

# The MLTA Commitment

MARYLAND'S NEWS SOURCE FOR TITLE PROFESSIONALS

Come *Back to the Future*  
The 2015 Convention Issue



**Brenda Dyer, CLTP**  
Editor-in-Chief













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<p><b>Want to Write an Article?</b></p> <p>The MLTA Commitment Committee is seeking people to write articles and contribute items for the next issue. Articles and contributions submitted should inform the MLTA membership of topics affecting the title industry in Maryland. As an added benefit for those working toward earning the Certified Land Title Professional (CLTP) designation, submission of articles can be used toward points for the CLTP designation. Contact MLTA at <a href="mailto:MLTA@mdlta.com">MLTA@mdlta.com</a>.</p>	<p><b>Notice:</b></p> <p>The MLTA Southern Maryland Chapter will hold a meeting Thursday, August 13, at 9:00 am at</p> <p>Bay County Settlements, Inc., 23063 Three Notch Road California, MD 20619.</p> <p>If you are doing business in Southern Maryland, please make plans to attend the meeting. If you are interested, email Brenda Dyer at <a href="mailto:bdyer@oldrepublictitle.com">bdyer@oldrepublictitle.com</a>.</p>
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*The Maryland Land Title Association (MLTA) is a professional organization working on behalf of title industry service providers and consumers. We hope that you will consider joining the many title insurance agents, abstractors, attorneys, and underwriters who already have benefited from their membership.*

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## President's Message



As I write this message, it's hard to believe that the first half of 2015 is already behind us. I suppose the big news since our last newsletter is that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has delayed the implementation of the new TILA-RESPA Integrated Disclosure (TRID) rule until October 3. At the risk of repeating myself, are you ready? Do you know how the regulatory changes currently scheduled to take effect October 3, 2015 will impact your job, your clients' jobs, and your lenders' business processes? Are you comfortable answering the questions that your clients are going to be asking you, including discussions as to why they are receiving multiple Closing Disclosure Statements and the value of owner's title insurance?

The two-month delay in the implementation of TRID is the breathing room that should be used by everyone in our industry to make sure we are well versed and ready for the changes that inevitably will be coming our way. Do not delay in talking to your realtor and lender clients! Use this time to learn how they will be dealing with TRID, and what that will mean for you and your operations. Make sure that you are the go-to person for your customers regarding how the CFPB and new regulations will impact their business. Take a critical look at your own offices and put the business processes in place now to ensure as easy a transition as possible in October and November. Remember, this is not a form change; it is a fundamental change in how the business of residential real estate transactions are handled. Last, but certainly not least, please make sure that your offices are in compliance with the American Land Title Association's Best Practices.

At this point, all settlement companies and attorneys should have their Best Practice manuals completed, and should be continually updating and enhancing them. You should be prepared to provide any lender who asks for it, evidence of your compliance with all seven Best Practices pillars, and at the very least, you should complete the ALTA self-certification. Also, if you have not taken the opportunity to visit the American Land Title Association website ([www.alta.org/cfbp](http://www.alta.org/cfbp)), please do so. There is valuable news and information there to help ensure your CFPB readiness. October will be here before we know it! Don't let yourself fall behind in preparing.

2015 was both an interesting and busy year legislatively in Annapolis. This year, there was a larger than usual batch of freshman senators and representatives. Despite this, our Second Annual Lobby Day, on February 3, and our Annual Legislative Reception, on February 19, were both great successes, giving us valuable face-time with our elected officials. I am happy to report that we once again successfully helped to defeat the "Transfer on Death Act," and we accomplished our goal of obtaining a sponsor for an MLTA bill to statutorily provide a framework in Maryland for filing and litigating suits to quiet title to real property. Although the "quiet title bill" did not pass both houses in its first year (which is extremely rare), we are reasonably optimistic that it will pass next year and be signed by

the governor. Overall, it was a very successful legislative session. Many thanks to Susan Zuhowski, Bill O'Connell, Jim Cosgrove, Paul Rieger, Bill Pitcher, and the entire MLTA Legislative Committee for all their hard work!

