

Ventura County Coastal



Official Publication of the Ventura County Coastal Association of REALTORS

November 2018

REALTOR® SAFETY

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UPCOMING Meetings/Events

NOVEMBER 19 VCRDS Committee Meeting Board Room 1:00-3:00 PM	DECEMBER 5 Biennial Code of Ethics Training Training Room 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM
NOVEMBER 20 Flexmls Beginning Training Training Room 9:00-10:30 AM	DECEMBER 10 VCRDS Meeting CSMAR 1:00-3:00 PM
Flexmls Advanced Training Training Room 11:00 AM – Noon	DECEMBER 11 Biennial Code of Ethics Training Training Room 9:00 AM – Noon
NOVEMBER 22-23 Office Closed – Thanksgiving Holiday	MLS Committee Meeting Board Room 1:00-3:00 PM
NOVEMBER 27 Board of Directors Meeting Board Room 9:00 AM – Noon	DECEMBER 13 LGR Committee Meeting Board Room 3:00-4:30 PM
NOVEMBER 29 New Member Orientation Training Room 9:00 AM – Noon	DECEMBER 14 Finance Committee Meeting Board Room 10:00 AM – Noon
MLS Orientation Training Room 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM	DECEMBER 17 Professional Development Committee Training Room 1:00-2:00 PM
NOVEMBER 30 Biennial Code of Ethics Training Board Room 9:00 AM – Noon	DECEMBER 18 Flexmls Beginning Training Training Room 9:00-10:30 AM
Committee Appreciation Luncheon Training Room – By Invitation Only Noon – 2:00 PM	Flexmls Advanced Training Training Room 11:00 AM – Noon
DECEMBER 3 Biennial Code of Ethics Training Training Room 9:00 AM – Noon	DECEMBER 19 Biennial Code of Ethics Training Training Room 1:00-4:00 PM
MLS Rules and Regulations Class Training Room 2:00-4:00 PM	DECEMBER 20 REFAT Meeting Board Room 10:00-11:00 AM
DECEMBER 4 Annual Board Installation Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach 8:30-11:30 AM	DECEMBER 24-25 Office Closed – Christmas Holiday

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Matt Capritto
2018 VCCAR President



Matt Capritto

Governance Improvements Lead to More Efficient VCCAR

As most of you know, VCCAR's governance structure has radically evolved during the past few years, and I hope you realize how much more efficient, more cost-effective, and more attuned to the needs of our members we have become.

I'm fortunate to be serving this year. Your leadership during Lyle Elliott's year as president really did most of the heavy lifting. As I said at the installation in January, it was like being handed the keys to a shiny new car after it's been detailed and is all ready to go and being told, "Matt it's OK to take the car out, just don't screw it up."

There's a misperception on the part of some that these changes have been driven exclusively by our outstanding CEO, Wyndi Austin. That's not the case. The changes you've seen during the past few years have been directed by the Board. While we're on the same page with Wyndi and it's a collaborative process, your Board members have led the charge to shape VCCAR's governance so it reflects the needs of the Association, its members, and the times we live in.

During the past few years and especially this year, the Board has focused laser-like on the big-picture perspective. We have a diverse Board membership with a wide range of perspectives and we have looked to do things differently. But we are a team. We put our egos aside, roll up our sleeves, and focus on coming up with policies and procedures to help our members and work to improve the real estate climate in Ventura County. I can't remember a board meeting this year where anyone left angry or dissatisfied. We have a "one for all and all for one" attitude, and I hope that shows.

One of the most successful results from our improved governance structure was the Leadership Academy, which was more successful than we had even hoped. Several graduates are now moving into leadership roles when a year ago they didn't have the foggiest idea of what the Association was all about. That builds a pipeline of incoming Board and committee members who understand their roles, have new ideas, and are enthusiastic about serving.

The board and staff retreat at the beginning of the year gave us a firm understanding of our roles and the need to keep the Strategic Plan in mind at all times. Simply put, if an idea doesn't help us achieve our Strategic Plan goals and objectives, we don't pursue it. And we're already laying the groundwork to update the plan in what will be a continuing process of improvement.

Today's Strategic Plan focuses on helping REALTOR® members by giving them tools to continue prospering as the market changes. And it supports Affiliates by facilitating more networking opportunities with the REALTORS they serve through Association-sponsored events and education opportunities

These priorities may differ from how VCCAR has operated in the past, but we are focusing on what our paying members need. Change is always difficult and some of these changes won't be universally popular at first, but successful associations must focus on their members' needs first and other priorities only as resources are available.

And if you want proof that VCCAR has moved forward, recall the Association's lead role in creating the Thomas Fire response that helped nearly 300 families this year. An effort like this simply wouldn't have happened in the past because the board and the staff would not have been thinking along those lines.

