

## MESSAGE FROM ANTHONY J. MAIOCCHI, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT OF NYSLTA

Throughout the convention in Saratoga last summer I kept on hearing one phrase from the attendees you did a great job in a very difficult year. Unfortunately, that statement was not true.

Last year, was a very difficult year. When I took office as president in August of 2010 the association was more than \$30,000.00 in debt. We weren't even sure if we would be able to pay salaries or rent. There was growing hostility between agents and underwriters. Lastly, I need not tell you that we are in the worst housing crisis since The Great Depression. Clearly the future did not look bright.

But it was not my efforts but rather the cooperation of the executive committee of the New York State Land Title Association that put the association on the right track.

At the first meeting of the new Executive Committee at the convention, both underwriter and agents developed a number of seminars on the new sales tax burden levied on agents and underwriters by New York State. For the most part underwriters gave seminars and the agents and in some cases the underwriters provided the location for the seminars. Sharon Stable traveled the state in holding the seminars. The seminars generated more than \$40,000.00 in fees and new membership dues that filled the gap in last year's budget.

We also created a Special Committee comprised of Michael Berry, Michael Miglino, Frank Carroll, and Lawrence Lipschitz to try to deal with the State Tax Commission to get answers to the many questions of Agents.

Unfortunately, in October we were sad to learn that Sharon was retiring. The finance committee manned by our former President John Piccirillo, the Chair of the Title Section Marvin Bagwell, the Chair of the Agent Section Richard Giliotti, President Elect Paul Bugoni, and treasure Marianne Mathieu, assisted me in running the day to day operations of the association until we hired a new executive director. These individuals devoted untold hours to this task. The problem was that none of us knew exactly how the association ran and we had to learn this on the fly. Moreover, due to our fiscal constraints we had to also find ways to cut costs at the same time try to make the association grow. Squeezing into our normal workloads was not easy.

The rest of the executive committee also had to undertake new duties and to help reorganizing the association. Amy Kelly, stepped up to the task of completely revamping and revitalizing our CLE seminar program as well as beginning to initiate a Non-CLE training program for agents. Amy Kelly and Jean Partridge began a newsletter to fill in the gap left by the fact that we could no longer produce our quarterly publication due to fiscal constraints. Agents of the association who were not even on the executive committee stepped up to task of trying to generate funds such as William Treuber who arrange a raffle for Super Bowl tickets that generated more than \$6,000.00.

The Finance Committee while running the association also had to find a new replacement for Sharon. It had to advertise for candidates and interview those candidates. We were extremely fortunate in find an individual that not only possessed the qualifications for being the executive director for the New York State Land Title Association but also possessed the enthusiasm for revitalizing the association. That person that the executive committee agreed to hire was, Robert Treuber.

If any one deserves credit for saving the association in the year 2010-2011 that credit should go to Robert Treuber. Not only did he come in, in January, and had to begin working at a feverish pace while learning the new nuances of our association, but he also had to develop a relationship with the Associations new lobbyist, Scott Wexler, who was scheduling meetings with the new governor's administration and the insurance department. Bob did not merely just preform these tasks but he excelled at them. He also single handedly planned a convention, which, for the first time in my memory resulted in a profit. He did this while renegotiating every contract that the association had with its vendors. Savings money became Bob's mantra. If any one does not believe this, they should know that Bob rather than buying wine from the hotel at the convention at an obscene markup purchased 1,600 bottles wholesale and drove them to the convention himself to save money. Any unused wine was sold and the funds return to the association.

It was the cooperation and efforts by both agents and underwriters that saved the association, not me. It is this effort that must be encouraged and promoted for our Association to continue to be viable and provide us with a mechanism to provide for our families. We have to nurture and encourage that cooperation and effort. It is the duty of every member of this association both underwriters and agents-- to promote the integrity of members of this industry. We must publicize to homeowners and property owners the value of title insurance... We insure the ownership of the most valuable asset of most individuals. Our efforts keep them out of trouble and that fact must be publicized.

Serving as your President was one of the greatest honors that I have experienced in my life and for that I wish to thank all of the members of this Association. I plead with you to take an active part in promoting this association and our industry so that we can be assured of a livelyhood. It was only about a year and half ago that an assemblyman wanted to put us out of business. Let us never forget that there are still threats out there that if we don't work together may defeat us.