At the recent REALTOR® Convention of the Dakotas, Karin Haskell, Alliance Real Estate, Bismarck, ND received the coveted State REALTOR® of the Year Award. This award is the highest honor that the State Association of REALTORS® can give to its members. The selection criteria is judged by the REALTORS® activities on the local, state and national level, on the amount of volunteer activities in their communities, personal business accomplishments and a high professional REALTORS® standard. She was chosen from among 6 other candidates nominated by their local Board of REALTORS®.

Haskell, who has been a licensed REALTOR® since 2006, is a member of the Bismarck-Mandan Board of REALTORS® (BMBOR). She has been actively involved with her local board, the North Dakota Association of REALTORS® and the National Association of REALTORS® since 2007. Karin has served on numerous committees on all three levels (local, state, national), a regular RPAC investor, and has attended many state and national conventions.

Karin has participated largely with the United Way in Bismarck Mandan - volunteering and serving on committees such as the Women’s Leadership Circle, Cabinet Campaign, Backpack Program, Little Black Dress Event, and Day of Caring. She is also a major donor and supporter to community projects and foundations locally.

The North Dakota Association of REALTORS® consists of approximately 1,900 REALTORS® and 280 Business Partner Members with seven local boards throughout the State of North Dakota. These local boards and State Association are part of the National Association of REALTORS®, “The Voice for Real Estate” and America’s largest trade association, representing one million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.
President’s Message

Ben Schroeder,
2018 NDAR President

NDAR members,

WOWZA what a great year! Your State Association has worked so hard for all of you this year and it was truly amazing for me to be a part of such a world class team! Here’s some of the bigger things we accomplished. The launch and redesign of our website to look more modern and be more user friendly, conducted a REALTOR® safety class at the state meetings in Grand Forks, had a very successful Convention of Dakotas in Minot (which included golfing at their very impressive new Minot Country Club), my corny video invite to state meetings in Minot that went viral after Josh Duhmel retweeted it to over 26k views last time I checked...haha, researched into a statewide forms option, introduced new legislation for this upcoming year to increase pre-licensing required hours and increase continuing education hours, and Trust Funds integration is almost fully complete throughout the state. We already have seen over 155 transactions utilizing Trust Funds! Fastest submission and completion was 124 secs with an average of 9.2 hours. Very impressive and a great benefit for our members and smaller associations.

I had three personal goals going into this year.

1) Be the same person going out as I was going into this position
2) Always give my best effort
3) HAVE FUN because you CAN be productive and have fun at the same time as this is such an amazing industry we are all in.

While this has been the biggest challenge of my career it has also been the most rewarding. As my term of your 2018 NDAR State President comes to an end I hope I made our industry proud, our members proud, and most importantly my family proud because in the end that’s what truly matters.

God Bless all of you and thank you again for the opportunity to serve as your 2018 NDAR State President

My Best,
Ben Schroeder
Since its creation in 1950, the honorary fraternity Omega Tau Rho, represented by the Medallion of Service, is awarded by the State Associations in recognition of a member’s various leadership skills. The Medallion of Service is awarded as a token of the high esteem in which inductees are held by their fellow REALTORS® and symbolizes the recognition and appreciation accorded to them for their contributions to the National Association of REALTORS® and its affiliated Institutes, Societies and Councils.

Medallions are awarded to those who have honorably completed their term of office as:

1. An officer or director of the National Association of REALTORS® including members of the Executive Committee; or
2. An elected officer of any Institute, Society or Council, or a governor or director thereof; or
3. A President of a State Association.

Also eligible are staff members of the National Association of REALTORS® with 10 years of service, except the Executive Vice President, Senior Vice Presidents, Comptroller and General Counsel who are eligible after 1 year. Membership was also opened to State REALTORS® of the Year, REALTORS® Emeriti of the National Association, and to Executive Officers of local boards and State Associations with 10 years of service.

Once a medallion is awarded, the recipient is a member for life and cannot receive the award again. This award is truly an honor as it marks exemplary dedication and service by REALTORS® members to their organization.

