

HOUSECALLS

Gabe's September 2017 Stuart Florida Real Estate HouseCalls



Don't forget Grandparents Day

Each year, the second Sunday in September is recognized as Grandparents Day. This year, it's on the 10th. It's the time to give them a card or gift, to visit, or to call them on the telephone.

For adult grandchildren, grandparents can be great sources of information. They've lived life and learned many things. Their knowledge and experience is a valuable asset you can draw from. Sometimes they can make just a simple statement that's loaded with the truth.

Today's grandparents are young. The average age for first-time grandparents today is about 48. While

that may seem infinitely aged to kids and young adults, those grandparents, unlike the oldsters of yore, are still busy and in the workforce. For kids, it is probably the great-grandparents who have lived the longest and now have time to teach and reminisce.



How Does a Real Estate Agent Help Sell My Home?

The data tell the story: A real estate agent can sell your house faster and for a higher price than you would get by selling it on your own.

In fact, according to the National Association of Realtors, properties sold by an agent sold for \$41,000 more. Owner-sold properties sold for \$174,900 in 2012 while agent-sold properties averaged \$215,000.

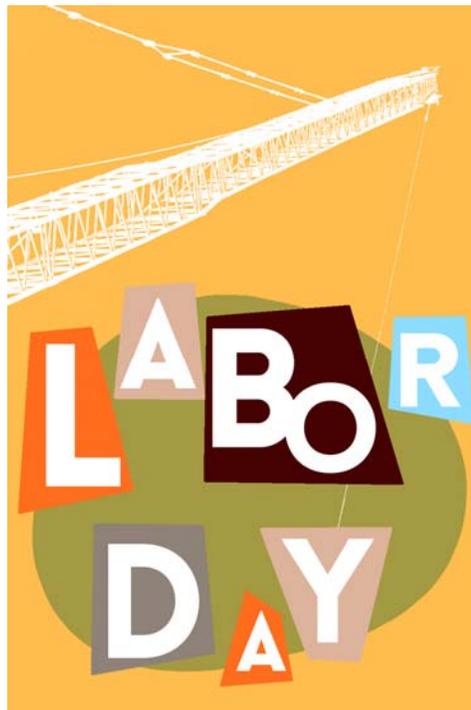
People are getting the message.

The number of people attempting to sell their own homes dropped from 20 percent to 9 percent during the last decade.

No wonder. The legal paperwork and contracts are complicated today and 19 percent say they have problems understanding how to draw up contracts and legal documents.

About 15 percent of sellers without an agent have problems getting the right price for the property and another 15 percent are confused about what fix-ups will make their property reach its full sales potential.

Professional agents simply have an advantage in this area. A professional agent is familiar with the prices of similar homes in your area and can help you adjust the asking



price higher or lower. Either way, the property will sell faster if the price is right. Real estate agents are good at pricing because they remove themselves from the emotional aspects of selling.

Taking the misery out of finding a buyer is one of a real estate agent's great services. You won't be bothered by odd telephone

calls and obvious "lookers" who just want to see your place. It will only be shown to serious and qualified buyers.

Marketing is a big part of the agent's job. He or she will photograph the home and advertise it at no cost to you. It will be included in the Multiple Listing Service so anyone in the country can see it.

Handling the volume of paperwork involved in a closing is part of the agent's job. Today, some purchase agreements are 10 pages long. Add to that the federal, state, and local disclosure papers. The agent can provide a list of professionals you can choose from whose services will be needed to close the deal.

Are you a buyer?

If you want to buy a home, don't just call the number on the sales sign and expect to make your best deal. Without an agent, a buyer has no leverage. It would be like going to court and letting the other guy's lawyer represent you both.

Agents also help by giving buyers more choices, finding properties that fit their needs, and price range, saving a great deal of time and trouble. After that comes the price negotiating, helping to find financing, and everything to do with the closing. For that, buyers need someone on their side who is experienced at negotiating.

Ask the Expert



We're thinking that buying a duplex would be a good idea. What do you think?

Buying a duplex is an excellent way to build equity and reduce taxes, as long as you live in the property, as opposed to being an investor. The income you receive will pay all or part of your mortgage.

