

## **Our voice continues to be heard**

By Alan Cooper, FSPA President

The early results are in on membership renewals. For all of you who have renewed, I thank you and you are to be congratulated. So far our members have exceeded all expectations. To date (June 15, 2009) 36.3% of membership has renewed, compared to (June 30, 2008) 31.5%.

My May article stated our voice is heard. Our voice continues to be heard. On June 9, FSPA members and others (UPSA members) appeared before the Florida Building Commission for a final rule hearing regarding the adoption of the 2008 National Electrical Code. At the April meeting the Commission voted to accept the NEC but to exempt the GFCI requirement on residential pools. Some people were opposed to the exemption but the FBC voted to stand by their April decision. I do not believe we would have prevailed if the industry did not have a seat at the commission table.

Also, two new subcommittees met for the first time, the Swimming Pool Subcommittee and the Pool Efficiency Subcommittee to the Florida Energy Code Workgroup. The industry is well represented on both of these committees. Even though the industry is represented on these committees, we as members have an obligation to be a part of this process. We cannot just rely on the members of the committees; they have to have your individual and industry input. Read Jennifer's article for the complete report of the FBC meeting.

One of the reasons we have been successful with our legislative agenda is our relationship with the Legislature. The chapters having meetings with legislators and our legislative days have helped pave the way for these relationships. Jennifer has greatly helped in gaining us access to many legislators. Your PIPAC contributions are necessary if we are going to continue to be successful in the legislative arena. I do not intend to reinvent the wheel, therefore the following is a quote from our past PIPAC chairman Dominick Montanaro, "The Pool Industry Political Action Committee does not fall under the umbrella of your membership dues. The sole purpose of PIPAC is to raise funds that can be used to contribute to the campaign accounts of individuals running for offices in the State of Florida. PIPAC funds can also be used to make contributions to the respective political parties for fundraising purposes. Donations to PIPAC enable us to identify legislators who are supportive of our industry and help them financially in election campaigns." I know that we are in hard economic times, however, potential bad legislation will not go away. I ask everyone to donate whatever you can; without you we cannot continue to protect our industry.

Your Association speaks for you and the industry. I could go on and on about the value we receive from membership but you have heard a lot of it before. I urge those of you who have not renewed your membership to do so now. I encourage you to speak to others who have not renewed and have them do so now. Also, if you know any past members or anyone else in the industry encourage them to join. There is strength in numbers. I can guarantee you the benefits outweigh the investment.