



JUNE 2021

REview



COMING UP

MLS USERS GROUP

June 2; 10:00 am - 11:00 am

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

June 3; 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

RECHARGE TASK FORCE

June 7; 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

AT HOME WITH DIVERSITY CLASS

June 8; 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

June 9; 10:00 am - 11:00 am

GPRMLS TRAINING DOJO SESSION: HOMESNAP PRO

June 9; 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

YPN COMMITTEE MEETING

June 10; 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

RPAC FUNDRAISING TASK FORCE

June 14; 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

AFFILIATES COUNCIL MEETING

June 15; 9:00 am - 10:00 am

NEBRASKA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION MEETINGS

June 17 - 18

OABR DIRECTORS MEETING

June 30; 10:00 am - 11:00 am

CONSUMER SPENDING WILL PROPEL 2021 ECONOMIC GROWTH

SAYS NAR CHIEF ECONOMIST

WASHINGTON (May 13, 2021) – After recording the quickest recovery in the nation's history in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. economy is expected to kick into higher gear in 2021. That is according to analysis from the National Association of Realtors® delivered today during the 2021 REALTORS® Legislative Meetings & Trade Expo(link is external) at the Residential Economic Issues and Trends Forum.

With the number of vaccinated Americans increasing and new coronavirus cases on the decline, NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun anticipates the economy will grow 4.5% in 2021.

"Consumers will begin to spend massive savings, and do more shopping, restaurant dining, traveling and in-person house hunting," he said.

While home sales continue to be an economic bright spot, unemployment remains an issue. Eight million jobs that were lost during the pandemic have not yet been recaptured. Yun maintains that job recovery is taking longer due to some friction in the labor market, including workers being unable to return to their jobs, where work-from-home is not an option for many. As economic growth strengthens, 4 million jobs are projected to be gained this year.

Despite high unemployment, the economic recovery – propelled by favorable monetary and fiscal policies – has created the hottest housing market in nearly 50 years. The marketplace has surpassed pre-pandemic levels in terms of sales, but the fast-paced recovery has contributed to historic home price growth. In fact, an NAR report released Tuesday found that 89% of metros saw prices climb at double-digit rates on a year-over-year basis during the first quarter of 2021.

Thursday's presentation noted that the economic recovery, both in the U.S. and globally, has raised inflationary pressures which will ultimately lead to an increase in the 30-year fixed mortgage to an average of 3.2% in 2021. Consumer price inflation is accelerating due to higher costs for a number of goods and commodities, including oil, gasoline, lumber, moving and storage fees, household appliances, rents, and houses, which have reached record-highs.

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Read the REview online!

OmahaREALTORS.com/news



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Bill Swanson, 2021 President



WE ARE NOT INVINCIBLE

There is no doubt that we are in a dangerous profession. In the last few years, we have had assaults, stalking, threats of life, blackmail, and other dangerous situations happening to OABR agents. We also suffered the ultimate tragedy when our colleague, Mickey Sodoro, violently lost his life.

The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® is striving to improve the safety of members. The Safety Committee, initially chaired by REALTOR® Jill Anderson of NP Dodge Real Estate and now by Deda Myhre of Nebraska Realty, has worked tirelessly to offer classes, reminders, and tools to help you safely operate your business.

The Homesnap Pro application has a safety timer that can send a warning to your emergency contact list. Many agents are using the Forewarn app to verify identities. Others have adopted the Red File protocol where an agent contacts the office and requests the Red File for 12345 Main street. The office then knows the agent is fearing for their safety and needs help which is promptly dispatched. There are a plethora of safety tools to utilize. Join the next Safety Committee meeting to learn what tools are around the corner.

However, as good as the tools are, they are useless without proper application.

The vulnerability of our industry. Use the open house example. First, we make ourselves look handsome, attractive, and sometimes downright gorgeous on our business cards, in advertising, and online. Then, we tell everyone where we will be, most likely alone, for a couple of hours. There are numerous accounts of creepers and criminals showing up at an open house.

