WISCONSIN
REAL ESTATE MAGAZINE

WRA A PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN REALTORS® ASSOCIATION

March 2022 Vol. 38,

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THE LATEST CONTENT

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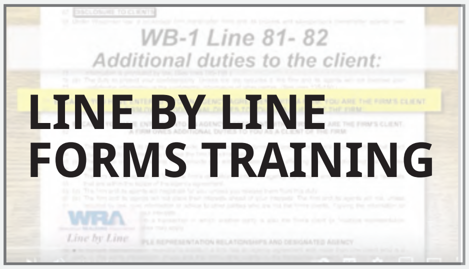
Line by Line forms training free for WRA members



Watch: www.wra.org/LBLForms

HOUSING REPORT

Monthly analysis in Wisconsin housing

Watch: www.wra.org/HousingVideo

EVENT RECAP VIDEO

REALTOR® & Government Day

2022 REALTOR® & Government Day Recap

On February 9, 2022, the WRA held its annual REALTOR® & Government Day (RGD) event, back in Madison and in person after going totally virtual for the 2021 RGD due to the pandemic.

Thank you to the hundreds of Wisconsin REALTORS® who came together to make a positive difference for Wisconsin's homeowners and property owners.

Watch: www.wra.org/RGD/VideoRecap

WRA 360

The latest in real estate developments

RECENT EPISODES

EP. 11: "Amp Up Your Career with C2EX"

EP. 10: "Wisconsin's Commercial Real Estate Market: Resilient and Evolving"

EP. 9: "Low Inventory, High Demand and Rising Prices: What's Next?"

EP. 8: "2021 Cybersecurity Threats"

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Listen: www.wra.org/WRA360

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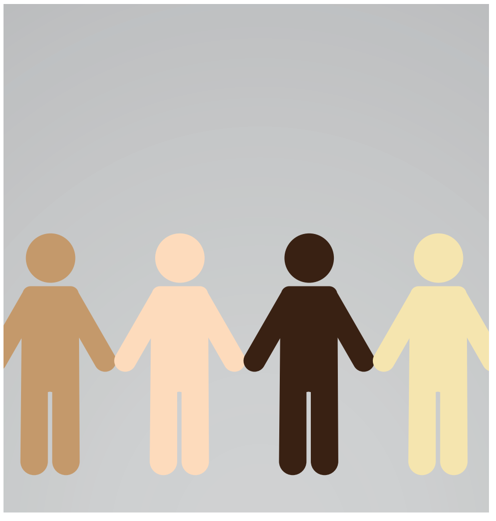

JANUARY HOME SALES SLIP AS PRICES CONTINUE TO RISE

BY DAVE CLARK
PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AT MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
PRINCIPAL AT ECON ANALYTICS, LLC

- January 2022 existing home sales fell 4.2% relative to that same month last year.
- Sales fell in the less urban regions of the state.
- The 30-year fixed mortgage rate increased by just over a third of a percent since December.
- Total listings fell 14.6% from their levels 12 months earlier.

See the full report: **www.wra.org/HSRJan2022**

David Clark, Ph.D., is a professor of economics at Marquette University and principal at ECON Analytics, LLC, and serves as a consultant to the WRA in the analysis of home sales data as well as in the preparation of the monthly Wisconsin Housing Report. For more information, contact Clark at 414-803-6537.

JANUARY HOUSING

4,578
CLOSED SALES JAN 2022
-4.2%
FROM JAN 2021

$231,000
MEDIAN PRICE JAN 2022
+10.0%
FROM JAN 2021

ACTIVE LISTINGS BY PRICE

PRICE RANGE	NUMBER OF LISTINGS
$0-$124,999	1,950
$125,000-$199,999	3,283
$200,000-$349,999	4,387
$350,000-$499,999	2,632
$500,000 & higher	2,072

14,324
TOTAL STATEWIDE LISTINGS
JAN 2022

14.6%
FROM JAN 2021

MEDIAN PRICES BY REGION

CENTRAL	$180,125
NORTH	$192,500
NORTHEAST	$210,000
SOUTH CENTRAL	$278,000
SOUTHEAST	$235,000
WEST	$230,000

AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET
84 DAYS JAN 2022
COMPARED WITH
90 DAYS JAN 2021

MONTHS OF INVENTORY
1.9 JAN 2022
2.2 JAN 2021

HOUSING STATISTICS MONTHLY ACTIVITY

Statewide	January 2022	January 2021	% Change	YTD 2022	YTD 2021	% Change
New Listings	4,832	5,480	11.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Listings	14,324	16,765	-14.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Closed Sales*	4,578	4,777	-4.2%	4,578	4,777	-4.2%
Median Sales Price	$231,000	$210,000	+10.0%	$231,000	$210,000	+10.0%
Months of Inventory	1.9	2.2	-13.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Avg. Days on Market	84	90	-6.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Affordability Index	192	227	-15.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A

	Median Price			Closed Sales		
Region	January 2022	January 2021	% Change	January 2022	January 2021	% Change
Central	$180,125	$161,000	+11.9%	272	321	-15.3%
North	$192,500	$165,000	+16.7%	412	484	-14.9%
Northeast	$210,000	$185,000	+13.5%	879	873	+0.7%
South Central	$278,000	$255,000	+9.0%	900	952	-5.5%
Southeast	$235,000	$220,000	+6.8%	1,682	1,732	-2.9%
West	$230,000	$216,965	+6.0%	433	415	+4.3%

*Report criteria: Reflecting data through January 2022. *Total statewide closed sales may differ from the summed regional sales due to a small number of sales not being assigned to a county.*

INSIDE THE WRA

MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH COMMITTEE SERVICE

The WRA and the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) are looking to fill positions for 2023. If you are interested in serving on a committee at a state or national level, apply online at **www.wra.org/committees**.

Application deadline: May 1, 2022

Make sure you indicate your committee preference. While we will attempt to honor all preferences, we cannot guarantee them due to space limitations.

COMMITTEE AND DESCRIPTION	STAFF LIAISON
Cultural Diversity in Housing Committee Provides resources and tools for members and local associations on fair housing laws. Monitors and evaluates legislative, legal and regulatory trends with respect to fair housing, cultural diversity and equal opportunity in housing. Administers the Partnership for Success program.	**Debbi Conrad**
Legal Action Committee Selects and funds legal expenses in administrative matters and cases that are of statewide interest and concern to the real estate industry.	**Debbi Conrad, Cori Lamont**
Professional Standards Committee Resolves allegations of ethical violations and controversies between REALTORS® as described in the WRA bylaws.	**Tracy Rucka**
Public Policy Committee Monitors, analyzes and takes positions on state legislation, regulations and public policies that impact the WRA and local REALTOR® associations, MLSs, real estate licensees, appraisers, homeowners, property owners and the real estate industry on behalf of the WRA.	**Tom Larson**
Real Estate Forms Committee Provides counsel and advice on behalf of the WRA regarding the use of and modification to Wisconsin forms utilized in real estate transactions.	**Debbi Conrad**
Wisconsin REALTORS® Foundation Board Provides financial support to statewide charities as well as financial support for relief efforts in response to natural disasters in Wisconsin.	**Cori Lamont**

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BE A NATIONAL LEADER IN 2023

The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) recently adopted a new governance structure that establishes the composition of its board of directors, executive committee, regional vice presidents and leadership team. In addition to changes in structure, new requirements and qualifications have been added for state and local association representatives on the NAR board.

Under the new system, states will be allocated a specific number of NAR directors to represent the state association and larger local boards. In addition, the WRA must appoint two new NAR directors:
• One director representing medium size boards (with 500 to 1,999 members)
• One director representing small boards (with 1 to 499 members)

As a point of reference, below is a listing of the small and medium local associations in Wisconsin as of December 31, 2021.