The 2018 Omega Tau Rho recipients are:

Ben Schroeder -- 2018 NDAR President – Park Company REALTORS®, Fargo
Kristin Oban -- 2017 REALTOR® of the Year -- Century 21 Morrison Realty, Bismarck
William Daniel -- Emeritus – Daniel Companies, Bismarck
Kathy Feist-- Emeritus – Bianco Realty Inc., Bismarck
Jim Guttormson -- Emeritus – Alliance Real Estate, Bismarck
Mark Bickler – Emeritus – Brokers 12, Inc., Minot
Bruce Walker – Emeritus – Coldwell Banker, Minot
Craig McIvor – Emeritus – Dakota Realty, Williston
IRS Info from NAR

You can still deduct your business meal expenses even if they’re part of an entertainment activity, the IRS clarified in temporary guidance last issued last week.

Effective on January 1, 2018, the tax reform law enacted last year retained the 50% deduction for business meal expenses but ended deductions for business-related entertainment, amusement, or recreation. The changes created uncertainty over whether meals remain partially deductible if they were part of entertainment, amusement, or recreation activities. Under the temporary guidance just released, those meal expenses remain 50% deductible provided you can show those expenses were incurred separately from the entertainment expenses.

The meal expenses are eligible, the guidance says, when “the cost of the food and beverages is stated separately from the cost of the entertainment on one or more bills, invoices, or receipts.” The deduction is 50% of the costs.

The clarification is a win for real estate, because business-related meal expenses are common in the industry.

For example, suppose Randi REALTOR invites her business contacts Bob and Bev to a baseball game. Randi purchases tickets for the three of them to attend the game, and while at the game she also buys hot dogs and drinks for herself and Bob and Bev. The guidance indicates that the cost of the game tickets is an entertainment expense and is not deductible. However, the cost of the hot dogs and drinks, which were purchased separately from the game tickets, is still 50% deductible by Randi.

Here are some of the key points in the guidance:

1. The meal expense must be ordinary and necessary and paid or incurred in a trade or business context.
2. The expense is not lavish or extravagant under the circumstances.
3. The taxpayer, or an employee of the taxpayer, is present at the furnishing of the food or beverages.
4. The food and beverages are provided to a current or potential business customer, client, consultant, or similar business contact.
5. In the case of food and beverages provided during or at an entertainment activity, the food and beverages are purchased separately from the entertainment, or the cost of the food and beverages is stated separately from the cost of the entertainment on one or more bills, invoices, or receipts. The entertainment disallowance rule may not be circumvented through inflating the amount charged for food and beverages.

The temporary guidance is in effect until the IRS issues formal rules on the deductibility of expenses for business meals, expected later this year.

To advertise in the ND REALTOR®

Contact Sarah at 1-800-658-3485 or email: bhgads@bhgnews.com

Evan Liddiard
National Assn of REALTORS
Washington DC
202-383-1000

Spring or summer travel plans? There’s no better time to get the best deals on hotels, available just for members of the North Dakota Association of REALTORS®. We’ve partnered with HotelStorm to offer our members exclusive savings continuing all season long. Visit the NDAR website www.ndrealtors.com to utilize this great benefit!
2019 Officers Elected

Congratulations to the 2019 NDAR officers elected during the General Membership/Board of Directors meeting held at the 2018 Convention of the Dakotas, Minot ND.

Also appointed as the NDAR Director at Large by 2019 NDAR President Amy Hullet is Nicole Schoeder, Dickinson

Amy Hullet  
Bismarck  
PRESIDENT

Jill Kjorstad  
Williston  
PRESIDENT-ELECT

Mary Shelkey Miller  
Bismarck  
VICE PRESIDENT

Nicole Schoeder  
Dickinson  
DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Since 1997 Spare Key has been helping families in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin “Bounce and not Break” with a mortgage or rental grant on their behalf while their critically ill or seriously injured child recovers in the hospital.

Spare Key was once again the charity that was focused on at the Convention of the Dakotas. A total of $43,072.00 was raised from their time in Minot. This includes what was raised at the convention, the luncheon, the Dakotas RRC donation and a matching grant of $21,536.00 from the Schulze family.

For more information visit www.sparekey.org
Badlands BOARD OF REALTORS®

In September we held a Lunch n’ Learn to help our members familiarize themselves with RPR. It was very informative! Our President, Nicole Schoeder, made appointments with our local Real Estate Agencies to present the State of the Board. It was very well received and seemed to be appreciated by all. The meetings gave the agents an opportunity to ask questions that they maybe had wanted to ask for a while.

