

# TIMES

SOUTHERN MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



The voice for real estate in Southern Maryland®

Volume 10 Issue 4 Fall 2013

## Welcome to SMAR's Electronic Newsletter

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### Sharpen Your Primary Skill - Negotiations

Learn Strategies GUARANTEED to INCREASE Your POWER in Real Estate Negotiations.

#### Course

Certified Negotiation Expert (CNE®)

**November 14 & 15, 2013**

8:30 am - 5 pm both days

Cost: \$249 (includes lunch)

(email [hannahsanders@smarweb.org](mailto:hannahsanders@smarweb.org) for payment plan information!)

**Approved for MD CE! [Click here for details & to register online!](#)**



### Military Relocation Professional (MRP) Certification - Latest NAR Certification Course!

Learn how to provide the real estate services—at any stage in the service member's military career—that meet the needs of this niche market and win future referrals.

**December 11, 2013**

9 am - 5 pm

Cost: \$150 (includes lunch)

**Approved for MD CE! [Click here for details & to register online!](#)**

### Installation of Officers & Directors

October 30, 2013

Join us as the 2013-14 SMAR Officers and Directors are installed. [Click here to register online!](#)

#### Location

Jaycee's Community Center, Waldorf



# MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

### REALTOR® MEMBERS

#### **CENTURY 21 COMSTOCK EARNEST**

Steven R. Mosedale, Waldorf

#### **CENTURY 21 NEW MILLENNIUM**

Drema K. Ballengee-Grunst, California

Diane M. Fenwick, California

Sheena V. Neely, California

Brittany E. Arbin, La Plata

Sharon L. Capitani, La Plata

Patricia (Patti) C. Harris, La Plata

Michael G. Metz, La Plata

Rose L. Seigler, La Plata

Todd D. Arbin, Prince Frederick

Virginia D. Cox, Prince Frederick

Crystal A. Mercedes, Waldorf

#### **FIRST CHOICE REALTY**

George A. Bennett, Jr., Mechanicsville

#### **EXIT BY THE BAY REALTY**

Susan M. Reinhart, Prince Frederick

Mariah Thomas, Prince Frederick

#### **EXIT BENNETT REALTY**

Marion L. Johnson, Greenbelt

#### **EXIT LANDMARK REALTY**

Shermania Y. Campbell, White Plains

Angela C. Chase, White Plains

Mildred Gibbs, White Plains

William (Bill) Johnson, White Plains

Kimberly A. Murray, White Plains

#### **EXIT REALTY CAPITAL PROPERTIES**

Anthony D. Mathis, Waldorf

Tajudeen A. Owolabi, Waldorf

#### **FITZGERALD REALTY & AUCTIONEERS**

Ronnie E. Martin, Charlotte Hall

Sarah M. Mulford, Charlotte Hall

Cecelia M. Robinson, Charlotte Hall

Mark W. Thompson, Charlotte Hall

#### **HOME TOWNE REAL ESTATE**

Gary J. Jameson, Owings

Michael B. Williams, Owings

Amanda M. Brink, Solomons

Erin M. Smith, Waldorf

#### **KELLER WILLIAMS PREFERRED PROP**

Kim D. Stevens, Upper Marlboro

### **LONG & FOSTER REAL ESTATE**

Karen J. Smith, California

Taylor A. Burton, Waldorf

Rashi Garg, Waldorf

Sherri A. Mona, Waldorf

### **O'BRIEN REALTY**

Dorothy C. Hammond, California

Tracy Vallandingham, California

Tawna Y. Arroyo, Waldorf

### **PAX REAL ESTATE**

Heather L. McNerney, Prince Frederick

### **PAX RIVER REALTY**

Benjamin A. Sullivan, Lexington Park

### **PRUDENTIAL PENFED REALTY**

Charles L. Jordan, Waldorf

Judy L. Sargent, Waldorf

### **REALTY DIRECT**

Sondra G. McLeod, Largo

### **RE/MAX 100**

Jamie L. Hoffman, California

Lakshmana Manoharan, California

Jeri F. Mead, California

Herbert O. Patterson, California

Kimberly A. Scott, California

Kaitlyn F. McGaffin, Mechanicsville

Donnetta Banks Reed, Mechanicsville

Lynette R. Cherry, White Plains

### **THE MCNELIS GROUP, LLC**

Jeffrey O. Lewis, Solomons

### **REAL ESTATE FIRM**

#### **PARAGON REAL ESTATE GROUP, LLC**

*Phillip A. Watson, Broker*

99 Smallwood Drive, Ste 101

Waldorf, MD 20602

301-710-2081 (office)

