



# HCBR Newsletter

## November 2024 Contents:

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## Christmas Party Set for Dec. 9

The Board of REALTORS® Christmas party is scheduled for Monday evening, December 9 at the Hillsdale Elks. There will be a buffet dinner offering Prime Rib and Chicken with salad, vegetable, potatoes, dinner rolls and dessert. There will also be appetizers and a cash bar.

The Christmas Party Committee: Diana Carson, Kara Moyer, Lori Rubley and Scott Phillips have planned the event.

President Diana Carson will present the REALTOR® Awards this year to the REALTOR® of the Year, the Rookie of the Year and the Lifetime Achievement Award winners. REALTOR® Awards recognize those who shine in the REALTOR® profession as well as giving back to the community and the organization.

Russ Martin will provide live music for the event again this year and a Christmas photo op will be available as well.

The party will begin with a social hour from 5 to 6 p.m. and dinner will be served immediately after. The Christmas Party meal and evening are free for members, but guests will be charged \$35 per person.

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### **Psalm 82 Initiative**

The Board has a new charity to support this year that

represents a carryover from the November Lunch N Give program. The Psalm 82 Initiative is an organization that helps people from difficult or abusive home situations become independent. The Psalm 82 Initiative has helped many people in troubling situations to be able to provide for themselves a new life.

At the party there will be envelopes provided for donations to the Psalm 82 Initiative and one name will be drawn to receive a prize.

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### **Gift Basket Charity Raffle**

The Charity Gift Basket Raffle is a highlight of the Christmas Party and has successfully raised funds for local charities such as CAPA, King's Kupboard, Hospice and the Hillsdale County Humane Society. Each year the money raised is split between the two charities that receive the most votes from the members who attend. Last year the money was split between two charities, each of which received over \$400. Each broker office will be asked again this year to donate a gift basket with a value of \$50 or more. Baskets are usually creative, colorful and full of great gifts, many valued at much more than the minimum donation. All attendees, when they sign in at the par-

ty will receive a ticket to vote for the charity of their choice. The gift baskets will be raffled off and guests may put their raffle tickets in the bowl for the basket they want to win. Winners will be drawn from the ticket bowls midway through the evening.

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### **Member Services Drawings**

Drawings will be held for member services gift certificates and sponsors will be asked to draw the names and present the awards they are donating.

The Board received over \$5000 in sponsorships last year from affiliates and business partners, enabling us to provide a fantastic meal and hand out over \$3000 in REALTOR® services gift certificates. All members who RSVP and show up for the Christmas Party will be eligible for the drawings.

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### **RPAC Donor Drawing**

There will also be a prize drawing for those who have invested in RPAC for 2024. All Bronze donors will have their names in the drawing once, Silver donors twice, Gold donors three times and Platinum donors four times.

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### **RSVP**

Please RSVP by calling 517-439-1770 or email us at hcboard@yahoo.com.



## Local Board Members Ring for Salvation Army

Hillsdale County Board of REALTORS® has signed up for Wednesday, December 5 at the Hillsdale Market House from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. to ring bells for the Salvation Army.

Members should contact the Board Office at 439-1770 or email hcboard@yahoo.com to sign up for 1 hour shifts. Board Aprons will be distributed to those who ring.

Monies raised by the Salvation Army benefit needy families in the Hillsdale area.

In addition, participating in community service fundraising events helps the Board of REALTORS® maintain Core Standards Compliance with the National Association of REALTORS® and earns Board Dollars for participants.

The HCBR Newsletter is published periodically by the Hillsdale County Board of REALTORS®.

**Editorial Office**

32 E. Bacon Street  
Hillsdale, MI 49242  
(517) 439-1770  
hcboard@yahoo.com

**Board Hours:**

Mon-Wed-Fri: 9-5  
Tues-Thur: 9-2  
Closed 12-1 for Lunch

**Newsletter Editor**

Shirley Smith  
Executive Officer

**2024 HCBR Officers**

President: Diana Carson  
Vice Pres.: Matt Yoder  
Treasurer: Sherri Groves  
Past President: Tjay Fitton  
Directors:  
Brad Jenkins  
Alicia Galloway  
Scott Phillips

