

This column highlights promotions, transfers, hirings, awards won and other key personnel moves within the suburban real estate community. Send a brief biographical summary — including the towns of residence and employment and a black-and-white photo, if desired — to: Movers & Shakers, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Our fax number is (313) 591-7279.

Toppa joins C-21



Tracey Toppa, a Westland resident, has become a sales associate with Century 21 John Cole Realty in Redford. She has been working at the agency the past 17 years as secretary, closing processor and office manager. Toppa will specialize in residential real estate in Wayne County.

She earns GRE



Karen Thomas, a Realtor with Coldwell Banker Schweitzer in West Bloomfield, has earned the designation Graduate Realtors Institute. The credential indicates that Thomas has taken classes in financing, construction and legal aspects of real estate and passed required testing. She services Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield and the Lakes.

Builders honor

The Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan will honor several of its own members next week during its annual leadership recognition and awards night.

Honorees include Gary Tadian, young builder of the year; Guy Barron, developer of the year; and L. David Kellest, remodeler of the year. Also, Theresa McCarthy, salesperson of the year; Kevin Burke, associate of the year; and Sally "Jo" Luyckx, spike (membership recruitment) of the year.

Mark T. Jacobson will be recognized for distinguished service to the apartment industry. Abraham Han for distinguished service to the building industry and Samuel W. Krela for distinguished ongoing service to the building industry.

Lucia Scaccia will receive the women's forum leadership award.

Earns sales award

Yoshiko Fujimori, an associate with Century 21 Row in Livonia, has been honored with the Centurion Award for sales performance.

To be considered for the award, an agent must achieve a specified high level of performance achieved by only about two percent of the nearly 70,000 agents in the Century 21 system.



Classified Ad Index

CLASSIFICATION, NUMBER, SECTION

■ Autos (800-884)	
■ Employment (800-824)	F.R.
■ Help Wanted (800-824)	F.R.
■ Home and Service Guide (1-250)	G.
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REAL ESTATE

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Hall of Famer: Robert Brody, who's developed land and built houses and apartments for nearly 50 years, will be inducted into the Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan Hall of Fame.

Brody headed for Hall of Fame

By Doug Funker
STAFF WRITER

Robert Brody, a developer/builder, says he's constructed thousands of houses and apartment units and prepared hundreds of lots for other builders during a career that started in the late 1940s.

He's won Small Volume Builder of the Year honors from the National Association of Home Builders, helped start the Apartment Association of Michigan and served as president of the Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan.

But it's the little things that most stick in the memories of the 70-year-old Bloomfield Hills resident who will be inducted into the BIA Hall of Fame next week.

"What I really like best is going out when we're doing grading and smelling the raw ground," Brody said. "I used to take my grandsons out when they were four or five years old.

They used to sit in the seat of a big grader or stand next to the big tire. They loved it. I loved it.

"The most satisfaction you have is seeing what you've done, seeing you've created something people want," Brody said. "You've created homes for families, good homes, well built."

Brody was selected to the Hall of Fame for service to the association. His first house, built with Paul Broder in Southgate in 1949, was a two-bedroom bungalow with a basement, unfinished attic, asbestos siding, living room, dining room and kitchen priced at \$9,995.

"We bought 124 lots. There was no down payment, and we sold out in one weekend," he said. "The war was over. There was a tremendous demand for housing."

Brody branched out into apartment construction and smaller strip shopping centers in the mid 1960s.

"The reason you want to go into

commercial and multiple is the building business has peaks and valleys," he said. "You're making a living off profit from a home and lot. When you're in a downturn, that stops. There's no profit, no livelihood."

Now, Brody spends most of his working efforts overseeing apartments in his portfolio including Fountain Park in Westland.

His most recent single-family development was Stratford Subdivision in partnership with Joe Block in Cuyahoga. He built his last house in Country Ridge Subdivision in Farmington Hills.

Brody's father, Samuel, built hotels in Detroit in the 1920s, so Brody kind of figured he'd end up in the building business himself. A son, Gerry, has followed him into the business.

While Brody's been at it nearly 50 years, he's not one to live in the good old days.

