

REVIEW

Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®



UPCOMING EVENTS

5.2

8:30AM - 12:00PM

**NEW MEMBER
ORIENTATION**

6:00PM - 9:00PM

**GOOD CONTRACT/
BAD CONTRACT**

5.6 - 5.11

**NAR LEGISLATIVE
MEETINGS**

5.9 - 5.11

**WCR CHAPTER
MIDYEAR
CONFERENCE**

5.11

10:30AM - 11:30AM

**SUPRA TRAINING:
EKEY BASIC**

5.15

10:00AM - 7:00PM

**AFFILIATE
GOLF**

5.17

**REGISTRATION
OPENS FOR NAR NXT**

10:30AM - 11:30AM

**SUPRA TRAINING:
SUPRAWEB**

5.18

**WCR CHAPTER-
BROKER PANEL**

5.24

10:30AM - 11:30AM

**SUPRA TRAINING:
EKEY PROFESSIONAL**

OABR DIRECTORY

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COVER PHOTO:
OLD MARKET
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A MESSAGE FROM ★ THE PRESIDENT ★

CRYSTAL ARCHER, 2023 PRESIDENT



MAY WE REMEMBER

Spring is in full bloom, and we revel in what the month will bring. May is the month we appreciate mothers and commemorate the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice serving their country.

May, named after Maia, the goddess of Spring, brings us new shades of green. In the real estate world, May often brings a warmer sales climate and rising temperatures. The month boasting the Kentucky Derby and the Indy 500 also can lead to a race in real estate sales. Let the race begin!

Each May, the National Association of REALTORS® hosts Legislative Meetings in Washington, D.C. Having attended the meetings, I have witnessed the importance and impact of the REALTOR® Association in establishing public policy favorable to home ownership. The business meetings allow REALTORS® to continue critical policy conversations with our lawmakers. The preferable position real estate holds in our society is not by accident.

At least 70 percent of your RPAC investment remains in Nebraska; however, the cumulative impact of the nationwide effort builds relationships with Congress and supports the fight for common sense policies that protect the interests of private property and REALTORS®. I encourage you to consider supporting RPAC this month – it's an investment in your business.

In addition to the NAR Legislative Meetings, the Women's Council of REALTORS® (WCR) will host the Council's Midyear Conference in D.C. Women's Council is another excellent organization representing your interests. Getting involved provides opportunities for expanding your knowledge and leadership skills and meeting other professionals in the industry. Locally, the Omaha Chapter of WCR offers programming and other options for its members. Everyone is welcome to attend their monthly events!

Later this year, consider attending the NAR NXT national conference – there's something for everyone! Registration for the November event opens on May 17. With over 100 live education sessions, extraordinary networking events, and fabulous keynote speakers, you won't be disappointed. Check out the full schedule online in early May. The 2023 conference is in Anaheim, CA. You won't want to miss it!

As May unfolds, let's enjoy the revelries of the season in between the challenging but rewarding business that is real estate. Let's make this Spring a time to remember!

Best Regards,

Crystal Archer,
2023 OABR President



FREMONT AND OMAHA AREA REALTORS® MERGE

In April, with the assistance of the Nebraska REALTORS® Association, the Fremont Board of REALTORS® merged with The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®. The legal merger process, recommended by the leadership of both local organizations, was approved in separate votes by the general membership of the two neighboring organizations. Fremont area REALTORS® already subscribed to Great Plains Regional MLS services but will now share the same local REALTOR® association.

Lisa Allard, former President of the Fremont Board of REALTORS®, said she was “super excited about the merger and looking forward to increased opportunities, available training, and all the different events.”

The Fremont Board of REALTORS® had 94 members before the merger. Allard said that the downside of being a small organization was the limited number of CE Classes available. There was typically just one day of CE classes in Fremont.



Photo credit: NP Dodge

Former FBR President
Lisa Allard

She's excited about the additional education and training that OABR has and sees broader opportunities as part of a larger organization.

"We didn't have all the events that Omaha has. We didn't have a Chili Cook-off, for example. We're excited about all the fun events," Allard said enthusiastically. "We did have REALTOR® Ring Day. We look forward to that event all year."

The Former Fremont Board President said that she was incredibly excited to get involved with the OABR committees, adding that Hybrid meetings that utilize Zoom technology provide an option that allows more REALTORS® to engage and be active participants.

While the excitement from Fremont REALTORS® is encouraging, Allard acknowledged that "Change is hard, but I'm here for them." She explained any change is an adjustment, even good change, but underscored that she would always be around to guide her fellow Fremont REALTORS®. "I'll leave the door open for them."

Trista Beaudette, Treasurer of the Fremont Board of REALTORS® at the time of the merger, said participation at the Fremont Board dwindled over time. It seemed REALTORS® in FBOR leadership didn't so much volunteer, as they were voluntold.



Photo credit: NP Dodge

FBR Treasurer
Trista Beaudette



In her five years of recent experience, she noticed much of the participation was from one or two brokerages. She hopes the merger means more opportunities for involvement and career development. "I want everyone to feel like part of the community," the former Treasurer said, adding, "I would like to see this grow holistically."



