



Greater Gateway Association of REALTORS®, Inc.

OUTLOOK

Remember **WALL**:

- Walk
- Around
- Lights off
- Lock doors

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What's Happening

March

- 3 Proficiency Course/Exam
- 4 Proficiency Course/Exam
- 8 Affiliates Committee Meeting
- 9 HUD Training Seminar
- 16 Proficiency Exam Only
- 24 New Member Orientation
- 31 Proficiency Course/Exam



HUD Training Seminar

Wednesday, March 9

10-11:15 a.m. **OR** 1-2:15 p.m.

GGAR Office, Glen Carbon

Effective November 1, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as you know it had an overall change.

During this short seminar, you will learn how to navigate through the new website; re-register your office and agents in order to bid; find out how to access HUD listings; and learn about important changes in the bidding, earnest money, and commission collection processes.

FHA foreclosed loans are expected to double next year - be prepared for the changes that will affect your business!

Seating is limited – RSVP at general@gatewayrealtors.com or by calling our office at 618-692-8300 – please indicate the session (morning or afternoon) for which you are registering.

Officers:

Chairman of the Board Jenni Beck, e-PRO, GRI, Beck Group Realty, Inc.,
 Chairman-Elect Joy Wofford, CRS, e-PRO, GRI, RE/MAX Realty Centre
 Vice Chairman Sandy Michel, Real Living Vandalia Real Estate, Inc.
 Past Chairman of the Board Rick Edwards, Century 21 Seniker-Edwards

SIR/MLS Governors:

David Cisler 635-2244
 Norma Kasten, ABR, CRS, e-PRO, GRI 655-1188
 Ed Kleber 654-5575
 Rick Lauschke 465-1637

Directors:

Marna Asbury, Olin Community Credit Union
 Kevin Botterbush, Botterbush & Associates
 Jill Cummings, ABR, CRS, RE/MAX Preferred Partners
 Dave Erutti, Bev George & Associates, Town & Country
 Tammie Fleming, Prudential One Realty Centre, Granite City
 Rosetta Heavner, GRI, Landmark Realty, Bethalto
 Tammy Owens, CRE, RE/MAX Alliance
 Linda Wheaton, e-PRO, Landmark Realty

Committee Chairpersons:

Affiliates	Michelle Blom	377-7755
Awards	Richard Rolfingsmeyer, CRB	655-1188
Budget and Finance	David Lauschke	465-2966
Bylaws	Norma Kasten, ABR, CRS, e-PRO, GRI	655-1188
Comm. Involvement	Debbie Conreaux	656-8616
	Pat Walker	655-4100
Education	Bev George, ABR, CRB, CRS, e-PRO, GRI	656-1188
Golf Outing	Justin Huneke	656-0057
	Chris Seniker	372-4535
Grievance	Roger Reeves, ABR, e-PRO, GRI	346-7000
Legislative	Julie Lading, GRI	655-4100
Membership	Jill Cummings, ABR	655-1188
MLS	Doug Hartmann, CPM, CRB, CRS, GRI	344-7900
Nominating	Chris Seniker	372-4535
Prof. Standards	Sharon Jones, ABR, GRI	288-7100
RPAC	Dave Erutti	288-0000
	Jen Teske	288-0000

GGAR Staff:

Al Suguitan, e-PRO, GRI, RCE, President and Chief Operating Officer
 Doris Stephens, Director of Administrative Services
 Lori Eder, e-PRO, Marketing and Communications Manager
 Jessica Newbold, Governmental Affairs Director
 Jeanie Leitschuh, Administrative Assistant

Newsletter Staff:

Al Suguitan, CAE, e-PRO, GRI, RCE, Publisher
 Lori Eder, e-PRO, Editor

From the Board Room

The Board of Directors met on February 17, 2011 and discussed or approved the following items of business:



Administrative - Al Suguitan:

1. A motion was made and approved to appoint Dave Erutti and Jen Teske as co-chairs for the RPAC Committee.
2. The Home Builders Association is hosting an energy-efficiency seminar on March 17 at Villa Marie Winery in Maryville. Visit hbaswil.org for complete details.

Education - Doris Stephens:

1. Heard a report from Vice President Doris Stephens that 86 salespersons transitioned to a broker status and 64 brokers transitioned to a managing broker status during the January and February proficiency courses/exams.

Government Affairs - Al Suguitan:

1. President Suguitan and Governmental Affairs Director Jessica Newbold met with Madison County school superintendents regarding an endorsement from GGAR for a 1 percent sales tax increase for the school district, which would mean the likelihood of a reduction in real estate taxes. The parties are asking for GGAR to take a position on the issue - the Board of Directors will revisit the issue at the next meeting.
2. Suguitan reported that the RPAC 100% Ask Campaign will be shortened to four weeks and will include activity for major donations.

