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2016 Leadership Installed and Recognition Awards Presented

By Christina DeFalco-Romano
Public Relations & Communication Programs Manager

The Long Island Board of REALTORS® Inc. (LIBOR) and the Multiple Listing Service of Long Island Inc. (MLSIL) have announced their 2016 leadership teams. MLSIL leadership was installed at the MLSIL Installation and Recognition Luncheon on November 18, 2015 at the Woodbury Country Club. LIBOR leadership was installed at the annual LIBOR Installation Gala and Dinner Dance on November 24, 2015 at the Crest Hollow Country Club. These events also served as the forum for announcing several of the REALTOR® Recognition and Appreciation Awards.

Cathy Nolan Esq., a past president of both LIBOR and MLSIL, and current board counsel, had the honor of installing incoming 2016 MLSIL President David Lucas at the MLSIL luncheon. Following Lucas, Nolan administered the oath of office to the 2016 MLSIL Executive Committee: Vice President Suffolk Michael Mendicino; Vice President Nassau Vincent DellAccio; Vice President Queens Walauddin (Buddy) Hoosein; Treasurer Kevin Loiacono; Secretary John Fitzgerald and 2016 MLSIL Directors.

Lucas has been a licensed REALTOR® for more than 15 years and has been a member of LIBOR and MLSIL since 2001. Lucas is the principal broker of D. Lucas Realty in Laurelton.

He is founder and president of Queens Realist Group, which is a chapter of National Association of Real Estate Brokers. On the state level, Lucas has served on NYSAR's Professional Standards Committee. He has also served as the VP of Queens in 2011, 2012 and 2015. Lucas also served as the MLS Secretary in 2013. Lucas has served on the MLS Technology and Services Committee, Nominating Committee, Strategic Planning Committee and the Procedures Committee. He holds designations as an ABR, CBR, GRI, SFR, SRES, BPOR, RSSP and CDPE.

At the annual LIBOR Installation Gala and Dinner Dance, New York State Association of REALTORS® (NYSAR) 2015 President Michael Smith had the honor of installing the 2016 LIBOR elected officers, including: David Legaz, president-elect; Charlotte Van Der Waag, Nassau vice president; Nancy Mosca, Queens vice president; Peter Demidovich, Suffolk vice president; Ann Marie Pallister, vice president East End Liaison; Susan Helsinger, treasurer; and Dianne Scalza, secretary. All were on hand to take the oath of office and accept the responsibility that comes with serving in these positions.

2016 LIBOR President Mary Alice Ruppert was installed into office by friend Georgianna Finn, broker/owner of Coach REALTORS®. Ruppert succeeds

2015 LIBOR President Laura Copersino. Ruppert, a member of LIBOR since 1990, is the branch manager of Coach REALTORS® in East Islip. She holds CRB, SFR, GRI and ABR real estate designations.

Ruppert's involvement with LIBOR began at the Huntington Township Chapter, where she served as a director, secretary, vice president, and chapter president in 2000.

She became further involved at LIBOR's board level when she became a director in 2005. She was elected as LIBOR's Suffolk County vice president and served as such until 2009. In 2011, Ruppert was elected as LIBOR's secretary. In 2013 and 2014, she served as LIBOR treasurer and as president-elect in 2015.

During this time, Ruppert has been a member of numerous LIBOR committees, including By-Laws vice chairperson and Grievance vice chairperson and chairperson. She is actively involved at the state and national levels as well, serving on various committees and on the NYSAR and NAR Board of Directors.

With a heart and mission toward affordable housing opportunities, Ruppert has extended herself to both promote home-buyer programs to the consumer and educate REALTORS® regarding funding and housing opportunities throughout Long Island.



Mary Alice Ruppert,
2016 LIBOR
President



David Lucas,
2016 MLSIL
President

Following the installation of officers, five distinguished awards were presented to REALTORS® recognized for their outstanding individual achievements. Awards were presented to: REALTOR®-Broker of the Year, Barbara Ford; REALTOR®-Salesperson of the Year, Matthew Arnold; Community Service Award, Evelyn Atanas; REALTOR®-Affiliate of the Year, Howard Fritz; and the distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award to Johnette Correia.

