

**National Association of REALTORS®  
2007 Leadership Summit  
Aug. 16-17, 2007  
Chicago Sheraton Hotel and Towers**

**Opening Comments and Keynote Address  
“All Together”  
Dick Gaylord, 2008 NAR President**

**Diana**

Our 2008 President is someone who brings experience, integrity and vision to NAR's top leadership position. He's also just a great guy who is so passionate, as you all know, about this organization and all those we serve. Dick has been a REALTOR for 29 years, and he is a broker with RE/MAX Real Estate Specialists in Long Beach, California. He has also served as the President of the California Association in 2000, and twice President of the local board in Long Beach, in 1987 and in 1992.

**Mark**

And in 2003, Dick served as Regional Vice President for Region 13. In 2006, he was elected First Vice President and President-Elect in 2007. Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to introduce our 2008 NAR President, Dick Gaylord. [*Applause.*]

**Dick Gaylord**

Good morning. Thank you. Good morning. Thank you, thank you, thank you. A warm good morning to each and to every one of you. I feel very honored and privileged to welcome you to the 2007 Summit. I want to thank Diana and Mark for giving so much of their time to help us with the summit. Aren't they doing a great job? [*Applause.*]  
They're two of my favorite friends.

I ask you to take just a minute to look around the room. Look at the person next to you, and look at the folks who are seated at your table.

[*Laughter.*]

When we all entered the room this morning, we did so as 1,400 individuals, each of us prepared to do our part to lead our state and local associations. But if you look a little closer, there's more than a group of elected presidents and association executives here.

You'll see a unified team, ready to make history at all levels of the REALTOR organization.

Ladies and gentlemen, I see, in you, the future of the real estate industry. I see Team 2008. And I stand with you today ready to move, all together, toward a bright and promising future for our profession, our industry, the entire REALTOR organization, and every REALTOR we serve in this great country. Andrew Carnegie, one of the most powerful and successful businessmen in U.S. history, once said, "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision, the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Today we're here to work toward a common vision, to direct our members towards our organization's objectives, and to fuel uncommon results. And I'm more confident than ever that working all together, we're going to get the job done. The REALTOR organization has already shown what we can do when we work together toward a common vision. In 1908, real estate professionals gathered here in Chicago with a sole purpose in mind: to exert combined influence on matters affecting the real estate industry and its interest. There wasn't a person at that time that imagined such a simple vision would shape a real estate industry beyond anyone's expectations, but that's exactly what happened.

Through the past one hundred years, the National Association of REALTORS and its members, all of you, have influenced nearly every aspect of the real estate industry and our profession. It is REALTORS who have made ethical conduct the staple of our business by adopting a strict code of ethics. In doing so, we have helped millions of consumers from unfair business practices. It is REALTORS who have promoted the sharing of property information among practitioners and created a multiple listing service that both protects consumer privacy and makes the transaction more efficient.

It is REALTORS who have helped raise the home ownership rate to nearly 70% by advocating for laws and policies that protect private property rights, and make housing more affordable and accessible. It is REALTORS who have expanded our knowledge and innovated, decade after decade, to insure we always provide the best information and service to every consumer we serve. And ladies and gentlemen, it is America's REALTORS who have promoted competition in the marketplace by encouraging new business models and by keeping large banks out of real estate.

*[Applause.]*

Together, REALTORS have shaped an uncommon team of America's best and brightest entrepreneurs. We have always been essential to the real estate transaction, but today we stand for much more. We build communities. We make home ownership possible. We drive one of the most powerful industries in the world. And guess what? We're just getting started.

Our vision for the next one hundred years remains as clear and as simple as it was in 1908: to be the business and public policy advocate for our members and the consumers we serve. I ask you, Team 2008, are you ready for a second century of success? [Applause.] I know you are, and working all together, nothing's going to stop us.

As we look toward our future, we must ask ourselves what will it take to successfully fulfill our mission for another 100 years? We already know the answer. We must direct our individual accomplishments toward broader organizational objectives.

