



RANWW

Realtors® Association of
Northwestern Wisconsin

August 2020
Volume 13 Issue 11

The GAD Report

THE PANDEMIC AND POLITICS—RPAC EDITION —NEED YOUR INVOLVEMENT

Welcome to August:

As I am writing this, Governor Tony Evers has used his emergency powers to implement a mandatory state-wide mask wearing policy. About a minute later, I was already hearing from sources that one or both houses of the state Legislature were in discussions to stop it. (The state Legislature can override the Governor's actions by a vote of both chambers, and the Governor has no veto power over it.)

How you feel about wearing a mask, I'll leave that opinion to each member. Know that your Association is following developments as they happen and will adapt to change as quickly as possible.

Now, to things that haven't changed. August 11th marks primary election day in Wisconsin. In person, absentee and drive thru voting are available (in many locations). There is a primary for the 10th Senate District that covers Menomonie and a few townships in Dunn County, a GOP primary in the 29th Assembly for the same area, a Democratic and GOP primary for the 3rd Congressional District, and a recall of a town supervisor in Sawyer County.

What also hasn't changed is the need for all of you to be politically involved. And right now that means an investment in RPAC. I am asking every member to invest \$100 into Direct Giver so that we can support incumbents and vetted candidates for the state Legislature, and after the fall election, candidates for local non partisan offices. A number of our Large Donor Council members are coming back at the \$1000 level, but we need as many of you as possible to be involved at \$100 or more. You can go to WRA's secure site and use Visa, Mastercard or American Express to make your investment:

<https://www.wra.org/dgcontribution/>

Your support is VITAL.....so is your investment. Thank You!!!

Bruce

It is very Important for you to stay up-to-date on the latest orders from the county health departments in our jurisdiction:

www.ranww.org

You will find updates at the local, state and national level regarding the coronavirus.

I'll continue to update the GADabouts Facebook page with new information from WRA and NAR as it occurs.

Stay safe, and stay informed with your Association.

Bruce King — Government Affairs Director



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- RPAC Investment Needed!!
- August Primary
- WRA Podcast
- Tools You Can Use
- Politics and COVID-19
- Contact My Legislator

NAHB SAYS SINGLE FAMILY HOMES ARE UP 13.8 PERCENT IN JUNE

In a sign that the housing market is leading the economy during the coronavirus outbreak, sales of newly built, single-family homes rose to their highest level since the Great Recession, up 13.8 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 776,000 units in June, according to newly released data by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau. The June rate is 6.9 percent higher than the June 2019 pace.

"While Wall Street may have been expecting a smaller gain, anyone following the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index would know these numbers are in line with what we are hearing from builders," said Chuck Fowke, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and a custom home builder from Tampa, Fla. "Builders are moving to ramp up production to meet growing demand."

"Just Because You Do Not Take An Interest In Politics, Doesn't Mean That Politics Won't Take An Interest In You." —Pericles (430 B.C)

WISCONSIN EYE DISCUSSION ON EVICTIONS DURING A PANDEMIC

[WATCH THE FULL PROGRAM](#)

The governor implemented the 60 day moratorium on evictions on March 27, but it was also coupled with \$50 million aid from the federal CARES Act. Wisconsin saw a 4,075 reduction in eviction filings during this time, but now with the additional \$600 in unemployment insurance ending, landlords and tenants are left to wait for the next federal COVID-19 relief package. WRA's Joe Murray is a panelist on the program.

PRIMARY ELECTION SET TO GO AND A RECALL IN SPIDER LAKE TOWNSHIP

Primary elections will be held on August 11th in the 10th Senate district, where Cherie Link is challenging Rob Stafsholt for the GOP nomination. In the 29th Assembly district, three Republicans will vie for the right to run in November. They are Neil Kline, Ryan Shirley and Clint Moses.

There is a primary in the 3rd Congressional district where 22 year incumbent Ron Kind is facing Democrat Mark Neumann. On the GOP side, Jessie Ebben will meet Derrick Van Orden.

Two candidates are running for the position of interim chairperson of the Town of Spider Lake in a recall election Tuesday, Aug. 11. The fall 2020 primary election also is being held that day throughout Sawyer County and Wisconsin.

The recall election was authorized after 71 town residents signed a petition citing various allegations related to incumbent chairman John Leighton's official duties. The allegations and Leighton's responses to them were detailed in the June 17 and June 24 issues of the Sawyer County Record.



PHASE TWO OF THE CURRENT SET TO GO NEAR THE CANNERY DISTRICT

With much of the Cannery District ready to see new construction, a housing project that is currently under construction is looking to have its second phase approved.

The building is called the Current, and has been under construction since early spring. W Capital Group will have the first phase ready for occupancy in about two months.

The second phase of the developers plan is for the lot immediately

to the north of the current development begin construction. This building will have 36 of the 43 units designated for low income individuals. Studios, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments will be available along with underground parking, storage units and a community room.

The developer has received low income tax credits and incentives from the City of Eau Claire to maintain low-cost rents in both units.

