

*In the Know....*

*March 22, 2021*

"The greatest wealth is to live content  
with little."

-Plato



## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**APRIL 2 - Good Friday/Easter Holiday Board Office Closed**

**APRIL 8 - BOD Meeting 9:00 a.m.**

**APRIL 13 & 14 - CE Class - Zoom - CLASS IS FULL**

**APRIL 15 - Lunch-N-Learn 11:00 a.m. More details to come.**

**APRIL 27 & 28 - CE Class - Zoom - Registration form on page 3.**

### **Board of Directors**

Trent Curtis  
Kay Kunce  
Mark Pontecorvo  
Erica Amans  
Keith Forbes  
Patty Seutter  
Amy Demske  
Jennifer Streich

**Visit our website at [www.neindianarealtors.com](http://www.neindianarealtors.com)**

**2021**

### **2021 EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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[mark@hansbarger.com](mailto:mark@hansbarger.com)  
260-316-3192  
Dawn Miller, Secretary/Treasurer  
[4dawnmiller@gmail.com](mailto:4dawnmiller@gmail.com)  
260-260-367-1778

### **MLS Board of Directors**

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Mark Hansbarger  
Trent Curtis  
Shala Cook-Hoover  
Mike Patka  
Patty Seutter

## MEMBER NEWS:

### **2021 CE Classes Update**

CE classes scheduled for April 13 & 14 are full.

Openings for CE classes on April 27 & 28 are now available. See information on page 3.

There are also free online classes available thru RECP. Visit RECP.org for more details

### **RPAC UPDATE:**

**WE ARE NOW TAKING DONATIONS AND PLANNING THE EVENT FOR SEPTEMBER 16!!**

### **MLS Board Openings**

If you would like to have an impact in your association, we invite you to consider joining the MLS board of Directors. We currently have 5 seats available. If you are interested, please contact a member of the board or the board office at [niaro1@mchsi.com](mailto:niaro1@mchsi.com)



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**Eric Smothermon**

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# UPSTAR 12HR CE **BROKERS & MANAGING BROKERS**

## REGISTRATION FORM

### 12-HOUR CE COURSE - FOR BROKERS & MANAGERS

Indiana licensees must complete 12 hours of approved CE by June 30th every year. (Managing Brokers must have 4 of the 12 hours in an approved management course. This two-day course satisfies Indiana's 12-hour CE requirement for both Brokers & Managing Brokers.)

**Tuesday, April 27, 2021 - via ZOOM**

UPSTAR | 3403 E. Dupont Road, Fort Wayne, IN

- ☐ The Ins and Outs of New Construction and Updates on Code (2CE) 8 AM–10 AM
- ☐ \*Professionalism and Real Estate (2CE) 10–12 PM  
(\* This class does NOT count toward the NAR Code of Ethics Requirement.)
- ☐ Soooo You Want to be an Investor (2CE) 1–3 PM
- ☐ Till Death Do Us Part (2CE) 3–5 PM

**Wednesday, April 28, 2021 - via ZOOM**

UPSTAR | 3403 E. Dupont Road, Fort Wayne, IN

- ☐ \*\*Hot Topics for Managing Brokers (4CE) 8 AM–12 PM  
(\*\* This class is for Brokers & Managing Brokers.)

### CLASS FEES:

**ZOOM DEAL!**

**\$50**

**CE PACKAGE**

for UPSTAR & NEIAOR  
REALTOR® Members!



Call Ashley Lanning at UPSTAR, (260) 426-4700, for questions regarding continuing education. All classes are held at the Upstate Alliance of REALTORS® (UPSTAR) office or at a specified offsite location. Pre-registration is encouraged for all continuing education programs shown above. You may register with UPSTAR via phone, or submit this form via email, fax, mail or in-person. Checks, cash, or credit cards (Visa & MasterCard) are accepted. Limited seating is available for walk-ins—taken on a first come, first served basis. **CANCELLATION POLICY:** You must cancel in writing 24 hours in advance to receive a refund.

### REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT *No reservations will be taken without payment.*

**REGISTER ONLINE:** UPSTAR members (only) may register online at [www.UpstarIndiana.com](http://www.UpstarIndiana.com) with a MasterCard of Visa

**REGISTER BY PHONE:** Call the UPSTAR office at (260) 426-4700 with a MasterCard of Visa

**REGISTER VIA THIS FORM:** ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ CHECK ENCLOSED (Make check payable to UPSTAR)

Submit form via: **MAIL:** 3403 E. Dupont Rd, Fort Wayne, IN 46825 **FAX:** (260) 422-9966 or **EMAIL:** [Ashley@UpstarIndiana.com](mailto:Ashley@UpstarIndiana.com)

Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

NRDS#: \_\_\_\_\_ License#: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Payment: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check No. (If paying by check) \_\_\_\_\_

#### CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Acct# \_\_\_\_\_

Exp: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# focus on: Legal Affairs



By: Richelle Cohen Mossler, Esq., General Counsel

## “Love Letters” Create Fair Housing Risk

“Love letters” are tools used by some buyers to stand out to a seller. These letters are especially popular when competition for homes is high, such as it is right now with historic low inventory across Indiana (and much of the U.S.).

Although these letters may seem harmless, they can create fair housing risk since they often contain personal information and characteristics of the buyer, such as race, religion, or familial status. These facts could then be used, knowingly or through unconscious bias, as an unlawful basis for a seller to accept or reject an offer.

Fair Housing laws require selling real estate to anyone who is qualified, regardless of an individual's inclusion in any protected class, such as race, religion, or familial status.

While it is one thing for a buyer love letter to tell a seller how much they like a property because of its location, style, or characteristic of the home, these letters often get much more personal and include statements such as:

- “I can see our children celebrating Christmas here.”
- “My wife and I would love to raise our family in this house.”
- “I finally found a home that can accommodate my wheelchair after months of searching.”
- “We are so excited to send our children to the parochial school and church nearby.”

There is a nationwide concern that these personal information letters, which often contain details or photos of families, may violate the Fair Housing Act, as well as **Article 10 of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics**:

*REALTORS® shall not deny equal professional services to any person for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. REALTORS® shall not be parties to any plan or agreement to discriminate against a person or persons on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.*

As real estate professionals, you should be aware of the danger and potential liability with love letters, should discourage buyers from writing letters to sellers, and discourage sellers from accepting or reviewing letters to help promote Fair Housing.

Buyer agents should consider raising fair housing concerns with their buyer clients, and not read or accept love letters drafted by these clients.

Listing agents should discuss potential liability during the listing interview and not accept or deliver a love letter to their seller clients.

Updated  
March 2021





Where a love letter is accepted, consider having the seller and buyer's attorney review it and keep a record, showing good faith efforts to advise against this practice.

**Tips to avoid legal and ethical issues with love letters:**

- Discuss possible conflicts with Fair Housing laws.
- Tell sellers they do not have to view love letters.
- Let buyer agents know that love letters will not be reviewed or looked at by the seller(s) if the seller(s) make this decision.
- If buyers want to submit love letters, advise them to consult a lawyer.
- If sellers want to read love letters, advise them to consult a lawyer.
- Only pass along love letters to sellers if they are part of the offer as you have a duty under Indiana law and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics to pass along offers on a property.
- Sellers who do accept love letters should be prepared to demonstrate a non-discriminatory reason for accepting that buyer, especially where that buyer did not present the highest offer.
- Love letters and personal pictures are generally NOT part of the purchase agreement and will likely not be provided to a lender or title company if the offer is fully executed. As a listing agent, however, you cannot withhold the letter, if provided as part of or incorporated into the offer, without the seller's permission. Otherwise, Indiana license law as well as Article 1 of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice 1-6 and 1-7 require agents to submit all written offers on a property to their clients objectively and as quickly as possible.

**Best practices to protect yourself and your clients from Fair Housing liability:**

- Educate your clients about Fair Housing laws and the pitfalls of buyer love letters.
- Inform your clients that you will not deliver buyer love letters and advise others that no buyer love letters will be accepted by your seller (with seller's permission).
- Remind your clients that their decision to accept or reject an offer should be based on objective criteria only.
- If your clients insist on drafting a buyer love letter, do not help your client draft or deliver it. Advise them to seek legal counsel.
- Avoid reading any love letter drafted or received by your client.
- Document all offers received and the seller's objective reason for accepting an offer.

