



Realtor of the Week



[Mike Dolan, Realty Executives Integrity, Hartland](#)

SERVING AS AN ADVOCATE FOR CLIENTS SUITS AGENT

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As Mike Dolan advanced to the corporate level within two Wisconsin insurance companies in a career that culminated with an executive position with CUNA Mutual Insurance Group, he found that he missed advocating for clients. When the CUNA division was sold and he again could serve an advocacy role, he turned to something that had interested him for many years; real estate.

Dolan had been an investor and owner of property for many years and in his earlier career in insurance, he used his role as a financial planner to advise his clients on taxes and other aspects of buying real estate. When it came time for a second career in 2006, he joined Realty Executives Integrity in Hartland.

"I always liked real estate and wanted to get out of that corporate environment to get back to working with individuals again. It really mirrors my background," he said.

Dolan enjoys blending the two approaches. "I use a multi-disciplinary approach, using data and delving deep to truly understand clients' needs, whether they're buying or selling properties."

The market conditions of the past few years have been challenging to all realtors, but Dolan has developed a niche that helped, along with some things he learned from family members. "I've been very fortunate and there have been a couple of things that I've been able to do. My mother was a teacher and my daughter is a teacher so I have this side of me that is very open to working with young, first-time homebuyers. I really learned a niche out here in Waukesha County with grant money that's available and the different financing programs available to help first-time homebuyers get into a home. Because of that and the first-time buyer tax credit, my practice actually flourished," he said.

He attributes part of his success to having a balanced practice – last year it was 51% from buyers and 49% from sellers.

Another aspect of selling real estate that is appealing to Dolan is the ability to advocate for non-profit groups, particularly those that benefit handicapped individuals. "I get to use my business to help these charities," he said.

"The quality of life and the opportunities made available to the people they serve has encouraged my wife and I to volunteer. For example, for many years I was the chairperson for the Steve Striker golf outing on behalf of Very Special Arts and we raised several hundred thousand dollars," he said.

Very Special Arts of Wisconsin is a group that uses the arts to "expand the capabilities, confidence and quality of life for children and adults with disabilities." Another group that Dolan is an advocate for is the Autism Society of Wisconsin. In fact, he's been named an official ambassador for both groups. He raises funds by writing into the contract that 5% of his commission on the transaction will go to that charity.

Dolan also teaches finances for high school students in Milwaukee Public Schools. He also helps his wife in her garden, listening to music and spending time with his two children. "I'm also an avid golfer," he said.

Being able to work with people brings agent to career in real estate.