“RPAC Does Not Buy Candidates....It Buys A Seat At The Table Where Decisions On Matters That Affect Your Clients And Your Business Are Made.”
(Bruce King, RANWW Government Affairs Director)

NEWSPAPERS ANNOUNCE MERGER

One of the sources of information that many have relied on for decades is facing the same kind of financial trouble new digital media is. Several newspapers in our jurisdiction have decreased the number of times a week they publish a printed paper (just about all have a digital replica). Now after 144 years, the Mondovi Herald-News will merge with the two other weekly papers that serve Buffalo County. After August 6th, the Cochrane Fountain City Recorder and the Buffalo County Journal will all be rolled into one publication.

CITY TO APPLY FOR IDLE SITE GRANT TO HELP HY-VEE CLEAR FORMER K-MART SITE

The City of Eau Claire has applied for a \$500,000 Idle Site Grant from WEDA to remove any asbestos, lead paint or other contaminants in the former K-Mart and demolish the site. The City would then give the money to Hy-Vee to pay for demolition of the building and grounds.

Under an agreement with the City, the site must be demolished and ready for construction by the end of 2021. Hy-Vee plans a 95,000 square foot grocery store with a pharmacy, liquor department and coffee shop.

Plans from the developer show the main entrance facing west toward Memorial High School with 556 parking spaces. Earlier discussion on the site included having a right turn lane into the site off Clairemont Avenue just west of London Road.

The K-Mart was built in 1963 and was one of the original big box stores in the region 8 years before London Square Mall opened, but in its last years suffered from its parent company filing for bankruptcy and having a portion of the roof on the east side of the structure partially collapse after a heavy wet snowfall.



We have all heard reports that say residential rental evictions surged due to the Wisconsin eviction moratorium expiration in May. The real numbers show a 30% decline for the first six months of 2020 versus 2019. How can this be true, you ask? Listen in as WRA chief lobbyist Tom Larson and residential rental expert Tim Ballering from the Apartment Association of Southeastern Wisconsin (AASEW) break down the actual numbers and provide valuable insights into the eviction issue in Wisconsin.

NEW MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT NEARING FINAL APPROVAL IN EAU CLAIRE

A new mixed use development is in its final design approval for downtown Eau Claire. The Andante project will be located in a space that currently holds a municipal parking lot across from the Eau Claire Chamber building and is on the banks of the Eau Claire River.

The five story building will have underground parking for tenants and nearby parking in the RCU parking ramp across the street. There will be mixed use on the ground floor including space on the west side of the structure specifically designed to be a restaurant. There will be a lobby and space for bike storage for the apartments which will be configured as 76 residential units, with 16 studio, 12 studio plus, 16 one-bedroom, 16 one-bedroom plus and 16 two-bedroom units.

Once the Plan Commission has given final approval, its on to the City Council for its approval. Construction could begin later this year or in 2021.

This development is a block from the RCU parking ramp, where the Children's Museum will move, Block 7 will be developed into mixed use and apartments, and three blocks north of the bus transfer site where low income apartments will be developed.

RPAC AND YOU

Did you know that you can make your RPAC investment securely online using your Visa, Mastercard and now American Express card?

Go to <https://www.wra.org/dgcontribution/>

If REALTORS® do not speak out, get involved and help shape the discussion, someone else will.

Nobody knows a community better than a REALTOR®. You are on the front line as defenders of real estate issues.

Investing in RPAC assures you a seat at the table when critical decisions are made for homeowners and private property owners.

Supporting vetted candidates and incumbents at all levels of elective governance is part of what RPAC is about.

Now more than ever, we need your financial investment in RPAC thru the Large Donor Council or Direct Giver.



FIND OUT WHO IS ON YOUR BALLOT

There will be a primary in the 3rd Congressional district on both the Democratic and Republican tickets, a primary for the 29th Assembly seat and a Republican primary for the 10th Senate seat. Those will happen on August 11th, then its on to the general election in November.

You will get an application for an absentee ballot in September if you do not want to go to the polls.

What is important is to know the positions of each candidate, and who is on your ballot. Check with MyVote Wisconsin 21 days prior to an election to know.



[Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly and applying the wrong remedies.](#) - Groucho Marx

TOOLS YOU CAN USE IN YOUR BUSINESS

If you have been thinking about adding tools to your toolbox, NAR offers two excellent certificate programs that do not take a lot of time to complete and will complement your current skill set.

First is e-PRO®. The current pandemic has rushed technology to the forefront in a way not seen before. Zoom, Microsoft and Webex meetings are happening hourly.

With many members still at home, and many that will stay there after the pandemic eases, having a heightened understanding of marketing strategies and how to make technology work for you with those strategies will give you an edge.



The second is At Home With Diversity. This course addresses issues of diversity, fair housing and cultural differences and how these dynamics influence you as a real estate professional.

Do you know how easy it is to make an RPAC investment?

Go to www.wra.org/dgcontribution, fill in your information and credit/debit card number (Visa, Mastercard and American Express) and enter a one-time amount or set up monthly payments.

