



THE REALTOR®

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LIBOR to Host the 7th Annual Long Island & Queens REALTOR® Open House Weekend

April 9-10, 2016 - Open houses, open doors to homeownership!

By Christina DeFalco-Romano
Public Relations & Communication Programs Manager

With spring at our doorstep, the real estate market will become abuzz with activity in a few short weeks. During springtime, more properties become available, and buyers are eager to begin the process of finding a home after the stagnancy of winter. Open houses are a key to success in the spring market, and are a boost to spring home-buying activity. To celebrate spring and kick-off the season, Realtors® throughout Long Island and Queens are taking part in the 7th Annual Long Island and Queens Realtor® Open House Weekend on Saturday and Sunday, April 9 and 10, 2016.

The weekend is organized by the Long Island Board of Realtors® (LIBOR) Public Relations Committee in an effort to unite Realtors® as they host thousands of open houses, while engaging consumers on the benefits of homeownership and bringing buyers and sellers together. The Realtor® Open House Weekend offers buyers a stress-free way to visit homes for sale in different neighborhoods where they might want to live. For sellers, the weekend provides a

high-visibility effort to promote traffic and drive home sales.

In its seventh year, the Long Island and Queens Realtor® Open House Weekend has been proven successful since its inception. With print, radio and social media advertising, it is a marketing extravaganza; which in turn drives traffic to your listings. All the way around, your office participation in this high-profile marketing event makes sense.

Long Island & Queens
OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND
REALTOR® April 9th - 10th, 2016

Further information, including how to register your office and where to receive promotional items, will be posted on www.LIRealtor.com in the upcoming weeks. Don't miss out on the opportunity to get your office,

and your listings noticed by the potential buyers in your area. LIBOR looks forward to supporting all of our members and is proud to contribute to your success, by creating events that promote homeownership. ●

A Glance at the Year Ahead for Public Relations...

The Public Relations committee encourages all Realtors® to get involved with the "We're More Than Realtors®" campaign initiatives throughout the year. Here are a few components of the campaign, which was created in 2006 to improve and strengthen the image of Long Island Realtors®, by promoting a positive and professional image of our members to the public.

Realtors® Against Hunger (RAH) food drive will be in effect through all of 2016. LIBOR will be working with Island Harvest in the fall, on their Turkey and Trimmings initiative.

Long Island and Queens Realtor® Veteran Scholarship Program – provides financial assistance to those Veterans approved to attend the required NY 75-hour Salesperson qualifying course (a \$295 value) at one of the four Realtor® Service Centers.

Realtor® Scouting Scholarship Award – \$1,000 scholarships for three Eagle Scouts and three Girl Scout Seniors (one in each county - Nassau, Suffolk and Queens).

The Realtor® Spirit Award, which honors Realtors® (individual/group/Chapter) who have made a difference in their community.

Throughout 2016 LIBOR will sponsor volunteer builds/projects with **Habitat for Humanity and Rebuilding Together Long Island** and numerous other business affiliates. If you would like to volunteer, please email pr@lirealtor.com.

Be sure to check www.LIRealtor.com regularly for more LIBOR Public Relations programs and initiatives and for information on how to get involved.

President's Message

By Mary Alice Ruppert
LIBOR President

Well it's hard to believe but it's been a whole month since taking the reigns as your Board President and I can tell you, it's been quite a month! I never fully grasped the breadth of this role until I fully experienced this first 30 days.

With an overwhelming schedule of meetings and events that have taken me from one end of Long Island and Queens to the other, I feel as if I have lived a year of life in just that short a period of time. I am in awe of the scope and influence that my role as President of this organization has opened up to me. Over the past 30 days I have rubbed elbows with no less than a half dozen of our State and Regional leadership, broken bread with our awesome team of Realtor® leaders throughout the three Counties and have had the pleasure of watching several of my leadership team take hold of their Committees and Divisions, as they lead their team of members through the path that will be the focus of their efforts for the coming year.

