

Gabe's December 2013 Housecalls

The Gabe Sanders Real Estate Team 2 N Sewalls Point Road, Stuart, FL 34996 - 772-323-6996



Gabe Sanders

Sell your old iPhone

If you get a new iPhone for Christmas, what are you going to do with the old one? Don't stuff it in a drawer when you can sell it for actual cash.

You can sell it on eBay or Craigslist, but many folks don't want to take the time to deal with an auction.

Websites such as NextWorth and Gazelle will buy it directly, offering a bid with a 30-day

locked guarantee, depending on the model.

Walmart, Best Buy, RadioShack and Target accept trade-ins for credit.

Even Apple has joined the reselling craze with its recycling program.

Gazelle offers \$340 for the previous model iPhone 5 in good condition, according to USA TODAY.

Your house looks pretty at Christmas: Why not show it?

Family, cheer, warmth these are some of the memories and feelings the holidays conjure up and they are, not coincidentally, the best possible feelings to create when showing your home.

Holidays offer the seller so many options for making a home perfect for the buyer: Special lights, holiday smells, cozy fireplaces, and festive decorations.

Remember, though, the motto for sellers is 'stay simple.'

* Use modest lighting and decorations inside and out.

* If you have a Christmas tree, consider buying one size smaller than you usually buy. Arrange a few simple gifts with matching wrapping paper under the tree. Make sure there is no extravagant display of gifts or toys under the tree. Store furniture that is displaced by the tree.

* For all decorations, smaller and simpler is better.

* Favor natural materials such as real pine branches and pine cones for wreaths and other decorations, and shun plastics or bright, big decorations. Avoid blowup decorations outside.



* Decorate your home with fragrance. Bake bread or cookies. If this is impossible, try light holiday fragrances such as vanilla or cinnamon. Avoid heavy pine smells.

* Clean thoroughly your fireplace and make sure a small, crackling fire is going during walk-throughs. But pay special attention to the temperature of your home. Make sure the home is lightly warm, not so toasty that potential buyers can't stand to wear their coats.

* Make sure all your window blinds and curtains are open

for day showings. This means the windows themselves must be perfectly clean.

What type of mortgage do you advise?

There's no easy answer to your question. To get the most attractive rate and terms on your next home loan, you'll need to compare options on several types of mortgages. Since each mortgage product is designed to meet specific needs, you and the lender will evaluate your particular wishes and circumstances in order to find the product that is right for you.

Interest rates are determined by the term of the loan, the amount of the down payment, and your credit score, among other factors.

Fixed-rate home loans are typically available with terms of 15, 20, 30 or 40 years. Generally, lower interest rates are offered for mortgages with shorter terms.

Adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) have a variety of terms. They include a lower up front rate, but that interest rate will increase during the life of the loan according to your contract or as market interest rates change.

Compare rates from several lenders. Whether you are refinancing or searching for a new home loan. Only the lender you contact can give you the information you want. Often, your local bank or mortgage company will be your best choice.

Mortgage companies have a wide variety of loans. Remember that if you are paying less than 20 percent down, you'll also be paying for mortgage insurance.

FHA loans are fairly easy to get. While their mortgages haven't changed much, they do have their advantages:

They have less-stringent qualification and credit requirements, and the required down payment is lower as well.

The drawback is that they take longer to arrange and close than a loan from your local lender would.

It takes time and effort to evaluate the market for what may be the largest purchase you'll ever make.

Short sales falling out of favor with lenders as prices surge

Short sales were all the rage in late 2011 and early 2012, but surging demand has loan servicers with distressed properties on their hands going back to traditional foreclosure auction sales and bank-owned sales, where cash is often king, according to the latest report from data aggregator RealtyTrac.

“The combination of rapidly rising home prices, along with strong demand from institutional investors and other cash buyers able to buy at the public foreclosure auction or an as-is REO home, means short sales are becoming less favorable for lenders,” said RealtyTrac Vice President Daren Blomquist in a statement.

Inventory shortages are part of the picture — last week Lender Processing Services reported that after 18 straight months of declines, U.S. foreclosure inventory is now at its lowest point since the end of 2008, falling nearly 30 percent from a year ago to 1.28 million in October.

RealtyTrac said short sales represented 5.3 percent of all sales in October, down from 6.3 percent in September and 11.2 percent at the same time a year ago. Foreclosure auction sales to third parties (a new category, separated out in the report for the first time) represented 2.5 percent of all sales, down from 2.8 percent in September but nearly twice the 1.3 percent seen at the same time a year ago.

Sales of “real estate owned” (REO) homes repossessed by banks accounted for 9.6 percent of October sales, up from 8.9 percent in September and 9.4 percent a year ago.