No corporate cards allowed, but LLCs are permitted.

CAMPAIGNS IN THE AGE OF COVID-19-BY JOE MURRAY, WRA

Bruce's Note: I'm running this story from last month by Joe Murray because it gives you excellent insight into the political process during a pandemic, the changing face of traditional campaigning and fundraising and even how we will be able to vote in November. It will hopefully engage you to the point of investing in RPAC as soon as possible.

This year, candidates face a very significant challenge. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed almost everything. In the age of social distancing, political campaigns will have to adapt to the restriction on face-to-face interactions with voters while campaigning at every level. Events that feature large crowds have been canceled, and the most common task of the grassroots campaign — knocking on doors — is taboo for now.

In spite of all this, the elections to be held on November 3 are underway. Three political factors will ultimately influence the final results, perhaps significantly, one way or another:

1. The 20 state legislative seats with no incumbent running.
2. The incredible surge in absentee voting.

THE BIG QUESTION OF HOW VOTERS WILL RESPOND TO THE COVID-19 "SAFER AT HOME" SHUTDOWN THAT HAS PRODUCED THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED WORKERS IN WISCONSIN SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

OPEN LEGISLATIVE SEATS

The 2020 legislative election cycle includes 20 open state legislative districts. These are districts where the incumbent has decided to retire or possibly run for a different office. In the state Senate, there are seven open seats; in the state Assembly, 13 districts are open. This is an average number of open seats over the last 10 years.

After looking closely at the voting history of all 20 open seats, one conclusion is pretty clear: only six of the 20 districts (30.0%) will be or could be highly contested between the two major parties. The other 14 seats are either strong Democrat or Republican districts and will remain in the same party hands after the elections on November 3.

Why are open legislative seats important to political insiders? Because open seats in any election cycle, depending on where they are located, offer the best possibility to flip from one party to the other. Based on historical voting numbers, only six open seats fall into competitive territory this year, and this means that additional "opportunity" seats will be in districts with incumbents running for reelection, and incumbents are generally more difficult to defeat.

ABSENTEE VOTING WILL CONTINUE TO SKYROCKET IN WISCONSIN

Badger State voters have a long-held tradition of turning out to vote in big numbers. Wisconsin voter turnout is always near the top compared to most states, and political prognosticators believe that November 2020 voter turnout could break all previous records in the state.

Even with the COVID-19 pandemic, many believe turnout will surge, in large part due to absentee early voting. Prognosticators point to the recent election for state Supreme Court between liberal Jill Karofsky and conservative Dan Kelly. In the April 7 election, 71% of all votes cast were absentee. This represents a dramatic increase over all previous elections. For example, in the November 2016 election and 2018 midterms, fewer than 30% of all votes were cast absentee. Fear of the pandemic drove Wisconsin voters to vote absentee, "essentially turning the voting pattern in Wisconsin upside down, from being mostly in-person to mostly by mail," according to UW-Madison political science professor Barry Burden.

Assuming absentee voting surges, how will this impact final results? Donald Trump carried Wisconsin by approximately 22,000 votes in 2016, one of the narrowest margins in the country. Will the November absentee surge prove to be an advantage for Trump or Biden? And how will this surge affect down-ballot elections for Congress and state Legislature? Research has suggested that down-ballot races could be most impacted by higher turnout driven by absentee voting. That may influence the outcome in highly competitive districts where the two parties spend the bulk of their time and resources.

Representatives in the Wisconsin Legislature

29th Assembly

Rob Stafsholt

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67th Assembly

Rob Summerfield

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68th Assembly

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73rd Assembly

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74th Assembly

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75th Assembly

Romaine Quinn

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87th Assembly

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91st Assembly

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92nd Assembly

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93rd Assembly

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State Senators

23rd Senate

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25th Senate

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31st Senate

Jeff Smith

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OUR MISSION:

“RANWW/
NWWMLS UNITE
TO ADVOCATE FOR
REAL PROPERTY
RIGHTS, ADVANCE
PROFESSIONALISM
AND CONNECT MEM-
BERS WITH OUR
COMMUNITIES.”

RANWW GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

The REALTORS® Association of Northwestern Wisconsin is the largest association in terms of area, stretching from Millston, Whitehall and Fountain City to the south all the way to central Bayfield and southern Ashland county to the north. We are the fourth largest of the 19 Associations in terms of membership. Your Association covers 385 units of local government, monitoring a wide variety of issues that can and do affect you. In addition to local government, your GAD also monitors issues at the state and national level that will have a direct or indirect impact on housing and the industry, as well as legislation that can affect the consumer. Your Government Affairs Director works with members and affiliates to raise investment dollars for RPAC that help to support elected officials that support your business. RANWW is one of only three REALTOR® Association's in Wisconsin that have their own PAC, which was started 41 years ago to support candidates at the local and state level. We maintain a Facebook page, called “The GADabouts”, that aims to keep you up to date on political issues that will affect your business. Your GAD also produces a periodic government affairs program posted on our YouTube channel, RANWWTV!!



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Empower your future.**



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