This year your MLTA Board has begun an initiative of becoming more involved with other organizations within the real estate industry, and TRID has provided an excellent backdrop for this. In June, Kathee Brown and Sherry Blyton from the Membership Committee attended, and Steve Buckman, Past President, participated in a panel discussion at the joint Maryland Mortgage Bankers Association and Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors meeting. The topic was TRID and how those two groups would be impacted by the new regulation. Further, Steve Buckman and other MLTA Board members have been working with SMAR, GBBR, GCAR, and other realtor groups in regards to amending the standard residential sales contracts around the State to include mention of enhanced owner's title insurance policies, so that such policies can be quoted to the consumer, and included in both the new Loan Estimates and Closing Disclosure Statements. These interactions with others in our industry provide greater visibility for the MLTA, as well as opportunities to advance causes important to all title professionals.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the American Land Title Association's Title Action Network (TAN). TAN is the premier grassroots organization promoting the value of the land title industry and what we do for the consumer. If you won't advocate for your industry, who will? It is critical to showcase a unified and energized voice for our industry when influencing legislators and regulators. That's why it's important all land title professionals join TAN. It is free and takes only a minute to join. TAN provides easy-to-understand advocacy alerts on issues impacting you, your business, and your customers. TAN focuses on ensuring state

and federal legislators understand the value of the title industry. You can join today at [www.alta.org/tan/join](http://www.alta.org/tan/join).

Finally, please plan on joining your friends and colleagues at the 2015 MLTA Fall Convention September 10 – 12, at The Grand Hotel & Spa, in Ocean City, Maryland. This convention is the single best opportunity to network with others in the industry, gain valuable knowledge during the eight hours of continuing education, and visit with vendors and service providers who can enhance the efficiency and sustainability of your individual operations. You can register [here](#), or learn more about the convention at the MLTA website; <http://mdlta.org>.







# **Come “Back to the Future” at the MLTA 2015 Fall Convention**

**September 10-12, 2015  
Ocean City, Maryland**

**Nancy Gusman, Esq., CLTP**  
MLTA Convention Committee

Join us at The Grand hotel for this year's convention. We're "Building on the Past for Success in the Future" as we begin implementation of the Federal TRID Rule. Since 1986, we have watched the gradual transformation of the real estate transaction, and we are once again in a period of change. Come September, we will be closing the first transactions under TRID and learning how to coordinate and collaborate with our lenders to comply with the Rule and create the Closing Disclosure Form. We will already have spent a few weeks confronting the issues with our real estate agents, loan officers, and loan processors as we all learn how the Rule affects our contracts, our clients, and our customers.

Incorporated into the Rule are new requirements placed upon us for security of the information and funds we collect, as well as regulatory compliance. Are you Best Practices ready? Will you be in September?

COME TO CONVENTION and learn where the industry stands in this changing environment and whether you are actually in compliance, or just think you are. With 8 hours of continuing education and additional break-out sessions, there is a lot of opportunity for you to learn what you need to know. We are inviting compliance vendors to exhibit at this year's convention in order to make your transition as smooth as possible. Take this opportunity to network with your peers to see what they are doing to comply and what ideas they may have that you could use in your office.

Incorporating our theme of Back to the Future, we would like to create a photo montage of MLTA's past and present. To that end, we are requesting our membership to

forward any photos you may have from MLTA past or current events. We also plan to have a Memory Wall, where you can share fond memories, send messages to your friends and colleagues, and share your hopes for the future of our industry and association.

Registration will open at 1pm on Thursday, September 10, and our first education session will begin at 3:30 pm. Join us in the Exhibitors' Showcase for our Welcome Reception where you can catch up with old friends. On Friday evening, watch the sunset over the Bay while sipping cocktails. Join us for dinner after, to include our Installation and Awards Ceremony. It's all fun in the bar after dinner where there will be Karaoke, dancing, and an opportunity to just "let it go." While the Convention officially ends on Saturday afternoon, those of you who are staying the weekend should join us for dinner on Saturday evening.

