

**A**PRO membership is one of the key reasons I love the rental-purchase industry. I have been a member for nearly 25 years and cannot think of anything that has had a greater overall impact on my business. Years ago, when the rent-to-own industry was in its infantile stages, APRO legitimized the industry. The Association bonded us all together and helped us improve our businesses. We cleaned up our stores, made them look nicer, improved our advertising and changed the image of our industry because APRO provided the information and the ability

profits considerably.

For many years, I was a quiet APRO member who attended conventions and interacted with other members, but didn't get involved in the inner workings of

APRO. Because of a speech Mamie Harper gave at the 1999 convention, I became motivated to get more involved. I first served as a member of the PAC committee and now serve as your immediate past president. I learned more than I ever imagined possible. By becoming more involved, I met and became acquainted with so many people. Now, many of my closest friends are fellow rental dealers and vendors; people I know that if I was struggling in some way, either personally or professionally, would come to Nebraska to lend me some assistance. I became friends with the congressmen and senators from Nebraska and Iowa because I traveled to Washington, D.C., to educate them about our industry and asked for their help in passing federal legislation. There's no way any of us could have pursued federal legislation were it not for APRO.

At last year's APRO buying show debut, I saved more than \$14,000 by taking advantage of show specials. I have always gained a new idea or program that made my company better by attending convention seminars and networking with other dealers. If I have a client who skips to another part of the country, my stores can call a fellow APRO dealer and ask for help in getting my merchandise back. APRO General Counsel Ed Winn has helped me a number of times. He has answered questions regarding the industry that have saved me money. As the foremost authority regarding rental-purchase law, he has helped me with bankruptcies, rental agreements and even offered me sound advice with regard to day-to-day decisions. Over the years, I have saved or made hundreds of thousands of dollars because of my APRO membership.

Because of APRO, I love what I do. I love the industry we work in and am enthusiastic about continuing to make my business better and the industry even more respected. Thank you APRO, both staff and membership, for helping me in so many ways every day. ■

*Lyn Leach is the owner of Ace Furniture and TV in Lincoln, NE. He was APRO's 2003–04 president and currently serves on the APRO board of directors.*

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## The virtues of APRO

to communicate with other dealers who decided together what needed to be accomplished.

We then embarked upon a mission to secure state legislation to protect our businesses and our customers. We marched together as dealers, with APRO's help, and one by one we worked with lawmakers and achieved our goal of passing legislation in my home state of Nebraska and almost every other state. APRO provided the resources and knowledge to help us get this job finished. When the industry was in jeopardy of being treated unfairly by the IRS with regard to depreciating our inventory, APRO, under the leadership of Kevin Quinn, stepped up and helped us get a fair revenue proclamation. Without this, most of us, including myself, would have gone out of business. Today, APRO is helping us secure federal legislation to define further our transaction and protect our livelihood.

Because of APRO, I had the opportunity to meet my rent-to-own heroes. As a young man, I met people like Bud Holladay, Chuck Sims, Larry Tinney, Barry Gambini, Darrell Tissot, Dick Eichlin, Ed Winn, Bill Keese, Norm Slatton and many more. These individuals had a positive influence on me and because of conversations I had with them and ideas they shared with me, I became a better businessman and stronger RTO dealer. There is no way to put a price on the information they shared with me, but I can tell you it saved me a bundle of money and increased my



**By LYN LEACH**  
 APRO board member