

January 2026



# REVIEW

Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®



# JANUARY

TUE  
06

## NEW REALTOR® ORIENTATION

9:00AM - 12:30PM

Kickstart your real estate journey at our New REALTOR® Orientation, where you'll gain the tools, knowledge, and connections to build a successful career from day one!

FRI  
09

## GOOD CONTRACTS/ BAD CONTRACTS

9:00AM - 12:00PM

Learn Vital aspects of the latest purchase agreement and increase your knowledge and awareness of the contractual terms.

THU  
15

## EMPOWER HOURS: FINANCIAL FITNESS FOR REALTORS®

11:30AM - 1:00PM

Three powerhouse industry experts for a candid panel discussion on elevating your business, protecting your finances, and building long-term stability in a shifting market:

THU  
29

## BRENT AND BRAD'S EXCELLENT VA AND FHA ADVENTURE

9:00AM - 12:00PM

You will be able to define the FHA and VA loans and how this can benefit your buyers and sellers.



SCAN TO VIEW  
THE OABR  
CALENDAR

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

The start of a new year often brings New Year's resolutions — goals, plans, and intentions for how we want to improve in 2026. Taking the time to reflect and plan is important, and many of you likely spent the end of last year in business-planning sessions doing just that.

Most of that planning ends the same way: goals are set, confidence is high, and January begins with momentum. Then reality shows up. In fact, the second Friday of January is often called "Quitter's Day," when many people have already drifted away from the goals they were excited about just weeks earlier.

This is where The Compound Effect by Darren Hardy really resonates. The idea is simple: small, consistent actions done over time create big results. Success doesn't come from one perfect month or a massive change — it comes from showing up every day and doing the next right thing.

To stay on track, I'll leave you with three simple reminders:

- Break big goals into smaller wins. Focus on 90-day milestones so progress feels achievable and motivating.
- Write your goals down—and keep them visible. What you see daily stays top of mind.
- Add accountability. Share your goals with someone who will help keep you moving forward.

2026 doesn't require perfection. It requires consistency. If you stay focused on small steps and keep showing up, the results will follow.

Here's to a year of steady progress and meaningful momentum.

**Wishing you a strong start to 2026.**

BRAD FRICKE,  
2026 OABR President





# REVIEW

## OMAHA AREA BOARD OF REALTORS® 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**PRESIDENT**  
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**WRITER**  
Melissa McElroy

**GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR**  
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Jaycee Miller

THU  
29  
JAN

**Brent & Brad's  
Excellent  
VA & FHA  
Adventure** (#1447)

📍 OABR EDUCATION CENTER

🕒 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Register at [omaharealtors.com/excellent\\_adventure](https://omaharealtors.com/excellent_adventure)

FRI  
06  
FEB

**2026  
ECONOMIC  
UPDATE**

WITH DR. LAWRENCE YUN,  
NAR CHIEF ECONOMIST

LIMITED SEATING

📍 QUARRY OAKS | 16600 QUARRY OAKS DR.

🕒 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Register at [omaharealtors.com/2026-economic-update](https://omaharealtors.com/2026-economic-update)

FRI  
13  
FEB

**SHOW ME  
THE MONEY**

#1365

OABR ED. CENTER  
REGISTER NOW AT [omaharealtors.com/finance](https://omaharealtors.com/finance)

📍 OABR EDUCATION CENTER

🕒 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Register at [omaharealtors.com/finance](https://omaharealtors.com/finance)

# 2026 RECHARGE

## REIMAGINED

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

REcharge, the annual education event presented by The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®, just got a makeover.

OABR President Brad Fricke said, “We took a look at the feedback from our past REcharge events and we listened.” He said past attendees were impressed by exceptional keynote speakers and wanted even more of that. For 2026, REcharge is now a series of events.

The first speaker of the REcharge series is sure to electrify audiences! It is *Survivor* contestant and real estate superstar Quintavius “Q” Burdette. The name Q



**BRAD FRICKE**

might sound like a James Bond villain; however, he is the hero of his own story, someone who can illuminate how to succeed in real estate. The former contestant on the wildly popular, long-running show *Survivor* has built a successful real estate career by applying survival instincts learned through the school of hard knocks.

The champion, born one of 17 children, described his upbringing in the opening of *Survivor* 46: “If I didn’t wake up first, I probably didn’t eat.” That hunger for success led him to be the first in his family to attend college, where he played football and ran track.

Q googled “What profession can I make what I’m worth?” and real estate popped up. “I didn’t have a clue about real estate. Fast forward two or three years, and I

was the number two agent in the U.S.”

This top performer in real estate will share how he used his driven, entrepreneurial mindset to build a thriving business. He’s been a crowd favorite at real estate conventions across the country and has been featured on countless real estate podcasts.

The *Survivor* contestant will be on *Survivor* 50, which airs on Wednesday, February 25th.

In addition to bringing in even more outstanding speakers, REcharge organizers are changing the format. Instead of a one-time, annual event, 2026 will feature a three-part series spread out over the year. Each part of the series will feature one show-stopping keynote speaker presenting a morning and afternoon session.

Mark your calendar for Q at the Relevant venue in Elkhorn on February 20, for the first installment of REcharge 2026. OABR member tickets are \$45 for one class, \$70 for both sessions with lunch.

Fricke said “People were asking for a more flexible schedule. Not everyone can take a whole day off to attend a conference.” He explained, “This will be a three-hour morning session and a three-hour afternoon session, giving members a choice.”

He said it offers multiple opportunities for real estate professionals to gain additional training and motivation that they can apply to their businesses. “Zig Ziglar said it best. ‘People often say motivation doesn’t last. Well, neither does bathing—that’s why we recommend it daily.’”





**BRIAN KAYS**

REALTOR® Brian Kays, who serves on the subcommittee that helped plan REcharge, said, "Instead of recharging one time at one REcharge event, there will be six different opportunities to recharge."



**NICOLE RIDDLE**

OABR Professional Development Chair Nicole Riddle said, "We couldn't be more excited about the REcharge revamp. Our committee has taken REcharge apart piece by piece to rebuild it with a more dynamic, national-level approach to education for 2026."

Riddle added, "The Professional Development Committee is passionate about our mission of advancing real estate knowledge, and this new programming reflects that dedication."

April 9 is the tentative date for the second featured speaker in the REcharge series. Seen on HGTV and Forbes - This "Disruption Navigator" is guiding entrepreneurs from chaos to clarity with guts, grace, and a good dose of grit.