Our Strategic Planning Committee has identified seven strategic goals that are critical to our members' future. All seven objectives are simple and easy to understand. And the 2008 Strategic Plan, which will be finalized and approved in November, will address each of them in very easy to understand terms. They'll also be printed on a small card that we can carry with us.

Let me be clear, however. The strategic plan is not a justification for programs that are already in place, it's a plan for our future. We have to keep this in mind as we lead our members in the coming months. In 2008, I specifically ask you to focus on three of the key goals, which are directly tied to the challenges that you and all of our members are facing in today's real estate market.

First of all we must strengthen the relationship between REALTORS and consumers. I often tell people the story of a hot dog vendor in New York City who heard that the economy was slowing and people weren't buying as much. So he bought fewer hot dogs and buns, thinking his business would slow. But people kept coming, and every day he would run short. His customers got frustrated, and soon they started to get their hot dogs elsewhere. Before long, the vendor was out of business.

Real estate is certainly not the hot dog business, but the point is the same: consumers drive our business. I ask you to think about how you can help your fellow REALTORS connect with their consumers and their marketplaces. And help these consumers understand all that we do in the transaction, in our communities, in the public policy arena and beyond, because it all benefits them.

Our second strategic goal is to be the most comprehensive source of real estate information. We all know that consumers want more information about the real estate markets and various properties. This is one of the main reasons Internet property searches are so popular today. But consumers also tell us that they need this information presented in a way that is most helpful to them. Someone once said that information is a source of learning, but unless it's organized, processed and available in the right format for decision-making, it's a burden, not a benefit.

REALTORS are experts at interpreting this kind of information. Again I ask you to think about how you can work with your members in your areas to provide more information to more consumers than ever before in a way that is most helpful to them. This includes information on real estate markets, new trends and ideas, and even public policy issues.

Our third goal is to enhance the professionalism of REALTORS. Back in 1978, I heard a gentleman named John Ludlow, who owned the Ludlow real estate schools, and he spoke to a group of REALTORS. He said ten years from now the people who will survive in this business are those who continue their education and those who provide a level of service like has never been provided before. I believe that statement was true then, and it's even more relevant today.

Recent innovations in real estate, industry, and technology, the vast array of lending products, new business models, shifts in demographics and local market conditions have made it almost impossible to stay ahead of the competition. In this ever-changing environment, education and training is no longer a "nice to have," it is a must for anyone who wants to succeed in real estate and stay in this business for the long term.

I ask you again to help your members, the members in your states and in your associations, get the training they need. And make sure that all of them adhere to the high standards of practice as we outline them in our Code of Ethics. These are the things that separate REALTORS from all other licensees.

Building relationships with consumers, being the most comprehensive resource for real estate information, and enhancing the professionalism of all REALTORS, these are our three goals, these are our focus for 2008. And there's one surefire way of achieving them: by working all together. As Mr. Carnegie explained, teamwork is the fuel for uncommon results. But you don't have to take his word for it, or even mine. Your fellow REALTORS are proving it every single day, all across America. In fact, several outstanding examples are sitting right here in this room today.

Anne Marie Howard, the Chief Executive Officer of the Charlotte Regional Association, is raising the bar for members in Charlotte, and making it easier for them to continue their education and training. The Charlotte Regional Association's Mingle School of Real Estate provides pre-licensing and post-licensing education and training. And under Anne Marie's direction, they also recently unveiled a new or veteran training program to encourage all agents to encourage their knowledge and professionalism.

The eleven-course program covers everything, from marketing to financing to valuation. Members can take the entire course, or they can register for single classes. Anne Marie could not be with us today, but we're fortunate to have Karen Lindsey, Vice President of Education for CRRA and the Nova program here in her place. Not only is Karen involved in this great program, but her husband, Anthony Lindsey, is one of NAR's federal political coordinators. Karen, would you please stand? *[Applause.]* Thanks to you and to Anne Marie for reminding us all that there is always room to grow. And thanks to your husband for all of his good work in our behalf.