With October, came our Oktoberfest. This event was designed by BBR’s RPAC Committee to thank all of BBR’s RPAC investors that invested $50 or more. The Badlands Board of REALTORS® is calling this group of investors, the 5-0 club and will be continuing to encourage members to invest at this level, or more, so that they can get that exclusive invitation every year. The event was a lot of fun!

This year, December 1st marks the beginning of a new 2 year term for our newly elected officers. On November 15th, at our General Membership meeting, the BBR inducted Mike Schwab as the new President, Tammie Braun as President Elect, Kyle Kuntz as Vice President, and Bonnie Warm as Treasurer. We will be sad to see Nicole Schoeder step down, as she has been an amazing President, but are very excited for what the new officers will bring to the table. Congratulations to all of them.

In December BBR will participate in the annual North Dakota REALTOR® Ring Day. It really is a blessing to be able to help out the community through this kind of work and we are excited for the opportunity!

Badlands Board of REALTORS® and their Business Partners will once again sponsor a United Blood Service Blood Drive in 2019. However; they will be moving their date up to January 4th with hopes that moving the date will afford more members to be able to participate and with the low blood supply during the holidays.

As of November 19th, the Badlands Board of REALTORS® Membership is at 117 with 92 Primary members and 25 Secondary.

Tanya Keck, 
Association Executive

Bismarck-Mandan BOARD OF REALTORS®

BMBOR was successful in working with a coalition of other organizations to pass ballot measures to fund arterial roads in Bismarck. The measures included a half-cent sales tax, capping existing sales tax at the existing level for property tax relief, and a measure to clean up outdated language in the Home Rule Charter.

It’s great to see REALTOR® Dave Lehman, Alliance Real Estate, is a participant in this year’s Chamber Leadership Program. And, Vice President Darren Schmidt has been appointed to Mandan’s West End Re-Development Committee and to the Mandan Renaissance Zoning Committee.

A video using the NAR ‘Own It’ theme song was produced using photos from meetings and events throughout the year. It’s not professionally produced, but we are excited about it! It was debuted at the Inaugural Celebration and Awards Ceremony on November 15. Other highlights from that evening include the announcement of the REALTOR® of the Year award winner, Desri Neether; and Affiliate of the Year winner Lisa Liken-Monroe. New directors and officers were installed including Desri Neether, President; Darren Schmidt, President-elect; Joy Nelson, Vice President; Kristin Oban, NDAR Director; Karin Haskell, NDAR Director; Jeff White, Director; and Mary Ohlhauser, Director. Life memberships for Ann Sharp and Jan Hoge were announced; and REALTOR® Emeritus for Kathy Feist and Jim Guttormson.
Market activity is steady, although down marginally from last year. However, average sale prices continue to increase annually.

Several members attended the NAR Convention in Boston including Desri Neether, Mary Shelkey-Miller, Amy Hullet, Karin Haskell, Jamie McLean, Vicki Roller, Mary Splichal, John VanMiddlesworth, Cathy VanMiddlesworth, and Nancy Deichert.

The annual planning session was held with much discussion focused on the new web site and changes that need to be made to make it more user friendly. A process has just been completed that included focus groups and broker/member surveys. Recommendations for enhancements will be submitted for consideration.

BMBOR will be embarking on a long-range strategic planning process in 2019. In addition, we will begin plans to mark our 75th year as a chartered REALTOR® Association in 2020. There are exciting times ahead!

Nancy Deichert,
Association Executive

Fargo-Moorhead Area
ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

FM REALTORS® are busy wrapping up 2018 and planning for 2019.

In October, President Elect Vicky Matson held a Leadership Retreat at the Coteau des Prairie Lodge in Havana, ND. The Lodge was a beautiful facility to hold our retreat. As we rented the entire Lodge, each participant had their own bedroom and bath. On Day 1, the incoming Board of Directors worked on the Strategic Plan, with Daryl Braham facilitating. The next morning, Vicky Matson led the group in planning 2019 Committee Goals. Although a lot of work was accomplished, there was still plenty of time for some fun, games and skits. Hopefully nobody took pictures… President Elect Vicky continued her training by hosting a Chair, Vice-Chair, Director in Charge training Session in November. One of FM REALTORS® goals for 2019 will be improving communication amongst our volunteers and members and it starts with those serving the organization.