Fortunately, your officers and Board members for 2019 are committed to continuing this process. I think that bodes well for the health of VCCAR and our ability to help our members next year and in the years to come. 🌱

“The Board has focused laser-like on the big-picture perspective.”

Remine Becomes Newest VCMLS Member Benefit

Remine, a real estate intelligence platform that brings together billions of pieces of data to help you find the consumers most likely to buy or sell in your market, is now available at no cost to VCMLS subscribers.

The service uses public data and artificial intelligence to calculate people in your farm who are most likely to consider selling. That allows you to surgically contact these potential clients.

In addition, Remine is contacting all MLS agents to offer a free one-on-one 30-minute appointment to go over how the service works. Besides the basic service provided at no cost, upgraded benefits are also available.

You can access your free account in the menu within Flexmls or by [clicking here](#).

Get Your Tickets for VCCAR Installation

Tickets are now available online for the 22nd Annual Installation of VCCAR's Officers and Directors, along with the presentation of the REALTOR® of the Year, Affiliate of the Year, and Broker/Owner/Manager of the Year awards.

This year's installation will be a breakfast event on Tuesday, December 4, at the Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach Hotel, 450 East Harbor Boulevard. Registration and breakfast will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m., with the program beginning promptly at 9:15 and running until 11:30 a.m.

Tickets are \$45 and can be purchased online by [clicking here](#).

Thank you to our event sponsors – Platinum Sponsors BHHS California Properties, Comstock & Calhoun Real Estate, and RE/MAX Gold Coast Realtors; Gold Sponsors Century 21 Everest, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, Guild Mortgage, and OnQ Financial; Silver Sponsors Joe Kapp Real Estate and LIV Sotheby's International Realty; and Bronze Sponsors Alicia Basurto/Farmers Insurance, Keller Williams West Ventura County, and Ventura County Credit Union.

Fire Relief Rentals Website Reactivated

In the wake of this month's devastating Woolsey Fire, VCRDS has reactivated the Fire Relief Rentals platform utilized earlier this year following the Thomas Fire.

To enter a short-term rental for others to find, just add a listing as you normally do, but select the Fire Relief Rentals property type at the very beginning.

To search for listings, you can view a screenshot on how to access the system by [clicking here](#) or find the [complete instructions here](#).

For a link to send to your clients/the public, [click here](#).

Thank you so much for all of you who have reached out to help. Stay safe!



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VCCU membership is open to anyone who lives, works or attends school in Ventura or Santa Barbara counties. All loans subject to credit approval and secured by lien on owner-occupied home. Certain restrictions apply. VCCU is an equal housing lender.



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Triebold Appointed to Fill Vacant Board Seat

Outgoing VCCAR Treasurer Carolyn Triebold has been appointed by the Board of Directors to fill the remaining term of Director Sher Heard, who was elected First Vice President by the members for 2019.

Ventura County Coastal Wins Award

VCCAR's online magazine was recently recognized as the winner of the Electronic/Digital Tactic Award in the California Capital Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America's annual Influence Awards competition.

Each submission was scored on a 100-point scale and awarded a "Merit" Award if its combined score was 80 to 89 and an "Influence" Award if it scored at 90 or above.

Content for the magazine is produced each month by John Frith john@twswcommunications.com of The Write Stuff Communications and the magazine is designed by Scott Arnold scott@foleypub.com with Foley Publications LLC. 



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Does Your Listing Violate MLS Rules & Regulations?

TRAINING SESSION DATES

Date: Monday, DEC 03

Time: 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Date: Monday, FEB 04

Time: 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Date: Friday, APR 26

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Date: Friday, JUN 07

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Date: Monday, AUG 26

Time: 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Date: Friday, OCT 18

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Date: Tuesday, DEC 03

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Location: VCCAR Training Room
2350 Wankel Way, Oxnard, CA 93030

Instructor: Tim Comstock

MLS Rules & Regulations

Have you ever wondered whether your listing violated MLS Rules and Regulations or the Data Integrity Standards & Guidelines?

Or, what happens if you fail to respond to a violation warning email?

MLS Rules & Regulations training covers the following items:

- Common rule violations.
- The CARETS Data Integrity Standards & Guidelines.
- Enforcement scheduling and how to avoid accruing unwanted fines.

**These items and many others will
be covered during this FREE class!**

www.ims.vcrealtors.com



Another SoCal Home Price Boom Is Cooling. Is a Crash Looming?

Los Angeles Times | November 4

The Southern California housing market has been on a nearly seven-year tear, with prices in many communities reaching all-time highs.

But now, as mortgage rates rise, the boom appears to be fading. Sales are dropping; inventory is swelling; more sellers are scaling back their ambitious asking prices.