For example, suppose you buy a duplex using an FHA loan. You put 3.75 percent down on the \$200,000 property on a 30-year note. At 4 percent interest, your payment would be about \$1,073, slightly more or less depending on various factors. The duplex then pays all or part of your note. There are certain tax advantages to owning a duplex since some of the interest you pay on the mortgage is deductible from income. There could also be a depreciation deduction.

Duplex buyers have to meet the standard guidelines for FHA loans and conventional mortgages. The best rates go to borrowers with credit scores of 740 or above. FHA loan requirements for single-family homes and multifamily homes are similar, but borrowers cannot have a non-occupying co-signer for an FHA mortgage on a multifamily property.

Success Through Being a Generalist

Everyone knows what it means to specialize in a particular field but it might not be as common to think about what it means to be a generalist.

Forbes magazine uses an excellent analogy from the animal kingdom in which they examine koalas and mice.

Koalas must have a specific diet, climate, and access to trees in order to survive and thrive. Mice, on the other hand, can survive just about anywhere that there is access to edible food. Although koalas do well when the situation is ideal, disruption can lead to disaster while the mice will simply move on to somewhere else.

Much like the animals, people often fill these same roles during their lives in the way they approach their careers and personal lives. As the Harvard Business Review explains, the past several decades have seen a marked increase in the amount of specialists flooding the job market because, for years, "expert" status has assured more money and better career chances. They argue that this era

may be drawing to a close, however, as it will take a generalist familiar in a variety of fields to be able to connect individual pieces into a big picture of the modern world economy.

For a given business, having a team of people highly trained in one specific area will be extremely inflexible if it comes time to head in a new direction or otherwise respond to trends in the market. These individuals would have to be retrained which takes time and effort. On the other hand, generalists can not only react more nimbly, but also tend to predict those trends better than the experts. According to a study of professional forecasters, non-experts in a field were more likely to predict the future than the experts; which shows how a narrow viewpoint can be blinding.

While it will probably always be useful for a person's surgeon to be highly trained in their area of expertise during an operation, it might take a generalist to understand why the surgery is needed in the first place.

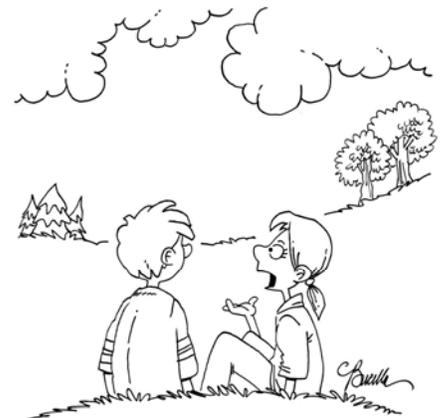


Debt-to-income ratios for conventional financing cannot exceed 45 percent, with slightly looser guidelines for FHA loans.

FHA borrowers can use gift money for all of their down payment, while conventional borrowers must use some of their own savings.

For young people who have not been homeowners, buying a duplex is a good way to get started in real estate. After owning the property for a few years, their savings could add up to the amount needed for a down payment on another home or rental property.

A caution, however. You will be in the rental business and this is usually not a walk-in-the-park. You assume all the liability associated with having a renter. You'll want to maintain a good property to attract a good renter. But if the renter damages your property or doesn't keep it up, it usually is your financial problem.



"Which one stores our computer data—the cloud that looks like a kitty or the one that looks like a pony?"

Origins of The Rule: *No white after Labor Day*

Don't wear white after Labor Day? Famed fashionista Coco Chanel never bought that rule. She wore white year round.

But many have long accepted that caution as fashion law.

Among upper classes in the late 1800s, white was reserved mainly for resort, sport and summer wear. When Labor Day became a federal holiday in 1894, the fashion powers-that-be accepted the day as the end of summer and, thus, the end of white clothing. Those rules eventually filtered down from the swells to everyone else and by the 1950s women's magazines were repeating the rule.

There might have been a practical reason for the code, according to wisegeek.com. White clothing, especially shoes, were easily soiled in slushy winter and rainy weather, especially on streets that were filled with horses.