She is a powerhouse keynote speaker, author, CEO, and rockstar REALTOR® who approaches her role with one goal in mind: "help leaders rise with courage, lead with integrity, and move forward with purpose."



**QUINTAVIUS 'Q' BURDETTE**

Photo Credit: facebook.com/quintavius.burdette.3

This real estate queen will share ideas and candid advice gained from her personal experience of working in the trenches every day, running a top-producing real estate team. Stay tuned to learn about her and the balance of the series which will offer amazing, top-tier speakers for real estate professionals..

# NEW YEAR, NEW YOU?

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

Every year, as the ball drops and the confetti descends, people around the world make New Year's resolutions for the coming year.

According to a survey conducted by Statista.com, the number one New Year's goal for 2026 was to exercise more. Eating healthier and saving more money also ranked high on the list.

REALTOR® Tim Collins, a fitness expert who owns a health and wellness business called TC Lifestyle Fit, said it is important that goals be grounded in reality. "Dream as large as you want, but set realistic expectations." He said it's not about focusing on a single short-term goal.

"Focus on the process. A healthy lifestyle is long-term to achieve the desired outcomes," Collins said. "Simplify the process. Develop habits and standards that you can maintain."

The fitness pro also said, "Don't focus on being perfect. Focus on skills, habits, and practices. Keep it simple. Focus on the fundamentals in any area you want to improve." It's about setting new, sustainable, healthy habits and setting the standard.

Dylan Dravland, Mortgage Advisor at NEO Home Loans, suggested some commonsense strategies for financial goals, such as avoiding large auto loan payments, generating a second stream of income, building an emergency fund, creating a budget, and investing, even if it's only \$50 a month.

He said you want to keep credit card balances

low. "The credit bureaus want to see responsible use of credit; they don't want to see zero use. Look at your card statements from the last two months and cut back as needed. Those little charges really start to add up."

Some prefer to skip resolutions altogether and set goals throughout the year. If you do make resolutions, whether they focus on fitness, finance, or another goal, small, consistent actions can amount to significant change.

## RESOLUTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE OABR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Angel Starks said, "I don't really do resolutions, but my intention for 2026 is abundance- not of things, but of the moments, relationships, peace, and purpose that actually matters."

Nicole Riddle said, "I'm a big believer in resetting each year with a fresh business and marketing plan guided by my 'why.' I make a 5x7 vision collage and frame it on my bookshelf, so I see it daily. On New Year's Eve, my kids and I each add one personal goal to the fridge—sometimes it's 'more family photos,' sometimes it's 'no cereal in bed after 8.' However, our resolutions always start on the 1st Monday of the year, unless that Monday is a snow day, then we try again the next week."

Mike McGlynn said he doesn't make resolutions for New Year's- he strives to live life in the now. After years of working all the time, he realized the importance of living a sustainable, healthy lifestyle. "We're all on this planet for such a short time. Life's way too short. Live for today," he said.

He does business planning, remains mindful of nutrition and fitness, and most importantly, loving his family. "Ralph Marasco said it best, 'It's not what you make. It's what you keep.'"

McGlynn also believes education is important.



New REALTORS® can take advantage of the Christie Bevington scholarship if they have educational goals: [business.nebraskarealtors.com/ap/Form/Fill/rnQn1TWL](https://business.nebraskarealtors.com/ap/Form/Fill/rnQn1TWL)

Sarina McNeel said she doesn't usually make New Year's resolutions. "Typically, I prefer short-term goals for personal achievements versus an annual resolution. I do typically set business goals for each year and focus on improving my systems."

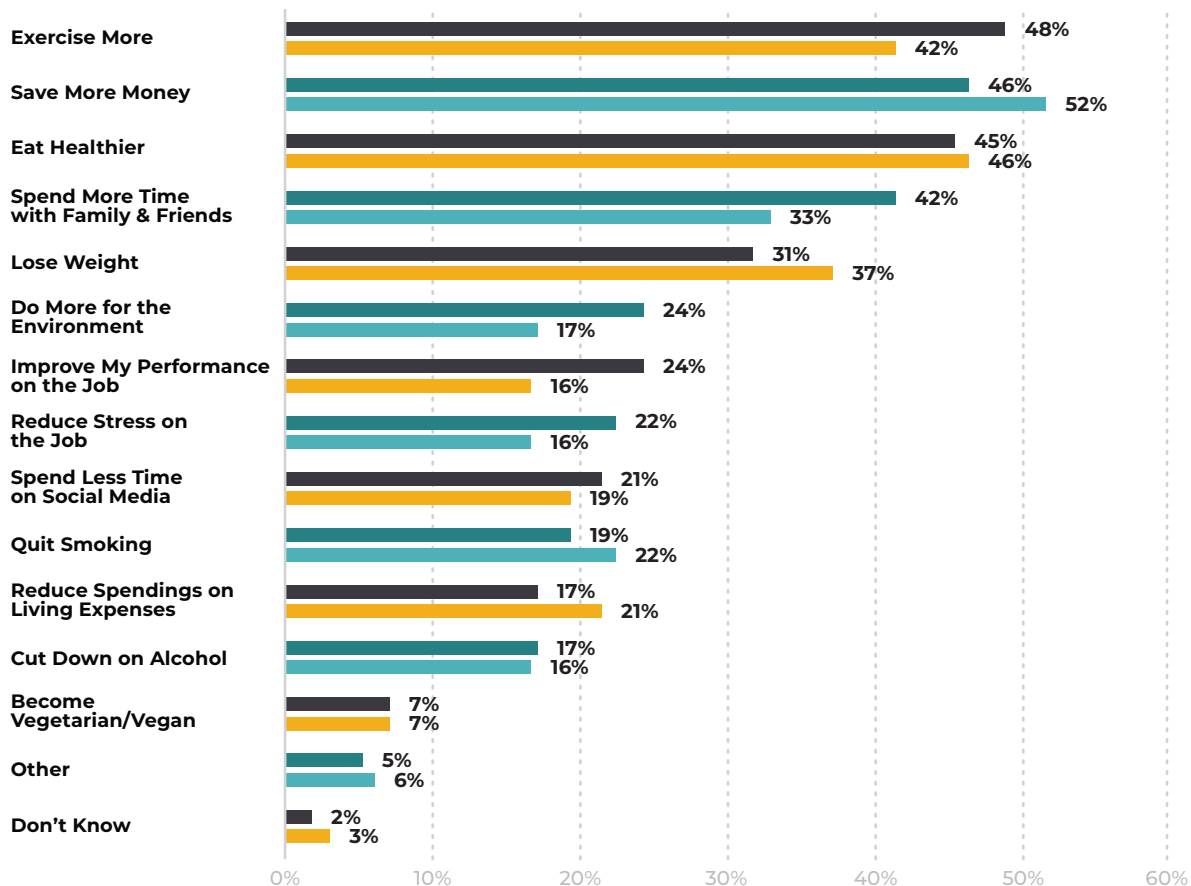
She works to keep in contact with her clients and commit to important causes such as MAD Rescue

and training for the 50 Mile March to bring awareness and fundraiser for veterans. "My goals tend to be pretty simple, and I find if I focus on those priorities, my business goals tend to fall into place," she said.