The annals of postwar Southern California real estate history are full of boom-and-bust cycles, with periods of sharp price appreciation that suddenly skid to a halt. Whether those ups and downs offer any guidance — or hope — for today's homeowners is a subject for debate.

[Read more](#)

Home Flippers Are Fleeing the Market as Their Profits Shrink

CNBC | November 1

A rough combination of higher costs and lower demand is putting a chill on the once red-hot house-flipping market. After the epic housing crash, flippers poured in, buying up distressed properties at bargain prices, fixing them up and flipping them either to residents or to other investors. That continued for years, but now the math isn't working so well, and some flippers are fleeing.

The number of home flips, defined as a home bought and sold within the same 12-month period, fell 18 percent nationally in August, compared with August 2017, according to Attom Data Solutions. Flipping volume has been falling annually by double-digit percentages for three of the past six months.

[Read more](#)

Homeownership Increases Again as Housing Market Looks for Balance

MarketWatch | November 1

More Americans became homeowners in the summer months, fresh evidence of a housing market that's finding some stability after several rocky years. The national homeownership rate was 64.4% in the third quarter, the Census Bureau said Tuesday. That's a half-percentage point higher than a year ago.

After touching an all-time high of 69.1% in 2004 as the housing bubble inflated, the homeownership rate bottomed out at 62.9% in 2016 as waves of Americans lost their homes or sold under duress. At the same time, many Americans who would ordinarily become buyers were locked out of the market by stringent lending rules, a lack of affordable inventory and a challenging economic backdrop.

[Read more](#)

Real Estate Is 'Transforming,' With Dallas-Fort Worth Leading the Way

RIS Media | October 31

With appreciation slowing, there are faint indicators of a market shift steeping—but for agents and brokers, prospects are ripe, and will continue to be in 2019, according to a report by the Urban Land Institute (ULI).

"The notion that real estate is a people business has, thankfully, not dropped out of the conversation," the authors of the report state. "Human capital has been very much a part of the driving forces in real estate demand."

From affordability to disruptors to the inventory shortage, challenges have emerged in housing in the last 10 years—challenges expected to lead to a normalization in two or three years, along with a broader economic stabilizing. According to the report, breakthroughs come from embracing, not fighting, the shifting tide.

[Read more](#)

Is Winter Coming for SoCal's Housing Market?

Los Angeles Times | October 30

A chill is settling over the once white-hot Southern California housing market. Listings are up. Sales are falling. Price reductions are becoming more common.

The latest evidence came Tuesday when CoreLogic released its monthly market report. Sales across the region plummeted nearly 18% in September compared with a year earlier, the largest drop in almost eight years. The median home price in the six-county region rose 3.6% to \$523,000, the smallest rise in more than three years.

[Read more](#)

First-Time Homebuyers Meeting Overlapping Pressures

RIS Media | October 30

With the affordability crunch difficult to overcome, first-time homebuyers are increasingly struggling, according to the 2018 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR).

Thirty-three percent of buyers this year were buyers fresh to the market, the report shows—a decline from 34 percent the prior year, and now down for the third straight year.

Their challenges are cost-related, and overlap: college debt, the down payment and increasing mortgage rates. Forty percent of first-timers have \$30,000 in student loans, according to the report, while 13 percent of all buyers are challenged by the down payment—half of which because of college debt obligations. The average first-timer paid 7 percent towards a purchase, but the average buyer in general put down 13 percent—a figure not seen since 2005.

[Read more](#)

How 5G Speeds Could Zap Real Estate Into the Future

RIS Media | October 28

Today, consumers expect to have information at their fingertips at lightning-fast speeds; now, a new standard for speed is about to be set.

4G will be taking a back seat in the coming years, as 5G comes closer and closer to becoming a reality. What could 5G do for the industry? Cutting-edge tech that hasn't yet been developed to its full capacity for real estate, such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality, could become more heavily intertwined in agents' and consumers' day-to-day activities.

The era of 4G brought with it several innovative technologies, such as streaming services like Netflix and Hulu and the beginnings of virtual reality combined with social media through applications like Snapchat and Instagram. The emergence of 5G will be a slow rollout, as users will have to upgrade to compatible mobile devices once the technology is available, which may take some time. Why? There are some hurdles.

[Read more](#)



C.A.R. HOUSING STATS

Housing Conference Provides Out-of-Box Thinking

More than 100 people attended the 17th annual Ventura County Housing Conference last month, hearing from speakers on how to incentivize housing and expressing some optimism that the reflexive anti-housing sentiment in many parts of the county seems to be easing.

“Leading the Way: Challenges, Innovations, Solutions” was designed to provide attendees with out-of-the-box thinking on how to create new housing opportunities in Ventura County, said VCCAR Government Affairs Director Marta Golding Brown, who also serves as this year’s president and chair of the Housing Opportunities Made Easier Board of Directors. HOME sponsors the conference.

