

# Virginia Association of Real Estate Inspectors

Quarterly Newsletter for the Virginia Home Inspector



## VAREI Times

Volume I, No. 1  
Summer 2004

### Message from the President

I hope this letter finds you well and prosperous as we move into the "hectic" days of summer! Virginia real estate sales are once again setting records and our industry is following suit.

Fortunately, we had a quiet session in the state legislature this year. VAREI was not called into battle over any threats to the well being of the home inspection profession. There was only one relevant bill introduced this year. It was introduced in the house as HB853 to allow architects and engineers to perform home inspections without being "certified". The bill was tabled in committee and died.

We do not expect things to remain this calm in the upcoming years. With that in mind, the VAREI Board of Directors recently hired a professional lobbyist / legislative monitor to specifically look out for our interests in the coming session. We believe this is prudent to fully protect our industry. We will keep you informed and updated as we move closer to the upcoming legislative session.

Please take a moment to review *your* newly updated **VAREI website** at [www.varei.org](http://www.varei.org). Here you will find much information and many links to all pending legislation and certification activities. This is the fastest way for you to stay informed. Many thanks to Greg Caudill for his work on the site.

Make plans to attend our **annual meeting** this year.; it is your best opportunity to help guide our Association. This meeting takes place the first Saturday in October every year. This year it will be held October 2 in the Richmond area. More information and reminders will be forthcoming. Please feel free to contact me directly anytime if you have questions or comments regarding VAREI. You can reach me via phone at (804) 640-3231 or email me at [bconner@usinspect.com](mailto:bconner@usinspect.com). Hope to see all of you in October if not before. Be involved, run for office or the Board. I will see you on October 2nd!

Sincerely,

Bill Conner  
VAREI President 2004

### In This Issue:

#### Message from the President

#### Committee Reports:

Education  
Legislative  
Membership  
Public Relations

### Calendar of Events

#### Recent Board of Directors Meeting

April 29, 2004 in Ashland, VA at 3:00 p.m.

#### Next Board of Directors Meeting

July 21, 2004 in Ashland, VA at 3:00 p.m.

#### Annual Business Meeting and Seminar

#### Board of Directors Meeting

October 2, 2004, Glen Allen, VA

### Your 2004 Leadership Team:

#### President

Bill Conner, Montpelier, VA

#### Vice President

Michael Tallmon, Fairfax Station, VA

#### Secretary

Michael Stephens, Fairfax Station, VA

#### Treasurer

Thomas Murley, Fairfax, VA

#### Directors

Greg Caudill, Manassas, VA

Peter Drennan, Charlottesville, VA

David Drewry, Fairfax, VA

Robert Gwaltney, Vienna, VA

Fred Simmermon, Norfolk, VA

Jim Thompson, Fairfax, VA

**www.VAREI.ORG**

# Education:

## Background Information on The Virginia Association of Real Estate Inspectors (VAREI)

The Virginia Association of Real Estate Inspectors (VAREI) was formed in October 2000 in response to efforts by a state real estate group to introduce legislation to control our industry. VAREI met the initial challenge in early 2001 by working with the real estate group and state authorities to introduce stronger, not weaker, legislation. Later, VAREI members assisted DPOR in defining the specifics of the pending regulation. The regulation became law in July 2003, and much of the language in the voluntary certification law is a result of your association's (VAREI) efforts. Two former VAREI board members serve on the Board for Asbestos, Lead, and Home Inspectors.

**The VAREI Mission and Organization:** VAREI is a non-profit organization run by four officers and a Board of Directors. Officers are elected each year at the annual meeting held the first Saturday in October. Board members serve alternate two and three year terms. The Board meets four times a year. The mission is twofold: to act as a voice for the membership in the Commonwealth of Virginia regarding statewide issues and: to promote excellence in the home inspection industry for the sake of home buying and home selling Virginians.

**The Challenge Ahead:** The future is always uncertain now that home inspectors have entered the realm of state regulation. The history of home inspection regulation in Texas, North Carolina, New Jersey and other states has shown there will be continuous efforts by outside groups to add to or amend the existing regulation. In some cases there have been efforts to lower standards to the point that anyone can become state certified or licensed creating a plethora of under qualified inspectors. In other cases, efforts were made to standardize and restrict reporting materials taking away the distinguishing differences between inspectors. Such actions force the industry to be price based rather than quality or service based. The challenges can come from many directions—real estate professionals, builders, remodelers, contractors, architects, engineers, code officials, or a state legislator who has heard from a dissatisfied constituent. In whatever form, the proposed changes often are detrimental to the home inspection industry. Countering bad legislation is expensive and time consuming. Now is the time to strengthen VAREI and to brace for the future!