Jessica Sawyer said, "After talking with my business coach, I decided I wanted to be better about showing my gratitude by writing personal notes. For years, I've wanted to be better at it."

Brent Rasmussen said, "Every year I try to add one more marketing idea for my business."

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS IN THE U.S 2026



Source: statista.com

Share of Respondents

2026 2025

# REALTOR® RING DAY: RINGING IN HOLIDAY CHEER

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

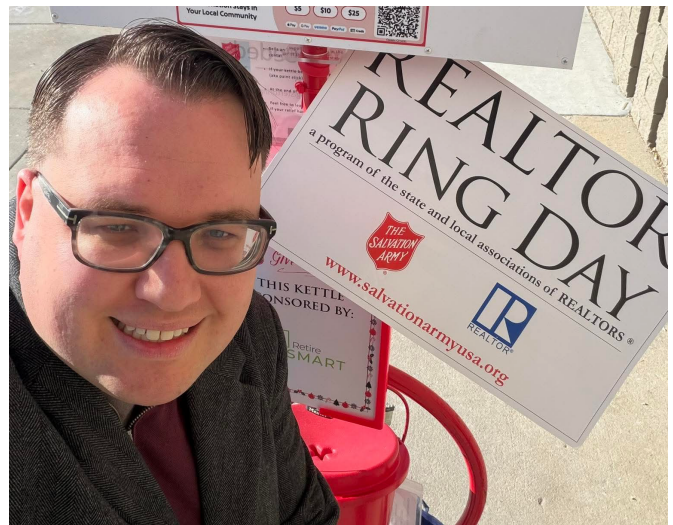
Merry bells rang out across the heartland in December! For years, on the first Friday of the month, REALTORS® across the nation ring bells for the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Drive, which raises funds for emergency food, shelter, and clothing for millions of people experiencing hardship during the holidays.

In addition to helping homeless and needy families at Christmastime, The Salvation Army serves over 27 million people throughout the year with social service programs, financial assistance, casework and counseling programs, residential assistance, abuse counseling, youth services programs, seniors' assistance, disaster response services, human and sexual trafficking advocacy, veterans services, and prison services.

Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® volunteers did more than just spread good cheer. Red Kettles overflowed with generous donations. Bellringers raised nearly \$12,000 this year, and over \$150,000 since 2010.

Jeff Beckman, Executive Director of Development for the Salvation Army's Western Division, said, "We salute OABR and its members for a fantastic finish to REALTOR® Ring 2025. The total raised of \$11,997.96 was the highest it's been in the last 5 years, and reflective of the hard work and dedication of the REALTORS® who participated. Our sincere thanks go out to all involved for making a difference while showing off their Christmas spirit."

A heartfelt thank you to all the OABR members who volunteered to help raise money for a worthy cause. Proving once again that the people in the real estate community have the biggest hearts!









# OABR Turkey Bowl 2025: An Affair to November

Written by  
**Melissa McElroy**

The deafening explosion of bowling balls and pins violently colliding reverberated across Maplewood Lanes again in November. The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® 2025 Turkey Bowl was in full swing. The annual fundraiser, organized by members of the OABR Affiliate Committee, benefited the U.S. Marine Corps' Toys for Tots program. This marks the 78th year that Marines have collected unwrapped toys for disadvantaged children at Christmastime.

OABR Affiliate Laura Singleton said, "As the chair of this year's Turkey Bowl, I was thrilled to see more than 300 people come together for one of my favorite annual events. It's always inspiring to join our members raising money supporting a cause that does so much for our community—Toys for Tots."

She added, "I am beyond grateful for our dedicated committee and the incredible OABR staff who help make this event such a success year after year. Their







hard work and enthusiasm are what keep this tradition strong. I am already looking forward to the event next year.”

The Toys for Tots charity collected numerous large boxes filled with toys valued at \$6,000. The Marines collected over \$1,000 in cash donations at the door, plus event proceeds, bringing the grand total raised from the 2025 OABR Turkey Bowl to over \$28,000!

A round of applause also to all who came to support the cause! Everyone's generosity bowled us over! Thank you for making this the BASTE Turkey Bowl EVER!

## Turkey Bowl Committee

Laura Singleton | Nebraska Title Company  
Debbie Williams | Farm Bureau Financial Services  
Holly Lombardo | Guild Mortgage

## King Pin Sponsors | \$2,500

Veterans United Home Loans | Nick Schuster  
US BANK | Summer Franco  
The Brudigan Team - Rate | Miles Brudigan

## Split-the-Pot Sponsors | \$1,000

D.R. Horton | Kathryn Gunderson

## Turkey Sponsor | \$750

Farm Bureau Financial Services | Debbie Williams

## Strike Zone Sponsors | \$500

Nebraska Title Company | Kristina Boehmer  
Mortgage Specialists, LLC | Brent Rasmussen  
Gershman Mortgage | Kayci Parker  
Thrasher Foundation Repair | Marie Dahlberg  
Green State Bank | Danny Gill

## Spare Zone Sponsors | \$400

Home Standards Inspection Services | Amy Dritley  
NR Insurance powered by Inszone Insurance | Chelsae Schaefer

## Happy Hour Sponsors | \$250

Ambassador Title Services | Melanie Doeschot  
Women's Council of REALTORS® | WCR

## Lane Sponsor | \$100

Neo Home Loans | Dylan Dravland  
Paul Davis Restoration | Cindy Gessert  
Gaskin Property Inspections | Paul Gaskin  
Northwest Bank | Samantha Hamrick  
NR Insurance powered by Inszone Insurance | Chelsae Schaefer  
Closing So Simple | Stephanie Schroeder  
Nebraska Realty | Andy Alloway  
Guild Mortgage Company | Holly Lombardo

