



FROM THE DESK OF ARTHUR S. LAZEROW

MAR Convention Successful

I am not sure what was more heartwarming, introducing my wife Tina to so many of the Realtors I have worked with over the past 15 years or meeting so many "Green" accredited Realtors. 1200 well focused and fun loving Realtors attended, plus numerous vendors.

Actually, there was a varied group of vendors, from staging specialists and home service firms, to mortgage and warranty companies. I must report that the fuzzy headed laughing giveaway pen from MRIS was the best gift and the best scene during the opening reception Monday night was watching two friends converse. Tommy Carruthers, an old friend from my homebuilding days, worked hard but unsuccessfully to convince Nancy Ballus, also an honored friend for many years, to return to management. And Bob Ballus looked terrific traversing his old real estate stomping grounds at the Convention.



The Glass Guru Booth made a big splash and was busy all three days. Realtors had never actually seen a fogged window side by side with a restored window. To the real estate community, eye-

popping and astounding were two descriptions frequently heard. One Realtor was so impressed that he actually made an appointment at the show to have his windows restored to clarity.

The theme of the three days was "Green" real estate practice.

Over 150 Realtors associated with offices from Deep Creek to the ocean attended the three day National Association of Realtors "Green Realtor" designation class. Normally green and Realtors are more often linked with money and commissions. But a sea change has begun as Realtors and the real estate

business become more aware of energy efficiency and the Green movement.

NAR has established the proposition that caring for the environment, as expressed by the Green movement, is good for the real estate business and good for Realtors. Realtors mostly have not gotten on board, but this is changing. It was encouraging when the environmental class broke and returned to the vendor fair area, many of these Realtors visited our Home Energy Team Maryland booth asking about RESNET Raters. This was the first time any Realtor had uttered the words "RESNET Rater." Since I am proud to have attained this level of energy auditor certification, I could only smile and inform Realtors that when they need a high-level energy audit, the RESNET Raters of Alban Inspections in our area and of Home Energy Team in other areas will be available to serve their clients.



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FROM JOE DEMPSEY, ASHI ASSOCIATE INSPECTOR & ALBAN CHIEF HOME ENERGY AUDITOR

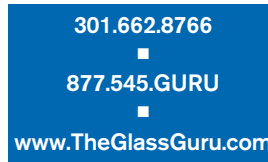
Utilities and Government Support Residential Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency in homes is slowly becoming a national mantra. When Alban Inspections started its energy audit division, there was very little demand for residential audits of existing homes. But we could see the future. Now both Pepco and Baltimore Gas and Electric are developing programs to support both energy audits and retrofit work for energy efficiency.

The Department of Energy's Energy Star program was for a long time the lone ranger program for energy efficiency in homes and for rating products. For the last several years, over 20,000 new construction homes per year were built under the Energy Star program, which

dictated a 20% improvement in energy utilization in the new home as compared to the basic code level new home. If this was accomplished, the builder received a \$2,000 tax credit and the buyer moved into a home with lower utility bills.

The proposed extension bill in Congress for this tax credit on new construction, which expires January 1, 2010, includes not only the \$2,000 tax credit for new homes, but a \$200 tax credit for an energy audit and a \$5,000 tax credit for construction costs which result in the owner of an existing home improving its energy utilization 50%. That's an exceptional down payment on future energy savings nationwide.



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