And then, there is the Pop-Tart Realtor. The agent gets a call, text, or Zillow alert, that a ready, willing, and able buyer needs to see a property right now! So, Pop-Tart jumps up like a toaster to show the house. Fortunately, these practices are becoming fewer and fewer as more and more agents are taking steps to stay safe. But it still happens!

Easy solutions. Do things differently! Use the buddy system, show houses in pairs, only meet unknown customers at the office, get the telephone number and call them back. Some agents even require a potential buyer to text them a photo of their driver's license so some online research can verify their identity. Other agents need unknown buyers first to be preapproved or at least interviewed by a lender. Working by referral can increase safety too.

Others that encounter strangers are doing what they can to make customers feel safe. Uber has a picture of your driver on the app. Some home inspection companies send a welcome email with a photo of the inspector.

Public reaction. There is an effort to educate the public about the dangers our industry faces. Good customers are generally not offended when asked to prove their identity before an appointment, to meet at the office and provide a copy of their driver's license before house hunting. Most auto dealerships mandate a similar practice with a test drive.

I urge you to adopt simple systems that increase your safety. Will it be comfortable? Probably not at first. Will you lose some clients? It's possible, but how much is your safety worth?

Targets. Our industry is vulnerable, and we could all be a target – male or female! Years ago, an agent-friend, Glen, called an out-of-town buyer staying at the Marriott Hotel to inform him that he would be arriving soon. A police sergeant answered the buyer's phone, and reported to Glen that his buyer was just arrested for murdering a real estate agent in another state. The Sergeant believed that Glen was his next random victim.

Be mindful of your surroundings, use the tools available, and please stay safe, my friends.

- Bill Swanson

Continued from page 1

"As mortgage rates increase, the frenzied multiple-offer situation will become less prevalent by year's end, as affordability challenges squeeze out some buyers and more inventory reaches the market," Yun said.

Although the low supply of housing has played a significant role in home price surges, Yun expects more home construction, a growing willingness among homeowners to list properties due to an increase in vaccinations, and a gradual decline in mortgage forbearance.

In addition to homebuilders' intentions to ramp-up construction, a recent NAR report – Case Studies on Repurposing Vacant Hotels/Motels into Multifamily Housing – details the idea of remodeling underutilized hotels and motels in order to help replenish the supply of affordable multifamily housing.

"With more inventory and some easing in demand, home prices are expected to shift to mid-single-digit appreciation by the fourth quarter and in 2022," Yun said.

Yun predicts that the median existing-home sales price will increase at a slower pace of 7% in 2021.

As more homes reach the market, NAR anticipates existing-home sales to grow by 10% and forecasts new home sales to jump by 20%.

The National Association of Realtors® is America's largest trade association, representing more than 1.4 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION of
REALTORS®



Lawrence Yun

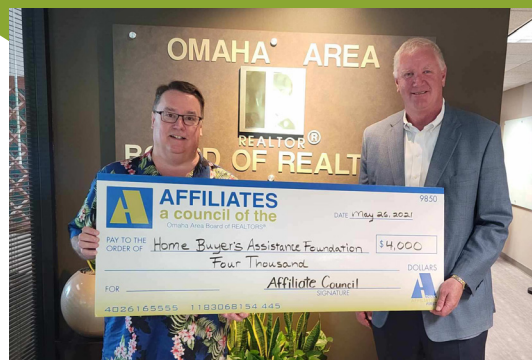


AFFILIATES COMMIT TO THE HOME BUYERS ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION

The Nebraska REALTORS® Association has established the Home Buyers Assistance Foundation (HBAF) to support first-time home buyers with small grants who have prepared themselves for home ownership by taking an approved Home Buyers education class.

The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® (OABR) Affiliates recognized the value of this program to encourage more and better prepared first-time buyers and are donating \$4,000 to the fund. The Affiliates raise money for local causes through various events including a golf tournament and bowling event. For more information on upcoming events, please visit the OABR website.

The OABR Affiliates are a group of businesses brought together to support REALTORS® and Real Estate transactions.



