

## KAR partners with KHC, HBAK, MBA in May training seminars

Beginning May 12th in Owensboro, the Kentucky Housing Corporation, in conjunction with the Home Builders Association of Kentucky, the Kentucky Association of REALTORS® and the Kentucky Mortgage Bankers Association, will hold a series of regional seminars. Topics at these seminars will include the newly formed “Kentucky Mortgage Credit Certificate Program,” the First Home Advantage Program for Down Payment Assistance and the \$8,000 federal tax credit for first time home buyers. Experts will be on hand to explain how each of these programs work, while giving tips on how to use these programs to provide the ability of first time home buyers to achieve the American Dream.

Members can register for these seminars by visiting [http://www.kyhousing.org/page.asp?calendar\\_id=1](http://www.kyhousing.org/page.asp?calendar_id=1).

You can also access the schedule by going to [www.kyhousing.org](http://www.kyhousing.org), clicking on Homeownership, clicking on Real Estate Professionals and then clicking on Homeownership Calendar. An online registration form will come up when you click on the date.

The Lender seminars will be from 9a.m. to Noon, and the Builder/REALTOR® seminars will be from 1p.m. to 3p.m. local time unless otherwise noted. Both seminars will be offered on each day unless otherwise noted.

### Seminar Locations

May 12 - Home Builders Association of NKY Office  
*Lender Seminar Only* - 9a.m. to Noon

May 13 - Home Builders Association of Owensboro Office

May 18 - REALTOR® Association of SKY Office  
*Builder/REALTOR® Seminar Only* - 2p.m. to 4p.m.

May 19 - REALTOR® Association of SKY Office  
*Lender Seminar Only* - 1p.m. to 4p.m.

May 20 - Lexington Bluegrass Association of REALTORS® Office

May 21 - Home Builders Association of Northern Kentucky Office,  
*Builder/REALTOR® Seminar Only* - 2p.m. to 4p.m.

May 22 - Greater Louisville Association of REALTORS® Office

May 26 - Somerset Center for Rural Development

May 27 - Elizabethtown Convention Center  
*Builder/REALTOR® Seminar Only* - 9a.m. to 11a.m.

May 28 - Greater Louisville Association of REALTORS® Office  
*Builder/REALTOR® Seminar Only*

## NAR News

### REALTOR® Credit Union

Created by the National Association of REALTORS®, REALTORS® Federal Credit Union (RFCU) is an independent and member-owned financial cooperative with services designed to meet the unique financial and cash-flow needs of REALTORS®.

[Click here](#)

### Serve on a NAR Committee

Start by completing an expertise profile and then submit a recommendation via the online Committee Recommendation database on REALTOR.org (search keyword: Committees).

### NAR Launches REALTORS® Core Health Insurance

The REALTORS® Core Health Insurance (RCHI) provides guaranteed-issue, affordable, Limited Medical health insurance plans to REALTORS® and association staff.

[Click here](#)

## Win \$10,000 and national publicity

REALTOR® Magazine is seeking applicants for the 2009 Good Neighbor Awards, which are celebrating their 10th anniversary. The Good Neighbor Awards recognize REALTORS® who have made exceptional contributions to their communities through volunteer work.

Five winners will be selected to receive \$10,000 grants for their community project, national publicity, and travel to the 2009 REALTORS® Conference & Expo in San Diego where the awards will be presented.

**Entry deadline is May 22.**

For an application or more information, go to [Realtor.org/realtormag](http://Realtor.org/realtormag) and click on Good Neighbor Awards, or contact Sara Geimer at [sgeimer@realtors.org](mailto:sgeimer@realtors.org), 312-329-8296.

## Freddie Mac restricts use of BPO's

Freddie Mac is restricting how lenders can use broker price opinions by revising its Seller/Service Guide to strictly prohibit its lenders from using broker price opinions to value properties for mortgage purchases. Though Freddie had refrained from using BPOs as a matter of policy, the changes made to section 44.7 of its Selling Guide leave no room for loopholes.

