

## Y2K Is No Problem at AREC

The year 2000 problem, a.k.a. Y2K and millennium bug, is the inability of computer programs at the year 2000 to interpret the correct century from a recorded or calculated date having only two digits to indicate the year. Many computer systems have been programmed without the century portion of the date (i.e., '58 or '99) as shorthand. This was done to mainly save computer storage space, which in the early days of computing was very limited and costly. Y2K is almost completely limited to computer hardware and software; however, computer software and hardware is tied to just about everything.

A Y2K example is a computer program in which the omitted century is assumed to

be 19 and the program's function is to figure out how old you are. For a person born in 1958, now in 1999 this program will calculate your age as 99 minus 58, or 41. That's fine, but what happens when the century rolls over to 20 in the year 2000? In this program, the year will appear as 00 but the century will still be assumed to be 19, so the program will calculate your age as 00 minus 58, or -58. Then, depending on the program's error-handling capacity, it might abnormally end or otherwise stop running. It may also send the negative age to another program, which might then fail. In some cases it may omit the sign from the number and pass your age off as 58. Other Y2K examples would include the embedded systems that control communi-

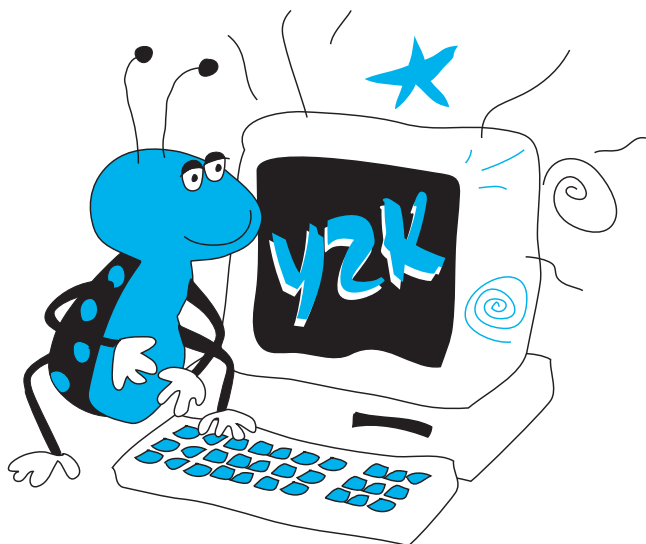
cation systems, copiers and fax machines.

Y2K at AREC. . . all Commission computers and legacy application software (real estate license programs) are Y2K compliant. Real estate legacy application software has been year 2000 compliant and in use since "1996". Currently, the Commission is replacing all off the shelf software on its personal

computers and communication software for the telephone systems with year 2000 compliant software. Year 2000 compliant office equipment the Commission recently acquired includes a copier and fax machine. With these and other advance preparations, we anticipate no Y2K problems in the new millennium. ■

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## BRIEFLY LEGAL

By: Charles R. Sowell, General Counsel

### RISK MANAGEMENT 102: Your Company Trust Account(s)

**W**hy did the lawyer cross the road? To get to the car wreck on the other side. If you are waiting for me to relate this to the subject, don't hold your breath. I just thought you would like it. It is easy to relate the importance of trust or escrow accounts maintenance to your company risk management plan. Just for the record, there are plenty of reasons to get it right. Our auditors are on the road almost every day doing random audits. Their visits are unannounced, and they look closely at trust accounts. Your commissioners, all nine of them, seem particularly interested in how you are doing. Lawyers are interested in things besides automobile accidents. If they can prove you misappropriated trust money, and used the money to benefit yourself, this is called conversion. A law firm specializing in this type of action could be named Punitive Damages, P.C. The real reason, though, is public confidence. For example, buyers need to know their earnest money is safe when you ask for it, otherwise they might be hesitant to give it. Do not take for granted what public confidence means to the business of every real estate company. Consumer protection is smart business.

The most common examples of trust funds are earnest money, rental payments, and security deposits. You can get a review of the basics of trust funds handling and maintenance by reading Section 34-27-36(a)(8) Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, and Alabama Real Estate Commission Rule 790-X-3-.03. I am going to help your review by listing the major points of the law and rule in plain language.

- Trust money goes into the bank in a trust account, and stays there until properly disbursed.