Beaudette desires to have at least one Fremont member on each OABR committee. Social Events and Professional Development piqued her interest, as well as taking part in the local WCR chapter. She said she is ready for all the Omaha Board has to offer and looks forward to Fremont members engaging to add what she called the "rural aspect of it" to the mix.

"Quite a few of us do business in Omaha, and the surrounding area, all the way to Columbus and Norfolk." She currently has a listing in Bellevue and David City.

With all the ground she needs to cover, the savvy REALTOR® is

disciplined about logging her mileage.

With the challenges REALTORS® face every day, it is good to have extra resources and a sound support system to guide you on your path. The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® is excited about the Fremont expansion and looks forward to working with everyone!

LUNCH AND LEARN!

An informal orientation for new REALTOR® members, formerly with the Fremont Board of REALTORS®, was held as a Lunch and Learn event on Wednesday, April 12, in the OABR Education Center.

The casual lunch allowed staff and leadership to interact with FBOR members interested in their newly expanded association. The nearby Swine Dining restaurant catered lunch while OABR President Crystal Archer, and President-Elect Denise Poppen, outlined the organization and various member benefits available to all members.

The OABR corporate structure, including the Great Plains Regional MLS (GPRMLS), Midlands Regional CIE (MRCIE), and the OABR Foundation, were reviewed. OABR leaders highlighted volunteer opportunities available to all REALTORS® and the OABR support staff was introduced. The interactive session opened a new chapter in OABR's story. ■

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FRIDAY
06.30.23



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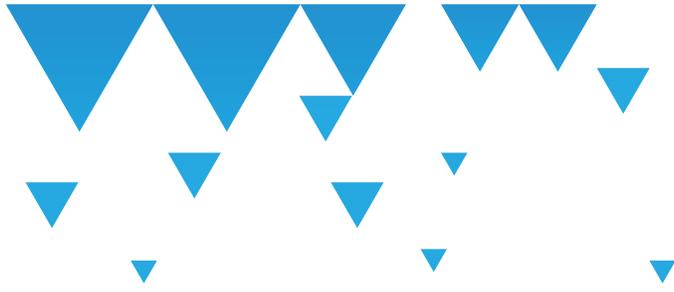
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PICNIC 6 - 7:30PM

GAME 7:05PM

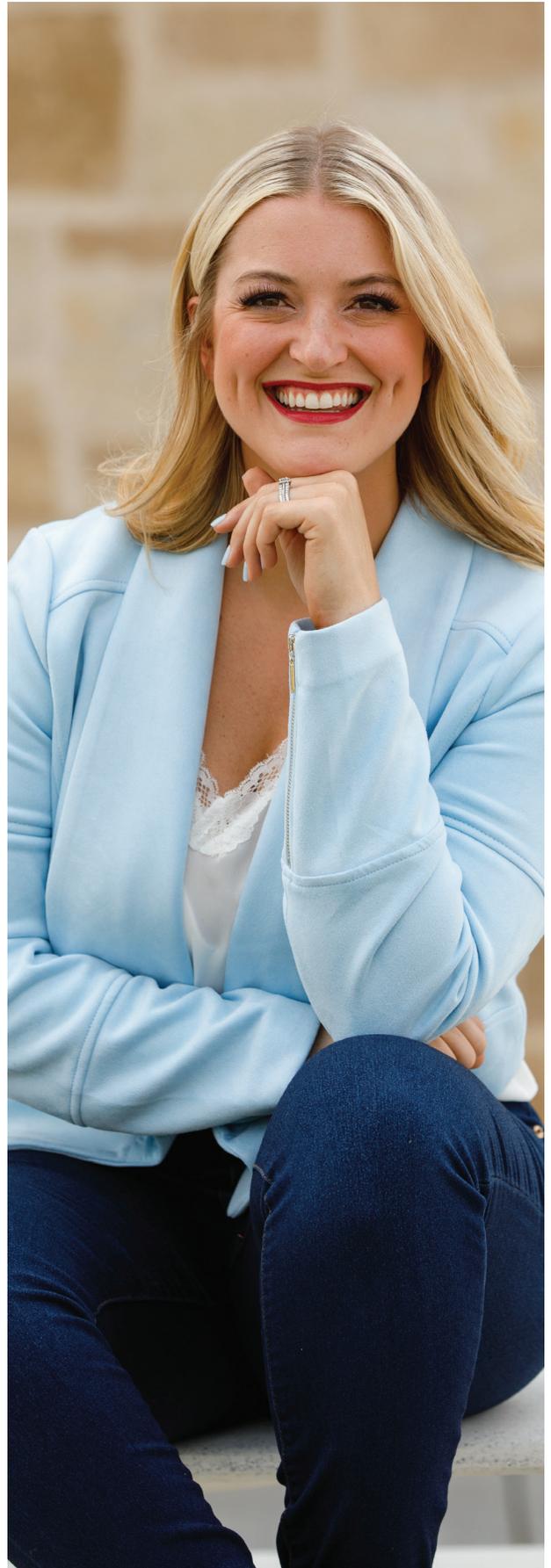
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THE CLASS OF
2023
30 UNDER 30

REALTOR® Magazine named Brittney McAllister a Rising Star in Real Estate this past month. McAllister knew she wanted to be a REALTOR® at the tender age of 11. She grew up watching her REALTOR® mom and decided it was the career path for her. Her determination paid off. REALTOR® Magazine just recognized Brittney by placing her in the impressive “30 Under 30” category for 2023.