**\*2024 Committee Chairs / Contact Persons**

**Awards**  
\*Alicia Galloway..... 398-3400  
**Building**  
\*Dan Satow ..... 617-1104  
**Bylaws**  
\*Tim Groves ..... 439-1511  
**Christmas Party**  
\*Diana Carson..... 416-3472  
**Education**  
\*Matt Yoder..... 419-439-5382  
**Executive**  
\*Diana Carson..... 416-3472  
**Finance**  
\*Sherri Groves..... 398-2996  
**Forms**  
\*Diana Carson..... 416-3472  
**Grievance**  
\*Cathy Galloway..... 849-0043  
**MichRIC Managers**  
Shirley Smith..... 439-1770  
**Nomination**  
\*Tjay Fitton..... 398-3500  
**Political Affairs**  
\*Diana Carson..... 416-3472  
**Professional Standards**  
\*Julie Games..... 437-7771  
**Public Relations**  
\*Brad Jenkins..... 425-1978  
**Specifications**  
\*Brad Jenkins..... 425-1978

## 2025 Board of Directors to Take Office January 1

The Board congratulates the new governing team of the Hillsdale County Board of REALTORS® for 2025.

Officers will be inducted at the Board of Directors Training on December 4 at the Board Office and will assume their duties on January 1.

Officers elected in the September Board election who will be inducted are:

**Matthew Yoder-President**  
**Tjay Fitton-Vice President**  
**Sherri Groves-Treasurer**  
**Alicia Galloway-Director**  
**Scott Phillips-Director**  
**Brad Jenkins-Director**  
**Diana Carson-Past President**

## Quotes of the Day

“We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone.”  
—Ronald Reagan

“Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right.”  
—Abraham Lincoln

“There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, 'All right, then, have it your way.' “  
—C. S. Lewis

“The only disability in life is a bad attitude.”  
—Scott Hamilton

“Life is a long lesson in humility.”  
—James M. Barrie

### 2025 DUES

Local, state and national dues billings will be sent out for Hillsdale members in mid-November and are due January 1st for 2025. Current dues for 2025 are as follows::

|                                    |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Local Dues and Fees:               | \$898.00         |
| NAR Dues:                          | \$156.00         |
| NAR Consumer Advertising:          | \$45.00          |
| MR Dues:                           | \$186.00         |
| MR Issues Mobilization Fund:       | \$40.00          |
| MR Legal Action Fund:              | \$3.00           |
| <b>RPAC Voluntary Investment:</b>  | <b>\$50.00*</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL 2025 Dues &amp; Fees:</b> | <b>\$1378.00</b> |

*\*(All fees except the RPAC investment are mandatory.)*

### FAIRHAVEN Your Fair Housing Simulation

The NAR will be requiring 2 hours of Fair Housing Training beginning in 2025. The 2 hours must be completed once every three years. If you complete the Fairhaven Module in 2025, you will have met that requirement.

You can try out Fairhaven, designed to help you recognize Fair Housing issues and pitfalls, by going to [Fairhaven.realtor](http://Fairhaven.realtor) and logging in with your REALTOR® identification number. If you don't know your number you can get it by contacting the Board Office. As a bonus, members who complete the Fairhaven course will receive \$25 in Board Dollars upon presentation of their certificate to the Board

## HCBR Calendar 2024/25

### Board of Directors Meetings

|            |           |            |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| December 4 | January 8 | February 5 |
| March 5    | April 2   | May 7      |

### Lunch N Learn Programs

(Classes held at the Board Office)

#### November 13-11:30 a.m.

Lunch-N-Give-Psalm 82 Initiative  
Sponsor:

#### December 18-11:30 a.m.

REALTORS Land Surveying/Laws-Karol Grove  
Sponsor: Greenstone Farm Credit Services

### Special Events

#### December 4

Board of Directors Training

#### December 5

Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Market House

#### December 9

Board Christmas Party-Hillsdale Elks Lodge

# NAR Offers Help for Agents Educating Clients and Explaining REALTOR® Value

For the past several months the National Association of REALTORS® has been preparing and sending out Consumer Guides to help members educate consumers about how the buying and selling process works and what they can expect when working with agents.

The Hillsdale Board Office has send out these guides as they have been received, to all of its members. The guides include:

- Consumer Guide: 10 Questions to Ask a Buyer's Agent
- Consumer Guide: 10 Questions to Ask a Seller's Agent
- Consumer Guide: Buying Your First Home
- Consumer Guide: Multiple Listing Service
- Consumer Guide: What Veteran's Need to Know about Buying a Home
- Consumer Guide: Fair Housing
- Consumer Guide to Written Buyer Agreements
- Consumer Guide: Listing Agreements
- Consumer Guide: Negotiating Written Buyer Agreements
- Consumer Guide: Offers of Compensation
- Consumer Guide: Open Houses and Written Agreements
- Consumer Guides: REALTORS®' Duty to Put Client Interests Above Their Own
- Consumer Guide: Seller Concessions

If you have not received or need additional copies of any of the above Consumer Guides, please contact the Board Office.