The revised Selling Guide states that to be acceptable for a transaction, each mortgage file must contain one of the following reports:

- A written appraisal report
- A written inspection report
- A print-out of the Last Feedback Certificate with the Minimum Assessment Feedback of Form 2070 or PIA

Also clearly stated in the revised language of Freddie's Selling Guide is the requirement that the Seller may not use tax-assessed valuations or BPOs to determine value.

*Source: Appraiser News Online*

## Jobless rate climbs in all 120 Kentucky counties

Jobless rates rose in all 120 Kentucky counties in March compared with a year earlier, according to state figures released recently.

Statewide, 10.3 percent of people who wanted a job last month couldn't get one, the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training said.

After adjusting for seasonal factors, the state rate was 9.8 percent, compared with 9.3 percent in February and 5.9 percent in March 2008. The county figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Fayette County recorded the state's lowest jobless rate in March, 7.4 percent, while Menifee County had the highest at 18.1 percent, according to the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training.

March numbers are preliminary, while February figures are revisions of figures released about a month ago by the agency.

*Source: Louisville Courier-Journal*



### Right Tools, Right Now

To help members through today's difficult market, NAR is making all of its programs, resources, tools and materials available at cost, at steeply discounted prices or absolutely FREE. Each month new resources are added. See what's available for April at the "Right Tools, Right Now" Web site.

[Click here to learn more](#)



## Lexington online property listings hijacked

A Lexington REALTOR® has a scam alert involving the misuse of the popular website, Craigslist.

Apparently, scam artists are highjacking information and photos from online property listings from real estate agents and trying to pass the property off as their own.

"I received a phone call Sunday morning. Somebody wanted to know how much I was renting my property for," said Kim Soper, a Realtor with Keller Williams Realty. "I told her it wasn't for rent, but for sale. She then told me the seller said they were from Africa."

Soper received about two dozen of these phone calls. People were getting her phone number from the for sale sign when driving by the home.

"They basically just stole all of my information and put their contact information on the listing," Soper said.

An email was sent to interested renters, it stated the posing sellers were having to rent their properties immediately because they had to move to Africa for work. It goes on to ask interested buyers to send their personal information and deposit.

"I just want people to know, this is a scam and nothing more and whatever you do, don't fall for it," said Soper.

To Soper's knowledge, nobody has fallen victim to this crime financially. However she says it's quickly spreading and more and more people could be targeted in the near future.

There are similar cases in Lexington and Georgetown - as well as New York, Florida and Washington, D.C.

Source: WKYT

## Federal court finds home buyers unfairly charged fee

An Alabama federal judge has ruled in favor of 30,000 real estate buyers who were improperly charged a \$149 fee, according to a Birmingham law firm. The ruling came against Birmingham-based RealtySouth, said Hare, Wynn, Newell & Newton, the law firm representing buyers in the class-action suit filed in U.S. District Court in Birmingham in 2004. The fee was instituted in 2003, Hare Wynn Attorney Don McKenna said Tuesday.

The court ruled RealtySouth collected the "administrative brokerage commission," but performed nothing for it. That, McKenna said, violates the Federal Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act. RealtySouth executives testified in court documents the fee is designed to pay the real estate brokerage's overhead, according to the ruling.

Source: Birmingham News



## Online CE courses available

It is now possible to earn CE credit for your real estate license renewal without leaving your home or office. These courses may be entered and exited at your convenience. Once you register for a course, you can begin immediately. All course work must be completed in a 12-month period to earn CE credit. Your completion date of the course determines the year the credit will be issued.