- Trust money must be timely accounted for or remitted (paid) to the appropriate party.
- Trust money must not be commingled, that is mixed with personal money.
- Complete trust money and accounts records must be kept for three years.
- Salespersons and associate brokers must immediately turn trust money over to their qualifying broker.
- Qualifying brokers must deposit cash immediately.
- Qualifying brokers must deposit checks when provided in the contract.
- Either qualifying broker may hold the money in a co-op sale.
- If for any reason there is a change of qualifying brokers, the old broker and the new broker must make a clean hand-off of the money and records to the new broker.
- In the case of a sale that does not close, earnest money may not be disbursed, except upon written release signed by all parties to the sale.
- Interpleader is available for trust money disagreements, but is not mandatory.

*“If it's not your money, don't touch it.”*

This is a quote from a broker who recently appeared before the commission at a trust account violation hearing. He directed this comment to the commissioners, saying it was one thing he knew about trust accounts. Here are his and some other cases we have seen in the last year or so. I am going to boil them down to the barest of facts, so you can see how some people managed to get into trouble. A word of caution is in order. Cases involve real people in real life situations. They are never as

simple as the bare facts.

- A qualifying broker collected two checks totaling \$2,500 as earnest money on two offers to purchase. The broker cashed the checks. Neither offer was accepted. Repeated demands by the buyers for return of their money were not successful.
- A qualifying broker purchased a home listed with the company. The broker's employer, an unlicensed officer of the real estate corporation, loaned her the down payment money. His check deposited into the earnest money escrow account bounced, but the funds were not replaced until a commission audit discovered the problem weeks later. The sale had closed during this time, with the earnest money coming from a check drawn on the escrow account.
- You think you've had some bad days lately? A qualifying broker loaned himself some money from his trust account. The very next day an auditor showed up at his office. The audit found the trust account to be short of funds because of the loan.
- An audit found a company in the property management business to have some \$21,000 in the rental payments account, although all rents had already been disbursed to the property owners. The qualifying broker had placed some \$93,000 of his own funds into the account. The account was used by the broker to pay personal loans, commercial loans, the Internal Revenue Service, and other company bills.
- About six months after a closing, a purchaser discovered he had no home warranty. This was because the warranty company did not receive payment of the

premium. The check from the title company to pay for the warranty premium at closing was delivered to the qualifying broker's office. It was deposited into an account controlled by the broker and her husband. The broker denied responsibility. She closed her office and left the state, but returned for a hearing.

- One qualifying broker bought a property management business from the other. A few months later an audit showed the purchasing broker to be short of funds by more than \$15,000. This shortage

was caused primarily by failure of both brokers to see that the security deposits were accounted for, and transferred to the purchasing broker. Rather than the proper accounting and transfer, the contract provided that the security deposits were deducted from the purchase price. Neither broker could show they had the funds on deposit before or after the time of the sale.

One final word to those involved in property management. We have had many cases over the years involving brokers with

a common problem. Audits have found them short of funds, either rents collected, or security deposits, or both. The shortages were caused by disbursement of rent proceeds to some owners, even though the repair expenses or mortgage payment, or both, exceeded the rent collected. In some cases mortgage payments or repairs were made in months when no rent was collected. These practices will make you short in your accounts. If this looks familiar, our staff can help you design a plan to prevent this from happening. ■



Marilynn Pressley



Stephanie Griffith

## New AREC Staff Members

The Commission and staff welcome **Marilynn Pressley** and **Stephanie Griffith** to the Real Estate Commission.

Marilynn has joined the licensing division to assist with the processing and issuance of temporary, permanent and transfer licenses. Her other duties include researching records of licensure for certification and helping to direct incoming calls to the Commission. Marilynn says she enjoys being able to help licensees and the public.

Stephanie has joined the Investigative/Legal division as an auditor. She is now assisting with the random examination of real estate company trust accounts and compliance with other real estate laws. Stephanie says her work as an auditor is both challenging and entertaining. She truly enjoys meeting and working with the various people throughout Alabama.

# AREC Directory

Have a question? Here's how to reach us.

When immediate contact can not be accomplished due to the large number of calls, please leave a detailed voice or e-mail message for better assistance.