Do love letters really add anything to the offer? Probably not. A seller's decision should be based on price/terms/ability to close. If the seller instructs the listing agent to withhold these letters and pictures, there will be no violation by agents of their legal or ethical duties to submit all offers and may help prevent future Fair Housing claims. For this reason, listing agents should consult with their seller clients upfront, and, with the seller's permission, remove these pictures and letters from offers presented.

***If you have any questions regarding Love Letters, please contact the IAR Legal Hotline at 1-800-444-5472, or complete this [online form](#). As a reminder, the IAR Legal Hotline is available to Managing Broker members and their designated agents, Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm Managing Brokers, need to designate an agent to use the Legal Hotline? Do it [online here](#).***

Updated  
March 2021

## Local Market Update for February 2021

A RESEARCH TOOL PROVIDED BY THE INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



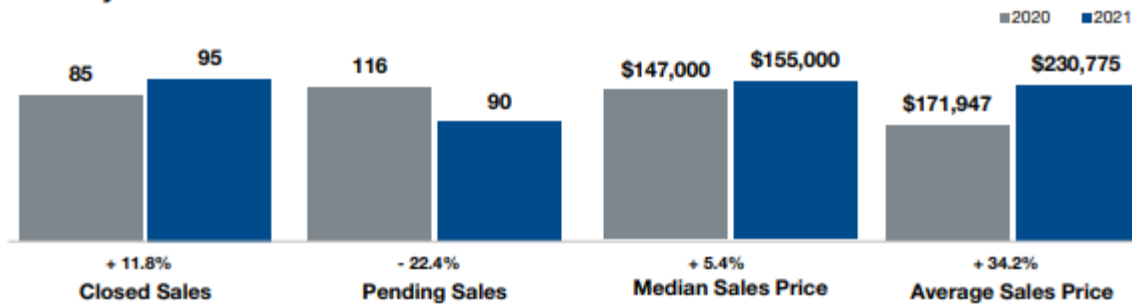
# Northeastern Indiana Association of REALTORS®

This report includes DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble and Steuben counties.

Key Metrics	February			Year to Date		
	2020	2021	Percent Change	Thru 2-2020	Thru 2-2021	Percent Change
New Listings	126	85	- 32.5%	255	184	- 27.8%
Closed Sales	85	95	+ 11.8%	174	180	+ 3.4%
Median Sales Price	\$147,000	\$155,000	+ 5.4%	\$144,950	\$154,950	+ 6.9%
Percent of Original List Price Received*	96.3%	97.3%	+ 1.0%	96.2%	97.2%	+ 1.0%
Months Supply of Inventory	2.6	0.7	- 73.1%	--	--	--
Inventory of Homes for Sale	376	108	- 71.3%	--	--	--

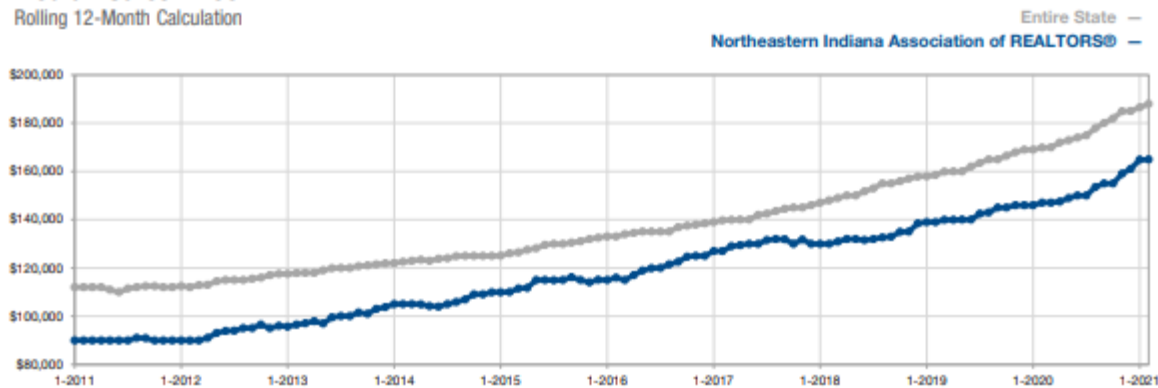
\* Does not account for list price from any previous listing contracts. | Activity for one month can sometimes look extreme due to small sample size.