“We invited people who were doing projects not normally seen in Ventura County. Donald Monti, for example, is leading a project to redevelop the downtown of Hempstead Village in New York into a vibrant mixed-use walkable neighborhood. And Noah Ornstein specializes in renovating mid-city Los Angeles apartment buildings and is a market leader in modular construction,” she said.

“Our third panelist, Ventura architect Tyson Cline, specializes in creative design solutions that include sustainable and energy-efficient strategies. All three panelists discussed new and exciting ideas.”

Two economists featured in previous issues of *Ventura County Coastal* also spoke. Dr. Matthew Fienup, executive director of the Center for Economic Research and Forecasting at California Lutheran University, gave an overview of the county’s economy and local housing, while Dr. Mark Schniepp, who directs the California Economic Forecast in Santa Barbara, talked about how automated vehicles will affect housing.

(Read their insights in the [August issue cover story](#).)

Brown said if self-driving cars become as widespread as anticipated, many people will give up their own cars – which means houses and apartments built in the future will not need as many garages and parking spaces. Parking needs can add substantially to the cost of new construction, so that would have a major impact on project costs and how they pencil out. 🏠



As a reminder, Ventura County Coastal is using data from RPR – Realtors Property Resource – to compile its monthly housing statistics. RPR is a free resource available to all REALTORS® from NAR and Ventura County Regional Data Share that allows you to create customized market reports and data on your desktop or your mobile device. To create your account or to learn more, visit www.narrpr.com.

Pending Sales Fall, While New and Active Listing Numbers Climb

As expected, the recent market softening seen throughout most California has now become fully evident in Ventura County, as pending sales dropped significantly in October compared to the previous year, while new listings and active listings both posted double-digit increases year over year, according to data compiled by the Ventura County Regional Data Share MLS and Realtors Property Resource.

Pending sales at the end of October totaled 285, down 16.2 percent from last October and down 14.2 percent from September. At the same time, there were 718 new listings in October, up 16.9 percent from the previous year but down 2.8 percent from September, and a total of 1,882 active listings at the end of the month, which was up 11.4 percent from last October and down 7.3 percent from September.

As sales fell and inventory climbed, there was 4.1 months of inventory available at the end of the month, a 46 percent jump from October 2017 and a 26 percent increase compared to September.

“The market has definitely started to shift and this is evident in Ventura County as well,” said C.A.R. Senior Economist Jordan Levine. “More listings are coming onto the market as demand has started to soften. As a result, homes are taking longer to sell and sellers are beginning to feel pressure to reduce prices and/or offer discounts in order to get homes sold.”

Perhaps reflecting a market peak, there were 582 closed sales during the month, which was up 5.6 percent from a year ago and up 27.9 percent from September.

The median sales listing price has also flattened to \$659,950, up 1.7 percent from a year ago and up 1.5 percent from September. The median listing price per square foot climbed 4.1 percent from a year ago to \$357, which was up just 1.4 percent from September.

The median sales price during October was \$615,000, up 7.9 percent from October 2017 but up less than 1 percent from September. The median sales price per square foot was \$356, up 5.3 percent from a year ago and down 1.9 percent from September.



Market Data Report

VCCAR Report

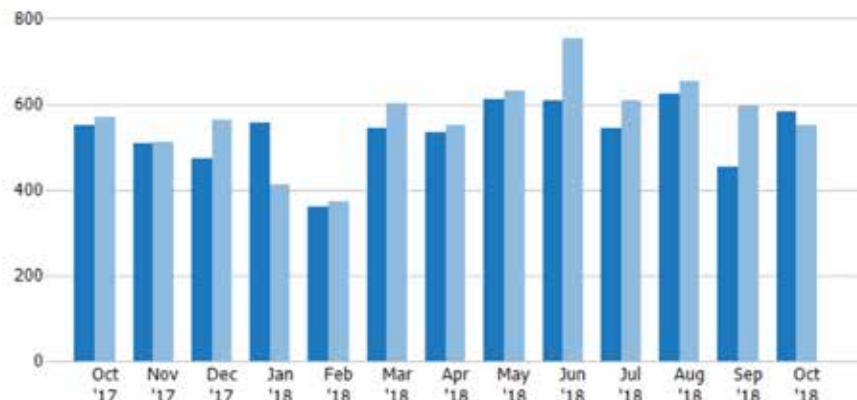
Closed Sales

The total number of residential properties sold each month.

