



# CHARITABLE contributions

BY BILL JOHNSTON

It is estimated that there are now nearly two billion Internet users around the world and while we may be spending more time isolated behind our computers, we're actually more connected than ever thanks to the emergence of websites like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Even before the social networking phenomenon though, REALTORS® always recognized the importance of staying in touch.

From home inspectors, to lawyers, to mortgage brokers, your REALTOR's® network of professional contacts can help you through any transaction. Whether you need leads on staging experts, contractors, or moving companies, your REALTOR® can identify a number of options for you.

The reach of many REALTORS® even extends well beyond professional contacts and into communities where they work to make a difference.

Each summer for example, a group of real estate professionals who are also motorcycle enthusiasts embark on a three-day journey to raise funds for the REALTORS Care Foundation. In 2009 alone, the ride collected more than \$40,000 for the Foundation, which since its inception has offered more than \$2 million in annual grants to shelter-related charities throughout Ontario. Beneficiaries in the Greater Toronto Area have included hospices, family shelters, youth centres and a refugee service provider.

Others choose to make a difference on the green thanks to the many golf tournaments hosted by real estate boards and associations each year. In 2009, the Toronto Real Estate Board's Annual Charity Golf Classic raised more than \$10,000 for the Salvation Army of Toronto.

REALTORS® contributions to the quality of life in GTA communities are as diverse as the city itself. Some for example, choose to help out in schools through the Children's Breakfast Program. A joint venture of the Toronto Real Estate Board and ▶



Bill Johnston is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 30,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.





- ▶ the Toronto District School Board, the program provides nutritious breakfasts and snacks to children in need in 13 local schools.

Greater Toronto REALTORS® also contribute to our city's future through awards that provide \$5,000 post-secondary scholarships to two graduating high school students each year.

Given that they also recognize the essential role that shelter plays in everyone's lives, Greater Toronto REALTORS® come together as a community to help with crises around the world as well. In early 2010, they contributed nearly \$75,000 to help with earthquake relief efforts in Haiti.

When similar efforts were underway to help victims of an earthquake in China and those struck by a cyclone in Burma in 2008, Greater Toronto REALTORS® again stepped in to help with financial contributions.



These efforts as a professional community are of course, in addition to the many individual pursuits that REALTORS® assume like coaching sports, delivering charitable gift baskets and raising funds for countless causes – efforts that are recognized each year through the Toronto Real Estate Board's Civic Service Award.

To learn more about how they can utilize their wide network of contacts to help you reach your goals, talk to a

REALTOR® and visit [www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com](http://www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com). There you will find community profiles, open house listings, information on government programs and links to a number of important services and attractions throughout the city.

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