Additionally, on pages 6 and 7 of this newsletter, you will find the NAR Value for REALTORS® which outlines what the NAR provides for you, the agent and for Local and State Associations.

*You're Invited!*

*Hillsdale County Board of REALTORS® Christmas Party*

*Monday, December 9, 2024 at Hillsdale Elks Lodge*

*5:00 to 8:00 p.m.*

*Prime Rib or Premium Chicken*

*Appetizers, Dessert*

*Cash Bar*

*Music by Russ Martin*

*REALTOR® Awards Presentations*

*Charity Basket Raffle & Psalm 82 Initiative Fund Raiser*

*Member Services Drawings*

*Christmas Photo Op*

*Members FREE (Guests \$35)*

*RSVP: 517-439-1770 or [hcboard@yahoo.com](mailto:hcboard@yahoo.com)*

# NAR Settlement Changes in Effect for REALTORS

In case you have not been tuned in to the REALTOR® changes taking place for the last several months, here is a reprint of an article that outlines the new rules all REALTORS® must live by in their business dealings. The new rules went into effect on August 17 of this year. On April 23, 2024, the Court granted preliminary approval of the settlement and the final hearing is scheduled for the 26th of this month. Following are the terms of the settlement approved at this time.

*Information provided by Becky Berke, MR Director of Legal Education*

## SETTLEMENT TERMS

**(Please note items in red that are specific to REALTORS® ways of doing business)**

- 1. Provide a RELEASE OF LIABILITY for types of claims brought on behalf of home sellers related to broker commissions.**
  - The release of liability includes: NAR, NAR members, State and Local Realtor® Associations, Realtor®-owned MLS's, Brokerages with a Realtor®-member as principal and a residential transaction volume below \$2 billion in 2022.
  - The release does NOT include: Non-Realtor® owned MLS's, Brokerages with a residential transaction volume above \$2 billion in 2022, HomeServices of America (only remaining defendant at the time of settlement).
  - NOTE: The settlement provided an "opt-in" mechanism for the excluded entities to be included in the release, if they chose.
- 2. Offers of compensation are no longer permitted through the MLS.**
  - Rule went into effect August 17, 2024.
  - The compensation field has been removed from the MLS.
  - Sellers and listing brokers are still permitted to offer compensation to buyer's brokers (off-MLS).
  - A listing broker can agree to share its commission with a buyer's broker, but only with the seller's approval.
  - A buyer and seller may agree (via a purchase agreement) that the seller will cover some of the buyer's closing costs, including buyer's broker fees.
  - Sellers may offer concessions (NOT compensation) on the MLS so long as they are not conditioned on using/paying a buyer's broker.
  - Brokers may display offers of compensation on their public-facing websites for their own listings – but not for other brokers' listings
- 3. NAR will pay damages of \$418 million over 4 years.**
  - Membership dues will not increase in 2024 or 2025.
  - NAR continues to deny any wrongdoing.
  - NAR has long-maintained (and continues to believe) that cooperative compensation and NAR's current policies are good things that benefit buyers and sellers.
  - The settlement agreement makes it clear that NAR continues to deny any bad action or wrongdoing.
- 4. MLS participants working with buyers MUST enter into a written agreement with those buyers prior to viewing a home.**
  - The written agreement must state the amount of compensation to be paid to the buyer's broker.
  - The amount cannot be "open-ended" and must be "objectively ascertainable."
  - The amount received (from any source) cannot exceed the amount agreed-upon in the buyer's agency agreement.
  - Must disclose that "broker commissions are not set by law and are fully negotiable."
- 5. What should REALTORS® be doing now?**
  - Articulate your value as REALTORS® and as stewards of a real estate transaction.
  - Use buyer agency agreements and know how to explain them to buyer-clients. These agreements maximize transparency, ensure clarity and understanding, formalize the professional working relationship, detail what services consumers are entitled to and what the buyer agent expects from their client in return.
  - Remind all clients that commissions are established by contract and are not fixed, controlled or recommended by law and are fully negotiable.
  - Educate sellers on what options they have in marketing the property, including offering compensation to a buyer's broker.