Filters Used

State: CA
County: Ventura County, California
Property Type:
Condo/Townhouse/Apt, Single
Family Residence

Month/ Year	Count	% Chg.
Oct '18	582	5.6%
Oct '17	551	-3.5%
Oct '16	571	3.3%



Current Year	551	508	472	558	361	545	533	612	607	543	625	455	582
Prior Year	571	510	563	411	372	601	549	630	752	609	654	596	551
Percent Change from Prior Year	-4%	0%	-16%	36%	-3%	-9%	-3%	-3%	-19%	-11%	-4%	-24%	6%



Former Santa Paula Police Officer Mark Cagnacci makes a point at VCCAR's safety seminar.

SAFETY FIRST

VCCAR Seminar Gives Tips on How REALTORS® Can Protect Themselves

By John Frith

VCCAR Editor and PR Consultant

On October 31, Orlando Martinez, a 54-year-old REALTOR® from suburban Philadelphia, was found shot inside a car near where he had been showing a nearby home to prospective buyers, according to Philadelphia police. He died soon afterwards, and at press time an investigation was continuing.

"He was found inside a vehicle, and he may have been there for a day," Sgt. Eric Gripp of the Philadelphia police told Inman News. "The only thing that we will say is that we believe he knew who the killer was. It wasn't random."

Thankfully, violent crimes against real estate agents remain low, but fully one-third of REALTORS® said they had experienced a situation that made them fear for their personal safety or the safety of their personal information, according to the 2018 NAR Member Safety Report. Fully 40 percent reported feeling unsafe in terms of personal safety at least every few months, and 12 percent said they felt unsafe at least once each month.

Fortunately, there are many things REALTORS® can do to protect themselves, as more than 60 VCCAR members learned in a safety seminar this month. More than 60 REALTORS® and Affiliates attended the seminar, led by Professional Development Committee Chair Sandy Seekins and former Santa Paula Police Officer Mark Cagnacci.

VCCAR President Matt Capritto said the training was very successful and will be offered again in the future.

"We had an overwhelming response. There is clearly a huge need for this training and we will have to do this regularly," Capritto said.

“Keep your head on a swivel.”
Former Officer Mark Cagnacci

While there were many takeaways, two in particular stood out to attendees.

"One key point was to get your face out of your phone while you're walking through parking lots," Cagnacci said. "That takes away your natural intuition when something potentially dangerous comes up."

"The other key point is to keep your head on a swivel. Always keep observing what's going on."

A poignant story

The session opened with the poignant story of Beverly Carter, a 50-year-old Arkansas REALTOR and mother of three who was murdered in 2014 by a repeat felon who kidnapped her for ransom when she met him at a vacant home for sale. The man convicted of the crime said she was targeted because "she was a woman that worked alone" and "a rich broker." After he learned the police had been notified, he asphyxiated Carter and buried her body at a cement plant.

"I told them I was there to scare you a little bit," Cagnacci said.

The program focused on three main topics:

- How to handle a call that leads to showing a property
- Safety at the office
- Open house safety

As an NAR video outlined, REALTORS® are unique among professionals in that they share their contact information publicly, meet unknown clients, and walk through vacant properties – just to name a few things most people never do.

NAR suggests that when meeting a client for the first time, don't do so at the property. Instead, meet with them at your office or a public place like a coffee shop. At that meeting, you should also make copies (or take cell phone photos) of their drivers' license and pre-approval letters.

When showing a home, arrange to drive separately, and at the home have the client walk in front of you. That not only gives them a chance to see rooms first, but allows you to keep an eye on the client.

And when holding an open house, advise the homeowner to board their dogs for the day and to keep valuables and prescription drugs locked up. Agents should also consider bringing a colleague to the open house as well to not only help with traffic but as protection.

(Many more NAR safety tips are available [on its website](#).)

Besides sharing a number of safety tips, the session was designed to be interactive, with attendees sharing stories of things that had happened to them, Seekins said. One story really hit home.

She said a REALTOR® had been picking up open house signs and left her car running as she got out to pick up a sign. Someone jumped into the car and sped away with her purse and other personal possessions.

"That was huge because we all do that," Seekins said.

Participants offer suggestions

And participants made other suggestions that went beyond the NAR resources.

Capritto noted that one Affiliate said agents should consider bringing an Affiliate to help out at an open house. Not only is it potentially a good business plan to have a lender there as well, the Affiliate member will also help with safety.

A REALTOR® who attended the seminar said she had followed that advice once and was glad she did.

"I was going out late one afternoon to meet a new client and my instinct told me I should take someone with me," the agent said. "So I called my title rep. As soon as we got there and he opened the door, he looked at us a little surprised and said, 'Oh, you brought someone with you.'"

Cagnacci agreed.

"Trust your intuition. If something doesn't feel right, there's usually a reason," he said.

REALTOR® Bonny Goetz said the program was very valuable,

and said she immediately reached out to other agents to offer help.

