



RANWW

Realtors® Association of
Northwestern Wisconsin

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The GAD Report

THE ROAD AHEAD

Welcome to February!

Real estate is still hot, median prices are up and inventory is low. Striking while the market is still strong will be key to what your Association does this year.

Let's start with RPAC. Normally, we begin our investment campaign later in the spring. Not this year, and probably never again. As you've read in these pages over the years, the cost of doing a political campaign, whether for local, state or national office continues to rise. We have more REALTORS® running for office, and others with a background in building and construction who understand the concerns groups like ours have when it comes to housing.

Housing, be it workforce or affordable, will be words you will be hearing for a long time to come. In the Chippewa Valley, you see new housing being built, less so in smaller communities. What you also don't see much of in rural communities is broadband. The Governor has pledged tens of millions to get it going, but there is more that needs to be done. Working and learning at home outside of a city presents daunting challenges. We empower men and women at the local, state and national level to solve those challenges, but the only way they get there is by members like you to invest in them, invest in their willingness to work with us on our issues or to give us a few minutes of time so that we may state the case for real estate, for housing and for the rights of private property owners everywhere. I call it *"The Chair"*

The Chair is that empty seat at a City Council meeting, or a county plan commission meeting, or at a legislative hearing or giving testimony in front of a Congressional hearing. If we do not support those local, state and federal officials, why would they support our issues? Your investment has never, nor can it ever, or should ever, buy a vote. What you invest in is a seat at the table with our elected officials to lobby on your behalf. Be watching for select messaging about *The Chair* this spring and maybe a podcast or two from me on the subject.

We have at the national and state level the finest lobbying team there is, the proof is in the results for your industry year in and year out. So, how about you try your hand at it. Spend two hours with us April 14th during REALTOR® and Government Day, see how its done, advocate for a couple of very important issues that will pay benefits for your business.

If you are a member of the Large Donor Council, I'll be reaching out to you first to renew your investment in the next few days. We will be reaching out to everyone in the Association for an investment this year. The issues demand no less than the highest level of participation of our membership.

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 Begins
- New BRF Housing
- R & G Day Virtual
- Mask Mandate?
- RCU Adding Facilities
- Capitol Insights

NEW HOUSING BEING PLANNED FOR BLACK RIVER FALLS

For longtime residents of Jackson County and the surrounding area, The Pines Ballroom was the place to go in Black River Falls. The facility served the region well. Then other hotels and the casino came to town, the Pines fell into disrepair and low use and finally closed. After some time, it was torn down and now sits as a vacant lot.

If S.C. Swiderski has their way, it won't be sitting vacant much longer. The company, who has current apartment projects going in Stanley, Chetek, Marshfield and a 120 acre, 500 plus unit complex that will break ground this spring on the west side of Eau Claire, is planning to construct 5 single family homes northeast of the

former Pines Ballroom site, then construct 95 apartment homes and 123 storage units on the 47 acre site.

The company has several different designs when they are building several buildings on one site. They will use three different styles, some with attached garages and some without.

The company plans to have the apartments targeted for rental by residents earning 60 to 120% of the areas median income.

Final details will be completed this spring.

“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)

WRA Issues Successes

1. REALTORS® and Real Estate are Essential
2. Remote Online Notarization
3. Condominium Association Dispute Resolution
4. More Money for K-12 Schools and Property Tax Relief
5. Broadband Expansion
6. Income Tax Cuts
7. Seller Audio/Video Surveillance at Showings
8. Prohibit Chasing Sales

IN BRIEF

As this edition of *The GAD Report* is going to press, both the Eau Claire City Council and the Eau Claire County Board are planning separate public hearings on a local mask ordinance. The City Council meets at 4 and the County Board meets at 7pm. Both will hold public hearings prior to discussion and voting on the ordinance.

The ordinance, if enacted would only go into effect if there is no statewide mask ordinance. Last week, the Wisconsin state Senate voted along party lines to abolish the mask mandate, but there is a snag that was unforeseen that caused the Assembly to postpone a vote. That snag is the possible loss of \$49 million a month in federal aid to Wisconsin's food assistance program.

