

HOUSECALLS

BlueWater Realty Services LLC - 1121 SE Ocean Blvd, Stuart - 772-323-6996



Gabe Sanders

Will you pay for super batteries?

If you have solar panels on your house, Tesla Motors CEO Elon Musk wants to sell you a battery as a lifestyle choice.

Demand for Powerwall, a 220-pound solar battery designed to hang on a garage wall, has been strong. Musk says they have received 38,000 pre-sale reservations from around the world for about 50,000 batteries priced at \$3,000 and up.

The idea of independent power has wide appeal for homeowners who are tired of paying the electric company.

It may be affordable for homes that already

have solar panels on the roof.

But if you are starting from scratch in the U.S., the cost of panels and batteries could add up to \$98,000, according to an analysis by Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF). And the equipment would rarely be used to its full potential.

"The battery-in-every-home idea, not only do I think it doesn't make economic sense, I don't think it's necessary," said BNEF analyst Brian Warshay.

The battery is garage infrastructure, not something you can fiddle with and fall for like a phone or a car.

Real estate market looks hot this summer

Good news in employment has kicked the real estate market into high gear this summer.

The numbers say it's a great time to sell a home and demand is high.

In the latest figures available, May sales of existing homes climbed 5.1 percent, the third month in a row that sales exceeded 5 million homes.

Home sellers are finding that prices are up nearly 8 percent in the last 12 months. In many markets this is because there just enough homes on the market to meet demand. So prices are being nudged up.

Rising prices brings some cheer to the market because it means that fewer people owe more on their homes than the home value. In fact, the number of people upside down in their mortgages has dropped 19 percent in the last year.

For some homeowners, this could mean it's time to go back in the market and sell.

Meanwhile for buyers, mortgages are still very low. Most 30-year fixed rate loans have been just above 4 percent this summer. But that was a slight increase from the dramatic lows of 3.59 percent -- those rates have been offered for more than four years.

Confidence and low interest rates put buyers in the mar-

ket for their first homes. About 32 percent of homes sold in May were to first-time buyers. That is up from 27 percent a year ago, according to economists.

Low supply: Act fast

With supply of homes for sale down, buyers have to focus on their goal, making sure to get pre-approved for a loan, and be prepared to make a deal. As interest rates make a slow climb up, people looking for a house to become their home should move quickly. Even a 1 percent rise in the interest rate could slash buying power. Interest rates moving up 1 percent means that a buyer once approved for \$150,000 might only be able to spend \$135,000. So if your heart is in a home, acting quickly is crucial.

Mortgages are available

New data by lenders shows that some consumers overestimate what they need to qualify for a home loan. Two-thirds think they need a credit score over 780, which is considered excellent, but a credit score of 660 or above is considered good. Some 36 percent think they need 20 percent down, but this is usually not the case.



Ask the Expert



Beverly Bray

We're buying a home, but wonder: What kind of mortgage should we get?

My favorite is the 20-year fixed interest rate loan. The payments are somewhat higher than the 30-year, but not as much higher as you might think. And it pays off 10 years sooner, which saves a ton of interest.

Types of mortgage loans

Conforming Loans. If the loan is for \$417,000 or less and meets requirements set forth by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, it is considered a conforming loan. A loan amount above \$417,000, in most areas, is considered a "jumbo loan."

Jumbo loans. They may carry a higher interest rate. Sometimes simply dropping your loan amount a few thousand dollars can lower your mortgage rate tremendously, so keep that in mind.

Government loans. They include the FHA loan backed by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Another government loan is the VA loan, backed by the Department of Veteran Affairs. The maximum loan amount varies.

The 30-year fixed loan. It's simple. They are based on a 30-year amortization, and the interest rate, and payments will stay the same for 30 years. You will also need to pay taxes and in-

How to Keep Your House Cool Without AC

Want summer comfort but hate the AC? Follow these tips, and you'll keep your house cool without frosty air conditioning. You don't have to switch on the air conditioner to get a big chill this summer. These tips will help you keep your house cool without AC, which will save energy (and avoid AC wars with your family).

Block that Sun!

When sunlight enters your house, it turns into heat. You'll keep your house cooler if you reduce solar heat gain by keeping sunlight out.