(Continued on page 5)

## NEW FORMS

**Michigan REALTORS® has drafted new forms for the use of members. These are available on Dotloop and Zipforms in the Michigan REALTORS® Library:**

1. Listing Agreement (Forms B and BB)
2. Exclusive Buyer Agency Agreement (Forms J and JJ)
3. Broker to Broker Compensation Agreement

**Addendums to Purchase Agreement:**

4. Seller Concession Addendum
5. Buyer Broker Compensation Addendum

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Q: Does the Realtor® Code of Ethics prohibit using a buyer's offer to negotiate compensation to the buyer's broker?  
 A: No. If the buyer has a written agreement in place with their broker that requires the buyer to pay that broker a specific amount, then the buyer can attempt to pass on that payment obligation to the seller via the purchase agreement.
- Q: How will a buyer's agent know if a seller/listing agent is offering compensation to a buyer's broker?  
 A: Agents can directly communicate offers of compensation via phone, text, email, etc. Listing brokerages can display offers of compensation on their websites for THEIR OWN listings.
- Q: What happens if the seller and/or the listing broker have offered to pay the buyer's broker more than what the buyer agreed to pay their broker (via the buyer's broker contract)?  
 A: In that case, the buyer's broker could not keep those excess funds. The settlement agreement states that if a buyer's broker is receiving compensation from another source (for example, a seller or listing broker) then that payment cannot exceed the amount that was agreed upon in the buyer's broker contract.
- Q: What happens if a buyer broker cannot get timely information from a listing broker about offers of compensation?  
 A: The settlement does not change the ethical duties that Realtors® owe to their clients. Realtors® are required to protect and promote the interests of their clients and treat all parties in a transaction honestly (Article 1, COE).
- Q: How will the prohibition on offers of compensation on the MLS affect pending transactions/current sales?  
 A: Listing agreements should be amended to reflect that offers of compensation cannot be communicated via the MLS.
- Q: Can a listing broker still offer compensation to a buyer's broker?  
 A: Yes – it just cannot be communicated via the MLS. If a listing broker is offering compensation to a buyer's broker, they must: Disclose to the seller (in writing) the amount of compensation to be offered to a buyer's broker; and obtain the seller's approval for any payment made to a buyer's broker.
- Q: What triggers the requirement to have a written agreement in place with a buyer?  
 A: The written agreement is triggered by two events: "Working with" a buyer (providing brokerage services to a buyer); and "Touring a home" (including virtual tours).
- Q: Are there any mandatory provisions that must be included in the written agreement?  
 A: Yes. Pursuant to the NAR settlement agreement (paragraph 58(vi)), written buyer agreements must: State the amount/rate of any compensation the MLS Participant will receive; Include a provision that MLS Participants may not receive compensation from any source that exceeds the amount/rate agreed to with the buyer; Disclose in conspicuous language that broker commissions are not set by law and are fully negotiable.
- Q: What happens if an unrepresented buyer reaches out to the listing agent directly for a showing or attends an open house? Does the listing agent need a written agreement in place with that buyer?  
 A: No. A listing agent does not need to enter into a written agreement with an unrepresented buyer before showing the home to that buyer. But, the listing agent must make certain the buyer understands that the listing agent is representing the seller – not the buyer.  
 NOTE: The answer is different if the buyer is seeking services from the listing agent beyond simply being shown the property.

# Value for REALTORS®

The National Association of REALTORS® works tirelessly to serve members, protect the rights of property owners, and advance the real estate profession. In 2024, National Association of REALTORS® annual dues are \$201/member.\*



## ADVOCATING ON YOUR BEHALF TO SHAPE THE POLICY LANDSCAPE

- Advocacy for federal, state, and local policies and policymakers that support REALTORS®, associations, the industry, and consumers, with a proven track record of significant policy wins.
- Millions of dollars saved for consumers through efforts including work to improve access to FHA loans, secure first-time home buyer tax credits, and eliminate additional mortgage fees.
- Tens of millions of dollars allocated each year to support state and local associations in advocacy campaigns.
- RPAC – which raised \$49.5 million at all three levels of the association in 2023 – promotes the election of bipartisan candidates across the country, with disbursement decisions led locally.

## PROVIDING YOU DATA-DRIVEN INTELLIGENCE AT SCALE

- Access to top economists and experts, and their work – such as the Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers report, Housing Affordability Index, and Home Buyers and Sellers Generational Trends report.
- Access to apps and other tools, including Realtors Property Resource® (RPR), a comprehensive data platform exclusively available to REALTORS®.
- RPR integrates property data and provides a one-stop solution for in-depth property analysis, valuation, market insights, and customizable reporting capabilities – including through AI-enabled tools.
- Largest real estate library in the world and customized reference and research services.

## REINFORCING YOUR VALUE

- NAR maintains a Code of Ethics for effective and ethical real estate business practices.
- Nationwide consumer ad campaign and "First-Time Buyer" docuseries highlight REALTOR® value and expertise.
- Graphics and social media assets.
- REALTOR® brand adds to members' credibility, trust, and authority with consumers.

