



The Sarras Family



# THE LIFE OF A CHIMNEY CHAP

*Meet Owners Rania & Scott Sarras of The Chimney Chap & South Shore Fireplace*

**sponsor spotlight**

The life of a chimney sweep was not always easy. In fact, it was cruel and abusive. Historically, chimney sweeping has been one of the more hazardous, and low-paying occupations.

By the 16th century, the trend to build fireplaces in England took off, with one often in every room of the house. A hefty hearth tax was implemented for each fireplace built. The results of this tax created a drastic domino effect. Builders would connect the flues of new fireplaces with those of an existing chimney, creating a complex maze of pitch-black, narrow tunnels inside the home, making it virtually impossible for adults to sweep the flues. Orphan boys were forced to climb inside

*Interviewed Chimney Chap after two other chimney companies fell short. Visited their store—real impressed with people, inventory, store and offices. Owner Scott Sarras was excellent at suggesting different technological options, Holly in the office was most helpful in scheduling and the technicians arrived on time, did their work, made some adjustments, picked up and left the area cleaner than when they arrived. Field techs Dan, Jason and Tiarnan were a pleasure to work with. Tiarnan was trained in expert masonry in Ireland and used some excellent techniques to match the antique chimneys in our 200+-year-old home. Highly recommend. Matter of fact, as an area REALTOR, I recommend them to all our clients who need any type of chimney work as a result of their top-quality control. You will be impressed if you use them.”*

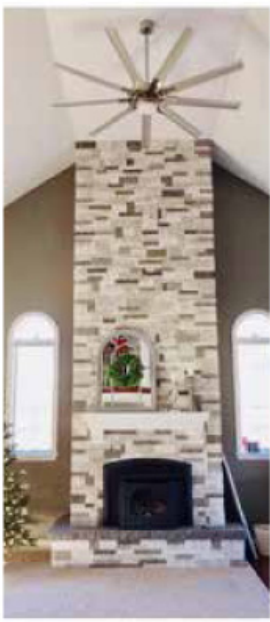
-Brad W., Marshfield Hills

these flues to brush them clean. Often referred to as the “climbing boys,” they worked and lived in the grime of the chimneys, often developing respiratory problems and other health-related issues. Fatal falls from rotting chimneys, as well as children perishing in chimney flues, were not uncommon, either.

So, when did a chimney sweep actually become “lucky”? Dating back to 1080, Legend tells us that King William of Britain (William the Conqueror) was rescued from a runaway horse and carriage by an unknown chimney sweep. Wanting to show his gratitude, King William invited the “lucky sweep” to his daughter, the Princess’s, wedding, and declared all Chimney Sweeps good luck. Soon after, it became a tradition for a chimney sweep to attend weddings and bless the celebration with a sweep’s kiss!

This is what motivated Duxbury native Ken Keithly to name **The Chimney Chap** in 1980. Ken brought sweep’s luck to countless





residents in the South Shore, with his top hat, brushes, and a lucky penny left on the mantle of every fireplace for good luck.

Eventually, Ken proudly turned over his top hat and brush to Scott Sarras, who has kept the tradition alive. With only a set of brushes and a rusty, dusty old Dodge, Scott began his life as a chimney sweep.

Scott recalls struggling during his first year, working completely alone, unable to afford to hire a helper. His days were long, climbing up and down ladders, and the work was hard, but he pushed through and never gave up. It was well after dinner before he would get home, only to find himself buried in paperwork and missed calls. It wasn't long after that his wife, Rania, left the medical field and joined Scott on their new venture. Together with the right mindset, the business started to sweep the South Shore.

The Chimney Chap went from solely sweeping chimneys to a full-service chimney company. Just like the Chap's motto says, "We don't just clean em', We build them!" Their dedication and passion for the industry—and to their customers—led them to open their retail hearth store, **South Shore Fireplace**. They carry the latest, most reliable stoves and fireplaces in the industry. South Shore Fireplace recently expanded into outdoor living products, including gas grills, outdoor gas and wood fire pits, as well as outdoor kitchens and furniture.

Today, Scott and Rania are deeply involved in educating the public and building officials on chimney safety and proper burn practices. Scott, president of the Massachusetts Chimney Sweep Guild, and Rania are strong advocates in the chimney industry—specifically educating and helping those who have fallen victim to the all-too-familiar chimney scams. Scam companies often offer cheap chimney sweeps to get their foot through the door, then

use scare tactics to con the consumer into paying thousands of dollars for unnecessary and shoddy repair work. Don't buy into this! Use a reliable and local company.

Juggling a successful business, four children, two dogs, and a dozen chickens is not easy! They still find the time, however, to travel throughout the country to attend and conduct training seminars, while they provide support for various non-profit organizations such as Warrior Horse, an organization created by

*All projects encounter unexpected challenges, such as when installing chimney dampers on a roof in the winter season. Having a Team committed to resolving issues and ensuring total customer satisfaction makes all the difference. Scott, Rania and their Team were honest, fair, knowledgeable and professional. Paid for a service and got it. Above all, they made the experience enjoyable. A rarity in today's world, when most contractors feel like they're doing you a favor just by showing up. Thank you, Team Chimney Chap."*

-Ron. T., Cohasset

Chimney Sweeps for our Veterans. Their children, Rianna, Robert, Angel, and Celia, are also a very big part of the business, and learning young, too! Do not be surprised if you call the office and hear a young little sweet voice on the other end "Thank you for calling The Chimney Chap, may I help you?"

As we spend more time—if not all of our time for the foreseeable future— at home, it's

a wonderful opportunity to reinvigorate your outdoor spaces. Building a patio kitchen or creating an inviting fire pit may be the additional space you and yours will want these days for the ultimate relaxation, and endless enjoyment.

**Why choose The Chimney Chap & South Shore Fireplace? It's simple...and backed by hundreds of stellar reviews. To view our gallery, or learn more about The Chimney Chap and South Shore Fireplace through live chat, visit [thechimneychap.com](http://thechimneychap.com) or call (508) 927-1900**