NOTICE OF ELECTION

The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® Nominating Task Force hereby submits to all REALTOR® members the following slate of candidates for open positions* on the OABR Board of Directors for 2022:



President-Elect
Crystal Archer



Secretary-Treasurer
Denise Poppen



2024 Director
Jill Anderson



2024 Director
Ashley Livengood



2024 Director
Dakotah Smith

The following individuals will continue their terms of service on the 2022 Board of Directors, or will be appointed by virtue of their current positions:

2022 President Megan Bengtson
2022 Director Brad Fricke
2022 Director Angel Starks
2023 Director Denise Poppen
2023 Director Jessica Sawyer

2022 Immediate Past President Bill Swanson
2022 GPRMLS, Inc. Chair Dakotah Smith
2022 Affiliate Council Chair Jonathan Jameson
2022 WCR Omaha Chapter President Chrissy Cameron

** Additional candidates for the open positions may be placed in nomination by petition signed by at least ten percent of the REALTOR® members and filed with the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® office by July 14, 2021, for election. If the open positions are uncontested, the published slate will take office September 1, 2021.*

RPAC TRUSTEE CANDIDATE POSITIONS AVAILABLE!



There are four Omaha Area positions open for the 2022 Nebraska RPAC Trustees. Terms run from one-year to three-years. Applicants should have a history of RPAC support and involvement in governmental affairs, public policy and political issues. **Interested REALTORS® should inquire with Donna Shipley, donna@omaharealtors.com or 402-619-5551.**



CROSSKEY VILLAGES PARK CLEAN UP DAY



REALTORS® and Affiliates volunteered their time on Saturday, May 1 to assist in the annual clean up day at Crosskey Villages Park. OABR adopted the park in 2017 as part of a Placemaking Project grant funded by the National Association of REALTORS®. The beautiful weather, good company and donuts made the day an enjoyable one, all while keeping our community a clean and happy place to be. We look forward to hosting events at the park again in the future.





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JULY 30, 2021



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Thank you,
Volunteers!



INSPECTOR SPOTLIGHT



Forrest Ruel
ASHI certified &
InterNachi certified
Home Inspector



Forrest has been with Home Standards since 2017 and has quickly become one of our most requested inspectors. We asked Forrest some questions:

Tell us about your family.

I have been married 27 years, have six children, 12 grandchildren, four great grandchildren, and two dogs (Auggie and Jax).

What do you like to do for relaxation or fun?

In my free time, I like camping and fishing with the family and friends. I also like watching a good movie.

How does your background or past experiences help you excel as a home inspector?

Working in the home and commercial industry with roofing installation and repair,

electrical, plumbing, building construction, remodeling, repairing of residential and Commercial Properties has given me a solid foundation of understanding of the building components and installation.

Being an ASHI and InterNachi certified inspector is a benefit for me professionally, by giving me the knowledge that keeps me sharp through the continued education. A home buyer benefits from knowing continued education is a strong part of the ability to perform a quality inspection.

What do you enjoy about home inspecting?

I really enjoy helping potential buyers make an informed decision based on the findings of the home inspection.



RECENT REVIEW

"I needed to get an inspection done on a house that I am purchasing. I have never bought a home before. Forrest was very patient and took the time to explain everything to me but never in a way that belittled me. I cannot say enough wonderful things about him! Thank you for making this process very smooth! I appreciate it!!"

– Chelsea C



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CERTIFICATIONS

Michelle Ragan, NextHome Signature Real Estate - Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA)

Kathleen McDonald, NextHome Signature Real Estate - Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA)

Kellie Murphy, NextHome Signature Real Estate - Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA)

Henry Kammandel, Next Home Signature Real Estate - Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA)

Marilyn Goure, Platinum Realty - Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) and e-Pro

Julia Morrison, NextHome Signature Real Estate - Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA)

PERSONALS

Condolences to:

- **Cheryl Japp**, Nebraska Realty, on the recent passing of her mother
- The friends and family of **Marc Cizek**, Coldwell Banker, on his recent passing
- **Monica Lang**, Celebrity Homes, on the recent passing of her father
- **Kate Reeker**, BHHS Ambassador Real Estate, on the recent passing of her great niece
- **Mindy Kidney**, RE/MAX Results, on the recent passing of her grandfather
- The friends and family of **Ron Riddle**, Keller Williams Greater Omaha, on his recent passing



HAVE SOMETHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

Contact us at: Jodi@OmahaREALTORS.com



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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

