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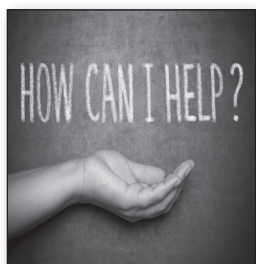
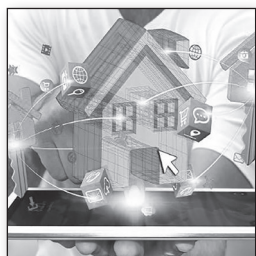
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WVAR

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Jeff Maddox



The pondering and procrastination that has lead up to writing this article has been extreme. What do you say about what our state and nation has been through? How many times a day do you hear, "Uncertain Times, Unprecedented Situation, Anxious Moments Ahead"? If we as individuals and as a Realtor body are not well informed about the current pandemic and the aftermath ahead, we may need to check our sources of information?

Words cannot properly express the Admiration that I have for our membership; the approximate 2,800 individuals that make up WVAR. It is said that Respect is a feeling of

admiration and warm approval; my friends that pretty much hits the nail on the head for me. The brave actions of our members, while attempting to serve our clients whose needs in many cases did not go away, has been inspiring. Once we were designated as an Essential Service provider by Governor Justice, we had the opportunity to continue to work, to perform our duties while following all prescribed safety guidelines. One of the greatest challenges has been the Concern we have for our safety and the safety of others around us. The duty of Care, has been all important and continues to be. Care for ourselves and Care for those around us as well. What do they say, "People don't Care how much you know until they know how much you Care." A truer statement has never been spoken and as we know, Care is shown by taking the proper precautions while performing our duties.

Leadership can be an awkward, challenging task; especially during times when unprecedented circumstances exist. Ray and the WVAR staff have done an exceptional job in keeping the membership informed and providing services during this time, my hats off to each of them.

As President of our organization, I have felt compelled to find ways to lead, comfort and inspire; it is a challenge. It is important that we have a

compelling message. We all hope that the current crisis will come to an end soon, that the world will get back to "normal," and that we all will be able to pursue our careers and lives with optimism. So, we have to chart a path forward. Not an easy task... We simply must have Confidence that everything is going to be alright. Not if our lives will ever be back to normal, but the optimism of when they will get back to normal. Preparation for tomorrow is key at this time, setting the table for what is next, you must develop a plan. The Balance, we must be poised to recognize and acknowledge the downside of events but balance that with optimism about the future. We must have the ability to respond appropriately to what's going on without conveying negative emotions that may cause people to question our objectivity. During a time when we are living in a vulnerable society, we must be Tenacious; we cannot be overwhelmed by the challenges but tenacious in finding resolutions. So, in part our quest is to become Long Term Thinkers; not only seeking solutions for today and tomorrow but for months and years ahead. It is the difference in being one that is responsive and not reactive. We can't always wait until bad things happen before we take action. Those that are tenacious don't give up just because the solution is not immediate, be determined to see things through to the end.

Lastly, I will tell you that I have been burdened during this time not only as the WVAR President but as a Wayne County Commissioner. Unfortunately, we had a nursing home in our county that had 77 positive Covid tests and 8 deaths. The Staff of the Wayne County Continuous Care kept coming in everyday or in some cases, they never left, they are HEROs and there are HEROs all around us, thank the LORD! I will tell you that I have spent a little time on my knees over that situation and many others. My point is this; be safe and keep things in perspective. This too shall pass, for the great majority of us, hopefully soon.

Jeff

Let Me Know How I Can Help?

"Life is like an onion; you peel it off one layer at a time, sometimes you weep"
Carl Sandberg



RAY JOSEPH

FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Holy Cow Is It 2021 Yet?

The last thing I remember was sipping on a glass of bourbon and thinking thank goodness 2019 was over, it was a rough year. Suddenly it was June and I longed for the good ole days of 2019. What a half year its been, they say the older you get the faster the time seems to go, but geeze! A rocky start does not even begin to describe the first half of 2020.

From the COVID19 quarantines, or as we call it in West Virginia "with all this S**t going on," to Murder Hornets, police brutality, riots and looting, locust swarms, does anyone even remember the California wildfires, Australian wildfires, Alabama and Arkansas Tornadoes or the impeachment hearings. Our fast-paced and vicarious Facebook Lifestyle often make our memories no longer than the average news cycle.

So, let's take a minute and look. Occasionally we are asked by the membership, where do my dues go. Well, while easily answered in any year, at the risk of looking a bit like I'm peacocking, if you didn't get your answer in 2020, you just aren't looking. At the onset of the COVID19 Pandemic, your association was there, working hard with government officials to designate the real estate industry as essential. While we received some initial pushback from a small minority of the membership, the numbers show, it was clearly the right thing to do.

