

# What Do Your Dues Do For You?

## *Learning about YCAR...*

We paid \$357 this year to belong to three professional industry trade associations. An association is a group of people joined together for a common purpose. It is about linking people for unified representation, connecting people to share common resources, and cooperating to build professional and mutually beneficial relationships. Together we can do more good for the housing industry, for Realtors®, and for our communities than we could ever hope to on our own.

Our three Associations have unique abilities and opportunities; they serve different objectives for us:

1. **The National Association of Realtors® (NAR)** offers national reach, unified organization of the state associations, and individual Realtor® resources. It focuses on big picture, universal realities.
  - NAR is a force in the federal government and in the complex realm of politics. NAR can marshal **a collective Realtor® voice** to influence federal law, and national issues and trends. They protect against relentless threats from other special interests harmful to the housing industry and the work of Realtors®. They lobby for improvements, and they educate decision-makers with expert industry information. They represent us where most of us cannot be. Significant recent accomplishments include stopping banks from getting into real estate, and passage of the extended tax credits for first-time home buyers and expanding it for many other buyers.
  - NAR provides vast shared **resources and tools**. There is a virtual library of educational information found on our Realtor® site [www.realtor.org](http://www.realtor.org). They create opportunities for certifications and designations (e.g. Graduate Realtor® Institute, GRI), for seminars and conferences, and gather us for a national convention. Our common Code of Ethics is a product of NAR and fosters higher standards than the law would require.
2. **The Oregon Associations of Realtors® (OAR)** serves the 27 local associations in Oregon, represents us in statewide political issues, and provides tools and resources for compliance with state law.
  - What NAR does at the federal level, OAR does at the state level. Recent relevant examples involve fighting the transfer tax on behalf of the public (which is really a sales tax on real estate sales), and protecting Realtors® from individual county franchise fees or additional taxes on their commissions. Local property rights issues are of paramount concern.
  - Real Estate law is primarily a state issue. OAR assists Realtors® and the public with awareness and the proper compliance and application of law. Examples include the Agency Disclosure pamphlet and forms, and both the Buyer, and Seller, Advisories. More information can be found at [www.oregonrealtors.org](http://www.oregonrealtors.org).
3. **The Yamhill County Association of Realtors® (YCAR)** is where association gets personal and physical; it is about boots on the ground. The association does not revolve around tasks, tools and resources; it is not focused on a government, or a collection of organizations; it is about Realtors® working together at street level. It is about mutual advantages we garner by cooperating as professionals and forging beneficial relationships. It is about protecting the public, and contributing to the community. Our local association focus on these three areas:

- It is about **linking Realtors® together** for unique and personal benefits
  - Yes, we are competitors, but we also share a common profession as colleagues. Yes, we practice in different and competing brokerages or working as sole proprietors, but our association transcends these boundaries to serve a common cause.
  - We associate with each other not to serve an organization, but to promote the greater welfare of each member, the public, and our communities through association.
  - We know well the stresses and strains of our own occupation with its complex issues. Professional relationships can be the supreme resource we need to bear the burdens and respond professionally in all we do. More important than things and information are competent colleagues who assist and share, who give, encourage and motivate us.
  - We who know intimately what it takes to be an exceptional Realtor®, a community servant, and a guardian for the public, can encourage such exceptional practice by recognizing those among us who are exemplary, not for their own glory and ego, but for the inspiration of developing professionals among us.
  - We who live in the same communities have the ability to readily mobilize to directly do good for our profession, our clients and our communities.
  - And while the state and national associations can provide us with great tools and resources, in our associations we can forge custom solutions to local issues and problems.
  - The greatest benefit for our labors may not be the money but the professional bonds of friendship which develop out of mutual respect.
- We work together to **protect our public's best interest**, and to promote home ownership in our area.
  - We subscribe to and mutually hold to the Realtor® Code of Ethics for the benefit of everyone.
  - We help each other apply the law properly and uniformly to protect the investments of our clients. We keep each other aware of changes in law, current issues, and best industry practices.
  - We insure that the Realtors® in our area are knowledgeable, well-trained, competent, and committed to high standards of business ethics and professional service. When there are failures, we police our own industry.
  - We promote Realtor® education and training to serve our clients well and help them to make wise decisions and profitable purchases.
- We contribute to **our local communities** as successful professionals who draw their living and their support from these same communities.
  - It is the mark of a consummate professional to give back to the community.
  - Locally, YCAR is less about government and organizations, and more about involvement with the people we live among.
  - It is about improving our communities as we improve our own skills and our success.
  - Together, we form a community of professionals who can do so much more, and so much better, if we choose to strive together. The accomplishments of the group will far out-weigh the efforts of disparate individuals.

- We form a local association of Realtors® to do good, but we also encourage our members to belong to local service clubs (e.g. Rotary, Soroptimists), and charitable enterprises (Juliet's House, Habitat for Humanity). We support those who volunteer their services for the poor (St Barnabas Soup Kitchen), assist local municipalities on committees, boards, or commissions. The communities that enrich us are enriched when we offer a hand-up, when we donate funds, talents, or time.
- As a by-product, the public's sometimes unflattering views of agents will be silenced because they know too much about local Realtors® and personally know the professionalism and generosity of Realtors®.

The strength of YCAR is its members, united and committed to the ideals above. To have an association in name only while each Realtor® lives independent and autonomously provides no benefits and does little good for anyone. We can do so much better!

We invite you to join us as a member, to contribute as a professional, and enjoy the fruit of our efforts together. Successful professionals are busy people but they find time for what is productive and valuable. If everyone comes together for our meetings, socials, and projects then we can build a more effective association without over-taxing anyone's time and resources.

There is a place for everyone to receive the benefits, to give in your own way, and to share the wealth with others. We will be glad to help you find your place, a proud place, among your peers. Call or email us for more information. More to come...

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