

Submitted By PeggyAnn McConnochie

Oh, how nice the warmth of the sun is on your face as you walk the miles (and I mean miles) through the Peabody Hotel to your meeting room and then walk miles (and I mean miles) over to the Convention Center for your next meeting and then back again...all in high heels!

Enough of all the falderal; let me get down to business.

Orlando was an interesting convention and annual meeting. Some of the highlights included cheering for our REALTOR® OF THE YEAR **Helen Jarratt** as she walked across the stage at the General Session, listening to a presentation from a group of retired fighter pilots, a concert with Glen Frey and Joe Walsh of the Eagles, and seeing Alaska pick up award after award through our fundraising efforts for RPAC. And did I mention the beautiful weather?

And at the end we had an interesting Board of Director's Meeting. I will now highlight some of the more interesting items discussed.

- REALTORS® Relief Fund: with the devastation brought to many because of Hurricane Sandy, NAR and our members in attendance helped to raise an additional \$775,000 for the Fund. Originally it was formed in response to the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 with a single goal – to help surviving family members of 9/11 victims pay their mortgage or rent for a defined period so no family would lose its home as a result of the attacks. Thanks to the heartfelt generosity of REALTORS®, member associations, and many others, families in more than 30 disasters have been aided with over \$22 million in emergency housing assistance. For your opportunity to contribute visit www.realtor.org
- Treasurer's Report: Bill Armstrong, NAR Treasurer reported that the membership count is approximately 1.6 million. He also gave the Board information on 2 new buildings that NAR purchased this past year.
- Strategic Planning: Chairman Elizabeth Mendenhall gave an interesting presentation on the new direction that NAR is taking with strategic planning. We all know that real estate is facing a transformation in the coming years, given the nation's economic concerns, demographic trends and shifting socio-economic landscape. Elizabeth spoke of the new direction they are working to shape that future through the "ReThink Initiative." The Strategic Planning group will be holding workshops throughout the US during 2013. Realtors® unable to attend a session will have an opportunity to experience it online, including providing feedback and insights just like the live ReThink events. The online experience will be available soon at <http://rethinkfuture.com>.
- Multiple Listing Committee: the MLS Committee proposed and the Board adopted a new policy statement that authorizes but does not require MLSs to authorize participants to display/distribute other participants' listings electronically using communication channels other than via VOWs and IDX displays. Even where MLSs choose to authorize such display/distribution, no MLS participant can be required to consent to such displays.
- Professional Standards Committee: they enhanced the procedures by which ethics and arbitration hearings are conducted to provide guidance to associations about how questions of timeliness, arbitrability, legal complexity, and other administrative issues arising after a matter has been forwarded for a hearing will be considered and resolved.

- Legal Action: requested permission to enter into a new agreement for a master policy for professional liability insurance. And, provided assistance in 4 cases, one of which is particularly interesting. NAR will be participating in a coalition challenging the reissuance of new Nationwide Permits under the Clean Water Act. Intervention is considered necessary to preclude the proposed new Nationwide Permits from being delayed or prevented, which would substantially inhibit a variety of real estate construction projects.
- Conventional Finance and Lending Committee: At the committee's direction, the Board adopted recommendations encapsulating elements for the return of private capital to the residential marketplace.
- Issues Mobilization Committee: The Greater Boston Real Estate Board will receive help fighting a proposal that would require mandatory energy audits at point of sale and would have the city undertake thermal imaging of buildings without permission of the property owner.
- REALTORS® Property Resource: gave an update in which they reiterated that there is no charge for entry and there will be no public access. Dale Ross, CEO of RPR, also spoke of the new broker and commercial tools now available.
- REALTOR.com: Errol Samuelson gave a report on the new look of the site and how web + mobile + social media are integrated for the benefit of the public and REALTORS®. He also pointed out the way that information on rentals, for sale and sold properties is being shown on the site.
- Committee Restructure: the Leadership Team brought to the Board then to the Delegate Body a proposal to change the membership structure to improve the capability of NAR to accomplish its objectives. The restructure was approved. If you are interested in getting on a committee at the National level you need to submit your name as soon as possible but in any case no later than December 1. The new structure will be in place for 2013.

Well, that is it. As always contacts me if you have any questions.