



UPCOMING EVENTS

New Member Orientation

Tue, Feb 1 at 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Wed, Feb 2 at 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Thu, Feb 3 at 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Affiliate Council

Tue, Feb 1 at 9:00 am

MLS Users Group

Wed, Feb 2 at 10:00 am

Education Forum

Thu, Feb 3 at 10:00 am

Equal Opportunity Task Force

Tue, Feb 8 at 11:00 am

Social Events Forum

Wed, Feb 9 at 10:00 am

YPN Event - LEED & Libations

Thu, Feb 10 at 5:30 pm

YPN Advisory Board

Fri, Feb 11 at 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Governmental Affairs Committee

Wed, Feb 16 at 12:00 pm

Nebraska Real Estate Commission Meeting

Thu, Feb 17 at 9:00 am, Lincoln, NE
Fri, Feb 18 at 9:00 am, Lincoln, NE

WCR Board Meeting

Thu, Feb 17 at 9:00 am

Knowledge Is Power Seminar - Computer 101

Thu, Feb 17 at 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Chili Cook-off Event

Fri, Feb 18 at 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

GPRMLS Executive Committee

Tue, Feb 22 at 9:30 am

GPRMLS Board of Directors

Tue, Feb 22 at 10:15 am

OABR Executive Committee

Wed, Feb 23 at 9:30 am

OABR Board of Directors

Wed, Feb 23 at 10:15 am

New Member Orientation

Tue, Mar 1 at 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Wed, Mar 2 at 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Thu, Mar 3 at 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Affiliate Council

Tue, Mar 1 at 9:00 am

It's Your Party!

What would happen to the Omaha real estate market if the mortgage interest deduction was eliminated from the tax code?

Experts agree the loss would not be a one-year event; homeowners would lose out on tax savings each and every year, compounding the loss and reducing the present value of real estate as an investment. Consider these facts about the mortgage interest deduction:

- 38.5 million taxpayers in the United States claim a deduction for mortgage interest; deducting a total of \$470 billion.
- 51 million – or 68 percent – of the approximately 75 million owner-occupied homes in the United States have a mortgage.
- The average taxpayer deducts \$12,200 from taxable income, saving approximately \$3,050 in taxes.

In recent weeks, several proposals suggesting changes to the tax system have been discussed, so REALTORS® should never take for granted the mortgage interest deduction benefit associated with home ownership.

BIPARTISAN REALTOR® PARTY

Our allies in local, state and federal government span the political spectrum – and Omaha REALTORS® need to work with each one of them to make sure they continue to support the interests of the real estate profession. In fact, the REALTOR® Party has been a leader in building the bipartisan relationships necessary on both sides of the aisle in every state. The REALTOR® organization needs to build on that success and your involvement in 2011 will help make that happen.



This year, consider becoming involved at the local, state and national level of the REALTOR® Organization by making a contribution to the 2011 RPAC fund when volunteers call. One hundred percent of your contribution is used to elect pro-REALTOR® candidates.

Funds received by RPAC are split: 70 percent remains in Nebraska for state and local elections; 30 percent of your contribution goes to fund key U.S. House and Senate races.

RPAC SUCCESS

In a January 21, article on the Politico website, REALTORS® were highlighted as the new model operation for political influence nationwide with the evolution of the "REALTOR® Party," a moniker of the National Association of REALTORS®.

During the 2010 mid-term elections the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) gave a total of \$6.5 million by backing 103 pro-REALTOR® candidates; electing 66 of them in a bipartisan effort.

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Property Marketing



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The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® is pledged to the achievement of equal housing opportunity throughout the community. The Board encourages and supports a marketplace in which there are no barriers to obtaining housing because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap, or familial status.



Message from the OABR President

Greetings!

As we move forward in 2011, I believe we have a lot to look forward to in the Omaha area. Already in 2011 a number of publications have recently ranked Omaha as the place to work and live. These Greater Omaha rankings include:

- America's Most Affordable Cities – # 1!
 (Forbes – January 2011)
- Omaha was named one of America's Lowest-Risk Housing Markets
 (SmartMoney.com – January 2011)
- Omaha was listed among Seven Cities that have Caught Start-Up Fever
 (Details – February 2011)
- Omaha was named one of 10 Up-And-Coming Startup Hubs From Around the World
 (Grasshopper Group – January 2011)

It appears to me that there is strong winter activity with a number of buyers out there considering purchasing a home. Strong activity should lead to strong sales. I encourage each and every one of you to sit down with your manager or an accountability partner to set goals and to come up with an action plan and take advantage as we turn the corner with the Omaha economy.

Omaha's rebounding economy guarantees buyers and sellers in the marketplace. Our market will improve much quicker than others across the country and will always be much more stable than the roller coaster rides that the coasts have seen.

Make sure you stay positive, continue to have excitement and enthusiasm about this business and you will be successful.

Best regards,

Vince Leisey
 2011 President



Vince Leisey
 2011 President

Special Events

- **YPN Event - LEED & Libations**
 Thu, Feb 10 at 5:30 pm
- **Knowledge Is Power Seminar - Computer 101**
 Thu, Feb 17 at 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
- **Chili Cook-off Event**
 Fri, Feb 18 at 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

**Prizes will be awarded for the
best "Secret" Chili!**



Judging (and tasting) will be on:
Friday, February 18, 2011 from 11:00-1:00 pm in the
Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® Education Center

CHILI COOKING CONTEST RULES OF COMPETITION

1. Any office (or combination of offices) may enter, including REALTOR®, Affiliates and Institute Affiliates.
2. Chili must be prepared ahead of time and brought hot to the OABR.
3. A double batch of chili must be prepared to provide samples to everyone attending (over 200 people attend each year)
4. Winners will be based on ballot vote by celebrity judges. There will be prizes to the winning participating chefs.
5. Judging will be at 11:00 am and the decision will be final.
6. The OABR will provide serving cups, spoons and napkins for each person. Pop will also be available.

**If you or someone in
your office would like to
participate as a chef in the
cookoff, please contact:
Donna at the OABR
Office, 402-619-5551 or
DShipley@OABR.com,
by February 7, 2011.**

A Night of Hockey

For about 180 REALTORS®, family and friends the UNO Mavericks Hockey Night was exciting and fun even though the Mavs dropped a close, one-point game in overtime. The Qwest Center event, sponsored by the Social Events Forum of the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® got on track with everyone connecting at the Old Mattress Factory for dinner and social

hour. At the end of the night, the Food Bank of the Heartland and REALTOR® Dave Dunn were the big winners; the result of a benefit-raffle for an autographed hockey helmet from the UNO Mavericks 2011 team. A special thank you to all who sold tickets and promoted the event. More photos at Photos.OABR.com.



**SOCIAL
EVENTS**
Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®



Continued from Page 1

According to Politico, the success of the REALTOR® organization has more to do with candidates that are pro or con on big issues for REALTORS®, than if they are Democrat or Republican.

