

Golden Real Estate Is Taking Colorado Gives Day to the Next Level

Colorado Gives Day (Dec. 6th this year) has become a popular annual tradition, when it comes to supporting Colorado's non-profit community. The day is sponsored by a year-round website, www.ColoradoGives.org, which

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By JIM SMITH, Realtor®

was created in 2007 by the Community First Foundation, with support from Colorado based FirstBank. Over 2,000 Colorado charities with 501(c)(3) status (making donations to them tax-deductible) have registered with the organization and are listed on that website. Looking through the site, here are some of the organizations that speak to me and/or my broker associates at Golden Real Estate. Maybe they speak to you too, and you'll consider donating to them on Dec. 6 — or anytime, since the website is a year-round mechanism for charitable giving.

Housing & Homelessness:

- Habitat for Humanity
- Denver Rescue Mission
- Colorado Realtor Foundation
- Warren Village
- Brothers Redevelopment, Inc.
- Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
- Family Promise of Greater Denver

Clean Energy & Sustainability:

- Energy Resource Center
- Energy Outreach Colorado
- Colo. Renewable Energy Society
- Clean Energy Action

Other:

- El Porvenir
- Autism Society of Colorado
- Goodwill Industries of Denver
- Alzheimer's Association
- Christian Action Guild, Inc.
- The Action Center
- Golden Backpack Program
- Safehouse Denver, Inc.
- Urban Peak Denver
- Senior Support Services
- The Gathering Place
- Family Tree, Inc.
- Golden Civic Foundation
- Denver Dumb Friends League
- Foothills Animal Shelter
- Golden Schools Foundation

The website makes it easy to give online and only charges participating organizations 2% of each donation to cover credit card and other fees and to keep the website sustainable.

Golden Real Estate wants to assist you in supporting these or any of the 2,000-plus other organizations listed on www.ColoradoGives.org.

Here's how we propose to do that:

If you agree to use Golden Real Estate in the sale or purchase of real estate anytime in the next 13 months — not just now — **we will donate 10% of our earned commission to the charity you name.** The only requirement is that

you contact us before Dec. 31, 2016, and that you mention this offer and indicate which charity you'd like to receive our donation. The donation will be made in your honor.

The real estate doesn't have to be in the metro area, or even in Colorado. If we earn a referral fee by hooking you up with a Realtor to buy or sell elsewhere, we'll donate 10% of that fee.

Registering for this offer does not obligate you to actually buy or sell any real estate. It simply assures us that you will use Golden Real Estate **when and if** you buy or sell real estate under the agreement, and it assures **you** that we will give 10% of our commission to the charity you have selected. Our commitment to do so will be in writing under "Additional Provisions" in the registration agreement you sign. That agreement will expire on Dec. 31, 2017.

Giving 10% of earned commissions to charity is not new for me. For my first five years as a Realtor, I pledged 10% of **all** my earned commissions to **Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver**, which generated about \$100,000 for that organization. I still support Habitat for Humanity, although not at that level. However, Habitat is included in this offer, so I will do so again if Habitat is the charity you choose. (Applies to any affiliate of Habitat, not just Denver.)

What's different now is that I'm opening this offer to **any** non-profit listed on www.ColoradoGives.org.

I already have a 10% commission donation arrangement in place with two non-profits. Both **Family Promise of Greater Denver** and the **Golden View Classical Academy** have informed their supporters that if they hire Golden Real Estate and mention them when they call me, that I will donate 10% of my earned commission. Family Promise already received \$565 this way. I encourage other non-profits to contact me about a similar agreement.

Giving back to the community is important to us at Golden Real Estate. Three of us are graduates of **Leadership Golden** (which, by the way, is also participating in Colorado Gives Day) and several of us volunteer for various organizations. Rita and I are both member of the **Golden Rotary Club**, and Rita has taken on several commitments with the club. I'm also a member of the **Golden Lions Club** and on the board of directors of the **Golden Chamber of Commerce**. I'm an honorary member of the **Golden Optimists** for hosting their **Bicycle Recycle Program** (also listed on ColoradoGives.org) in our parking lot

Associate **Kristi Brunel** actively volunteers at the **Christian Action Guild**, where she is also a board member. Speaking of that organization, our office at **17695 S. Golden Road** is once again a drop-off site for unwrapped toys. Help us fill our toy box by Dec. 16th. All toys go to the Christian Action Guild for their Dec. 17th "Santa Shop."

The Gas/Diesel Tax Should Be Replaced With a Vehicle Miles Traveled Tax

Last week, an editorial in the Denver Post supported CDOT's study of a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) tax. As the owner of two electric vehicles (EV's), I have enjoyed being a "freeloader" when it comes to the construction and maintenance of the roads and highways I use. At the same time, I realize that more and more EV's in service will mean that our already shrinking gas tax revenue for road construction and maintenance will virtually dry up in 10 to 20 years.

It's only right that all vehicles using our roads should pay their fair share of taxes to build and maintain those roads. At some point we freeloaders will outnumber those who are paying road taxes, and we and our vehicles will all suffer the consequences.

There will always be gasoline- or diesel-powered vehicles, but within a very few years 80% or more of Americans will realize that EV's economically meet their automotive needs. I predict that revenue from fuel taxes will decline by 5% to 10% per year for the next decade. That means that within two to three years, the funding crisis will become apparent enough that all legislative bodies, including Congress, will be forced to consider alternatives to the gas/diesel tax.

A VMT tax is not hard to implement, but it should be implemented on the federal level first, because we can't adopt a VMT tax without eliminating the gas tax. The VMT tax will be easy to collect via our tax returns. Tax payers would declare how many miles they traveled along with the make and model of their vehicle. They could understate their miles traveled, but will not understate it so much that they trigger an audit. The tax will still generate the revenue that is needed.

Learn About "8 Weeks to Wellness"

There's a free informational session about this program **Dec. 7, 6:30pm**, at **Balance Wellness Center**, 755 Heritage Road, Golden. Rita and I recommend it! Info at **303-215-0390**.



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