240-607-2695 (fax)

[p.watson@paragoncontractinggroup.com](mailto:p.watson@paragoncontractinggroup.com)

### **NEW OFFICE BROKER**

#### **KELLER WILLIAMS CITY WIDE REALTY**

*Dean Dillard, Broker*

2101 Wilson Blvd., Ste 100

Arlington, VA 22201-3062

703-224-6105 (office)

703-224-6001 (fax)

[reosandshorts@gmail.com](mailto:reosandshorts@gmail.com)

### **SECONDARY FIRM**

#### **DOUGLAS REALTY, LLC**

*Douglas Smith, Broker*

8096 Edwin Raynor Blvd., Ste C

Pasadena, MD 21122-6837

410-255-3690 (office)

410-255-3892 (fax)

[doug@douglasrealty.info](mailto:doug@douglasrealty.info)

#### **KELLER WILLIAMS FLAGSHIP OF MD**

*Barry Hess, Broker*

1111 Benfield Blvd., Ste 250

Millerville, MD 21122

410-729-7700 (office)

443-795-3101 (fax)

[brokerbarry@gmail.com](mailto:brokerbarry@gmail.com)

#### **REALTY DIRECT**

*Wendy D. Powers, Broker*

1401 Mercantile Lane, Suite 100

Largo, MD 20774-4307

301-562-7070 (office)

703-852-3508 (fax)

[wendyc@realtydirect.com](mailto:wendyc@realtydirect.com)

#### **WHEELER REALTY, LLC**

*Kevin R. Wheeler, Broker*

11714 Amer Court, Ste A

Ft. Washington, MD 20744-5953

301-203-0052 (office)

301-203-0056 (fax)

[wheekev@verizon.net](mailto:wheekev@verizon.net)

### **AFFILIATE FIRMS**

#### **BANK OF AMERICA HOME LOANS**

*Liz O'Malley, Principal Affiliate*

10665 Stanhaven Place, Ste 206

White Plains, MD 20695

240-538-1890 (office)

877-578-5514 (fax)

[liz.omalley@bankofamerica.com](mailto:liz.omalley@bankofamerica.com)

#### **COLONY APPRAISAL SERVICES, INC.**

*Taso (TJ) Cheakalos, Principal Affiliate*

704 Boxmere Ct

West River, MD 20778

443-995-1088 (office)

443-995-1088 (fax)

[taso@mrisc.com](mailto:taso@mrisc.com)

