



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

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President's message: It's time for The Cycle's gears to get unclogged and start churning away

January 13, 2011 - Rhode Island

I'm looking forward to a great 2011!

That might sound strange coming from a Rhode Island home builder after the trials and tribulations of the past few years. But if you look carefully at the big picture, you should find good cause for optimism. That's because, when you look, "The Cycle" will be staring back at you.

The Cycle. People grow up and found new households. They have children and need bigger houses. They age, then change where they live. Their children grow up and found their own new households.

That's how it works, and no amount of economic turmoil or "new economic reality" is going to change that. No matter what conditions are, The Cycle always wins out, and with each of its phases, it brings a different kind of housing demand. Tastes and trends might shift, builders might have to get extra creative or extra "green," lenders might have to take new approaches, but The Cycle will remain.

In tough times such as we've seen recently, the "gears" of The Cycle can get temporarily clogged with people's fears about the future, lack of funding, and a perceived need to put off that next phase. But those clogs never last. What they really do is create pent-up demand.

I think that 2011 will be the year when we see The Cycle start up again, back toward where it should be: in full swing. It might take time for lenders to get themselves back into play and for people's fears to subside, but it will happen. And for those of us in the building and remodeling trades who stuck with it, who took these tough times and turned them into opportunities, the rewards will be great!

New alliances

As my administration begins its first full year and as the General Assembly begins its 2011 session, I want all Rhode Island Builders Association members to know that we are going to build close relationships between our association and those in the halls of power.

On December 7th, Senate president Teresa Paiva-Weed (D-Newport, Jamestown) talked with our board of directors and exchanged ideas with them about how best to help small business in Rhode Island. At our January 4th board meeting, we've invited newly elected attorney general Peter Kilmartin to address us and answer our questions.

We're going to keep these close contacts building, to include the state's general officers, the legislative leadership right down to the freshmen members, and regulatory leaders. For these contacts, we'll use board of directors meetings, our Breakfast Club, and any other venue that works. This will help us get to know these leaders. It also will help them get to know us so that when they face decisions that affect our industry, they'll have some acquaintance with our needs and concerns,

and an understanding of the crucial part we play in the state's economy.

If we don't educate them about our industry, our no-growth opponents will do so from their own point of view.

These contacts with office holders are not just for RIBA's leadership. It's vital that all members participate by attending the events where these exchanges take place. I remind all members that the presentation section of all board of directors meetings is open to any member. Not only have some rank-and-file RIBA members attended most board meetings since last fall to interact with our monthly speakers, but some have decided that they'd like to take leadership roles themselves.

Time to recruit!

Along with participating in our legislative and regulatory contact sessions, and as an important part of them, I'm asking every member to recruit at least one new member in 2011. If we can do this, it will double our membership by the end of the year. Think of those numbers! The greater our membership, the more we will be listened to, and the greater the benefit will be to you and your business. This can be a great year if you get involved!

For more information on RIBA's legislative and regulatory initiatives, educational opportunities or other member benefits, visit www.ribuilders.org or call (401) 438-7400. For a membership packet to give to your friends, contact Nancy Jenkinson at the same number.

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