

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.

### Lindhardt earns CRS



Lynda Lindhardt  
Lynda Lindhardt, a Realtor with Coldwell Banker, has earned the professional designation of Certified Residential Specialist.

Lindhardt also holds the designations of Certified Buyer Representative and Graduate Realtors Institute.

### Blondell name principal



Kenneth Blondell  
Kenneth Blondell, an associate appraiser with Dean Appraisal in Birmingham since 1988, has been made a principal with the firm.

Blondell, who has a marketing degree from Wayne State University, is a Member Appraisal Institute, a certified real estate appraiser and a licensed builder.

### Rodde receives GRI



Donald Rodde  
Donald Rodde, a Realtor associate with Re/Max West in Livonia and a resident of that community, has received the professional designation Graduate Realtors Institute.

Rodde has a finance degree from Detroit College of Business.

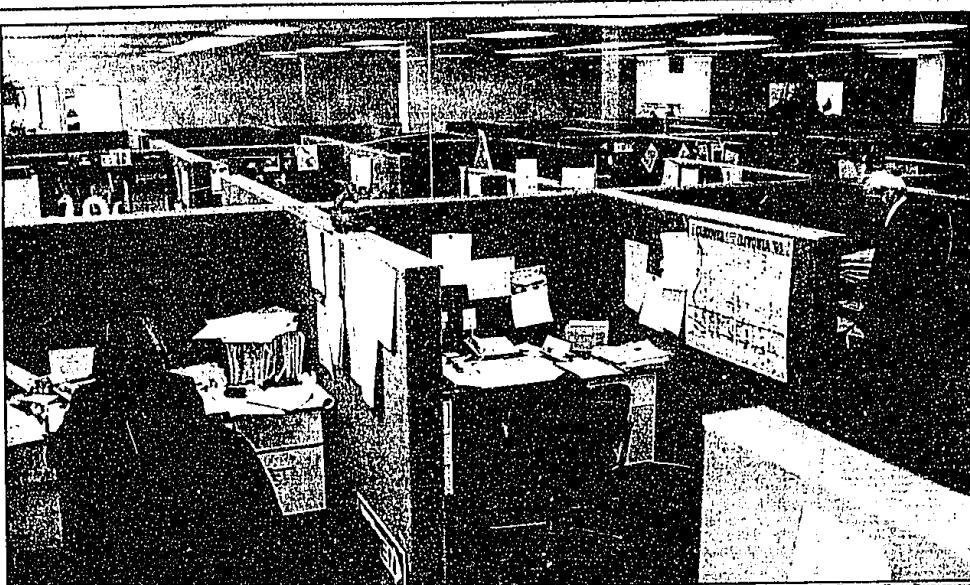
### She joins Plante & Moran

Kimberly Savella, a Livonia resident, has joined Plante & Moran Cresco, LLC, a provider of corporate real estate consulting services. Her areas of specialization include exclusive tenant representation and acquisitions.

Savella, a University of Michigan graduate, previously worked for Equus as a real estate associate.

# REAL ESTATE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1995 • PAGE 1 SECTION E



At work Real estate agents are everywhere — in the office, on the road, meeting clients and showing product.

## Real estate agents make big commitment

By DONN FINKE  
STAFF WRITER

So, you think you might want to sell real estate for a living. To get a license, you have to complete a 40-hour, state-approved course provided by real estate associations, trade schools or realty firms. Then you have to pass an exam that covers such things as property law, contracts, appraisals, financing purchases, agency and fair housing. The course, offered during a variety of times and places, costs upwards of \$150. The exam, given monthly, costs \$18. The initial license, good for a year, is \$23.

Then you have to find a sponsoring broker. Agents generally don't get paid until they make a sale. They share part of their commissions or pay a desk fee to help cover office expenses.

Still want to be an agent? It's not required, but figure on joining a realty board to get direct access to sales listings and additional training.

The Birmingham-Bloomfield-Rochester South Oakland Association of Realtors charges a one-time application fee of \$100, plus an annual fee of \$100.

Annual dues for membership in

state and national associations is \$147 combined.

"Everybody thinks real estate is going to be a real easy profession," said Patricia Benn, director of the Southeastern Institute of Real Estate in Southfield. "They don't realize there's a lot of work behind it."

"To get into this business, you have to have a cash reserve," said Sheila Clark, education director for the Western Wayne Oakland County Association of Realtors in Farmington. "You can go six months without getting a paycheck."

So with licensing requirements, fees to join associations and competition — more than 7,600 Realtors currently registered in Oakland and Wayne counties — why do people go into the business?

Few, it seems, choose real estate as an initial career path.

Al Van Acker, an agent with Re/Max in the hills in Bloomfield Hills, switched from insurance to real estate 28 years ago.

"I learned it was an area you could get paid for what you do," he said. "I was willing to work and know if I did, I would get paid for it. It's been very good to me."

Van Acker attributes the turnover in real estate to lack of training.