SMALL LOCAL BOARD/ASSOCIATION (1 to 499 members)	MEDIUM LOCAL BOARD/ASSOCIATION (500 to 1,999 members)
Door County Board of REALTORS®	Central Wisconsin Board of REALTORS®
Jefferson County Board of REALTORS®	Commercial Association of REALTORS® Wisconsin
Individuals	Lakes Area REALTORS® Association
La Crosse Area REALTORS® Association	Lakeshore REALTORS® Association
Lake Superior Area REALTORS® Association	REALTORS® Association of Northwestern Wisconsin
Manitowoc Board of REALTORS®	Southshore REALTORS® Association
Marinette Board of REALTORS®	Western Wisconsin REALTORS® Association
Northwoods Association of REALTORS®	
Rock-Green REALTORS® Association	

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The WRA is now seeking members interested in serving as NAR directors representing medium and small boards.
This process includes:

• Certifying board size: NAR will certify the membership count in all boards as of July 31, 2022.
• Applications: Members interested in serving in these posts must complete the online application and return it to Sandy Bolgrihn at **sandyb@wra.org** by August 15, 2022.
• Terms: Those members selected will begin serving a one- or two-year term beginning in January 2023.

REMINDER FOR WRA SERVICE

As a reminder, you will also need to apply for a NAR committee for service beginning in 2023.
Apply online at **www.nar.realtor/national-leadership/committee-members-liaisons/committee-selection-process**.


WHO DO YOU SEE?
a grandfather? a banker? a homeowner?
Implicit bias: associating a stereotype unconsciously.
Combat implicit bias in real estate: wra.org/ImplicitBias

MEMBER BENEFITS THAT RAISE THE BAR ON PROFESSIONALISM

BY ROB UHRINA
WRA VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Which member benefit(s) do you use the most? Many REALTORS® suggest access to the MLS because robust property data allows them to handle transactions with great intelligence. However, did you know the WRA offers an arsenal of free services to raise the bar on professionalism in Wisconsin, and they're right at your fingertips?

Before answering that, let's take a trip down memory lane. Back in 1909, when the WRA was formed as the Wisconsin Association of Real Estate Brokers (WAREB), large brokers across the state came together to establish an organization that would help protect property rights and help standardize the practice of real estate in Wisconsin. It was similar to when local cities needed to build infrastructure for traffic lights at busy intersections to protect drivers on the road. However, in the real estate sphere, it was vital to not only create a strong, statewide real estate organization that would help preserve, protect and promote the real estate industry, but also provide education to help real estate professionals deliver high-quality service to consumers.

Fast-forward to 2022, more than 110 years later, this story is a great reminder that our promise from the beginning remains strong, and there are plenty of tools and resources to leverage to raise the bar on professionalism and the REALTOR® brand. Here is a look at just five member benefits the WRA provides to help raise the bar on professionalism in our industry.

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT! LINE BY LINE WB FORMS TRAINING VIDEO SERIES

All WRA members now have free access to the Line by Line video series. The goal of these videos is to educate, raise professionalism and walk members through all the details of commonly used Wisconsin-based real estate forms and how to complete them with accuracy and competence. Previously a subscription-based series, Line by Line is now available for free as part of membership and gives all members equal access to the best Wisconsin-based real estate forms training on the market.

More info: www.wra.org/linebyline

WRA LEGAL HOTLINE

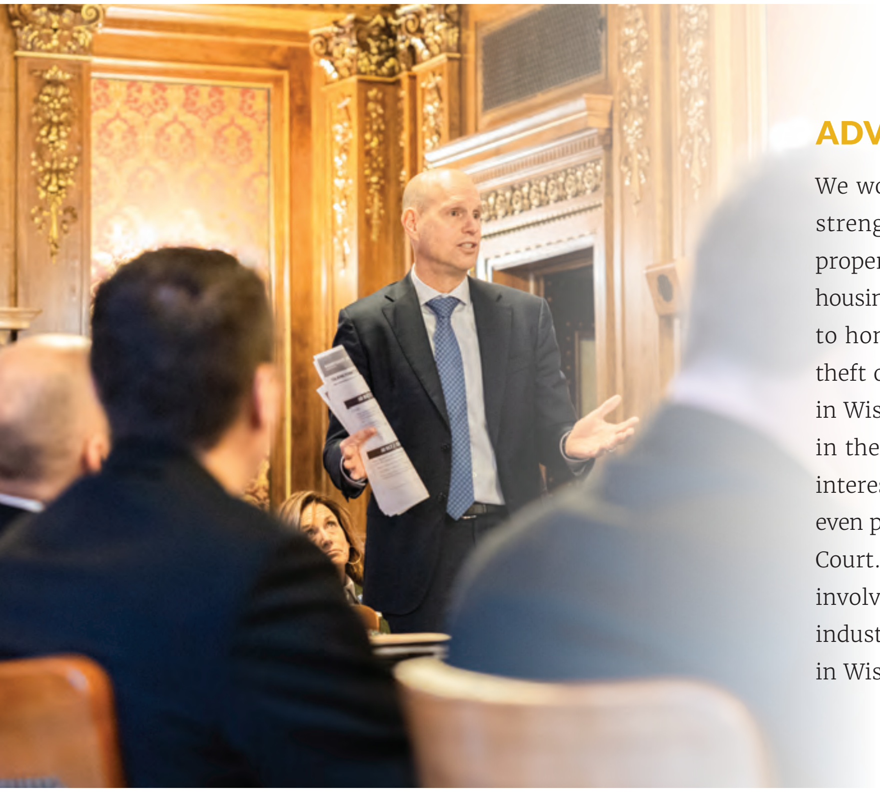
Why hire a real estate attorney for a real estate legal question? Real estate transactions are legal in nature and can be quite complex. Did you know you have access to real estate attorneys who can help? Whether the hotline discussion is about legal standards, changing laws or simple clarification, many members say just one phone call to the hotline can pay for membership in itself.

More info: www.wra.org/legalhotline

TRANSACTIONS (ZIPFORM EDITION)

One of WRA's most valuable benefits is providing our members access to electronic forms through Transactions (zipForm Edition). You can spend less time processing paperwork and more time serving clients! This digital transaction management and productivity suite makes contracts a breeze with fully licensed and up-to-date WRA digital forms and state-of-the-art transaction management tools. In addition to the electronic forms service, the WRA also covers unlimited digital signatures through Digital Ink and mobile access through its app to help you work quickly, stay compliant, and amaze your buyers and sellers every step of the way.

More info: www.wra.org/transactions



ADVOCACY

We work for you by advocating for policy initiatives that strengthen Wisconsinites' ability to own, buy and sell real property. Whether growing our economy with more workforce housing, holding the line on property taxes, applying regulation to homeowners associations, controlling foreclosure equity theft or addressing the 40-year expiration of access easements in Wisconsin, the WRA's lobbying team is active at the Capitol in the policymaking process to ensure the industry's best interests are considered when bills are passed or defeated. We even participate in cases that escalate to the Wisconsin Supreme Court. In doing so, we look to you — our members — for your involvement and leadership as eyes and ears to help advance the industry and preserve our right to practice real estate efficiently in Wisconsin.

LEGAL RESOURCES AND TIPS

Every week, the WRA arms members with answers to trending legal questions fielded by the WRA Legal Hotline so that the questions most relevant to the industry are communicated to all WRA members to ensure equal legal knowledge across the industry. These tips arrive each week in the weekly legal news email and also include resources to supplemental materials. In addition, the WRA takes an in-depth look at a trending legal issue each month and provides a white-paper-style narrative with robust explanations in its monthly *Legal Update* publication. Topics include: the latest real estate legal developments, forms revisions, new regulations or legal developments, case law summaries and hotline discussions.

Learn more about all the member benefits included with your WRA membership, including a free subscription to Inman Select and discounts with exclusive partners at **www.wra.org/memberbenefits**.