AT THIS YEAR'S CONVENTION, we will be hosting a Silent Auction to support the MLTA PAC. If you, or someone you know, would like to contribute items to be auctioned, please contact Margaret Webb in the MLTA office ([MLTA@mdlta.com](mailto:MLTA@mdlta.com)).

The MLTA Political Action Committee was formed to raise and spend money to elect candidates for local or statewide office, regardless of political affiliation, who support the ideals of the Maryland title industry. In recent years, the Legislature has increasingly turned its attention to regulating the title industry in Maryland, and to consumer-driven measures that affect the quality of title. The access afforded by MLTA PAC contributions improves the chance that the MLTA's message will be favorably received on these issues. To maintain and grow a fund from which to make these contributions, the PAC relies on contributions from MLTA members.



## Do You Need Roads?



### Going Beyond the Boundaries

"Guess you guys aren't ready for that yet. But your kids are gonna love it."

**-Marty McFly, in *Back to the Future***

### Great Scott!

The movie, *Back to the Future*, just celebrated its 30th anniversary. In case you have been under a rock for the past three decades, the popular movie is the first of a trilogy. IMDB.com describes the plot: "A young man is accidentally sent 30 years into the past in a time-traveling DeLorean invented by his friend, Dr. Emmett Brown, and must make sure his high-school-age parents unite in order to save his own existence."

The movie concluded with Marty and Doc Brown embarking on a journey 30 years into the future. As they back the DeLorean onto the street, Marty warns, "Hey Doc, we better back up. We don't have enough road to get up to 88 mph." (The speed required to initiate time travel to the future). Doc's answer introduces the sequel and a glimpse of their destination...

*"Roads? Where we're going, we don't need roads!"*

Marty was limited in his thinking. He thought that the only way the car could move was on a straight two-dimensional road. The Doc was thinking two dimensions past him in both space and time. I don't know if time travel will ever be possible but I know that no change can ever take place without thinking beyond your self-imposed limitations and boundaries.

We allow only the world we see to influence our vision. We speak in terms of the concepts we know. But we can't see beyond them. The first pilots to fight in aerial combat learned that they could use the third dimension (up or down) to outmaneuver anyone who was in the habit of fighting on the ground in two dimensions.

Those are the same limitations Marty has in the movie. He can't think beyond any dimension he hasn't experienced or thought of previously. All of us face the same self-limiting behavior.

What is limiting your thinking? What are you tied to that you need to release or get over? What have you never given yourself permission to see?

### Thinking Differently

My brother-in-law gave me his Apple computer last month. At first I hesitated because I have always considered myself to be strictly a Windows guy. But I have heard how much Mac users love their machines and I wanted to see the difference. It took a much shorter time to boot the device up and suddenly I was faced with a home screen like I had never viewed.



It's a learning curve – just like the first time you tried to use a touch screen mobile device. You really felt like you were in another league. I am still working on learning the new Mac shortcuts, names for programs and functions of this computer.

Now if you are an existing Mac user, you are laughing at me now. It's like learning a new language. Think of taking Spanish all your life and finding yourself in Brazil, where your classes do you little or no good. You recognize certain terms, but there are different words for everything. After some work on my new device, I see why people like Macs so much! It is easier to navigate, less maintenance and the feel is more user-friendly. It is more about how I think about this challenge than anything else.

It reminds me of a story about Apple founder, Steve Jobs. He had a way of breaking down barriers that existed in everyday life and thinking different than anyone else. Grace Rasmus of MacWorld, UK shared the following story.

"Jobs drove a Mercedes SL55 AMG and managed to keep a license plate off it for years due to a loophole in California vehicle laws. Anyone in California has a maximum of six months after the issuing of a plate number to put a license plate on a new car. Jobs changed cars every six months to a new, identical model so he could keep the plates off. No real reason for this has ever been revealed, other than Jobs' desire to live the 'Think Different' motto."