The program concluded with the installation of 2016 LIBOR elected directors, LIBOR past presidents, Chapter appointees and Chapter and Division presidents, performed by LIBOR and MLSIL past president and NYSAR 2016 President Linda Bonarelli Lugo.

Additional award recipients honored at the Annual Appreciation Luncheon included Paul Fetscher, 2015 LICN Member of the Year; and Gina Marie Bettenhauser, 2015 WCR Member of the Year.

Congratulations and best wishes to all for a successful 2016! ●

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President's Message

By Mary Alice Ruppert, LIBOR President

*"For last year's words belong to last year's language
And next year's words await another voice.
And to make an end is to make a beginning."*

~T.S. Eliot

It stands to reason that at the start of every New Year we think about our professional goals and start to put some thought behind how we are planning to reach them. For me, now that I have the honor of serving all of you in the capacity of LIBOR president, my goals have become broader, farther reaching, but are still born out of my personal passion – housing opportunities.

Housing opportunities have always been a priority to me. I have had a lot of involvement in this area inside LIBOR, NYSAR and The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), as well as outside my board service working with community groups that focus on housing issues. What I have found after working with local housing agencies is that everyone benefits if we can educate consumers that homeownership matters. Educated consumers will be more likely to successfully purchase and maintain their own home. REALTORS® working together with local housing authorities will help ensure history doesn't repeat itself. To avoid what transpired in the past, we need to work smarter together. We all need to continue to stay apprised of housing issues in our community to ensure that we are communicating the right information to the consumer. Committing ourselves to this objective will make many potential buyers better prepared for homeownership.

NAR uses the slogan Homeownership Matters, and I believe it does. According to the National Association of REALTORS® H.O.M.E. study, 87 percent of Americans believe buying a home is still part of their personal American Dream. Additionally, 83 percent of Americans believe that homeownership is still a good financial decision. That is good news for all of us, but we have to continue to work harder to keep the public trust intact. Better news is that our association has all the channels in place for you to stay educated and achieve continued success.

The mission of the board is to provide our members with the resources they need to reach their highest potential. Last year NAR adopted a new organizational alignment program that raised the standards for REALTORS® associations to ensure high-quality service for REALTORS®. Not all REALTOR® associations met these strict requirements, but I am proud to say that LIBOR met all of the required core standards, because our board already had all the systems, services, departments, education programs, etc., in place. As always, our organization is firing on all cylinders.

I would like to take this opportunity to say I am very excited to serve as your president this year. There are many people in my life to whom I am grateful: my family; my REALTOR® family; and my Coach family who have made my life wonderful. You all represent the BEST of what a REALTOR® organization is all about. And I know that together we can move our organization successfully into the future by working to provide more and better services that will help all of you become more professional.

May 2016 bring all of you new opportunities to grow personally and professionally. ●

From Where I Sit

By Joseph E. Mottola, Chief Executive Officer

I recently reached my 40th anniversary and watched and affected the evolution of the board and its MLS through the terms and stewardships of 65 different presidents, and literally thousands of REALTOR® volunteers. With respect to LIBOR, that evolution is in its public and political images.

Publically, it's awareness by the media of its influence, through our informational and educational programs and charitable efforts by chapters in their communities. Through LIRealtor.com and MLSLI.com, we provide valuable information to buyers and sellers in pursuit of ownership that is so highly prized as part of a rewarding lifestyle.

Politically, it's our ability to affect legislation and regulation by providing valuable market information to our legislators, maintaining liaisons with their offices and providing financial support to the most influential of them through RPAC.

This three-way approach ensures their awareness of our concerns for the rights of real property owners and the REALTORS® who provide the services so critical to a viable marketplace.

