



# RANWW

Realtors® Association of  
Northwestern Wisconsin

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## The GAD Report

### WITH SPRING COMES RPAC SEASON

This year, we started our RPAC investment campaign early in hopes of getting some of you to invest earlier before housing became tighter in our jurisdiction. We've had so-so results so far. Many of our Large Donor Council members are renewing, some paying now and some paying this spring or summer. We've had a few new Direct Givers in the mix as well. So, let's throw some numbers at you:

RANWW member participation in RPAC is consistently in the high 30s to 40%, that beats both the state and national average by a few percentage points. That's good. That also means that six out of every ten of our members do not invest anything in RPAC, yet gain the benefits from those who do.

Six out of ten.

So, why do I almost constantly ask you to invest? Is it really that important? The answer is yes. Regardless of where your political feelings or loyalties lie, we are the REALTOR® Party, we speak with one very strong 1.4 million member voice in Washington DC, we speak with one very strong 16,500 member voice in Madison, and we speak with one very strong 1,000 plus member voice in jurisdictions across northwestern Wisconsin advocating for workforce housing, rural broadband, sensible taxes, strong schools, clean water, and the protection of the rights of property owners across the nation and in our own backyards.

The way we keep elected officials advocating for you is to keep them in office, and that takes money. As a former two-time elected official myself I know that all too well. This September 30, data will be released that will allow for the redrawing of the congressional and legislative maps used for the next ten years. As in past decades, there will likely be a fight over those maps.

In your local jurisdictions, its business as usual. Investing in RPAC will allow you to have funds available to support those local and state candidates that support your business and your customers dream of homeownership. Please invest in RPAC, and maybe then I won't have to ask so much. Thanks and have a great May!!

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](http://www.ranww.org)

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

**As vaccines roll out, there will be changes to the current restrictions. Be sure you know the rules in your area.**

**Stay safe, and stay informed with your Association.**

**Bruce King — Government Affairs Director**



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#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- RPAC Investments
- AHWD 2 Day Course
- Eau Claire Housing Plans
- Capitol Insights
- REALTOR® Party
- Lumber Increases

## AT HOME WITH DIVERSITY TRAINING MAY 11-12

WRA is offering a two-day At Home With Diversity Training certification course on May 11-12. This is an excellent way to educate yourself in the changing face of the industry.

In the two-day course, you'll learn about bias in real estate, housing policies in America, "One America" principles and much more. And, you'll be ready to embrace diversity in the marketplace and ultimately build your business.

The fee is just \$30, the time and money invested is well worth it.

I am proud to have the AHWD certification, you will too. You can learn more about the course and [sign up online here](#)



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*"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)*

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The School District of Barron will move ahead with its referendum after a recount showed a larger margin of victory than earlier was reported.

The referendum calls for \$24.5 million of bonding that will encompass projects across the district, mainly facility improvements.

The vote total at the end of election night was close enough that a recall petition was asked for by a resident to recount the ballots.

After the second round the vote total ended 740 Yes and 725 No.

## LOTS OF NEW HOUSING COMING TO EAU CLAIRE

More companies and developers have announced plans for housing in and near the city of Eau Claire, with plans being analyzed and approved nearly as fast as they are drawn. Such is the state of housing in Eau Claire right now. Currently in the discussion and planning state is a project adjacent to the Cannery District called Sawmill Flats. The development would consist of 14 one-bedroom apartments and two floors with 14 three bedroom apartments each. The building would remove old housing and fill a vacant lot. The Redevelopment Authority received approval for constructing townhouses in the district and is working with an out of state company for a mixed use commercial and residential structure.

Wurzer Builders is working on a large apartment complex on the city's far southeast side and is already looking to the second phase of their project which would bring 62 single family homes and 31 twin homes. Menards has approval to develop a 163 lot residential subdivision on land it owns in the Town of Union on the far west side of town. The construction will be a mix of single-family homes and twin homes of Folsom Street, which is where another developer is looking to bring several twin homes.

Holtzinger Homes is developing an eight-lot subdivision for single family homes on land it owns on Vine Street. Earlier announced plans include mixed use and apartments at Birch Street and River Prairie Drive and across the road from that off Galloway Street, a 17 million apartment project won preliminary approval. C & M Construction is continuing to build twin homes along Jeffers Road on the northwest side of town.



In case you were not available to join us for REALTOR® & Government Day, these are the issues that were discussed with our Legislative partners and their staffs. Plan to join us next year in Madison on Wednesday, February 9, 2022.