MLS - Al Suguitan:

1. A motion was made and approved to move forward with developing a concept to bill agents directly for MLS fees, which is being designed to eliminate the need for broker-managers to serve as collection agencies for the association.



Eye on Washington

On Friday, February 11, 2011, the Obama Administration released its plan for reforming America's Housing Finance Market. The proposal offers three options for handling the secondary mortgage market participants, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac:

- * Full privatization,
- * A guarantee mechanism during crisis, and
- * Catastrophic re-insurance.

The plan also proposes criteria that would foster increased down payments to 10 percent, lower GSE and FHA loan limits, and raise the GSEs' guarantee fees (g-fees) and FHA premiums significantly in an effort to level the playing field and bring back the private sector.

The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) welcomes the Obama Administration's call for an orderly transition from the current form of the secondary mortgage market to a new structure that would enable Americans to achieve affordable, sustainable mortgages. NAR recognizes that the existing system failed and that changes are needed to protect taxpayers from an open-ended bailout. However, NAR believes that the new system must involve some government presence - outside of FHA, USDA, and the Department of Veterans Affairs - to provide middle-class families access to affordable mortgages at all times and in all markets.

NAR recommends the following key points for reforming the GSEs:

- * Reforms should ensure a strong, efficient financing environment for homeownership and rental housing.
- * The government must clearly, and explicitly, guarantee the issuances of the entities.
- * The reformed entities should guarantee or insure a wide range of safe, reliable mortgage products.
- * Sound and sensible underwriting standards must be established.
- * The entities should price loan products or guarantees based on risk.
- * The reformed entities must have a separate legal identity from the federal government but serve a public purpose.
- * The GSEs should remain politically independent.
- * To increase the use of covered bonds, particularly in the commercial real estate arena, the entities should pilot their use in multi-family housing lending.
- * There must be strong oversight of the entities.

As the Administration and Congress begin discussions about reforming the housing finance market, it is important that America's home buyers and sellers, as well as the housing industry, are well represented and accounted for in this conversation. To help demonstrate to policymakers and regulators the importance of homeownership, NAR's Leadership Team will kick off a three-city bus tour beginning in March to promote the benefits of home ownership. Each stop on the tour, part of the "Home Ownership Matters" campaign which was launched in late 2010, will include two events designed to engage REALTORS® and consumers on key issues. The awareness this effort will raise will benefit REALTORS® and home owners nationwide.

To learn more about the activities NAR has, and is, undertaking on reforming the housing finance market, along with more in-depth information on its key talking points for GSE reform, please visit www.realtor.org/government_affairs/gapublic/gses.

To learn more about the "Home Ownership Matters" campaign, please visit www.realtor.org/homeownership.

Government Affairs Update

By Jessica Gray

The Village of Swansea held their final Ad Hoc committee meeting to discuss their proposed inspection ordinance on Saturday, February 12. The committee reviewed statements made by citizens at the Public Hearing held in January. As a reminder, the proposed ordinance will affect rental property, not single family units. The following changes were inserted into the draft proposal:

1. Occupancy inspections will be good for two years. An inspection will be triggered by a change in occupancy but will not occur more often than two years.
2. Occupancy permits are required at the change of occupancy.
3. Landlords will be required to register with the Village on an annual basis.
4. The proposed fee structure will be: Inspection: \$50, Landlord Registration: \$10 or \$25 (this is a flat annual fee, not per unit like we have seen in some municipalities), Occupancy Permit: \$10

The draft in its current form will be presented to the Business and Land Use Committee on February 22. At that time, a second Public Hearing will be suggested, and the committee will vote yes or no on this proposal at its committee meeting next month. If it is voted out of committee, it will be sent to the Village Trustees for their approval.

Al Suguitan and I met with the Regional Superintendent of Schools on Monday, February 14. We received an informational presentation regarding the Sales Tax Referenda that will be placed on the April 5th ballot for Madison County voter approval.

School districts are able to use sales tax revenue for additional revenues due to legislation that was passed in the General Assembly in 2007. If the measure passes, homeowners will see

property tax relief that will be approximately \$100 per \$100,000.

The property tax relief that homeowners will see will be dependent upon how much sales tax revenue is received in a given year; some years it could be more, and some years it could be less.

It is estimated that about 33 percent of sales tax in Madison County is generated by citizens living outside of the county. The sales tax money can be used for new facilities, used against bonds, or to pay down existing debt. Please be advised that GGAR is contemplating the role the association will play in this initiative. The informational presentation that we received can be viewed at www.roe41.org.

Finally, the 35th Annual IAR Capitol Conference will be held on Tuesday, April 5 in Springfield. Capitol Conference offers attendees the unique opportunity to learn about current legislative issues and political developments and allows you to discuss the REALTOR® agenda with your state legislators.

