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## **President's message: Many people working together as a team**

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When we think of progress in America, one name that comes to mind is that of Henry Ford. This Michigan farm boy and son of immigrants ended up revolutionizing American industry with the idea of the assembly line: Many people working together as a team to build one thing.

In Ford's case, the team produced the automobile. But his ideas apply just as easily to us: 21st century men and women with a common purpose. In our case, that purpose is to build and maintain a strong shelter industry in Rhode Island. Ford said: "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success.... Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Our forbears in the Rhode Island Builders Association came together after World War II, kept together over many years and through many economic crises, and handed down to us a great legacy in the form of a strong trade association and a vibrant shelter industry. Our task as the 21st century carriers of this legacy is to make all of it even better. That can be a tall order in times like ours, when we are challenged, seemingly from all sides.

I believe that Henry Ford's thoughts are just as valid today. I also believe that there is no problem we can't solve if we work together. And the more people we have working together, the sooner we will see success. That's why RIBA has launched its first membership drive in decades.

Beginning in 1955, the new executive director, Ross Dagata, and charter member Anthony Viola set aside one day a week to drive from jobsite to jobsite and get contractors to join the young Home Builders Association of Rhode Island. Their teamwork brought success, and membership grew. During the next decade, the association expanded its services to members. Offering insurance to members became increasingly important, so Florence Dagata, Ross's wife, literally went back to school and took insurance courses so she could administer the association's new programs. Members and staff used their talents and dedication to work together to make RIBA, and the Rhode Island shelter industry, strong and successful.

RIBA has guided us through boom times when it seemed that everyone with a pickup truck was becoming a developer, and through lean times when even the modest membership dues seemed like a challenge for some. Today your trade association and you as a member of the shelter industry face unprecedented trials: a fits-and-starts recovery from the worst economic downturn in decades, unprecedented regulations and growth controls, tight credit, and a very cautious clientele.

Time to expand the team once again!

It takes just a little vision to see that rededicating yourself to RIBA is not only the best investment your business can make each year, it's one of the best bargains, considering what you receive by way of representation and valuable services.

Recruit at least one new member in 2011, whether it's a friend, a colleague, a supplier or a

subcontractor. Point them toward [www.ribuilders.org](http://www.ribuilders.org) for information on the many member benefits. Call Nancy Jenkinson at the RIBA office (401-438-7400) and ask her to send a membership packet. Show them The Rhode Island Builder Report.

You will be helping the potential new member, your trade association, your industry and, ultimately, your own business and yourself!

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