THE BEST OF THE LEGAL HOTLINE

BY DEBBI CONRAD
WRA SENIOR ATTORNEY AND DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

FORMS USE RULES

An in-depth knowledge of forms use rules is extremely important for real estate professionals in Wisconsin. In 1961, the Wisconsin Supreme Court created a narrow rule permitting real estate brokers to fill in the blank spaces on standard conveyance forms for clients without violating the prohibition against laypersons practicing law. In *State ex rel. Reynolds v. Dinger*, 14 Wis. 2d 193, 109 N.W. 2d 685 (1961), the court observed that completing contracts is the practice of law but granted a limited authorization for real estate licensees. While this privilege may be taken for granted by many licensees, they should realize the idea of licensees drafting real estate contracts is not always universally embraced. Licensees must be ever vigilant and continuously demonstrate they deserve this privilege by showing competence in their use of the state-approved forms and avoiding behavior that may be interpreted as the giving of legal advice.

A crucial part of this demonstration of competency is following the Wis. Admin. Code chapter REEB 16 forms use rules.

USE THE CURRENT VERSION OF THE FORM

The seller just received an offer on a property, and it is written on the old WB-11. Must the listing agent have the cooperating agent re-draft it?

According to license law in Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 24.13(2)(b), licensees must promptly present all offers. Presentation of the document by the listing agent, despite their misgivings, is not a rule violation.

The cooperating agent could face possible disciplinary action from the Real Estate Examining Board (REEB) for failure to use the required offer form — all licensees must use the latest approved versions of an REEB-approved form like the WB-11 beginning on the mandatory use date (January 1, 2020) per Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.06(7).

Because the parties do not yet have binding acceptance, the buyer could choose to withdraw the offer on the old form and prepare his offer using the current form. A buyer withdrawing an offer to resubmit another offer risks the seller accepting an offer from a different buyer in the interim.

If the offer is presented, the listing agent is to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the offer with the seller as required by Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 24.13(3). During the presentation, it may be helpful to compare the terms of the old offer with the current offer for the seller. The document, if agreed upon, creates a contract between the parties, regardless of any outdated content. It is up to the seller to decide to reject the offer, counter the offer or issue an offer to sell on a current form to continue the negotiations.

CHOOSING THE CORRECT FORM

An agent has a potential listing in an area that is 99% single-family homes. This property is a side-by-side condominium, and the agent is listing just one unit. Can the agent use the WB-1 Residential Listing Contract and enter it into the MLS as a single family/single family zero lot line? The agent would disclose in the comments that it truly is a condominium. Someone else had it listed first as a condominium, and most people and agents in the area don't even think to check condominium listings for their buyers.

If there is not a form that exactly fits the agent's transaction, the agent is to use the form that requires the least amount of modification. This property is a condominium, so the WB-4 Residential Condominium Listing Contract generally would be the appropriate form to use to list a condominium unit.

If using that form, however, is limiting the marketability of the property, the agent may consult with her supervising broker regarding the risks and benefits of using the WB-1 Residential Listing Contract, modifying it appropriately to include any condominium-specific provisions, and disclosing, as necessary, to other agents that the property is a condominium. Any offers should probably be on the WB-14 Residential Condominium Offer to Purchase.

There are potential risks to using a WB-1 Residential Listing Contract. Those risks include a buyer or an agent making a claim that the agent misrepresented the property or advertised it in a way that was false, deceptive or misleading. Adequate disclosure of the nature of the property as a condominium may help to limit those risks.

There is also a potential risk that a person could claim that the agent violated Wis. Admin. Code Chapter REEB 16 regarding "Approved Forms and Legal Advice" by incorrectly using forms. The counter argument to that claim, however, is Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.06(8), which states, "A licensee shall use approved forms and prepare addenda in such a manner as to adequately accomplish the contractual instruction of the person for whom the licensee uses the forms and prepares the addenda." If the seller instructed the licensee to use a WB-1 Residential Listing Contract rather than a WB-4 Residential Condominium Listing Contract, the licensee is arguably complying with the forms use rules by using a residential listing.

The agent should contact the MLS regarding any rules governing the acceptable categories for listing this property.

See the text of Wis. Admin. Code Chapter REEB 16 regarding the rules for "Approved Forms and Legal Advice" at **https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/reeb/16.pdf.**

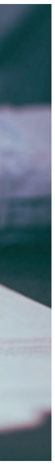
USING WARRANTY DEEDS

Is a licensee allowed to fill in the blanks on the warranty deed form?

A licensed broker is allowed to use state bar forms for deeds, but a salesperson may not. Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.03 provides as follows regarding licensees' use of approved forms:

(1) In addition to forms prepared and approved by the board pursuant to s. 452.05(1)(b), Stats., the board approves the following forms for use by brokers:
- (a) Forms prepared and approved by the state bar of Wisconsin for deeds, mortgages, mortgage notes, truth-in-lending disclosures, land contracts, release of mortgage, satisfaction of mortgage, assignment of mortgage, and assignment of land contract.
- (b) Uniform commercial code forms: 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 410, 411, 430, 445, 450, and 451.
- (c) Contractual forms for the sale, purchase or rental of real estate or a business opportunity located in another state, if the contractual forms are those which licensees may legally and customarily use for such transactions in the state where the real estate or business opportunity is located.
- (d) Forms prepared by governmental, quasi-governmental, and tribal agencies for use in programs administered by them under authority provided by law.
- (e) Forms to be used for a property management agreement between a firm and a landlord, prepared by the broker entering into the agreement, an attorney, or the landlord, that contain provisions relating to leasing, managing, marketing, and overall management of the landlord's property.

(2) In addition to forms prepared and approved by the board pursuant to s. 452.05(1)(b), Stats., the board grants approval of the forms in sub. (1)(c), (d), and (e) for use by salespersons. Board-approved contractual forms for use in real estate practice may be used by licensees and shall be available on the department's webpage.



OPEN LISTING

What is an open end listing?

"Open end listing" is not a defined term in Wisconsin law. In Wisconsin, the listing contract determines the listing broker's authority to provide services and the right to commission. Wis. Stat. § 240.10(1) provides that a contract to pay a commission for selling real estate is void unless there is a contract or other writing describing the real estate, setting a list price and the applicable commission, and stating the term of the listing. In addition, the listing contract must be signed by someone agreeing to pay a commission.

The provisions of Wis. Admin. Code Chapter REEB 16 do, however, include a definition of an "open listing."

Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.02 Definitions provides:

(4) "Open listing" means a written listing agreement, which may be given to any number of firms, with the first firm to secure a buyer under the terms of the listing agreement earning the commission.

Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.06(6) states: "A licensee may alter an approved exclusive right to sell listing contract to create an exclusive agency listing, an open listing, or a one-party listing."

In an open listing, the seller engages two or more firms to act simultaneously in marketing the property, but the seller is obligated to pay a commission only to the firm that brings a ready, willing and able buyer. If the seller personally sells the property without the assistance of any of the firms, the seller owes no commission.

See the information regarding creating different types of listings on pages 9-10 in the August 2014 *Legal Update*, "Limiting Listing Broker Liability," at **www.wra.org/LU1408**.

USING NON-APPROVED CONTRACTS

The developer is selling a new construction condominium. The agent is working with the buyer. The developer's attorney has their own purchase contract they use. Can the agent use that instead of a WB-14?

Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.04 provides:

When to utilize approved forms.
(1) Except as provided in subs. (2) and (3), a licensee shall use approved forms when acting as an agent or a party in a real estate or business opportunity transaction.
(2) For those kinds of real estate or business opportunity transactions for which the board has not approved contractual forms, a licensee, when acting as an agent or a party, may use contractual forms drafted by a party or an attorney, if the name of the drafter is imprinted on the form before use by a licensee. For the purpose of this subsection, a listing firm is a party to the listing contract transaction.
(3) A licensee may in any transaction where the licensee is acting as an agent, negotiate an agreement and permit the parties or an attorney for one or other of the parties to draft or prepare a contractual agreement which embodies all of the negotiated terms and conditions.

Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.02(5) provides:

"Use a form" means to complete a contractual or conveyance form by filling in the blanks or modifying printed provisions on a form for the purpose of accomplishing the instruction of a party in a specific real estate transaction.

The agent would be in conformance with license law as stated in § REEB 16.04(1) if they used the approved WB-14 Residential Condominium Offer to Purchase.

