

STATE NEWS

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STATE TAX COMMISSIONERS NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE

Go to <http://www.state.nd.us/taxdpt/property/pubs/> then scroll down to Property Tax Newsletter. Click on the issue you'd like.

DOWNLOAD HILL VISIT ISSUE PRIORITIES BROCHURE

A brochure detailing the key legislative issues you and your elected leaders can discuss with your congressional representatives during your May Hill visits is available online at <http://www.realtor.org/GAPublic.nsf/pages/2004legpr>

WIN A TRIP TO GREECE IN RPAC FUNDRAISER

As an incentive to encourage new RPAC contributions and increase RPAC participation, NAR is offering a chance to win a trip for two to the Summer Olympics in Athens. To enter, submit an official entry ticket to RPAC along with a \$100 contribution. This fundraiser is not associated with the Trip of a Lifetime sweepstakes held in previous years. The drawing will be held during the Board of Directors meeting at the Midyear Legislative Meetings and Trade Expo in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, May 15. See official sweepstakes rules online. To enter and for more info, Go To: <http://www.realtor.org/rpacweb.nsf/pages/officialrules> or CONTACT: Nicole Hassett, nhassett@realtors.org.

NAR APPLAUDS COMMITTEE APPROVAL OF JACKSON FOR HUD CHIEF

This week, the Senate Banking Committee approved Alphonso Jackson to be secretary of HUD. In a letter to the committee, NAR said Jackson was an excellent choice to serve with the President and Congress in developing and implementing housing and community development policies that are of critical importance to the nation. The nomination now goes to the Senate floor for final approval. For more info, CONTACT: Peter Morgan, pmorgan@realtors.org, 202/383-1233.

FREE SECURITY SCAN FOR ASSOCIATION WEB SITES

NAR's Center for REALTOR Technology now offers free security scans of association Web sites. The limited scan is not a complete security assessment, but it uses proven security technology to check for holes and vulnerabilities in your site. To sign up, Go To: <http://www.crt.realtors.org/scan>

MIDYEAR LEGISLATIVE MEETING AGENDAS ONLINE

Agendas for the 2004 NAR Midyear Legislative Meetings will be available online April 28. Access committee agendas at <http://www.realtor.org/natmeet.nsf>. For more info, CONTACT: Idis Rivera, 312/329-8870, irivera@realtors.org.

PATRIOT ACT FACT SHEET: WHAT REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS NEED TO KNOW ISSUE

The passage of the USA PATRIOT Act and the issuance of Executive Order 13224 have increased the level of the government's scrutiny of financial transactions in an effort to isolate and block the financial dealings of terrorists and terrorist affiliated persons.

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS AND USA PATRIOT ACT COMPLIANCE

REALTORS® engaging in any transactions involving blocked property and from providing any service benefiting any person or entity on the OFAC maintained master list of "Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons" ("SDN List"), regardless of where in the world they are located. The American Land Title Association in an article in Title News discussing OFAC compliance for real estate professionals, suggests the following in regard to OFAC compliance:

1. Compliance should involve scanning customer lists against the SDN List on a regular basis for matches. The updated and current SDN List is readily available at OFAC's website (<http://www.treas.gov/ofac>). Many private companies offer specific OFAC compliance consulting and special software to help companies scan customer lists for matches.
2. Any matches should be confirmed to be sure that are not "false positives" before contacting the OFAC Compliance Hotline. Evaluate the quality of the match by examining how closely the information matches the entry on the SDN List, including address, date of birth, and identification numbers, if any.
3. If there is a valid match, the professional should contact OFAC's Compliance Hotline at (800) 540-6322 for further guidance.

HUD WITHDRAWS RESPA RULE, REMAINS COMMITTED TO REFORM

NAR applauded a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announcement today that the department is withdrawing its draft final rule on changes to the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act. In a March 22 letter to the Office of Management and Budget, which was reviewing the final rule, HUD Acting Secretary Alphonso Jackson said he was withdrawing the rule "due to the significant number of questions raised."

"More and more decisions affecting millions of homeowners are being made at the regulatory level today," said NAR President Walt McDonald. "It's important that Congress continue to actively oversee the regulators." McDonald said: "more than 250 members of Congress who weighed in on this issue deserve the gratitude of all REALTORS for the leadership they showed."