At the November Connections Luncheon, Susie Nickell, Nate Anderson and Scott Breidenbach opened the meeting with a special presentation in honor of Veteran’s Day. We were grateful to have NDAR President and FM REALTOR® member, Ben Schroeder present to say a few words and install 2019 Leadership. Ben talked about his years of leadership, the obligation to get involved and how serving has changed his life. Congrats to President Vicky Matson, President-Elect Nick Olson, Vice President Shane Cullen and new Directors Cathy Hanson, Katie Johansen and Micah Thureen. Welcome! Thank you to Past President Shawn Ostlie for his year serving FM REALTORS® as President.

Congratulations to DeAnne Mason! DeAnne was named to an Honorary Red Kettle Campaign Chairperson for the Salvation Army. DeAnne was instrumental in implementing a REALTOR® Ring Day for the Fargo-Moorhead Salvation Army, which later spread throughout North Dakota, after which it became a national Ring Day for The Salvation Army. We are fortunate to have DeAnne as part of our organization.

The RPAC Committee is busy preparing for this years Holiday Party Silent Auction. This is always one of our most successful RPAC/Issues. We are trying something new this year and having TWO on-line auctions. One will be larger items only and open to ALL members of the association, no matter if they are attending the party or not. The other will be the traditional version with the items on-site as we’ve always done. The Program Committee is working on the entertainment for the party. Members have signed up to participate in a Variety Show with Jason Carrier producing the event. We are looking forward to a fun evening!

Marti Kaiser,
Association Executive

Grand Forks Area
Association of REALTORS®

2018 to date Sold Listings were down just slightly as compared to 2017, Average Sold Price was at $212,400 up from 2204,500 and Average Days on Market is up on average by 15 days.

The Grand Forks Board of REALTORS® members have been very busy in the past few months. The Public Relations Committee participated in a Giving Tree program through the Grand Forks County Social Services. Christmas for six needy families in the Grand Forks area was much more festive because of the
2018 Convention of the Dakotas a Success!

Board of Directors and Annual Membership Meetings:
At the September BOD Meeting, Life Memberships for Julie Albertson, Minot; Jan Hoge, Bismarck Mandan; and Ann Sharp, Bismarck Mandan were approved.

John Smaby, 2018 NAR President Elect, provided a NAR update. Smaby said that 2018 has been a remodeling year for NAR. He reported that NAR leadership has made a three-year commitment to carry forward the “Own It” theme focusing on a long-term vision and a member-first focus. The new CEO has completed a structural audit resulting in team changes. NAR’s reach is another focus area where they are looking at start-ups. The Commitment to Excellence also continues to be a major focus area. The concept of a Chief Advocacy Officer has been developed and a new Chief Lobbyist will be hired by the time of convention in Boston.

*Adopted the 2019 budget.

Election of 2019 Officers and Installation:
President – Amy Hullet, Century 21 Morrison, Bismarck;
President Elect – Jill Kjorstad, RE/MAX Bakken Realty, Williston;
Vice President – Mary Shelkey Miller, Hometown Realty, Bismarck; and
Director at Large – Nicole Schoeder, Continental Real Estate, Dickinson.
Great attendance at the Continuing Education classes

**State REALTOR® of the Year:** Karin Haskell, Alliance Real Estate, Bismarck

**Dakotas RRC Officers 2019:**
President, – Lorrie Nannt, RE/MAX Integrity Realty, Dickinson, ND; Finance Leader/Vice President - Cathie Ogdie, Ogdie Realty, Sioux Falls, SD; Membership Leader – Cheryl Croonquist, Elite Real Estate, Minot, ND and Education Leader - Gayle Chapel, Century 21 Gustofson, Krogman & Associates, Brookings SD; Immediate Past Chair – Charlie Larkin, Diversified Real Estate, LLC, Watertown, SD

**2018 Dakotas CRS of the Year Award:**
Lorrie Nannt, RE/MAX Integrity Realty, Dickinson, ND.

Dakotas RRC members also raised $650 for the Spare Key program to aid families who have critically ill family members.