If the agent wants to rely on § REEB 16.04(2), the case will first need to be made that the sale of a new construction condominium is a different kind of transaction when compared to sales of other condominium homes and residential properties. If that were true, then the name of the party or attorney who drafted the contract must be imprinted on the form before the licensee could use it.

If the agent was to rely on § REEB 16.04(3), the licensee may negotiate, but the parties or an attorney for one of the parties must draft the contract including all terms and conditions.

USING A LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORM

A broker is asked to write an offer on a city of Milwaukee property. The city has its own offer form, which includes boxes and blanks to fill out. Can the broker complete the form?

Wis. Admin. Code § REEB 16.03(1)(d) provides:

Approved forms.
(1) In addition to forms prepared and approved by the board pursuant to s. 452.05 (1) (b), Stats., the board approves the following for use by brokers: ...

(d) Forms prepared by governmental agencies for use in programs administered by them under authority provided by law.

The broker should also assess whether they are competent to fill out the form. Comparing an unfamiliar form with a WB-form can help identify differences.

See the text of Wis. Admin. Code Chapter REEB 16 regarding the rules for "Approved Forms and Legal Advice" at **https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/reeb/16.pdf**.

FIXTURE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY DISPUTES: TIPS TO AVOID THEM

BY JENNIFER LINDSLEY
WRA STAFF ATTORNEY AND DIRECTOR OF TRAINING

There is an old song written by George and Ira Gershwin called "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off." This song was made famous by Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire in the 1937 film "Shall We Dance." You are probably familiar with the lyrics as the song has been covered countless times by artists including Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong, Harry Connick Jr. and Willie Nelson.

"....You like potato and I like potahto.
You like tomato and I like tomahto.
Potato, potahto, tomato, tomahto –
Let's call the whole thing off..."

The duet continues in a similar fashion with Fred and Ginger each pointing out their differing pronunciations for various words and concluding that, due to their differences, they should just "call the whole thing off."

What does any of this have to do with fixtures and personal property disputes? There are some items in a real estate transaction the buyer might think of as fixtures (potato) and the seller thinks they are personal property (potahto), and because they cannot agree, they start sounding like Fred and Ginger and declare, "let's call the whole thing off." Ideally, careful drafting by the licensees involved will avoid these disagreements about interpretation and not leave the parties wanting to call the whole thing off.

The WB-11 Residential Offer to Purchase provides a definition of fixture at lines 26-36. If "fixture" is a defined term, why are there so many disputes related to whether items are fixtures to be included or personal property that the seller can remove? The definition of fixture does identify some items as fixtures such as water softeners, garden bulbs, plants, and blinds and shutters, but that list is not exhaustive. What about the basketball hoop or the hot tub? What about the play structure or a large outdoor sculpture? What about the deer stand?

"FIXTURE" DEFINED IN THE WB-11 RESIDENTIAL OFFER TO PURCHASE

"Fixture" is defined as an item of property which is physically attached to or so closely associated with land, buildings or improvements so as to be treated as part of the real estate, including, without limitation, physically attached items not easily removable without damage to the premises, items specifically adapted to the premises and items customarily treated as fixtures, including, but not limited to, all: garden bulbs; plants; shrubs and trees; screen and storm doors and windows; electric lighting fixtures; window shades; curtain and traverse rods; blinds and shutters; central heating and cooling units and attached equipment; water heaters, water softeners and treatment systems; sump pumps; attached or fitted floor coverings; awnings; attached antennas and satellite dishes (but not the component parts); audio/visual wall mounting brackets (but not the audio/visual equipment); garage door openers and remote controls; installed security systems; central vacuum systems and accessories; in-ground sprinkler systems and component parts; built-in appliances; ceiling fans; fences; in-ground pet containment systems, including receiver components; storage buildings on permanent foundations and docks/piers on permanent foundations.

After reviewing the definition of fixture from the WB-11 Residential Offer to Purchase, you can see that basketball hoop, hot tub, deer stand, sculpture and many other items are not listed there. So, what are they — personal property or fixtures?

The definition of fixture gives some additional guidelines on determining whether something is a fixture or personal property. Is the item physically attached to or so closely associated with land, buildings or improvements so as to be treated as part of the real estate? Then it is probably a fixture. Is the item physically attached and not easily removable without damage to the premises? Then it is probably a fixture. Is the item specifically adapted to the premises? Then it is probably a fixture. Is the item customarily treated as a fixture? Then it is probably a fixture.

Let's consider a hot tub. Is it physically attached to or so closely associated with land, buildings or improvements so as to be treated as part of the real estate? Maybe. The hot tub might be attached to pipes or tubes that are attached to the building, but the hot tub itself might not be attached to the building. Is the hot tub physically attached and not easily removable without damage to the premises? Maybe. A hot tub can be built into a deck or perhaps just setting on a deck. The answer to this question will depend on this specific hot tub. Is the hot tub specifically adapted to the premises? Maybe. If it is not a custom-built hot tub but rather a generic model right off the showroom floor, it is probably not specifically adapted to the premises. Is the item customarily treated as a fixture? Based on the number of WRA Legal Hotline inquiries about whether a hot tub is or is not a fixture, I think we can conclude it is not customarily treated as a fixture. Rather, determining a hot tub's status as a fixture or personal property will require a case-by-case analysis.

The first step will be to look to the offer to purchase to see if it was addressed. If the buyer included the hot tub as an item to be included in the purchase price, the problem is solved and the hot tub is included, and neither the parties nor the agents have to engage in the analysis to determine if the hot tub is a fixture that should stay or personal property to be removed. Another solution to this problem would be to again look to the offer to purchase to see if the hot tub is listed as an item not included in the purchase price. If so, the problem is solved without having to engage in the fixture or personal property analysis.

What if the hot tub was not addressed in the offer to purchase at all? The parties can look to the definition of fixture in the offer, but as mentioned earlier, the factors laid out in the offer are not necessarily conclusive. If the buyer and seller do not agree as to whether an item is a fixture or personal property, they could ask a judge to decide. The courts have attempted to lay down certain tests to determine when an article takes on the character of a fixture.

- Is the article physically attached? Is it easily removable without damage to the premises? If it cannot be removed without serious damage either to the item or premises, it is practically conclusive that it is a fixture.
- Is there a special adaptation between the article and the premises?
- What is the intent of the person attaching the article to the premises? Are there general community customs?

