

July President's Message



Welcome to FAMB's 2007 Annual Convention. This convention promises to be a time of great education, great networking, inspiring speakers and an overall good time!!

This year we are celebrating "The '80s" as our convention theme at Rosen's beautiful Shingle Creek Resort. The '80s were special for me. Not only did I graduate college in the 80's, I also entered the mortgage industry and started my career. Now, two decades later, we are looking back and celebrating what I feel were wonderful years. This year's convention offers fun-filled days and nights that will transport you back in time, while providing a full slate of education, entertainment and, of course, the famous FAMB two day tradeshow with over 300 booths. Come and enjoy! Make the most of the events and cultivate new business relationships. I look forward to seeing you at one of the fabulous functions.

My year as FAMB's State President has flown by. It was filled with some smooth, and some not so smooth, sailing legislatively. We defeated a licensure exemption bill, which went against everything for which we, as mortgage brokers, stand. We had great help as our lobbyist and general counsel rose to the occasion and did everything they could to represent us to make sure this bill did not pass. We also demonstrated that grassroots involvement works. We illustrated what it means to have our membership come out in numbers to weigh in with their legislators against unfair legislation. Our regulator added and amended parts of our statutes, F. S. 494, which sailed through the legislature fairly unscathed. On that note, please attend a 494 class while at the convention and learn everything that is going to change this fall with the law revisions.

It has been with great pride that I have served as your President this past year. We accomplished much. At our first quarterly meeting in Marco Island, the Board of Directors received great training from Bob Harris, the Association Guru. During the year we adopted our first advertising program and ad campaign. We approved the reformation of The Treasure Coast Chapter of FAMB and the formation of The Capital City Chapter in Tallahassee. Under the direction of the Strategic Planning Committee, we drafted FAMB's first ever Strategic Plan. We formed an alliance with BPC Financial, to administer group insurance plans- another FAMB members' only benefit. Visit www.famb.org and look at the insurance plans available to you as a member. This year our Tallahassee Legislative-Lobbying Conference was another success. We visited our legislators and our legislators visited us. The DECA program became our statewide community outreach initiative. We attended 3 DECA judging events and gave 9 Florida students scholarships. A Florida student received one of NAMB's 3 scholarships. I look forward to seeing our participation grow in the upcoming years. Our chapter presidents became an integral part of the planning process for our state as they participated on monthly planning conference calls with me; there we discussed state and federal government affairs issues along with membership enhancements and new programs. This was an attempt to keep the chapters informed and up to date with the latest information. This was a very successful first for Florida.

Our May Board of Directors held "lasts" for many of us. It was there that I addressed our board of directors for the last time as their President. Immediate Past President Steve Schneider served on the executive committee and attended his last board meeting and Karen Wordell-Smith, our Executive Director, served as part of our leadership at her final board meeting. It is here that I must express my appreciation for these two valued and appreciated colleagues. I had the honor of serving with Steve for the past 5 years and thank him for all he has done to serve FAMB. His contributions will remain long after he becomes part of the Past Presidents group. Karen Wordell-Smith has served our association for the past ten years as our Executive Director. I am only one of ten presidents she has served. She has been a valuable asset to us and has brought our association to a new level. Each year as the new President takes the helm she brings the Association's history and her experience to their presidency. Thank you, Karen. You have contributed much over the years to make this association great.

Serving with the Chapter Presidents this year has been an honor. FAMB's membership has been well served under their leadership. Our committee chairs and committee members have lead their fellow members well this year, and I thank each and every one of you who contributed to the growth and prosperity of this association.

I want to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to Ritch Workman, FAMB's 2007/2008 President. I have served with Ritch over the past 5 years and look forward to serving with him as Immediate Past President. I know FAMB will be in good hands with our own "Top Gun", President Ritch Workman. I look forward to serving with Kathy Love, our valuable President Elect, who will take over the Presidency in 2008. I also welcome our new officers, Vice President, Richard Peek; Treasurer, Valerie Saunders and Secretary, Jon Turla.

As we say goodbye to Karen, we welcome Frank Cicione as our new Executive Director. He is a past president of FAMB and I know Karen is leaving this association in good hands as Frank begins his tenure. I had the pleasure of serving with Frank as a Chapter President when he was our State President. Welcome, Frank-no stranger to FAMB.

Many thanks to our staff at FAMB headquarters-Melissa Grosvenor our COO, Cindy Gramling, superstar meetings and events planner and the rest of the gang at headquarters who keep our association running like a well-oiled machine.

My predecessor, Steve Schneider, said these words last year as my journey began. **"You cannot direct the winds, you can only adjust the sails."** This is an ancient maritime proverb. In business, intrapersonal relationships and life, we are confronted with challenges. Some we can control, others we cannot. Thus, it is our abilities to react and adapt which determine our success as navigators on the rough seas of life and business. This past year my journey as your President has been an experience to remember and I have been humbled by the confidence you bestowed upon me. I look forward to my new post as Past President and the opportunities that lie ahead for our association.

I can't close this message without a special "thank you" to my husband, Les and my children. They have given me unconditional strength and support.

Thank you again for the opportunity to lead this great state association-the Florida Association of Mortgage Brokers.

Patrice P. Yamato CRMS
FAMB President 2006-2007