**Omega Tau Rho Awards:**
For being awarded the 2017 REALTOR® of the Year, Kristin Oban, Century 21 Morrison Realty, Bismarck; the 2018 NDAR President – Ben Schroeder, Park Company REALTORS®, Fargo; for his leadership role as Dakotas RRC President, Charlie Larkin, Diversified Real Estate, Watertown; and for over 40 years of continued membership in all three levels of the REALTOR® family-local, state, and national – William Daniel, Daniel Companies, Bismarck; Kathy Feist, Bianco Realty Inc., Bismarck; Jim Guttormson, Alliance Real Estate, Bismarck; Mark Bickler, Brokers 12, Minot; Bruce Walker, Coldwell Banker, Minot; and Craig McIvor, Dakota Realty, Williston.

**Congratulations to All!!**

A big Thank You to the Minot Board of Realtors® for the great education and entertainment - everyone left with a smile on their face, renewed friendships, and business referrals.

For convention photos check out our Facebook page at [https://www.facebook.com/NorthDakotaRealtors/](https://www.facebook.com/NorthDakotaRealtors/)
NDAR Member
REALTORS® Earn RPAC ND Hall of Fame Status

Three North Dakota Association of REALTORS® members recently were inducted into the NDAR REALTOR® Political Action Committee (RPAC) Hall of Fame at the Convention of the Dakotas held in Minot, ND.

REALTORS® Tate Cymbaluk, Basin Brokers Inc., Williston Board of REALTORS®, Roger Cymbaluk, Basin Brokers Inc., Williston Board of REALTORS®, and Ninetta Wandler, RE/MAX Integrity Realty, Badlands Board of REALTORS® were presented awards and recognized for each contributing an aggregate of $10,000 over the years to NDAR’s Political Action Committee or Political Action Fund (called Issues & Mobilization).

Hall of Fame status requires annual investments to the REALTORS® POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (RPAC) that must result in an aggregate lifetime total of at least $10,000.

RPAC, the REALTORS® POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE, is non-partisan and supports candidates who support the real estate industry.

Save the Date for 2019 Housing Conference

Planning has begun for NDHFA’s 2019 Statewide Housing Conference. The main event will be May 20-21 at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck, ND. Presentations on the 20th will focus on housing policy. The 21st will be training day with property management, development and homeownership tracks. NDHFA will repeat a portion of the homeownership track sessions at the West Fargo Conference Center on May 22. Registration will open in February.
ND REALTOR® Ring Day
Dec 7

NDREC Meeting, Bismarck, ND
Dec 19

2018

2019

Feb 5
NDAR Mtgs/Legislative Impact Day, Bismarck, ND
Feb 6-8
FPC Training & Policy Conference, Washington, DC
Feb 5
NDREC Meeting, Bismarck, ND
Mar 29-April 2
AE Institute, Austin, TX
April 3
NDREC Meeting, Bismarck, ND
May 13-18
REALTORS® Legislative Mtgs, Washington, DC
May 20-22
NDHFA Housing Conf., Bismarck, ND
June 4
NDREC Meeting, Bismarck, ND
August 12-13
Leadership Summit, Chicago, IL
Sept 11-13
REALTOR® Convention of the Dakotas, Deadwood, SD
Nov 6-11
NAR Convention, San Francisco, CA

2020

May 11-16
REALTORS® Legislative Meetings, Washington, DC
May 12-14
NDHFA Housing Conf., Bismarck, ND
Nov 11-16
NAR Convention, New Orleans, LA

Updated 11/16/18
Officers pictured from left to right are: (Back Row) Nick Leavy, Kerry Strom, Chris Greenberg, and NDAR President Ben Schroeder. (Front Row) RuthAnn Halvorson, Laurie Burkholder, Jessica Rice, Jodi Danzl, Marilee Moen, Phil Vanyo, and Russel Crary.

The generous support of REALTORS® and Affiliates of the Grand Forks Board of REALTORS® Committee members also participated in the Listen Center’s Christmas tree program. Area businesses decorate Christmas trees which are then donated to needy families in Grand Forks. All monies from this program go the Listen Center in Grand Forks.

We will be participating in the Salvation Army Bell ringing project along with the rest of the State. We will have over 100 volunteer hours and will be able to raise quite a bit of money. We serve coffee and hot chocolate to all members ringing at the outside sites.

At our November Membership meeting we were honored to have NDAR 2018 President Ben Schroeder in Grand Forks to conduct our Installation of Officers Ceremony. Thanks Ben for traversing through the bad weather to join us. Good thing all the geese have moved south!

