

# CHRONICLES

TALES OF GREATNESS IN THE MAKING FROM AWARD WINNING INSPECTORS

## DALE GRISWOLD

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE AWARD



Dale Griswold got a taste of the property inspection business before he knew much about it. Dale had been a builder for most of his career and during the five years before he purchased an NPI franchise, he owned a residential home building company that served the rural, farming community around Masonville, Iowa.

"My friends were always calling me to ask if I would check out the houses they were buying. I enjoyed doing that."

As a result, Dale gave up his construction business and started checking out property inspection franchises decid-

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- Dale Griswold Masonville, IA

ing on NPI. He has never regretted his decision. What's more, National Property Inspections has become a family business with son, Matthew, joining his father as an inspector and wife, Deanna, managing the office phones, bookkeeping, reports and paperwork.

Dale discovered that Realtor presentations and Sunday open houses helped turn his first, weeks as a property inspector into a strong business. "We would drop by open houses on Sunday afternoon with a plate of cookies and a business card, introduce ourselves and leave. We'd never take up too much of the Realtor's time. That practice worked remarkably well," he added.

Personal contact is the key to making the property inspection business work, Dale said. "It's important to do a quality inspection, but personal contact will make all the difference."

So will "treating people like they should be treated," says Dale, which means working within the customer's timetable.

E-mail also can be an effective way to make an impression on a Realtor.

"A quick hello or a birthday greeting through the e-mail works well and also helps send the message that you're there to do anything you can to help make the Realtors' jobs easier."

That customer service philosophy has succeeded in the Masonville-Cedar Falls areas that he serves, which include about 90,000 people. Dale gives his customers exceptional customer service like assisting a customer who calls with additional questions about an inspection.

Success, he says, is attainable for any new inspector. "Learn as much as you can from Roland and the crew and then, when you go home, call other inspectors for help. Join trade organizations and participate in as much continuing education as you have time to do. I am a candidate for membership in the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) and a member of the National Association of Professional Property Inspectors (NAPPI). These are both respected industry groups that can help inspectors stay abreast of changes in the industry.

"Most importantly, if you're just starting out, don't give up."