

# Whiskers worked wonders

Agents sprout facial hair in the name of a worthy cause. By CASSANDRA DE WIND

**IF** you thought your local Peard Real Estate sales representative looked a little different last month, you were right.

Staff from the Scarborough, Joondalup and Cottesloe offices decided to go back to their roots and grew moustaches to raise money for the Movember Foundation – an annual month-long event aimed at increasing awareness for men's health.

Peard Real Estate Group chief executive Peter Peard said funds raised for Movember were shared equally between programs targeting prostate cancer and male depression.

"These funds are committed to the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and beyondblue – the national depression initiative and the Movember Foundation," he said.

"Together, the three channels work to ensure that Movember funds support a broad range of innovative, world-class programs in the fields of research, education, support and awareness."

The three offices raised more than \$1500 for the charity, with male staff joining thousands of men around Australia, sprouting beards and moustaches throughout November.



*Moustache appeal: Marcus Lord, Sam Mannino, David Lynch, Rodney Deville and Kristian Jeromson.*

Peard West Coast director and Movember participant David Lynch said the initiative was a great event.

"Growing a moustache for Movember was a simple and effective way of raising awareness of men's health issues as well as raising funds for this charity," he said.

"This was only our first year that we were involved with Movember and we were delighted with the results.

"Next year we plan to have all our eight Perth offices participate so we can raise even more money for men's health." ■

# Boutique agency offers referral incentives

Thinking outside the square is par for the course at Brooke Stone. By CASSANDRA DE WIND

**IT'S** not easy being a boutique-styled real estate agency, but Brooke Stone Real Estate in Joondalup utilises its small size to its advantage.

Although several major real estate companies approached the award-winning business to join its franchise, Brooke Stone remains an independent agency catering to customers along Perth's northern suburbs and coastal stretch with a strong



*Director Darryl Flaherty.*

commitment to placing the customer first.

Director Darryl Flaherty said the company used innovative and creative approaches to market their name against the giants of the real estate industry.

"Too much control goes to the directors in the eastern states, so we prefer to remain small but independent," he said.

"Brooke Stone have very definite and individual ideas on marketing and do not want to have to 'toe the company line'."

The company recently introduced an exclusive referral incentive, which promises a \$1000 settlement reward for each referral, as well as another \$250 into a "special bonus account" held in the name of the referrer.

A further \$1000 is paid at settlement of each subsequent referral, with another \$250 paid into the bonus account. Mr Flaherty said people could earn up to \$5000 "just for being social and a good listener".

"The referral club is proving very successful in directing new listings to their sales and property management departments.

"We have now introduced – probably for the first time in Australia – the idea that the owners of every 12 properties sold are placed in a draw to win one of 12 prizes. Everyone wins a prize."

Prizes range from a holiday for two to Paris or London with return air fares and accommodation to gift vouchers. ■

## How to maximise your investment



By Brett White  
RE/MAX EXTREME

**MANY** new investors make the decision to save money by managing their own investment property.

They work on the assumption that once they have selected and installed a tenant, the real work is done.

Do they, in fact, 'save money' as they intended?

Once they start looking after the property on a day-to-day basis, most investors realise they do not have the level of expertise required to maximise income and minimise expenses.

They realise they cannot do the work cost-effectively, and that tenancy legislation is best left to the experts.

Most novices need to spend a disproportionate amount of time making sure they get it right.

Even then, they worry that they have not thought of everything.

Most find it an enormous relief to hand over to an expert, who has the up-to-date legal knowledge to prevent problems developing.

Most investors report an increase in their net income as well as in their leisure time.

Happily, most people hand over to an agent before things go wrong.

They realise that staying up-to-date with week-to-week fluctuations in the rental market is difficult for those not in the business.

It takes a lot longer for trends to become apparent to people who are looking after just one or two properties.

Do-it-yourself investors do all the work themselves and it may still cost them money in higher vacancies.

It's also very hard to keep a distance from demanding tenants when there is no third party to liaise.

Communication and arbitration is an area where the objectivity of a third party is essential. Dialogue via a third party minimises income-reducing anger and conflicts. ■

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