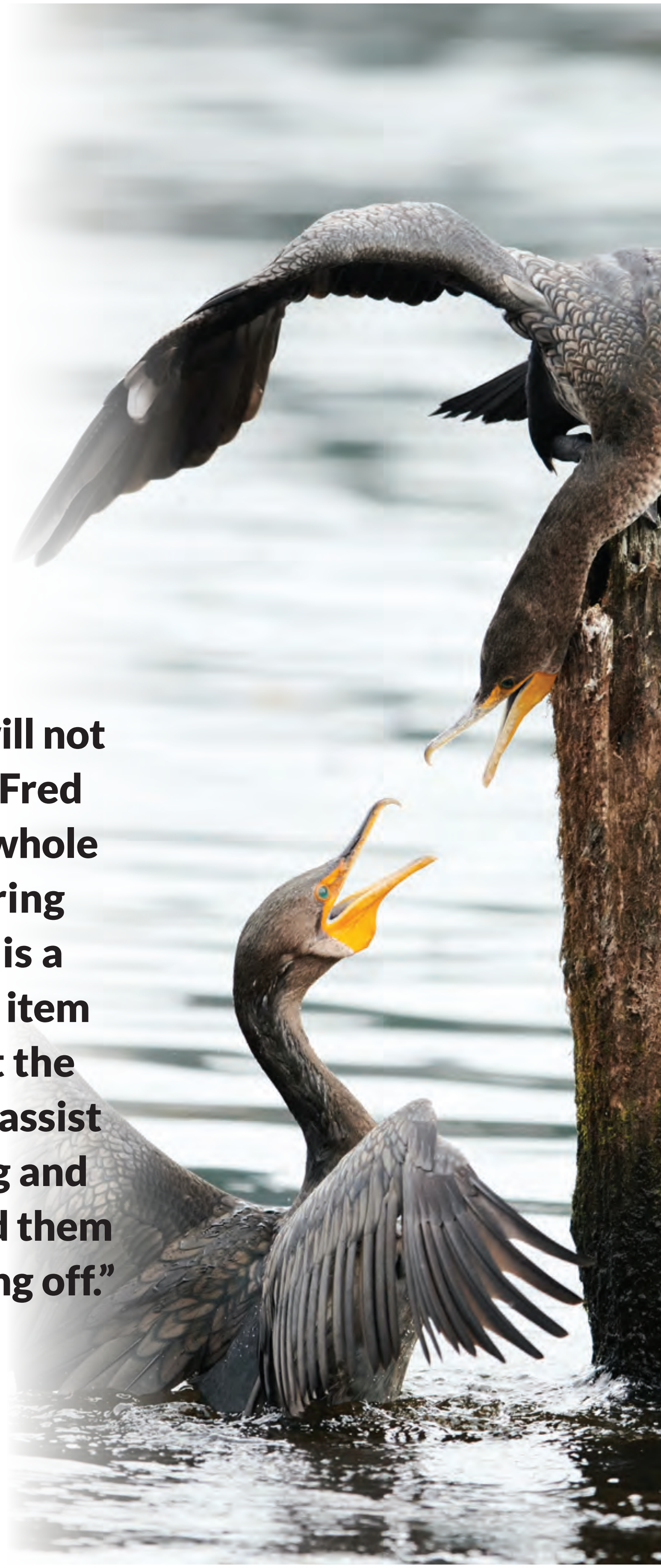
None of these tests are conclusive on their own, nor do they operate mechanically.

Going to court to solve this problem requires a great deal of time and money. The agents involved in the transaction have the ultimate, foolproof solution to this and every potential fixture or personal property dispute. The solution is to draft offers carefully and to document in detail what the parties want to have happen and not rely on court-created tests and characteristics laid out in the definition of fixture to address these items.

Is a licensee drafting an offer for a buyer with a hot tub? The licensee can ask the buyer whether the buyer wants the hot tub and either write it into the offer as included if the buyer wants it or write it into the offer as not included if the buyer does not want it. Hot tub problem solved. The same is true for all those other items that could go either way depending on the item and the property. The basketball hoops, sculptures, play structures and yes, even the deer stand, depending on its construction, are all solvable problems by simply drafting the offer to specify whether the item is included or not included in the purchase price.

Let's take this discussion a bit further by considering another way to reduce potential disputes about what items are included or not included in the sale. A buyer's offer specified that the purchase price includes "washer and dryer." The seller accepts this offer and intends to leave a washer and dryer behind in the property, but they are going to take the washer and dryer currently in the property with them to their new home and replace them with the washer and dryer from the home they are buying. Can they do this? Arguably, yes. The buyer said the purchase price includes a washer and a dryer, which they will have. The buyer did not specify the buyer wanted the washer and dryer as seen in the property on the date of the buyer's showing. Is the buyer going to be excited to move into the property and find a different washer and dryer in the home? Probably not.

What would happen if the buyer sued the seller claiming that the seller swapping out one washer and dryer set for another was somehow a breach of contract? Courts generally construe ambiguous terms against the party who drafted the contract. If a buyer sued about the swapped washer and dryer, the court would look to the contract and say, "You wanted a washer and a dryer. The seller provided you a washer and a dryer. Case closed. If you wanted a specific washer and dryer, Buyer, you had the opportunity to specify that in your contract and you did not." To avoid this situation, a buyer could specify in the buyer's offer that the purchase price includes "washer and dryer in the laundry room as seen on" the date of the buyer's showing or some other identifying date to avoid any questions as to which washer and dryer the buyer wants included in the sale.



Hopefully your buyers and sellers will not find themselves singing along with Fred and Ginger and deciding to call the whole thing off because they are of differing opinions as to whether something is a fixture (potato) to be included or an item of personal property (potahto) that the seller can remove. The best way to assist the parties is to use careful drafting and avoid disagreements that could lead them to declare, "Let's call the whole thing off."

LATEST LEGAL RESOURCES

UPDATES AND RESOURCES ABOUT WISCONSIN REAL ESTATE LAW, EXCLUSIVELY AVAILABLE FOR WRA MEMBERS

LEGAL UPDATES

January 2022: Case Law Update

This *Update* includes Wisconsin case law summaries, which provide an overview of some of the most important and interesting real estate decisions from 2021.

Case summaries touch on topics related to property assessments, landlord/tenant law, setback requirements, permitting requirements and more.

See the recent *Legal Updates* (WRA login required): **www.wra.org/LegalUpdates**

LEGAL HOTTIPS

Search Q&As from the WRA Legal Hotline

Your WRA membership gives you access to the WRA Legal Hottips online library: a collection of discussions from the WRA Legal Hotline. The library dates back several years with hotline Q&As about disclosure, liability and much more related to Wisconsin real estate law. New hottips are published every week.

Search the Q&As (WRA login required): **www.wra.org/LegalHottips**

PROFESSIONAL POINTERS

Enhance professionalism in your practice

The Professional Pointers series offers you a weekly boost of professionalism. You'll find the weekly Professional Pointer every week in your inbox and on the WRA website. The pointers explore topics like the ethical duties to cooperate, confidentiality, managing expectations and more.

See the pointers: **www.wra.org/ProfessionalPointers**

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RPAC AS A WRA MEMBER BENEFIT

BY JOE MURRAY
WRA DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

If I had to guess, I would bet that most WRA members who contribute to the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) or Direct Giver program view their contribution as an "investment." They see it as an investment in the political process to help elect pro-housing and pro-economic development lawmakers who understand how critically important housing and real estate are to a strong and sustainable Wisconsin economy. And they're right! RPAC is a wise and necessary investment in their business.

But RPAC is also a benefit of REALTOR® membership. The best definition of "benefit," according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is "something that produces good or helpful results or effects or that promotes wellbeing." When you consider the long-term legislative success at the national, state and local level through our advocacy efforts, it's easy to conclude that contributions to RPAC "produce good or helpful results."

At the national level, the NAR advocacy team worked tirelessly in 2021 to protect and benefit the real estate sector during the pandemic and made progress on many priorities. NAR was successful in stopping a proposal that would have limited the use of like-kind exchanges, a proposed increase in the capital gains tax rate, and a proposal to tax unrealized capital gains at death for owners of properties with assets over certain levels. NAR was also instrumental in ensuring that federal rental assistance was well funded to help tenants and landlords during the eviction moratorium. These were consequential pieces of federal legislation that benefited REALTORS® in every part of the industry.

At the state level, the list of accomplishments is impressive as well. Over the last 10 years, WRA members as well as homeowners and property owners have benefited significantly from member investments in RPAC. Hundreds of bills are introduced each session in the state legislature, and elections determine who will be voting on these bills. RPAC keeps real estate professionals informed, involved and influential regarding legislation important to their industry.

Although not an exhaustive list, check out the list of victories at the state level that REALTORS® can be proud of over the last 10 years. These are victories that "produced good or helpful results" for REALTORS®, homeowners and property owners in every corner of the Badger State, demonstrating RPAC is truly a member benefit.