Three courses are available:

**Environmental Issues in Real Estate** - 6 hours (3 hours law credit & 3 hours elective credit)

**Real Estate Finance Today** - 3 hours (3 hours elective credit)

**Fair Housing** - 3 hours (3 hours law credit)

[Click here to learn more](#)

## IRS Requires Reporting of Cooperative Commissions

The Internal Revenue Service (“IRS”) requires that listing brokers who pay a cooperative commission in excess of \$600 to an individual who is not their employee must complete a Form 1099-MISC. While this is not a new law, it has come to NAR’s attention that not all real estate professionals are aware of this requirement. Below is a brief description of this issue and links to the necessary forms.

The IRS requires individuals that:

- 1) pay compensation of \$600 or more to
- 2) an individual who is not an employee
- 3) for services provided
- 4) during the course of the payor’s trade or business to complete Box 7- Nonemployee Compensation on Form 1099-MISC, give Copy B of the form to the individual who received the compensation, and file Copy A with the IRS.

“Nonemployee compensation” includes fees, commissions, prizes, and awards, and so would include cooperative commissions and referral fees paid by real estate professionals because these payments are made during the course of their trade or business to nonemployees.

These filing requirements exist even if the listing broker is not directly paying the cooperative commission to the other broker. So, if the cooperative commission is paid by the escrow agent to the other broker, the listing broker may still need to file a 1099-MISC. This is because the funds constituting the cooperative commission are drawn from the listing broker’s portion of the commission and so the payment is technically made by the listing broker.

This requirement only applies to payments made to individuals, and does not apply when the payments are made to corporations. Listing brokers should still make it part of their business practice to obtain a completed Form W-9 from anyone to whom it pays a commission, whether it be an individual or a corporation. Property owners do not need to complete a 1099-MISC for the commissions they pay to real estate professionals because this activity is not part of their trade or business.

[To read more, click here \(login required\)](#)

## GRI Courses

The entire 2009 GRI schedule is now available on KAR’s website.

Registration for classes can be made [here](#) or by visiting <http://ims.kar.com>.

May 19 & 20  
GRI 1: Professionalism in R.E.  
Madisonville, KY

June 2 & 3  
GRI 5: Systems for Success  
Somerset, KY

## Calls for 2009 Award Nominations

**REALTOR® of the Year Award**  
**Deadline: Saturday, June 1, 2009**

**Distinguished Service Award**  
**Deadline: Friday, June 12, 2009**

**Nat Sanders Education Award**  
**Deadline: Saturday, August 15, 2009**

**REALTOR® Community Service Award**  
**Deadline: Saturday, August 15, 2009**

**Please visit the KAR Web site ([www.kar.com](http://www.kar.com)) for nomination forms and more information about each of these awards.**

## BofA retires Countrywide brand

Bank of America Corp. launched a new mortgage and home equity loan brand Monday as a result of combining the previously acquired Countrywide Home Loans with the bank's mortgage operations.

The brand is called Bank of America Home Loans and is one of the first steps in converting Countrywide customers into Bank of America (NYSE: BAC) since the Charlotte, N.C.-based financial giant bought Countrywide Financial Corp. July 1.

Starting in April, the Countrywide Web site was merged with the Bank of America Web site and Countrywide customers had access to their mortgage financing information at any Bank of America retail location.

The Countrywide name is now retired.

The new home loans division will be based in Calabasas, Calif., Countrywide's former home.

The brand also includes several new tools offered to both Countrywide and Bank of America customers to help clarify the home financing and the payoff process. One of those tools, called the clarity commitment, is a one-page summary of the borrower's mortgage that includes a clarification of monthly payments, the interest rate, date due and closing costs.

The bank also launched an interactive mortgage Web site called the Bank of America Home Loan Guide where borrowers are guided through the home buying and refinance process.

The Web site is [www.bankofamerica.com/homeloan](http://www.bankofamerica.com/homeloan).

Both the new Web site and the billing statement clarifier are for home loans as well as refinanced loans.