REALTORS® maximized their impact by taking on sizeable roles in 11 races, including some of the hardest fought contests, and its candidates won in eight of them. Of the candidates selected to receive maximum support from the association, five were Republicans and six were Democrats.

The REALTORS® website summarizes that “Electing and re-electing REALTOR® friendly candidates is an integral part of protecting the industry. During the 2010 mid-term election, REALTORS® were the driving force in triggering the candidates’ understanding that stable and sustainable housing markets are the central component of our economic recovery... Because of these ongoing efforts, the next Congress will contain many old friends and new friends who understand real estate issues.”

Politico also pointed out that all communications in the campaigns feature positive messages about the candidate on real estate issues, a policy that helped it avoid accusations of running ads deemed unfair or false. According to Federal Election Commission records, the Realtors’ program was financed with individual donations from thousands of members, which also made it distinct in its success.

IN NEBRASKA

Recently, Omaha REALTORS® participated in the Nebraska REALTORS® Association’s Legislative Days, held each year in Lincoln during January – a key time for the Nebraska Legislature. In a bill-review work session, over 60 individual pieces of newly-introduced legislation impacting the real estate industry and private

property rights were reviewed with lobbyists and legal counsel representing the Nebraska REALTORS®; many of the bills were earmarked for support or opposition. REALTORS® participating in the events heard a presentation by Sen. Mike Flood, Speaker of the Nebraska Legislature, had lunch with State Senators and enjoyed an evening reception with Governor Heineman at the Governor’s Mansion.

If you would like to join the Governmental Affairs effort, please contact Donna Shipley, DShipley@OABR.com or 402-619-5551.

NAR Public Policy Priorities

Political observers agree that significant federal income tax legislation is inevitable. NAR’s priorities include those impacting commercial and residential real estate:

- Mortgage Interest Deduction: NAR opposes any changes that would limit or undermine current law.
- Capital Gains Exemption: NAR opposes any changes to the capital gains exemption on the sale of a home.
- Estate Tax Reform: NAR supports repeal of the estate tax but opposes the portion of the repeal that requires the use of so-called “carryover basis.” If the estate tax were to be revised, NAR supports the lowest possible rate (but in no event a rate higher than the maximum individual tax rates) and a substantial exclusion.

Depreciation—Tenant Improvements: NAR supports efforts to establish a permanent rule that more accurately reflects the depreciable lives of buildings and to conform amortization periods for tenant improvements more closely to the term of the lease.



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Submitted By: Nancy Spidle
Mold Solutions, Inc.
dba Restoration Solutions



12 Things You Should Know About Mold

Over the past decade, there has been an increased awareness among the general public that sensitivity to mold is a significant cause of allergic diseases. These diseases include allergic asthma, allergic rhinitis, allergic fungal sinusitis, bronchopulmonary mycoses, and hypersensitivity pneumonitis.

Many people consider mold an inconvenience in a wet basement or poorly ventilated bathroom. But molds can be much more than just an inconvenience – it can affect your health and the structural integrity of your house.

Molds use tiny spores to reproduce. Spores that become airborne can be hard to filter out and may stay suspended in the air for long periods of time. A few mold species are capable of producing toxins if conditions are right. People vary in their sensitivity to the concentrations of spores in the air. The elderly, children, and people with compromised immune systems are most vulnerable to the effects of inhaled spores, but even healthy people may react to high concentrations.

For mold to grow, it needs moisture and a food source. Since there is usually plenty of organic material in a home to serve as food for the mold, the presence of water determines where mold will grow. If you can see visible mold growth or smell musty odors, then you may have mold growing in your home.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MOLD

1. Exposure to elevated levels of molds can cause serious health problems. Those most susceptible include young children, the elderly, those with compromised immune systems, and other sensitive individuals.
2. Mold spores can cause health problems even if the spores are dead.
3. Potential problems include allergic reaction, respiratory and sinus problems, asthma, cold and flu-like symptoms, headache, fatigue, trouble concentrating, and memory loss.
4. Many molds have the potential to cause health problems including Alternaria, Aspergillus,

Chaetomium, Cladosporium, Fusarium, Penicillium, and Stachybotrys. (Remember: Just because you can't pronounce it, doesn't mean it can't harm you.)

5. Mold spores are very common outdoors; there is no practical way to eliminate all mold spores indoors.
6. Mold requires an organic food source (such as cloth, plasterboard, or wood) and a moisture source to grow. Mold can begin to grow if any organic material remains wet for more than 48 hours.
7. To eliminate mold, eliminate moisture: Fix the source of the water problem and/or reduce indoor humidity levels to 30-60%.



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8. Clean and dry any damp or wet building materials and furnishings within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth.
9. Mold growth is often a visible sign of a structural defect that allows moisture to intrude into a building.
10. Mold can grow undetected inside wall spaces, behind and under cabinets, under carpet, and inside HVAC systems.
11. The best way to abate mold growth indoors is to remove the impacted materials. Cleaning the surface of a material with mold growth may not always kill the mold, especially if mold is growing on porous materials like plasterboard or wood.
12. Cleaning large areas of mold growth can cause airborne levels of spores to increase up to 10,000 times that of background levels, resulting in acute exposure to those doing the cleanup if personal protective equipment is not worn.

References: The EPA's Indoor Air-Mold Resources Web Site (www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldresources.html) and the Mold Services Group (www.molddoctors.com).

THE HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

The health implications associated with "toxic" mold are debated on a daily basis. However, the debate does not center on mold itself. The experts agree that mold has been a likely cause of typical allergic reactions in humans for many years. Furthermore, mold spores are known to worsen asthmatic and other respiratory symptoms. The debate lies in the reference to mold as being "toxic" or lethal. According to the Centers for Disease Control, there are few documented cases in which "toxic" molds (those

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AFFILIATES... A Council of the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®

The role of the Affiliate Council of the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® is to promote business relationships and services to REALTOR® members, actively solicit Affiliate membership in the OABR and promote ethical business practices of Affiliate Members.