"I think brokers are responsible for that," he said. "I think some people are shocked when they really don't know what the business is all about. Procedures, the work ethic, it takes."

Kathy Solan, an agent with Real Estate One West Bloomfield-Lakes, made the transition from the corporate world to real estate four years ago.

"I figured downsizing was going to happen. I was taking more responsibility. I really felt I had gone as far as I could. It was a family-owned situation."

"I like being able to call my own shots," Solan said. "I like interaction with a variety of people. No two transactions are the same. You constantly challenge yourself and learn new things."

Carole Stevens, an agent with the Prudential Praxion Properties in Novi, made a career switch about a year ago when technological changes affected her advertising business.

"It seemed like a next logical choice," she said. "I'm a people per-

son, and I like to help people. That's why I came into the business."

There was another attraction, too. "You're paid on your own efforts," Stevens said. "Most successful people in life are risk takers."

Mark Kleinknecht, an agent with Remerica Hometown One in Plymouth, discovered while doing a drafting internship that he wanted more from a job than putting in time for a salary.

"I wanted to be paid for my merits," he said.

So six years ago, after graduating with a business degree from Central Michigan University, Kleinknecht went into real estate.

"Investing in real estate interested me," he said. "I felt I could get involved and stay locally. It had high career potential."

Kleinknecht described his most eye-opening experience.

"You have to work like a dog. The level of commitment it takes to do the job appropriately is substantial. You're giving up a lot of family time. You're either in or out," he said. "It's not a halfway thing. In the future, you're either going to be part of the 20 percent making money or 80 percent not. The public is demanding more of agents."

## Management company shouldn't run condo board

REAL ESTATE  
QUESTIONS



ROBERT M. MEISNER

Q. I am a member of our condominium board and have just learned that our management company is holding the ballots from the annual meeting and will not let any of the directors see this.

One board member has questioned the propriety of the management company doing this, and when he consulted with the condominium association's attorney, the attorney indicated that he would not be prepared to bring a lawsuit against the management company, which is the first time this was ever disclosed to the board.

What actions can be taken to retrieve the records? The attorney for the association has since resigned under threat of retribution.

A. The management company is merely an agent for the association and operates at the direction of the board. Sometimes management companies attempt to usurp the board's functions and boards allow them to do so.

While that may be good in certain instances, the board cannot delegate away its legal responsibilities, notwithstanding the fact that the management company has assumed many daily functions. The board, if it is well advised, will keep a tight reign on the activities of the management company and the authority that it delegates to it.

As to the ballots, they would presumably be books and records of the association, and the directors of the association would have a right to examine them so long as they have not been destroyed.

As to the unwillingness of the attorney to pursue

the management company, that is something that presumably should have been disclosed to the association when the attorney and/or the management company first became involved with each other and the association.

There are issues that come up on a monthly basis between the management company and the attorney that might require the attorney to advise the board of a problem with the management company. If the attorney is not in a position to independently represent the association, he/she may well be considered to be in a conflict of interest under those circumstances as would be the management company.

You may be well advised to discuss your issues with independent counsel for the association who has no tie to the management company or your former attorney.

Q. I am a condominium board member of some 15 years and have just been advised by our managing agent that the State Senate passed a bill last year that would legally mandate open meetings of the board of directors to its members and require that notice of that meeting be sent to the members of the association, at least 14 days in advance of the meeting, except in the case of an emergency.

I think that that would unduly restrict my board's ability to conduct business and would jeopardize not only the sanctity of our meetings, but the ability to attract people to serve on boards because of the constant distractions and interruptions that co-owners would no doubt make at our meetings.

Do you have any views on that subject?

The bill is dead for now, but may be reintroduced. The proponents of the bill may be attempting to equate condominiums with public bodies when, in

fact, a condominium association is a nonprofit corporation and should not be treated any differently, legislatively, than any other nonprofit corporation since the directors of condominium associations are just as liable as any other director of any other profit or nonprofit corporation in most instances.

Moreover, opening up the meetings, as a matter of law, to homeowners would, in my view, impair the attorney-client privilege, would undermine the ability of the association to carry out its business properly, would discourage people from serving on the board or otherwise express their views openly and candidly at board meetings and would, in general, undermine the ability of associations to function properly.

While it sounds reasonable on its face to guarantee members of a condominium association the right to attend board meetings, those who are experienced in the operation and management of condominium associations know what dire results would occur if such attendance was mandated as opposed to being discretionary as determined by the board or by an amendment to the bylaws, which is the general rule in corporate law.

I would strongly recommend that if your association has a position on this bill, that it write your state senator and state representative, as well as the governor, to express your views.

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 467, Bingham Farms, Michigan 48025.

This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.

**Classified Ad Index**

Employment • Real Estate • Services  
 Automobiles • Education • Health • Insurance  
 Home Improvement • Legal • Medical • Miscellaneous  
 Music • Recreation • Religion • Science • Sports  
 Travel • Vocations • Weddings • Other