



## **Grand Junction [CO] REALTORS® Hit a Home Run with RPAC Fundraiser— *September 2014***

The 2014 Chairman of the Grand Junction Area Association of REALTORS® (GJARA) in western Colorado understands the importance of RPAC. She also loves baseball. Bringing these two institutions together, the 541-member association held its first-ever RPAC fundraiser at the height of the summer, and hit it right out of the park.

Linda Romer Todd, a big ball fan who's served on many committees of her local, state, and national REALTOR® associations in the course of her 36-year career as an owner-broker, knew that it was time for GJARA to go beyond simple dues billing and personal outreach fundraising. "RPAC is the only entity lobbying for our profession, and for our clients," she says. "I tell our board every chance I get, 'If you don't contribute, you're riding on the backs of those who do.'" Todd is not just talking-the-talk: in addition to being a lively motivator of RPAC investments, she is the first Platinum Investor in the state of Colorado.

Todd learned about the National Association of REALTORS® RPAC fundraising grants from one of its REALTOR® Party representatives. The program stipulates that the association receiving the funding must raise three-times the grant amount for RPAC. "No problem!" said Todd, who applied for a \$3,000 grant and confidently upped the goal to \$15,000. GJARA booked a sky box at Grand Junction's new baseball stadium, an exciting facility that hosts the rookie league for the Colorado Rockies. Then it set about attracting its members to 'REALTORS® at the Rockies' on June 24th. Todd, herself, threw out the first pitch of the game, and when the evening was over, the home team had won -- and GJARA had raised \$15,200 for RPAC.

The grant covered the rental of the skybox, which included entry to the game, an open bar, and stadium food for up to 100 people (60 attended); large screens provided close-up viewing as well as continuous screening of RPAC videos. Admission to the event was a \$100 new investment from members and guests alike. GJARA provided two door prizes, a weekend getaway to Telluride and a local fruit-and-wine basket. "The initial winner of the basket didn't drink, and so donated it right back to us for a spontaneous auction," says Todd. "When we announced that we were close to our goal, another member in the generous spirit of things filled in the blank with a big bid -- over-calculating by a few hundred. We took his money!" she laughs, adding, "Everyone had a great time, and committed to coming again next year."

In fact, Todd hopes to help other rural boards in the region to plan their own 'REALTORS® at the Rockies' events, or to open GJARA's future RPAC events as broader regional gatherings. "It's just not feasible for members here on the western slope to make the 250-mile trek over the mountains to state events in Denver," she says, "But Grand Junction is pretty accessible -- and the stadium is a strong attraction."

Later in the summer, in order to ensure that all members could participate in an RPAC fundraising event, GJARA hosted another, with no minimum: a chili cook-off in a city



park, featuring eleven distinctly different recipes, and raising an additional \$1,100 for RPAC.

From peanuts-and-Crackerjacks to hot sauce, GJARA is increasing its RPAC investment in terms of both dollars and member participation. "RPAC investment is essential for our professional survival, notes Todd. "It is the best way we can protect our business opportunities as well as the property rights of those we serve."

*To learn more about how the REALTORS® of Grand Junction parlayed a RPAC Fundraising Grant into the double-digits, contact Linda Romer Todd, Chairman of the Grand Junction Association of REALTORS®, at [linda@buygrandjunction.com](mailto:linda@buygrandjunction.com) or 970-263-7250.*