Our industry pulled together and figured it out at every level, virtual showings, safe closings, drive by appraisals, top to bottom everyone pulled together to make the best of a profoundly serious and grave situation. The result is clear, while numbers are down across the board it is in the 2 to 5-point range, rather than the double digits drops the industry is experiencing in other states. While all facets of our industry from home inspectors to closing attorneys got together to adapt to the pandemic, so to did our government officials.

Speaking of Government Officials, a tip of the hat to the Governor and his staff. When approached, not only did they understand why our industry was essential but the allowed us to determine the safety protocols that fit our members individual needs. Many states, while deeming real estate essential, handed down guidelines that made it almost impossible to operate. A tip of the hat to Secretary of State Mac Warner, his office both expedited and relaxed the notary process to allow for safe notarization while social distancing.



Last but certainly not least on the government side, thanks Jerry Forren and the West Virginia Real Estate Commission, for working with us to develop a safe way to provide Continuing Education to hundreds of REALTORS® across the state from the safety of their homes and offices. Thanks to the cooperative effort with over a thousand Licensees from across the state were able to renew their license on time.

Finally, on the CE Front, we could not have done any of this without the volunteer efforts of WVAR President-elect Amy White, her tireless efforts to help make Zoom CE a reality can never be repaid. Thanks to her and our proctors, Barbara Belcher, Nancy Williams and Tammy McBride-Lewis, our staff Jody Rollins and Stephanie Smarr all working behind the scene, our effort was nothing short of success.

And of course, you can't have a behind the scenes without those out in front of the camera. None of this would have been possible without our team of instructors donating their valuable time to stand in an empty room and teach. Thank you to Josh McGrath, Kanawha Valley Board of REALTORS®; Dawn Dodson, Eastern Panhandle Board of REALTORS®; Kevin Tenney, Morgantown Board of REALTORS®; Mark Mansour, Huntington Board of REALTORS® and David Houser, Prime Lending. We could not have done it without you.

For those members that logged in to our weekly Zoom Meetings, we hope they provided current and helpful information during the pandemic. I would be remiss if I did not take a minute to thank everyone who watched and all our presenters as well. Sen. Shelley Moore-Capito, Sen. Joe Manchin, Rep. Carol Miller, and all their respective Staffers, Brian Abrams and Rebecca Blaine from Governor Justice's Office, Kimberly Donahue, SBA, Katie Johnson, Brian Green, Megan Booth and Jessica Lautz all From NAR and our regular team, Mark Slotnik, Bailey and Slotnik, Jerry Forren, WVREC, Mark Heitzman, Movement Mortgage, David Houser, Prime Lending, Ted Ranson, Huntington Banks, Marilyn Lovejoy, American Home Warranty, Chris Lambert, Suttle and Stalnaker, Brad Sorrells, WVAR General Counsel and Drew Myers, NAR. We had great participation from our membership and are so thankful to everyone who made it possible.

I hope I haven't missed anyone, but if I did, thanks to everyone who helped us during these unprecedented times. As things settle back to some semblance of normal, please stay safe and productive, we have all proven that's possible. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter and let us know how we are doing.

WVAR

STRAIGHT TALK

by Amy White

So...How y'all doin'?



Has it been a minute or what? I am sure I speak for all of us when I say to the year 2020, "What did I do to you?". However, if you know me at all, you know that I try to find something to learn from each setback, every downturn, any challenge. These last few months have certainly had their share of all three, so I thought it only fitting that I share some of what I've learned from the COVID19 experience.

Things I Hope I Never Have to Learn Again

It should go without saying, if I never hear the word unprecedented again, it will be simply fine with me. Living through a moment that will surely be a history lesson for my great-great grandchildren has forced me to be more observant of threats, adaptations, and our new realities almost daily. I think the only thing worse than learning a lesson the hard way, must be to have to learn it twice. Like, who thought toilet paper would be the currency of the future? Added to the list of things I will always have a contingency supply of are (not in order of importance): hair color, frozen food, snacks, and beverages of all kinds. Should the apocalypse befall me, I will look right, be well fed and in a cheery mood.

I will also learn not to take for granted the option to plan meals before I go to the store instead of pulling meals together with whatever I could find at the store like I'm on an episode of Chopped. "This week's basket features frozen Alaskan Salmon, shredded mozzarella cheese, and an artichoke; feed a family for a week!"