AFFILIATE MEMBERS ATTENDING THE JANUARY 2011 MEETING:

Regi Powell (President) –
Farmers Insurance/Powell Insurance
Deb Martin (President-Elect) – Northwest Bank
Wendy Walker (Secretary) – Omaha Title & Escrow Inc
Brenda Stuart (Treasurer) – ServiceOne Inc
John Angus – Basics and Beyond Computer Specialists
Laura Bambino – Great Western Bank
Lori Bonnstetter – AmeriSpec Home Inspection Serv
Cherie Casey – The Home Buyers Protection Co
Joanne Cawley – Brickkicker Inspection Service
Tracy Connor – City-Wide Termite and Pest Control
Janet Dragon – Heartland Reva Team
Cyndi Johnson – TNT Insurance Inc
Debbie Kalina – Radon Protection Tech LLC
Sara Kelley – Great Western Bank
PK Kopun – Metro 1st Mortgage
Josh Livingston – American Title Inc
Laura Longo – Centris Federal Credit Union
Chip Monahan – Monahan Financial Inc
Scott Moore – Rels Title
Phillips, BevVan – Home Access Solutions Inc
John Ponc – Security National Bank
Brent Rasmussen – Mortgage Specialists LLC
Mary Sladek – Farmers Insurance Group
Ruth Smith – Norm's Door Service
Jody Smythe – MetLife Home Loans
Nancy Spidle – Mold Solutions
Alan Stoltenberg – SAC Federal Credit Union
Matt Thiel – DRI Title & Escrow
Carlene Zabawa – American National Bank
Dawn Zaller – Team USA Mortgage

www.OABRAffiliates.com.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- Tuesday, Feb. 1, 9:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, Mar. 1, 9:00 a.m.

All Affiliate members are welcome to attend.

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**Brent Rasmussen,
CRMS, President**



Continued from Page 7

containing mycotoxins) have caused such health conditions as pulmonary hemorrhage, kidney and liver failure, or death.

HOW DO I GET RID OF MOLD?

It is impossible to get rid of all mold and mold spores indoors: some mold spores will be found floating through the air and in house dust. The mold spores will not grow if moisture is not present. Indoor mold growth can and should be prevented or controlled by controlling moisture indoors. If there is mold growth in your home, you must clean up the mold and fix the water problem. If you clean up the mold, but don't fix the water problem, then, most likely, the mold problem will come back.

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EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Following a water-damage emergency, water needs to be cleaned up immediately. If left too long, your home can begin to see early signs of mold growth. In addition, your belongings, as well as elements of your home, such as drywall and base boards, can only be saved if the dry-out process is started right away. This is why you should call the professionals at Restoration Solutions.

Our team is ready 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year to respond to your water damage. Unless we are experiencing extreme conditions, our team will respond to your water loss within one to two hours. Restoration Solutions will dry the affected areas, communicate with your insurance company and restore the building or residence to pre-loss condition.

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Editor's Note: The Article "Omaha Affordable Housing Program Benefits REALTORS®" in January's FOCUS was submitted by Mary Packett, Dundee Realty Co.



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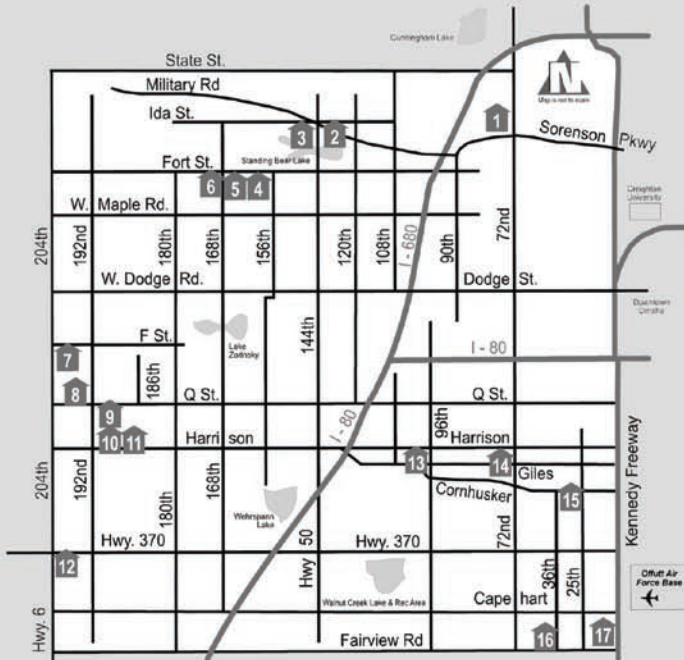
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Update to the Paragon 5 URL

The Great Plains REALTORS® Multiple Listing Service is pleased to announce the agent-ready release of our new Paragon 5 MLS system.

Important: If you are currently using the original URL address for Paragon 5 (oabr.fnismls.com) you will be redirected to the updated URL for our MLS.

The following will be the new Paragon 5 URL address for our MLS System:

www.Paragon5.GPRMLS.com

IMPORTANT NOTES:

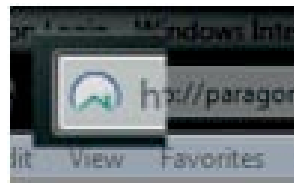
- Both your current Paragon 4 and Paragon 5 sites will continue to share the same database. There is no need to duplicate actions in both systems.
- Paragon 4 will remain operational for several more months until completion of the MLS Administration sections of the program.

We will be working with LPS Real Estate to communicate a date for when Paragon 4 will be disabled. We will communicate when this information becomes available.

Replacing Your Desktop Icon

If you currently use a desktop icon on your PC to access our MLS system, you will need to update that as well.

1. You can place a desktop icon for Paragon on your desktop by clicking the icon next to the website's URL in the address bar, holding down mouse button and dragging the icon to the task bar at the bottom of the screen.



2. While still holding down the mouse button, drag the icon to wherever you want to place it on your desktop and release the mouse button.
3. The new Paragon 5 URL address is now a desktop shortcut!

MLS Users Group

The MLS Users Group is a very active committee that meets the first Wednesday of every month at 10:00 am in the OABR conference room. In the last 6 months we have been;

- Beta testers for the new Paragon 5 (which works with Safari for all you Mac users!!)
- Beta testers for Paragon Client Connect
- Modernizing the MLS input fields (including updated school districts, adding sub areas, adding a price per square footage field, adding modern features, and removing outdated features)
- Involved in Doc Central and MLS orientation training

The projects that we are currently working on are;

- Consolidating our property subtype and Style fields
- Expanding the residential rental fields
- Expanding rDesk & Paragon IDX Smartframing

Our goal is to make the MLS a valuable and accurate source of information to help you be more productive! If this is something you would like to get involved in (all experience and "tech" levels are encouraged), please feel free to join us at a meeting or e-mail us at mls@gprmls.com.

Gina Ogle
MLS Users Group Chair

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2011: The Code Meets Today's Realities

The REALTOR® Code of Ethics is a dynamic, living document that guides our professional activities and our relationships with other practitioners. Here's a look at some of the changes for 2011.



- No discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. For many years, the Code has assured the public that REALTORS® would not deny any person equal professional services based on their race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin. In response to the recommendations of several state associations, Article 10 and Standard of Practice 10-3 were amended to add sexual orientation as a protected category.
- A greater duty to share information. Article 3 obligates REALTORS® to cooperate with other brokers to promote our clients' interests. New Standard of Practice 3-9 explains that the duty to cooperate includes a duty to share information about listed property and to make property available to other brokers for showing to prospective purchasers. Standard of Practice 3-7 was clarified, substituting "relationship with the client" for "representational status," which acknowledges that a REALTOR® performing an appraisal may be seeking information about property yet not actually "representing" a buyer or seller.
- Linking to key disclosures on the Web. The Professional Standards Committee continues to consider how the Code applies to the Internet and mobile technology. Standard of Practice 12-5 requires REALTORS® to disclose the name of their

firm in all advertising of real estate services and listed property. But in some cases, only a very limited amount of information can be displayed via electronic communication; consider posts on Twitter. Standard of Practice 12-5 was amended to take these limitations into account, and now provides that these displays are exempt from the requirement to disclose the firm's name, but only if they are linked to all required disclosures.