*"You will succeed in direct proportion to your willingness to come out of your comfort zone."*

*-Joe Bonura*

## Roasted for a Reason!

I once heard the story about a young bride who prepared a pot roast for her husband. She added the potatoes, onions, carrots and other ingredients. But just before she placed it all in the oven, she sliced the ends off of the roast. Her husband watched in amazement at what she did. He had watched his mother prepare roasts... but never remove the ends!

"Why do you cut the ends off?" he asked her.

"It tastes better." She said, "Besides, that is what my mother taught me to do." It seemed to taste the same to him when he ate the dinner. Wondering about this, he asked her to call her mother and ask why she did this. She called her mother the next day and asked, "Why did you always cut the ends of the roast off before placing it in your oven?" Her mother answered the same as she did. "It tastes better, and that is the way your grandmother always prepared a roast," she said.

So they called grandmother and put the question to her. "Well, dear, I was always told it tasted better that way when my mother taught me to cook a roast." Getting to be routine, right?

Several weeks later, the family was visiting the great grandmother at the nursing home. While there, the young bride asked her, "Grandma, why did you always cut the ends off a roast before cooking it?"

"Well, darling," the elder woman said gently, "I had a very small oven and a large roast never fit in it well!"





For generations the family practiced a ritual for no apparent reason. They were convinced it added to the taste. The instruction only perpetuated a practice that no one understood as if it were an essential rule. I saw this in almost every organization I ever worked for. People blindly followed rules that they never understood and were outdated in the modern world.

What is the “roast” in your business, career or thinking that you are cutting the ends off of under the assumption that there is only one correct way to do it? If you don’t know the reason, then the practice is meaningless and will be replaced by a better reason.

“I like pushing boundaries.” -Lady Gaga

### What Do YOU See?

In the 1998 movie *Patch Adams*, Robin Williams’ character, Patch Adams, runs into Arthur Mendelson (played by Harold Gould), an older genius living in a mental hospital with him.

Adams recognizes him as a well-known local genius. He continually asks people to look at his hand in front of their face and tell him how many fingers they see. Each person answers “4,” and each time Arthur flies into an angry rage. He accuses them of being short-sighted, lacking vision.

Finally one evening Patch asks the man the meaning of his riddle. The older man likes him and shows him that when he focuses only on the hand in front of him, he sees just four fingers. “No, no! Look beyond the fingers! Now tell me how many you see. You’re focusing on the problem. If you focus on the problem, you can’t see the solution. Never focus on the problem.”

Then Patch looks beyond the hand at Arthur’s face and focuses on that. Patch suddenly sees eight fingers. “Eight’s a good answer!” Arthur says.

*Do you see four fingers, or eight in front of you? Do you see problems or solutions beyond them? Someone else will see the solution if you don’t.*

*“See what no one else sees. See what everyone chooses not to see... out of fear, conformity or laziness. See the whole world anew each day!” –Arthur Mendelson, in Patch Adams*

**Easy Action Steps:** How is your thinking limited by what you see immediately in front of you?

Can you see what lies beyond? What self-limiting boundaries are stifling your thinking and creativity? What would it take to “free” yourself from your limitations?

Do you need roads?

Jim Mathis is an international Certified Speaking Professional, executive coach and author. To subscribe to his free personal and professional development newsletter, please send an email to: [subscribe@jimmathis.com](mailto:subscribe@jimmathis.com) with the word SUBSCRIBE in the subject. An electronic copy will be sent out to you every month. For more information on how Jim and his programs can benefit your organization or group, please call 888-688-0220, or visit his web site: [www.jimmathis.com](http://www.jimmathis.com).