*Fred Simmermon, Chair*

## Legislative Committee

### The 2004 General Assembly Session has finally ended !

During the 2004 Virginia General Assembly session only one piece of legislation was introduced affecting the home Inspectors Industry in Virginia. Del. S.C. Jones introduced HB 853 that would allow any architect or professional engineer to use the term and render services as a "certified home inspector". It was voted down in committee 22-0.

This year the board decided that VAREI needs to be more vigilant (over 2000 bills are submitted each session). The board has approved the hiring of a registered lobbyist to monitor the 2005 General Assembly Session and to subscribe to the **Lobbyist-in-a-Box** service of the General Assembly for the same session. This two pronged approach should give us a early heads up approach to any adverse legislation that may come our way and give us adequate time to respond. The Lobbyist -in-a-Box service is free to those who want to track a bill so, when we know of any home inspector related legislation we will keep you informed. The other services, which are many, are available to subscribers only. Five of the board members have been designated subscribers to its full services.

The legislative committee will review and pass on recommendations to the board, however, we are trying to get e-mail and telephone trees set up for feedback on issues as well. Peter Drennan who travels thought out the country as a lecturer called upon the experiences of our brothers in New Jersey as to how they handle such issues, and we are in line with their efforts. VAREI is for all Virginia inspectors and **in Numbers there is Strength**, so , if you know of any inspector who hasn't joined VAREI we need him to join and support our efforts to protect our livelihoods.

*Mike Stephens and Peter Drennan, Co-Chair*

# Membership

## Have you joined VAREI yet?

VAREI members will receive a quarterly newsletter keeping them apprised of developments in the state home inspection profession, and notifying them of related association meetings and training opportunities. Members can attend the annual meeting to hear speakers on subjects of interest to professional home inspectors. Members also can make recommendations to the Board regarding matters they want VAREI to investigate or that they want VAREI to raise with the Asbestos, Lead, and Home Inspectors Board. VAREI strives to maintain good relations with regulatory authorities so home inspector issues will be heard. Presently we have 119 Certified Home Inspectors in the state of Virginia with more applications coming in daily.

Join VAREI! Help protect the home inspection industry in Virginia! Annual dues are \$100. Membership is open to all home inspectors operating in Virginia. Affiliate memberships are available to those offering products or services to home inspectors. Visit the website at [www.varei.org](http://www.varei.org) and download an application form. Or ask a VAREI board member for an application.

*Dave Drewry, Chair*

# Public Relations

## Have you visited the new VAREI website yet?

Over the past few months the VAREI website has changed its look! We have changed in order to keep up with the demand of technology. Soon the website will have a membership roster, online renewal system, possibly a personal webpage and more. The legislative arena will continue to change and the website is another way to keep you informed outside of the newsletter. We will keep you informed of the quarterly Board of Directors meetings and will publish the approved minutes online. Take the time to browse the new site and give us feedback on any improvements you think would be helpful to the membership. Go to [www.varei.org](http://www.varei.org) and bookmark the page so you can come back often.

*Greg Caudill-Chair*

# Upcoming Elections

At the October Annual meeting the membership will be voting on prospective nominations for VAREI Officers and Board of Directors positions for the up coming year. Information on how to be considered for nomination, or to nominate someone else will be coming soon. VAREI needs new volunteers to carry the association forward. Step up and get involved!

## Contact Information

email: [homexpert@comcast.net](mailto:homexpert@comcast.net)

web: <http://www.varei.org>

This newsletter will be published quarterly in an attempt to reach the majority of home inspectors throughout the state of Virginia. If you know of any home inspector not familiar with VAREI, pass the newsletter along. We would love to introduce them to the Virginia Association of Home Inspectors.

**Unsubscribe:** To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please send an email to [homexpert@comcast.net](mailto:homexpert@comcast.net) and insert "Unsubscribe from VAREI Newsletter" in the subject line. Please allow 7 days to become effective.