Every year the competition is fierce. In 2023, approximately 300 real estate professionals from across the nation were considered. The tradition started in 2000. Since then, REALTOR® Magazine has recognized young REALTORS® who are doing extraordinary things in their business. In 2022, Omaha’s Kail Walker was recognized for the prestigious designation.



2023 OABR President Crystal Archer commented, "Having two '30 Under 30' REALTOR® OABR members selected in consecutive years is quite an accomplishment. Both Brittney and Kail are great representatives for the real estate profession and speak to the caliber of today's young agents in the Omaha area."

"This is something I wanted for a long time." McAllister commented, "it was on my vision board." It took a couple of attempts to achieve her goal, and having a clear vision of success is a trait that sets her apart. She wrote numerous papers in high school on how she'd make a good REALTOR®. It's not surprising since she grew up in real estate. It was in her blood. She described it as a kind of osmosis. You start to absorb it when you are always around it. "It feels surreal now that it's happening after envisioning it," the young real estate agent mused.

The 28-year-old REALTOR® of Keller Williams Realty is passionate about learning. She always wants to continue learning, keep her mind open to new ideas, and look for new ways to evolve and grow her skill set. Everything from taking CE Classes to attending conferences keeps her on her game. "Whenever I speak at a conference or teach a CE class, I'm helping other REALTORS®, but it's also a good learning experience for me."

Meeting her peers in the industry from around the country keeps her informed. "We're in a bubble here. It's interesting to learn how people from other regions do things." She said people's innovative solutions impress her, noting that people on the coasts are often on the cutting edge.



"I consider what kind of business leader I want to be," McAllister said. She learned so much about leadership from different mentors: her mom, sports coaches, and her current mentor Brindley Tucker, who specializes in coaching real estate professionals. The young professional believes it's essential to have a mentor, who is an expert in the field, pushes you, and holds you accountable.

"Real estate has evolved so much. There used to be this idea: just go sell more and more houses, but I was taught to run real estate as a business. There are just so many pieces to it." She said working with a team helps her business run smoothly. "Your business grows to the extent that you do" is McAllister's mantra. In a highly competitive arena, her competitive nature, her thirst for learning, and her passion for real estate make her a force to be reckoned with. ■

PICKLE AT YOUR OWN RISK



For REALTORS® who are regularly sealing the deal, PICKLEBALL was a chance to seal the dill – or at least enjoy an unseasonably warm day and a cool beverage. It was especially warm if acting as the OABR Pickleball mascot dressed as – you guessed it – a pickle.

The Pickle at Your Own Risk event was served up by the Affiliate Council at 4:00 p.m. on April 13, at Blue Sky Pickle Ball near 107th & Pacific streets. About 100 individuals attended the event, making it a big dill? You might say the intensity on the court was jarring, and the winner of the championship, if there was one, was able to relish the moment. Ha!

Don't like pickle puns? Sorry, I guess you'll have to dill with it!

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JUNE 9, 2023

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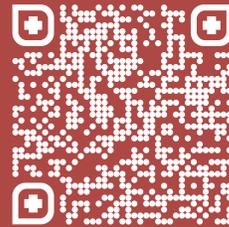
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HOUSING DEVELOPER AND HABITAT TEAM-UP



Photos by Metonic

Tractor tire tracks carve into a patch of undeveloped earth near North 210th & Emmet streets in Elkhorn. It's groundbreaking in more than the literal sense. The Capriana project breaks new ground in addressing Omaha's affordable housing shortage. Stretched out over 15 acres, the \$43 million project will feature a mix of 149 luxury "Apartminiums" for rent and 11 single-family, affordable homes for sale.

Kassie Inness, President of Metonic Real Estate Solutions, collaborated with Amanda Brewer, CEO of the non-profit Habitat for Humanity, to realize a vision. Inness described the series of serendipitous events to bring this project to fruition. She met Brewer in late 2021 and spent 2022 working through land entitlements and land documents. Construction began in the fall of 2022. Inness says they are "going vertical in the next month or so." They plan to have homes ready by the fall of 2023.