Even though the dress rules have loosened significantly since the 1970s, white wear still suggests a feel of vacation or non-working time, especially for men.



Ravens in Arizona - By Jon Sullivan (PDPhoto.org) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Those incredibly clever ravens

Humans are capable of planning for the future, though some might think it is a talent rarely used. But humans aren't the only creature on earth that can do this: Ravens can, too.

The large, black-feathered bird with the big beak has long been known for its intelligence. A recent study, published in the July 2017 issues of the journal *Science*, shows the bird is not only intelligent, but wise.

The study, by Lund University in Sweden, trained ravens to get a tasty reward (a bit of dog food) by using a tool to open a box. Later, the box was removed and the ravens were offered a choice of three possibilities: a treat (but a less desirable one); a variety of interesting items; the tool to open the box. In 86 percent of the cases, the ravens chose the tool and, when the box was returned to them 15 minutes later, they used it to open the box.

The ravens were also taught to barter for treats using a blue cap as currency.

Interestingly, great apes have also demonstrated the ability to barter and plan for the future.

College football wags invent silly chants

The colorful spectacle of the college football game, marked by peppy students and high stepping bands, is usually completed by a sometimes irreverent cheer section.

The cheers and jeers usually reflect the school's reputation and fall into two main categories: Intellectual and hostile.

At the top of the list are the Quaker schools. Founded by pacifists who reject violence and are motivated by politics, Quaker school cheers are both hostile and intellectual plus political.

The classic, used by every Quaker college:

Fight, fight, inner light!

Kill, Quakers, Kill!

Knock 'em down, Beat 'em senseless!

Do it 'til we reach consensus!

On the more hostile side:

Blood makes grass grow!

Kill, Quakers, kill!

On the political side:

Stop multinational corporations
from raping third-

world countries.

Go team.

On the intellectual side:

Fight exuberantly!

Fight exuberantly!

Compel them to relinquish the ball!

On the nerd side of things

we have the appropriately named Great Nerd Chant. Used by the University of Chicago and Swarthmore, among others:

Pericles, Sophocles, Peloponnesian War

X-squared, Y-squared, H₂SO₄

Cosine, tangent, secant, line

Three point one four one five nine.

On the snarky intellectually hostile side, attributed to the University of Chicago:

Two, Four, Six, Eight

God is dead and Nietzsche's great!

Kant, Hegel, Marx, Spinoza

Come on team, hit 'em in the nosa.



Clean your house or get fat?

Hate to dust? Want to stay a size 8? You better get that dusting done, pronto.

So concludes a Duke University study that says house dust contains endocrine-disrupting chemicals that interfere with hormone production. The EDCs cause fat cells to mature and acquire more triglycerides, a type of body fat, and that causes weight gain.

Just 3 micrograms of dust could trigger fat production, according to Christopher Kassotis, lead researcher in the study.

The study, published in the journal *Environmental Science and Technology*, left room for new research on the subject.

September 2017



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 LABOR DAY	5	6	7	8 Int'l. Literacy Day	9
10 Grandparents Day	11	12	13	14	15	16 Oktoberfest (Start)
17	18 Nat'l. Cheeseburger Day	19 Talk like a Pirate Day	20	21	22 AUTUMN BEGINS	23
24	25	26	27 World Tourism Day	28	29	30 Yom Kippur

Martin County Single Family Homes July 2017

Click on the Image for the full report

Monthly Market Detail - July 2017
Single Family Homes
Martin County



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Summary Statistics	July 2017	July 2016	Percent Change Year-over-Year
Closed Sales	220	220	0.0%
Paid in Cash	70	74	-5.4%
Median Sale Price	\$355,000	\$320,000	10.9%
Average Sale Price	\$492,218	\$459,195	7.2%
Dollar Volume	\$108.3 Million	\$101.0 Million	7.2%
Median Percent of Original List Price Received	94.2%	94.4%	-0.2%
Median Time to Contract	48 Days	65 Days	-26.2%
Median Time to Sale	98 Days	110 Days	-10.9%
New Pending Sales	230	188	22.3%
New Listings	283	234	20.9%

View all Market Reports for [Martin County](#), [Saint Lucie County](#), and [Florida \(statewide\)](#)



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