2011-12
- Farmland conversion fee eliminated (AB 40)
- Health savings accounts now tax deductible (SSSB 2)
- Regulatory reform guarantees riparian owners right to place a pier (SB 326)
- Presumptive approval for DNR permits (SB 326)
- Property tax freeze (AB 40)

2013-14
- State preemption of local regulations relating to brokers (SB 208)
- Significant landlord-tenant law reform (SB 179)
- Broker experience law requiring two years of experience before obtaining a broker's license (SB 208)
- $506 million property tax cut (SSSB 1)

2015-16
- Two-year statute of limitations for REALTOR® liability (AB 456)
- Time of sale requirements prohibited (SB 21)
- Your right to use state-approved forms protected (AB 456)
- One-strike evictions for criminal or drug-related activity (AB 568)
- Maintain the property tax freeze/levy limits (SB 21)
- Historic rehabilitation tax credits preserved (SB 21)

2017-18
- Right to rent for homeowners (AB 64)
- Rental weatherization program eliminated (AB 771)
- Maintain the property tax freeze/levy limits (AB 64)
- Partial repeal of the personal property tax (AB 64)
- Broadband grants expanded for underserved areas (AB 64)
- Condominium document fee caps (AB 518)
- $400 million property tax reduction (AB 64)
- Municipal rental property inspection law reformed (AB 771)

2019-20
- REALTORS® and real estate deemed "essential" (Emergency Order #12)
- Broadband expansion funding significantly increased (AB 56)
- COVID-19 civil liability exemption (SSSB 1)
- Maintain the property tax freeze/levy limits (AB 56)
- Property tax and income tax cuts (AB 68)
- Broadband expansion grant funding significantly increased (AB 68)
- DSPS technology upgrades to simplify online credentialing (AB 68)

2021-22
- Note: The 2021-22 session is not complete.

2022 REALTOR® & GOVERNMENT DAY RECAP

THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE 2022 EVENT A MAJOR SUCCESS!

“Very informative and great to meet with senators to talk about our concerns in the real estate world. Great networking event too.”

Last month on February 9, 2022, the WRA held its annual REALTOR® & Government Day (RGD) event, back in Madison and in person after going totally virtual for the 2021 RGD due to the pandemic.

And Wisconsin REALTORS® showed up in Madison in record numbers, ready to lobby their lawmakers for a healthy real estate climate in Wisconsin! Before meeting face to face with lawmakers at the Capitol, Wisconsin REALTORS® listened to several speakers and learned about the current legislative issues in Wisconsin that affect real estate.

Event keynote speakers included WRA President & CEO Michael Theo, 2022 WRA Chairman Brad Lois and Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers. In addition to the keynotes, the WRA lobbying team outlined four key legislative issues to discuss with lawmakers during the Capitol visits: workforce housing, homeowners associations, access easements and foreclosure equity theft. At the Capitol, Wisconsin REALTORS® briefed more than 100 Wisconsin legislators on these four priorities.

Workforce housing shortage: REALTORS® urged lawmakers to support a series of bills that are aimed at increasing Wisconsin’s workforce housing stock. These initiatives would reduce regulatory costs for new housing, update older housing stock, provide financial assistance for building workforce housing and much more.

40-year expiration of access easements: Wisconsin REALTORS® stressed to legislators the need to completely eliminate the statutory expiration of access easements in Wisconsin. Instead,

“It was my first time going and I was not disappointed! It’s great to meet fellow REALTORS® and colleagues along with speaking to our local representatives about what impacts our communities.”

REALTORS® advocated for the right to contract: the agreement of the parties is the ultimate deciding factor regarding the future of the easements — not the statutes.

HOA transparency: REALTORS® explained to lawmakers how current Wisconsin law does not regulate homeowners associations (HOAs). The REALTORS® lobbied to better streamline and simplify HOAs so property owners and purchasers better understand HOA rules and regulations.

Foreclosure equity theft: REALTORS® told lawmakers to require counties to pay any net proceeds of non-homestead foreclosures back to the former owner of the property. Wisconsin is one of only 12 states that allows foreclosure equity theft, and that fact needs to change.

After a productive afternoon of lobbying, REALTORS® enjoyed a free cocktail reception to conclude the day. Also at the cocktail reception, one of the RGD event sponsors handed out “Advocacy Ale” beer as well as Wisconsin-themed drink coasters — the fun freebies were a hit!

Thank you to the hundreds of Wisconsin REALTORS® who came together to make a positive difference for Wisconsin real estate. Your support is greatly appreciated, and we’ll see you in April 2023 for the 2023 Government Day!

Thank you to the event sponsors, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago and Universal Home Protection.

Testimonials appearing on pages 26-27 were collected from the 2022 RGD attendee survey and were submitted anonymously.

“It was a great event and the information and networking were invaluable. I learned a lot about issues I didn’t even know existed before R&G Day. Also the reception was wonderful.”

LINE BY LINE FORMS TRAINING

THE MOST IN-DEPTH WISCONSIN REAL ESTATE FORMS TRAINING IS NOW FREE FOR WRA MEMBERS

For years, the WRA's Line by Line forms training video series has provided powerful, in-depth analysis of the WB forms commonly used in Wisconsin real estate practice … for a fee. But fee has changed to free! The Line by Line video series is now included with your WRA membership. That's right, as long as you are a WRA member, the most comprehensive WB forms training in all of Wisconsin is completely free for you.

With Line by Line, you have access to hours of online training, hosted by WRA Attorney and Director of Training Jennifer Lindsley, walking through each line of the WB forms you use in your transactions. Not only does enhanced contract knowledge result in smoother transactions, your forms expertise benefits the industry overall by raising the bar of professionalism and enhancing consumer protection. This free training benefits your business, your clients and the industry — it's a triple win!

Forms included in Line by Line

WB-1 Residential Listing Contract
WB-2 Farm Listing Contract and WB-42 Amendment to Listing
WB-3 Vacant Land Listing Contract
WB-4 Residential Condominium Listing Contract
WB-5 Commercial Listing Contract
WB-6 Business Listing Contract — Exclusive Right to Sell
WB-11 Residential Offer to Purchase
WB-12 Farm Offer to Purchase
WB-13 Vacant Land Offer to Purchase
WB-14 Condominium Offer to Purchase
WB-15 Commercial Offer to Purchase
WB-16 Offer to Purchase — Business with Real Estate Interest
WB-17 Offer to Purchase — Business Without Real Estate Interest
WB-24 Option to Purchase
WB-28 Cooperative Agreement
WB-35 Simultaneous Exchange Agreement
WB-36 Buyer Agency/Tenant Representation Agreement
WB-37 Residential Listing Contract — Exclusive Right to Rent
WB-38 and WB-47 Commercial Buyer Agency/Tenant Forms

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PARTNERSHIP FOR SUCCESS PROGRAM

PROMOTING GOOD BUSINESS THROUGH ENHANCED DIVERSITY

BY DEBBI CONRAD
WRA SENIOR ATTORNEY AND DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

There is a WRA committee doing wonderful and beneficial things that few members are familiar with: the WRA cultural diversity in housing committee. In addition to educating the WRA membership about fair housing and diversity issues, this committed, active bunch is always looking for ways to promote cultural diversity among membership and leadership and better enable REALTORS® to successfully work with culturally diverse clients and customers.

Members sometimes comment they are not in need of such services because they have no minorities in their communities, but the face of America has changed. Minorities now make up roughly one-fifth of Wisconsin's population. The Census Bureau publishes a diversity index that predicts the likelihood two people chosen at random will be from different racial and ethnic groups, and the diversity index for Wisconsin is 37%.

The committee believes real estate brokerage companies will become more profitable when the faces in their offices reflect the faces in their marketplaces. It simply is good business to increase minority participation in our companies and in our organizations. One tool serving that goal is one of the "best-kept secrets" at the WRA: the WRA Partnership for Success Program, administered by the cultural diversity in housing committee.

What is the Partnership for Success Program?

Rather than taking a traditional scholarship approach, the WRA's Partnership for Success Program forges a partnership between the applicant, the sponsoring broker, the local or regional association, and the WRA. Applicants must be of a minority race, color or national origin and demonstrate a commitment to becoming successful real estate licensees. The sponsoring broker provides a mentor and in-house training for the program recipient to optimize the success of the new licensee. Ideally, the applicant is a new licensee who has not had a license for more than six months and who is aspiring to become a full-time agent. The program is intended to provide startup assistance to applicants who have not previously held a real estate license.

What is the purpose of the Partnership for Success Program?

The WRA designed the Partnership for Success Program to promote diversity within the REALTOR® membership based on race, color and national origin, in a manner designed to enhance the probability of long-term success in the real estate profession. Increased minority representation in our brokerages and in our organizations will contribute to REALTOR® diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and marketplace success.