By Cliff Niersbach REALTOR® Mag, January 2011

To download the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, go to <http://www.realtor.org/mempolweb.nsf/pages/printable2011Code>.

American Attitudes

According to a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® survey of 3,793 adults conducted by Harris Interactive and released in January 2011, home owners and renters agree that home ownership benefits individuals and families, strengthens our communities, and is integral to our nation's economy. Among the findings of NAR's "American Attitudes About Homeownership" survey:

- The vast majority of both home owners and renters say that owning a home is a smart decision over the long term. Even in today's challenging economy, 95% of owners and 72% of renters believe that over a period of several years, it makes more sense to own a home.
- Home owners are much more likely to be satisfied with the quality of their family and community life than renters. While more than half of owners (56%) are "very" or "extremely" satisfied with the overall quality of their family life, only about one-third (36%) of renters report the same levels of satisfaction. Also, 43% of home owners are "very" or "extremely" satisfied with their community life, compared with 30% of renters.
- An overwhelming majority of home owners are happy with their decision to own a home. A full 93% of owners surveyed would buy again.
- Most renters aspire to home ownership. The majority of renters (63%) say they are at least somewhat likely to purchase a home at some point in the future. Among them, young adults (18- to 24-years-old) have the strongest aspirations for home ownership.

The survey also confirmed that home owners and renters continue to have concerns about the economy:

- In today's market, many aspiring home owners face worries about job security and credit worthiness. Among renters who are "very" or "extremely" likely to buy a home in the future, three out of five consider confidence in job security or creditworthiness to be an obstacle.
- Home owners and renters both believe that the mortgage interest deduction should not be targeted for change. 74% of owners and 62% of renters say it's "extremely" or "very" important that the MID remain in place.

Given the strong public support of and aspirations for owning a home, we need to keep in place policies that support and encourage responsible, sustainable home ownership.



Monica
LANG, CSP
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Lisa, Renee & Susan for their
Hard work & Dedication*



Renee Lampman

WCR REALTOR® of the Year 2010

Susan Clark

WCR Entrepreneur of the Year 2010



*Thank you **LISA RITTER**
for your Leadership as the 2010
WCR President*



Win an iPad!

Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® RPAC Challenge

One winner will receive an iPad with
Wi-Fi + 3G and 64 GB plus an iPad case
retail value approximately \$950.00.



Contribution dates: January 1, 2011 – August 1, 2011

Drawing to be held at the OABR Picnic on August 10, 2011

Political contributions are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal and state income tax purposes.

- ☐ **\$25 per entry ticket** (Fair Share)
- ☐ **2 tickets for \$50**
- ☐ **5 tickets for \$100** (99 Club)
- ☐ **8 tickets for \$150** (Senator's Club)
- ☐ **14 tickets for \$250** (Capitol Club)
- ☐ **20 tickets for \$365** (\$1-A-Day Club)
- ☐ **30 tickets for \$500** (Governor's Club)
- ☐ **65 tickets for \$1000** (Sterling "R" Club)

Payment Option:

☐ My check is enclosed (payable to Nebraska RPAC)

☐ Charge my VISA / Mastercard:

#: _____

Exp. Date: _____

☐ Bill Me

Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®
11830 Nicholas St.
Omaha, NE 68154
402-619-5555



Signature: _____ **Print Name:** _____

Contributions are not deductible for Federal tax purposes. Contributions to RPAC are voluntary and are used for political purposes. You may refuse to contribute without affecting your membership rights. 70% of each contribution is used by your state PAC to support state and local political candidates. The remaining 30% is sent to National RPAC to support federal candidates and is charged against your limits under 2 U.S.C. 441a.

Learn more at www.RealtorActionCenter.com/RPAC

Membership Report

JANUARY, 2011

NEW REALTORS®

Boltinghouse, Kamie – Regency Homes
Bowles, Cheryl – GTRSALES
Donovan, Galen – Valuation Services
Horvath, Dawnn – NP Dodge VI LLC – 120th Pacific
Lauritsen, Julie – Prudential Ambassador Real Estate – California #101
Schutzenhofer, Alex – NP Dodge VI LLC – Leavenworth
Wedemeyer, David – Robert Thompson Real Estate

NEW AFFILIATES

Cawley, Frank – Brickkicker Inspection Services
Johnson, Cyndi – TNT Insurance Inc
Sladek, Mary – Farmers Insurance Group

REALTOR® CANDIDATES

Altstadt, Martin – CBSHOME Real Estate – 147th
Barrera, Oscar – CBSHOME Real Estate – Davenport
Camenzind, Mary Beth – NP Dodge III LLC – Lakeside
Chiles III, Jo-el – CBSHOME Real Estate – 147th
Farnsworth, Adrienne – Property Land Management LLC
Richardson, Charles – CENTURY 21 Century Real Estate

AFFILIATE CANDIDATES

Cawley, Joanne – Brickkicker Inspection Service
Phillips, BevVan – Home Access Solutions Inc

MEMBER TRANSFERS

Baumler, Wayne From DEEB Realty – 117th To NP Dodge I LLC – Pierce
Ciochon, Mark From CBSHOME Real Estate – 131st Dodge To Prudential Ambassador Real Estate – California #101
Hajek, Kevin From McGowan Real Estate Inc – Elkhorn To Keller Williams Greater Omaha – Giles
Headley, Charles From Hurt Property Management To Headley Realty PC
Hogan, Justin From McGowan Real Estate Inc – Elkhorn To Keller Williams Greater Omaha – Giles
Irish, Kelly From SureMove Realty To NP Dodge VI LLC – 120th Pacific

Kindler, Inger From Keller Williams Premier One To Don Peterson & Associates R E – Fremont
Mangen, Christopher From 803/NP Dodge VI LLC – 120th Pacific To 710/CBSHOME Real Estate – 131st Dodge
McGowan, Kara From McGowan Real Estate – Ft Calhoun To McGowan Real Estate – Elkhorn
Meisinger, Kirk From SureMove Realty To NP Dodge VI LLC – 120th Pacific
Naik, Nilam From NP Dodge V LLC – 129th Dodge To DEEB Realty – 117th
Olazabal, Fernando From DEEB Realty – Bellevue To DEEB Realty – 117th
Schutzenhofer, Alex From NP Dodge VI LLC – Leavenworth To NP Dodge VI LLC – 120th Pacific
Stone, Daysha From NP Dodge V LLC – 129th Dodge To Landmark Group
VanZee, Adam From NP Dodge IX LLC – Oak To Downing Properties Limited LLC