See the full membership report at:
OmahaREALTORS.com/membership-report

APRIL ACTIVITY	MO	YTD
New REALTOR® Members	39	143
Resignations	10	61

MEMBERSHIP (As of May 1)	2021	2020
Designated REALTORS®	211	200
REALTOR®	2962	2820
REALTOR® Emeritus	62	74
TOTAL REALTORS®	3235	3094

Institute Affiliate	70	69
Affiliate Full Members	171	187
Affiliate eKey Only	159	159
TOTAL AFFILIATES	410	425



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9 AM - 4:30 PM

INSTRUCTOR:
MAURICE HAMPTON

REALTORS® know the importance of adapting and remaining relevant in today's marketplace. By developing a business practice rooted in inclusion and equality, you can help buyers of all cultural backgrounds achieve the dream of homeownership. **The At Home With Diversity® (AHWD) certification course** teaches you how to work effectively with diverse populations so you can build business success in today's multicultural real estate market.

Bonus! The At Home With Diversity® certification course counts as an elective for the Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR®) Designation and Certified International Property Specialist (CIPS) Designation, and towards the C2EX Endorsement.



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2022 RECHARGE



02.16.22
EMBASSY SUITES LAVISTA

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Register for the 2022 REcharge before August 2, 2021 and save \$20! On August 2nd, the keynote speaker announcement will be made and ticket prices will go up! There's only 500 tickets, so don't delay!



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AFFILIATE SPOTLIGHT

COVID CONSTRUCTION HURDLES

BY WENDY WALKER, COBALT CREDIT UNION

Ask any real estate agent in Omaha what's the greatest challenge facing the industry today and the response is usually the same - the lack of homes on the market. Many are also wondering can we build more with the current state of our economy?

One of the major construction-related headlines in 2020 unrelated to the coronavirus was the dramatic increase in lumber prices across the country. Lumber prices seem to set a new record almost daily, now up 67% this year and up 340% from a year ago, according to Random Lengths, a wood products industry tracking firm. Lumber doesn't just go into framing a house; those added costs also hit cabinets, doors, windows and flooring. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) estimates that lumber alone has pushed up the cost to build a single-family home by more than \$35,000. While some builders across the country are slowing production in the face of exorbitant costs; other builders are trying to ramp up production as fast as they can to meet soaring demand.

General contractors spend a great deal of their time balancing project costs. To ensure profitability, they must control material, labor and overhead costs while continually receiving payment from clients. The task is difficult and a number of factors impact a contractor's ability to do this including the varying costs of materials and labor.

Given the dramatic increase in softwood lumber prices, the availability and cost of many other home building materials, local builders are adding an escalation clause

to contracts in order to address unexpected price increases in building materials. Escalation clauses specify that if building materials increase, by a certain percentage for example, the customer could be responsible for paying the higher cost. Including such a clause allows all parties to be on notice that the contract costs could change if the price of materials change due to supply constraints outside the builder's control.

The material escalation clause is only as good as a client's willingness to accept it as part of a working agreement. Escalation clauses can present challenges because the prices that are being submitted aren't necessarily guaranteed, leading to an increased purchase price for a new home. However, escalation clauses are helpful for owners because contractors will be more comfortable submitting lower bids, meaning more contractors will bid on jobs; and they can be a valuable tool to keep things moving forward.

Another tool that is helpful is an extended interest rate lock. Cobalt Credit Union offers the TrueBlue Lock program, which allows members to lock a rate for up to 12 months for a .5% upfront, nonrefundable commitment fee, which then is credited back to borrower's loan costs at closing. The TrueBlue Lock program also provides a free float down if market rates have dropped below the locked price. With extended-lock programs such as the TrueBlue Lock, borrowers have the peace of mind of a locked rate while they can enjoy watching their home being built. That is a bright spot when determining the final costs of projects are this challenging.



WENDY WALKER

(402) 650-3615

wendy.walker@cobaltcu.com





There's no question about it, Women's Council is AWESOME!!

