

The Realtor's® Gazette

Upcoming CE Courses

Tuesday, June 22nd

Instructor: Amy Greene

Title V RE22RC01

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Real Estate Laws and Regulations for Owners & Managers RE03R01

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Seller Agency RE01R01

12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Lead Paint RE20RC01

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Instructor: Amy Greene

American Disabilities Act RE21RC01

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Fair Housing RE19RC01

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Classes run from 8am to 8pm and are 2 hours each (You can choose to attend all or just specific classes)

Upcoming Seminars

Tuesday, June 3rd ~ 1031 Tax Exchanges

Wednesday, June 9th ~ Pre-Listing

Inspection: Why Sellers Need One

Monday, June 14th ~ Real Estate Brokerage Professional Ethics

Thursday, June 24th ~ Mortgage Loan

Denied: Top 10 Reasons

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A Publication For Members of the Greater New Bedford Association of REALTORS®
www.grnbar.org

ON THE HOMEFRONT

GrNBAR

For the first time in many years, GrNBAR is sponsoring several of the courses needed for members to take to get their GRI designation. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the GRI, here is some information that you might find helpful in determining whether this is a designation you wish to pursue.

GRI refers to being a Graduate of the Realtor® Institute. The Realtor® Institute program consists of 90 hours of training, divided into six modules of fifteen hours each. Students may take these modules in any order, however they must complete the six-module program and pass each exam course within a five-year time frame in order to earn the nationally recognized **Graduate, Realtor® Institute (GRI)** designation.

Here is a brief description of the six modules and the amount of continuing education credit each one qualifies for:

GRI 101 – Skills For Success (0 CE credits)

- Acquiring and Servicing the Listing
- Building a Real Estate Business

GRI 102 – Managing Risk (8 CE credits)

- Risk Reduction
- Financing the Sale
- Working with Buyers

GRI 201 – Tools of the Trade (4 CE Credits)

- Code of Ethics/Professional Standards
- Negotiating
- Technology.

GRI 202 – Building a Foundation (6 CE credits)

- Architecture
- Condos/Co-ops/Timeshares
- Personal & Business Taxation
- Residential Construction, Zoning & Codes

GRI 301 – Under All is the Land (6 CE credits)

- Environmental Issues
- Appraisals
- Corporate Relocation

GRI 302 – Expanding Your Base (4 CE credits)

- Industrial Real Estate
- Commercial Real Estate
- International Real Estate
- Working with Builders/New Construction
- Investment Real Estate

While we are offering three of the six modules here at our own Member Service Center in 2004 (in February, May and October), the additional courses are being offered at other locations in the state. So, if you are interested in getting the whole program done as soon as possible, that can be done. However, we do anticipate offering the other three modules in 2005.

For more information on getting your GRI designation, check out MAR's website at marealtor.com or call them at 1-800-725-6272.



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By: Judy Perry, President

NEW ENGLAND REALTOR® CONFERENCE

I recently attended the New England Realtor® Conference on Cape Cod. It was a very educational experience and I want to share some of that with you.

NAR is working on a homeownership tax credit where a builder or investor who renovates a home in a distressed area or constructs a new home in a distressed area, will be eligible for a tax credit encouraging them to help with affordable housing.

NAR has joined forces with MSN and has integrated their listings on Realtor.com into MSN's "House & Home" channel making Realtor.com the exclusive provider of integrated resale home listings content for MSN. Realtor.com is the official website of NAR and is ranked as the number one homes-for-sale site. Seventy-six percent of Internet buyers use Realtor.com.

NAR is pursuing legislature to permit legitimate trade associations to offer health care alternatives to members. This legislation is H.R. 660 and has been approved by the House.

NAR'S Call to Action website has explanations on all of the regulatory issues that are important to our industry. When you are emailed by NAR requesting you to send a letter to your congressman, you need to follow through. The letters are all written for you and all you have to do is forward them.

Al Manell (NAR President-Elect) stated that there is a need to increase the value of our services to the consumer whether they are real or perceived. He also stated that two thirds of the housing bought in the future will be bought by minorities and immigrants.