## Seven tips to getting your clients what they want

Negotiating in today's market has taken on a more important role than in year's past. It is a skill that can serve you and your clients well in making deals happen. Here are a few tips from Jennifer Allan:

**Tip #1** - Never, ever call the buyer's agent and ask how the inspection went. Let him come to you. Take the attitude that you're confident the inspection went well.

**Tip #2** - Never, ever call the buyer's agent on the day of the loan approval and ask if the buyer, indeed, has loan approval. Call the next day. It's not your job to protect the buyer's earnest money deposit.

**Tip #3** - When negotiations get hot and heavy - withdraw. Dead silence from your end. Let the other side wonder if they blew it with you. Overnight.

**Tip #4** - When negotiating, try not to make the other side feel bullied or cornered. Build in a slight "putz" factor when you can to give the opposite team a way to accept without losing face. For example, if your buyer asks for a \$2000 credit for repairs and the seller counters with an unacceptable \$1000 credit, go back at \$1,800 instead of standing firm at \$2,000.

[To read more tips, click here](#)

## Seven home selling moves to avoid this spring

Amid falling home prices, near record-low mortgage rates, and even an \$8,000 tax perk from Uncle Sam, prospective buyers have plenty of reasons to dive into the real estate market. But with the teetering economy and financial markets, real estate experts don't anticipate an aggressive bounce in sales this spring. With the help of these experts, U.S. News compiled a list of seven home selling moves to avoid this spring.

**1. Thinking your home is the exception:** It's natural to be emotionally attached to your home, especially if you've lived there a long time. But allowing this affection obscure the realities of today's real estate market is a serious mistake. If your local market is declining in value, you'll need to price your home at a compelling level. That will require a painful decision: to price the property at or below comparable homes in the area, even if the price point is less than what you feel your home is worth.

[Read the additional tips here](#)

## Join KAR on Facebook, LinkedIn and ActiveRain

Join now and become a member of the KAR groups! KAR has added additional sites to its list of social networking outlets.

If you are not currently on these sites, getting started is easy. Just log on to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) or [www.activerain.com](http://www.activerain.com) and set up a profile.

Joining is free and once you become a member, you can request to be added to the KAR groups. That's all there is to it.

To locate the KAR groups, use the search feature or go directly to the group:

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=9244727021](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=9244727021)

### LinkedIn

[www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1323837](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1323837)

### ActiveRain

[activerain.com/groups/kar](http://activerain.com/groups/kar)



Mark your calendars and make plans to be a part of KAR's upcoming events!

## Summer Business Meeting

June 17 - 19

Lake Barkley

Cadiz, KY

Free registration to all members!

## Annual KAR Convention & Expo

September 29 - October 1

Galt House

Louisville, KY

\$49 registration for first-time attendees before July 31.

\$99 registration for all other attendees before July 31.

As part of KAR's Stimulus Package, registration rates are being held much lower than last year (savings up to \$50) making the 2009 gathering a tremendous value!

You'll have the opportunity to earn a full year's worth of continuing education credit, see the latest products and services at the Expo, network with your peers from across the state, socialize at the ever-popular KAR reception/Field of Bling event and advance your Association via our business functions.

Register now at [www.kar.com](http://www.kar.com).



## Postage rates increase on May 11

New U.S. and international postage prices go into effect this coming Monday (May 11). The cost to mail a U.S. First Class one-ounce letter will increase two cents, from 42 to 44 cents. The cost to mail a postcard will increase from 27 to 28 cents. The cost to mail a letter to Canada will be 75 cents, a letter to Mexico will be 79 cents, and it will cost 98 cents to mail a letter to all other countries.

For detailed information on the new U.S. and international postage rates and a listing of prices, go to <http://usps.com/prices/pricechanges.htm>.

### Facts At A Glance

Some 27 percent of homes currently on the market across the United States have experienced at least one price cut, according to Trulia.com. Across 15 major cities, including New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston and Atlanta, the average price reduction for homes ranged from \$20,000 to \$295,000.

Source: Trulia