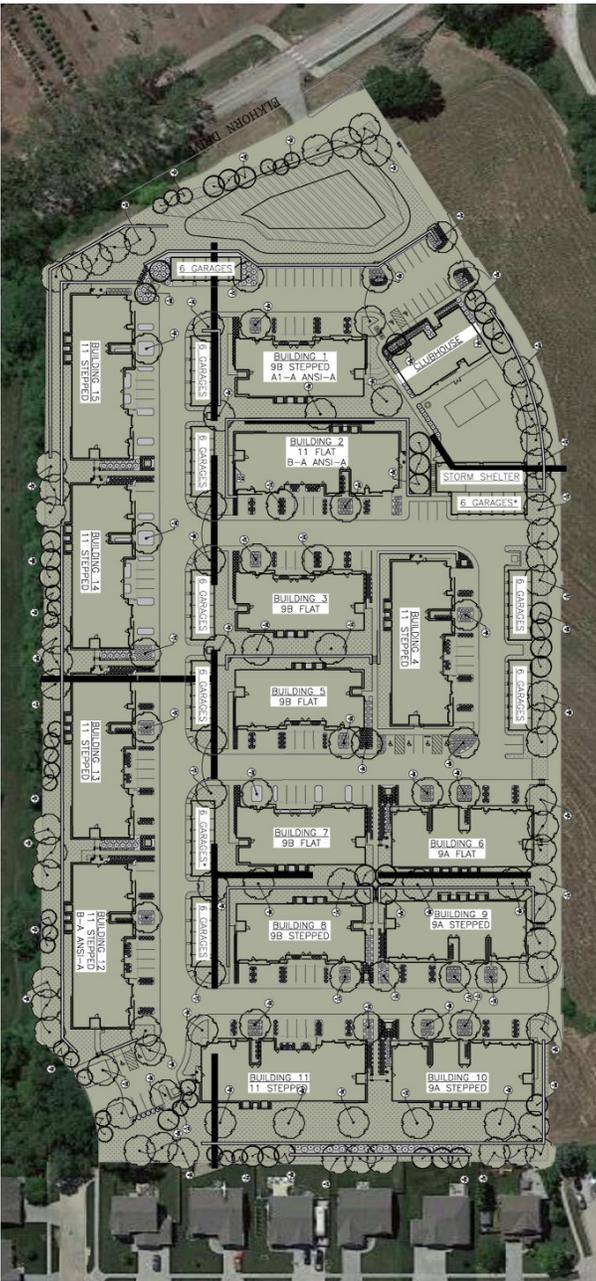
The right partnership needed to form for the Capriana project to come together, and a suitable parcel of land had to be acquired. Inness's multifamily background and Brewer's single-family housing expertise provided the ideal partnership. The perfect plot of land, an agricultural property, became the new building site.

Rezoning was required, so they worked with the City of Omaha's Planning and Public Works Department to make it happen. There were hurdles to overcome, among them acquiring the necessary electrical devices in a pandemic-induced supply chain shortage in 2022.

"Development is like having a baby and raising a toddler. It's a 3-to-5-year process," Inness said. "I would love to do more projects like this." According to the real estate developer, other organizations could potentially follow the Capriana example.

The Elkhorn neighborhood was selected for several factors. The suburban community is in an ideal area, with plenty of employment opportunities and a top-rated school district. The affordable, single-family homes provide a unique chance for lower-income constituents to live in a more upscale location.

The community will boast a set of amenities available to both the apartminiums and the single-family houses, including a clubhouse, a pool, pet amenities, and a fitness area. The upscale Apartminium homes are spacious, two-story dwellings with attached garages geared towards young professionals and empty nesters looking to downsize.



Currently, the Metonic portfolio features several affordable multifamily communities promoting diversity. “Diversification is essential, diversification in schools and the community. Anytime you can bring in different incomes and races, we should always be pushing for that,” said Inness.

Brewer said she had a dream goal for years to develop in partnership with a for-profit company to produce a mixed-income community. Her dream is being realized through the Capriana project. For Brewer and Habitat For Humanity, it was about helping lower-income individuals get into homeownership.

Brewer believes the housing shortage needs to be addressed with a myriad of methods. “There’s not one solution. It’ll take a mosaic of solutions.” One of the ways that Habitat for Humanity addresses housing needs is through its home repair program, where they provide up to a \$30,000 interest-free loan for low-income families.

Brewer explained that in addition to maintaining existing homes, Habitat for Humanity has evolved beyond the original mission of the grassroots non-profit that began in the 1970s. They now have an added focus on getting people mortgage-ready and, in some cases, even provide financing opportunities for individuals competing with all-cash investors.

Since the Capriana project gained exposure, Habitat has been approached by other developers to consider additional projects. One such project will provide 100 single-family homes near North 51st Street and Sorensen Parkway.

“What impresses me so much about Metonic and Kassie [Inness] is they didn’t have to do this. They saw the need and wanted to be part of the solution.” Brewer commented that they wanted to see more first-time homeowners and wanted them to have access to not only a desirable location but also the upscale amenities of that community. According to Brewer, “Things only happen when people step up.” ■



Kassie Inness



Amanda Brewer

ANDY ALLOWAY

NEBRASKA
REALTOR®
OF THE YEAR



Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® member Andy Alloway has a calm, measured demeanor. His cool, collected, grace-under-fire disposition has served him well. The Omaha real estate broker was awarded the prestigious 2023 Nebraska REALTOR®-of-the-Year award at the annual Nebraska REALTORS® Association Convention held at the LaVista Convention Center on April 4.

The Omaha native, President & CEO of Nebraska Realty for 14 years, is also a seasoned real estate professional for over 22 years. He said that being honored with the award was a surprise, “You never want to take it lightly or for granted,” noting that only one individual is presented with the honor each year. In his estimation, if you work hard long enough, you eventually reap the benefits.