1201 Carmichael Way Montgomery, Alabama 36106-3672

**Phone** (334) 242-5544 **TTY** (334) 396-0064 **Fax** (334) 270-9118

**Email** arec@arec.state.al.us **Web site** www.arec.state.al.us

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	Vernita Oliver-Lane	427	voliver@arec.state.al.us

# DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS TAKEN

December 1998 through February 1999

**Name:** James S. Collins, Qualifying Broker, Opelika, Alabama  
**Date of Hearing:** December 4, 1998  
**Disposition:** Mr. Collins was found guilty, reprimanded and fined \$250 on Counts 1 and 2 for violation of the Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, Count 1: Section 34-27-36(a)(8)a. and Section 34-27-36(a)(8)b. by failing, within a reasonable time, to deposit in a separate federally insured account or accounts located in Alabama, and to properly account for at all times, all funds coming into his possession that belonged to others in a separate federally insured account or accounts; Count 2: Section 34-27-36(a)(19) by failing to comply with Section 34-27-83 in his failure to have RECAD office policy in place in his office.

**Name:** Randell L. Dickson, Qualifying Broker, Huntsville, Alabama  
**Date of Hearing:** December 4, 1998  
**Disposition:** Mr. Dickson was found guilty and fined \$250 for violation of the Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, Section 34-27-36(a)(8)a. and Section 34-27-36(a)(8)b. by failing, within a reasonable time, to properly account for and remit money coming into his possession that belonged to others in a separate federally insured account or accounts.

**Name:** Walter Lucas, Jr., Instructor, Montevallo, Alabama  
**Date of Hearing:** December 4, 1998  
**Disposition:** Mr. Lucas was found guilty and his instructor's approval suspended for a period of six months, beginning on April 1, 1999, for violation of Section 34-27-6 Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, and Rule 790-X-1-.07(1)(e)



that requires all instructors to attend commission sponsored seminars.

**Name:** Etta L. Allen, Inactive Salesperson, Birmingham, Alabama  
**Date of Hearing:** December 4, 1998  
**Disposition:** Ms. Allen was found guilty and fined \$250 for violation of the Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, Section 34-27-36(a)(16) by presenting to the Alabama Real Estate Commission, as payment for a fee or fine, a check which was returned unpaid by the bank upon which it was drawn.

**Name:** Louise C. Crosby-Osterman, Salesperson, Columbus, Georgia  
**Date of Hearing:** December 4, 1998  
**Disposition:** Ms. Crosby-Osterman was found guilty and fined \$250 for violation of the Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, Section 34-27-36(a)(16) by presenting to the Alabama Real Estate Commission, as payment for a fee or fine, a check which was returned unpaid by the bank upon which it was drawn.

**Name:** RE/MAX Elite Realty of Dothan, and Jo Ann Whiddon, Qualifying Broker, Dothan, Alabama  
**Date of Hearing:** January 22, 1999

**Disposition:** RE/MAX Elite Realty of Dothan and Ms. Whiddon were found guilty of violation of the Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, Section 34-27-36(a)(8)a. and Section 34-27-36(a)(8)b. by commingling money belonging to others with her own funds and failing to deposit and properly account for at all times money coming into her possession which belonged to others. Ms. Whiddon was fined \$500. RE/MAX Elite Realty of Dothan was fined \$1,000.

**Name:** Alison Gwin, Inactive Salesperson, Montevallo, Alabama  
**Date of Hearing:** January 22, 1999  
**Disposition:** Ms. Gwin was found guilty and fined \$250 for violation of the Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, Section 34-27-36(a)(16) by presenting to the Alabama Real Estate Commission, as payment for a fee or fine, a check which was returned unpaid by the bank upon which it was drawn.

**Name:** Gary L. Jackson, Salesperson, Tuscaloosa, Alabama  
**Date of Hearing:** February 11, 1999  
**Disposition:** Mr. Jackson was found guilty and fined \$250 for violation of the Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, Section 34-27-36(a)(16) by presenting to the Alabama Real Estate Commission, as payment for a fee or fine, a check which was returned unpaid by the bank upon which it was drawn.

## OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

**Determination for Licensing Eligibility**

Approved . . . . .	8
Denied . . . . .	0



# Commission Procedure, Meetings and Things

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

By: *D. Philip Lasater, Executive Director*

**Q** How often does the Real Estate Commission meet?

**A** *On average about once each month during the year.*

**Q** Where does the Real Estate Commission hold and conduct its meetings?

**A** *The Real Estate Commission office is located in Montgomery and several times a year the Commission meets in its own building, License Law; however, provides that licensees are entitled to a hearing in their county of residence or actual place of business unless they agree to meet wherever else the Commission may be meeting. Generally, all meetings are held in public facilities in the community where the meeting has been scheduled.*

**Q** Who may attend Commission meetings?

**A** *Commission meetings are open to anyone who has an interest and the time to attend. Commissioners encourage all licensees to feel welcome in observing the business discussed, policy matters considered, and hearings conducted whenever a hearing is scheduled nearby.*

**T**he Real Estate Commission is subject to “Sunshine” law or “Open” meetings requirement. Legal notice is given for three consecutive days and runs in the daily newspaper of the county where an upcoming meeting has been scheduled. The Commission has nine members and five must be present for a quorum to be established and for the Commission to take official action, which must be recorded in minutes.

The Real Estate Commission is subject to compliance with the Alabama Administrative Procedures Act. This means that any licensee is given at least fifteen days notice of a formal complaint being filed and a hearing scheduled. The licensee is entitled to due process and a chance to have his or her side of the story heard by a board of peers including a consumer member. An Assistant Attorney General from the Hearings Division serves as a Hearing Officer and ensures that the Commission as represented by its General Counsel meets the standards required for substantiating allegations of license law violations. Licensees may be represented by legal counsel but there is no requirement that they be so represented.

Commissioners, after considering evidence that has been entered and presented in the hearing by following Administrative Procedure, then make a determination of guilty or not guilty. If a licensee respondent is found guilty, the discipline

that Commissioners may then administer has been set by the legislature and includes: a reprimand, suspension, or revocation and/or a fine of up to \$1000 per count but not less than \$25.

Rules, those regulations in the back of the license law book that have the force of law, are adopted through the Administrative Procedure Act governing the promulgation of Administrative Rules. These Rules cannot make new law but serve only to explain the law and its application to situations. In other words, Rules clarify or elaborate the requirement of the law for those who are required to comply with it or those who are required to enforce it. Proposals for new rules, amended rules, or repealed rules must be submitted to the Legislative Reference Service. A notice of proposed Rules is published in a publication called the *Administrative Monthly*. A public hearing must be held at a time and place announced in the publication. Written comment on the proposed rule(s) may be submitted to the Executive Director during a 35-day period. Rules become effective after adoption and 35 days after being certified by Legislative Reference.

The thing to remember when observing a Commission meeting is that its conduct is subject to process. Process takes time and produces little drama but it can be enlightening and constructive. ■

## EDUCATION CORNER

By: Pat Anderson, Education Director

# Out of State CE

**G**ood news! As reported on page ten in the fall 1998 edition of the Update, there was a recent addition to Rule 790-X-1-.11 that allows Alabama licensees to earn CE credit for courses taken in other states. Here is how it works.

First of all, the course you wish to take must be approved for continuing education credit in the state in which it is offered. It is the licensee's responsibility to ensure that it is approved in that state for at least three hours of CE credit. For example, at NAR's (National Association of Realtors) midyear meetings in Atlanta

in February, Alabama licensees earned CE credit for courses that had been approved by the Georgia Real Estate Commission.

Next, the licensee or course provider must obtain documentation that it is approved in the state where it is offered. This can be accomplished by obtaining a copy of the letter or certificate that the state real estate commission would have given to the provider showing that the course has been approved for credit. If that is unavailable, documentation must then be obtained directly from that state's real estate commission. As with the NAR

courses offered in Atlanta, the NAR provided a copy of the approval letter from the Georgia Real Estate Commission.

Finally, the documentation referenced in the above paragraph must accompany the certificate when the course provider mails it to the Alabama Real Estate Commission. This must be done within ten days after completion of the course.

**NOTE! Do not send in a CE certificate without the accompanying documentation that the course is approved in another state.**

## ANNUAL INSTRUCTORS' SEMINAR

Auburn Hotel and Conference Center

October 8, 1999

### *Featuring Dianna Brouters, DREI, CRB, GRI, ABR, CAI*

Dianna was REEA's 1998 Educator of the Year. She is a national speaker and author on buyer agency and risk reduction. She has taught nationally for NAR as well as state and local Realtor associations. Some of you may have attended her session at the 1998 REEA conference. Dianna's practical knowledge as a broker, excellent teaching skills and educational background, make her a very popular speaker and trainer.

