

April 2008

From the Deck of the President

As we approach the end of April I am surprised at the wide variety of reports I am hearing about the economy. Even in my own backyard I hear varying reports of the market both from other builders and customers. My approach to sales seems to be ever changing and I keep looking for new ways to reach the consumer. I can tell you that it is taking more effort to get those early season sales but overall the interest is there. More people are staying in their houses and the remodel business (replacements and rebuilds) is looking very strong for the decking industry. The press would like us to buy into the doom and gloom about just how bad things are but I recently read a report coming from the Realtor Industry and the inventory of new homes is down which is a good sign for the market. So, find new ways to be different than your competition...something other than price. Be creative in your designs and suggest add-ons and upgraded features. By setting yourself apart from the low dollar competition you give customers the reason to go with your company. Everyone can try and offer the lowest price but you cannot always win that battle but you can win by being different. Whatever the others are doing try being different...add those lights, offer pipe balusters, add diagonal decking...you decide, just be positive and give them options. If you ignore the press your customers will follow.

We are also on the eve of Deck Safety Month<sup>®</sup> and you are about to see this program really take off. Jump on board and offer customers in your area the service to make sure their deck is safe. Download the Consumer Checklist from the web site and use it for a guideline and leave a copy behind. There are also mailers and press releases available to help promote this NADRA program to those in your area. It is a great consumer service and just another way to set you apart and show customers why they need to find NADRA members when they are ready to change their space.

Here at NADRA Headquarters we are seeing tremendous interest in the way we are growing. New doors are opening each and every day. It is time for you to come off the bench and get involved. You can add value to your membership by giving a little of your time...join a committee and help us make a difference. Sometimes it is tough to know where to start so we are here to help. Feel free to email me directly ([shawn@nadra.org](mailto:shawn@nadra.org)), go by the web site or call the office. We will be happy to point you in the right direction.

Remember to be profitable and build safe,

Shawn