Reflecting on how he began his

career in real estate, he said, “God works in mysterious ways.” When he was fresh out of college from Northwest Missouri State, earning his degree in exercise sports, he helped train the Milwaukee Brewers minor league baseball team. His career was undetermined at that point. While leafing through the local newspaper, he ran across an ad for a real estate job that required a license. He took a course that ignited something that has stayed with him ever since – a love of real estate.

The younger version of himself knew that he needed to make a decision about his career. He was at a crossroads. His real estate instructor told him to talk to Van Deeb. “After I talked to Van, I realized I needed to stay in Omaha,” Alloway said it was God’s

intervention. His path then became clear. “There’s ups and downs in real estate, but it gets in your blood once you do it.”

The 2023 Nebraska REALTOR®-of-the-Year has been involved in the association for years, serving as a former Local President, State President, and Great Plains Regional MLS Chair. He also serves at the national level. He described the REALTOR® organization as an elaborate machine with many moving parts operating at the local, state, and national levels. “Being involved gives you a voice. It is life-changing. I’d be much less of a person without being involved in professional organizations. You can’t calculate the value. It’s been a tremendous opportunity.” Alloway also believes in the rewards of helping people in the community, supporting several charities, including Open Door Mission, Metro Community College Foundation, Ronald McDonald House, and the Hope Center for Kids. ■



ANDY ALLOWAY

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IN THE TRENCHES

The real estate business can entail massive amounts of paperwork and require meticulous attention to detail. It can also be enthralling, edge-of-your-seat excitement. For REALTORS® John Lorkovic and Denise Poppen both encountered far more excitement on the job than they bargained for.

Samurai Seller

John had what started as a typical real estate transaction. An elderly gentleman was selling his home to a young buyer. The morning closing started as an eventful day.

Despite the thorough paperwork, the seller was somehow confused about when the buyer would take possession of the home and didn't realize he needed to vacate the house that day.

The buyer showed up later with a moving truck and family in tow, only to discover the seller leisurely sitting around in what was now legally the buyer's home. The young buyer became understandably annoyed. Incensed, he yelled, "Get out of my house!" and "I'm gonna lock you outside!"

The buyer infuriated the seller so much that a physical altercation ensued. After being confronted, the older gentleman went back in the home and took a large, decorative Japanese sword off the wall. He then started swinging it at the buyer in the front yard, resulting in a call to the Police and the seller being charged with assault with a deadly weapon.

All John could think was, "Wow, that's impressive the seller could even lift that sword," explaining that the sword was possibly seven feet long and looked extremely heavy. "I don't know if I could pick it up, much less swing it around," he said with a chuckle. Eventually, the situation was resolved. "Luckily, no blood was drawn," John mused. Of course, no bloodshed is the goal in any business deal.

In the Dark

Denise Poppen recalls a time years ago on a dark, dreary winter day when she showed a large, vacant home to a woman and her middle-school-aged daughter. The house was dark inside, and according to Denise, the place "seemed kinda spooky" to start.

While inspecting the basement, they turned the corner into a pitch-black room. Suddenly, the lights began flashing on and off with a strobe effect. They could only make out little bits of images with each flicker, but they saw what looked like old, prison-style metal bunk beds and what appeared to be a meat grinder in the corner.

Terrified, Denise and her potential buyer screamed like a scene out of a horror movie. They frantically scrambled. While fleeing the chaos, they ran into each other, heightening the urgency. They tore up the stairs from what they were convinced at that moment was a terrifyingly haunted torture room.

Once they got to the top of the stairs, they realized the adolescent daughter was controlling the lights, presumably for her own amusement. Once the lights were fully on, they discovered the basement room was a storm shelter. And the meat grinder in the corner? It turned out to be an old furnace.

Facing the odd and sometimes terrifying is all in a day's work when you're a REALTOR® in the trenches. ■



Ericka Heidvogel



Shelley Hourigan



Brooke Johnson



Monica Lang



David Lee



Luke Lofgren



Kurt Pfeffer



Gary Price



Tammy Smart



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Summer Break is around the corner!!

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FOR UP TO THE MINUTE INFORMATION ON ALL WE DO! CHECK OUT THE FUN WE HAD AT MUSIC BINGO!!!

(Pics at the bottom of this page)

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Our 2023 Board traveled to Mid-Year Conferences in Washington D.C. May 9-12.

We enjoyed some team bonding with each other and our colleagues from "Sea to shining Sea"!

We also brainstormed about which of our members might be interested in getting involved on our 2024 Board and Project Teams!

Be on the look-out for a tap on the shoulder as we ask you how we can help you get involved! OR reach out to ANY of us if you want more info.

We would love to help guide you on your leadership journey!

May 18th we have an amazing line up for our Broker Panel discussion!

We welcome them on Thursday, May 18th at Champion's Run from 11am-1pm.

WE ARE TAKING A BREAK FOR JUNE!

WE KNOW HOW "TAXING" THE SPRING MARKET IS SO JUNE IS A CHANCE TO SLOW DOWN AND ENJOY A BREATHER!!



NEVER FEAR THOUGH—GOLF IS NEAR!

Get ready to

Rock the Drive & Roll the Putt

THURSDAY, JULY 20th

SHOTGUN START 10AM

TIBURON GOLF COURSE

Register @WCROMaha.com



In support of our 2023 Charity Partner, Project Intentional, Inc. we invite you to engage in opportunities to support their mission at each of our events this year!