Last on the list of things I did not enjoy learning: ZOOM. I, like the rest of the world, downloaded ZOOM in March following a "what's the best online meeting format" Google search. Little did I know it would become a lifeline to my professional and personal life. Several tutorial videos later, I was scheduling bi-weekly company meetings, instructor meetings, and weekly WVAR update webinars. I have attended more ZOOM meetings in the last 8 weeks than I care to count. I have held meetings, tech-supported webinars, hosted open houses, and I have seen some things that I never ever wanted to see. ZOOM has tested my patience for a multitude of reasons. It also provided for a few fun nights with family my from all over the place in tiny boxes neatly stacked on my computer screen. But I'm over it. I want people in front of me, beside me, in the same room with me at least. I want to be able to roll my eyes without the whole world seeing me do it (not that I would ever do that, but, you know, some of you may or may not have done that in meetings before and I don't want you to feel bad). I am officially ZOOMED out and as I write this, I still have three days of CE to get through and various company ZOOM open houses and meetings to host. I know it's a part of the future, I just don't

want to depend on it for all communication either personally or professionally.

But all is not lost, which leads me to: Things I Want Never to Forget

I've spent more time talking to my family and friends, my co-workers, and my clients in the last few months than I did in what I call B4C (before Corona). Certainly, I kept in touch with everyone, but more often by text than by calling them or ZOOMing them and actually seeing their faces and hearing their voices. There is a huge difference in your relationships when you can see them answer "How are you" or hear the heavy sigh when they talk about their concerns for the future or disappointment in the lost graduation celebration. It's a reminder that just because technology makes communication simpler through texts and emails, that doesn't mean it is the best form of connecting with people.

I have been reminded that family dinners are a big deal and that it's important to save some of the best of you for the people you live with. I love to cook, I always have, but it was easy to let a busy work schedule mean fewer and fewer home cooked meals. Forced to feed my people all day, every day, I enjoyed taking time to make something special or a favorite something just to show them that they are worth it. REALTORS work long, strange hours and never really are off the clock. In my B4C existence, I came home tired, spent, and drained from a day doing whatever was required of me. My energy, kindness and patience were often used up by the time I got home, leaving friends and family to wonder what was most important to me. Having the chance to work in front of them gave them an opportunity to see me doing what I love, but it also meant I could turn my attention to them more often. It's been a good lesson and hopefully a reminder to save a bit of the best of me for the people that I love. If COVID19 has taught us nothing, it's taught us that people matter. I want to remember that long after we've regained a "normal" way of life.

Finally, I want to remember how much pride I have felt for my REALTOR family. Faced with real challenges, with threats we had never imagined, we did what REALTORS always do: we found solutions. We are the champions of figuring out a way and we showed that throughout this crisis. We worked together to provide education for our members. We supported our communities with donations and support. We worked within the guidelines provided to keep leading people to their next destinations, to their homes. We worked safely to protect our clients and our families.

So, it's been a minute, but I've never been more sincere when I ask, how are you all doing? I'm sure you're a bit tired, but I want to say Job Well Done. I look forward to a time when I can see you, talk with you, share your exhaustion a bit to give you the break you need to get back out there and keep doing the amazing work that you do. You are my REALTOR family and I will never forget the work you've done and how absolutely essential you are.

What's On Dea's Mind?

By Dea Kennen



Looking at life through a "Baby Boomer's" lens, I must say things seem upside down to me.

Zoom meetings have become the norm, and I am sure I will never feel totally comfortable with them. It's like seeing peoples' images that I know, some quite well, without a soul. They become just images on a screen and not "my" people. The soul connection seems to get lost somewhere on the internet. Oh sure, business can still be

completed as always, but the per-sonal connection is lost to me.

One of my new Zoom meetings is my weekly prayer group. For thirty plus years we have been meeting every Tuesday morning, but on Zoom, it is just not the same. It is just okay. Yes, we see each other, and we connect, but something is missing in the connection. The "soul" of our meetings seems lost.

Our agent meetings are all on Zoom. The good news is we get a few more agents attending because they can attend while wearing sweatpants, but we still miss the real connection with one another. We are accomplishing our business, but we are missing out on the personal items. We need to have time to hear about the new grand baby, or the trip to the beach, or how your hip surgery went last week. That is the stuff that is not shared during our business on Zoom, and that is the stuff that really

is the glue of our relationships. Caring about the per-sonal stuff can be just as important as the real estate business we need to discuss.

Everyone is talking about the new normal, and I want to be sensitive in this pandemic, I really do. I will wear my mask, I'll wash my hands fifty times a day, and I'll watch church in my pjs with everyone else. But I am concerned that the new norm may not include the "soul" of connecting with one another. I do not have to shake your hand to acknowledge I am glad to see you, but I still need to see you! Not on a computer screen or a tiny cell phone, but body and soul up close and personal. I want to look into your eyes and see what you are really feeling and sense the things you may not be comfortable sharing on Zoom. I need to see the body language that tells me if you need a hug today or if things are going well with you.