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## **MMBA/GBBR Recap**

**Maryland Association of Realtors,  
Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors,  
Maryland Mortgage Bankers Association,  
and Maryland Land Title Association:**

**July 17, 2015 at Ten Oaks Ballroom in  
Clarksville, MD**

At June's MMBA/GBBR event, a panel discussion on the imminent changes to the real estate settlements and documentation included prominent speakers Phil Schulman, Esq., KNL Gates, LLP; NAR RESPA Counsel, Steven Buckman, Esq., MLTA Past President, Brian Webster, CFPB, Originations Program Director, and Ken Markison, MMBA, Vice President & Regulatory Counsel. Important topics covered were: Who is impacted by these changes; will you be caught off guard by the 3-day Closing Disclosure Rule; and can you afford to be the only one not prepared? Phillip L. Schulman, Esq., was also the featured Speaker on TRID. The speakers were sponsored by Eagle Bank. More than 250 members attended, including listing agents, selling agents, lenders, and title agents.

We believe that, through Steve's leadership and our efforts, MLTA became a stronger source of information for future events held by MMBA and GBBR.

Kathee Brown, Sherry Blyton, Co-Chairpersons, Membership Committee



## **2015 Silent Auction Donation Request**



We will be holding a Silent Auction to benefit the MLTA PAC. One of the longstanding functions of the MLTA is to review and comment on legislation affecting the title industry in Maryland. The MLTA PAC was formed to raise and spend money to elect candidates for local or statewide office who support the ideals of the Maryland title industry. To make this event as exciting and successful as we hope, we will need your help!

Please support our event by donating gift certificates, merchandise, or services. In exchange, you will receive community exposure and advertising.

You may bring your donation to the Fall Convention registration desk, or we will gladly pick up your donation. E-mail [Theresa.Ramond@stewart.com](mailto:Theresa.Ramond@stewart.com) or call 410-581-4228. If you have any questions, please contact us at [MLTA@MDLTA.com](mailto:MLTA@MDLTA.com)

Thank you for supporting MLTA and the MLTA PAC!

### **MLTA Thanks Our Silent Auction Donors:**

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# Are Your Advertising Agreements Setting Off Red Flags At The CFPB?

One of the main areas that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has focused on enforcing in real estate has been RESPA Section 8 — otherwise known as the “kickbacks and illegal fees” section.

This rule was first enforced last September, ending with the title agency in question paying \$200,000 in fines to the CFPB. The incident became somewhat of a warning for the real estate industry to check their marketing and advertising service agreements (MSAs or ASAs) for illegal fees and kickbacks.

The rule established that when a company enters into a contract with the agreement or understanding that in exchange the counterparty will refer services, it violates RESPA Section 8(a).

It is important to understand not only the rule, but also the reasoning behind the rule. Kickbacks and referral fees are illegal in most cases because the customer is supposed to find mortgage professionals who work in their best interest, not the companies' best interest. Steering the customer to a professional because that professional will provide something of value in return is not valuing the customer or acting in their best interest. Referrals aren't supposed to happen for financial gain.

Most of those in the real estate or mortgage industry are not consciously violating regulations. However, many might not be aware of the various red flags that regulators look for.

Red flags for regulators:

## 1. Having a marketing and advertising service agreement

MSAs and ASAs are like smoke. If a real estate business has one, then regulators will probably check for a fire.

## 2. Sharing office space

If a real estate agent shares office space with any other type of business, then both the real estate agent and the business are a target for regulators.

They'll want to know why the real estate agent is there, and what kind of work they are doing. If the real estate agent is legitimately providing service and not referring business, they are fine.

Many times, however, regulators find that this type of arrangement is a cover-up for a kickback agreement. It's all in the intent.

## 3. Not “showing the work”

Marx Sterbcow, one of the nation's premiere RESPA attorneys, was the featured speaker with ATS Secured on a webinar titled “RESPA Section 8: Understanding marketing and advertising regulation.”

One of his pieces of advice to avoid a legal action against your business was that each advertising and marketing service needs to be quantified. Each fee needs to be broken down to illustrate where the money came from. Proof has to be shown in ASAs or MSAs. Even if you know that you are above board, the regulators don't know that.

“As two of the former heads with HUD who ran the RESPA division once told me,” Sterbcow said, “If you can't show your homework, then we have a problem with it.”

It's important to be aware of these red flags to avoid catching regulatory attention. If your real estate, mortgage, or financial organization is undergoing a regulatory audit, having the ability to “show the homework” will significantly decrease the chance of a legal action against your business.