*Continued on page 3*



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## OCTOBER 2013

**Fri 11**

New Member Orientation, 9 am

**Mon 14**

*Columbus Day - SMAR Offices Closed*

**Tues 15**

Finance Cmte, 12:30 am

**Thurs 17**

Board of Directors Meeting, 9:30 am

**Wed 23**

Awards & Special Events Cmte, 10 am

**Thurs 24**

Commercial Cmte, 9 am

Forms Cmte, 9:30 am

**Wed 30**

Installation of Officers & Directors,  
Jaycee's Center, Waldorf

## NOVEMBER 2013

**Mon 4**

Community Relations Cmte, 10 am

**Wed 6**

Public Awareness Cmte, 9:30 am

**Mon 11**

*Veteran's Day - SMAR Offices Closed*

**Wed 13**

Forms Cmte, 9:30 am

YPN Cmte, 9:30 pm

**Wed 14**

Education Cmte, 9:30 am

**Wed 20**

Awards & Special Events Cmte, 10 am

**Thurs 21**

Board of Directors Meeting, 9:30 am

Commercial Cmte, 9 am

**Thurs 28 & Fri 29**

*Thanksgiving - SMAR Offices Closed*

## DECEMBER 2013

**Mon 2**

Community Relations Cmte, 10 am

**Wed 4**

Public Awareness Cmte, 9:30 am

**Fri 6**

New Member Orientation, 9 am

**Wed 11**

Forms Cmte, 9:30 am

YPN Cmte, 9:30 pm

**Wed 18**

Awards & Special Events Cmte, 10 am

**Thurs 19**

Board of Directors Meeting, 9:30 am

**Thurs 27**

Forms Cmte, 9:30 am

**Tues 24**

*SMAR Closing at Noon*

**Wed 25**

*Christmas - SMAR Offices Closed*

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION CONTINUED

**MARYLAND DEPT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

*Cecilia Weller, Principal Affiliate*

100 Community Pl  
Crownsville, MD 21032  
410-514-7014 (office)  
410-987-4136 (fax)  
[singlefamilyhousing@mdhousing.org](mailto:singlefamilyhousing@mdhousing.org)

**NATIONAL PROP INSPECTIONS TRI-COUNTY**

*Gary Martin, Principal Affiliate*

43974 Autumnwood Lane  
California, MD 20619  
240-431-0827 (office)  
[npigarymartin@md.metrocast.net](mailto:npigarymartin@md.metrocast.net)

**RESOURCE DYNAMICS**

*Richard Kurtz, Principal Affiliate*

30021 Tomas Ste 300  
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688  
949-459-2122 (office)  
866-371-8098 (fax)  
[Chandra@resourcedynamicsltd.com](mailto:Chandra@resourcedynamicsltd.com)

**ASSOCIATE AFFILIATE**

**NATIONAL PROP INSPECTIONS TRI-COUNTY**

*Sally-Ann Martin, Associate Affiliate*

43974 Autumnwood Lane  
California, MD 20619-2162  
240-561-0825 (office)  
[npisallyannmartin@md.metrocast.net](mailto:npisallyannmartin@md.metrocast.net)

**SUNTRUST MORTGAGE, INC.**

*Tyler Austria, Associate Affiliate*

101 E. Charles Street, Ste 204  
La Plata, MD 20646  
301-392-3967 (office)  
301-392-5085 (fax)  
[tyler.austria@suntrust.com](mailto:tyler.austria@suntrust.com)



# CONTINUING EDUCATION CALENDAR

DATE	COURSE/SPEAKER	TIME	CLOCK HRS	COST*
OCT 25	<b>2010-12 Legal &amp; Legislative Update</b> , <i>Don Martin</i> Approved Topic A - Course ID# 332-2611	9:30 am - 12:30 pm	3	\$40
OCT 25	<b>MD Fair Housing</b> , <i>Don Martin</i> Approved Topic C - Course ID# 320-2611	1:30 - 3 pm	1.5	\$20
OCT 25	<b>Risk Management</b> , <i>Don Martin</i> Approved Topic F - Course ID# 334-2611	3:30 - 5 p	1.5	\$20
NOV 1	<b>2010-12 Legal &amp; Legislative Update</b> , <i>Mary Chiappa</i> Approved Topic A - Course ID# 332-2611	8:30 - 11:30 am	3	\$40
NOV 1	<b>MD Code of Ethics</b> , <i>Mary Chiappa</i> Approved Topic D - Course ID# 366-2611	12:15 - 3:15 pm	3	\$40
NOV 1	<b>When Price Meets Preparation</b> , <i>Mary Chiappa</i> Approved Topic F - Course ID# 335-2611	3:30 - 5 pm	1.5	\$20
NOV 2	<b>MREC Agency - Residential</b> , <i>Mary Chiappa</i> Approved Topic H - Course ID# 363-2611	8:30 - 11:30 am	3	\$40
NOV 2	<b>MD Fair Housing Principles &amp; Practices</b> , <i>Mary Chiappa</i> Approved Topic C - Course ID# 336-2611	12:15 - 3:15 pm	3	\$40
NOV 2	<b>Buyer Prequalification Process</b> , <i>Mary Chiappa</i> Approved Topic F - Course ID# 337-2611	3:30 - 5 pm	1.5	\$20
DEC 5	<b>MREC Required Supervision</b> , <i>Chuck Kasky</i> Approved Topic I - Course ID# 372-2611	1:30 - 3 pm	1.5	\$20
DEC 5	<b>CMA vs. Appraisal</b> , <i>Tim Murphy</i> Pending CE Approval	1:30 - 4:30 pm	3	\$40
DEC 6	<b>MD Ethics, Flipping &amp; Predatory Lending</b> , <i>Sue Parks</i> Approved Topic D - Course ID# 329-2611	12:30 - 3:30 pm	3	\$40
DEC 12	<b>2011-13 Legal &amp; Legislative Update</b> , <i>Bill Castelli</i> Approved Topic A - Course ID# 371-2611	9:30 am - 12:30 pm	3	\$40