The WRA Partnership for Success Program offers the successful candidate the opportunity to have one year of REALTOR® dues and six months of MLS fees covered as well as the chance to attend additional courses and educational events. The WRA waives one year of WRA dues, local participating associations waive any initiation fee and one year of dues, and the WRA pays one year of NAR dues. The program also provides supplementary education and networking opportunities for the recipient to attend classes, conventions and other events.

Is the Partnership for Success Program a scholarship program?

No. The recipient must repay fees paid by the WRA in cash and/or by volunteer service hours for the WRA, local REALTOR® association committees or established § 501(c)(3) charities. Repayment is due no later than three years after the award is given so that program funds may be "paid forward" to additional deserving recipients. One hour of committee or volunteer service repays $20. Volunteer hours must be verified either with a signed letter from the REALTOR® association or charitable organization, preferably on the organization letterhead, or on the WRA Cultural Diversity in Housing Committee Volunteer Hours form, available on the Partnership for Success webpage at **www.wra.org/Partnership**.

Why is the Partnership for Success Program important for the WRA?

The WRA benefits when the organization reflects the composition of the Wisconsin marketplace. The Partnership for Success Program contributes to the diversity of our membership and to our DEI initiatives.

Why is the Partnership for Success Program important to brokers?

The Partnership for Success Program enables brokers to welcome new minority agents who they believe will become successful agents and enhance the diversity of the broker's office. The brokers are asked to choose wisely and "invest" in the new agent by providing mentorship and education for the new agent and coming to an interview with the WRA cultural diversity in housing committee.

How does the Partnership for Success Program help minority candidates?

The candidate receives a financial boost at the beginning of their new real estate career as well as enrichment opportunities in the form of designation classes, seminars and REALTOR® events. The boost over the initial financial hurdles frees the new agent to study and learn the business — and become successful.

How does a candidate apply to the Partnership for Success Program?

Potential applicants will find videos and information about the program, application materials and the interview schedule at **www.wra.org/Partnership**.

What is the most important thing to know about the WRA Partnership for Success Program?

The Partnership for Success Program works! The program enriches the office, is a fantastic tool to launch the new minority agent, and creates success for all!

Learn about the success story of Fatima Marinho Perry in "Partnership Fosters Diversity and Breeds Success," in the April 2019 *Wisconsin Real Estate Magazine* at: **www.wra.org/WREM/Apr19/Partnership.**

PARTNERSHIP FOR SUCCESS AWARD WINNERS

The WRA Cultural Diversity in Housing Committee is pleased to announce the following Partnership for Success award winners! The Partnership for Success Program is designed to promote diversity within the REALTOR® membership and enhance the probability of long-term success for new minority agents. The program offers the successful minority candidate the opportunity to have one year of REALTOR® dues and six months of MLS fees covered, and to attend real estate practice courses and networking events. Most program benefits are "paid forward" via the recipient's cash reimbursements or community service hours within three years of receipt of the award. Potential applicants and their sponsoring brokers can learn more at **www.wra.org/Partnership**.

Please join us in congratulating these amazing new agents and their remarkable sponsoring brokers!

AWARD WINNER: DAVID CUBIAS

FIRM: EXIT REALTY HORIZONS, WAUWATOSA
SPONSORING BROKER: TOM MCCORMICK

David Cubias has worked as a property manager, has sold cars, and drives Uber part-time to sustain himself. He aims to own a home and help Spanish-speaking people learn about the homebuying process. Broker Tom McCormick finds David to be a self-starter who will do well in the company's 10-week training program and mentorship shadowing system. The company motto: Do the right thing. Be involved.

AWARD WINNER: KEWAND ESKRIDGE

FIRM: KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY, WHITEFISH BAY
SPONSORING BROKER: JOAN READ

Kewand Eskridge holds an associate real estate degree from MATC Milwaukee and first became interested in real estate after experiencing the hardships of a slumlord and eviction firsthand. As a result, he has great appreciation for the value of family wealth-building through homeownership. Broker Joan Read admires the effort made by Kewand to find the Partnership for Success and bring it to her. Joan is the compliance broker for her office and will work with Kewand as coach and trainer.

AWARD WINNER: GARY GILBERT

FIRM: FIRST WEBER INC., APPLETON
SPONSORING BROKER: DYLAN DIERSEN

Gary Gilbert is committed to providing opportunities to build family wealth after observing firsthand the broken-up neighborhoods in Milwaukee. He also is interested in learning more and teaching others about the benefits of real estate investment. Another plan is to spread the word about the Partnership for Success Program so others can begin their careers and contribute to the goal of minority wealth-building. Broker Dylan Diersen finds Gary to be hard-working with a desire for self-improvement and an eagerness to learn. First Weber has a comprehensive training program, is active in local associations and has extensive community involvement.

AWARD WINNER: MERCEDES LEWIS

FIRM: FIRST WEBER INC., MADISON
SPONSORING BROKER: DAN LEE
MENTOR: STACY OZANNE

Mercedes Lewis is a registered nurse committed to helping people and has the energy and drive to learn new things. She wants to share the lessons she learned when she bought her own home and educate ethnic groups regarding how to get and keep their own homes. Mentor Stacy Ozanne believes Mercedes possesses all the attributes and skills needed to be successful. First Weber has a comprehensive training program, is active in local associations and has extensive community involvement. First Weber's comprehensive training include modules addressing combating bias and the history of real estate.

AWARD WINNER: ELIYAH ZACHERY

FIRM: SHOREWEST REALTORS®, JANESVILLE
SPONSORING BROKER: JEFF JOSEPH

Eliyah Zachery has served in the military and holds a BA in creative writing. He is a hard worker who likes people and is willing to take extra steps to achieve his dreams. He is active with the Boys & Girls Club and hopes to teach them writing. Broker Jeff Joseph finds Eliyah to be enthusiastic and a great student for the Success Track Training Program and the Ninja Selling Training he will attend along with the personal guidance that will come from Jeff. Jeff has been very active with the local association and is proud of the extensive charitable activity conducted by Shorewest.

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IMPROVE YOUR BUYER REPRESENTATION
ABR designation course: April 13-14

The Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR) designation equips you with the skills needed to represent buyers during the homebuying process. With April's ABR training course, you'll gain the tools to build a buyer representation business, guide buyer-clients through the home-search process, negotiate buyer-clients' offers to a successful close and more.

- Date/time: April 13-14, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. each day
- Course location: Madison live and virtual streaming
- Instructor: Bonnie Dixon
- Course fee: $289 (sign up early before March 29 and get $30 off)

Register: www.wra.org/2022ABR

POWER UP YOUR PRICING
PSA certification course: April 21-22

Take the guesswork out of pricing by taking a deep dive into pricing strategy with Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) training. You'll enhance your understanding of pricing and comparative market analyses (CMAs) to better guide clients through the CMA to ultimately list and sell properties at the appropriate price.

- Date/time: April 21-22, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. each day
- Course location: Virtual
- Instructor: John LeTourneau
- Course fee: $159 (sign up early before April 6 and get $20 off)

Register: www.wra.org/2022PSA

EMBRACE DIVERSITY IN YOUR PRACTICE
AHWD certification course: April 27-28

By developing a business rooted in inclusion and equality with the At Home With Diversity (AHWD) certification training, you can help buyers of all cultural backgrounds achieve the dream of homeownership. The AHWD course explores how to work effectively with diverse populations so you can build business success in today's multicultural real estate market.

- Date/time: April 27–28, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. each day
- Course location: Virtual
- Instructor: Maurice Hampton
- Course fee: $109 (sign up early before April 12 and get $20 off)

Register: www.wra.org/2022AHWD

FALL INTO "VACATION" MODE
RSPS certification course: May 16-17

Over a third of all home sales are either vacation or investment properties. The resort and second-home market is filled with opportunities for REALTORS®, and the Resort & Second Home Property Specialist (RSPS) certification can prepare you to service the growing resort and second-home market. Earn your RSPS with the RSPS virtual training in April!