REACTIVATED MEMBERS

Dankhof, Karl – DEEB Realty – 117th
Jepsen, Kelly – Keller Williams Greater Omaha – W Center
Thiessen, Dale – Landmark Group

RESIGNATIONS

Bechtold, Charles – NP Dodge III LLC – Fremont
Buso, Jacquelyn – NP Dodge IV LLC – Papillion
Cunningham, Larry – Hearthstone Homes Inc
Doty, Ronald – Tri-Win Properties – Lincoln
Dreier, Mark – Real Estate Associates Inc
Flanagan, Jamie – Keller Williams Greater Omaha – Giles
Freed, Judy – Real Estate Associates Inc
Geistlinger, Terry – All Towns Real Estate LLC
Hatfield, Kelly – CBSHOME Real Estate – Lakeside
Hellman, Jennifer – Prudential Ambassador Real Estate – California #101
Hoffman, Sally – Regency Homes
Johnson, Roger – Thrasher Basement Systems Inc
Jost, Jennifer – Hearthstone Homes Inc
Knudsen, Ashley – Keller Williams Premier One
LaCroix, Karen – Keller Williams Greater Omaha – Giles
Ladenburger, Joshua – CBSHOME Real Estate – 147th
Ley, Robert – NP Dodge V LLC – 129th Dodge
McGinn, Charles – Landmark Group
Martin, Jacob – Hearthstone Homes Inc
Militti, Maureen – CBSHOME Real Estate – Lakeside
Moreno, Jean – CBSHOME Real Estate – 131st Dodge
Morrissey, Steven – Keller Williams Greater Omaha – Giles
Murphy, Shelley – RE/MAX The Producers
Nebuda, Ryan – Landmark Group
Nikodym, Shelly – CBSHOME Real Estate – 131st Dodge
Patterson, Jocelyn – CBSHOME Real Estate – Davenport
Phillips, Kristine – NP Dodge III LLC – Fremont
Quick, Teri – CBSHOME Real Estate – 147th
Roberts, Sue – NP Dodge IX LLC – Oak

Rowell, Mark – Property Land Management LLC
Runnels, Susan – Prudential Ambassador Real Estate – California
#101

Schumacher, Traci – Tri-Win Properties – Omaha
Troia, Candice – DEEB Realty – 117th
VanZee, Adam – NP Dodge IX LLC – Oak
Vasser-Brye, Nakia – DEEB Realty – 117th
Vonderlage, Lara – NP Dodge II LLC – Co Bluffs
Watts, Connie – Keller Williams Greater Omaha – Giles
Williams-Hayes, Martha – NP Dodge IV LLC – Papillion
Wulff, Judith – NP Dodge V LLC – 129th Dodge

NEW REALTOR® COMPANY

#100918/Headley Realty PC – 11822 B S 25th St, Bellevue, NE,
68123
OABR/MLS Phone: 291-0814 Fax: 866-488-0783
Designated Realtor: Charles Headley

NEW BRANCH OFFICE

COMPANY ADDRESS AND PHONE UPDATES
(Notify the Board office for all directory changes fax to 619-5559)
McGowan Real Estate – 223 S HWS Cleveland Blvd, Elkhorn,
NE, 68022
Valuation Services – 5408 N 99th St Ste A, Omaha, NE, 68134

COMPANY NAME CHANGE

Heavenly Homes Sales – (Formerly Dreamscape Realty)
Legacy Real Estate LLC – (Formerly CENTURY 21 Legacy Real
Estate)

CHANGE OF DESIGNATED REALTOR

Keller Williams Greater Omaha – Giles – Michael Martin (For-
merly Mark Boyer)
Keller Williams Greater Omaha – W Center – Michael Martin
(Formerly Mark Boyer)
Keller Williams Premier One – Fremont – Michael Martin –
(Formerly Mark Boyer)



Think of it as a new
business magnet.

Changed your home address or e-mail address?
E-mail the change to DPeterson@OABR.com.

MARCH ORIENTATION

- Tuesday, March 1, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 2, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Thursday, March 3, 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

*Every new member attends an Orientation Program
upon application for membership.*

Thank you to all of the New Member Orientation coffee break sponsors...

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John Ponec – Security National Bank
Nancy Spidle – Mold Solutions
Mary Sladek – Farmers Insurance Group
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Deb Martin – Northwest Bank

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Carlene Zabawa – American National Bank
Wendy Walker – Omaha Title & Escrow Inc
Ruth Smith – Norm's Door Service
Laura Bambino – Great Western Bank

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

OABR

| | Dec 2010 | Dec 2009 |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Designated REALTOR® | 219 | 219 |
| Des. REALTOR® Secondary | 2 | 4 |
| REALTOR® | 1959 | 2030 |
| REALTOR®-Secondary | 1 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 2181 | 2253 |

| | | |
|---------------------|------|------|
| Institute Affiliate | 73 | 67 |
| Affiliate | 182 | 179 |
| Other | 5 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 2441 | 2500 |

| | Dec 2010 | YTD |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----|
| New REALTOR® Members | 8 | 232 |
| Reinstated REALTOR® Members | 3 | 98 |
| Resignations | 38 | 424 |

GPRMLS

| | Dec 2010 | Dec 2009 |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| Participants (Primary) | 209 | 205 |
| Participants (Secondary) | 61 | 57 |
| Subscribers (Primary) | 1932 | 2007 |
| Subscribers (Secondary) | 181 | 178 |
| Exempt | 30 | 28 |
| TOTAL | 2413 | 2475 |

WCR PROGRAM LUNCHEON

TOP PRODUCERS PANEL

**Loving Any Market -
How to Achieve Consistent Success**

Top Producer Panel Participants:



CBSHome - Karen Jennings

Deeb - Lisa Ritter

NPDodge - Jeff Cohn

Prudential - Teresa Elliott

Re/Max - Peg Maloney



February 10, 2011

11:45 a.m.

(Doors open at 11:15 a.m. for networking)

Champions Run

13800 Eagle Run Drive



Personals

CONGRATULATIONS to Cindy Hartzell and Marsha Lab of Celebrity Homes on earning their Certified New Home Specialist (CSP) Designation.



CONGRATULATIONS to John Bredemeyer of Realcorp on completing his Masters of Business Administration (MBA) from UNO.

CONGRATULATIONS to Kelly Gitt of Gitt Real Estate & Mike Gitt on the birth of their 5th child, Ava Anne Gitt, born on 1/17/2011, 7 lbs 8 oz 19.5" long.

CONGRATULATIONS to Douglas County Register of Deeds and REALTOR® Diane Battiato on being awarded a certificate of achievement from the NACO Institute of Excellence. The institute offers a year-long program of professional development for Nebraska county officials that is designed and conducted by the University of Nebraska.

