



Over All is the Sky
by Jennifer Valerien, 2017 President
Spokane Association of REALTORS®
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Opinion

The Spokane Association of REALTORS® will do something this coming week that it has never done before. In fact, it will do something that no other REALTOR® association in the country has ever done before – convene a public conversation around the use of drones in our community.

Our partner in this effort is the 20,000-member strong Washington REALTORS®. We will convene ***Home Drone - Enterprise Drone Conference and Expo*** at the Spokane Convention Center on Tuesday (March 21st) at 9 a.m.

Join us!

Many of my REALTOR® colleagues will be there. The public is warmly invited and welcome, too. You can find our program for the day, and a link to buy tickets, online here: **HomeDroneSpokane.com**

Why is a REALTOR® association convening a conversation about drones? Because we should.

Drones, or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), were allowed to fly in U.S. airspace for commercial purposes for the first time on August 29th, last year. Since then, myriad businesses, large and small, have been looking at adding drone capabilities to both their internal and public-facing work.

Increasingly, REALTORS® are taking to the sky – either as certified drone pilots themselves, or hiring certified drone pilots – to get listing photos from the air. This doesn't make sense for every property, but it's hard to beat the stunning imagery that can be captured of a property from the sky.



More than a sales tool, drones can be used to put a new eye on just about anything: a land survey, a crop assessment, a structural inspection, a forest fire lookout, a search for a missing child, a criminal apprehension, even a package delivery – the sky's the limit (sorry, I couldn't resist).

Drones are serious business tools and need to be taken seriously. To date, the largest fine for a drone violation is \$1.9M; the stiffest penalty for a drone violation is 30 days in jail. Every business and business person needs to look at drones with eyes first on safety and propriety.

Our keynote speaker will be **JD Claridge**, CEO and co-founder of Coeur d'Alene-based drone manufacturer xCraft. You may have seen him go up against five sharks on the ABC television show *Shark Tank*.

Other speakers represent the FAA, Washington State Department of Commerce, Gonzaga University School of Business, Lee & Hayes Attorneys at Law, Northwest Flight School, Rees Aerials, Oasis Property Marketing, 3D Visualize, AGL Productions, Back40 Media, RL Miller Photography, Dean Davis Photography, Nick Brommer Photography, The Cru Connection, and flying REALTORS® **Paul Murray, Blake Middleton, and Ron McIntire**.

It'll be fun, too. The SpokaneFPV drone racers will be doing exposition flights in the Convention Center Cage (also a first) during the mid-day lunch hour and the day-end happy hour with no-host bar.

The human brain processes pictures 60,000 times faster than it does text. A typical consumer makes a decision in about three seconds. No matter how finely crafted your narrative, it's the image that sells a product, service, or idea.

In the real estate world, we take special notice of the fact that 98-percent of all home-shoppers today begin their search for a home online. The more engaging the images we post online – that's us – the more productive our efforts will be for our clients – that's you.

A Washington REALTOR® and Tacoma Presbyterian minister, Arthur Barnhisel, adds a Preamble to the REALTOR® Code of Ethics in 1924. He writes, "Under all is the land." Today, nearly 100 years later, we acknowledge too that over all is the sky. REALTORS® lead the conversation again as we help write the first words on ethics about using our airspace for unmanned flight.

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