John Colter, Association Executive

Jamestown BOARD OF REALTORS®

Our summer Social/RPAC event was a great success. Changes were made to this event compared to previous years. We skipped the silent auction and included more social time with interactive fun and games. We raised a similar amount to previous years.

Since our last report our board has sponsored two education classes, Tax Strategies and Code of Ethics. We had a strong attendance providing our members access to great training.

In August we participated in the “Block Party”. This is a community event in downtown Jamestown designed to welcome the Jamestown College freshman to town. Participating organizations set up booths on Main Street and provide goodies to all in attendance. The event is open to the public and has a large crowd show up to support the college freshman.

This year’s food drive yielded great participation. Our members provided many items to our local food pantries.

In October we installed our new Board of Directors who will start their official duties on the first of December. Director – Jenna Schulte, Secretary – Jessica Clemens, President-Elect – Tricia Seckerson, President – Sally Domke, and Past President – Austin Bauer.

In addition we held a successful open house event in October. This event included offices in both Jamestown and Valley City. We showcased many homes in both cities with good interest from the public.

Our next event will be the annual Christmas Party which includes an auction that provides funds to several local programs and some RPAC funding.

Scot Nething, Association Executive
Minot
BOARD OF REALTORS®

Wow it has been a busy fall! We were excited to host the 2018 Convention of the Dakotas here in the Magic City. We had over 400 attendees, thank you to all who came to network, learn and share!

In October, we kicked off our Kicking the Cold Campaign in conjunction with the Salvation Army’s Coats for Kids to collect and distribute winter gear for area youth. We were able to assist with handing out over 200 coats. We look forward to continuing this event annually!

At our November Membership Luncheon we had the swearing in of new officers for 2018-2019. Lisa Olson - President, Tamie Dunn - President Elect, Amber Kraft – Vice President/Secretary, Jane Mayer – 1 Year Director, Kerri Zablotney – 2 Year Director and Bonnie Domsteen – 3 Year Director. Mayor Shaun Sipma was our guest speaker and spoke on flood insurance and future expansion options of the city landfill.

Remaining board events for the year include our Annual Holiday Party & Salvation Army Auction November 29th as well as Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army on December 7th.

Thank you to the 2018 MBOR leadership team and committee volunteers for an amazing year!

Beth Mayer, Association Executive

Williston
BOARD OF REALTORS®

Heather Kitzman, Vice President, conducted New Member Installation for Tijana Jones at the General Membership meeting in October. We also held a donation drive at the meeting which brought in much-needed items for the Family Crisis Shelter.

Welcome to the 2019 leadership team: Heather Kitzman, President, Kari Donner, Vice President, JoAnn Callahan, Secretary/Treasurer and Alex Gilbertson, Director. Thanks to President Mitzi Bestall for her service in 2018.

Two members attended the NAR Annual Convention in Boston. One of them, Amanda Simard, said “Being able to go to the NAR convention in Boston was definitely an amazing opportunity. The speakers that I saw were able to bring that motivation I needed in a time when we tend to slow down with the holidays coming up. They also had puppies we could cuddle at the convention so that always makes for a great experience!”

The signup sheet to participate in the Williston Board of REALTORS® Ring Day on December 7th has gone out. We’re pretty excited that our Membership Committee secured indoor sites this year!

On November 29th we will have our Christmas party with a social, dinner, games of chance, auctions and an Ugly Christmas Sweater contest. The proceeds will benefit service organizations and individuals with medical needs in our community.

Jane Marum, Association Executive

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www.ndrin.com
Elections are over with (thank you) which means we will have an upcoming legislative session coming before us soon. As most of you know our Government Affairs Director retired late this summer and we have been on the search for a replacement.

After publishing the opening and not finding a good fit for what we were looking for, leadership and I discussed hiring a lobbying service to help us out at least through the 2019 session. Happy to report we have contracted with Olson Effertz Lobbying and Consulting.

We will continue to keep you informed as the session gets underway and ask for your involvement as well. We are all in this together to better our industry as well as for the public and home ownership. Legislators need to hear not only from staff and our lobbyist, but most importantly from you. Please do your part when called upon.