CONDOLENCES to John Kimsey of Prudential Ambassador Real Estate on the recent loss of his mother.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Fax: 402-619-5559

Email: DShipley@OABR.com

Phone: 402-619-5551

Mail: 11830 Nicholas St., Omaha, NE 68154.



Attention Affiliates!



Affiliates You are Invited to an Affiliate Networking Event!

Free Beer Tasting, Drinks, and Appetizers

Thursday, February 17th

4:30 to 6:30

Affiliate only Event

Network with fellow members

Quality Brands of Omaha
13255 Centech Road
Omaha, NE 68138

(Located about 1 mile south of 132nd and Harrison on the north side of the Budweiser distribution plant)

Sponsored by: Affiliates A Council of the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®

Learn about opportunities to build your business!

Don't Forget About:

Canned Food Drive and Chili Cook-Off
February 18, 11:00—1:00 pm at the OABR Education Center
Join us for Chili Tasting and Networking

First State Bank Your Mortgage Resource

First State Bank is a local full service bank and mortgage company, offering all types of financing such as Conventional, FHA, VA, NIFA, and USDA.

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Dennis Ritter
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- **R. F. Morrissey & Associates**
402 -933-9033

- **REEsults Coaching (Mark T. Wehner)**
www.REEsultsCoaching.com
402-676-0101

- **Larabee School of Real Estate**
www.LarabeeSchool.com
800-755-1108

- **Nebraska REALTORS® Association**
www.NebraskaREALTORS.com
402-323-6500



- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Feb 11 | CRS 111: Short Sales & Foreclosures (6 hrs) Omaha |
| Mar 3-4 | GRI 105: Real Estate Investment & Management (12 hrs) Lincoln |
| Apr 11-12 | GRI 101: Rookie Training (9 hrs) Lincoln |

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Food Drive

**Food Collected Will be
Donated to the Omaha Food Bank**

Date: February 18, 2011

Time: 11 am to 1 pm

**OABR Office
11830 Nicholas St. • Omaha, NE**

Real Estate Offices that want to participate need to contact Debbie Kalina at 639-1100 to arrange for a barrel to be delivered to their office (by the Omaha Food Bank) for the collection. The barrels will be dropped off at offices ahead of time (2 weeks or so) for the collection of canned goods. The food bank will then pick up the barrels and weigh them. People can also bring food to the Chili Cook-Off to donate, if they so choose.

Prizes

Real Estate Offices will be competing for prizes for the most food donated by office (by weight) per capita.

Sponsored by:



AFFILIATES

a council of the
Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®

**in conjunction with the
OABR Social Events Forum
Annual Chili Cook-Off**

www.oabraffiliates.com

**If offices want a barrel for food collection,
they should email Debbie Kalina at
Debbie@OmahaRadon.com or call her at 402-639-1100.**

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Add Supra eKEY® software to any smartphone listed below and turn it into your lockbox key. Supra only supports eKEY Software on the devices listed on this page. To get your Smartphone set up as your eKey call 402-619-5552.



Android™

Example devices:

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| Ally | Eris |
| Captivate | Evo |
| Droid | Hero |
| Droid 2 | Incredible |
| Droid X | Nexus One |

All Android devices with OS 2.1 or later support eKEY.
User experience may vary between devices.



Androids require the use of the eKEY Fob to access the iBox



BlackBerry®

8800 series (8820, 8830, 8830 World Edition)
All models in the following product lines:

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Bold | Storm |
| Curve | Torch |
| Pearl/Pearl Flip | Tour |



BlackBerrys require the use of the eKEY Fob to access the iBox



iPhone

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| iPhone (original) | iPhone 3GS |
| iPhone 3G | iPhone 4 |



iPhones require the use of an eKEY Adapter to access the iBox and iBox BT



Windows Mobile®

Infrared Models

8125
8525
HTC Mogul
HTC P4300
iPAQ 6900 Series
MDA
PPC-6700/6800
Treo 700w/wx
Treo 750
Treo 800w
Treo Pro (850)
XV 6700/6800

Non-Infrared Models*

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| AT&T Blackjack II | iPAQ 900 |
| AT&T Fuze | LG Insite |
| AT&T Fuze NC | MOTO Q™ 9c |
| HTC Fuze | Pantec Duo |
| HTC Imagio | Samsung Ace |
| HTC Ozone | Samsung Epix |
| HTC Pure | Samsung Intrepid |
| HTC Shadow | Samsung Omnia 1 & 2 |
| HTC Tilt 1 & 2 | Samsung Saga |
| HTC Touch Diamond | PN-820 |
| HTC Touch Pro 1 & 2 | XV 6900 |
| HTC Wing | |

The Non-Infrared Windows Mobile devices may be used but have not been fully tested.



**Non-infrared Windows Mobile devices require the use of the eKEY Fob to access the iBox*

Palm®

| | | | | | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Centro | Treo 600 | Treo 650 | Treo 680 | Treo 700p | Treo 755p |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|



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11/22/10

REALTOR® Quiz: Property Marketing



Even great listings can benefit from skillful property marketing. Take this quiz prepared by the National Association of REALTORS® to find out if you know what it takes to grab the attention of prospective buyers and make the home's best features stand out.

1. Which of the following is not a good tactic for marketing a starter home?

- ☐ Suggest various scenarios for financing the home, including sample downpayments and monthly mortgage payments
- ☐ Emphasize the advantage of homeownership (e.g., the mortgage interest tax deduction and the possibility of building equity)
- ☐ Advertise the home in a local dining-out guide targeted toward young adults
- ☐ Hire a professional designer and photographer to create a four-color brochure of the home's highlights

2. What is the most important part of an ad?

- ☐ The photograph
- ☐ The headline
- ☐ The media placements
- ☐ The price

3. Which is the following would make an appropriate and captivating online home tour?

- ☐ A sweeping panoramic scene of an entry-level home
- ☐ A video tour showing the seller's designer furniture, antique collectibles, and museum-quality artwork
- ☐ A short and fast-loading preview that highlights the top features of a well-staged home
- ☐ A 20-minute digital tour, including the neighborhood, the street, the exterior of the home, the neighboring homes, and every room in the home

4. At an open house, the salesperson should:

- ☐ Greet visitors and ask them to sign a guest book, distribute flyers and handouts, answer questions about the home, and offer to assist prospects with their search for a home to purchase
- ☐ Eat lunch and watch the ballgame on the seller's television if there is no traffic
- ☐ Follow visitors around the house, ask them with questions about their home search, and mention how many interested visitors have been there today
- ☐ Talk with visitors as little as possible so that they have time to view the home

5. To help ensure a successful property auction:

- ☐ Make repairs and improvements to the property
- ☐ Have a home inspection completed before the auction
- ☐ Promote the auction heavily to appropriate target markets
- ☐ All of the above