#### **Required Attendance Day**

Friday, October 8, 1999

#### **Optional Attendance Day**

Thursday, October 7, 1999

*Buyer Agency and Risk Reduction Workshop*

**MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW TO ATTEND BOTH DAYS!**

# Technology and Its Impact On Real Estate Education

This article is an update on a project that the Association of Real Estate License Law Officials (ARELLO) has just completed in the area of distance education, the resulting certification program, and the influence this work is having on real estate education in Alabama.

We are all familiar with the changing face of education. We pride ourselves in staying fluid enough to serve our communities and to make education accessible. In Alabama excellent real estate education has been delivered for pre-license, post license and continuing education purposes. The Commission has been able to approve education experiences that were conducted with accountability and integrity. Our citizens have benefited from a more knowledgeable real estate industry and for this our educators can enjoy a good deal of the credit.

Over the last few years it has become quite evident that technology is having, and will continue to have, a significant impact on education. Its impact on education delivery has been of particular concern as the Alabama Real Estate Commission has been approached by more and more program providers to approve seminars and courses

offered in a variety of formats, everything from audio-only to on-line programs. Real estate regulators have researched distance education delivery and know that it has many strengths and can provide an excellent educational experience when administered with integrity. They have also been exposed to enough to know that there are distance delivered programs that claim to be educational and have very little, if any, integrity. A set of accepted standards by which to measure and evaluate these programs was needed. After an extensive search and many discussions

with regulators from other states and provinces and educators from various institutions, it was discovered that, apparently, a comprehensive set of standards for distance education delivery did not exist.

Real estate regulators took their concerns to the Association of Real Estate License Law Officials (ARELLO) and received approval to expend funds from the Education and Research fund to hire a qualified consultant and to support a task force in developing standards for the approval of distance education. ARELLO

has succeeded in this endeavor with the significant input and guidance of Dr. Robert Meyer, a Fulbright Scholar in Distance Education. By all reports ARELLO is quite proud of the results of the task force's extensive efforts. The Standards were completed last fall, approved by ARELLO's Board of Directors, and made available for purchase.

An obvious complement to this body of work was the creation of an ARELLO Distance Education Certification program. Applicants for Certification will fill out a course-assessment document



and will receive the benefit of the Consultant's expertise to affirm or strengthen various aspects of their course. Certification has already been granted to a few courses since it was launched in January. Reports from the Certification Council and the Course Developers have been very supportive and complimentary of the process. Certified programs are to receive a prestigious recognition on ARELLO's Web site at [www.arello.org](http://www.arello.org) and will be entitled to display the Certification Council's logo on their course materials.

The Certification is proving very valu-

able indeed. Well-designed distance education courses have legitimacy and serve a valuable purpose. It is important to evaluate these courses using a comprehensive and consistent set of criteria, i.e., ARELLO's Standards, to protect the quality of education that we have enjoyed to this date. Because in many cases it would require the services of a consultant who has particular knowledge of distance education delivery to measure a program's compliance with the Standards and because those services are available through ARELLO's Certification program, many jurisdictions are preparing to

require that distance education courses first attain ARELLO Certification before applying for approval from their regulatory body. Alabama is at the forefront of this effort by having already adopted a rule to require ARELLO certification for all distance education courses.

Anyone who has interest in real estate education, particularly in distance education, is encouraged to review ARELLO's Standards and the Certification program. Copies of both publications are available through ARELLO and may be ordered by accessing [www.arello.org](http://www.arello.org) or by calling ARELLO at (334) 260-2902. ■

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR Don't Miss Out!

