

February Newsletter



A s s o c i a t i o n L u n c h e o n

The next luncheon of the Association will be Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at Westlake Country Club at 12:30 pm. Please mark this date on your calendar and be sure to make your reservation with the Association Office. This will be the President's and Awards Luncheon. Make plans to attend!

Code of Ethics Orientation:

For those that have signed up:

Please remember that we will be having a Code of Ethics Orientation class on February 12, 2015 at 9 am—12 pm at the association office. The class starts promptly at 9 am.

SOUTH CAROLINA MEMBERS

We have scheduled a class for all South Carolina agents, for Thursday, April 23, 2015. It will be an eight hour class of continuing education. Be sure to mark this date on your calendar and the reservation forms will be emailed the first of March.

WANT TO HEAR FROM THE BOARD? GET ALL THE CLASS NEWS?

Please make sure that there is an accurate email address in Navica, under the Office/Management section. We have recently discovered that agents are not receiving emails from the board and this is one of the ways we communicate with you....thank you!

ONLINE CONTINUING EDUCATION CLASSES

The Association now offers online continuing education. These courses are approved for both Georgia and South Carolina. Go to the Association's website... augustarealtors.com and scroll to the bottom of the page and you will see the link to the "Online Continuing Education". Follow the instructions.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Association Luncheon
- Message from 2015 President
- MLS News: Class Information
- Message from MLS Committee
- Message from Education Committee
- Message from Legislative Committee
- Luncheon Reservation Form

We want to know about our members!

Please notify the Association Office if you know or hear of a member being ill, in the hospital or might just need a phone call.

CALL US!
(706) 736-0429

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR 2014 PRESIDENT

It's a new year and time to get ready for all the great things headed your way in 2015! If January is an indication of how busy this year is going to be, we are in store for a very productive year in real estate.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the activities of your local Association.

From giving back to the community through our Public Relations Committee, keeping up with the political issues that face our industry and making decisions that affect each member, your Board of Directors give of their time to make your Association one of the best in the country!

If you have any suggestions that you feel can help to make your Association of REALTORS even better, please let us know. We love new ideas!!

I look forward to serving as your President for 2015 and hope to bring something of value to our Association and to you.
See you at the luncheon on February 18th!!

Barbara Sanders
2015 GAAR President



MLS Committee Update

Membership into the Greater Augusta Association of REALTORS affords us many benefits, but also requires us to all work with-in our “MLS Rules and Regulations”. These rules are published and are required to be followed by all our members. Most of our members work with-in these rules daily, as they insure we are all working on a “level playing field”. Unfortunately, a small number of our members will try and “stretch these rules” to gain a competitive advantage over the group as a whole. It’s these few that take up a tremendous amount of time from Beverly and her staff and your MLS Committee.

The #1 rule we have been working on lately is the advertising of another Brokers Listing without that Broker’s written permission. Our rule states:

Section 2.7: Advertising of listings filed with the service:

A listing shall not be advertised by an participant other than the listing Broker without the “written consent” of the listing Broker”.

In other words, if you want to advertise a listing within our MLS system, you must have the listing Broker’s permission. That is why we have “**Exclusive Listing Agreements” with our clients.**

We presently are working on several formal complaints on this major infraction, and we hope to bring this back into control in the coming months.

We are anticipating a Great Year in Real Estate in the CSRA this year and we all benefit when are working with-in the same rules.

Dennis Smith

MLS Committee Chairman



FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

We are off to a great start with training for this year! Hal Haunson taught 2 new contracts classes in January and of course, both were great! We have another contracts class coming up on February 3, 2015 with Pat Johnson. It filled up immediately also. We have Georgia Power for a class on February 24th. Look for the announcement for a “Landlord, Tenant Law” Class in March. Zan Monroe is returning in August. The committee is working on booking the rest of the year. If you have a class that you would like to see us bring to Augusta, just email me or Beverly with the information and we will see what we can do. We are also working on a South Carolina CE class for April or May.