Of course, as I said earlier, REALTORS are about much more than buying and selling homes. We build communities. And few do it better than REALTOR Ken Jackson of Florence, South Carolina. In addition to serving as the 2003 President of the South

Carolina Association of REALTORS, Ken has served as Chairman of the Florence County Municipal Planning Commission. He is currently Secretary-Treasurer of the Florence County Economic Development Partnership, and also a member of the Board of Directors of the Florence Chamber of Commerce.

Last year he received the Palmetto Award, the highest civilian honor from South Carolina's governor, Mark Sanford, for his outstanding service in insuring a high quality of life for South Carolina's citizens. We are very fortunate that Ken is going to serve as Vice Chair of our Smart Growth Program Advisory Group next year. Ken and his daughter Emily are here with us today. Would you please stand? *[Applause.]* Thank you, Ken, for inspiring all of us to do more for our communities.

Of course there are plenty of other ways REALTORS are serving their communities. When you arrived here at the Summit, all of you received a binder with the Congressional logo. The fact is, getting involved in politics is one of the best ways to strengthen both communities and our businesses. And if you aren't involved in politics, you might find yourself out of business.

I want to take just a moment to share with you some outstanding examples of how members are flexing their political muscle in influencing laws and policies that benefit all of us and the consumers we serve. Patty Bryant, from Tulsa, Oklahoma, has long been active in the REALTORS Political Involvement Committee. Her tremendous success in influencing lawmakers in her state is a direct result of her involvement.

A few years ago, Patty was asked to serve as president of the Tulsa County Republican Women, and in 2001 was named Outstanding Woman of the Year in Tulsa County. She also serves on the board of Tulsa Advocates for Rights of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. A few months ago the Oklahoma State Senate asked Patty to serve as Secretary to the Tulsa County Elections Board, the first time a Republican has ever held that position. Patty, would you please stand? *[Applause.]* Thank you for your service and for making sure that the voice for real estate is heard loud and clear in Oklahoma.

Of course, one of the best ways to influence laws and protect policies is to get elected, and the California Association of REALTORS has a new program to help members in that state run for elected office. Bill Brown, President-Elect of the California Association of REALTORS, and a past chair of ARPAC, has been talking about a candidate campaign school for quite some time.

This September the association will welcome its first class of 26 members who will participate in a two-day course on the ins and outs of running for public office. Polling, direct mail, fundraising are just a few of the topics that will be covered during the first day. Participants will also work in small groups to create a complete campaign plan during the second day.

While the campaign school is designed to help members, it also gives the association an opportunity to identify talented leaders before they run for office. Bill, would you please stand?

[*Applause.*]

Thanks to you and the California Association of REALTORS for helping us bring up the next generation of political leaders.

California isn't the only state where REALTORS are running for office and winning. Now in his second term, REALTOR Fred Kratky currently serves in the Missouri House of Representatives. As a key member of the House Special Committee on Job Creation and Economic Development, Fred is so well regarded that the chair has called upon him to preside on more than one occasion. The Speaker of the House even has invited Fred to preside over the House debate, which is quite an honor, especially for a member of the minority party.

Fred also has been a driving force behind legislation supported by the Missouri Association of REALTORS. He even convinced his party to remove real estate licensees from tort reform legislation, despite the fact that the Democratic leaders supported the amendment. Fred, would you please stand? [*Applause.*] Thank you for proving that the most powerful party in Missouri is the REALTOR party.

One of the most remarkable examples of political success in the REALTOR organization is Gary Herbert, who was elected Lieutenant Governor of the State of Utah in 2004. As Lieutenant Governor, he leads state efforts concerning homeland security, transportation, water, and rural affairs. Prior to his election in 2004, Gary served 14 years on the Utah County Commission, nine of those as chairman.

As the former President of the Utah Association of REALTORS, Gary is an expert on REALTOR issues, and is known for his ability to bring together diverse groups and interests. He has served on many NAR committees, and has chaired NAR's state and local fiscal affairs, the Business Issues Committee, and our Issues Mobilization Committee.

He has also been recognized numerous times for his outstanding service in Utah. He was named Utah's Outstanding County Commissioner and County Elected Official. He is also the recipient of the National Outstanding Republican County Elected Official of the Year Award.