Giving back to our community and supporting locally are a top priority of our network!

Thank you for participating.

- Liz Otto, President

MUSIC BINGO LITERALLY ROCKED!



AFFILIATE SPOTLIGHT PRESENTS

REFINANCING AT ANY STAGE OF DIVORCE

Divorce is never an easy time. If you and your spouse are both listed on the family home, you have several options. Before you choose a divorce loan, it's important to note that you can begin at any stage of divorce from before it's filed to while it's pending and, of course, once it has been finalized. So why wait?

Divorce Refinancing

If you would like to stay in the family home, a refinance is in order. Refinancing during a divorce will take your spouse's portion of the loan and add it to what you owe. You must be able to qualify for the mortgage with only your income and credit score. Alimony or spousal support can also be used to help qualify for the mortgage, but only if the divorce settlement states you will continue to receive payments for at least three more years.

Want to refinance before your divorce is filed or completed?

Since you're looking to begin the refinancing process before your divorce is complete, the alimony or spousal support won't be finalized. Rest assured that the team at Mortgage Specialists is equipped to guide you through the refinance process during this time and will not require a finalized divorce before beginning the process.

Want to refinance while your divorce is pending?

If you're in the middle of a divorce and would like to look ahead at your housing situation after the divorce is finalized, there's no reason to wait. As mentioned above, since you're looking to begin the refinancing process while your divorce is pending, the alimony or spousal support won't be finalized, but we are able to begin the process without a finalized divorce, allowing your housing situation to be settled before or shortly after the divorce is complete.

Want to refinance to give your spouse cash so they can purchase a new home?

If you're thinking of refinancing the family home so you can stay and your spouse can purchase a new home, you can do so at any point of the divorce process. While many lenders will tell you to wait until the divorce is finalized, it can be advantageous to begin before then. If you're able to complete the refinance process while the divorce is pending, you can give your spouse their portion of equity before the divorce is finalized. Doing so gives them money for a down payment and allows both of you to be settled in your homes before the divorce process is complete or shortly after.

Want to purchase a new home while your divorce is pending?

Whether you and your spouse decided to sell the family home and both purchase new homes, or your spouse is staying in the family home and you're buying a new home, you can do so while your divorce is pending. In fact, we recommend it! If you focus on your housing situation while the divorce is pending, you'll have everything finalized before or shortly after your divorce is complete.

Regardless of your unique situation, assembling a team of specialists you can trust during your divorce is incredibly important. Doing so will give you a wealth of knowledge to lean on when making decisions. In addition to your attorney and financial planner, a mortgage lender experienced in divorce loans is an integral asset for your team.

Brent Rasmussen
Mortgage Specialists



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

April Activity	MO	YTD
New REALTOR® Members	24	86
Resignations	34	58

Membership (As of April 1)	2023	2022
Designated REALTORS®	196	204
REALTOR®	3035	3003
REALTOR® Emeritus	84	56
TOTAL REALTORS®	3315	3263

Institute Affiliate	72	72
Affiliate Members	161	168
Key-Only Affiliates	140	146

See the full membership report at: OmahaREALTORS.com/membership-report

DESIGNATIONS

Certified Residential Specialist (CRS)

- Angela Eppenbaugh, kwELITE Real Estate
- Christine Shour, RE/MAX Results

Seniors Real Estate Specialist® (SRES®)

- Dawn Stock, PJMorgan Real Estate

ENDORSEMENTS

Commitment to Excellence (C2EX)

- Carla Hueler, Nebraska Realty
- Denise Poppen, BHHS Ambassador

CONDOLENCES

- Monica Bayles, OABR Member Services on the loss of her mother-in-law
- Gary Tusa from BHHS Ambassador Real Estate has passed away



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THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

MAY



MAY 11: Following years of drought, a colossal dust storm two miles high, 1500 miles long, and 900 miles across covered one-third of the country. Nebraska crops failed, and many farmers went bankrupt, extending the impact of the Great Depression.

1934



MAY 17: The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Brown v. Board of Education*, ruling that racial segregation in public educational facilities is unconstitutional.

1954



MAY 10: Warren Buffet gains control of Berkshire-Hathaway.

1965

1896

MAY 26: The Dow Jones Industrial Average was first published. The average price of the 12 initial stocks was \$40.94. The Dow peaked at \$36,799.65 in early 2022.



1935

MAY 28: The City of Omaha passed a resolution establishing the Omaha Housing Authority to contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide rent subsidies for low- and moderate-income individuals.



Beware Scammers



Steve Vacha
President

Recently I had a family member who was being scammed into selling their home.

Definition of Scamming: "A scam is a deceptive scheme or trick used to cheat someone out of something, especially money."

We are all hearing of folks getting scammed one way or the other. Personally, was scammed about 20 years ago, when I received a phone call telling me I was one of the few contractors in Omaha being notified about an exclusive dealership for an amaz-

ing breakthrough product called "Liquid Genie" that increased milage for diesel engines.