[Click here to register online!](#)

\*The price reflected above is the cost for REALTOR® members. The non-REALTOR® cost is an additional \$5 for 1.5 - 2 hour classes, \$10 per class for 3 hour classes. There is an additional \$5 fee for walk-ins or same day registrations.

*The entire class must be completed in order to receive CE Credit. Classes are open to all licensees based on availability.*

## Continuing Education Approved Topic Legend

- Topic A) Federal, state or local legislative issues
- Topic C) Fair Housing Law
- Topic D) Real estate ethics or professional standards
- Topic F) Professional enhancement for practicing licensees
- Topic H) The principles of agency & agency disclosure
- Topic I) The requirements of supervision by brokers, branch office managers & team leaders



# CONTINUING EDUCATION POLICIES

## Updated policies from the MD Real Estate Commission (MREC) – Effective April 18, 2011

1. A picture ID is required to be admitted into class.
2. Course Credit – a student may not receive credit hours for a course if:
  - a. The student arrives after the class instruction has begun or departs prior to the class being dismissed; or
  - b. The student is out of the classroom during the instruction period for more than 5 minutes during a 60-minute period.
  - c. A course provider, instructor, or monitor may not make an exception to the attendance requirements under any circumstances.
3. Classroom Conduct
  - a. Students may not take reading material unrelated to the course into the classroom.
  - b. Instructors, monitors, or students may not consult any personal electronic device (Blackberries or i-Phones, for example) during a class session.
  - c. Class time may not be used to promote or sell any materials or services or to solicit affiliation or membership in any business or organization.

*If any of the policies above are not adhered to, it will result in the loss of Continuing Education Credit (Clock Hours).*

### Refund Policy

- Continuing education fees are not refundable. If you have registered for a class and are unable to attend, please call prior to the start of the class and you will be eligible for a “class credit.” A “class credit” (money you paid for a class) can be used to attend another continuing education class of choice at SMAR.
- If you are late and have not called prior to the start of class, you are NOT eligible for “class credit.”
- If you have registered for a class and are a “no-show,” you are NOT eligible for “class credit.”

### Inclement Weather Policy - Updated as of February 18, 2010

- If the College of Southern MD Charles County Campus is closed, all education classes and committee meetings are cancelled and the SMAR office is closed.
- If the College of Southern MD Charles County Campus is set for “delayed opening,” all education classes and committee meetings scheduled before 12:00 noon are cancelled. Education classes and committee meetings scheduled after 12:00 noon will meet as scheduled.
- Please call SMAR’s main number, 301-274-4406, and press 7 for Inclement Weather/ Seminar Status Updates. Messages will be posted no later than 7 a.m. the day of the inclement weather.
- Once the cancelled Continuing Education Class is rescheduled, registrants will be notified of the new date. If a Continuing Education Class has been cancelled due to the weather, registrants have the option of rescheduling the class or receiving a refund.

## MD Real Estate License Renewal Requirements

### Required Topics for MD Licensees

1. Topic A - Federal, state or local legislative issues - 3 clock hrs
2. Topic C - Fair Housing Law - 1.5 clock hrs
3. Topic D - Real estate ethics or professional standards - 3 clock hrs
4. Topic H - The principles of agency and agency disclosure - 3 clock hrs\*
5. Topic I - The requirements of supervision by brokers, branch office managers, and team leaders - 3 clock hrs\*\*

\* Required topic for ALL licensees renewing after January 1, 2012

\*\* Required topic for all Brokers, Managers and Team Leaders renewing after January 1, 2012. Can be used as elective credit for salespersons at anytime.