Laurie Janik (Sr. Vice-President & General Counsel for NAR MLS and Vows) stated that our MLS is the power of unified REALTOR® activity. It is not a public utility. We were not able to get the MLS trademark in the US (Canada does have it). However, it is subject to a "true picture" when used in an ad by a REALTOR®.

The "Do Not Calls" are changing on a monthly basis so we need to check them every 30 days. Also, in the insurance industry, binders are no longer binding. The insurance companies have written into their policies a 30 to 90 day option to cancel the binder. They have been canceling binder's days before closing and days or weeks after a closing. Make sure that you have your customers get their binders early.

BANKING ON IT

Lender's Committee

Issue: Legislation to require the disclosure of credit scores to all consumers who apply for home mortgages was enacted when the President signed Public Law No. 108-159 on December 4, 2003. As of December 1, 2004, mortgage lenders will be required to disclose an applicant's credit score and reasons for the score as received from a Credit Reporting Agency where the score is used in the underwriting decision.

Background: Credit scores have been used in consumer lending since the 1950s, but did not become widely used in mortgage lending until the mid-1990s. Currently, consumer credit scores are used in the proprietary automated underwriting systems of many large lenders, Freddie Mac, and FHA (starting May 1, 2004). Fannie Mae announced in 2000 that it would no longer use credit scores in its automated underwriting system. The importance of credit scores in the mortgage underwriting decision has prompted increasing public interest in the factors used to develop credit scores and increasing public demand for the disclosure to the consumer of these factors along with the consumer's actual credit score. Lenders find that consumer education concerning credit scores and familiarity with their credit records prior to applying for a mortgage greatly improves the origination process. The credit score disclosure requirements under Public Law 108-159 are very similar to the disclosure requirements currently mandated under California state law.

MBA Position: MBA fully supports greater clarity with regard to credit scores and how credit scores are developed. MBA believes that borrowers should know and understand their credit score and credit history prior to approaching a lender for a loan. Mandatory disclosure of credit scores by mortgage lenders is an additional disclosure that adds costs and burdens to the origination process, that, while it may be currently necessary, will hopefully become unnecessary as consumers become more educated prior to meeting with a lender.

Status: Credit score disclosure becomes mandatory on December 1, 2004.

Staff Contact: **Tim Doyle-(202) 557-2860**
Mary Jo Sullivan-(202) 557-2859
Renee Rappaport-(202) 557-2758

SEMA MLS UPDATE

Anne Arruda



In previous newsletters the SEMA MLS Office posted articles citing various Rules & Regulations from the Fines schedule. **No agent name, phone number, office name or office phone number should be placed in the remarks or the addendum.**

The SEMA MLS Office received several complaints from agents who were unaware of this rule. Therefore any fines that were issued for data not allowed will be waived. However, **please be advised that there is a \$50 fine for data not allowed in the listing and any future fines will not be waived.**

Another issue that needs to be reiterated is the adding of new street names. If you do not see the street name in the drop down menu, you must call the SEMA MLS Office within 24 hours to have it added. The option of "your choice" should only be used when the Board office is closed. Once the street name is added it is the responsibility of the agent to correct the listing.

A copy of the SEMA Rules & Regulations & Fines Schedule is available at the SEMA MLS Office.

AROUND THE STATE

MAR Website

Bay State to host NAR Resort Symposium
Massachusetts will play host to the National Association of REALTORS® 2004 Resort Symposium & Workshop later this spring when the program is held from June 9-11 on Cape Cod. Presented in part by the Massachusetts and Cape Cod & Islands Associations of REALTORS®, this second annual symposium will feature over a half dozen seminars and workshop sessions designed exclusively to meet the needs of the resort specialist.

The program is expected to draw agents and brokers from multiple countries and numerous resort markets across the U.S – not surprising since over 25 percent of all vacation homes are located more than 1,000 miles from the buyer's primary residence. As a result, the event will include several networking activities, allowing attendees to build their contact networks which are so vital to the success of those who cater to the second home and recreational and resort property markets in vacation destination locales.