### February



### Median Sales Price

Rolling 12-Month Calculation



A rolling 12-month calculation represents the current month and the 11 months prior in a single data point. If no activity occurred during a month, the line extends to the next available data point.



## **REALTOR BENEFITS® PROGRAM OFFER**

### **Uncover Meaningful NAR Member Benefits**

In one year alone, 800,000+ REALTORS® saved \$74 million with the REALTOR Benefits® Program. Have you saved this year?

\*\*\*\*\*

## **RPAC MOMENT**

Please think about what you and/or your office would like to contribute for the silent and live auctions.

**WE ARE TAKING DONATIONS AND PLANNING THE EVENT FOR SEPTEMBER 16!!**

Auction items can be dropped off at the Board office or contact an RPAC committee person and they will be glad to pick them up.

#### **Contact:**

Dawn Miller, 260-367-1778

Cyndi Andrew, 260-466-5757

Kelly Grimes, 260-318-1770

Shala Cook-Hoover, 260-463-1111

Dani Rittermeyer, 260-499-1334

Kay Kunce, 260-316-1422

Keith Forbes, 260-318-2788

Patty Suetter 260-302-1899

The Board Office 260-347-1593

Thank you





**SETRICARD ALERT:**

Effective January 1, 2022, agents will no longer have the ability to use the Sentricard for lockbox access. Switching to the app is very easy! Contact the Board Office with your cell phone number to start using the app today!

+++++

**PLEASE HELP ME KEEP YOUR RECORDS UP-TO-DATE!**

Contact me at [niaor1@mchsi.com](mailto:niaor1@mchsi.com) if you have changed your home or office address, cell or address. It is so updated

office phone or email important to have your information!



**3 RIVERS®**





## Paragon Webinars for March 2021 (All times are CST)

### **March 22 - 26**

[Paragon Home Page | Contact Activity Widget - March 22 @ 10am](#)

[Collab Center | New Prospects - March 22 @ 11am](#)

[Collab Center | Prospect Functionality - March 22 @ 12pm](#)

[Collab Center | Listing Carts & Agent Picks - March 22 @ 1pm](#)

[Collab Center | Seller Side Setup - March 24 @ 11am](#)

[Collab Center | Agent Preview - March 24 @ 12pm](#)

[Collab Center | Additional Functions Button - March 24 @ 1pm](#)

[Paragon Connect | Access Website - March 24 @ 2pm](#)

[Paragon Connect | Contact Access to Collab Center - March 25 @ 10am](#)

[Paragon Connect | Searches - March 25 @ 11am](#)

[Paragon Connect | Buyer Details - March 25 @ 12pm](#)

[Paragon Connect | Seller Details - March 25 @ 1pm](#)

[Email | Email Signatures & Message Bodies - March 26 @ 11am](#)

[Financial Calculators Overview - March 26 @ 12pm](#)

[Agent Branding in 3 Preferences - March 26 @ 1pm](#)

[Results | Report Types - March 26 @ 2pm](#)



### **March 29-31**

[Searches | Search Fields - March 29 @ 10am](#)

[Searches | Hotsheets - March 29 @ 11am](#)

[Searches | Adv. Function Buttons - March 29 @ 12pm](#)

[Searches | Saving & Loading Saved Searches - March 29 @ 1pm](#)

[Searches | Customizing Searches - March 30 @ 11am](#)

[Results | Filtering & Sorting - March 30 @ 12pm](#)

[Results | Customizing Fields & Setting Defaults - March 30 @ 1pm](#)

[Results | Distribution \(Email, etc\) - March 30 @ 2pm](#)

# ASSURANCE TITLE COMPANY