6. Which of the following would not be a violation of fair housing laws?

- ☐ Only asking for pre-qualifying financial information from people you think might not be able to afford to buy
- ☐ Indicating in a property advertisement that the sellers will give preference to offers from buyers of a particular religious faith
- ☐ Encouraging buyers to shop for a home only in selected neighborhoods because you think they will like them better
- ☐ Running advertisements that emphasize that the home has a mother-in-law suite

7. Which of the following would make a good newspaper advertisement?

- ☐ Emotionally captivating description of the home, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, asking price, your name and telephone number
- ☐ Square footage of the home, price the seller paid for the home, asking price, and seller's telephone number
- ☐ Inflated description of the home, total number of rooms, a few abbreviations (e.g., frpl, MBR, vw) and a statement that seller is "highly motivated"
- ☐ Description of neighborhood, school district, asking price, your name and e-mail address

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Debbie Kalina
Owner



Phone: 402-639-1100
Email: Debbie@OmahaRadon.com
www.OmahaRadon.com

8. Which of the following would be an example of negligent misrepresentation?

- ☐ Telling buyers that a property's roof was replaced last year without seeing any written evidence to support this statement
- ☐ Telling the buyers that they don't need to worry about asbestos it was not manufactured after 1978
- ☐ Telling the sellers that the house is probably connected to the city sewer because sewers were run to this area five years ago
- ☐ All of the above

9. What is Megan's Law?

- ☐ A California law that requires real estate salespeople to research the presence of sex offenders in their local area
- ☐ A federal law that requires real estate salespeople to notify home owners if a sex offender moves into their neighborhood
- ☐ A federal law that requires state governments to enact regulations mandating registration of convicted sex offenders but doesn't specify whether real estate salespeople are responsible for disclosing such information
- ☐ A law that protects home buyers from sex offenders in their neighborhood

ANSWERS

Increase your success in real estate by improving your property marketing skills. Review the correct answers below and try this quiz again. And don't forget to visit our Property Marketing

(<http://www.realtor.org/toolkits/propertymarketingtoolkit>) resource kit.

1. Which of the following is not a good tactic for marketing a starter home?

Correct Answer: Hire a professional designer and photographer to create a four-color brochure of the home's highlights

A professional four-color brochure is probably an overly expensive marketing tactic for a starter home unless it was being advertised as part of a new development. The rest of the ideas are more appropriate for an entry-level home.

2. What is the most important part of an ad?

Correct Answer: The headline

Although all the possible answers are important in the success of an ad, most advertising experts say that a strong headline is the most important element in an ad's success.

3. Which is the following would make an appropriate and captivating online home tour?

Correct Answer: A short and fast-loading preview that highlights the top features of a well-staged home

The most effective virtual tours move quickly and emphasize the home's scale, space, and proportions.

4. At an open house, the salesperson should:

Correct Answer: Greet visitors and ask them to sign a guest book, distribute flyers and handouts, answer questions about the home, and offer to assist prospects with their search for a home to purchase

Continued on Page 22



Frank.Cawley@BrickKicker.com
Joanne.Cawley@BrickKicker.com



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Continued from Page 21

The salesperson should be friendly and professional, present and represent the home, and use the event to market real estate services.

5. To help ensure a successful property auction:

Correct Answer: All of the above

An auction works best when the home is exposed to buyers who are comfortable with the process and are well informed about details of the transaction. Having a home inspection completed in advance of the auction makes buyers more confident in their bidding.

6. Which of the following would not be a violation of fair housing laws?

Correct Answer: Running advertisements that emphasize that the home has a mother-in-law suite

Although you should avoid mentioning families in your advertising, the term "mother-in-law suite" is acceptable to describe a suite with its own living area and facilities. Advertising that sellers prefer buyers of a particular religion is considered steering, while asking for financial information from only certain prospective buyers can lead to charges of discrimination. Always ask for the same basic information from every prospect.

7. Which of the following would make a good newspaper advertisement?

Correct Answer: Emotionally captivating description of the home, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, asking price, your name and telephone number

A good newspaper ad captures a prospective buyers' attention and provides vital information, including the number of bedrooms, the price, and your phone number. Don't fill your ad space with too much information on the neighborhood or

the home, and never use jargon or abbreviations that consumers may not understand.

8. Which of the following would be an example of negligent misrepresentation?

Correct Answer: All of the above

Negligent misrepresentation is making a statement without confirming the accuracy of the facts. You should not state that the roof was replaced without seeing paperwork. Instead, say that the sellers told you it was replaced, but you are not sure. The second answer option is incorrect because you are not communicating all the facts; even though asbestos manufacture was banned in 1978, suppliers were allowed to sell off inventory, so houses built in the early 1980s could still have asbestos. Finally, home owners are generally not obligated to connect to city sewers unless they wish to be, so making that assumption without verifying the facts is incorrect.

9. What is Megan's Law?

Correct Answer: A federal law that requires state governments to enact regulations mandating registration of convicted sex offenders but doesn't specify whether real estate salespeople are responsible for disclosing such information

The federal Megan's Law doesn't say real estate salespeople have any responsibility for informing home buyers about registered sex offenders. However, some states do require this notification. In all cases, salespeople should inform buyers of their rights to obtain this information and let them know where they can obtain it.

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SPECIAL AGENTS: Operation



Your Mission:
WCR's Trivia Night Fundraiser
Gather Intelligence and Your Team

-  Date: Thursday, April 7, 2011
-  Time: Doors open 5:30p, Event starts @ 7p
-  Place: Erin Court – 4714 N 120th Street
-  Space Limited to 30 Tables – 8 to a Team
-  Cost: \$20.00 per person / \$160 per table
-  Who: Anyone (not limited to WCR members)



OMAHA CHAPTER
Omaha Nebraska

Teams' Secret Assignment:
Choose a Theme
Costumes encouraged,
Decorate your tables &
Bring food for your theme
Registration on back
*Prizes awarded to Best
Themed Table

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Brenda Stuart, ServiceOne,
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ASK THE HOME INSPECTOR!

By Patrick Casey, President
The Home Buyers Protection Company

Home & Building Inspections • Radon & Mold Testing



The following article is intended to provide pertinent home and building inspection information to the readers. Your input is welcome by emailing your questions to pat@hbponline.com.

Question: We will be purchasing a new air conditioner and are wondering if we should get a heat pump instead of a standard system?

Answer: Several factors need to be considered to determine if a heat pump will be cost effective for you. They are more expensive to purchase than a regular air conditioner. Heat pumps provide both heating and cooling, and can provide energy savings. You need to determine if it will provide you enough savings in heating to offset the added cost.

If your heating system is electric, a heat pump will be less expensive to operate than the electric furnace, and it is probably worthwhile.