After more than thirty years in the real estate business, one thing I know for sure is people need to know people care. It's the heart of the business. It supersedes the almighty dollar and the need for success. It is true with our agents, and it is true with the public we serve. As amazing as technology is today, never tell me you think it's better without the human touch!

People are very adaptable, and I feel confident that we'll come out okay on the other side. My prayer is that in the new norm we do not exclude the "soul" of our relationships with one another. Zoom can connect us but cannot give us peace. Our highest reward, a peaceful night's sleep, comes from caring and connecting with the lives we touch every day.

Happy Zooming everyone!

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LEGAL HOTLINE

By Brad Sorrells

"A Return to Normalcy"



One Hundred years ago, Warren G. Harding was running for U.S. President using as his campaign slogan the call for "A Return to Normalcy." He elaborated on this call by saying: "America's present need is not heroics, but healing; not nostrums, but normalcy; not revolution, but restoration; not agitation, but adjustment; not surgery, but serenity; not the dramatic, but the dispassionate; not experiment, but equipoise; not submergence in internationality, but sustenance in triumphant

nationality. I would love for some normalcy about now, myself, and I'll be glad when I can't remember the last time I heard the phrase "in these uncertain times."

With the goal of "a return to normalcy," I will pass on the temptation to write about the effect of COVID-19 on West Virginia law. In any event, I don't think that the impact has become known yet in West Virginia, other than in an unprecedented declaration of a Judicial Emergency that left courthouses and record rooms across the state closed. Instead, I will focus on a normal issue of real estate law, one that has been raised in a notable number of calls and e-mails to the Hotline these past months. That issue is the law of implied easements, the most common form of which is the "way of necessity."

In April of 2010 the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeal issued the long and interesting decision of *Cobb v. Daugherty*, 693 S.E.2d 800 (W.Va. 2010), which covers this topic. Due to space limitations, only a portion of the opinion can be set forth here, but all of the text below this paragraph is taken directly from the Daugherty opinion. For the same reason, all footnotes and most citations have been omitted.

An implied easement is one that is "graft[ed] . . . onto a land transaction in order to do justice in a particular case." This Court has made it clear that "[t]he law does not favor the creation of easements by implied grant or reservation." "Courts must be very careful before decreeing upon one man's land in favor of another without compensation such an incumbrance as a way, permanently impairing that man's dominion and ownership, which next to life and liberty, is the most valuable of rights inhering in the citizen." *Crosier v. Brown*, 66 W.Va. 273, 275, 66 S.E. 326, 327 (1909).

Accordingly, "[t]he burden of proving an easement rests on the party claiming such right and must be established by clear and convincing proof." Syllabus point 1, *Berkeley Development Corp. v. Hutzler*, 159 W.Va. 844, 229 S.E.2d 732 (1976).

A. Easements Implied by Necessity

A court once noted that, "Few things are as certain as death, taxes and the legal entanglement that follows a sale of landlocked real estate."

An easement implied by necessity arises when the owner of a unified tract of land severs the tract into two (or more) smaller parcels, and

then conveys one of those parcels that is of such a nature and extent that either the parcel conveyed or the parcel retained is landlocked, and either entirely surrounded by the land from which it is severed, or by this land and the land of strangers. Our law is clear that, in such cases, the owner of the landlocked parcel implicitly receives a right of way - a way of necessity - across the other tract of land. As we stated in syllabus point 1 of *Wooldridge v. Coughlin*, 46 W.Va. 345, 33 S.E. 233 (1899):

A way of necessity exists where land granted is completely environed by land of the grantor, or partially by his land and the land of strangers. The law implies from these facts that a private right of way over the grantor's lands was granted to the grantee as appurtenant to the estate.

Where one owns and conveys a portion of his land which is completely surrounded by the retained land or partially by the land of the grantor and the land of others, without expressly providing a means of ingress and egress, and where there is no other reasonable means of access to the granted land, the law implies an easement in favor of the grantee over the retained portion of the original land of the grantor.

To establish an easement implied by necessity, a party must prove four elements: (1) unity of ownership of the dominant and the servient estates; (2) severance (that is, a transfer of the dominant and/or servient estates to another); (3) proof that, at the time of the severance, the easement was strictly necessary for the benefit of either the parcel transferred or the parcel retained; and (4) a continuing necessity for an easement.