The event begins at 11 a.m. with registration, lunch and a legislative briefing held at the Springfield Hilton. Capitol visits will commence after lunch, with a legislative reception following at the Hilton. The registration fee is \$30 until March 24. After March 24, you must pay the walk-in registration fee of \$40. If you are interested in attending Capitol Conference, please contact GGAR at 618-692-8300.

As always, if there is an issue happening in your community that you think I should be aware of, don't hesitate to contact me by at (217) 529-2600 or JNewbold@iar.org.



SIR/MLS SCOOP

SIR/MLS, Inc. has received several reports that Facebook is threatening to remove personal profiles due to advertising of homes for sale as it is against Facebook terms to "...use your personal profile for your own commercial gain.". However, you are allowed to advertise your listings on a Business/Fan page.

Although the Innovia MLS system had allowed you to easily share listings to social websites, we have recently removed the social sharing tool for Facebook. Since our social update feature posted to your personal page, we were forced to remove the tool in order to abide by Facebook regulations. If you have any questions, please call our office 618.343.3030 or e-mail support@sirmlsinc.com.

Don't forget, we have training every month at the MLS office in Collinsville. It is hands-on (we have the computers) and free of charge. All we ask is that you call (618-343-3030) or e-mail the MLS office (debi.peel@sirmlsinc.com) to reserve a seat.



Our next Affiliates Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 8 at 8:30 a.m. at the association office. Any affiliate member may join the Affiliates Committee. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact GGAR at 618-692-8300.

As always, the Affiliates Committee is looking for topics for the Lunch and Learn seminars. We are planning to offer an "odds & ends" seminar in the near future. If you have a topic that you are interested in, please forward it to masbury@scu.org.

Michelle Price resigned from the Affiliates Committee, and the Chairman position has been filled by Michelle Blom of Community Title & Escrow. Donna Thornton of Southern Illinois Real Estate Title Center has filled the position of Vice President. Please join us in congratulating Michelle and Donna on their new adventure!

The Affiliates Committee meeting schedule for 2011 will be: March, April, May, June, August, October, and December on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

The Affiliates Committee is composed of lenders, appraisers, housing inspectors, home improvement companies, title companies, community and government offices, local newspapers, and construction services. Our goal is to enhance vendor relationships with REALTORS®.

The Affiliates Committee is always working toward a common goal with REALTOR® members!

Michelle Blom, Community Title & Escrow, Chairman
Donna Thornton, Southern Illinois Real Estate Title Center, Vice Chairman
Maureen Donaho, Chicago Title Insurance Company, Secretary
Marna Asbury, Scott Credit Union, Board Representative

Shimkus Supports Cuts in Federal Spending

By Congressman John Shimkus

Washington has taxed too much, spent too much, and borrowed too much over the years. We must now start to restrain the annual spending in order to reduce our deficit and slow the growth of our long-term debt, thus I voted for the Continuing Resolution for fiscal year (FY) 2011 appropriations.

The Continuing Resolution



passed the House very early Saturday, February 20. It would fund the federal government from March 4 to September 30, 2011.

Republicans proposed \$100 billion in cuts from the budget President Obama proposed last year. We debated and approved some additional cuts, but we are still going to spend over one trillion dollars on discretionary spending.

The stimulus and higher spending over the last two years

have increased our expenditures dramatically, which is why we want to move federal spending back to 2008 levels. The President's budget proposal for FY2012 starts with a deficit over \$1.6 trillion. If we do not take action - dramatic action - we will never reduce our annual deficit and our long-term debt.

I do understand that these cuts will be felt. And they will be felt in Illinois by real people; however, we must start somewhere.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

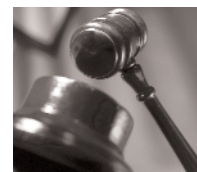
By Congressman Jerry Costello

Months ago, I wrote to update you on what had been turning out to be an emerging challenge to the vitality of the real estate market: commercial real estate. At the time, the commercial real estate (CRE) market had recently been highlighted by Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke as one of the primary risks to the economy, and he was joined by a number of economists in making that assessment.

Since then, we have seen positive trends developing in the commercial real estate market, with real estate experts estimating that 2011 will be a year of recovery for CRE. At the end of last year, a report from the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) noted that CRE markets are stabilizing nationwide and are expected to improve modestly in 2011.

NAR's report cited a recent commercial real estate index by the Society of Industrial and Office REALTORS®, which reported a 1.6 percent increase in the third quarter to 42.6 on the index; this is the fourth consecutive quarter of improvement in the index. Considering the dismal future that concerned economists had projected for the commercial real estate market, this is very welcome news.

I will continue to support efforts by the federal government to help restore confidence in the CRE market, and I look forward to keeping you updated on these and other issues affecting the real estate market and the long-term growth of our economy.