We were able to have our annual Trivia Night on May 13th. Our teams joined us from their offices, couches and even garages to help raise money for our Charity of the Year, Women's Center for Advancement. Who also came to play and were our Trivia Winners for the night. We were so excited to have them join us and get a glimpse of what Women's Council is all about. #WCRforWCA

Thank you to our sponsors for Trivia: Centris Federal Credit Union, Home Standards Inspection Services, My Insurance, Benchmark Mortgage, Stewart Title, and Peterson Bros Realty. Congrats to our Split the Pot winner, Matt Circo! Split the Pot brought in over \$3,000 with a part of the proceeds benefitting WCA.

In May, we also had our Mid-Year Conference. We were virtual again this year but were able to meet up (shout out to Centris for letting us use their awesome facility!) and enjoy some quality time together. We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to be in such amazing company with the nationwide leaders and speakers that Women's Council provides. Thank you to all our members for your support and engagement in all things Women's Council. I think we are turning that corner and looking to have a more normal year of networking, fun and education. We hope to see you at our upcoming events listed below.

- Jen Monjaras, President

June 10th: Mitchell & Associates & WCA
July 22nd: Golf Tournament at Tiburon

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GO-ASHI Greater Omaha Chapter American Society of Home Inspectors

The Mission of ASHI is to set and promote standards for property inspections and to provide the educational programs needed to achieve excellence in the profession. The members of GO-ASHI promote this mission through continued education provided at our monthly meetings.



Current Membership

Jon Vacha ACI (President) - Home Standards Inspection Services
Tim Krof ACI (Vice President) - Home Standards Inspection Services

Steve Marten ACI (Treasurer) - Homespec Property Inspections

Mike Frerichs ACI (Secretary) - Home Buyers Protection Co

Ahlvers, Chad ACI - Cornerstone Property Inspections

Byrd, Mark ACI - Accurate Building Inspection

Carney, Dominic - Home Buyers Protection Co

Crnkovich, Rick ACI - Heritage Home Services, Inc

Duckett, Steve - Midwest Inspection & Testing, LLC

Eggenburg, John, ACI Surehome Inspection Services

Fisher, Jessie - Home Standards Inspection Services

Gaskin, Paul, ACI - Gaskin Property Inspections

Pachunka, Paul - Home Standards Inspection Services

Petersen, Bret ACI - Home Buyers Protection Co

Ruel, Forrest - Home Standards Inspection Services

Simmerman, Brent ACI - Midlands Home Inspections, Inc

Vacha, Steve ACI - Home Standards Inspection Services

Les Wallace - Advanced Building Inspections

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*ACI denotes ASHI Certified Inspector



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GET INVOLVED WITH



DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The Diversity Committee promotes equal opportunity in housing and diversity within the real estate industry. It encourages diversity in the real estate industry with the Ethnic Minority Outreach Scholarship Program, promotes OABR activities to heighten the awareness of diversity within the real estate profession, identifies the equal opportunity and cultural diversity concerns and needs of OABR members and makes recommendations to the OABR Board of Directors regarding those concerns and needs.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 13 at 11:00 am
Staff Liaison: Donna Shipley, donna@omaharealtors.com



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee is committed to providing quality education and training opportunities for its members in order to promote success in every aspect of their business. The committee oversees OABR Academy, its courses, and NAR'S REBAC classes that enable our members to earn certifications and designations locally & economically. The committee also oversees New Member Orientation, the OABR instructors, and our member's compliance with the Code of Ethics.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 3 at 1:00 pm
Staff Liaison: Donna Shipley, donna@omaharealtors.com



GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Governmental Affairs Committee monitors governmental entities impacting the real estate industry in the Omaha area, interviews political candidates and makes recommendations for Nebraska RPAC contributions, and organizes RPAC fundraising efforts. At the direction of the Board of Directors, the committee participates in grassroots lobbying efforts.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 16 at 10:00 am
Staff Liaison: Donna Shipley, donna@omaharealtors.com



REGIONAL MLS USERS GROUP

The MLS Users Group monitors and makes recommendations to the Great Plains Regional Multiple Listing Service Board of Directors regarding the use and functionality of the MLS system.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 2 at 10:00 am
Staff Liaison: Tomi Coffey, tomi@lincolnrealtors.com

YOUR ASSOCIATION!