As I sit here and catch my breath, I realize that I am in that moment that has been the focus of my efforts over the past nearly 10 years. We, as Realtor® members, cannot fully appreciate all that we have at our disposal as resources for our daily work life, whether it is listing and selling real estate or running a branch or real estate office. Being a member of the third largest Realtor® association in the country cannot completely resonate until you experience it from the perspective of having a hand in all that this organization does for its members in just one year.

I feel I am well prepared; there is good reason for the path to leadership. To make the decisions that lay before our Board of Realtors® in 2016, it is an awesome experience to be front and center to the power and reach of the Long Island Board of Realtors® and all it does for its members on an annual basis. Our professional organization, considered a leader in the National arena, has a role and a responsibility to lead the way into the future of our real estate industry. I take this role very seriously and I thank all of you for allowing me this great opportunity and I promise to give it 110% of my time and effort. You have my word on that. ●

SHARE YOUR NETWORK... EXPAND YOUR NETWORK!

You can earn a \$50 American Express® Gift Card by referring your business contacts to us!

Introduce your contacts to the benefits-rich LIBOR Affiliate Membership Program that helps them market themselves to more than 20,000 REALTOR® Members.

Your contacts will thank you...and LIBOR will thank you!

For more information, visit lirealtor.com/affiliates or call Mike Miller, Business Development Manager, at 631-661-4800 Ext. 384.

From Where I Sit

By Joseph E. Mottola
LIBOR Chief Executive Officer

Just as our Board and Multiple Listing services are evolving to remain current with industry trends and practices, so do our Headquarters facilities need to change. Since our 1983 purchase, we have re-organized departments as we moved from a clerical operation to one where technology forms the foundation of all our services.

Before we acquired the adjacent 346 building in 1987, everything was done in our Headquarters Building. Now the adjacent Realtor® Service Center essentially handles the overwhelming number of visitors to our site for classes and meetings.

The 300 building primarily houses staff and smaller Conference Rooms for Committee meetings and Professional Standards hearings. Outside visitors are now unusual and we need to address some major internal changes to maximize the building's use and in these times, it's Security. The last revisions were the exterior changeover of the windows in 2008 and the parking lot in 2013.

We are now exploring providing a "state of the art" larger Conference Room adjacent to the Reception area. It would be used for Arbitration and Ethics Hearings and be equipped to handle what we see as the inevitable "Virtual" Hearings with Panelists in one location and then perhaps one or both of the parties in other locations, possibly in one of our other three Service Centers. The 2nd floor Conference Room would also receive upgraded electronic capabilities.

The existing third floor Conference Room would be converted into office space and what is now the Members Services staff would relocate to the third floor. Accounting and Membership would be relocated to other areas of the third floor but that would not require any significant structural changes.

Part of the redesign could include a "swipe card" system for employees and a "buzz in" system controlled by the Receptionist. It would further be configured to prohibit entry to other parts of the building unless allowed by the Receptionist. Current security procedures require Sign Ins by all building visitors and the requirement that they be escorted to other floors both coming and going by Staff.

We will obtain plans and get proposals for Construction Management and renovation costs. The ultimate decision will rest with the LIBOR and MLS Boards of Directors. The Directors are quite aware of the scope of our administration and operations and I would expect that they would be most supportive of any efforts that facilitate services and security. ●

Current Legal Helpline Issues

By Cathy Nolan
Goldson, Nolan & Connolly P.C.
General Counsel

Q. I listed a rental property from a landlord in Suffolk County who will not rent to any tenant on a program. What do I do?

A. Either educate the landlord about fair housing so that he agrees to rent to any qualified tenant, no matter what the source of income, or give up the listing. By the way, the fine for a fair housing violation in Suffolk County can be as high as \$100,000.00 if the discrimination is deemed willful and it can be levied against both landlords and brokers. Since the fine goes into the Suffolk County Treasury, the county has a vested interest in finding you in violation of the fair housing statute. Be careful!

Q. An agent from another office put my listing on his Facebook page. Is that allowed?

A. Not without your permission.

Q. Can I advertise houses I sold, even if I sold them when licensed to another broker?

A. Yes, as long as you disclose that the transactions occurred while you were associated with another office and/or broker.

