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President's message: Reflecting over the past year

November 20, 2014 - Connecticut

Hello again to everyone within earshot of this article. It seems that a fair share of my president's messages have touched on two topics consistently. The first being the concept of change and the second being some facet of the weather. Never being one to break from tradition as well as being a native New Englander, this article will have a bit of both. So, of course as I write this I can see out of the corner of my eye (property managers never get the best views) the very first snowfall of the year for us here in Conn. Definitely qualifies as change and weather. But of course, it didn't sneak up on us, so we were prepared, hope you were, too (or if you were real lucky, it missed you).

As I come down to the end of my term as president of the Greater Hartford Chapter of BOMA, I would like to reflect a little bit on my term as well as my overall experience with BOMA, both locally and on the international level.

I have been associated with BOMA since I first started working in the real estate industry, and it has been a fantastic experience on so many levels. It has helped me immensely with my job. The education and contacts that I have made are things that aren't available anywhere else.

Being involved on a local level has afforded me the opportunity to meet, interact with, and learn from most of the large property owners and managers in our area. Along with the managers and owners, we also have some of the finest service providers in the area in our membership. If I need a reliable service provider in a particular area, chances are we have one who is a BOMA member. And if we don't, well then there are always the other Principal members who are more than happy to share their experiences and contacts. These contacts have become invaluable to me.

I have also taken advantage of BOMI's educational offerings, including earning the RPA designation. BOMI offers many different study methods for its courses, and personally, I took classroom study courses. For me, this not only offered the chance to learn the BOMI material, but I found myself sitting in class with a group of people who all had unique experiences and stories to tell. It was like 2X the education at a bargain price.

Through our monthly programs here we have heard from a myriad of respected professionals ranging from politicians, to economists, to developers. We have toured some amazing facilities including the brand new Jackson Laboratory, Goodwin College, Hartford Steam Company plant, Travelers Claim University, and Blue Back Square. Each educational session offers great information. Of course, we are able to mix a little bit of fun in our events as well. Some of those highlights include our annual Gus Johnson Memorial Golf Tournament as well as our annual Holiday Social and TOBY Awards.

And participation on the international level is an extension of all of those benefits gleaned on the local level. By attending the conferences and trade shows, I have been exposed to an entire new level of networking, education, and experience. I have met and have gotten to know other building owners and managers from throughout the U.S., and even a few International members.

I literally have information from just about any market a phone call away. Oh, and I haven't quite found a comparable experience to sitting in your senator's or congressman's office in Washington D.C., discussing upcoming issues and their support of said issues.

If you are a current BOMA member, chances are you have had a lot of similar experiences. I still remember walking into my first BOMA meeting. It looked like a room full of 100 people who had been best friends since elementary school. I remember thinking "How am I ever going to find a way into this group?" It couldn't have been more than 2 minutes before someone came up with a friendly handshake and a "Hi, I am so and so from XYZ company. It is a pleasure to meet you. I see you are a new member, let me introduce you to a few people." And it just got better from there. Now, those same meetings that seemed intimidating feel more like a visit to Cheers, "Where everybody knows your name."

And if you aren't a BOMA member and this sounds appealing to you, then all you have to do is reach out to your local BOMA association and let them know you are interested in the organization and would like to learn more. Trust me, BOMA will take care of you from there.

Ok, I have to stop myself here, I could talk about BOMA and the benefits for days. I would like to point out Greater Hartford BOMA will be holding our annual Holiday Party on Thursday December 11th at Marquee located at historic 960 Main St., in downtown Hartford. This year we will have a special presentation as one of Greater Hartford BOMA's founders, Jim Williams, is awarded a Lifetime Membership from BOMA International. Hopefully we will see you there.

I'll be back next month with my final president's message. Until then, stay prepared.

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