- Wes Miller is the CEO and co-founder of ATS Secured, a new technology category for the real estate closing industry.

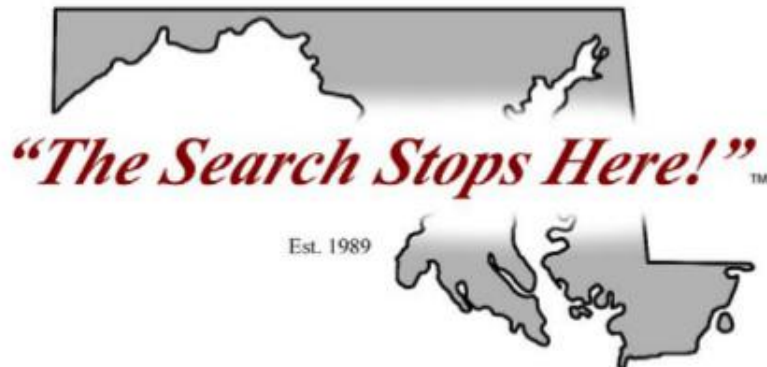
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## Appreciation For Tony O'Donnell



A Tony O'Donnell Appreciation Party was held at the home of Wanda and Michael DeBord on June 12. In attendance were several local builders, developers, and business owners.

Music was provided by Angie Miller & Friends, and the event was catered by Stoney's Seafood House.

This successful MLTA event raised a significant amount of money for Delegate O'Donnell's campaign committee, Friends of Tony O'Donnell. An un-calculable amount of good cheer and fellowship was had by all. We look forward to working closely with Delegate O'Donnell in the next legislative session!

Delegate O'Donnell was instrumental in passing the Quiet Title bill through the House of Representatives with an unopposed vote. Unfortunately, the bill did not pass the Senate, but appears to be positioned favorably for next year.



## MLTA Eighth Annual Crab Feast

More than 190 MLTA members and guests attended the MLTA Eighth Annual Crab Feast on June 3, 2015. A 50:50 raffle was held to benefit the Kenneth & Patricia Bayne Foundation. Proceeds were \$1131.00. The raffle winner, Ruth Kohl, generously donated her winnings back to the Foundation.





## County Updates

### Cecil County

We have been informed that effective July 1, 2015, Cecil County will impose a county transfer tax payable to Cecil County, Maryland, before any deed or other instrument involving the transfer of an interest in land may be recorded. The amount of the tax is 0.5% of the consideration identified in the deed or other instrument recorded with the Clerk of Court for Cecil County.

Please note that the transfer tax does not apply to an instrument of writing that is exempt from the State transfer tax under Md. Code. Ann., Tax – Property, §13-207. Also, the transfer tax for first time home buyers shall be 0.25% of the consideration payable for the instrument of writing, with the transfer tax to be paid entirely by the seller.

Further, properties under contract as of June 1, 2015 shall be subject to the existing transfer fee of ten dollars (\$10.00), provided that the settlement on the transfer of land occurs on or before August 31, 2015. Eligible properties that fail to record the transfer on or before September 15, 2015 at the Cecil County Department of Finance will be assessed the new 0.5% county transfer tax unless otherwise exempt.

In order to qualify for the Cecil County Transfer Tax interim exception, you must submit the following along with your documents:

1. Original Cecil County Transfer Fee Affidavit
2. A copy of the fully executed contract/agreement dated on or before June 1, 2015.

### Charles County

The Board of County Commissioners of Charles County recently enacted a county transfer tax. This new tax will be effective Saturday, August 8, 2015. It is our understanding that this new tax will be imposed on any deed presented after the effective date. They will not be looking to the date on the deed to determine if the new tax will be collected.

The rate of the transfer tax will be one half of one percent (0.5%).

There is an exemption for first time home buyers on the first \$50,000 of consideration, if the dwelling unit will be their primary residence.

The tax checks should be made payable to Charles County Government.