Q. I am a buyer's agent. My agreement with the buyer says I will take whatever the listing broker offers a buyer broker. Now my buyer wants to see an exclusive listing of another broker, who refuses to pay me. I asked the seller to pay me out of the proceeds of the transaction, but she said no! Can they do that?

A. Of course. You made your mistake by agreeing to work for a buyer who does not want to pay you, since now no one owes you any commission.

Q. Can a seller reduce the commission he promised to pay at the closing? He said he did not realize he would have to pay a transfer tax and wants the agents to pay it out of the commission.

A. The seller owes the agents the amount he promised to pay; however, he has the power, even though he does not have the right, to reduce your payment! If he pays the agents less than was promised, the agents' brokers can sue the seller for the balance owed.

Q. Can I offer a seller or buyer or both, a rebate if they agree to list with or purchase through me?

A. Yes. You may give any or all of your commission to either or both of the parties to the contract.

Q. Can I offer a seller or buyer a bonus if they recommend a friend who lists with or buys through me?

A. No, since they are not parties to the resulting contract of sale and such payment, therefore, would be considered an illegal kickback!



Q. An attorney wants to be paid a commission for his clients purchase. Is that allowed?

A. You are allowed to pay an attorney as his law license entitles him to collect a commission, but you are not compelled to pay him unless you promised to do so. He, on the other hand, is prohibited from collecting a real estate commission on any transaction for which he represents the party as his or her attorney.

Q. Am I a dual agent if I sell my own listing at an open house for my listing?

A. Only if the buyer is also your client! A dual agency means you have two clients. Most buyers who come to an open house would be the listing agent's customers.

Q. What do I do when my broker refuses to pay me the commissions I have earned?

A. You would have to sue him.

Q. How do I stop an agent from trying to get my seller to demand I release his listing?

A. Bring an Ethics Complaint against him under Article 16 for interfering in your agency contract. ●

LIBOR Legal Helpline: FREE advice for members through LIBOR

The Legal Helpline gives you direct access to a board-retained real estate attorney, who is available to answer your legal questions.

LIBOR EDUCATION HOT TOPICS



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ALL NEW ONLINE CE COURSES: Choose from a variety of all NEW online CE courses which include DOS required fair housing training and NAR Ethics. Discount packages for LIBOR member!

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LEGISLATIVE/ RPAC NEWS



NAR's 2016 Federal Legislative Priorities

By Randy L. Kaplan

Director of Governmental Affairs and Senior Lobbyist

In 2016, NAR's over one million REALTORS® will be focused on many public policy initiatives including homeownership and real estate investment tax policies, credit, lending and insurance policies as well as protecting business operations.

The growing federal debt, weak economic recovery, and continued growth of tax complexity have kept tax reform near the top of the national agenda. Members of Congress from both Houses and both parties have expressed a high level of interest in reforming the tax system, and President Obama has also expressed qualified support, especially for corporate or business tax reform. This ongoing debate places a variety of tax laws, including those affecting commercial and residential real estate, under increased scrutiny. These issues include: State and Local Tax Deductions; Mortgage Interest Deduction; Mortgage Debt Cancellation Tax Relief and Capital Gains.

Protecting the business operations of members is always a priority for NAR. There are a number of issues before Congress and the Federal Regulatory Agencies that could have a significant impact on the business operations of real estate firms including the Dodd-Frank Act Regulations (TRID Implementation) and Technology Issues (Patent Reform, Net Neutrality, Data Privacy & Security). ●

And We're Off...

to Belmont Race Track

**BELMONT
PARK**



RPAC's 11th Annual Day at The Races!

WHEN: Wednesday, May 4, 2016

BUFFET LUNCH: 12:00pm to 2:30pm

1ST RACE BEGINS: 1:00pm

PRICING: **\$100.00** by 4/22/16 • **\$125.00** after 4/22/16
Checks made payable to RPAC
(Full amount will go toward your RPAC Contribution)
You must pre-register. Deadline is 5/2/16.
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