The MLS has evolved into a high-tech information exchange that has provided our REALTORS® with an ever-increasing foundation of data and resources. This enables them to be aware of issues critical in the increasingly complex transaction process.

Three things have fostered that evolution. It begins with the Internet and the technology that enables REALTORS® to work virtually, the volume of products and services, and the education to use them to better serve the public. It's the gradual movement toward maximizing each aspect of these that has continued to keep the REALTOR'S® role relevant in the marketplace.

The last component that has marked my 40 years of experience has been the staff. The caliber and capabilities to support all that MLS and LIBOR strive to be is made possible by a diverse, technically competent, dedicated and motivated group of industry professionals. My on-going goal for 40 years has been building and enhancing LIBOR and MLS's national reputation for service and value as one of the country's premier REALTOR® organizations. ●

"MY ON-GOING GOAL FOR 40 YEARS HAS BEEN BUILDING AND ENHANCING LIBOR AND MLS'S NATIONAL REPUTATION FOR SERVICE AND VALUE."

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For more information, visit lirealtor.com/affiliates or call Mike Miller, Business Development Manager, at 631-661-4800 Ext. 384.

Recent Issues of Interest to LIBOR Members

By Cathy Nolan
Goldson, Nolan & Connolly P.C.
General Counsel

Q. I am working with a buyer who saw a house with another broker and made an offer, which was not accepted. Now the buyer wants me to make an offer on the same house for him. Can I do that?

A. Yes, but you may find yourself in an arbitration to see which agent is the procuring cause and therefore entitled to the commission.

Q. Can a landlord refuse to rent to someone who is on a government program?

A. No landlord can refuse to rent to someone just because the tenant is on a program in NYC, Nassau County or Suffolk County and soon Source of Income may be protected in the whole state. The landlord is not, however, obligated to take a tenant just because the tenant is on a program. You are not allowed to take a listing from a landlord who refuses to allow you to bring prospective tenants who are on programs.

Q. I just got a listing from a seller who has told me she was previously listed with an agent who she believes tried to pull a fast one on her by negotiating a deal when the buyer was the agent's husband and no one ever disclosed it. In fact, the agent said she was working for the seller and the seller only found out accidentally that the agent and buyer were married! Now the seller refuses to allow that agent to show her house. Can I keep the agent out?

A. Yes, the sellers' instructions to you about the agent are lawful and you must obey them. You may not, however, put this information on the listing, but may only tell the agent she will not be allowed on to the premises. You should, by the way, get the seller to give this instruction to you in a writing she has signed.

Q. My seller has a very desirable house and there are multiple offers on it. I do not want to get involved in a bidding war. What can I do?

A. You can present all offers and let the seller decide whether or not he wants to encourage a bidding war. This is not your decision!

Q. I am a new agent and my first listing was for a rental. I spent a great deal of time and energy on the listing and, although it was finally rented, I realized I will never make a living in real estate if I continue to do rentals. Can I refuse to do any more of them?

A. Of course. It is up to you to decide how to use your time most productively.

Q. I am a salesperson but want to get a broker's license. Most of the time I concentrate on listings and find I'm usually successful in marketing properties for sellers. Now I have discovered that I only receive 10 points toward the 3500 I will need to become a broker, while the agent with the buyer will receive 250! Is this true?

A. At the moment, this is the case.



Q. I was licensed as a salesperson in 1992 and became a broker in 2005. I understand that I am grandfathered in and am excused from taking continuing education courses. Now the Department of State has asked me to show them proof that I took 22.5 hours of continuing education in 2012-2014. What do I do? I have not had to take any courses since 2007.

A. You must produce your licenses showing you were continuously licensed since 1992. If you cannot show the DOS your licenses, take a look at the Course Catalogue LIBOR puts out each quarter and pick a couple of courses you think you might enjoy taking, since you will be required to do so from now on.

