



## **Great REALTORS® are Story Brokers**

By Jack Kestell, 2015 President  
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### **Opinion**

What will a great REALTOR® add to your next home-buying experience? Oh, my. Let me count the ways! With the time we have together here in the Sunday paper, let me share two short answers to this excellent question. A great REALTOR® is, truly, both scientist and artist.

A great REALTOR® offers technical expertise.

This is the science part, wherein your head is in charge and there are right and wrong answers. Buying or selling real estate is a legal process. That, by nature, makes it highly technical. You'll start with a Washington state Purchase & Sale Agreement. Then, you will add some combination of additional forms (and this is not an exhaustive list of the current inventory): Form 1A, Form 1B, Form 1C, Form 17, Form 22B, Form 22D, Form 22T, Form 25E, Form 35, Form 35E, Form 65, Form 68, Form 90T – and these are just some of the forms that were recently updated for Washington state. There are more, depending on your circumstance.

A great REALTOR® lives a life of continuing education to keep up with all of the technicalities of the profession, and all of these forms. A Code of Ethics, too, is about right answers and wrong answers. It frames how a great REALTOR® will manage his/her working relationship with you as you make, what will likely be, the largest purchase of your life.



A great REALTOR® is a story broker.

This is the art part, wherein your heart is in charge. Buying or selling real estate is an emotional experience. This is less about what is empirically right or wrong and more about what is best **for you**. No website can comprehend and empathize as another human being can. Your life and lifestyle will dictate how the story of your next home ought to be written. An accessible neighborhood may be important to you, or convenient public transportation, or walking-distance to a grocery store. Maybe you need a large yard for fruit trees or perhaps one of Spokane's great neighborhood parks will be all the green space you need. A great REALTOR® will know how to translate the story of your life into a property that meets your needs.

The art of real estate is also how you make friends with a REALTOR® - often for life. Let me tell you a little story, a story about a letter we received recently at the office. It was addressed to my dad, who became a REALTOR® just after World War II and founded the company that still bears his name.

Fifty years ago, my dad (who taught me every important thing I know about this business) helped a Mr. & Mrs. Walters buy a new home in the Linwood neighborhood of north Spokane. "We don't know for sure but we have always believed Monte was a friendly angel," Mrs. Walters wrote of my dad from the same address he had brokered for them 50 years ago. "We've lost most of our neighbors, only four remain, but those who replaced them have been good neighbors and we are lucky to have well kept homes."

Mrs. Walters concluded her letter with these words: "If Monte is still alive, please give him a hug from me. If not, let his younger generation know how much they have to live up to."

I lost my father in 1996 but he would have loved that hug, and this letter. It reminded me that he was a great REALTOR®, technically proficient and an excellent story broker. My colleagues and I work to live up to the same standards he lived by every day.

Your own home is a wonderful place in which to live. Talk with a story broker – a great REALTOR® – today!

This article represents the personal opinion of Jack Kestell, 2015 President of the Spokane Association of REALTORS®.