## ENGAGEMENT



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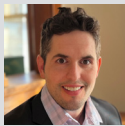
**Brent Rasmussen**

Owner | NMLS #5918  
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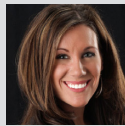




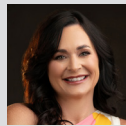
Matthew Cookson



Kara Guinto



Ericka Heidvogel



Shelley Hourigan



Don Igo



Monica Lang



David Lee



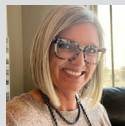
Seth Mielke



Gary Price



Karen Stansberry



Tiffany Stanton

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**CelebrityHomesOmaha.com**



# NAR'S ECONOMIC FORECAST FOR 2026: SUNNIER DAYS AHEAD

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

**B**ust out the sunglasses. According to the National Association of REALTORS® Economic Forecast for 2026, the future is so bright, you're gonna need shades.

Despite several years of stagnation, 2026 will see a 14 percent uptick in real estate, according to NAR's Chief Economist Dr. Lawrence Yun.

He said sales have only risen a paltry 0.1 percent. There have been three straight years of subpar performance with new home sales down 1.2 percent in 2025, essentially unchanged, due in part to the government shutdown.

Yun said, "Real estate is a cyclical business." There are the expected seasonal changes in the market. Business traditionally slows down in the winter and heats back up in the spring. Those with a locked-in, low-interest rate are hesitant to purchase a different home, except in cases of life-changing events: marriage, divorce, birth, death, career changes, or retirement.

He offers a different perspective from some media outlets. The renowned NAR economist said, "Sometimes the media gets it wrong." He explained, "Sometimes the interpretation of data can be a little off, or the research report where it's coming from."

The data show that supply exceeds demand, despite media reports. Despite stagnation, seriously delinquent mortgages and foreclosures, which are when consumers are over 90 days late on their mortgages or in foreclosure, are at historic lows.

Yun also expects two more Fed cuts next year. While it is not a one-for-one correlation to mortgage rates, lowering this rate can push down the 10-year Treasury yield, a key benchmark for 30-year fixed mortgages.

Dr. Jessica Lautz, NAR's Deputy Chief Economist and Vice President of Research, provided a succinct report on 2025 real estate trends.

"Two major converging trends that we saw. One is the continual trend of all-cash buyers. There was a slight downtick last year of primary residence buyers who purchased with cash, but it's still 30 percent of repeat buyers, which is double what it was before the pandemic," she said.

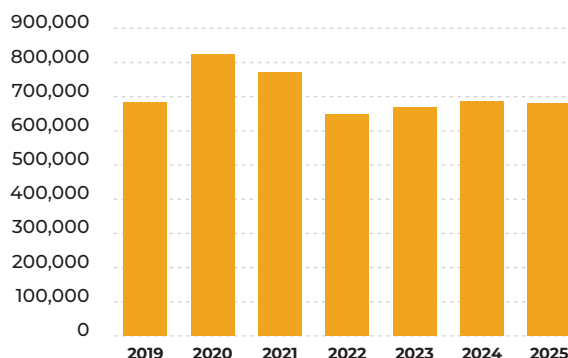


**DR. LAWRENCE YUN**

Equity gains played a significant role in the increase in cash buyers. Inheritance is increasingly playing a role for first-time homebuyers, as wealth is transferred from one generation to the next. Financial assets are also playing an increasing role for first-time buyers in the market.

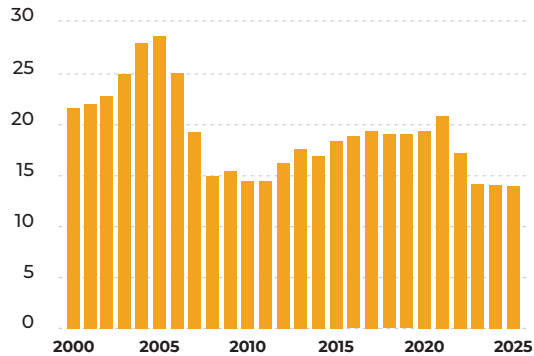
**SEE DR. LAWRENCE YUN LIVE  
'2026 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK'  
FEBRUARY 06 AT QUARRY OAKS!**

## NEW HOME SALES

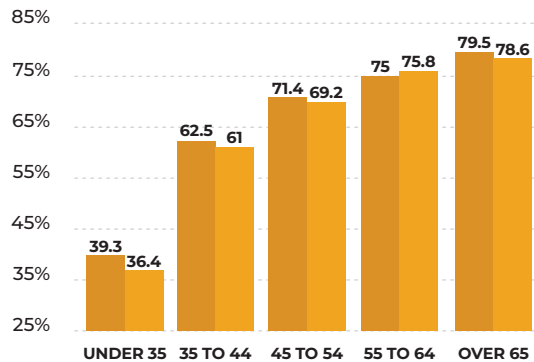


Data source: [nar.realtor](https://www.nar.realtor)

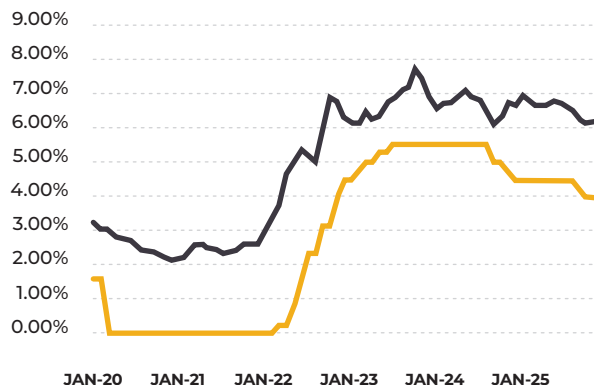
### TOTAL HOME SALES PER 1000 RESIDENTS



### HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE BY AGE GROUP 2022 PEAK VS. 2025 Q2



### MORTGAGE RATES (BLACK) FED FUNDS RATE (YELLOW)



A gift or loan from relatives or friends toward a home down payment has declined, as has using personal savings.

