



## CELEBRATING 100 YEARS...



**Bill McMenemy**  
CBR President, 1989

I was honored in 1989 when the members of the Columbus Board of REALTORS® selected me to be their president and I'm honored now in 2008 to have been selected by the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee to write one of the articles of celebration.

1989 was an historic year in which the Berlin wall opened and the East German Government resigned. In China, the Tiananmen Square uprising took place and in Alaska the supertanker Exxon Valdez grounded on Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound. In the U.S., the express freeway collapsed during the 1989 San Francisco Earthquake.

At the Columbus Board of REALTORS®, we instituted the first two day leadership training session for our officers, trustees and committee chairs and focused on the needs of our members.

The other 1989 officers were Nancy Sharp, President Elect; Jack Myers, Vice President; Pat Grabill, Secretary-Treasurer and George Smith, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

Our returning trustees were Dick Alt, Sam Calhoun, Bruce Massa, Doug McCloud, Dean Potts, Pauline Tingley and Rick Weber and our newly elected trustees were Pat Kearns-Davis, Barbara Lach, Pat O'Neil

and Felix Pedon. Our associate trustee was Jeff Brader.

In addition to our officers, the five underlined trustees all served as president of the Columbus Board of REALTORS® and three also served as President of the Ohio Association of REALTORS® as did two of our officers. WOW! That's impressive. That leadership training obviously worked.

What also worked was Larry Metzger, our wonderful executive officer, who has become widely known for his political acumen and excellent lobbying skills. What a friend we have in Larry. He has made Board service so worthwhile and so much fun for all of us. Larry is so skilled at his craft he makes the conventions come alive so that all participants can be their most effective in representing our members and guarding our collective best interests. After the work day, relaxing at dinner at one of his favorite restaurants, I found myself so impressed with his judgement that, when it was my turn to order, I would look at the waitress and order the exact same dinner that Larry had ordered.

Ray Boll and Barbara Lach were the 25 Million Dollar Sales Club winners; there were 51 One Million Dollar Sales Club winners and 25 Five Million Dollar Sales Club winners.

Jeff Murray was President of the Northeast Area Realty Association. Lynda Long was President of the Westerville Area Association, Steve Kahn was President of IREM and past president Don Kelley was named "Catholic Man of the Year". Diane Blackwood was MLS chairperson and, as an aside, when my company later bought the Coldwell Banker company in 1992 she was the manager of our Westerville office.

In 1989 home sales in Columbus continued to boom after a record setting year in 1987. Building permits for single family homes hit more than 4,000 keeping pace with 1988. Vacation homes became a larger part of the market for residential specialists.

That year, we had 12,680 sales from 30,333 listings at an average sales price of \$90,215 per unit. Those figures are approximately one half of today's market figures in each category. Multi-family building permits were up to 700 over 1987, and it was a good year for specialized multi-family development, those developments that targeted a specific market.

Our downtown and suburban office vacancy rates were lower than the national aver-



*McMenemy with Irving Levine and crew at dinner meeting.*



*McMenemy at radio interview with Margie Holzer.*



McMenamy at President's Ball.



McMenamy with Elvis on velvet.

age as well as many surrounding Midwestern cities, and industrial vacancy was on par with the national average. Asbestos was the buzz word of concern for our commercial industrial practitioners, and we would all soon begin to feel the ill effects of the retro-active 1986 Federal Tax Act, which shut down the savings and loan industry. Columbus was a shining star in the Midwest, an island of hope and prosperity within the newly named "rustbelt".

Mayor Buck Rinehart and Columbus Public Schools Superintendent, Ron Etheridge, were special guests at our February meeting. In March we greeted NBC newsman Irving R. Levine, who did more for the bow tie than anyone until current OSU President Gordon Gee. Also at that March meeting we presented a long time friend of the board, Congressman Chalmers Wylie, with the CBR Award of Appreciation.

At the annual awards night meeting we recognized Marge Drake, Salesperson of the Year, Margie Coyle Holzer, REALTOR® of the Year, and Pete Edwards CBR Citizen of the Year. CBR's other activities included support for the Columbus Housing Partnership. We regularly interacted with executive director Beth Hughs and were instrumental in the success achieved by that very worthwhile organization.

My 1989 year began with my induction into the office of president by past president Marvin Yerke. Many of you remember what a humorous and funny man Marvin could be and that night he was at the top of his form. He set the stage for a fun-filled year which I will never forget. After my year was over I received a letter from the then oldest living past president of CBR, Leigh Koebel, who thanked me for my service. Leigh was a true gentleman who embodied great qualities each of us respects and wants to emulate.

The induction was fun filled and very public, the letter reading very private and very touching. Both men very unique, good friends of my parents and very important to me. Marvin danced with my mother at a dance club they all belonged to. Leigh sold my mom and dad the lot on South Stanwood Road in Bexley where they built the home I grew up in. All of us active in the Columbus Board of REALTORS® have great stories of friendship we can tell. Leigh was president in 1928, Marvin in 1964.

The friendships made through the Columbus Board of REALTORS® are

very special and are forged from a time commitment which is special and unique among trade groups. Those relationships are very important to us personally, but give our group a special power which only comes from combined effort.

The members of the Columbus Board of REALTORS® have been a catalyst for actions that made our association one of the absolute best in the country. Ponder the effect John Galbreath had on the skyline of Columbus. Consider the impact he and Harley Rouda, Sr. had on our industry while serving as presidents of NAR. Consider the strength our organization gained when John Galbreath and Dr. Bob Weiler donated successive locations which allowed our former Town Street and current Board facilities to be state of the art at successive times during our operating history. The impact of the Columbus Board of REALTORS® has been very widespread and each of our many members should take pride in and feel responsible for our influence on our industry, our city, and our country over these 100 years since our founding.

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