Both bodies will allow up to two hours of testimony prior to discussion and a vote.

Royal Credit Union announced that they will be building a new facility across from Woodman's in River Prairie, redesignating their facility off Birch Street as a mortgage origination facility, and also close their branch near Mayo Clinic downtown and construct a drive thru bank on the site of the current Direct Store on Barstow Street, which will close this spring and be torn down.

Recently, the Association jurisdiction lost two retired legislators. Former 68th Assembly Representative Dave Plombon, who served in the 1990s passed away at 59 while Barb Gronemus, who served in the 91st Assembly District for 26 years, died at age 89.



What does the future hold for waterfront property owners? REALTOR® Mike Spranger discusses the importance of the WRA's lobbying efforts and advocacy on the "Protect Our Piers" bill working its way through the Wisconsin Legislature. <https://youtu.be/grdZRTNR6tM>

ECONOMY IMPROVING FASTER THAN EXPECTED: CBO REPORT

The Congressional Budget Office came out with an analysis of the nation's economy, and the non-partisan agency likes what it sees, despite the current pandemic. In brief, it could be a lot worse.

The American economy will return to its pre-pandemic size by the middle of this year, even if Congress does not approve any more federal aid for the recovery, but it will be years before everyone thrown off the job by the pandemic is able to return to work, the Congressional Budget Office projected on Monday.

The new projections from the office, which is nonpartisan and issues regular budgetary and economic forecasts, are an improvement from the office's forecasts last summer. Officials told reporters on Monday that the brightening outlook was a result of large sectors of the economy adapting better and more rapidly to the pandemic than originally expected.

They also reflect increased growth from a \$900 billion economic aid package that Congress passed in December, which included \$600 direct checks to individuals and more generous unemployment benefits.

The budget office now expects the unemployment rate to fall to 5.3 percent at the end of the year, down from an 8.4 percent projection last July. The economy is expected to grow 3.7 percent for the year, after recording a much smaller contraction in 2020 than the budget office initially expected.



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.



MARK THE DATE



Tell your story. Collaborate. Advocate. Protect.

Wisconsin real estate was deemed essential. And your participation in the WRA's annual lobbying event is your chance to keep it that way.

With the all new virtual format, you can attend and visit lawmakers virtually, all from the comfort of home. Advocating for a brighter tomorrow has never been easier.

04.14.21



FREE REGISTRATION | VIRTUAL | WRA.ORG/RGDAY

2021 REALTOR® & GOVERNMENT TIME CHANGE WITH PROGRAM UPDATE

The 2021 REALTOR® & Government Day program will be a two hour event that will respect everyone's time and still have meaningful dialogue with our legislators and their staffs. The program will begin at 1pm with introductions followed by an address by Governor Tony Evers. That will be followed by an issues briefing from WRA's lobby team. Due to the short time frame to interact with our legislators, the number of items that we will share with them will be limited to three or four. We will have a short break to get the electronic rooms ready for everyone to join, then begin our meeting at 2:20. Our meeting will last about 35 minutes, then have a five minute wrap up from WRA.

Since we cannot be in Madison this year, it is very important that we have a large turnout for this meeting. We will again be joined by members of the Lake Superior Area REALTORS® as well as the Western Wisconsin REALTORS® Association.

Registration is free. The time commitment is two hours, but the importance is substantial as we move forward with legislative issues that impact your clients, your business and your community.



[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.

The National Association of REALTORS® has long been known as one of the top lobbying organizations in the country and is often recognized as one of the most bi-partisan.

Advocating for your interests, NAR was also recognized by Politico® as one of the top groups for investment in issues, the 3rd quarter saw NAR as the number one lobby group on your behalf.

Representatives in the Wisconsin Legislature

29th Assembly

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31st Senate

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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. And be watching for a podcast called “The Chair” coming soon.

**Bruce King, C2EX, AHWD,
e-PRO®
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**Enhance your skills.
Empower your future.**

