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President's message: Annual Home Show very well attended

May 06, 2009 - Rhode Island

The Rhode Island Builders Association has just wrapped up another successful Home Show. I freely admit that the state of the economy had us a little concerned about attendance before the show, but it turned out that the numbers were better than expected. Visitors and exhibitors alike seemed enthusiastic about the new, four-day show format as they entered the exhibit hall and participated in the many activities there and in the seminar areas.

RIBA's new welcome booth inside the main entrance, and our great staff there, were true credits to our organization. Our warmest thanks go to Jutras Woodworking for their design and manufacture of the beautiful mahogany booth!

The large number of exhibitors included the "tried and true" who had been with the show for many years, as well as some very welcome newcomers. My conversations with many exhibitors led to the general consensus that our show is the best in New England and that the professionalism of RIBA showed in every aspect.

It was a pleasure for Colin Kane and me to host RIBA's weekly radio show, You're Home with the Rhode Island Builders Association, from the show floor on March 28th. We thank the Zangari brothers, Paul and John, of Drive-Thru Radio for giving up an hour of their air time and allowing us to do a two-hour live broadcast. Kudos to WPRO for the way they handled the remote broadcast. Thanks also to the six exhibitors who took the time to join us on the air.

To matters legislative.

The 2009 session of the Rhode Island General Assembly is well under way, and there are a number of bills pending that concern our industry. RIBA's Legislative Committee has met several times and is closely monitoring these bills.

RIBA's leaders and lobbyists can't do this alone! It's very important that all members pitch in to lobby their own state representatives on these matters, many of which are of vital concern to every contractor in the state.

For a step-by-step guide on talking with your legislators, visit www.ribuilders.org and see the "Talking to Your Legislators" page under "What's New." Also go to the "Public Library" page on the RIBA site to see the legislative status report, which is updated every Friday.

If you have any concerns about legislation, contact our executive director, Roger Warren, at (401) 438-7400 to determine any bill's current status, to express your concern and to find out how to help. Remember that these legislators are making laws that affect our industry. If we don't educate them about our businesses' needs, nobody will.

Micheal Artesani is president of the Rhode Island Builders Assn., East Providence.

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