The bills we are bringing forward started in committee over the last 18 months, went to task force for research and recommendation, back to committee with recommendations, and then forwarded to the Board of Directors for final approval and support. See the 2019 NDAR Advocacy Agenda article elsewhere in this newsletter, but to be brief we will be introducing bills on increasing the pre-licensing education requirements and also a first time homebuyers savings account - as well as monitoring any other bills that impact our industry or home-ownership.

2019 marks the 75th anniversary of the North Dakota Association of REALTORS® so watch for more info coming on that this spring. Looking at membership numbers from the inception of the organization it is interesting to watch the growth through membership numbers. We were in the single digits the first few years and broke into the 100’s in 1960 and the 1,000’s in 1979. We lingered in the 1,000 to 1,250 members until 2007 and now are in the 1,800’s.

Happy Holidays and to a very successful 2019!
North Dakota Association of REALTORS® Launches New Website

In September, NDAR launched the new and improved website www.ndrealtors.com. NDAR’s new site features a sleek, modern design with colorful graphics and photos, front slide banner, updated task bars, more informational pages, and a members-only area with secure login for members only. The new design also incorporates a new color scheme matching the NDAR logo, which was updated a few years ago.

To watch the promo that was sent out before the launch, visit our YouTube page at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oINd0l8gSw

The biggest change with the site is the “NDAR Member” area which provides information that only is available to NDAR Members. You will need to log-in to view that portion of the website.

The log-in is your Member ID Number (NRDs Number) and a universal password. The password is NDAR01701

If you are unsure of your Member ID (NRDs number), you can visit the link below provided by the National Association of REALTORS® to get your ID. https://login.connect.realtor/#/forgotmember or call NRDs Help at 1-800-874-6500 (and while there you should check out the great member benefits that are available to you through the National Association of REALTORS®.)

You also can call or email your Local Association/Board office to obtain your Member ID Number.

Visit www.ndrealtors.com to view the website!
A ServiceDog With An “ATTITUDE” Is Not Welcome

Last year, the Supreme Court of Vermont was asked to examine the competing interests between a tenant, who claimed the right to have a dog as a reasonable accommodation for her disability, and the landlord with a ‘no pets’ policy. Such issues with pets are not unusual to the modern real estate world; however, the decision by the Vermont court offers some important insight to the allowable balancing of these competing interests.

In the Vermont case, the tenant (“Johnson”) lived in Section 8 housing, which included apartments for disabled senior residents. Under the lease, pets were not allowed unless the resident qualified the pet as necessary reasonable accommodation for a disability. Johnson, who suffered from chronic pain, had a dog named Dutchess living in her apartment. Unfortunately, the evidence indicated that Dutchess was not a candidate for Ms. Canine Congeniality in the apartment complex. Other residents started complaining that Dutchess bared her teeth and lunged them, and that Dutchess also had the bad habit of barking loudly through the door when other residents passed Johnson’s apartment door. In fact, many residents expressed fear about Dutchess and refused to leave their apartments during those times when Dutchess was outside.

The problem escalated to the point that the landlord decided that Johnson needed to be evicted. In response, Johnson produced a doctor’s note, opining that the presence of a dog would help Johnson cope with the anxiety arising from the chronic pain. In response, the landlord approved the request for reasonable accommodation, but denied approval of Dutchess, based on bad history which Dutchess had created within the apartment complex.

Apparently, Johnson refused to get rid of Dutchess, and the landlord subsequently started an eviction proceeding. After the eviction hearing, the trial judge agreed that Johnson was entitled to a reasonable accommodation for an emotional assistance animal, but rejected Johnson’s claim that she had the right to keep Dutchess. In reaching that conclusion, the trial judge noted that Dutchess had been trained as a guard dog and that Dutchess was “people and dog aggressive.”

Johnson appealed the trial court ruling. The Supreme Court of Vermont noted that a tenant has a right to reasonable accommodation for an assistance animal “if the tenant demonstrates that he or she is disabled and that tenant has a disability-related need for an assistance animal.” However, the Court added, a reasonable accommodation request can be denied (1) if the specific assistance animal would pose “a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation” or (2) if the specific assistance animal “would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation.” The Court cautioned that the inquiry must be directed at the specific animal; thus, a decision regarding the animal cannot be based upon the animal’s breed or size, upon speculative fear of harm, or upon damage caused by other animals.