## Are you CFPB ready?

**SoftPro's Title, Closing and Escrow Software** combines cutting-edge technology with outstanding support to make your business run more efficiently while keeping you prepared for upcoming changes. It is fully customizable and scalable so you can work the way you want, yet also conforms to the latest regulations so you can keep compliant within our ever-changing industry.

Trust **SoftPro** to be your guide for upcoming CFPB information and updates, start following **SoftProCurrent.com** today!

For more information visit **softprocorp.com**  
or contact SoftPro Sales at **800-848-0143**  
or **sales@softprocorp.com**.





# MLTA Fall Convention

Building on the Past for Success in the Future



## Wine Me Up! Donate A Bottle of Wine or Two...

September 10-12, MLTA will be hosting the 2015 Fall Convention at The Grand Hotel & Spa, in Ocean City, MD. We anticipate more than 200 guests.



**Please support our event and the MLTA PAC by donating a bottle of wine!**

In exchange, you will receive some excellent community exposure and advertising. Stop by the Wine Me Up booth on the days of the event. For \$20, you can select one of the covered bottles. It's a grab bag for adults! The funds raised from Wine Me Up will go to the MLTA PAC.

**Bring your bottle to the Convention – or – we will gladly pick up your bottle of wine.**

Please contact Theresa.Ramond@stewart.com or call 410-581-4228. We will make arrangements to pick up your donation if you are not attending the Convention. If you have any questions, please contact Theresa.Ramond@stewart.com.



Thank you for supporting the MLTA PAC! Wine Me Up!

**Register for the Convention:**

<http://mdlta.org/Portals/0/Convention/MLTA%20FC%20regis%202015.pdf>

**Enter a chance to win an IPAD Mini! All you need to do is show up for our educational events.**

Do you do business in **Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia**? Join our Title Industry experts for great presentations comparing underwriting issues and how they differ.

*Elisabeth Zajic, Esquire, First American Title Insurance Company*

*William O'Connell, Esquire, First American Title Insurance Company*

*Mark Heacock, Esquire, North American Title Insurance Company*





## Are You Audit Ready?



The Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA), under COMAR 31.04.22.04, requires that Underwriters conduct an On-Site Review each year and submit an analysis of underwriting practices, claims, and escrow practices for an agency conducting business in Maryland.

The regulation requires underwriters to report on various activities of the business operations, including company Escrow Practices. Specifically, are you reconciling properly? Do you fund shortages timely? Are you preparing a Trial Balance, and does it agree with the reconciliation? Also required is verification that only licensed title insurance producers exercise control over trust money. (Section 10-121(a)(3) of the Insurance Article, Annotated Code of Maryland) Escrow compliance is addressed in ALTA Best Practices Pillar #2. So if you are Best Practices compliant, your escrow accounts should be in pristine order.

The On-Site Review determines whether the agent is in compliance with the title insurance underwriting standards in the

State. Specifically required is evidence of the buyer's right and opportunity to purchase owner's title insurance, written notice of the additional premium, and the buyer's determination. Are you making sure that your buyers sign a Statutory Notice and make the appropriate election? If not, this could be something that is reported to the MIA.

Compliance with the new on-site review may require you to evaluate your agency practices. Are you monitoring your escrow accounts? Do you escheat unclaimed funds to the State as required? Did you file your annual MAHT report as required by COMAR 31.16.03.06? The Annual On-Site Review is not optional. Your underwriter is required to report its findings. Take the time to review your practices, and make changes that are warranted.

### Jennifer L. Greenberg

Certified Land Title Professional  
Agency Administrator  
Old Republic National Title Insurance Co.



Join our Panel Discussion  
*CFPB – Where Are We Now?*

**BACK TO THE FUTURE**

September 10-12, Ocean City, Maryland

The poster features a red background with a yellow lightning bolt striking a black DeLorean car. The text is in white and yellow. A small logo is visible in the bottom left corner.



