

The National Association of Realtors , “The Voice for Real Estate,” is America’s largest trade association, representing more than 1.3 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

Remarks by Dick Gaylord
2008 NAR President
Habitat for Humanity Dedication
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Orlando, Florida

Introduction

Today, I am very excited to be here with our partners at Habitat for Humanity to continue our long-standing tradition of helping a deserving family find that special place called “home.”

This has been a challenging year for consumers and communities. Now, more than ever, they are counting on us, America’s REALTORS to help them preserve their most valuable asset – their “home.”

When you get down to it, the most important benefits of owning a home aren’t about dollars and sense. Research shows that children of homeowners do better in school, and homeowners are more likely to get involved in supporting the community.

It’s no wonder that, according to a recent NAR survey, more than 80 percent of consumers believe that homeownership is still one of the best investments they can make.

Owning a home is not just a solid financial investment – it is an investment in your future and in your communities. REALTORS are committed to helping more families achieve homeownership – and stay in their homes for the long term.

NAR and Habitat

The National Association of Realtors and Habitat have a long history of working together to achieve this goal. Since 2001, we have joined forces every year to build a home in our Annual Conference host city and in a major city abroad. This is actually our second time building a home here in Orlando.

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NAR also works with Habitat year-round to sponsor other events, like Congress Builds America – and to fund special projects, like Realtor Villages in Southeast Asia for the victims of the tsunami in 2005. Two years ago, we made another unprecedented commitment – working with Habitat and Realtors across the nation to build dozens of homes for families along the Gulf Coast who lost their houses in Hurricane Katrina.

This week, we expect more than 20,000 REALTORS to join us here in Orlando for our Conference & Expo. Each and every one of them, has contributed to the home we built right here.

I want to take just a moment now to recognize the folks who have made this remarkable day possible. First, a special “thank you” goes to Dee Danmeyer, from Habitat for Humanity Orlando, and her staff for putting together this build.

I also want to recognize Bob Caldwell, of the Greater Orlando Association of Realtors, for his great work organizing local volunteers throughout the year. Of course, we are also grateful to the many Realtors who helped build this home. Thank you all for your leadership and hard work.

Present the Keys

Now, for the best part of the day. It is my distinct privilege to present Ms. Martina Dunston and her children with the keys to their new home.

Martina, on behalf of the National Association of Realtors, and all of our members and partners around the world, “Welcome Home.”

[present keys]