If that isn't enough, Gary and his wife Jeanette also own and operate a daycare center in Utah County. We are most honored to have the Lieutenant Governor of Utah here with us today at the summit, and I'm excited to tell you that he's agreed to help introduce our Tool Time session later today. Ladies and gentlemen, acknowledge the Lieutenant Governor of Utah, Gary Herbert. [*Applause.*] Thank you again, Gary, for being with us

today. We're honored to have you, and we thank you for showing us all how to be great leaders and great advocates.

Finally, I want to recognize a very special REALTOR who could not be with us today. John Baker, from Salem, Oregon, is on an extraordinary mission, to make sure no soldier serving overseas is forgotten. Through his web site, [www.loveboxesforourtroops.com](http://www.loveboxesforourtroops.com), John provides care packages to soldiers who are currently serving abroad. To give you an idea of just how amazing this project is, I want to share a letter I received from John a couple of weeks ago:

*Dear Friends:*

*A great time was had by all last Tuesday when our love box experts packed 250 boxes in just 63 minutes. With the reserve of 140 packed boxes already on hand, we had 400 boxes to ship over to our great troops. Last Wednesday and Thursday, 270 boxes were sent out to 23 different soldiers and/or their units, leaving us with 130 boxes to ship out the middle of August.*

There will not be a packing part in August because I leave tomorrow on a trip that I have dreamed of for many years. My 14-year-old son and I are accompanying two World War II soldiers, who were made famous by the HBO series "Band of Brothers," on a three-week journey that follows their path from D-Day to the end of the war.

I plan to go for a run and collect sand from Omaha Beach, and visit the American cemetery there, to stand in the depressions of what were fox holes just outside Bastone, to be reminded of the horrors and the fanatics of Dachau Concentration Camp, and to understand the similarities of what American soldiers were fighting for in the 1940s, and what they are fighting for today. Thank you all for your support for our troops, who are always faithful to their duty on our behalf."

[Applause.]

One of the soldiers who received one of the love boxes recently wrote to John, "I wish there were more people in the world like you and like the members of your organization." I truly believe that every REALTOR is like John. We all share a passion for serving people in any way that we can. Please join me honoring John with a heartfelt round of applause.

[Applause.]

All of the REALTORS I have just recognized have accomplished uncommon results in their own ways. Together they're moving this organization, their communities and our members forward. The best part is they're doing it with the exact same resources that are available to each and every one of us. I hope they inspire you to work more closely with NAR, with our members, with consumers, and with public policy makers to achieve

uncommon results in each of our states. Now it's our turn to follow their example, and I know we will.

I once heard Peter Drucker say to an audience, "I am so tired of hearing about team-building. Show me teamwork, how to work together, how to share ideas with people." For the next two days, we're not going to be talking about team-building, we're actually going to work together as a team to share ideas that can help all of us achieve uncommon results throughout this great REALTOR organization.

You will hear from state and local presidents and AEs, industry experts, staff members, and yes, your national elected officials. And you'll have a chance to share your ideas with all of us. In the Tool Time session, fellow NAR leaders will explain how you can take advantage of the great resources that are available to you through the REALTOR organization. These are tools you can use to help your members.

We also have two outstanding technology experts, Michael Tchong and NAR's own Chief Technology Officer, Mark Lesswing, who are going to explain how REALTORs can use technology to build better relationships with consumers. And later today Scott Bradley is going to lead a panel on how we can help members provide more comprehensive information to clients by encouraging diversity in our associations.

Tomorrow we're going to turn the tables and ask you to share your thoughts and ideas with us at the leadership town hall. Then Dale Stinton, our Executive Vice President, and the senior staff are going to tell you about some of the exciting programs they're working on to help all of you strengthen your organizations and help your members in the year ahead.

The ideas you collect over the next few days are fuel for our success. I urge you to take advantage of all the summit has to offer. Babe Ruth once said, "The way a team plays as a whole determines its success." You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime. The REALTOR organization has grown and succeeded for nearly one hundred years, not because of a few outstanding players, but because we know how to work together in good times and in challenging times.