- Date/time: May 16–17, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. each day
- Course location: Virtual
- Instructor: Maurice Hampton
- Course fee: $159 (sign up early before May and get $20 off)

Register: www.wra.org/2022RSPS

REPRESENT SELLERS WITH THE SRS
SRS designation course: June 2-3

Real estate sellers need representation ... which means you need the Seller Representative Specialist (SRS) designation! As the premier credential in seller representation, the SRS gives you the power to increase listings to grow your business, understand and apply the REALTOR® Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, and more.

- Date/time: June 2–3, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. each day
- Course location: Madison live and virtual streaming
- Instructor: Robert Morris
- Course fee: $289 (sign up early before May 18 and get $30 off)

Register: www.wra.org/2022SRS

OFFERING	FORMAT	DETAILS & REGISTRATION
EVENTS		
Annual Convention: October 2-4, 2022	Live in Wisconsin Dells	Watch for details in summer 2022!
PRE-LICENSE TRAINING		
SCHEDULED TRAINING		
Sales Pre-exam Review Webinar: April 1, 2022	Virtual webinar	www.wra.org/SPLwebinar
Sales Pre-exam Review Webinar: May 6, 2022	Virtual webinar	www.wra.org/SPLwebinar
Sales Pre-license Course: July 11-15, 18-20, 2022	Live in Madison	www.wra.org/July2022SPL
ONGOING VIRTUAL TRAINING		
Broker Pre-license Course	On Demand	www.wra.org/BPL
Sales Pre-license Course	On Demand	www.wra.org/SPL
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		
ONGOING VIRTUAL TRAINING		
ABR Designation Course: April 13-14, 2022	Live in Madison and virtual	www.wra.org/2022ABR
PSA Certification Course: April 21-22, 2022	Virtual	www.wra.org/2022PSA
AHWD Certification Course: April 27-28, 2022	Virtual	www.wra.org/2022AHWD
RSPS Certification Course: May 16-17, 2022	Virtual	www.wra.org/2022RSPS
SRS Designation Course: June 2-3, 2022	Live in Madison and virtual	www.wra.org/2022SRS
ONGOING VIRTUAL TRAINING		
GRI On Demand	On Demand	www.wra.org/GRI
Quick Start	On Demand	www.wra.org/QuickStart
REAL ESTATE CONTINUING EDUCATION		
SCHEDULED TRAINING		
Courses 1 & 2: March 8, 2022	Live in Madison and virtual	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 1 & 2: March 9, 2022	Live in Grafton	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 1 & 2: March 10, 2022	Live in Milwaukee	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 3 & 4: March 15, 2022	Live in Madison and virtual	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 3 & 4: March 16, 2022	Live in Grafton	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 3 & 4: March 17, 2022	Live in Milwaukee	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 5 & 6: March 22, 2022	Live in Madison and virtual	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 5 & 6: March 24, 2022	Live in Milwaukee	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 5 & 6: March 30, 2022	Live in Grafton	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 1 & 2: March 31, 2022	Live in Minocqua	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 3 & 4: April 7, 2022	Live in Minocqua	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 5 & 6: April 14, 2022	Live in Minocqua	www.wra.org/Mar2022CE
Courses 1 & 2: September 8, 2022	Live in Lake Geneva	www.wra.org/Sept2022CE
Courses 3 & 4: September 15, 2022	Live in Lake Geneva	www.wra.org/Sept2022CE
Courses 5 & 6: September 29, 2022	Live in Lake Geneva	www.wra.org/Sept2022CE

WISCONSIN REALTORS® FOUNDATION 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

In 2021, the Wisconsin REALTORS® Foundation (WRF) continued its partnership with Feeding Wisconsin to further the mission of unifying REALTORS® to help children in the areas of education, hunger, homelessness/abuse and serious illness. With the support of WRA members, see what the WRF achieved in 2021:

REALTOR® children scholarships awarded:
$20,000

Meals raised by REALTORS® for Feeding Wisconsin:
220,650

Contributions through REALTOR® dues:
DONATE
$150,419

Allocated for disaster relief in our communities:
$2,556

To get involved in 2022, visit **www.wra.org/WRF** and follow the WRF on social media **@WIREALTORSWRF**.

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

TECHNOLOGY

COOL TOOLS AND HOT HACKS FOR PHOTOS EVERY AGENT WILL LOVE

High-quality photos for your listings, promotional activities, website and social media are crucial. They help appeal to your audience, sell properties faster and gain more listings in the future. However, even if you have the right photo, you may benefit more if you also know how to fine-tune it.

Some edits you can make to increase the impact of a photo include correcting color or image brightness, resizing your image, and removing an unnecessary background. Plus, to manage the size of the space that photos consume on your laptop or desktop, you can use a handy tool to delete duplicates automatically.

Best of all, you don't have to use expensive software like Adobe Photoshop or be an image-editing expert. Happily, we've found that these excellent tools and hacks can assist an agent even with limited tech skills.

REMOVING IMAGE BACKGROUND

Have you ever seen a headshot of someone with an all-white background? It's probably the most popular hack for professional photos. And did you know you can remove an image's background and make the focus just on the subject by turning the background white? It's a great way to make a headshot easier to use and stand out more.

The coolest tool to do this is remove.bg. This background removal tool instantly removes a photo's background in just five seconds and zero clicks. Remove.bg will save you a significant amount of time versus trying to accomplish the same thing with other photo-editing applications. Click on the "upload image" button on the site or drop a photo in the tool's box, and the background is automatically removed for you and ready to download and use.

Remove.bg can help you create more engaging images, bringing a professional quality to your photos. And if you use Adobe Photoshop, remove.bg also is fully integrated and can speed up your workflow in fixing images. Best of all, remove.bg offers a free plan. It also provides a subscription plan if you need to remove more than a handful of backgrounds. Prices range from 23 to 11 cents per image, depending on how many credits you purchase a month.

A reminder to not go too far with Photoshopping with listing photos: NAR states, "Don't retouch pictures to cover up significant property imperfections or repair issues; doing so could violate the REALTOR® Code of Ethics." So while brightness, color correction, making sure images are vertically aligned, or removing a trash can from a driveway are edits that can be done to listing photos, be careful not to misrepresent the property.

RESIZING PHOTOS

Having the right size for your photos can make all the difference in maximizing the effectiveness of your image. Often when you reduce the size of a photo to save space, you lose quality. One such photo-editing hack that helps you avoid that is BeFunky, a nifty creative platform that allows you to quickly resize the photo, reduce its data size, and maintain a high-quality image — for free. When emailing an image to a client, having a small file size will save the hassle of waiting on a large download. Some email providers also have limits to the size of the files you can send. BeFunky's resize tool helps you change the image's file size without cutting anything out or decreasing the quality of the image. It also allows photo adjustment for your blog or website if needed.

EDITING PHOTOS

There are many potential online and offline choices for what you need in photo editing. For example, GIMP is a free, open-source photo editor available for Windows and Mac and allows high-quality photo editing. Adobe also offers a free web application called Adobe Spark to remove photo backgrounds and resize images. Furthermore, it also provides unique hacks, such as converting JPGs into PNGs and vice versa, which comes in handy if a client requires a specific type of photo from you.

REMOVE DUPLICATE PHOTOS

While you may need to temporarily keep several variations of the same photo for your listing or website, eventually, you may want to remove the duplicates because they drain storage space. You can download a free tool called Duplicate & Similar Photo Cleaner if you own a Windows computer. This software scans all photos stored on your device and auto-selects similar images across multiple formats, along with similar ones that may have been edited. This allows you to delete the photos you want gone in one go, saving you space and time in searching for duplicates.

If you have a Mac device, you are in luck, as you don't need a particular program — just follow the instructions that MacKeeper provides. Or, you may also download the MacKeeper app, click on the "duplicates finder" from the sidebar, hit the "start scan" button. Then it will locate all the images that are similar to the originals. Then, select the "remove duplicates" option, and you will be all set.

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Definitely a front porch with a swing...

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