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55 YEARS

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## How important and powerful volunteerism is - by Ralph Valentine

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Ralph Valentine,  
The Valentine Group

Have you given thought to just how important and how powerful volunteerism is? One large group of volunteers and one paid staff member operate NHCIBOR, NECPE and NHCIBOR Cares. Think about that, and with a combined budget of about half million dollars to boot. This contingent of unpaid, selfless, crazy-busy volunteers is responsible for delivering a major assist to tens of millions of dollars of annual CRE transactions in our region.

When volunteers serve, they attach more importance to serving the CRE community than to serving themselves. They aspire to the principle of donating time and energy for the benefit of others in the CRE community, but as a social responsibility rather than for any financial reward.

Nationwide, there are about 1,400 Boards of Realtors, all run by volunteers. In Washington D.C. at the branding meeting, NAR was talking about changes to the Realtor logo. One change is to eliminate the red CRE Realtor pin, which differentiates us from residential Realtors (blue pin). One volunteer stood up in front of a very large crowd. He was adamant that NAR should not make that change. "It will be met with strong resistance from commercial realtors," he said. The moderator tried twice to stifle this volunteer. But he persisted and made his position known loud and clear. When he was done, there were loud cheers from those of us proudly wearing the red pin. That one voice was Gerry O'Connell.

Our organization has a deep bench when it comes to volunteers, but it's not by luck. It's due to the hundreds of hours put in by past volunteers and from those who currently serve. They developed and fostered a culture that attracts other volunteers. And to them all we owe a debt of gratitude.

Your one voice is needed to continue to foster this culture of serving, rather than being served. With your help, with your one voice, our organization will not only sustain itself but grow to be something more powerful.

Your voice counts, use it. Volunteer.

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