## OFFERING VALUABLE SAVINGS AND DEALS

- Ample savings and special offers. Members using products and services through Second Century Ventures and REACH represent annual savings of \$100/member on average.
- Nationwide partnerships providing exclusive offers and discounts for members to save on solutions (financial services, marketing, technology resources, etc.) as well as exclusive access to insurance options.

## SUPPORTING YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

- Significant resources for state and local associations for programs supporting your success, such as commercial, global, and Young Professionals Network offerings.
- Free website with .realtor and .realestate domain for small businesses.
- Range of risk management tools, timely guidance, and resources from NAR Legal Affairs.

## EMPOWERING YOU TO DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS AND ADVANCE YOUR CAREER

- 10+ specialized designations and certifications, 100+ micro courses, and an award-winning podcast through Center for REALTOR® Development (CRD).
- CRD keeps agents updated on trends, best practices, and new regulations.
- NAR educational offerings help satisfy your continuing education needs.

## CONVENING OUR INDUSTRY AND BUILDING YOUR NETWORK

- Conferences, events, and other virtual and in-person learning opportunities throughout the year offer opportunities for connection, relationship-building, and conversation about the future of our profession.

\*For 2024, dues are \$156 per member plus a \$45 Consumer Advertising Campaign special assessment. All NAR dues are tax deductible for the member's income tax purposes, except for \$55 which is nondeductible and attributed to NAR's lobbying efforts.

# Value for State and Local REALTOR® Associations



Working together as part of the Three-way Agreement allows the REALTOR® organization to use its combined resources to shape policy, support members, and advance the industry.

## UNPARALLELED NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ADVOCACY IMPACT

- Advocacy for federal, state, and local policies and policymakers that support REALTORS®, associations, the industry, and consumers, with a proven track record of significant policy wins.
- Millions of dollars saved for consumers through efforts including work to improve access to FHA loans, secure first-time home buyer tax credits, and eliminate additional mortgage fees.
- Tens of millions of dollars allocated each year to support state and local associations in advocacy campaigns.
- RPAC – which raised \$49.5 million at all three levels of the association in 2023 – promotes the election of bipartisan candidates across the country, with disbursement decisions led locally.

## CONSUMER ADS AND SERIES

- National ad campaign showcasing expertise of REALTORS®.
- "First-Time Buyer" docuseries on Hulu.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

- Toolkits and checklists on strategic planning, safety, volunteer leadership, mergers, and disaster preparedness.
- AE professional development resources, including new AE orientation, AE Institute, webinars, self-study courses, and the REALTOR® Association Certified Executive designation.
- REALTOR® Leadership Development courses (L.E.A.D.) and NAR Leadership Academy.
- Center for REALTOR® Development (CRD) resources, including licenses for state and local associations to provide designation or certification courses.

## TECHNOLOGY / E-COMMERCE PLATFORM

- Support for association staff and vendors for REALTORS® MI and e-commerce; assistance and training on front-end systems, including e-commerce credit card transactions.
- Innovative tools for REALTORS® to make them more competitive, including Realtors Property Resource® (RPR).

## POLICY AND GOVERNANCE SUPPORT

- Assistance for associations as they implement and maintain REALTOR® association policy.
- Professional standards training, guidance, and resources (e.g., sample forms, models, templates, brochures, scripts).
- MLS policy, model documents, and other resources.
- DEI training and resources, including Diversity and Inclusion Grants.

## DATA AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

- National, state, and local research reports and presentations on market data, commercial and international real estate, home buying and selling, NAR member information, and technology.
- Local Economic Area Reports generated by REALTORS® Property Resource for distribution to local, state, and regional government officials.
- Largest real estate library in the world and customized reference and research services.

## LEGAL RESOURCES

- Insurance program, including E&O, D&O, employment practices, crime coverage, cyber coverage, and limited patent infringement protection.
- Risk management education and tools.
- Litigation support for matters of national significance.
- License to use the REALTOR® brand and trademark; educational resources about proper use of trademark and enforcement against misuse.

## ... AND MORE!

- Conferences, events, and other virtual and in-person learning opportunities.
- Graphics and social media assets, and tailored content for AEs (newsletters, magazines, emails).
- Opportunities including Global Alliances, Global Business Councils, the Ambassador Association program, Young Professionals Network (YPN) program, Commercial Accreditation, and other commercial services and program support.
- Millions of dollars provided annually for a variety of grants that support local and state association programs and priorities.
- REALTORS® Relief Foundation raises money to provide housing relief to victims of hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other disasters.
- Annual Meetings and consistent engagement in support of Communication Directors.