The driving force behind an easement implied by necessity is purely economic. "Land without means of access is practically valueless. No reasonable use can be made of it, and it has no market value. The presumption of intent on the part of the parties to the conveyance to provide a means of access is so strong . . . that the contrary thereof can hardly be supposed." *Crotty v. New River & Pocahontas Consol. Coal Co.*, 72 W.Va. 68, 71, 78 S.E. 233, 234 (1913). To ensure that land can be reasonably used, "the law implies an easement over the servient estate where the grantor owns and conveys a portion of the original lands without expressly providing a means of ingress and egress." *Berkeley Development Corp. v. Hutzler*, 159 W.Va. 844, 850, 229 S.E.2d 732, 735 (1976). See also, *Wolf v. Owens*, 340 Mont. 74, 79, 172 P.3d 124, 128 (2007) ("The way of necessity arises when the strong public policy against shutting off a tract of land and thus rendering it unusable gives rise to a fictional intent defeating any such restraint.").

An easement implied by necessity "is not established by the mere fact that one's land is surrounded by the lands of others cutting him off from public ways." *Proundfoot v. Saffle*, 62 W.Va. 51, 54, 57 S.E. 256, 257 (1907). The easement arises only when a unified tract is severed - if there is no evidence that the purported dominant estate and servient estate were ever a part of the same tract of land, there cannot be a way of necessity. *Derifield v. Maynard*, 126 W.Va. at 755, 30 S.E.2d at 13. The easement also arises only if, at the time of severance, there was no reasonable access to the landlocked property except by way of the claimed easement. This Court has stated that a party claiming an easement of necessity "can go back beyond the deed of the immediate grantee to the common source of title, however remote it may be, and claim a way by necessity, as appurtenant to the land[.]"

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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4. Father or Guardian's Name: _____

Father's Employer: _____

5. Mother or Guardian's Name: _____

Mother's Employer: _____

6. Name of REALTOR® Affiliation: _____

7. List of membership and participation in school organizations and activities including positions of leadership held, if any.

Please do not abbreviate organization names _____

8. List membership and participation in community, civic, and religious organizations and activities including positions of _____

leadership held, if any: _____

9. Which of these memberships and activities have made the biggest difference in your school and/or community? Why?

10. List school or civic honors, awards or special recognition: _____

J. JACKSON PAULEY SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship Application (continued)

11. College or higher education institution preference: _____

First Preference (name of school and location): _____

Second Preference (name of school and location): _____

12. Briefly describe your career/life goals. Explain how these will make a contribution to society and to your community.

13. Work Experience:

Employer / Phone Number/ Position / Dates of Employment

14. Number of persons dependent upon the family income (including parents, dependent children or others as reported on income tax returns): _____

Names and ages of brothers and sisters:

Name

Age

15. Number of children listed above who will be attending college this year: _____

16. Please state any unusual family or personal circumstances you feel warrant the attention of the selection committee:

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The J. Jackson Pauley Scholarship Fund was established to honor the memory of the late Executive Vice President of the West Virginia Association of REALTORS® and to help fund post-secondary education in academic, art or technical areas for family members of association members.

The required application appears on the next two pages of this magazine and must be completed and returned by **March 1, 2020**. In addition to the application, please be sure the eligibility requirements listed on this page are met by the applicant. Your application will not be considered without these requirements being fulfilled.

Send applications and all supporting materials listed under Eligibility Requirements to the West Virginia Association of REALTORS®, 2110 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Suite 209, Charleston, WV 25311, by **March 1, 2020**.

Any false information or misrepresentation made by the applicant shall result in immediate revocation or termination of the scholarship.



Eligibility Requirements

1. Be a family member of WVAR member (REALTOR®, member, son, daughter, grandchild, stepchild, parent, spouse, step grandchild, son/daughter-in-law, brother or sister) and provide the name of the active REALTOR®.
2. Submit application on or before **March 1, 2020**
3. Provide an up-to-date transcript of high school grades, college grades, including SAT or ACT scores and class rank.
4. Complete student application (the only information available to the selection committee is that which the applicant provides. Therefore, it is imperative that the entire application be completed.) Attach all other criteria or information, along with a black and white original photo of the applicant (no photo copies, please).
5. Two letters of recommendation addressing character, scholarship and potential of applicant—one from a teacher in the school which the applicant currently attends and the other from a person not related to the applicant. (If the applicant is not a high school or college student, then two letters of recommendation from a person that is not related to the applicant)
6. Complete a two hundred (200) word essay as to why you want to be considered for this scholarship.

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SPECIAL FEATURE

By Jennifer Miller Lipscomb

Essentially Yours: Random Musings from a Semi-Quarantined Realtor



Rain. PPP application. Cable news overload. More rain. Sellers worrying. Buyers hitting the brakes. For the love of all that is holy, why is it still raining? I can, in no shape, form or fashion, handle another drop of rain.

Hmm, Zoom. This seems helpful. Better figure this out, inbox is filling up with virtual meeting invites. Video – awkward at first, but not so bad after a meeting or two. Should have taken the plunge into video long ago. Might as well do a couple selfie virtual tours. Oh wow – an offer!