Scammers often utilize several malicious tactics to trick people. One is a **get-rich-quick scheme**, which I fell for with my Liquid Genie product. The scammer said it was a sure-fire product, tested and ready for quick distribution, and that I could be the sole distributor for this product throughout the state of Nebraska.

Another scam tactic is to **create urgency**. I was told I must commit to the distributorship before anyone else accepted it. When I wanted more information, I was given the number of "another distributor" in another state, who, of course, gave them rave reviews.

I paid several thousand dollars for this distributorship and some products. Anyone want to buy my

Liquid Genie? I might still have some left. Just kidding, of course. I did receive my product – cases of diesel treatment and I excitedly tried it in my diesel engine car. It made no difference. Liquid Genie turned out to be nicely packaged kerosene. After contacting the FBI, I filed a report and (to date) have received about \$30 back.

Back to scammers and homes... Scammers utilize a form of get-rich scheme where they claim sellers can save thousands due to lack of expensive real estate agent fees, and still get market value. Creating Urgency they stress quick sale, no inspections, no strangers walking through home. My family member signed a purchase agreement selling their home for \$100,000 under present market value. They were scammed.

To help sellers avoid falling for scammers, we are introducing a new service: **Sellers Pre-Sale**



Consultations. These are designed for people like my family who was being scammed. Sellers get:

- Third party written report on issues of concern
- Rough estimate on potential cost of repair
- Designed for agents, to help their clients.
- Consultation Report can later be turned into a Pre-Sale inspection report, with repairs removed.



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MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Established in 1949, the platform's purpose is to raise awareness about the importance of mental health and wellness. An estimated 1 in 5 Americans suffer from a mental health illness. Psychologist Dr. Emma Topf weighs in on the subject in a Q & A session.



Q How does Mental Health Awareness Month help get the word out about mental health issues? How can we better educate the public about it?

A Mental Health Awareness Month spreads awareness on mental health issues and how to identify them. It educates people about available services and how to access them. It reduces the stigma around mental health and identifies specific ways to advocate for change in mental health policies and access to care.

Educating the public about mental health highlights awareness. Recovery could be celebrated on a larger scale by including it in easily accessible media, as well as increasing targeting specific populations. People may relate more to information about the impact of mental health when it is shared in a relatable context such as the impacts and trends of mental health in the context of specific career fields, age groups, and/or gender identity.

Companies can offer information on what mental health support is offered through the company, or within the community such as mental health training programs, employee assistance programs (EAP), and other wellness programs.

Q There has often been a stigma attached to mental health issues. How can we destigmatize mental health care?

A We can raise awareness through information sharing about recognizing mental health issues, and through vulnerable storytelling and policy change. It's not always easy to identify symptoms of mental illness. More education is needed for people to understand symptoms of mental illness and types of treatment necessary.

Historically in our culture, there has been and continues to be a mentality of "you should be able to get over it" and "pull yourself up by your bootstraps,"

which typically results in avoidance of mental health care and an increase in mental health issues, especially for men. This perpetuates the stigma and results in avoidance or delays in seeking care, poor medication management, and early discontinuation of treatment. Mental health issues can feel very isolating and lonely. When people hear stories similar to their own experience and the positive impact of seeking mental health care, it can feel validating, decrease feelings of hopelessness, and people may be more likely to seek support.

In addition, policy change needs to occur at the federal and state levels to increase prevention efforts, increase opportunities for early identification and intervention, and increase access to integrated care and treatment. Policy changes within companies can also be supportive to destigmatizing mental healthcare by offering options for taking a mental health day.

Q One in 5 Americans will experience mental illness at some point, how can we prioritize mental health care and make it more accessible to everyone?

A Advocacy and funding are crucial for more supportive policies that support people with mental illness and their families and for better access to care. For many, mental healthcare is out of reach financially because mental health services are not covered to the same degree as physical health services by insurance, if covered at all.

Access to care is challenging to obtain due to the limited mental health resources in most communities, especially rural communities. Even once someone decides to seek care and has been able to jump through the many hoops required to obtain care, it is not uncommon for there to be long waiting lists due to the limited amount of mental health resources offered.

Q Being a REALTOR® is a very stressful career at times. How can real estate professionals manage that stress effectively?

Assess your work-life balance:

A This career can be very demanding, and it can be easy to find yourself working around the clock or working in place of engaging with family and friends. When you notice your stress level has increased, find ways to return to a healthier state of equilibrium that allows for time to recharge physically and mentally. Preventatively scheduling time (weekly, monthly, quarterly) to spend with family, for getaways, to engage in hobbies, and self-care is the best option.

Manage health and wellness:

Eating a balanced diet, getting adequate sleep, finding time to exercise, engaging in mindfulness, and finding

time to laugh and play all are important aspects of managing stress effectively.

Seek support when needed:

Check-in and reflect on your physical and mental health frequently. Seek support when you need it. This might look like finding a mentor within the real estate community or talking to friends and family. However, if your stress level persists, consider seeking professional mental health support.

Q The data shows that REALTORS® suffer from high rates of clinical depression. How can we address the surge in depression?

A To address the surge in depression, it is important to identify and utilize coping skills that work for you in moments of high stress to combat taking the work home with you. Real estate can feel unpredictable at times when working in high stress situations, with high stress clients, or when a sale fails for reasons out of your control. Over time, when the stress is not dealt with, it can lead to symptoms of depression.