Among primary residence buyers, the share of first-time homebuyers has been cut in half since before the Great Recession. Historically, about 40 percent of the market was made up of first-time homebuyers. They are sometimes navigating a lack of inventory and affordability. They also need to overcome the hurdle of saving for a down payment while paying student loan payments and high rent.

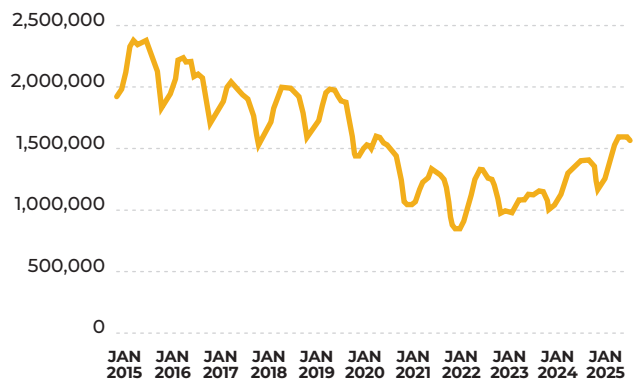
First-time homebuyers are at the highest age ever, at 40. Typically, a first-time homebuyer is between 28 and 30. This translates to fewer moves and fewer equity gains over one's lifetime.



DR. JESSICA LAUTZ

The median age of today's repeat buyer is 62. Historically, the typical repeat buyer in the market was as young as 36. According to Lautz, they are very different buyers who want very different things from their homes and plan to stay there for a long time.

### INVENTORY OF HOMES FOR SALE



Data source: nar.realtor

There are also more single women buyers, more unmarried couples, and even more roommates buying a home together. There is room for growth for single

men. There is a noticeable decline of homebuyers with children under 18, which could be due to lower birthrates and childcare costs as a barrier for first-time buyers. All of this could contribute to the median age for repeat buyers spiking from 36 to 62.

Buyers consistently continue to use agents. Lautz said 88 percent of buyers used an agent last year. Consumers wanted an agent to help them find the right home, navigate the process, and negotiate on their behalf. Sellers seeking an agent are at an all-time high. They want an agent to help them price their home competitively, find a qualified buyer, and

market it, according to the economist.

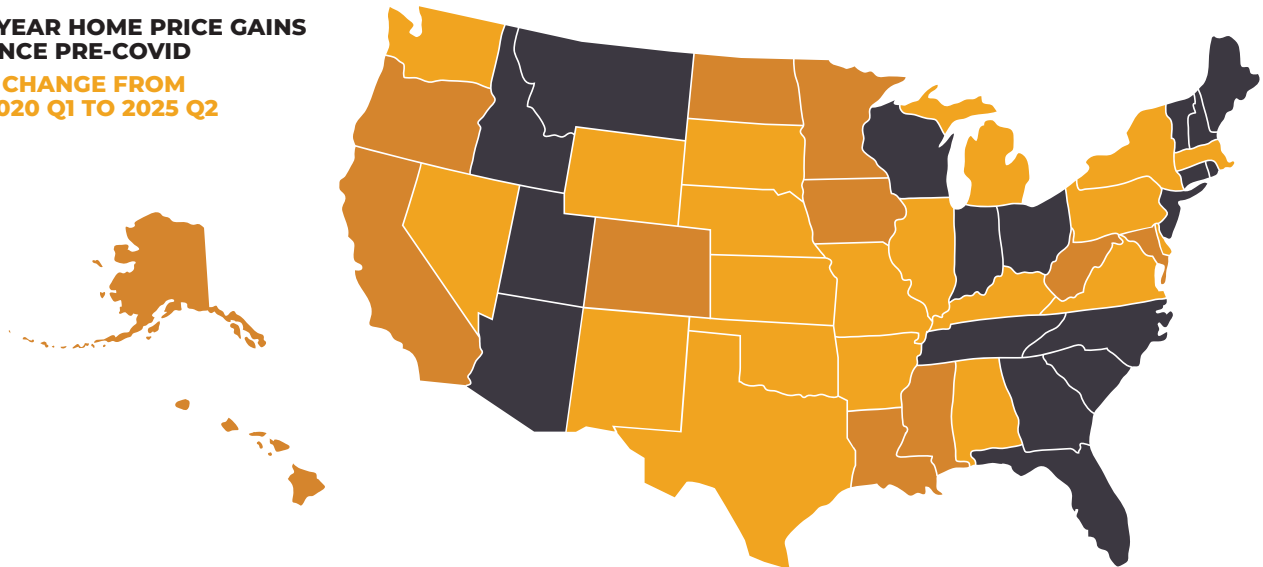
She said, "It is very important in a changing market to make sure they're finding and working with that seller to find the faults and features in that property to market it, but also suggest ways to fix up that home for sale so that the home can be seen in the best light."

FSBOs are at an all-time low: just five percent. Half of those are not arm's-length transactions where they know the buyer.

The NAR economists provided keen insight into what is driving buyers and sellers. Lautz shed light on 2025, and Yun forecasted a sunny 2026. The data is clear: consumers still want REALTORS® to navigate the ever-changing real estate market successfully.

## 5 YEAR HOME PRICE GAINS SINCE PRE-COVID

% CHANGE FROM 2020 Q1 TO 2025 Q2



ALABAMA	57.7%	HAWAII	47.3%	MASSACHUSETTS	56.2%	NEW MEXICO	58.7%	SOUTH DAKOTA	56.7%
ALASKA	44.8%	IDAHO	69.5%	MICHIGAN	59.1%	NEW YORK	59.4%	TENNESSEE	70.1%
ARIZONA	65.4%	ILLINOIS	51.2%	MINNESOTA	43.5%	NORTH CAROLINA	70.4%	TEXAS	51.3%
ARKANSAS	58.6%	INDIANA	60.9%	MISSISSIPPI	46.6%	NORTH DAKOTA	36.2%	UTAH	62.5%
CALIFORNIA	45.7%	IOWA	46.5%	MISSOURI	58.4%	OHIO	61.8%	VERMONT	71.0%
COLORADO	45.1%	KANSAS	56.1%	MONTANA	70.8%	OKLAHOMA	52.6%	VIRGINIA	56.1%
CONNECTICUT	69.8%	KENTUCKY	56.7%	NEBRASKA	53.9%	OREGON	43.0%	WASHINGTON	53.0%
DELAWARE	55.7%	LOUISIANA	27.4%	NEVADA	54.2%	PENNSYLVANIA	55.1%	WEST VIRGINIA	45.5%
FLORIDA	69.9%	MAINE	80.1%	NEW HAMPSHIRE	74.9%	RHODE ISLAND	73.5%	WISCONSIN	63.7%
GEORGIA	67.4%	MARYLAND	45.2%	NEW JERSEY	69.6%	SOUTH CAROLINA	68.4%	WYOMING	50.3%

Data source: nar.realtor





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# FREE Sewer Scope for Listing Agents






FACT: Most owners typically do not have sewer scopes done unless the buyer through their agent requests it. ***Did you know hidden sewer surprises kill more deals than low appraisals?***

If a buyer requests a sewer scope - We'll jump in and give you a **100% FREE professional sewer scope** (HD video + easy-to-read report) the minute a buyer requests one. Zero cost to you or your seller.