Ah, there you are, you beautiful sunshine, you. Let's me and my mini go out for a long stroll, it's been a trying two weeks for us both. Fresh air will do our souls a lot of good, and my daughter's little toddler legs need to run and play in the great outdoors. Hmm, turns out some running and playing has cheered me up, too. Warmer weather is expected to stick around for a few days – maybe we'll just keep up this daily 2-mile stroll and playtime routine.

Really productive Zoom with our Chamber of Commerce board, proceeding with a long-ago planned Community Clean-Up Month. Maybe we will bring supplies to clean up a street that's a part of our new daily stroll route.

Never been much help in the kitchen. Ever since my husband got food poisoning after eating a salmon dinner, I made him in our dating days, he has claimed the kitchen as his territory. Oh boy, here comes the rain yet again. Ok, I saw a delicious Bolognese recipe online that takes 6 hours to make. That should kill some time and keep my brain occupied today. Let's give it a go. If it's terrible, I'll just throw it out and no one will be the wiser about my continued lack of cooking prowess.

Quarantine Kitchen Success! Many hours later, I dance around the kitchen feeling victorious as my daughter happily gobbles down some spaghetti Bolognese. Husband approves and there is enough to feed an army, so neighborhood food delivery ensues.

Uncertainty over our local real estate market continues proving unfounded (thankfully!), my phone rings each day and exciting new listing opportunities appear. My photographer starts offering 3D Matterport virtual tours and wow, are they are an awesome marketing tool. Website hits are up, what little inventory is out there is going under contract in multiple offer situations, and I sell a couple properties sight unseen to investors from different areas of the country. Here's to hoping these low interest rates hold steady.

Easter comes and goes. It is a happy day with our little family, but we sure do miss our siblings, nieces and nephews, and our parents. Our daughter is obsessed with bunnies, thanks I'm sure, to the Easter décor I actually had time to decorate the whole house with this year. She pretends to be a bunny and does this elaborate sniffing that my heart will never forget – even when she is a teenager no longer humored by her early childhood cuteness. Oh yes, this sniffing has been captured forever on video.

We have always had a vegetable garden but order more plants than usual this year. We will still have our basic tomatoes, zucchini, asparagus, and hot peppers but are going to add in some broccoli, cabbage, watermelon,

cucumbers, herbs, peas, and ever divisive brussels sprouts. While it's usually a rush to get the plants in the ground in between appointments on a busy Saturday, my husband and I enjoy planning the garden layout and take care getting everything just so this year.

I find my next week full of work with out-of-state buyers – from New York, New Jersey and North Carolina to Florida and Washington state, interest in our quiet little community appears to be skyrocketing. Our rural listings with an acre or more of land are a hit with this crowd, as are the larger acreage tracts.

Through all this, I participate in WVAR Executive Committee Zooms and texts – a mix of serious business decisions and funny memes, we work well together and I appreciate everyone's ability to respect one another's points of view, even with differing from one's own. The importance of respect between colleagues also extends to my greater community. Social media is flooded with opinions on mask and glove wearing, social distancing practices, and the ever-entertaining conspiracy theories. My take, and that of most of the people I consider friends and trusted advisors, seems to be simple: You do you, and I'll do me. Just do what feels right for you and your family and leave judgement on the decisions of others out of the equation.

There is a random sprinkling of snow and my heart feels despair that perhaps 2020 is indeed out to get us. It was just a Mother's Day snow, rare but not, in fact, the year 2020 out to get us. On a holiday that causes so much heaviness in the hearts of those who have lost a mama, grandma or a little one, take a quarantine holiday without loved ones and add some icy snow falling from the sky for some extra sting to an already difficult day. There is so much to be thankful for, though, as I am reminded when my daughter practices her newest skill – blowing her mama kisses. The snow melts, the sun returns – for good this season now, it seems – and my hope returns along with it.

The team that it takes to close a transaction has been astonishingly on top of things throughout all of this. Lenders are doing all they can to help get clients through their loan processes, and attorneys are being so flexible, understanding, and diligent in getting those clients closed and into their new homes. Since I began my real estate career 10 years ago, I have appreciated the teamwork that goes into every transaction. Near, though, had I considered how absolutely essential the real estate industry is to the world around us. I'm sure I'm not alone in having had clients who critically needed to buy and sell during this Stay at Home time. So many people have worked so hard to make it happen for those folks, and I feel a greater pride in our real estate industry than ever before.