In this case, the Supreme Court decided that the trial judge had correctly ruled in favor of the landlord. The Court felt that there was sufficient evidence to substantiate Dutchess’ bad behavior toward other people and other dogs. In addition, the Supreme Court noted that it was the obligation of Johnson, not the trial judge, to offer reasonable alternatives which would have accommodated the problems posed by Dutchess.

Although Vermont court decisions are only binding in Vermont, this case is instructive for its analysis of the considerations involved in a reasonable accommodation request. At a minimum, it confirms that landlords (and condominium associations) have the right to consider the manner in which the presence of a service dog (or other animal) affects others within the complex. The right of accommodation cannot be ignored; however, the rights of others cannot be ignored, either. That is why the law calls it “reasonable” accommodation and not “absolute” accommodation.
REATOR® Convention of the Dakotas
September 11-13, 2019
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The 2019 Convention of the Dakotas “All In” will be hosted by the Mt. Rushmore Area Association of REALTORS® in beautiful Deadwood, SD.

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Karen George of New Horizons Realty Advisors, LLC, Watford City received the 2018 NDAR Good Neighbor Award at the REALTOR® Convention of the Dakotas in Minot, ND. The Good Neighbor Award recognizes REALTORS® for their efforts in community and charitable service and is awarded every other year during the REALTOR® Convention.

President of the North Dakota Association of REALTORS® states, “We created the Good Neighbor Award to recognize REALTORS® efforts to make their communities a better place to live.” He further explained, “REALTORS® are generally very involved in their communities and often times, it goes unnoticed. We want to recognize our members who are not only business people, but also give back to their communities, dedicating themselves to community services projects while serving the needs of their real estate clients.”

Karen commits much of her volunteer efforts to the Watford City Chamber of Commerce and is a member of the Badlands Board of REALTORS®. In the nearly three years George has been involved, she has gone from board member to Vice President of the Chamber. Karen was also instrumental in coordinating a speedy response to find temporary housing for those in need during the July tornado that destroyed the Prairie View RV Park south of Watford City. In the past two years George has donated over 500+ hours to the community and Chamber of Commerce.

George was chosen among other REALTOR® nominees from across North Dakota.

The North Dakota Association of Realtors® consists of approximately 1,900 REALTORS® and 280 Business Partner Members with seven local Boards throughout the State of North Dakota. These local Boards and the State Association are part of the National Association of Realtors®, with a combined membership of over 1,000,000, which is the largest trade association in the United States.
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Registration Fees - Full registration includes all convention activities and education except the
tuesday night event, Golf, and Dakota RRC Education.

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Requests for refund received on or before close of business on July 31, 2019 will receive the registration fee minus the adm-
inistrative processing fee. Requests for refund received after July 31, 2019, will receive one-half of the registration fee minus the
administrative processing fee. No refunds available after August 15, 2019. Registration fees will not be refunded for individuals
who registered and did not show to check in for convention. All refund requests will be processed following the convention.
2019 NDAR Advocacy Agenda

- To have introduced legislation creating First Time Home Buyer Savings Accounts in ND financial institutions, which would allow for a state income tax exemption for beneficiaries of single accounts to save up to $3,000 and for beneficiaries of joint accounts to save up to $6,000 per year toward the eligible expenses of purchasing a single family residence in ND if they either have never purchased a home or have not purchased a home within the last three years.

- To have introduced legislation increasing the number of pre-licensing hours for real estate licensees from the current 45 hours to 90 hours to become effective in 2021 and to have those additional hours be scenario-based training to help new licensees be better prepared to serve clients when they are first licensed.

- To come before the Legislative Administrative Rules Committee to ask for the following changes:
  - To increase the number of annual Continuing Education credits for real estate licensees to remain licensed from the current nine (9) hours to 12 hours.
  - To add language that clarifies the role of teams in the real estate business.
  - To update real estate rules to ensure they appropriately reflect current real estate practice.

- To monitor all bills of interest to the real estate industry, property rights and homeownership that emerge from the interim committee studies and/or are introduced during the 2019 Legislative Session and take positions either for or against depending on whether they are beneficial or detrimental to the real estate industry, property rights and/or home ownership.

Follow the North Dakota Association of REALTORS® on Facebook and Twitter. Members can keep updated and follow all things going on with the association by following our pages.

Keep up on things impacting our industry on a real-time basis - state and federal updates, NDAR and NAR updates, industry news, business tips and so much more!

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