

Greetings-

I would first and foremost like to thank our 2007 AHBA President, Stuart Ray for his outstanding leadership during this past year. Together with the work of Caroline, Adrienne, the 2007 Board of Directors, the committees and all of our members who volunteered and actively participated at our meetings and events - this was truly a great year!

I am excited about the opportunity to lead this growing organization into another successful year! I would like to make myself available to anyone in the membership who needs me.

A pastor of mine used to say "If you always do what you've always done, you will always get what you've always gotten". The AHBA is doing things a little different and it is paying off.

This next year—I challenge us to continue to raise the bar! I think it is important to create a positive public image for the association. So, we have adopted a new tagline for the AHBA that simply states--- The Asheville Home Builders Association – “Bringing Professionalism to Our Industry.”

This year, we are launching a modest first marketing campaign, which will ultimately enhance the value of your membership and sponsorship dollars as we strive to gain more recognition in our community.

We are building relationships with other organizations in our area. Last year we formed an alliance with the Asheville Board of Realtors. We came together as a united front in opposition to the anti-build legislation being passed by the County Commissioners and City Councilmen. The AHBA and the ABR formed a political non-profit called MCAD – the Mountain Council for Accountable Development. Currently, we are working on a certification course for building responsibly in the mountains.

Running a successful organization like the AHBA is a lot of work and cannot be done without a lot of volunteers. We believe that anyone who works hard deserves recognition, so we will strive to make 2008 a “Year of Acknowledgement.” If you would like to get involved, but haven't yet, we would love to have your participation in 2008. Please see the attached committee signup form on page 16 of this newsletter

Our leadership for this next year represents many years of experience teamed up with some fresh faces which will bring us new vision and energy.

We will continue to strengthen our education department as we have finally brought NC Building Institute classes to this side of the state. The NCHBA has lobbied the licensing board so that builders who complete these courses to certification level will have designations linked to their license. This is a major achievement!

We are planning to do another community involvement project this year. The Top-of-the-Stop was a big success last year. This year we would like to have a friendly competition and see who can build a Habitat Home the quickest. This is known as a Builder Blitz!

Last year we raised the bar on Build Pac. You may or may not know some of the things that Build Pac does for us, but I can tell you, they are protecting us from anti-build groups and unfair tax burdens each and every day. This next year, we will attempt to raise the bar even higher so that our building community is spoken for, and the AHBA is recognized. At January's GMM, we will hear more about this as Alastair Macaulay joins us from the NCHBA.

And finally, with the faithful support of our **Foundation Club** we are able to operate and facilitate *all of these things*. Our sponsors and members are getting more exposure now more than ever. With a membership approaching 800, "Members doing business with members" has more value now than ever!

A little over a year ago, we added a new membership category called "Affiliates." This was done out of response from you who wanted multiple people from your organization to be represented at the AHBA. The Affiliate program is the best way to multiply your representation and strengthen our Association.

As a Builder or Associate member of the AHBA, you can provide your co-workers and employees with a discounted membership. Thanks to the Affiliate program you can add on members for roughly half the price of a full membership while providing them with nearly all the same benefits as a Builder or Associate members!

And lastly, we are having more fun at our meetings! Be assured—with this competitive market and economy, your membership has more value now than ever! Being a part of the AHBA is the best way to separate yourself from the competition.

I challenge you to help us to raise the bar. Get involved, volunteer and help us make a difference in 2008! As we "Bring Professionalism to Our Industry!"

Thank You

Sean Sullivan

2008 AHBA President