### Hour Requirements

15 clock hrs - For ALL Maryland Licensees

[Click Here for Online Courses](#)



# If Not YOU.....



By: Paula Martino, SMAR Government Affairs Director

REALTORS® in Southern Maryland should be very proud of their successes. If you've been a REALTOR® for longer than 6 years, you have survived the biggest crash in the economy since the Great Depression. If you've given your time and resources to one or more of the charitable projects developed by SMAR's C.A.R.E. Committee, you have helped SMAR win yet another \$5,000 C.A.R.E. award that will further assist those in need in our communities. And, if you contributed to RPAC in 2013, you have helped SMAR reach 174.4% of its annual goal, raising \$30,410, placing SMAR 4<sup>th</sup> highest out of 17 local associations in Maryland. Think about it. **YOU** are responsible for these successes. And think about this: **Who else could have achieved these results for you?**

That's what I hope REALTORS® will keep in mind as we face issues that could have a negative impact on the direction of our local economy and as we move into the 2014 election season. *If not YOU, then WHO will support candidates for office who will promote and protect homeownership and the real estate industry?*

The election year is upon us and the three Boards of County Commissioners are up for re-election. As it has since 2006, SMAR's Legislative and RPAC Committees will interview and carefully evaluate candidates for local elected office. Based on this evaluation, the Association will endorse Commissioner candidates from each county. Some of these may be incumbents while others may be newcomers, but each candidate will share the values REALTORS® hold dear and we hope our members will support them with their vote. *If not YOU.....WHO??*

If not YOU, then WHO will protect property rights and real estate? For the first time, SMAR has engaged the services of Sage Policy Group to conduct economic impact analyses of real estate for Charles, St. Mary's, and Calvert counties. The first report, for Charles County, has been completed and will be presented to the Charles County Commissioners. The highlight of this study is: JOBS and ECONOMIC OUTPUT. The real estate industry in Charles County produces in excess of 6,700 jobs, of which 4,119 are supported directly. Countywide, associated employee compensation for real estate and related industries combined with the values of sales

generated by real estate related industries supports more than \$930 million in economic output annually. So, the next time someone in Charles County suggests that real estate needs to pay its "fair share" or that we need to "stop growth" – share this with them. Copies of the Sage Policy reports will be available on SMAR's public website as each becomes available. Please share this great news! *If not YOU.....WHO??*

Beginning in the latter part of 2013 through 2014, REALTORS® in Southern Maryland may be asked to ACT to protect and preserve the prosperity of the communities where they live and work. To protect and preserve property rights of rural land owners, to support land use plans that will continue to promote the true SMART GROWTH principles – not No Growth ideologies labeled smart growth. REALTORS® need to support land use policies that support sustainable economic development and job growth policies, that support our military bases, that provide incentives to develop in areas designated for development to prevent sprawl, that support the revitalization of older neighborhoods, that support a multi-modal public transportation network and, last but certainly not least that preserve environmentally sensitive lands and our treasured historic features. Who else will come to the table to protect the sustainability of your livelihood, the local economy, and your community? As REALTORS®, you know how hard it is to find qualified buyers these days. Think how hard it will be if land use policies that stifle economic and job growth are enacted in Southern Maryland. *If not YOU.....WHO??*

In 2014, when SMAR releases the endorsements of its REALTOR®-friendly candidates for local elected office, PLEASE VOTE for these candidates. When that Call for Action lands in your email box or you are asked to attend a public hearing to support leadership testifying in support of the mission of the Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS®, the leading advocate for property rights and home ownership in Southern Maryland, PLEASE ACT. When, in 2014, you are asked by your colleagues to once again find room in the budget for a contribution to RPAC, PLEASE INVEST.