RPAC FUNDRAISING TASK FORCE



RPAC Fundraising Task Force works in conjunction with the Governmental Affairs Committee coordinating local efforts to raise funds for the Nebraska REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC). The organization has two primary objectives: to advocate for rights of all real estate owners, and to promote the best interests of REALTORS®. In conjunction with the Nebraska REALTORS® Association and the National Association of REALTORS®, RPAC is the leading voice for all things real estate; in Omaha, in Nebraska, and across the Nation.

Next Meeting: Monday, June 14 at 2:30 pm
Staff Liaison: Donna Shipley, donna@omaharealtors.com

REALTOR® SAFETY TASK FORCE



The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® provides members with access to the latest safety information. Our goal is to keep REALTORS® safe, following safety guidelines and using good judgement when meeting with unknown individuals.

It's true: REALTORS® face more on-the-job risks than most other business professions. Be safe.

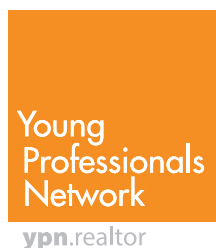
Next Meeting: Thursday, July 15 at 2:00 pm
Staff Liaison: Donna Shipley, donna@omaharealtors.com



SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Social Events Committee plans and implements member and/or family-friendly networking social events and implements community projects to enhance the image of REALTORS® in the community.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 9 at 10:00 am
Staff Liaison: Donna Shipley, donna@omaharealtors.com



YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK COMMITTEE

The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® Young Professionals Network connects, develops, and empowers young professionals by creating a nurturing community of focused, ambitious, and diverse professionals that network with one another for success and personal and professional growth. The mission of YPN is to become an active and visible part of the community by setting a high level of REALTOR® professionalism and volunteering for causes that YPN feels passionate about.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 10 at 1:30 pm
Staff Liaison: Jodi Carper, jodi@omaharealtors.com

VIRTUAL



FOOD DRIVE

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to test our strength and resilience, but our community remains committed to helping our struggling neighbors. The need is greater than ever, and Food Bank for the Heartland is adjusting to meet the increased demand while prioritizing health and safety.

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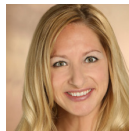
Shelley Hourigan



Don Igo



Brooke Johnson



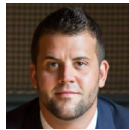
Monica Lang



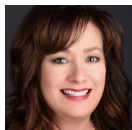
David Lee



Luke Lofgren



Kurt Pfeffer



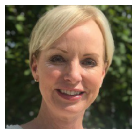
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FROM THE NEBRASKA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION...

PAYMENTS FOR SHOWINGS

The following is supplemental information to the original "What's New" statement on paying for showings and the article on payments for showings in the Spring, 2021 issue of the Commission Comment.

It has come the Commission's attention that some licensees may be paying other licensees directly for handling showings of properties. While it is acceptable to have another agent show a property for a customer or client, it is not acceptable for a licensee, other than a designated broker, to pay another licensee for such services, unless both licensees work for the same broker and the broker has provided authorization for such payments.

The authorization must be in writing but does not need to be specific to each agent or showing, a blanket authorization on file is adequate to meet the legal requirements. Some of the changes in median-home price, especially in small cities, were dependent on

the type of homes sold during Q1 2021; not all homes saw large appreciations in price.

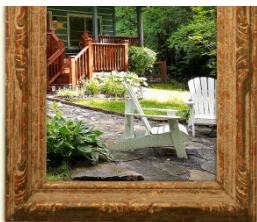
THREE OMAHA AREA REALTORS® ARE NOW SERVING

Doug Dohse is the latest Omaha area appointee to the Nebraska Real Estate Commission. Doug fills the salesperson representative seat on the seven-member commission which is Chaired by the Nebraska Secretary of State, Robert Evnen. Commissioners are appointed by the Governor and serve one, six-year term.

Doug joins **Lisa Ritter** and **Joe Gehrki** also from the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® who serve with fellow REALTORS® Darlene Starman of Lincoln, and Sheri Bourne of North Platte. Attorney Jim Titus of Lincoln serves as the non-industry public representative.



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