**



After serving the restaurant world as an Executive Chef and Corporate Chef, Managing Thatcher's Restaurant in Southbury & stints with Unilever & Chesseborough Pond... we are fortunate to have **Bob Tredennick** as our new Intern. A Graduate of Western Ct. State University and from Special Programs at the Culinary Institute and Norwalk Community College, Bob brings management and marketing skills and some strong cooking abilities! He has recently Graduated from Inspection Training Associates Home Inspection school in West Redding and will be fulfilling his internship with Stonehollow. Bobs change in Professions comes at a great time as he wants to get out of the kitchen and get into the whole house. Welcome Bob. Bob lives in Newtown.

**Mel Wilkes** has taken the next step in his career by passing the National Home Inspector's Exam...a psychometrically certified test

administered Nationally that proves competency as a home inspector. This is a big step towards completing his ASHI full Membership and we congratulate Mel for this achievement. Mel lives in Hamden, Ct.

**Bob Camarda** from Cornerstone Inspections has received his certification papers making him our newest ASHI full Member. Congratulations Bob. Bob lives in Fairfield.

**Steve Gladstone** recently completed the requirements for his New Jersey Home Inspectors License. New Jersey state law has the most demanding educational and field training requirements for practicing home inspectors. While he is not planning to do New Jersey inspections it gives him the ability to teach new inspectors from that state. Steve was also sworn in as ASHI's 22<sup>nd</sup> National President in January and presides over the largest most prodigious organization of home inspectors in the nation.

## South Africa beckons again !

After a rather successful visit to **Johannesberg, South Africa** at the request of the Home & Property Inspectors of S. A. Steve has been asked to return this summer to teach new inspectors entering the field. His report follows:

It was incredible to be so far from home and see these terrific homes being built and no concept of home inspection even exists. After the haggling is done to set the price, if something is bad or broken people just shrug... and accept the situation. While many of the homes were selling for a bit less than in Ct. we were still looking at rather significant homes in the \$300- \$800 thousand dollar range. As I toured various areas I was seeing quite typical construction problems like settling, plumbing and roofing problems. There is no doubt as South Africa matures the consumer will expect more both from builders and the government to protect them. Dates have been set to return this summer and I'll bring back some photos and stories, no doubt. Maybe I'll get some time to go visit a gold mine or go on a safari! I've enclosed some photos of the first trip on the next page.



Some of the homes I saw were huge and quite impressive, most were masonry construction with lots of brick and tile.



Johannesburg has skyscrapers and is a rather large city. Parts of the city are not considered very safe for tourists however.



Washing machines were a bit different looking. Dryers typically did not vent to the outside.



Gardens and pools were very popular.



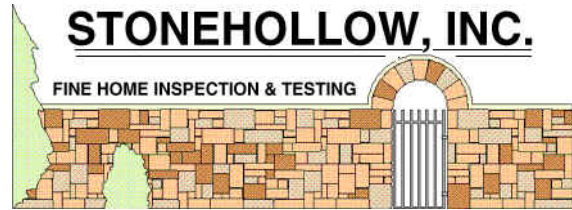
Shopping and bargains galore.

**Questions ? CALL 1-800-356-9611**

Address Correction, Please ! If this newsletter reaches you in error and you want it to stop... (or you want it in your name) please e-mail us at: [steve@stonehollow.com](mailto:steve@stonehollow.com) and we will fix it!  
Thanks!

*Did you know ???*

*Our average inspection takes 2 ½ to 3 hours on site... We look for over 5000 individual aspects of your home... We give you a report that has over 50 pages, with a walk- thru checklist, maintenance, and safety information... and Telephone consultation is free...forever !!!*



**Helpful Home News is a Quarterly Newsletter sent to you for free. Feel free to pass this information on to others.**

**Copyright 2003 HPN, Inc.**

**[www.stonehollow.com](http://www.stonehollow.com)**

**1-800-356-9611**

**Stonehollow Fine Home Inspection &  
Environmental Testing  
154 Overbrook Drive  
Stamford, Ct. 06906**

*SPECIALISTS IN PRE- PURCHASE  
HOME INSPECTION & TESTING*