QUESTIONS ON YOUR REAL ESTATE COMMISSION SPONSORED E&O INSURANCE

FAQ-Sample Policy-Coverage- Claim forms etc can be found at:

http://www.risceo.com/North%20Dakota/ND_Home.html

MORTGAGE LENDERS RANK AMONG TOP OFFENDERS

Of 'Do Not Call' Privacy Requests, FCC says, Four mortgage lenders earned the dubious distinction of being among the first group of businesses cited by the Federal Communications Commission for violating its National Do Not Call Registry. The citations not only put the lenders in hot water with federal regulators, they also expose the firms to the risk of hefty fines for future offenses. Collectively, the FCC has received 1,011 complaints from states across the country regarding unsolicited calls from the four lenders. The most were in regards to Mortgage Concepts, which reeled in 480 complaints. Overall, the FCC says it has received nearly 10,000 complaints from consumers since the registry took effect on Oct. 1, 2003.

GEORGIA REQUIRES ATTORNEY OVERSIGHT AT CLOSINGS

The Georgia Supreme Court, backing the opinion of the Georgia Bar Association, has ruled that real estate closings without attorney supervision can be considered an unauthorized practice of law. The court said consumers are better served by having attorneys at closings because, among other things, attorneys are trained to recognize legal issues that could adversely affect their clients, and their clients have recourse against them for failing to properly protect the client's interests. Such recourse isn't available against non-attorneys, the court said. A summary of the case is posted on The Letter of the Law, NAR's online legal newsletter, at <http://www.realtor.org/letterlw.nsf/pages/0204gaupl>

NDAR SPRING MEETINGS, Ramada Plaza Suites, 1635 42nd Street SW, Fargo, ND

Wednesday, April 14, 2004

9:00 – 10:00 am	Grievance Committee & Pro Standards Task Force	Overture
10:00 – 11:00 am	RPAC Fundraising Task Force	Etude
11:00 – 12:00 noon	Political Affairs Committee	Overture
12:30 – 1:30 pm	Membership Committee	Etude
2:30 – 3:30 pm	Issues & Mobilization Committee	Etude
2:30 – 4:00 pm	Nominating Task Force	Overture
3:00 pm	ND Real Estate Commission Meeting	Sonata I
3:30 – 4:30 pm	RPAC Trustees Committee	Etude
4:30 pm	Washington DC Briefing	Overture

Thursday, April 15, 2004

7:30 am	Executive Committee	Restaurant
8:30 – 10:00 am	Board of Directors	Crystal I

If you are planning on attending these meetings and need assistance relating to a disability, please contact NDAR as soon as possible at 800-279-2361 or 355-1010 or email- realtors@btinet.net

Note: A block of sleeping rooms has been reserved at the Ramada Plaza Suites – Call: 701-277-9000 – Please mention that you are with the REALTORS® group when making your reservation(s).

BURLEIGH COUNTY SEEKING DEPUTY AUDITOR/TAX EQUALIZATION DIRECTOR

Duties outlined in ND Century Code, Chapter 11-10.1 to include appraisal and assessment work of commercial, residential, and agriculture property to determine value for tax purposes, complete assessment abstracts, and supervise staff. Qualifications include Bachelor's Degree in accounting or business and 3 years tax or appraisal work experience, and/or equivalent combination of education and experience. Must have valid driver's license with clean record. Starting salary range is \$3,260-\$3,554 per month with benefit package. Contact Burleigh County for complete job description. Submit Burleigh County application, cover letter, & resume before April 15, 2004 to: Burleigh County Human Resources, 221 North 5th St, PO Box 5518, Bismarck, ND 58506-5518, (701) 222-6669, Fax: (701) 221-3395 dkroshus@state.nd.us

UPCOMING:

April

5-6 GRI I, Holiday Inn Fargo
7-8 GRI II, Holiday Inn Fargo
14 NDAR committee meetings, Ramada Plaza Fargo
14 Real Estate Commission meeting, 3:00 pm Ramada Plaza Fargo
15 NDAR Board Of Directors meeting, Ramada Plaza Fargo
15 Fannie Mae Advisory Board meet Bismarck
19 Required Risk Reduction Seminar, Jamestown PM
20 Required Risk Reduction Seminar, Grand Forks AM
20 Required Risk Reduction Seminar, Fargo PM
21 Required Risk Reduction Seminar, Bismarck AM
21 Required Risk Reduction Seminar, Dickinson PM
22 Required Risk Reduction Seminar, Williston AM
23 Required Risk Reduction Seminar, Minot AM

May:

4-5 LEAD Seminar, Mandan 7 Seas
11-15 NAR meetings Washington DC
19-20 NDAR Leadership Retreat Minot
22 ***Jerry Schlosser's*** Birth Day