



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS...



By Nancy Sharp
CBR President, 1990

In the early '90's, the process for going through the chairs to become the board president consisted of a five-year preparation. Although 1990 was a year I had looked forward to for a long time, when my turn came for that office, I was grateful for the preparation.

CBR's Forecast Night, on a frosty night in January, was our first program and featured the chief economist for Citicorp, William W. Garrison. He was the keynote speaker at the Village Milano on Schrock Road.

The Board announced that the previous year's home sales included 12,180 sales with an average price of \$94,884. (You may be interested to note that there were 26,544 sales in 2007, with the average closing price of \$177,228.)

We had polled our members to ascertain their concerns, and with those results in hand, set our goals for the new decade to include increasing selling skills and increased professionalism. As a part of the professionalism goal, we wanted to increase our political image and activity within the community as well.

The market expectation was that 1990 would be very similar to 1989. We were

informed that the average home price in Ohio for 1989 had increased by 3.5% (sound familiar?). With a lot of enthusiasm and excitement (I remember we talked a lot about a new decade), we were off.

Our RPAC auction, headed by Mike Alpert, auctioneer and Elvis impersonator, was very successful that spring.

The next big news was that for the first time, the Ohio Housing Finance Agency released first-time homebuyer money at 7.9%. The market was at 10%! Many of us remember taking food and encouragement to our clients, who were patiently standing with their contracts in hand, as they stood for hours in long lines that formed around the participating institutions.

During the summer, yet another survey of members indicated that they were very concerned with the REALTOR® public image. This concern was not unique to Ohio, and has been reflected nationally in NAR's "image campaign", which has shown measurable positive results in recent years.

We were all happy in June as the Ohio Housing Finance agency again released \$282 million in low-cost mortgage money for first-time homebuyers, with rates over two percent below the current market. The requirements for qualification included a maximum household income of no more than \$36,000 to \$50,040 - the higher amount was accepted for purchases in targeted areas.

The sea change that affected my presidential year, however, came in that summer of 1990, when agency representa-



Angela Pace MC'd CBR's roast of Jack Hanna to benefit "I Know I Can." Pictured with Jack and wife Suzi are roasters Bill Wolfe, the Columbus Dispatch; Mike Greene, Greene Media; Dave Tebay, Tebay Enterprises and Joe Stegmayer, Worthington Industries. 430 people attended this event and helped CBR raise \$29,124 for "I Know I Can".



1990 Award winners: Bill McMenemy, REALTOR® Broker of the Year; Melvin Schottenstein, Citizen of the Year; Jerry Lux, REALTOR® Salesperson of the Year.

tion took center stage in our industry. The new law required that an agency disclosure statement be submitted to the principals in every transaction.

Historically, of course, without an agreement to the contrary, all agents were considered to be agents of the seller.

Changing long-standing habits was not an easy thing, and to say that this subject impacted the last half of my year as your president is an understatement. We answered questions daily, contributed to and attended classes on the subject, created new forms, etc., busy, busy.



Nancy and Jack Myers accepted a plaque from the Columbus Housing Partnership in recognition of the board's commitment to helping provide affording housing in central Ohio.

However, I believe that most of you will agree with me that as of today, eighteen years later, the net result has been a better understanding and increased professionalism among our members, as well as a better informed public.

We had a terrific, well-attended Sales Associates Day in September, featuring a mariachi band and impromptu dancing.

Also in September, about 500 of our members attended the state convention in Columbus, which was notable for the high quality of educational offerings. CBR hosted the Fourth Annual Minority Career Night, and we celebrated the three-year success story of Columbus Housing Partnership. CHP, founded by Don Kelly as a public/private partnership with the city of Columbus, by that date had helped more than 200 low-to-moderate income families become homeowners.

We counted, and found that we had



Mariachi entertainment inspired members during the REALTOR® Expo "South of the Boarder" held at Veteran's Memorial.

pulled ahead of last year's sales. The October dinner meeting featured local native Bob Greene, well known and noted author of "Be True to Your School".

We also hosted our annual Candidates Night, where more than 85 elected officials attended. We studied our issues, and expressed our point of view that evening in an appropriate manner. Whew! Talk about busy.

We still had December and the President's Ball, where traditionally we could celebrate our latest sales leaders and our year's work, as we welcomed our new officers. It gave us a chance to say



1990 Officers included: Pat Grabill, Vice-President; George Smith, Secretary-Treasurer; Charlotte VanSteyn, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer; Nancy Sharp, President; and John Myers, President-Elect.

our thank yous and goodbyes. My memory of the year at that time was a kaleidoscope of one event spilling into another. With the skilled help Larry Metzger and staff, we had also formed the

CBR Foundation, a charitable foundation designed to solicit funds to invest into community housing needs.

And we had also organized a faster electronic response to political issues that affected our field. Both of these efforts helped to fulfill the year's goals.

Speaking personally, I gained a deeper understanding and was more completely convinced that as an organization, we must stay focused on entry-level housing. That positive action of the first-time buyer permeates the entire market as it flows upward; that action makes our whole market healthy.

The glamorous, high-priced coastal markets, which attract so much media attention, also exact a certain toll which we might not care to pay.

As it turned out, in 1990, we kept pace with 1989 figures, and the reason, in my opinion, was because we could offer *affordable* housing. I am still convinced today that we must always work, legislatively as well as philosophically, to keep the market



President Sharp interviews Carol Caito at Sales Associates Day while Mike Tabor looks on.



Erika Blumenstein demonstrated how to assemble the Emergency Blue Light Unit at a Safety Fair held at Marion Square Apartments in February 1990. The board and the

Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority hosted the event where more than 300 units were distributed to residents.