*If not YOU.....WHO??*

**Check out the New SMAR Public Website. Same web address!  
[www.somdrealtors.com](http://www.somdrealtors.com) or [www.southernmarylandrealtors.org](http://www.southernmarylandrealtors.org)**



# President's Message

By: Kevin Turner, 2012-13 SMAR President

Southern Maryland REALTORS®: what a great year it has been. Many of us just returned from the annual state conference in Ocean City where we had the great pleasure of seeing one of our very own installed as MAR President: Russ Boyce of RE/MAX 100. Russ has been working incredibly hard for a very long time, both locally and at the State level and we are both extremely proud of him AND excited for what we know will be a great year. Also at the conference, SMAR received (for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row) a REALTOR® C.A.R.E. Award for your efforts giving back to the community and with that received \$5000 to donate to local charities. An award like this is a huge accomplishment and a testament to the hard work put in by all members, and by our CARE Committee. What a great MAR conference for Southern Maryland REALTORS®!

Of course, we are also updating our billing procedures and dues cycles - the ability to pay online, reduced overhead for the whole process, greater member convenience and more. The new process is going well and that is a credit to our SMAR staff and to all members for their willingness to adapt. Additionally, as you are receiving this, we are

expecting promotion of our launch of an additional forms vendor: DotLoop. This is very exciting as a member alternative, an e-sign platform, and even features available to brokers (and use of forms on tablets, any browser, etc!).



As I write this we are days away from our Annual Meeting, which will feature a bit of a new platform, and less than a month away from our annual installation dinner where we will install the 2013-2014 Officers and Directors and pass the torch to President-Elect Bud Humbert. This has been a fantastic year with a wonderful group of volunteers, and on your behalf they have accomplished a great deal. From technology upgrades to financial positioning, from strategic planning to one of the best RPAC years in the history of SMAR, we all owe a great deal of thanks to a lot of hard-working volunteers and our SMAR staff. I'm even more excited about what we'll be able to do over the next few years.

## SMAR Annual Membership Meeting Recap

There was a fantastic turnout of 118 members who were present for this year's membership meeting. The agenda included voting for the 2013-14 SMAR Board of Directors, Bylaws Changes and update from SMAR's Government Affairs Director, Paula Martino. In addition, Andrew Strauch, MRIS Director of Product Innovation, Marketing and Education presented an advance review of exciting new features.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2013-14 ELECTED BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President – Bud Humbert  
President-Elect – John Coller  
Vice President – Steve Paul  
Secretary/Treasurer - Kathi Payne  
Calvert County Directors – Debbie Balderson, I. Q. Slusher, Judy Szybnorski  
Charles County Directors - Jackie Alexander, Bill Hocker, Cecelia Sage  
St. Mary's County Directors - Bill Harris, Beverly Moody, Lisa Van Tassel

Congratulations to all! Also serving on the 2013-14 Board will be Kevin Turner, Immediate Past President. Additionally, ex-officio members are MAR District 9 Vice President, Paul Fenton and 2014 MAR President Russ Boyce.

Why not show your support of your new officers and directors by attending their installation on **Wednesday, October 30, at the Jaycee's Community Center in Waldorf**. Check in begins at 6 pm, buffet dinner follows at 6:30 pm and the program will kick off at 7:30 pm. Cost is \$40 per person. A Silent Auction will also be part of the festivities. [Click here to register.](#)



**Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS®**  
*Mission Statement*

*We advocate for private property rights and serve with competency, integrity and professionalism.*



# The Community Relations/CARE Award Committee of SMAR is sponsoring a Winter Coat Drive & Children's Clothing Drive



Coats are donated to Men's, Women's and Children's Shelters. Donate your coats, scarves, gloves and hats (must be clean and in good condition).



Clothing will be donated to students in local elementary (K - 5) schools. Clothing must be clean and in good condition.