■ **MARCH 10, 1999**

NEW INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION  
Real Estate Commission Office, Montgomery

■ **MAY 12, 1999**

NEW INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION  
Real Estate Commission Office, Montgomery

■ **JULY 14, 1999**

NEW INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION  
Real Estate Commission Office, Montgomery

■ **SEPTEMBER 15, 1999**

NEW INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION  
Real Estate Commission Office, Montgomery

■ **OCTOBER 7, 1999**

RISK REDUCTION AND BUYER AGENCY WORKSHOP  
Auburn Hotel and Conference Center

■ **OCTOBER 8, 1999**

ANNUAL INSTRUCTORS' SEMINAR  
Auburn Hotel and Conference Center

■ **NOVEMBER 3, 1999**

NEW INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION  
Real Estate Commission Office, Montgomery

## License Law Book On The Net!

In a joint project with the Alabama Real Estate Research and Education Center, the 18th edition of the

### *Alabama Real Estate License Law*

book, including rules and regulations is now available on the Internet.

Go to the Alabama Real Estate Commission Web site at

**[www.arec.state.al.us](http://www.arec.state.al.us)**

to access the electronic version of the License Law. License Law paperback books are obtainable from the Real Estate Commission at a cost of \$4.00 per copy.



## ALABAMA REAL ESTATE RESEARCH &amp; EDUCATION CENTER

## NEWS UPDATE

## Geographic Information Systems

The Alabama Real Estate Research and Education Center's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities continue to grow. The center can now provide drive-time analysis, demographic trend analysis, and population projections to its mapping reports along with detailed demographics,

traffic counts, and mailing lists. The last service, mailing lists, may be of particular interest to residential real estate licensees.

The center can create consumer profiles based upon any number of different economic and demographic characteristics and then map the locations where the majority of people who fit these profiles live. Once the area is defined, then a mailing list of the people who live in that particular area or areas can be generated. The center provides these lists in electronic form on floppy disks. The data can

then be processed into any contact manager software, or just used to create mailing labels. The center uses the most current available data, which is updated every six months, to generate these target marketing lists. Contact Dennis LeBlanc or Kelly Whitecotton at the center for more information about these services.

## New Site Selection Text

The center has just completed a new textbook on site selection. The book is primarily intended as a primer on the basics of site selection and market area analysis. At eighty-five pages, Site Selection provides a step-by-step, comprehensive introduction to site selection methodologies that assumes no prior knowledge on the part of the reader, yet provides experienced professionals with the opportunity to add new weapons to their site selection arsenal of techniques. The textbook is available from the center at a cost of \$29.95.

## 1998 Housing Affordability

1998 finished with a bang as far as housing affordability is concerned. A combination of low mortgage interest rates and moderating home prices lifted the Alabama Housing Affordability Index to its best finish since 1994. Rising seven percentage points in the fourth quarter, the AHAI finished the year at 156. The housing affordability index is calculated as the ratio of the actual median family income to the income needed to purchase the median priced home in Alabama. An index number of 100 indicates that a family earning the median family income to qualify for a mortgage on the median priced, existing, single-family house, given standard underwriting criteria. The higher the index number, the more affordable the housing. During the fourth quarter, families earning the state's median family income of \$39,207 had more than one and a half times the income needed to purchase the statewide, median priced home, which was \$96,634. This was down almost \$2,000 from the third quarter. From a buyer's perspective, this is an excellent time to be in the market for a home.



## New ARELLO Approved Distance Learning Course

The Alabama Real Estate Research and Education Center is the first in the world to receive ARELLO certification for its distance learning course, Introduction to

the Internet for the Real Estate Professional. The four-hour course includes class lectures and on-line demonstrations. The Alabama Real Estate Commission has awarded this class three hours of continuing education credit. Some of the topics include how to successfully navigate the World Wide Web using browsers and search engines to locate real estate companies as well as access legal and mortgage updates, how to comply with Real Estate License Law in advertising, Internet security, how to comply with RECAD disclosure requirements and fair housing

regulations on-line, and how to use the Internet to improve the services provided to customers and clients.

The center now has the capability of providing this course via fiber optics cable from an interactive classroom at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa to interactive sites in Birmingham, Montgomery, Huntsville, and Mobile. Any group of licensees or a real estate firm interested in sponsoring this course should contact Holly Clark, Administrative Coordinator of the Research Center at (205) 348-4117. We require a minimum

of fifty students to be able to cover the delivery costs of such a program. Price will vary depending on the number of students attending a given class.