Dr. Emma Topf, Psychologist

Q How can you be supportive to a friend or family member suffering from depression or a mental health issue?

A The more you learn about depression or other mental health illnesses, the different ways it can affect people, and ways to seek treatment, the better you will be able to support someone experiencing it. If you notice someone is suffering from depression or a mental illness it is important to have an open and honest conversation with them to share changes you have seen in them and why you're worried. Urge them to seek help from a professional, offer to help find and access support (calling to set up appointments, drive them there etc.), and consistently let them know how much you care about them.



2023 NEBRASKA REALTORS® ASSOCIATION CONVENTION



The Nebraska REALTORS® Association celebrated its 106th Annual Convention and Expo April 3-5 at the La Vista Convention Center. The three-day event kicked off on Monday with Committee Meetings on everything from Statewide Professional Standards to Governmental Affairs. Monday closed with a reception and group photo with the highly visible “Riding With the Brand” REALTOR® Bus, a year-long trek across the country.

Tuesday and Wednesday boasted two full days of informative CE Classes – Code of Ethics, Bias Override – Overcoming Barriers to Fair Housing, The Tax Impact of Residential Real Estate Investments, Principles of Property Management, Investment and Retirement Strategies for REALTORS®, and Goals, Time Blocking and Self Care, to name a few. On Tuesday, exceptional members were recognized for their contributions to the industry, including Nebraska’s 2023 REALTOR® of the year, Andy Alloway. The 2022 REALTOR® of the year, Herb Freeman, presented the coveted award. ■

2023 FIRST QUARTER STATS (GPRMLS.COM)

NEW HOMES MEDIAN CLOSED PRICE

+12.4%

YTD 2023: \$449,401
YTD 2022: \$399,900

EXISTING HOMES MEDIAN CLOSED PRICE

+6.1%

YTD 2023: \$260,000
YTD 2022: \$245,000

NEW HOMES ON MARKET **+128%**



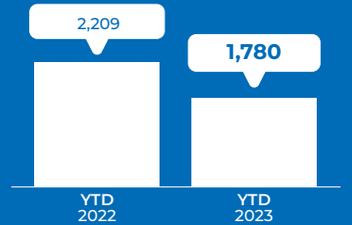
EXISTING HOMES ON MARKET **+17.7%**



NEW HOMES CLOSED SALES **-25.8%**



EXISTING HOMES CLOSED SALES **-19.4%**



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YP SUMMIT 2023

A surge of palpable anticipation filled the CHI Conference Center, as over 1,500 attendees converged on the Greater Omaha Chamber's YP Summit held on March 24.

The summit was kicked off by author and motivational speaker Ben Nemtin, the New York Times bestselling author ("What Do You Want to Do Before You Die") and MTV star ("The Buried Life").

After the then-young athlete experienced a devastating setback while playing college Rugby, Nemtin slipped into a dark, immobilizing depression. He rediscovered his purpose with what started as a bucket list created with three of his friends. They set out on a grand cross-country adventure in a dilapidated, old RV to realize what Oprah would later describe as a truly

inspiring mission of inspiration.

The Closing Session featured Omaha native Symone Sanders-Townsend. Her resume includes being the former national press secretary for Bernie Sanders' 2016 presidential campaign, a senior advisor for President Biden's 2020 presidential campaign, and a Senior Advisor to Vice President Kamala Harris.

Omaha's YP Summit is the country's most attended young professionals' conference. The REALTORS® association sponsored OABR YPN Advisory Committee members to participate in this year's conference. In addition to the keynotes and networking sessions, the day-long event featured three breakout times, each with the choice of five sessions. ■

PAST PRESIDENT'S CORNER

DAVID MATNEY, 2013 PRESIDENT

What was the housing market like the year you were the OABR President?

We were just starting coming out of the Great Recession years after the downturn.

What is one of your most rewarding experiences while being President?

The relationships I built with my fellow REALTORS®. It was a wonderful networking opportunity!

How has being involved with OABR helped you grow professionally?

It made me appreciate what the CEO, staff and volunteers do to help run the association at a local, state, and national level.

Tell us about you. What are some of your hobbies/interests?

I am a history geek and I enjoy fishing. I also enjoy making YouTube videos.

What attracted you to a career in real estate?

I originally got my license because I was a real estate investor.

Any words of wisdom for new agents?

My words of wisdom for new agents. There are 2 types of people. People you know and people you don't know. You need to be talking to both groups of people. Build your database by building and nurturing relationships. Focus on the basics and avoid "shiny object" syndrome. Reach out to your database and be of service and add value to their lives. Reach out using multiple channels and methods, texts, phone calls, handwritten notes, email (Homebot), (if I loved Homebot anymore it would be inappropriate.) and mail and host at least one client appreciation event per year. You are not entitled to their business, you have to earn it! Study your market and know your stats. Be a sponge and learn the business. Try to learn and improve each day. Get comfortable being uncomfortable. Be patient, it does take time to build your business. It is OK to suck at something before you get good at it. Consistency always wins! You can do it!



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