Close the drapes: Line them with light-colored fabric that reflects the sun, and close them during the hottest part of the day. Let them pillow onto the floor to block air movement.

Add awnings: Install them on south- and west-facing windows to reduce solar heat gain by up to 77%, says the U.S. Department of Energy. Make your own by tacking up sheets outside your windows and draping the ends over a railing or lawn chair.

Install shutters: Interior and exterior shutters not only reduce heat gain and loss, but they also add security and protect against bad weather. Interior shutters with adjustable slats let you control how much sun you let in.

Apply high-reflectivity window film: Install energy-saving window films on east- and west-facing windows, which will keep you cool in summer, but let in warming sun in the winter. Mirror-like films are more ef-

fective than colored transparent films. Here's more information about energy-efficient window coverings.

Open Those Windows

Be sure to open windows when the outside temperature is lower than the inside. Cool air helps lower the temps of everything -- walls, floors, furniture -- that will absorb heat as temps rise, helping inside air say cooler longer.

To create cross-ventilation, open windows on opposite sides of the house. Good ventilation helps reduce VOCs and prevents mold.

Fire Up Fans

Portable fans: At night, place fans in open windows to move cool air. In the day, put fans where you feel their cooling breezes (moving air evaporates perspiration and lowers your body temperature). To get extra cool, place glasses or bowls of ice water in front of fans, which will chill the moving air.

Ceiling fans: For maximum cooling effect, make sure ceiling fans spin in the direction that pushes air down, rather than sucks it up. Be sure to turn off fans when you're not in the room, because fan motors give off heat, too.

Whole house fans: A whole-house fan (\$1,000 to \$1,600, including install) exhausts hot inside air out through roof vents. Make sure your windows are open when you run a whole-house fan.

urance.

The 15-year fixed loan. This works the same way but for 15 years. The payment will be higher, but you will pay less interest and gain more home equity each month.

The ARM (adjustable rate mortgage). It's an attractive option. You'll make much lower monthly mortgage payments during the initial period, but you'll be paying higher interest rates after 5, 7 or 10 years. Planning a future monthly budget around an ARM can be challenging unless your income has increased.

An ARM is designed for buyers who can be more flexible. One example, if you have to move to another state or buy a different home, you won't have paid as much toward equity.

© Randy Glasbergen / glasbergen.com



"I'm looking for an old mansion that has a hidden underground cave filled with high-tech crime fighting gadgets."

To new graduates: Advice for living, finding a job

A Great Job case study:

Robert the photographer

This is a true story of a career path of a man we'll call Robert. He graduated as an Journalism major from a small private college in the south with no way to pay the rent. But, today, at 53 he has worked for NASA, Microsoft and the United States Air Force.

How did a young guy with nothing end up a secure, professional family man? Luck and versatility were key, he says.

He started out just following his interest in photography. He met other photographers and one day, in the parking lot of a Houston grocery store, he ran into a friend, a photographer for NASA. When a position opened, the guy remembered Robert. He got the job.

Soon Robert used his 7th grade knowledge of programming to write little applications for scheduling jobs. His apps were appreciated and he switched to programming.

Later a friend got a job at Microsoft and told Robert about another position opening. Three times, Robert went through the daunting, comprehensive day-long Microsoft interview process. The third time he got a job that combined both programming and writing. From there he moved to programming and writing books about programming.

His versatility made him valuable.

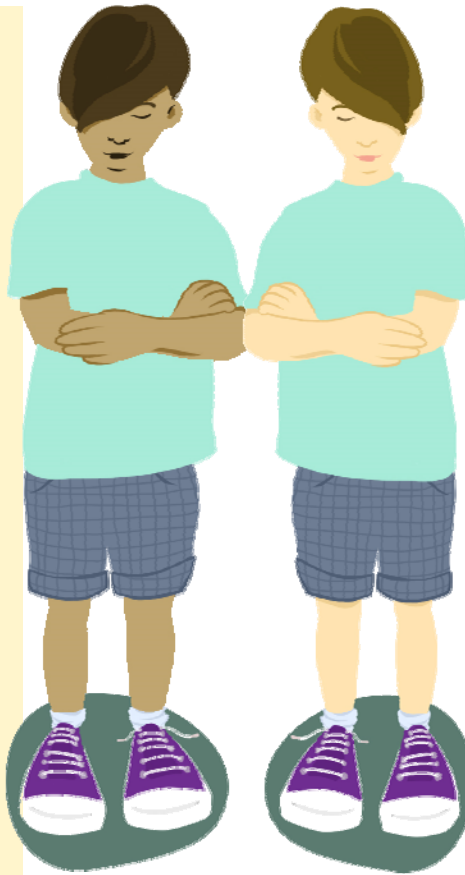
"I've been able to combine skills in each job. Programmer to writer, writer to programmer, and writer and photographer," he said.