- **Broadband expansion:** Broadband expansion for unserved and underserved areas is a top priority for the WRA. The 2019 Wisconsin state budget included the largest appropriation for broadband expansion grants in state history: \$44 million over two years. The broadband program awards funding for critical infrastructure projects to deliver high-speed internet service to Wisconsin's rural communities. This session, Gov. Tony Evers and the legislature must work to build on this investment and dramatically expand broadband internet access in areas of critical need in the Badger State.
- **Workforce housing:** Wisconsin has a serious shortage of workforce housing, and workforce housing is another top priority for the WRA. The state is not building enough housing to keep up with demand for its growing workforce and its needs. The WRA and interested allies are working on a number of legislative proposals to address the workforce housing shortage. These proposals will focus on issues such as lack of inventory, construction costs, land use regulations and affordability.
- **Property taxes:** Wisconsin property owners pay among the highest property taxes in the country. In 2018, Wisconsin's property tax rate was the fifth highest in the country, according to thebalance.com. Among Midwestern states, Wisconsin has the second-highest percentage of homeowners across all income levels who are "extremely cost-burdened," paying more than 50% of their income on housing. The WRA supports the property tax caps and finding alternative revenue sources to fund local government and schools.
- **COVID-19 losses for landlords:** The current eviction moratorium will leave many housing providers and renters alike struggling. During the moratorium, property owners will struggle to meet their payment obligations for mortgage, insurance, taxes, property maintenance, utilities and staff. When the moratorium expires, renters will struggle to make up massive amounts of back rent, which could amount to over a years' worth of rent. This could turn into a significant housing crisis in 2021 and beyond.



Sen. Dan Feyen (R-Fond du Lac) and WRA EVP Tom Larson discuss the shortage of workforce housing in Wisconsin and what we can do to address the problem. Listen here: <https://youtu.be/NCTpXyWSkqM>

## BE A PART OF THE REALTOR PARTY



The REALTOR® Party is a powerful alliance of REALTORS® and REALTOR® Associations working to protect and promote homeownership and property investment. The REALTOR® Party speaks with one voice to advance candidates and public policies that build strong communities and promote a vibrant business environment.

Now more than ever, it is critical for REALTORS® across America to come together and speak with one voice about the stability a sound and dynamic real estate market brings to our communities. From city hall to the state house to the U.S. Capitol, our elected officials are making decisions that have a huge impact on the bottom line of REALTORS® and their customers. Through the support of REALTORS® like you, the REALTOR® Party represents your interests, interests at the federal level with issues such as mortgage interest deductions and flood insurance, at the state level with rural broadband and workforce housing and at the local level with housing, zoning, parks and other quality of life issues that make our communities, large and small, places to live, work and play. You can be a part of that by volunteering on a committee, investing in RPAC, running for office or working at the polls on election day. Vote Act Invest...it's all part of the REALTOR® Party.

### RPAC AND YOU

Did you know that you can make your RPAC investment securely online using your Visa, Mastercard and now American Express card? And, you can set up monthly payments!

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.





## WRA'S TOM LARSON ON WISCONSIN EYE

Wisconsin Eye recently sat down with Tom Larson, Senior VP of WRA, Jerry Deschane, Executive Director of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, Professor Kurt Paulsen from UW-Madison and Scott Manley, Executive VP of Government Relations at WMC for a discussion concerning workforce housing.

In 2019, WRA commissioned Professor Paulsen to work on a landmark report that shows the lack of workforce housing across the state and its impact on homebuyers.

This program is an update on that 2019 report along with insights from other business sectors.

If you were with us for REALTOR® & Government Day, you know that workforce housing is a top priority in this legislative session.



"We in America do not have government by the majority, we have government by the majority who participate" - Thomas Jefferson

## LUMBER INCREASES ADD TO NEW HOME COST

A story in this edition of *The GAD Report* cited Eau Claire for having a virtual housing boom going on with hundreds of housing units approved recently, plus several hundred approved last year and more that will be approved on the next few months.

All that housing will come at a cost, first to the contractors that build the new homes, then to the new homeowner who will need to contend with a steep, and increasing rise in the cost of a new home thanks to lumber prices that are adding nearly \$36,000 to the cost of a new home and nearly \$13,000 to the price of an average new multifamily home.

According to the National Association of Home Builders, that increase can translate to an increase of \$119 a month in rent and all at a time when workforce

housing is at a premium and shortages appear all across the state.

It's not just lumber. Drywall costs are up 7%, copper wire is up 27%, and land prices are also up 11%.

Despite the much higher prices, single family housing starts in March increased by 41% over March 2019.



*Did you know that you can use your Visa, Mastercard or American Express to make your Direct Giver investment? You can set up a recurring payment and run it until you reach the desired amount, or you can do it all at once. Remember, we also take LLC checks (sorry, NO corporate checks allowed).*

*Your investment in RPAC is an investment in your business!*

## Representatives in the Wisconsin Legislature

### 29<sup>th</sup> Assembly

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### 87<sup>th</sup> Assembly

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## State Senators

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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.

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COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

**Enhance your skills.  
Empower your future.**