"Things being built today, I think, are using better materials than we

used back then," he said. "Drywall is better than wet plaster because it's easier to repair, faster to work with. Poured basements use the same manpower but about one fifth the time."

Irvin H. Yackness, BIA executive vice president, has known Brody for years.

"He has never lost an optimistic outlook and a very puckish sense of humor," Yackness said. "All of his career, he has completely committed to his involvement with this association, and he is one of its strongest supporters."

For fun, Brody plays golf, reads and travels. He's married to Rhona and father to Jay, a tax and real estate lawyer, Cathy, a special education teacher, and Gerry.

"I loved it," Brody said of his long career. "There have been some unpleasant aspects in the sense you had homeowners, very few, you couldn't change. It's been very rewarding in every sense."

Tobin wins Builder of Year

By Doug Funker
STAFF WRITER

When Mike Tobin was a sprout, his dad, Marshall, a builder, used to take him and his siblings to work and pay them 50 cents to help out doing simple little tasks.

Young Mike loved it. "I used to get my brother 50 cents to take his turn," Tobin said. "I used to clear weeds at the office, then I got promoted and got to empty wastebaskets and clear weeds."

From there, he grew into more responsible tasks. Now, Tobin helps run the family business, Mike Building of Farmington Hills, which builds houses and apartments and develops land.

Tobin, 41, has been selected Builder of the Year by the Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan for service to the professional group.

"What I enjoy most is moving a young couple into a new home or first apartment."

"It makes my whole day," he said. "Their expression and gratitude is something you just can't buy."

Mike Building currently is involved in several projects: Pebble Creek Apartments in Shelby Township, Chatsworth Club Apartments in Davison and developing Moorwood Pines West subdivision in Oakland Township.

"We don't just build homes — we build communities," Tobin said. "I

enjoy creating, developing apartments or subdivisions and going in where there's nothing and creating something that becomes a good part of the community."

"To go in and do something, leave your mark. It's nice. That gives me pride," he said.

"There are so many others deserving of this award. I was surprised I was chosen."

Tobin, a West Bloomfield resident, is married to Susan and dad to Brian, Alan and Mara.

He's newly-elected treasurer of the Michigan Association of Home Builders and a BIA director.

Tobin, a pilot, also flies medical emergency Air-Life flights.



Mike Tobin

Ask lawyer whether he has malpractice insurance

REAL ESTATE QUESTIONS



ROBERT M. MEISNER

In fact the attorney and/or accountant has malpractice insurance is extremely important to protect the interests of the client.

Q. We are looking at attorneys and accountants for our condominium association. One of the persons on our board is in insurance and says that one of the questions we should ask our professionals is whether in fact they have malpractice insurance and in what amount. Do you think that is a reasonable request and a good idea for the association?

A. With any professional or contractor, you should inquire as to the extent and amount of insurance that that person has. In the case of an accountant and/or attorney, whether

it is legitimate for you to ask such questions to ensure that if in fact there is a problem with your professional, that there will be a reputable insurance company backing up the attorney or accountant regarding the availability of insurance coverage. Malpractice insurance is expensive, and some lawyers and accountants choose to go without.

While that may or may not be reflected in the lower fee to the association, it may also result in the association's having a claim against the attorney or accountant that may be uncollectible.

Q. Our deed restrictions require architectural drawings for new construction and give the association 90 days to reject any proposed construction plans. One of the homeowners wants to place a satellite dish on their property located in the subdivision governed by our association. The homeowner has notified the association as required and has gotten a permit from

the city to keep the satellite dish from going in.

A. In a recent case issued by the court of appeals, with similar facts, the court found that the provision requiring a 90-day period was enforceable and that the association could enforce the deed restriction against the satellite dish.

Obviously, each case depends on its own facts, however, and you are best advised to consult with counsel before taking any legal position.

Robert M. Meisner is a Birmingham area attorney concentrating his practice in the areas of condominiums, real estate, corporate law and litigation. You are invited to submit topics which you would like to see discussed in this column, including questions about condominiums, by writing Robert M. Meisner, 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 487, Bingham Farms, Michigan 48025. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.