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Now is a great time to become a member of an appraisal organization!

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Just a few thoughts to share with my fellow appraisers. Now is a great time to become a member of an appraisal organization. Being a board member of the Massachusetts chapter of the Appraisal Institute and a member on several committees of the Massachusetts Board of Real Estate Appraisers (MBREA) puts me in the enviable position of an informed observer. I get to see all of the work that goes on behind the scenes to help our profession. Both organizations are working full tilt for the betterment of our appraisal lives. Within the past few weeks I attended the Jay Zeiger service day for the Mass. Chapter, which was an afternoon well spent at the Boston Food Bank. More than 35 members showed up and handled several tons of food that would eventually be distributed to a number of worthy programs throughout the area. The following week I attended an afternoon seminar in Waltham on the Residential Development Market in Suburban Massachusetts. Three speakers, including Jeff Rhuda from Symes Associates, Reid Blute from Pulte Homes and Wayne Clough from Fantini & Gorga expounded on current market conditions and where they perceive the market is going. The seminar was extremely insightful, up to the minute and well attended. The Mass. chapter is also spearheading a drive to raise funds to send to the AI Washington. This money is necessary to assist in the myriad number of issues that we, as appraisers face today. As our current president Dave Carey, Jr. said in the solicitation for funds regarding AI Washington, "Issues facing us include TARP, predatory lending, banking and financial services regulatory reform, implementation of the Home Valuation Code of Conduct and foreclosure prevention, IRS rules and regulations, and multiple state initiatives to regulate appraisal management companies." Quite the huge plate!

On the flip side, MBREA is also working diligently on our behalf. Since becoming MBREA's executive director, Steve Sousa has raised MBREA's level of exposure through the creation of ad hoc committees that assist the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Real Estate Appraisers and by also establishing a government affairs committee. The committee is leading the association into the political arena by analyzing issues, preparing positions for the board of trustees and effectuating activity to advance the cause of the appraisal profession. The committee has held meetings with key members of the Massachusetts house and senate joint committee on consumer protection and professional licensure so as to provide information about appraiser regulations and review important issues confronting appraisers today. They petitioned governor Patrick to appoint a qualified certified general appraiser to the Appellate Tax Board and have asked congressman Barney Frank to amend the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 so that licensed appraisers on the FHA roster as of July 2008 would be able to retain their status as FHA appraisers without upgrading to certified. In addition the MBREA authored and had filed legislation that is now pending on Beacon Hill. House Bill 395 would allow consumers to file a 93A complaint against anyone who violates an appraiser's

independence. Finally, on June 17th, MBREA will celebrate its 75th Anniversary with a dinner at Lombardo's in Randolph, Mass. Dave Buntin, president of The Appraisal Foundation will be the guest speaker. There are also some reported surprises in store.

Finally, a sad note. I was recently notified of the passing of Charlie Akerson, MAI. Akerson was a true titan in the field of appraising. The author of a number of textbooks and numerous articles, he was a past chapter president and also the national president of the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers in 1978, the first chair of the Appraisal Standards Board in 1989 and the president of the Union of Panamerican Associations of Valuation in 1996 to 1998. He will be sorely missed.

We are all fortunate to have these organizations working on our behalf. If you are a current member, look to serve on a committee or board. If you are not a member, please join. It will enhance your professional stature and bring you invaluable contacts. Who knows, maybe someday, years from now someone will say, "Boy, he was another Charlie Akerson."

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