As we open back up, and enjoy picking up pieces of our pre-COVID 19 lives while keeping an eye on public safety, it's a bit overwhelming to look back and try to process the affect that this event has had on our lives. I did not know where this article was taking me when I started typing. As I pause for a moment, I realize that sometimes – even amidst a global pandemic – it is allowing ourselves to slow down, breathe, and let go of a need to be in total control that gives us a chance to see more clearly than ever before what it is that truly matters. Essentially, I am excited to get back to a sense of normalcy...but I will also be focusing on never again being "too busy" for those two-mile strolls, new recipes, and time spent gardening with my family. Wishing you all health and success in the summer months ahead. Off to reply to a few client emails, and then it is back out into the sunshine to watch my daughter and doodle splash around in the pool. And I think to myself, what a wonderful world.



WEST VIRGINIA PROFILE By Rachel Valencia



A Road Worth Traveling, Dea Kennen

"If you believe in your profession, you give back!" That was my biggest takeaway after interviewing Delilah (Dea) Kennen. She and her husband, Bob, are staples in the West Virginia Real Estate Community. Dea represented our state for the National Association of REALTORS® and Bob is now the

newest commissioner for WVREC. Together they work to improve our industry and keep the heart & soul of our business with one on one interaction. I had an interesting experience with Dea, she sent me her story in her own words. I love her passion for our industry and there was no way I could match what she had to say about her own experience.

Before I let you transition into her "autobiography", I will highlight some of what I learned about the two of them. Dea was part of the driving force to create our statewide REALTOR® Relief Fund in 2007. Many, including myself have benefited from this program during devastating times of need. She was also the president of the YWCA for many years and she has been involved in many charities within her church. Bob helped establish Habitat for Humanity in the Wheeling area. They have three children and 5 grandchildren who live close by. They are a close-knit family and spend a lot of time together. Two of their children are REALTORS® as well. When they're not with the family they enjoy golfing. So, without further delay, here is Dea Kennen in her own words.....

Everyone has a story, and my real estate story is joined at the hip with my husband and partner for 44 years, Bob Kennen.

I mention Bob mainly because when the steel industry died in Wheeling, we looked for a way to stay put with our three children. All were in high school at the time. The late eighties were a time of great transition for the Kennen family. Bob's degree was in marketing, so we thought let's just switch from steel to real estate. So, we did. We opened Kennen & Kennen Realtors in March 1993. Our goal was to be the "boutique" real estate office in town. That sounded good, but we quickly found that only two people working an office could be the quickest route to starvation. We decided to look for people in the community that we thought would be good in real estate. Contrary to other agencies, we chose to find people and ask them if they would like to get into the business. Surprisingly, everyone we approached said yes! Eventually it led to our opening our own real estate school giving us the perfect vehicle to educate new agents. We never had to look to other companies for agents.

It was during the beginning years that I realized how much I loved the business. We quickly saw that if we were to be professionals, then education would need to be our hallmark.

In the early 90s we were at a state convention and I heard some agents discussing their family life. Every one of them said they certainly did not want their kids to follow them into real estate. They wanted their kids to get a "real" job after college. I must admit, my jaw dropped! All of them were being extremely honest that day, but it made me stop and think. Why did they all feel that our profession was not good enough for their own children. Bob and I both felt strongly that the professional Realtor was just as important as any other professional in the community.

Doctor, lawyer or Indian Chief, people need a professional when purchasing a home. We never grow tired of serving people. We never grow tired of getting a "thank you" phone call from past clients. And, for the record, two of our children with college degrees have joined us in the business!

In the mid-90's we both served in various capacities on our local Wheeling Board, and both served as Presidents for several years. In 1998 I began my love affair with the West Virginia Association of Realtors as a State Director. I met so many of the great people I still get see all these years later; Barbara Belcher, June Williams, Susan Lawrence, Glenna Swiger. These ladies were the ones that were steadfast in their devotion to the work of WVAR. I've enjoyed seeing them at every quarterly meeting for the past 22 years.

One of my fondest memories of WVAR was serving as a "newbie" on the Board when we were looking for a new CEO. Mr. Ray Joseph was one of the candidates being considered. Kathy Martin and I were immediate fans of Ray's, and the rest is history!

Serving on the Executive Committee 2005-2007 was one of the most satisfying times I can remember. When my President term came around in 2007, I was extremely excited. Traveling the state and seeing places and people that I would never see any other way, was the absolute best! That same year I also got to chair the WVAR convention in Wheeling, double icing on the cake. And I was blown away when the surprise of Realtor of the Year was given to me at that convention!

On the national level it was my privilege to serve as WVAR's National Director for nine years. Sitting in on the National Association of Realtors' Board of Director meetings with almost 700 members was amazing! I loved the May meetings in D.C. each year and the chance to meet with West Virginia's congress men and women. You certainly get to see the "big" picture when you're in Washington, D.C.