Rachel Combs

Education Committee Chairman



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Your local Legislative Committee and GAR State and Local Government Affairs Committee is in place to protect property rights. Your contributions to RPAC tremendously aids us in protecting property rights. **RPAC is a real benefit to our profession.**

This year's major State Government push will be transportation due to the conditions of our roads and bridges. At this time (nothing in writing) they are considering an increase of 2-3 cents a gallon on all fuel State Tax. We will keep you apprised of events.

HB33 – Criminal Offenses Against a Code Enforcement Officer. We opposed a similar bill last year which made it a felony. The bill never made it to the floor. We again oppose this because it diminishes your rights as a property owner. This bill seeks to provide for the criminal offenses of resisting, obstructing, hindering, or opposing a code enforcement offer. Knowingly and willfully obstructing or hindering any code enforcement officer shall be punishable by a misdemeanor and whoever knowingly and willfully resists, obstructs, or opposes any code enforcement officer by offering or doing violence to the legally authorized person is guilty of a felony. Code enforcement officer is defined as any person contracted with or employed by the state, county, or municipality who has enforcement authority by law for health, safety, welfare, or zoning requirements and is authorized to issue citations or file formal complaints regarding the same.

AUTHORIZATION OF THE GEORGIA REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS BOARD TO ENFORCE REGULATION Z

This bill seeks to grant authority to the Georgia Real Estate Appraisers Board (GREAB) to promulgate rules to enforce violations of Regulation Z at the state level. Regulation Z is a provision in the 2010 Dodd-Frank Act requiring Appraisal Management Companies (AMC'S) to pay for appraisals at a rate that is customary and reasonable for appraisal services performed in the market area of the property being appraised. Currently, appraisers must file complaints with a select list of federal agencies with results in a burdensome and protracted process for Georgia appraisers. Granting authority to the GREAB to enforce this regulation would provide for a more expedited process of addressing appraiser's complaints against AMCs that are in violation of Regulation Z.

With this bill appraisers and real estate agents will have a place in GREC to file complaints about appraisals. We currently have appraisers coming to our area to appraise and they don't understand our markets which makes the appraisals unrealistic sometimes.

Ira Tindall
Chairman, Legislative Committee



UP YOUR BLURB APPEAL

Do your listing ads tell the story you want? Your listings may have great curb appeal, but are you telling their story as effectively as you can? JAZZ IT UP...here are suggestions for amping up the literary power of property descriptions: 1. Set a scene 2. Get more descriptive 3. Complement the photos with your text 4. Don't offend or exclude 5. Write for SEO 6. Watch grammar and spelling 7. Highlight features: don't just list them 8. Accentuate the positive, but don't overdo it. Read examples of fuller property descriptions online at realtorm.ag/prop-descriptions. (Information copied from realtor.org).

TAX TIPS FOR REALTORS

Utilize these nine strategies to lessen your tax expense. Fortunately, the IRS provides ample opportunities for small-business owners to minimize their overall tax burden. You should work closely with your CPA to ensure you are taking advantage of every legal deduction. Here are nine valuable tax tips to start that conversation. (1) Take advantage of retirement accounts. (2) Employ your family member. (3) Carefully consider your business structure. (4) Pay attention to how you deduct health insurance premiums. (5) Take the home office deduction you are entitled to. (6) Keep good records to ensure you don't miss out on deductions. (7) Consider having your business own your automobile. (8) Take the family on business trips. (9) Share every detail with your CPA. Copied from John W. Dickson, C.P.A.

TECH HELPLINE

DON'T FORGET! The helpline is available to members Monday-Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. and Saturdays from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Call toll free or via live chat visiting Technology-Helpline.com. The Technology Helpline analyst can even remote into your computer and fix it for you! CALL! 877-573-5611



FEBRUARY
LUNCHEON RESERVATION

WHEN: FEBRUARY 18, 2014

TIME: 12:30 P.M.

WHERE: WESTLAKE COUNTRY CLUB

COMPANY: _____

HOW MANY: _____