"We all get so comfortable with where we live, and I think we found out that we're naïve. I usually work with my husband (fellow REALTOR® Mark Goetz) so I feel safe, but I reached out to a couple of women there and said to call me if they needed someone to go with them and I'd be there," she said.

REALTOR® Tim Hall recalled a large number of take-aways from the event:

- If you're in a vacant house, make sure the doors are unlocked, the lights are on, and that you have an escape route planned out.
- In this era of mass shootings (the event was held the day after the assault in a Thousand Oaks bar in which 12 people died), industry offices should train for a worst-case situation – what should you do if someone comes in with a gun? Where can you hide? How can you escape?
- And while some agents arm themselves with pepper spray or even handguns, Cagnacci urged attendees to be careful. He said if you choose to go that route, you need to thoroughly train yourself on their proper use or you'll be more dangerous than the guy you're trying to get away from. For example, if you spray pepper spray into the wind, it will likely blow back into your face and blind you.

Hall also noted that he'd had a client who had stolen painkillers from open houses, so urging owners to lock up drugs and valuables is a good idea.

And he urged more members – men and women – to attend the next time a class is offered. The vast majority of attendees this month were women, but men need to know what to do as well.

"This is a good class for everyone. If you get just one take-away, you're ahead of the game," Hall said. "And this information translates to everywhere you go – with your family, your friends, and by yourself. It's how our lives are these days. And the officer thought things won't get any better any time soon." 🌱

“There is clearly a huge need for this training and we will have to do this regularly.”

Matt Capritto



Troy Palmquist

Why Indie Brokers Have the Edge Amid Merger Frenzy

How are the agents working for smaller firms — and their clients — affected?

Editor's note: VCCAR REALTOR® Troy Palmquist wrote this column for Inman News.

The Southern California real estate market, like many other markets around the country, is becoming overridden by big-box real estate companies buying out other brokerages — creating somewhat of a monopoly.

Many of the firms that are being acquired are the smaller independent (or “indie”) brokerages, which have been an integral part of our business and are a vital alternative to the major players for agents and consumers alike.

Certainly, acquisitions by the “big boys” are not exclusive to the real estate industry. Take Amazon, Disney, Ma Bell, Chase — the list goes on. Back to real estate, why such a trend toward takeovers?

Put simply, to make recruiting easier and get more market bandwidth. Instead of trying to farm talent, brokerages have now seemed to turn to poaching and buying out existing real estate companies with good track records to get their market share.

Some of these brokerage acquisitions have even put offices out of business, with entire teams lured away, forcing them to shut their doors.

One must consider, how does this shift to the behemoths affect those agents working for the smaller firms and, more importantly, their customers?

The agent's new identity

While indie agents once had a differentiator for themselves in the market, one centered on boutique personal-touch service, they are today being grandfathered into this new big-brokerage formula that seems to be taking over. These “confiscated” agents who once had their own identity are, in effect, merely becoming just small fishes in a big sea.

Let's think about this situation for a moment. If a real estate company has a 20 percent market share in a particular city, most likely you'll have a couple of agents from that brokerage competing for the same listing, in essence becoming rivals when seeking to land a potential home listing appointment.

What do they have to offer to differentiate themselves? Except perhaps their sales history. That's great; but let the better agent win. Newer agents may be at a disadvantage in this scenario, unless the sellers are merely basing their choice on chemistry, enthusiasm or connections alone. Most often, that's not the case.



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Hurting or helping the client?

The other primary question that remains is: How does this all help the buyer or seller? In my opinion, not much.

The independent real estate broker has much to offer, not just to agents but also to the customers they are servicing. In some ways, smaller firms may seem limited, but overall, they are not.

Although the real estate business of the modern day revolves around the latest, greatest technology and use of digital platforms, real success for any-size brokerage still relies upon the quality of its people, training and services.

Why go with the little guy?

So in the wake of takeover trends, why would anyone, agent or consumer, choose a boutique real estate firm? Several reasons actually.

Boutique brokerages are extremely specialized in their market and focused on above-average client representation.

Clients benefit from the expertise of a proficient, dedicated agent and capitalize on the skills and support of an entire office working on their behalf to ensure a smooth, successful transaction.

Agents can concentrate on quality over quantity, with a primary

mission of building relationships and delivering personalized results rather than just achieving volume numbers.


Even commission structures can be flexible to entice or reward exceptional talent.

Indie firms can go head-to-head with their big competitors in terms of technology, having access to the same multiple listing service (MLS) representation, the same properties, the same online marketing offerings, and the same high-quality marketing products.

If you look closely, you'll find a number of indie brokerages that put the "real" back in real estate by offering a very unique model of client-centric, relationship-based service, while optimizing the use of the high-tech, industrywide resources available at their disposal.