Member News

The Board of Directors will act on new applicants subject to completion of the required New Member Orientation class and notice to members. If any member knows of any reason why these applications should not be accepted, please write a letter to Chairman of the Board Jenni Beck, 10 Ginger Creek Parkway, Glen Carbon, Illinois 62034.

New REALTOR® Members:

Betsy Butler, Prudential One Realty Centre, Edwardsville
Laura Eavenson, Coldwell Banker Brown REALTORS®, Edwardsville
Sean Flower, Paradigm Realty
Linda Kepple, Keller Williams Premier Realty

Returning REALTOR® Members:

William Plunk, RE/MAX Integrity
Kelli Weiss, Bailey Real Estate

Transfers:

Jessica Ambuehl, RE/MAX Realty Centre
Christine Velloff, Landmark Realty, Godfrey

Drops:

Donald Barnett, Donald E. Barnett, Broker
Annette Bowen, Bev George & Associates, Town & Country
Lyn Broshow, Star REALTORS®
Don Brown, Key Real Estate
Don Cherry, Manor Real Estate
Amber Cole, Market Pro Realty
Deborah Cotton, Prudential One Realty Centre, Edwardsville
Stephen Craig, SC Appraisal
Adam Glosier, ROI Realty Partners, Inc.
Tom Haida, Southern Illinois Appraisers
Susan Holden, RE/MAX Preferred, Swansea
Tammy Horton, RE/MAX Alliance
Debbie Jenkins, First Choice Realty & Auction Service
Andrea Johnson, Coldwell Banker Nester, Shiloh
Sandra Key, Prudential One Realty Centre, Edwardsville
John Knapik, Progressive Property Network
Lisa Krahl, Century 21 Seniker-Edwards, Brighton
Jodi Lemkemann, Keller Williams Premier Realty
Amy Merritt, Wooff REALTORS®, Bethalto
Ana Montoya, RE/MAX Preferred, Swansea
Mary Nash, Landmark Realty, Edwardsville
Andy Paschedag, Bev George & Associates, Town & Country
Kenneth Quinlan, Wallace REALTORS®
David Seilheimer, Star REALTORS®
Michele Shemonia, Prudential One Realty Centre, Granite City
Nicholas Smyrniotis, Realty Exchange
Paul Standefer, Manor Real Estate
Cathy Stubbs, Coldwell Banker Nester, Swansea
Jimmy Warren, Fayette County Real Estate

New REALTOR® Office:

Paradigm Realty

Dropped REALTOR® Offices:

Century 21 Seniker-Edwards, Godfrey
Donald E. Barnett, Broker
Manor Real Estate
RE/MAX Preferred, Swansea
ROI Realty Partners, Inc.
SC Appraisal
Southern Illinois Appraisers

New Affiliate Office:

USA Mortgage, Maryville

Dropped Affiliate Office:

Professional Home Inspections



Mission Statement
 The Greater Gateway Association of REALTORS® is dedicated to promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and ethics in the real estate profession.

We're on the Web!

www.gatewayrealtors.com



Questions? Comments?
 Suggestions? E-mail change?

Please contact Lori Eder:
leder@gatewayrealtors.com
 or 618-692-8300

Homebuyer Tax Credit Tips

Tax season is upon us, and if you have a client who is lucky enough to claim the homebuyer tax credit, be sure to pass along these important tips from the Internal Revenue Service.

The home buyer must have been at least 18 years old on the date of the purchase; for a married couple, only one spouse must meet this age requirement. A dependent is not eligible to claim the tax credit.

You must have bought - or entered into a binding contract to purchase - a principal residence located in the United States on or before April 30, 2010 and closed on this home on or before September 30, 2010.

To be considered a first-time homebuyer, you and your spouse (if married) must have not jointly or separately owned another principal residence during the three years prior to the date of purchase. To be considered a long-time resident homebuyer, you and your spouse (if married) must have lived in the same principal residence five out of the past eight consecutive years.

The maximum credit for a first-time homebuyer is \$8,000, half that amount for married individuals filing separately. The maximum credit for a long-time resident homebuyer is \$6,500, \$3,250 for married individuals filing separately.

New homebuyers must attach a copy of a properly executed settlement statement used to complete such purchase. Long-time residents should attach any documentation covering the five-consecutive-year period, including Form 1098, Mortgage Interest Statement or substitute mortgage interest statements, property tax records, and/or homeowner's insurance records.



As of February 14, 2011

Affiliate Offices/Members	101
Full Member Appraiser Offices	83
Full Member REALTOR® Offices	142
TOTAL FULL MEMBER OFFICES	225
Full Member Appraiser Members	89
Full Member REALTOR® Members	865
TOTAL FULL MEMBERS	954
Total GGAR Offices	326
Total GGAR Members	1,055