## Lobby Day



ALTA's 2015 Federal Conference and Lobby Day are officially in the books. This one really clicked. I heard great feedback from attendees about the engaging topics and speakers. We kept more than 230 title professionals engaged and entertained over the three day conference. But, more than that, our members have hit their stride on Capitol Hill and in more than 220 meetings. We connected well with members of Congress and their staff from 36 states, plus Washington, DC.

The primary focus during these meetings on the Hill was on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's TILA-RESPA Integrated Disclosure (TRID) rule. Title professionals asked members of Congress to support two main issues with respect to the bureau's mortgage disclosure rule. First, Lobby Day participants encouraged members of Congress to support legislation that would implement a hold-harmless period for TRID through the end of 2015. Participants also asked representatives to urge the bureau to amend the TRID rule to allow the title and settlement industry to accurately disclose the price of title insurance to consumers. Lastly, participants asked members of Congress to avoid changes that would negatively affect Americans' investments in housing and real estate when considering tax reform.



Prior to Lobby Day, we had an informative and productive Federal Conference. The conference kicked off with a reception and dinner: Title Industry Honors: Celebrating the Industry's Greatest Defenders. I would like to take this opportunity to brag about the impressive work our members have been doing over this past year to help promote the title insurance and real estate settlement industry.

The Title Industry Political Action Committee raised a record \$460,000 in 2014. This was done with the help of our outstanding TIPAC trustees, who volunteer their time to raise money for TIPAC

**- Michelle L. Korsmo, Chief Executive Officer**



# Why Join the Maryland Land Title Association?



Did you know that a trade association is:

a "voluntary association of business firms organized on geographic or industrial bases to promote and develop commercial and industrial opportunities, within its sphere of operation, to voice publicly the view of members on matters of common interest, or in some cases to exercise some measure of control over prices, output, and channels of distribution."

The point of joining a trade association is to expand your knowledge of your industry and your business, to create a network of other professionals within your industry in order to better develop your own business, and to advocate for your industry with the various governmental agencies and the public at large.

As a Trade Association, did you know that The Maryland Land Title Association (MLTA) does this for you?

1. We stay on top of the current events and judicial and legislative efforts that affect the way we conduct our business, and we make sure to disseminate that knowledge to our members.
2. We provide events to educate you on those issues that help you promote your business, conduct better business, and keep you compliant with all regulatory requirements.
3. We provide you with social and networking events where you can meet and network with others in the industry to develop those relationships that will assist you in providing better services to your clients and customers.
4. We give you a voice in Annapolis, on Capitol Hill, and with the general public to promote your business in a positive light.

It is not MLTA's intent to provide you with business leads or to provide you with employment services. However, you can actually create these things for yourself

when you get involved. When you attend our events and read our publications, you learn valuable information that will be useful in promoting your business to potential clients and customers. You also meet others within the industry upon whom you can rely in resolving business and title issues that help you service those clients and customers, as well as possibly provide you with the contacts to obtain employment when you see the need.

Our annual dues structure tends to be more affordable than most other associations because:

1. Our leadership is made up of member volunteers who give an average of 3-4 hours/month to the Association.
2. All of our events are organized by member volunteers, who provide you with our educational sessions, social events, and conventions.
3. We have one paid Administrator and no paid staff.
4. Our committee members give 1-2 hours/month on average to the Association.

Further, unlike other organizations that charge hefty attendance fees for their events in order to raise operating capital, our attendance fees are structured to cover the cost of the event. Yes, we sometimes make a modest income on our events, but most of our operating capital comes from your annual dues.

Yes, we want your annual dues to keep our organization running, and we want you to attend our events to help make them successful. We need you to volunteer your time to help us build a strong title and settlement industry in Maryland and to give us a stronger voice and a better presence throughout this great State of Maryland.

Active Membership Class A Corporate is \$400 and Individual is \$200. Associate Membership Class B Corporate is \$350 and Individual is \$150.

Do you want to find out more and discover who are our Members? Please visit our website: [www.MDLTA.org](http://www.MDLTA.org) or contact Margaret Webb at [MLTA@mdlta.com](mailto:MLTA@mdlta.com).