If your heating system is natural gas or propane gas, you will need to weigh the cost of gas vs. the cost of electricity (heat pumps are electric). This is somewhat difficult, since the cost of gas and electricity varies from year to year.

Finally, if your furnace is gas, and if it is a high-efficiency model, a heat pump may not provide enough savings to warrant the added cost. Some electric utilities will offer discounts to their customers that operate heat pumps by reducing their electrical usage rate, and this should be a consideration also.

For information, consult the U.S. Dept. of Energy at: www.energysavers.gov/your_home.

Go to our website at www.hbponline.com for more information about heat pumps, see our specials and order an inspection online.



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Environment Omaha

Streetscapes. Mixed use. Walkability. A decade ago, these terms were reserved for the professionals, those formally charged with building our cities and maintaining our infrastructure so we – the general public – could carry on with our daily routines, unimpeded by matters that needn't concern us.

Today, in Omaha, they've become part of our public debate. Casual conversation in coffee shops, around company water coolers and at neighborhood meetings is no longer limited to politics, the weather and the state of the Husker Nation. Today, matters of urban design do concern us. We – the general public – are not only talking about them, we're claiming our right to be included in the decision-making processes that affect how Omaha is built and maintained.

As Omaha by Design prepares to celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2011, we applaud Omaha's historic progress in the urban design arena, and we look forward to continuing to tackle the city's Urban Design Element recommendations with the help of our current partners and new recruits. At the same time, we're embarking on a new, yet familiar, role.

Ten years from now, we want the local coffee drinkers, the 3 to 11 shift and the family down the street to be talking about a greener Omaha. We want them to be weighing in on what's happening to protect and enhance the city's natural environment; on how Omaha is laid out and how we navigate around it; on how the city's buildings are built, renovated and maintained; on how we're conserving our natural and material resources and capitalizing on the ingenuity of our residents to make that happen; on how we're making Omaha more active, safe and healthy for all, not just a privileged few.

When the Omaha City Council voted 7-0 to adopt the Environment Omaha document as a component of the city's master plan last month, it ushered in more than a comprehensive new environmental vision for Omaha. It acknowledged the connection between the economic and social health of our city and its ability to adapt to the global challenges of the day.

With more than 600 recommendations in five categories, Environment Omaha is bigger than Omaha by Design, the entire city staff or any singular entity. In the coming months, we will be developing a strategy to address the recommendations related to partnerships, education and outreach. We're also asking all Omahans to determine their role in helping execute the vision – from the Fortune 500 executive to the third-grader at Benson West Elementary. For those who want to keep tabs on our progress, follow Environment Omaha on Facebook and *Twitter*.

A FEW SPECIFIC 2011 PROJECT NOTES:

* Omaha by Design will continue its role as project manager for the Benson-Ames Alliance, a grassroots group of community leaders formed in 2005 to help plan and implement the revitalization of this historic corner of the city. Recent efforts have focused on developing the tools this volunteer group needs to carry out its work. Among them are a streetscape plan for Maple Street, the creation of a Tax Increment Financing District in downtown Benson and a

revitalized Benson Business Improvement District with expanded boundaries and an expanded board, a new financing mechanism and a strategic work plan. 2011 will see implementation efforts begin in earnest on a number of fronts, starting with the creation of an east gateway to the Benson business district.

* Omaha by Design will launch a new regional effort focused on conserving, preserving and restoring the metro's investment in its history, building stock and infrastructure, both commercial and residential – one of the Urban Design Element recommendations not yet acted upon. A core group from the Omaha by Design Advisory Committee has begun meeting on this topic. First up is a gap analysis to determine existing assets and potential opportunities.

* Omaha by Design will continue to offer its Place Game workshop services free of charge to neighborhood and civic groups interested in brainstorming potential improvements to the public spaces in their corner of the city. The 2011 Place Game season begins in March and runs through October. For more information, call 402.554.4010 or email info@omahabydesign.org.

In addition to our planned program of work, we resolve to remain vigilant for and act on activities that threaten our collective investment in Omaha's urban design and environmental public policy.

A 10-year anniversary is a milestone for any business, organization or couple. In the nonprofit community, it's a testament to those who believe in your mission and equip you with the tools you need to carry it out. In our case, a great big urban design and environmental thank you to our donors, advisors, project partners, volunteers and supporters from the private, public and philanthropic sectors, those who've been there from the very beginning and those just joining us. Thanks also to all who've joined the public debate. It's your city – we're just working to make it the best Omaha it can be.

Best wishes for a healthy, productive and green 2011.

Submitted by Connie Spellman, director Omaha by Design. Connie will be joined by Mike McMeekin and Steve Jensen at a Governmental Affairs Committee meeting on February 16, 2011 at the OABR Office.



Mike McMeekin
President,
Lamp Rynearson
co-chair
Environment
Omaha



Steve Jensen
former Omaha
Planing Director
co-chair
Environment
Omaha



**Connie
Spellman**
Director, Omaha
By Design

Winds of Change Usher in New Life for the Metro Omaha Builders Association.

On January 14, 2011 the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) accepted the application for affiliation presented by the Metro Omaha Builders Association (MOBA) with no challenges. This means, once again, MOBA is the NAHB official charter association for Omaha and the surrounding area. For 64 years MOBA has held this charter, but due to financial difficulties, volunteered to relinquish it until the association was fiscally stable. To accomplish this MOBA needed to change to better suit the economy. MOBA made cuts, reduced staff and even sold its 3 year old building to reduce overhead costs. A change to the MOBA bylaws will even reduce its Board of Directors from over 40 down to 12 coming this February. MOBA has committed to place the focus back on its membership and to be more open transparent in everything it does.

We are here to help. If you have any questions about MOBA, its membership or events, please contact JJ Morris at the MOBA office 402-333-2000 xt 100 or email jjmorris@moba.com.

MOBAcalendar

January

25 General Membership Monthly Meeting
 at MOBA Office Building Lower Level 6:00pm

February

10 ELECTION for Board of Directors - All Day
 10 General Membership Monthly Meeting
 at MOBA Office Building Lower Level 6:00pm
 15 Board of Directors Meeting at MOBA, 10:00am
 21 President's Day - MOBA Office CLOSED

March 31-April 3 **Omaha Home Show**

April 16 & 17 **Remodel Omaha Tour**

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SOURCREAM
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January Word Search

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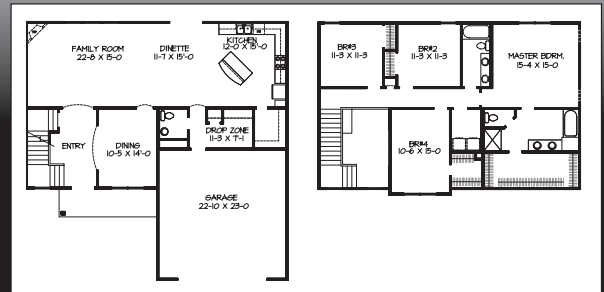


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