## Dropoff Locations - Through December 31<sup>st</sup>

### **Baldus Real Estate**

101 E. Charles St, La Plata, MD

### **Century 21 New Millennium**

55 Stoakley Rd, Ste E, Pr Frederick &  
3292 Crain Hwy, Waldorf

### **Davis Realty**

109 La Grange Ave, La Plata

### **Foote Title Group**

3010 Crain Hwy, Ste 300, Waldorf

### **Home Towne Real Estate**

13940 HG Truman Rd; Solomons, MD

### **Leonard Realty**

22607 Three Notch Road, California

### **RE/MAX 100**

10665 Stanhaven Pl, Ste 300, White Plains  
& 23076 Three Notch Rd, Ste 301, California

### **SMAR**

8440 Old Leonardtown Road, Hughesville

## SMAR's Newest Designation Recipients!



The ABR® (Accredited Buyer Representative) designation is awarded by the Real Estate BUYER'S AGENT Council (REBAC). **Congratulations to: Terri Davis Herbert of RE/MAX 100**

Terri joins more than 50,000 REALTORS® in North America who have earned the ABR® Designation. All were required to successfully complete a comprehensive course in buyer representation and an elective course focusing on a buyer representation specialty, in addition to submitting documentation verifying professional experience.

REBAC, founded in 1988, is the world's largest association of real estate professionals focusing specifically on representing the real estate buyer.



The Graduate REALTOR® Institute Designation is awarded by The Maryland Association of REALTORS®. **Congratulations to: Deborah Buckingham of Exit by the Bay Realty and Anne Carter of Century 21 New Millennium**

Developed for members of the National Association of REALTORS® and offered through State REALTOR® Associations, the GRI program recognizes those who achieve the GRI designation, as those real estate professionals who have made a commitment to providing a superior level of professional services to better serve and protect their clients. The 90 hours of coursework required to earn the GRI Designation supplies the tools and knowledge needed to provide clients with superior services.





# SMAR Technology Services Delivers

By: *Stewart Bowling, SMAR Technology Director*



A busy year of ambitious goals kept SMAR Technology Services hard at work. We're happy to report success!

We launched a new membership and billing system in January. It is by far the most extensive and complex system SMAR has ever used. It affected all aspects of SMAR's daily operations. Staff has made significant adjustments in response to it. Even though we are near the end of the year, we are still learning how it works and how to make it work better. The new system allows us far greater control over how we communicate with our members. It offers automatic integration with a member's only website, e-commerce, automated paperless billing and a much easier mass email system. This year's interim dues billing was our first one on the new system, and it performed very well for us.

A few months after we launched the membership management system we opened our new Member's only web site. The site is already integrated with the member's database, which allows the site to provide each of our members a personalized browsing experience. Members may correct and update their personal data, search for member rosters, pay dues invoices, print current and past invoices, register for events and classes and track attendance of SMAR events. Committee members can access documents and information specific to their committees. The site's email contact form will provide a history of emails sent between members and SMAR staff accessible to both. More is planned once our vendor works out a few template issues. The old SMAR member's site URL was pointed to the new site in June so that members may still access the new site using the familiar [www.smarmember.org](http://www.smarmember.org) address.

Technology Services shifted gears to focus on forms in the spring. An ongoing top-to-bottom review of the forms led to significant changes in the SMAR forms inventory.

The need to support our Mac users with an automated forms solution without a dues impact was one of several factors guiding a review of available forms solutions. Many fine products were evaluated but when the search was over only two met our criteria: Autocontract and Dotloop. SMAR already had a long and positive relationship with Autocontract. Both products offered features not found in the other. Rather than force an unwelcome change of vendors we decided to let the members choose the system that best meets their needs. Members who wish to use Dotloop may gain access to the SMAR and MAR forms as well. Dotloop launched early in September. Autocontract remains available and both maintain updated SMAR forms.

With the Dotloop rollout completed, SMAR Technology Services renewed its attention to the outdated public website. Our old site had long been in need of a facelift. It had carried the load of both a public site and a semi-member's site for years. It was time to split them apart. But the role of the new public site could not be made clear until after we knew exactly how the membership management system's member's site worked. With the MMS up and running work on the public site greatly intensified over the summer. The new [www.SoMDrealtors.com](http://www.SoMDrealtors.com) was launched at the end of September with almost a full year of content copied over from the old site to the new. Organized by event and service, the site makes locating information on the topic you need to know about much faster. The potential for growth on [SoMDrealtors.com](http://www.SoMDrealtors.com) is enormous. Development will continue in many areas for years to come as the site becomes a key tool for meeting the strategic goals of the Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS®.

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