His advice for new grads?

* **Keep your Internet clean and professional.** Don't have any frat pictures or blatantly offensive blogs. Those are forever.

* **Do everything.** On a new job, try to do everything once and almost never turn down tasks. It makes you a more versatile team member, and it gains a good reputation.

* **Network.** This is as simple as joining a professional club and getting active.



Love your family.

Respect those around you by giving them your best. Be helpful, accountable and reliable.

Go to work and work hard.

The work you do shows love for family. All work is valuable and doing your best at work, no matter how humble, earns respect. It opens doors. It builds a foundation for life.

Pay your bills.

Live up to your agreements. Live within your means. Be a person others trust.

Plan for the future.

Reserve some money for emergencies; they are inevitable. Always look for new opportunities. Remember you will not always be young; plan for your old age.

Make your own solutions.

Don't look to others to solve your problems. Don't blame them for your problems. Find your own solutions.

Luck is for everyone, researcher says

You are about to walk out the door and you have a nagging feeling. You forgot something.

You turn back and remember you had taken your credit card out of your wallet. Lucky you remembered!

But wait. You don't turn back. You get to the store. No credit card. Bad luck!

In fact, according to luck researcher Richard Wiseman, being lucky is often a matter of listening to your gut.

Lucky people tend to be more

open to new experiences. They tend not to stick stubbornly to routine ideas and behaviors.

Wiseman also found that lucky people tended to be more relaxed so they could notice unexpected patterns and events. So the lucky people tended to make the most of their opportunities.

Another factor: Lucky people thought they were lucky. That made a difference in how people eval-

uated the outcome of events. If they didn't get what they wanted, they felt they avoided bad luck. If they did, they were lucky.



Featured Listing

Spacious Palm City Pool Home

Spacious 4BR, 3.5 Bath pool home. Perfect home for those looking to live in large rooms on an over an acre lot with minimum HOA rules and low fees. This home features a huge family/great room with exposed wooden beams with a fireplace and a wet bar. There's a large den/office that leads into a spacious master bedroom. The master bath has dual vanities on granite counters with separate tub and shower as well as a private entrance to the spacious back yard. The kitchen has been recently upgraded to granite counters and mostly stainless appliances as well as new tile. There are 3 additional bedrooms one of which has an ensuite bath. Large screened lanai and an oversized pool.

Offered for \$545,000.



Martin County Single Family Homes Report for June 2015

Click on the Image for the full report

Monthly Market Detail - June 2015
Single Family Homes
Martin County

FloridaRealtorsSM
The Voice for Real EstateSM in Florida

Summary Statistics	June 2015	June 2014	Percent Change Year-over-Year
Closed Sales	322	250	28.8%
Paid in Cash	102	103	-1.0%
New Pending Sales	286	280	2.1%
New Listings	322	330	-2.4%
Median Sale Price	\$298,000	\$315,000	-5.4%
Average Sale Price	\$460,188	\$457,788	0.5%
Median Days on Market	50	61	-18.0%
Average Percent of Original List Price Received	93.0%	91.8%	1.3%
Pending Inventory	479	426	12.4%
Inventory (Active Listings)	1,038	1,391	-25.4%
Months Supply of Inventory	4.5	7.2	-37.7%

View all Market Reports for Martin County, Saint Lucie County, and Florida (statewide)

Click on the name of the region above to view the reports.



Disclaimers: All real estate information deemed reliable but not guaranteed and should be independently verified. All properties are subject to prior sale, change, or withdrawal. Neither listing broker(s) nor this company shall be responsible for typographical errors, misinformation, misprints and shall be held totally harmless. If your property is currently listed with another real estate broker, this is not a solicitation of that listing.