As the founder of a boutique brokerage in the middle of a hotbed of acquisitions, I believe strongly in advocating for the concept of local real estate companies and local agents, and I hold firmly in our stance to ward off aggressive solicitation by large out-of-state firms that may not have the best interests of the community and its residents at heart.

We put people first and treat our agents and clients like family, not numbers, as it should be.

Troy Palmquist is the founder and broker of [The Address](#). Follow him on [Facebook](#) or connect with him on [LinkedIn](#). 

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VCCAR Government Affairs Director

C.A.R. to Pursue Property Tax Fairness Proposal

Although voters this month rejected Proposition 5, C.A.R.'s Property Tax Fairness Initiative, C.A.R. leaders vowed to continue the fight until the "moving penalty" for seniors 55 and older, the disabled, and victims of natural disasters is removed.

At the same time, C.A.R. was successful in helping defeat Proposition 10, which would have repealed the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act and allowed for a dramatic expansion of rent control.

"While our opponents were successful in stopping Proposition 5 this time, our resolve on this issue is firm, and we are committed to this effort for the long haul," said C.A.R. President Jared Martin.

"In fact, we are pursuing a revised initiative for the November 2020 ballot. The new initiative for the 2020 ballot provides for property tax base portability, reforms intergenerational transfer laws, and addresses the true 'split roll' problem: corporations gaming the current property tax reassessment system. And, most significantly, it will raise money for schools and local governments."

The state association also is planning to pursue the issue through a legislative alternative to achieve its goals. "Ideally, we can get the Legislature to place the alternative on the March 2020 ballot so that we do not have to pursue the November 2020 initiative," Martin said.

Martin pointed out that C.A.R. worked for more than 10 years to pass the Costa-Hawkins law, which Proposition 10 would have repealed.

"It may ultimately take longer than a couple of years to achieve our property tax fairness goals. Put simply, achieving big public policy goals takes time but we will not be deterred!" he said.

Local candidates supported by LCRC are victorious

A total of eight city council candidates supported by the Local Candidate Recommendations Committee were elected in this month's elections.

Elected were Charlotte Craven in Camarillo, Diane McCall and Lynn Russell Edmonds in Fillmore, Carmen Ramirez and Tim Flynn in Oxnard, Jenny Crosswhite in Santa Paula, and Erik Nasarenko and Jim Friedman in Ventura. 🌱



Marta Golding Brown



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Code of Ethics CONT 17-18 (BIEINNDE) **Instructor:** Jim Keith

WED DEC 05 @ 9:30am - 12:30pm

Code of Ethics **Instructor:** David Compton

Cost: \$20.00

TUE DEC 11 @ 9:00am - 12:00pm

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Compliance Dates To Remember

- Deadline to complete a course is December 31, 2018.
- As of January 1, 2019 members not in compliance will be suspended.
- As of March 1, 2019 members still not in compliance will be terminated.

**For more information* visit
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*Check the "Are You In Compliance" list - if your name appears on this list you are in compliance for the current cycle.

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NEW MEMBERS



11 New Members Join VCCAR

Eleven new members completed their new member orientation in October and were presented their REALTOR® pins by VCCAR President Matt Capritto.

Front row, left to right: Nicole Echevarria, Joe Kapp Real Estate; Suzanne Dahl, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties; M'Lou Keller, Century 21 Everest; Sandra Donovan, BHHS; Maria Acosta, Realty Services.

Back row, left to right: Instructor Ashley Anderson; Antonia Gonzalez, Coastline Realty Group; Juan Galaviz, Century 21 Everest; Cecilia Caro, Century 21 Everest; Eddie Call, Century 21 Everest; Damon Kumley, Ocean Vista Realty; VCCAR President Matt Capritto. 🌱

