



Recognizing Our Volunteer Effort

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TREB PRESIDENT'S COLUMN AS IT APPEARS IN THE TORONTO STAR

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It has been said that even the smallest group of concerned citizens can help to change the world.

Indeed, those who are committed to a cause are often willing to invest themselves deeply in order to make a difference. When you combine such commitment with a favourite pastime though, the results can be even greater.

Thanks to such passion and a common interest, a group of real estate professionals who are also motorcycle enthusiasts collected more than \$40,000 for charity last year through an annual summertime fundraiser.

This year, the REALTORS Care Foundation Motorcycle RIDE for Charity celebrates its fifth anniversary.

On July 7th, riders will set out from Mississauga for a more than 1400km round-trip journey to Sault Ste. Marie to raise funds for housing-related charities throughout Ontario. Some participants will even continue on to Thunder Bay, making a round trip ride of nearly 2,000km.

All of the proceeds from their ride will benefit the REALTORS Care Foundation. Now in its 43rd year, the REALTORS Care Foundation was established as part of Canada's Centennial celebrations in 1967 and repatriated to Ontario in 1977. Since its inception, the Foundation has granted more than \$2 million to shelter-related causes throughout the province.

Twenty-four real estate boards and associations in Ontario, including the 30,000 Members of the Toronto Real Estate Board, have committed to supporting the Foundation through the Every REALTOR® program, authorizing their professional association to make a donation on behalf of the membership.

Thanks to this commitment and the Ride's success, the REALTORS Care Foundation provided nearly \$300,000 in grants to shelter-related causes throughout Ontario last year alone.

The Toronto Real Estate Board offered grants to 20 different shelter-related charities through the REALTORS Care Foundation in 2009. Beneficiaries included hospices, family shelters, youth centres and a refugee service provider.

Boards and Associations play a key role in the Motorcycle Ride for Charity as well. This year's Ride will stop at 14 different real estate boards and associations along the way, each of which will show their support by providing donations, refreshments and local media exposure.

Riders, all of whom pay their own costs of food and lodging, seek pledges for the event and since the Ontario Real Estate Association fulfills administrative needs, 100 per cent of the proceeds from the Ride directly benefit the REALTORS Care Foundation.

Safety is also of paramount importance at the event. Riders are not required to stay precisely together at all times and therefore traffic is not disrupted throughout their travels. The journey is in fact, coordinated such that some riders can participate for individual legs of the trip by rendezvousing with the group at specific times.

If you would like to make a pledge to this event or learn more about the REALTORS Care Foundation please visit www.realtorscareontario.ca and click on the Ride link.

To find out about the many ways that a REALTOR® can help you, please visit www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com where you will find neighbourhood profiles, information on government programs, market updates and more.

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