I would say to any Realtor that has not chosen to get involved locally or statewide, please do. The experience will not only be enriching to you personally but will most definitely make you a better Realtor.

1. Make appointment with seller for listing presentation. 2. Send a written or e-mail confirmation of appointment and call to confirm. 3. Review appointment questions. 4. Research all comparable currently listed properties. 5. Research sales activity for past 18 months from MLS and public databases. 6. Research average days on market for properties similar in type, price and location. 7. Download and review property tax roll information. 8. Prepare

Obtain copy of subdivision
 10. Obtain copy of subdivision
 11. Research property's
 12. Obtain copy of subdivision
 13. Research
 14. Obtain copy of subdivision
 15. Obtain copy of subdivision
 16. Prepare

You have a lot to do.

of subject property. 18. Compile and assemble formal file on property. 19. Confirm current public schools and explain their impact on market value. 20. Review listing appointment checklist to ensure completion of all tasks. 21. Give seller an overview of current market conditions and projections. 22. Review agent and company credentials and accomplishments. 23. Present company's profile and position or niche in the marketplace. 24. Present CMA results, including comparables, solds, current listings and expireds. 25. Offer professional pricing strategy based and interpretation of current market conditions. 26. Discuss goals to market effectively. 27. Explain market power and benefits of multiple listing service. 28. Explain market power of Web marketing, IDX and REALTOR.com. 29. Explain the work the broker and

agent do behind the scenes and agent
 screening qualified buyers to protect
 master marketing plan. 32. Explain
 preference. 33. Review all clauses in
 current title information. 35. Measure
 room sizes. 37. Confirm lot size via

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and all unrecorded property lines, agreements, easements. 39. Obtain house plans, if applicable and available. 40. Review house plans, make copy. 41. Order plat map for retention in property's listing file. 42. Prepare showing instructions for buyers' agents and agree on showing time with seller. 43. Obtain current mortgage loan(s) information: companies and account numbers. 44. Verify current loan information with lender(s). 45. Check assumability of loan(s) and any special requirements. 46. Discuss possible buyer financing alternatives and

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TECHNOLOGY NEWS

By Sarah Beavers

"Technology is Deemed Essential"



We have talked before about the love/hate relationship we can tend to have with technology. There seems to be varying opinions on the importance it plays in our industry. COVID-19 has proved that it is essential. What would business look like if this pandemic had hit 20 years ago? Do you think you could have not only maintained your

business, but flourished? What about our day to day lives in general how would they have been without the technology we have today?

Agents are still able to show homes to their buyers with various avenues of technology. They could simply use their cell phones to do a video walk through or face time call with their clients to show the homes they were interested in. Those with the 3D video technology available could send a link of a 3D video that allows the client the ability to view the home in 360-degree angles and walk through it virtually, and have the ability to zoom in to any area of the room. This is as close as clients could get to what seeing the home in person would be like.

Listing and Purchasing agreements could be done on the computer and sent to clients to sign through various digital ink platforms. The completed paperwork could be scanned into the computer and emailed to the offices without having to be there in person. Law offices and closing companies found ways to still conduct closings with as little contact as possible due to tele-conferencing, virtual notarization, and other technology.

Brokerages and agents were able to use web meeting platforms to stay in touch with their agents, offer trainings, and hold their regular sales meetings. We all know what ZOOM is now, and it is not the only option. I believe many of these techniques are now here to stay and brokerages along with all other business will be continuing to use the technology well into the future when things are back to "normal" whatever that might be.

Technology didn't just play a leading role in the real estate industry and pretty much every business, but also in just the quality of every day life.

Children are able to continue their scholastic studies online and finish out their school year. Families are able to stay in touch and not only hear each other's voices, but also see each other virtually when they cannot be together in person. Churches everywhere are holding virtual services. There are live concerts streamed by nearly every musician one can think of. With technology and the creativity of artists, there are several free classes in different styles so you can learn a new skill or just forget about what is going on for a while. Apps such as Door Dash, Grub Hub, and Uber Eats are able to deliver food from local restaurants that might just keep them afloat. Many workers on the front lines in the grocery stores, pharmacies, warehouses, factories, USPS, UPS, FEDEX, the truck drivers, and many more finally get the recognition and respect they should have had all along.

The most important part of technology during all of this is what it provides to those on the front line everyday doing all that they can to help us. Doctors and nurses using it to treat patients, first responders using it to get to you as fast as possible, scientist and researchers using it to help find a cure or vaccine, and so that family members who were kept away were able to keep in touch or say goodbye.

We use it every day from watching TV to using our cell phones. We have become so accustomed to it that we don't even see it anymore, but it all comes down to technology being one of the most essential things in our businesses and our lives.

I hope all of you who are reading this and those that you love are safe and well.



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