Q. I am working with a buyer who wants to look at houses in Staten Island. Can I show him any properties there?

A. If you are familiar with the area and have brokers and agents there who are willing to co-broke and cooperate with you, you can show and sell houses in Staten Island or anywhere else in the state of New York. Remember, however, you subscribe to a Code of Ethics that requires you to be competent (see Article 11). If you do not know the area, you may be much better off referring the buyer to someone in the area, or at least finding an agent in the area who is willing to work with you and your buyer to familiarize you with the properties outside of your area of expertise. ●

LIBOR Legal Helpline: FREE advice for members through LIBOR

The Legal Helpline gives you direct access to a board-retained real estate attorney, who is available to answer your legal questions. Simply email your inquiries to the helpline attorney and your questions will be answered via phone or email within 24 hours if sent during the business week. The Legal Helpline is available at LIRealtor.com/legal/legal-helpline.

LIBOR EDUCATION HOT TOPICS



**Plan Your Education
Plan Your Growth
PLAN YOUR SUCCESS!**

ALL NEW ONLINE CE COURSES: Choose from a variety of all NEW online CE courses which include DOS required fair housing training and NAR Ethics. Discount packages for LIBOR member!

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CERTIFIED RESIDENTIAL SPECIALIST (CRS): Highest credential awarded to residential sales agents, managers and brokers with recognition as an expert in residential sales.

CERTIFIED BUYER REPRESENTATIVE (CBR): Thousands of NY Realtors are becoming Certified Buyer Reps! This 3 day popular course will teach you how to legally and ethically represent buyers in a transaction. Approved for 22.5 hours NYS CE credits and includes 3 hours of fair housing & ethics required training as well.

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LIBOR NEWS



2016 Could be a Game Changer for the REALTOR® Party

By Randy L. Kaplan
Director of Government Affairs & Senior Lobbyist

During the past year, REALTORS® have been working very hard to protect private property rights that affect home buyers and sellers at all levels of government. These include the preservation of the much-needed Mortgage Interest Deduction to foster homeownership, a first-time home-buyer incentive program, and the uncertainty of the direction of where the flood insurance program is going. In addition, we must try and give a voice to the folks who are discriminated against in the co-op buying and selling process.

Mortgage Interest Deduction (MID) will once again top our 2016 federal legislative agenda. We also must stay vigilant about the small but never-ending bevy of federal legislators who wish to eliminate the MID. Many will say this is not an issue but history has proven that with each passing legislative session—there are more officials looking at the MID as a possible way to wipe out the national debt. REALTORS® have and will continue to make these issues a priority each year.

When the issue of the federal flood insurance program comes up in any conversation, it is safe to assume that most of us are worried that not enough is being done to help us get the answers and desired results through this period of uncertainty. We are all greatly impacted by this issue and LIBOR is happy to report that our elected officials from all levels of government are staying on top of this issue to ensure that we have a reasonable outcome.

On both the local and state levels, we are very proud to report that last year LIBOR began a conversation to suggest some property tax alternatives that might lessen the burden on all of us. In 2016, LIBOR will play a role in the upcoming Property Tax Alternatives study undertaken by the Long Island Regional Planning Council. We anticipate that all of the competent minds associated with this project will provide a realistic approach to what is possible.

Zombie homes and the removal of squatters are a hot issue that seems to be getting increased attention. Once again, our elected officials are considering legislation that will address these serious concerns.

In the Fair Housing arena, LIBOR and REALTORS® statewide are actively trying to pass laws that will ultimately prevent unfair and illegal discrimination in the co-op buying and selling process. We have recently received encouraging news from lawmakers in Nassau County, the New York City Council and at the state Legislature that they are ready to help us in this quest!

While this agenda will move forward in 2016, it is once again critically important to remind everyone that all REALTORS®, their friends, family members and their clients must get out and vote. Lawmakers are very aware that REALTORS® and their associates are strong in the political arena. We will soon be upon what can only be described as a historic year in politics. With that being said, with politics comes policy. It is more critical than ever to exercise your right as a REALTOR® to affect legislation by voting and making an investment in the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC), which increases our influence in protecting our industry. ●