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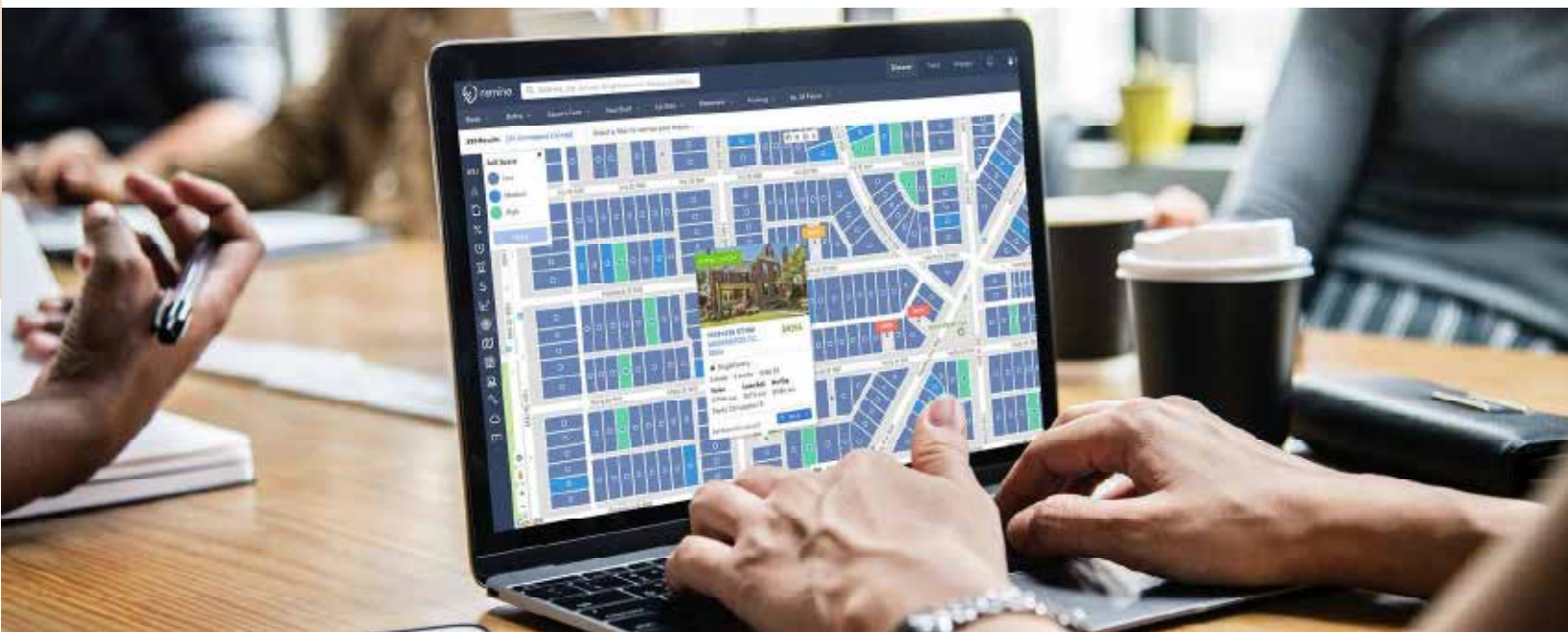


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NAR Moves to Revamp Governance Structure

VCCAR President Matt Capritto's column at the front of this issue of *Ventura County Coastal* discusses the effects of the Association's Strategic Plan and governance changes. As you can see, the results have been dramatic thanks to the vision and leadership of the Board during the past several years.

The same efforts are also continuing at NAR. At governance meetings held in Boston earlier this month, the national association's board of directors adopted a five-year strategic framework to provide a more visionary and business-oriented approach to how NAR operates during the years to come.

The NAR Strategic Framework for 2019-2023 is designed to provide clear answers to such important questions as where are we going? what do we stand for? and how will we operate? The framework replaces the 2014 strategic plan and includes the following key points:

- People have a right to safe, decent, and affordable housing.
- Thriving commercial and residential markets are critical economic engines of the country and key to healthy communities.
- Private property rights are foundational to the country.
- The opportunity for homeownership should be as broadly shared as possible.
- Entrepreneurs should have the freedom to pursue their business goals and succeed in creating the quality of life they desire.
- All REALTORS® ascribe to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism.

In addition, a new presidential advisory group (PAG) has been appointed to look at what changes, if any, should be made to the structure of NAR's governance system. The PAG's work covers only governance at the national level and will not delve into state and local association governance.

NAR President Elizabeth Mendenhall established the Governance Game Changer Presidential Advisory Group to ensure NAR retains its industry leadership position into its second century. More than 50 members and association executives have been appointed to look at the structure, process, people, resources, and operating environment of NAR's governance system.

The goal is to ensure NAR's structure supports the efficient, nimble, and transparent operation of the association; fully engages the experience, expertise, and talent of its members; and positions the association to act effectively in the years ahead.

As we at VCCAR already know, if properly carried out these efforts can play a tremendous benefit, and we look forward to seeing what the PAG eventually recommends.

Also at the meeting, the board approved policies supporting remote notarization, Opportunity Zones, and inflation indexing for capital assets. It also passed Core Standards changes for commercial boards, changes to enhance cooperation among brokers, and a rule change on evaluating ethics complaints while a criminal action is pending.

The notarization policy calls for rules that focus on the completion of the notarial act, regardless of the technology used, and support the adoption of remote notarization across all U.S. states and territories, while protecting consumers' personal information. The policy also urges federal agencies to facilitate the adoption of remote notary services across the mortgage system.

More information is available on [Realtor.com](https://www.realtor.com).

“The NAR Strategic Framework is designed to provide clear answers to such important questions as, Where are we going?”

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