



Utah REALTORS® Raise Money for RPAC With Rally Ride – June 2013

To increase investments in the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC,) the Utah Association of REALTORS® (UAR) has been capitalizing on one of the state's most valuable assets: its striking natural beauty. That, and its Harley Davidson-riding members.

The culture of a motorcycle rally, as Megan Brimhall Kallas, Government Affairs Director of the 10,500 member association has discovered, is not about speed. It's about driving out under the big open sky and leaving the stresses of the everyday world behind. The breathtaking scenery of Utah's canyons, mountains, and pristine lakes erases those clean away. "The added bonus is that participating members enjoy the satisfaction of knowing they're supporting RPAC, too," notes Kallas.

On June 17-18 this year, UAR will be hosting its fourth annual RPAC Rally Ride, an event that has expanded to capacity, drawing top agents to what has become an elite gathering of major investors to the political action committee. "It's a really relaxed networking opportunity, especially for those members who are not interested in golf or black-tie events," says Kallas, noting that spots are reserved for affiliate members, too.

It began back in 2010, as the brainchild of Kenny Parcell, who is now NAR's REALTOR® Party Member Mobilization Liaison. Thinking outside the box one day with some fellow Harley-riding UAR members, he said, "Hey! This would be a cool way to raise money for RPAC: We'll gather a critical mass of riders, charge each one \$1,000, and provide a ride, a flag, food, and a hotel stay." One morning a short time later, with the Association Executive's blessing, 35 riders completed the Rally and rolled into the UAR's board of directors meeting. The board saw it was clearly so much fun, that rider-ship tripled in numbers the following year (in 2011), when Parcell was UAR President.

That's when UAR decided to apply for a \$5,000 RPAC fundraising grant to help expand the ride and turn it into a self-sustaining event. Now, with participation capped at 80 vehicles for safety and logistics, the Rally includes everything from convertibles to Mini-Coopers. It is so popular that UAR has instituted an early sign-up policy, and has to turn members away. In 2012, it raised over \$75,000 for RPAC, and that was without a grant!

The logistics of a motorcycle rally are formidable, and UAR expands and refines them every year. The route changes annually, to make the most of Utah's spectacular scenery. To keep the event completely carefree for the participants, UAR provides hotel accommodations, meals, snacks, and everything else that might be needed along the way. Lunches are often catered by local mom-and-pop operations in a town square along the route; sometimes local REALTOR® associations meet the rally for breakfast. Luggage is towed along in a support trailer, bearing a banner that reads "RPAC Rally - Protecting Homeownership." UAR staff provides detailed turn-by-turn directions so no one gets lost, and even scouts out the best public restrooms along the route. All riders receive a swag bag, including t-shirts, sunscreen, bandannas, and flags.



“We look at every aspect of the ride, to make sure everyone is safe, comfortable, and having a good time,” says Kallas. She even draws up “dance cards,” so that motorcyclists who are willing get a different passenger on the back of their bikes on each leg of the journey. All cars are likewise filled with a rotating group of passengers, to maximize camaraderie.

To learn more about the Utah RPAC Rally Ride, contact Megan Brimhall Kallas, Government Affairs Director of the Utah Association of REALTORS®, at Megan@utahrealtors.com or 800.594.8933.