## In return (*the win-win*):

- 1) Plumbing Today has first option to present a bid, if repairs are needed — we're fast and fair.
- 2) If your client gets other bids, let us take a second look to make sure nobody's cutting corners. That's it.

## What you can expect (*agents rave about this*):

-  Same-day or next-day scheduling
-  Honest evaluations — no scare tactics
-  Crystal-clear video + one-page summary (perfect to forward)
-  Zero hassle guarantee: free appointments (based on availability)
-  We handle all buyer/agent questions, so you don't have to

## Are you ready to safeguard your next sale?

- CALL us at (402) 933-8835 – All calls answered LIVE - 24/7
- BOOK Instantly Online – scan the QR code or visit [www.plumbingtodayomaha.com](http://www.plumbingtodayomaha.com)
- EMAIL – [plumbingtodayllc@gmail.com](mailto:plumbingtodayllc@gmail.com) - Subject Line – FREE SEWER SCOPE
- SCHEDULE your FREE sewer scope to lock in your spot before they're gone – limit – 10 a week

*Must be in the Omaha Metro area to qualify. Does not include pulling or resetting toilet, if needed.*



Plumbing Today, 3150 Spaulding Street, Omaha, NE 68111

# OMAHA MUNICIPAL LAND BANK'S REAL ESTATE ROOTS

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

The Omaha Municipal Land Bank (OMLB) recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. For over a decade, the nonprofit organization has rehabilitated problematic properties, breathing new life into communities and presenting new opportunities.

The land bank is a quasi-public, nonprofit organization that rehabilitates vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties in a systematic, transparent manner that encourages stability and economic development and benefits the community.

The land bank can address physical issues with a property, as well as properties with problematic titles. They then make the property available for sale to enterprising entrepreneurs who want to build affordable housing. Affordable lots make building affordable housing more achievable.

REALTOR® Mike Riedmann has been a board member of The Omaha Municipal Land Bank since its inception and is currently a non-voting OMLB board member. Riedmann and other leaders in the Omaha real estate community were instrumental in its creation.

He said, "Over a decade ago, over 1,000 homes needed to be demolished in Omaha, but the city could only afford to demo 100 per year. They were 10 years behind."

After extensive discussion, leaders in the Omaha community recognized a need for a land bank here. REALTOR® leaders at the state and local levels, including Riedmann, worked with then State Senator, Heath Mello, to champion legislation forming OMLB. The legislation ensured specifically that the real estate community would be represented.

Riedmann said there are currently no homes left to demolish after a decade. According to him, it is better to rehabilitate homes if possible to conserve the integrity of the neighborhood. Tearing down a house and building a new one in its place changes not just the aesthetics, but the character of that block.

However, some homes could not be salvaged due to extensive fire damage or crumbling foundations. Others were "zombie properties," properties with extensive liens, no clear owner, or otherwise cloudy titles, along with unpaid taxes. "One of the magical powers of the land bank: they have the ability to remove liens and special assessments. They can issue a new, clean title," Riedmann said.

He said thanks to a \$250,000 grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, they were able to make even the worst lots shovel-ready. Some homes had old stoops or foundations that needed to be regraded, or in some cases \$20,000 worth of tree removal. Now, those properties are buyer-ready.

"The whole block improves when a property is fixed up," he said. It creates a domino effect; it motivates owners of neighboring homes to clean up their properties.

REALTOR® Susan Rauth, another non-voting OMLB board member, said, "I'm honored to be representing the real estate community. It's

important to shed light on the affordability issue, and the available lots within Omaha that can be repurposed and reused.”

She has been a long-time advocate for affordable housing and firmly believes in OMLB’s mission.

“There has been \$83.5 million in total economic impact by the land bank, including an estimated \$58 million in residential property value gains. Over \$24 million in local economic activity was generated, and approximately \$1.4 million in property tax revenue was restored. For every dollar spent, \$9.30 goes back to the community,” Rauth said.

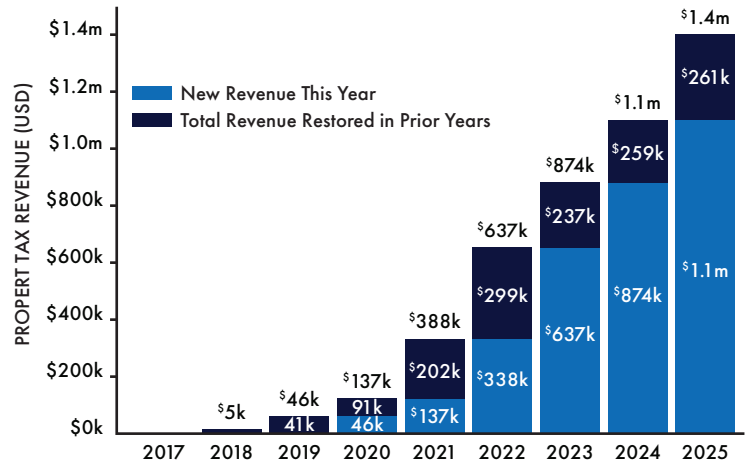
OMLB released a 10-year economic impact report for 2015-2025, outlining how the land bank’s activities contributed to property value stabilization, local economic activity, and the restoration of tax-generating properties.

In the report, OMLB Executive Director Leslie Smith said, “We remove the impediments for development. We take a look at utility issues, zoning issues, issues with the foundation, and then work to fix those things, and prepare the lot for sale for equitable housing.”