Among the key issues to be examined at the Symposium will be 1031 exchanges, marketing and communications strategies for the resort specialist, and the importance of understanding customs and cultures to build more business. Attendees also will be able to learn about membership in the MAR International Council of REALTORS® which will be exhibiting at the event. Registration is \$209 for REALTORS® and \$229 for non-REALTORS®. For more information or to register, go to www.realtor.org/resort. Mass. laws are specific regarding E&O coverage According to Realty Times, a recent national survey of real estate brokers found that considerations of legal liability were one of the foremost factors in their business. When assessing legal liability many brokers opt



to purchase errors and omissions insurance to protect them when and if they are involved in any type of litigation. A common question among REALTORS® is whether or not they are required to carry errors and omissions insurance for their brokerage firms. Under Massachusetts license law, only Limited Liability Corporations (LLC) and Limited Liability Partnerships (LLP) are required to carry liability insurance, corporations and independent brokerages are not.

An LLC or LLP must maintain professional liability insurance which meets specific minimum standards. First, the insurance shall cover negligence, wrongful acts, errors and omissions, and insure the LLC and its officers or the LLP and its partners as required by the Massachusetts law. Second, the insurance shall be in an amount for each claim of at least \$50,000 multiplied by the number of individual licensees employed by, or officers/partners of, the LLC or LLP, and in an aggregate amount of at least \$150,000 multiplied by the number of individual licensees who are employed by, or officers/partners of, the LLC or the LLP.

The requirements of this regulation shall be satisfied if the LLC or LLP maintains insurance sufficient to provide coverage at a level of at least \$300,000 for each claim with an aggregate top limit of liability for all claims, during any one year, of at least \$1,000,000. The insurance required may provide that it does not apply to any dishonest, fraudulent, criminal, or malicious act or omission of the insured LLC, or any officer or employee thereof, or the LLP, or any partner or employee thereof. To learn more about the insurance requirements for LLCs and LLPs <http://www.state.ma.us/reg/boards/re/cmr/25402.htm>

ON THE NATIONAL SCENE

NAR Website

Reduction in lead poisoning prevention funds proposed

The Bush Administration's proposed budget for FY '05 contains a \$35 million reduction in funding for lead poisoning prevention programs in the U.S. The 20 percent cut in funding –from \$174 million this year to \$139 million in the coming year – could prevent up to 40,000 U.S. homes from achieving lead-safe status in 2005, according to several advocacy organizations. To offset the cut in funding, the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development says it will look to real estate firms, banks, foundations, and other private-sector interests to increase their financial commitments toward lead remediation.



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Greater New Bedford Association of REALTORS
651 Orchard Street
Howland Place - Suite 101
New Bedford, MA 02744

Phone: 508.993.0406
Fax: 508.993.4386
Email: info@grnbar.org

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.GRNBAR.ORG

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 Paint Your Hearts Out
6	7	8 Realtor Day On Beacon Hill	9 Pre-Listing Inspection Seminar	10	11	12
13	14 Professional Ethics Seminar	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Continuing Education Classes (8am-8pm)	23	24 Seminar - Mortgage Denied: Top 10 reasons	25	26
27	28	29	30			

WELCOME

NEW REALTOR MEMBERS:

Ronald Angelone	Acushnet Realty Group
Kimberly Lopes	Alferes Realty
David Arruda	Amaral Resendes Realty
Melody Martin	Alferes Realty
Rosa Brizida	Amaral Resendes Realty
Lori Matrisciano	Gold Star Realty
George Clark - Tracy McCree	Century 21 Hughes & Carey
Darren Costa	ERA Castelo Real Estate
Sarah Murphy	Jack Conway & Co.
Kyle Costa	Jack Conway & Co.
Charlene Preece	Mainstay Realty Services
Robert DeSousa	SouthCoast Realty
Carla Rocha-Gil	Gold Star Realty
George Desrosiers	ERA Castelo Real Estate
Jorge Soares	Pomeroy Associates
Jennifer Fullerton	Towne House Realty
Nellie Souza	Jack Conway & Co.
Cheryl Gagne	Ronnie Glassman Real Estate
Philip Sullivan	Jack Conway & Co.
Glenn Gertridge	Pomeroy Associates
Barry Trahan	Ronnie Glassman Real Estate
	Trahan Realty
Eric Goncalo	ERA Castelo Real Estate
Lynnea Walker	CB Hayes Associates
Matti Goulart	CB Hayes Associates
Julie Wright	Jack Conway & Co.