In 2008, we are very fortunate to have a group of superstars on our team, and I can tell you from my own experience over the past year, they are experts at working together. It is my honor to introduce you to the officers who, along with me, will be working alongside each of you to move our organization forward in 2008. Will the leadership team please join me on the stage at this time? [*Applause.*]

The 2008 President-Elect is Charles McMillan, from Irving, Texas. [*Applause.*] Charles and I have worked closely together at NAR for more than fifteen years. He has been such an inspiration to me, and he is a great friend.

Vicki Cox Golder, from Tucson, Arizona, is our 2008 First Vice President. [Applause.] Vicki was Vice Chair of the Issues Mobilization Committee when I was chair. She was the perfect vice chair. She does all the work and pays tremendous attention to detail. [Applause.]

Our 2008 Treasurer, Jim Helsel, from Lemoyne, Pennsylvania. [Applause.] Not only is Jim past president of the Pennsylvania association, but his father also served as NAR treasurer. Jim literally grew up with NAR. [Applause.]

Your 2008 immediate past president, and someone we all know and love, Pat Vredevoogd Combs, from Grand Rapids, Michigan. [Applause.] Let me just say what a pleasure it is to work with Pat. She has handled every aspect of the office of the NAR president with tremendous class, and I am so fortunate that she will be at my side to help guide our great organization in 2008. [Applause.]

I am so fortunate to have Dale Stinton, NAR's Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, to help guide our efforts in 2008. [Applause.] Dale has been with the REALTOR organization for more than 20 years. He is a great leader, a great partner, and a great friend. [Applause.]

Also serving on the 2008 leadership team are two vice presidents and liaisons. The 2008 Vice President and Liaison to Committees is C. Scott Bradley, from Honolulu, Hawaii. [Applause.] Scott has built one of the most successful Coldwell Banker firms in the country. A past chairman of NAR's Strategic Planning Committee, he represents the future of our industry. [Applause.]

The 2008 Vice President and Liaison to Government Affairs is Bob Kulick from Campbell, California. [Applause.] Bob has chaired several public policy committees, and knows more about politics, public policy and fund raising than just about any other member of this organization. [Applause.]

Each of these individuals you see here with me is an extraordinary leader and has contributed to our success for many years. We're truly fortunate to have them as a part of Team 2008. [Applause.]

I speak for all of the leadership and the staff when I say we understand the challenges you face because we face them, too. We are your family and we're here to help you, not only at the summit, but throughout the year. Please don't hesitate to call on us at any time. Ladies and gentlemen, once again, I want you to acknowledge Team 2008. [Applause.]

On behalf of the entire team, I leave you now with one final thought. "All Together" is not just the theme for the year, it's who we are as REALTORS and as dedicated citizens of our great nation. We need to do more than talk about working together, we have to live up to it in our own work every single day. Just as America's motto, *e pluribus unum* – out of many, one – defines what our country stands for, I believe "All Together"

defines what we stand for in our associations, in our businesses, and in our communities. It is only through unity that we can achieve our collective goals and our individual goals.

This November, NAR will launch a broad campaign to celebrate and reflect on our one-hundred-year journey as a unified organization, and we're going to celebrate the contributions we've made to our great nation. The theme for the centennial campaign is the face for real estate for 100 years, and we've created a mosaic that will show every member that he or she has an equal place in the REALTOR organization. We plan to replace the thousands of images in this representation with the faces of members of staff, with all of you.

Please stop by the NAR booth here at the summit to pick up information about this important campaign, and have your photo taken so that you can be added to the mosaic. And when you get home, encourage your members to visit [www.thefaceofrealestate.com](http://www.thefaceofrealestate.com) so that they, too, can be included.

When I began my remarks, I asked you to look around the room. Take a moment now to look again at the person next to you and the people at the tables around you. You are the face of real estate today. May the mosaic serve as a lasting reminder to all of us that no matter whether you are President of NAR, president of a large state or a small state, EVP of NAR or an AE at a large or a small association, a brand new member or a veteran, we are all in this together.

And with Team 2008 leading the way, I am certain we will make this a most memorable year for our entire organization, for all of our members, and for those we serve in every community throughout America. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.