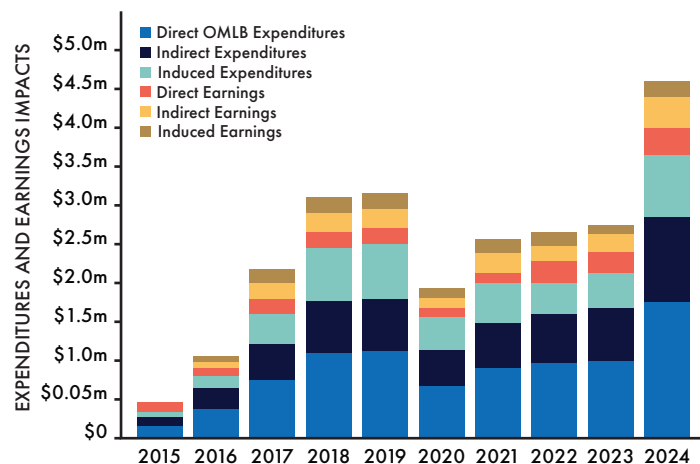
Poorly maintained, tax delinquent lots create a ripple effect on surrounding neighborhoods. They damage the property values of nearby properties. OMLB is able to reverse the negative impact of neglected properties through systematic maintenance, title clearing, and preparing those properties for reuse.

What started as a flurry of discussions within the local real estate community helped lay the groundwork for the land bank, which will continue to help address the affordable housing crisis.

## PROPERTY TAX REVENUE RESTORED



## LAND BANK EXPENDITURES & DOUGLAS CO. RIMS II IMPACTS, 2015-2024



Source: omahalandbank.org



## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

November Activity	MO	YTD
New REALTOR® Members	22	234
Resignations	10	353
<b>Membership (As of November 1)</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
Designated REALTORS®	188	197
REALTOR®	2992	2996
REALTOR® Emeritus	101	94
TOTAL REALTORS®	3281	3287
Institute Affiliate	86	78
Affiliate Members	138	130
Key-Only Affiliates	134	119

Full membership report at [OmahaREALTORS.com/membership-report](http://OmahaREALTORS.com/membership-report)

## DESIGNATIONS

### Graduate, REALTOR® Institute (GRI)

- Janelle Tierny, Nebraska Realty

### Seller Representative Specialist (SRS)

- Laurie Hardin, Nebraska Realty

## CERTIFICATIONS

### At Home with Diversity® (AHWD)

- Nicole Riddle, NP Dodge RE Sales, Inc Sarpy

### Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA)

- Nicole Riddle, NP Dodge RE Sales, Inc Sarpy

### Short Sales & Foreclosure Resource® (SFR®)

- Cynthia Robirds, Real Broker NE, LLC

## PERSONALS

### Our Condolences

- To the family and friends of Lorri McKean, Nebraska Realty, on her passing



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# THE ROAD AHEAD

After all the madcap chaos of the holidays, January ushers in a new month, a new year, and a new chance for a fresh start.

As I step into the role as the 2026 WCR President, I carry with me all the memories created through this amazing organization over the years and remember all the trailblazing leaders who have paved the way. I am in awe of how WCR has helped women develop their leadership skills and helped them grow personally and professionally. Building women leaders is at the heart of WCR.

My immediate predecessor, Trac Burkhardt, laid a solid foundation for the incoming 2026 WCR Board to continue to build upon. Her leadership skills, analytical skills, and understanding of systems, really had a profound impact on this organization. We are so fortunate that she will be acting as a liaison representing our local WCR board to both the state and nationally. It will be the first time we have ever had a liaison. Can't think of anyone better suited for the role.

I believe it is important to honor the past, not just within this organization, but on a larger scale, which is why I'm passionate about the history of Omaha. There are so many communities within our community. Knowing the history behind our historic neighborhoods is especially important for REALTORS®. It makes us better at our job when we are able to share that knowledge with clients, whether a future homeowner is a local or from another city.

Having reverence for the past is why we selected the Hispanic Art Center for the 2026 WCR Installation. It was the perfect setting, considering the incoming board's appreciation for yesteryear's architecture. Plus, the building is owned by REALTOR® Milt Schneider.

The 2026 WCR Board is full of energy and new ideas. I'm excited for the year ahead, as we continue the legacy of building the women leaders of tomorrow. We are bringing that fresh, exciting energy to all of the events that we are planning. We will keep all the beloved WCR classics: the RPAC breakfast, the Music Trivia Spring Event, and of course our Golf Event, which we have moved to September. We would also like to bring back the School Superintendent Panel, which was hugely successful.

Expect many more changes this year at WCR. There are processes in place to make this year run even smoother. We have been networking and sharing ideas over the past year with WCRs across the country. We want to honor the past but continue to bring fresh ideas as we build the future.

Here's to the year ahead. May it be educational, transformational, and inspirational.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**ANGIE THIEL**  
2026 President  
Women's Council of REALTORS®





# REALTORS® Make the Market

## Omaha Area Residential Snapshot

NOVEMBER 30	2024	2025	%
NUMBER ON MARKET	2,433	2,675	+9.9% ▲
NUMBER UNDER CONTRACT (MONTH)	779	826	+6.0% ▲
NUMBER OF SALES CLOSED (YEAR-TO-DATE)	11,059	11,428	+3.3% ▲
EXISTING SALE PRICE (MEDIAN YEAR-TO-DATE)	\$293,000	\$300,000	+2.4% ▲
NEW SALES PRICE (MEDIAN YEAR-TO-DATE)	\$424,990	\$425,000	+0.0% ▲

## AFFILIATES Add Value!



### Differences Between Residential & Commercial Property Inspections

#### What Sets Commercial Inspections Apart?

Commercial property inspections differ significantly from residential ones and require specialized expertise. Inspectors must understand complex systems, regulations, and structural requirements.

#### Capital Expenses & Maintenance Planning

Buyers need details about HVAC systems, water heaters, and roofing components to budget for future expenses. Commercial properties often require advanced assessments to determine potential repair or replacement costs.

#### Safety & Compliance Standards

Commercial buildings must meet stricter safety codes. Features like emergency exit lighting, smoke detectors, exit signs, and fire ex-

tinguishers should be serviced annually. Electrical systems over 400 amps should be inspected by licensed electricians, who use specialized safety equipment.

#### Roofing & Structural Concerns

Flat roofs, such as EPDM or rolled asphalt, are common in commercial properties. Inspections focus on drainage issues, structural support, and signs of material wear or deterioration. Addressing these issues early can prevent costly repairs.