The center has developed a fifty-page companion manual for the distance learning version of the Internet course. The manual, Real Estate Professionals and the Internet: An Introduction, can be used as a stand alone reference guide and is available from the center for \$19.95. Participants in the distance learning class will receive this text at half price, which will be included in the price of the course. ■

ALABAMA REAL ESTATE EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

# AREEA Holds State Chapter Meeting

**O**n January 29, the state chapter of the Alabama Real Estate Educators met in Montgomery for their first meeting of 1999. AREEA member, Mark Yarbrough Program Chairman, organized this dynamic one-day event.

In addition to discussing chapter business and planning meetings and workshops, there were presentations by several Alabama educators. Two of Alabama's DREI's (Distinguished Real Estate Instructors) Avery Yarbrough and Jim Gillespie, explained the qualifications along with the procedures for earning the designation of DREI. They explained all the requirements and how they can be met. It is a tough designation to earn but Avery and Jim encouraged all AREEA members to seek this worthy designation.

Next, there were four splendid presentations by AREEA members. They were "How to Use a Pretest as a Teaching

Tool" by Bo Goodson; "Effective Presentations for Opening and Closing Class Sessions" by Fraser Sparkman; "Team Teaching - How to Make it Successful" by Debbie Coe and "Using PowerPoint and Technology in Your Classroom Presentations" by Donnis Palmer. This was another outstanding job by some of Alabama's many talented educators!

And finally, many AREEA chapter members volunteered to assist the Commission in developing some much needed outlines for post license and continuing education courses. Twelve AREEA members make up the task force chaired by Jeri Gray. The Commission looks forward to some productive meetings and work with this task force.

If you would like information about the Real Estate Educators Association and all of its many benefits, contact any AREEA member or the Alabama Real Estate Commission. ■

## New Officers Elected

At its annual meeting held on October 8, 1998, the Alabama Real Estate Educators Association elected officers for 1999. The new officers are:

<b>President</b>	Sandra Johnson <i>Muscle Shoals</i>
<b>Vice President</b>	Jim Gillespie <i>Birmingham</i>
<b>Secretary</b>	RoseMary Chambers <i>Birmingham</i>
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# The Children's Trust Fund of Alabama: A Special Real Estate Partnership

Alabama's child abuse and neglect prevention agency is known as the Children's Trust Fund. The Children's Trust Fund (CTF) was created by the state legislature in 1983 to allow for the funding of community prevention programs each year and for the establishment of a self-sustaining source of funding for such programs in the future. CTF's mission is the elimination of child abuse and neglect through funding of community-based prevention programs; providing statewide educational and public informational campaigns to increase public awareness; and encouraging professionals and groups to recognize and deal with the problems of child abuse and neglect. Since its creation CTF has awarded over 11.7 million dollars in grants to nonprofit community programs and agencies statewide. The prevention programs funded through CTF come in a variety of forms and sizes. Their common bond is the prevention of child abuse and neglect utilizing local volunteers and local matching funds.

The Children's Trust Fund and the Alabama Association of REALTORS® (AAR) have had a unique arrangement for approximately six years. The connection of selling homes and CTF's mission of strengthening families and protecting children formed the basis of the partnership. The leadership of AAR realized the "natural fit" between encouraging their members to donate to the Children's Trust Fund and selling homes. REALTORS®

know that when they contribute to CTF, their dollars are going back to their communities to serve children and families.

When a REALTOR® donates to CTF in honor of a client, both the REALTOR® and client are acknowledged. The honorees' names are also added to the CTF mailing list and are recognized in their quarterly newsletter. Feedback from both REALTORS® and client indicate their shared sense of good will generated from giving to prevent child abuse. This past year REALTORS® contributed over \$36,000 to the Children's Trust Fund. The total amount donated since the partnership was formed stands at over \$100,000. However, more important than the dollar amount is the good will that is shared with so many REALTORS® across Alabama. Their awareness of the Children's Trust Fund and their shared vision of child abuse pre-

vention are the intangibles that mean so much to those at CTF.

The Children's Trust Fund is extremely honored and proud to be associated with the Alabama Association of REALTORS® — "Because Home Should Be A Haven For Children". Together they are helping that slogan become a reality for more children and families across Alabama. For more information, contact the Children's Trust Fund, RSA Union Building/100 North Union Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36104, telephone (334) 242-5710 and fax (334) 242-5711. ■

*Information provided by the Children's Trust Fund*

State of Alabama



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