#### Plumbing & ADA Compliance

In Omaha, PEX plumbing is prohibited in commercial properties. Inspections also evaluate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including marked parking spaces, foam protection on pipes, and grab bars in restrooms.

#### Parking Lot & Exterior Checks

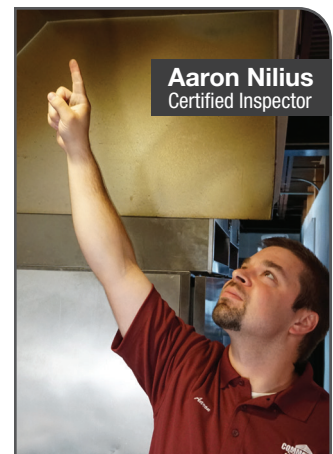
Parking lot striping, curb stops, and signage are assessed for visibility and wear. Gas meters in areas prone to vehicle impact should have protective concrete bollards.

#### HVAC Systems

Package HVAC units are common in commercial buildings. These combined heating and cooling systems are installed outdoors, eliminating the need for metal flues. Inspectors assess the age, efficiency, and condition of these units.

#### Commercial Kitchens & Grease Management

Cooking appliances in commercial kitchens, such as ovens, gas cooktops, and fryers, often require fire suppression systems and exhaust hoods. Fire suppression uses chemical agents to control flames. Grease traps are inspected to prevent drain blockages, as regular cleaning is essential.



Aaron Nilius  
Certified Inspector

#### Why It Matters

Understanding these differences helps buyers and agents evaluate inspector qualifications and make informed decisions. To learn more about the commercial property inspection process or its impact on buying and selling commercial properties, contact us today!



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# THE TRENCHES

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

Working in real estate is, in some ways, like surviving winter. With a little preparation and ingenuity, you'll soldier on to see sunnier days.

## **DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD**

REALTOR® Pat Bittner remembers walking into a showing. It was a perfectly normal house on an ordinary street. Nothing unusual... until she turned the corner.

Pat let out a bloodcurdling scream when she came face-to-face with a severed head. She soon realized it was a mannequin head that had been propped up the couch. The little prank made her chuckle.

## **SKEPTICAL SELLER**

REALTOR® Ashima Choudhary recalls one particular seller, an elderly gentleman who was very set in his ways. He was looking for someone to walk him through the steps, so to speak.

The seller had tried to sell his house using different real estate agents in the past without success, even though it appeared to be a beautiful home in a popular neighborhood.

Ashima said she would help him, but she would need to see his house. He told her, "It was one house but had been made into two homes." What she discovered when she saw it in person was that he had made the basement into an apartment. The only entrance to it was outside the home. He put up a wall, blocking access to the basement from inside the house.

She told him that if he wanted to sell his home, he would have to remove the interior wall so buyers could access the basement. The seller balked at this, claiming

the other agents had never mentioned the wall. At this point, he wondered if she even knew what she was talking about.

She finally convinced him to follow her advice and remove the wall. He soon received an offer for his property, and the mission was accomplished – sold! Everyone chuckled when he exclaimed, "I knew you were the right REALTOR® for me!" as though there was never a moment of doubt.

## **SHOW AND TELL**

Jen Pagel has seen a thing or two working in real estate. One story stands out to her, in particular. When she was doing a routine showing, they were all shown more than they bargained for.

Jen and some prospective buyers made their way around a rental property that was for sale; they eventually made their way to the primary bedroom. When she opened the door, there were two individuals, naked as jaybirds, who threw the comforter over their heads, trying to hide. Jen very quickly shut the door and made a quick exit.

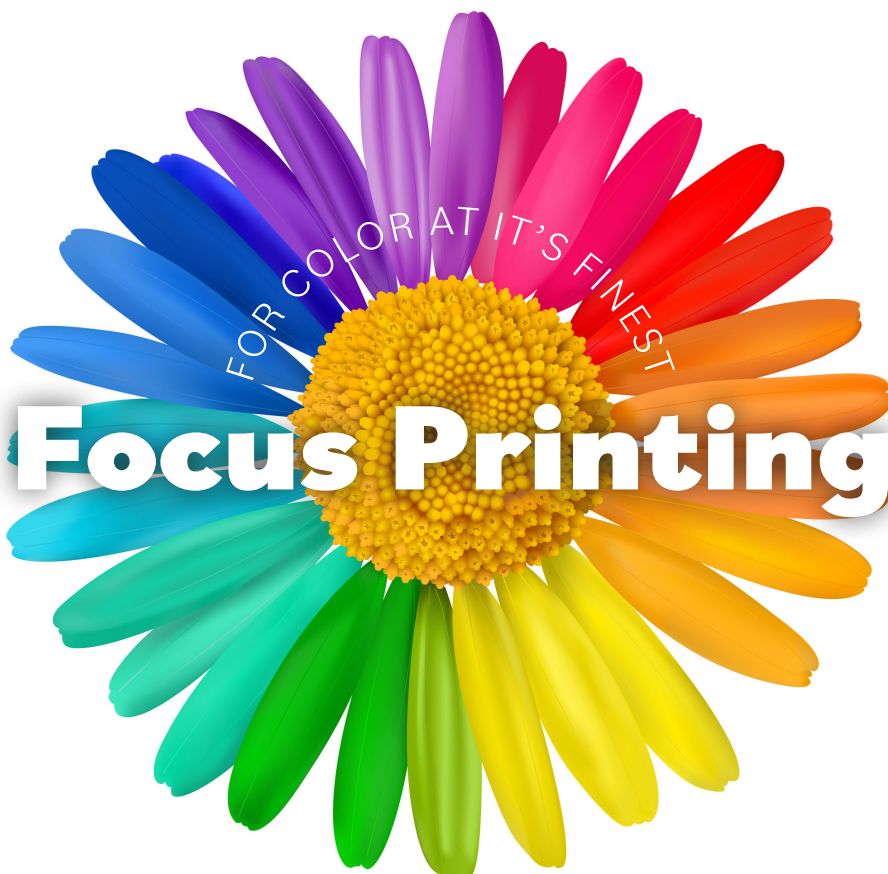
Suffice it to say, they were caught off guard. They must have been too distracted to hear her loudly announce her presence when she first arrived. It turned out they were the current renters of the home and had not been informed by the owner that there was a showing that day.

Every day holds unexpected misadventures when you're toiling away in the trenches of real estate. With a bit of humor and grit, you'll prevail.

# REVIEW

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