With banks favoring cash buyers, it's not surprising that cash sales represented 44.2 percent of all residential sales in October, up from 33.9 percent a year ago. Talk of institutional investors being scared away by rising prices appears to have been overstated, at least in some markets.

Tight inventories and rising home prices hampered home purchases in October, the National Association of Realtors reported last week.

Although the U.S. is still seeing “significant supply shortages,” inventories are “stabilizing” compared to the dramatic annual declines seen earlier this year, realtor.com said in releasing October data.



"You're in luck. It comes in Large, Extra Large and Bowl Full Of Jelly."

The adventurer and

The Christmas Flower

Born to wealth in South Carolina, Joel Roberts Poinsett traveled the world. In 1806 in Baku, Azerbaijan, Poinsett speculated that pools of petroleum might be used for fuel. In Russia, he told the empress that her country could not industrialize so long as serfs worked for free. In Persia, he told a great Khan about Thomas Jefferson. Then in 1825, Roberts, an avid botanist visited Taxco del Alarcon, south of Mexico City. There he saw for the first time the lovely, winter-blooming Flor de Noche Buena or Christmas flower. He sent samples back to the States where the flower immediately became popular. By 1836, the plant the Aztecs called cuetlaxochitl had another name: Poinsettia.

Prices for the Super Bowl will be Big Apple big

This year you can buy one ticket on the cushy club level seats at MetLife Stadium for the Super Bowl or you and the wife could fly to Paris and spend the weekend in a nice hotel.

About the same price.

Best not mention that to the wife.

But it's THE SUPER BOWL and it's in NEW YORK CITY, which is exactly why the National Football League officials say that tickets to this particular game are worth big Big Apple prices.

Compare: Club level seats in NYC with access to restaurants, \$2,600. Club level seats in New Orleans last year, \$1,250.

Why the price hike? Because there are more people with more money around New York City and the NFL can sell the tickets. That's the whole truth.

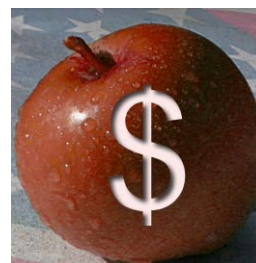
Since about 50 million people live within 200 miles of MetLife Stadium (compared with 6 million in New Orleans) many people won't mind paying more because they're likely to save money on flights and hotels.

Participating teams distribute 35 percent of the seats. The league itself controls 25 percent of the seats, which it often shares with corporate sponsors and partners. So a large proportion of those attending have their seats paid for by someone else.

In all, the executives say the average price of 39 percent of the 77,500 seats will cost \$1,000 or less. The lowest price seats will cost \$500, compared with \$600 previously.

Research shows that many \$600 tickets last year resold for \$2,000 on the secondary market. Seats near midfield went for up to \$6,100 and club seats changed hands for \$6,400, all of which are multiples of their face values.

For the New York Super Bowl, indoor suites with 30 seats each are already selling for \$500,000 and up depending on the location.



Men in tights and we are not talking Robin Hood

Om, I have an idea. Let's jump in our tights do a few asanas, then head down to the bar for some brews.

Cool. Namaste, dude.

Can you see the average guy and his boys taking up yoga?

Retailers can absolutely see men in tights, or at least yoga pants, and other yoga fans can too.

It's a fitness idea that is building steam.

Even though yoga is an ancient exercise developed by men, few men in the West do it.

According to Robert Sidoti, co-founder of Broga, yoga for men, one reason is that men think they have to be able to touch their toes to do yoga.

Not true, says Sidoti. Sidoti says most men have tight hamstrings, making toe-touching difficult. The Broga regimen uses a series of poses (asanas) that focus

on strengthening the back, shoulders, arms and chest.

The Broga program improves flexibility as a side benefit of its main focus on improving core strength.

The program is available in most major cities.

Also, in Broga, guys don't get that slightly out-of-place feeling they will probably have among 10 women and wafting incense.

The San Diego Padres do yoga twice a week as a team. So it can't be that sissy. The idea is

to build strength and balance. And they don't wear tights.

High-priced women's exercise retailer Lululemon now makes workout clothes for the regular guy with workout pants called Kung Fu priced



Featured Listings

Palm Cove Golf and Yacht Club

Live the good life in Palm Cove. Community marina, non-equity golf & river front clubhouse. Outstanding custom home built by McNamara, updated by current owner. Innovative design & attention to detail will captivate you. Large entry hall, formal dining room, wood paneled office/4th bdrm, bath. Open living room w/ wet bar, fireplace, brand new hardwood floors, tray ceiling, recessed lights. French doors to screened pool. covered lanai. Gourmet kitchen w/ stainless appliances, marble counters, pantry, center island. Two guest suites with baths. Over sized master includes large sitting area, tray ceiling, two walk in closets. Elegant marble master bath, double vanities. New roof, gutters, AC and freshly painted. Come and see this very special home.

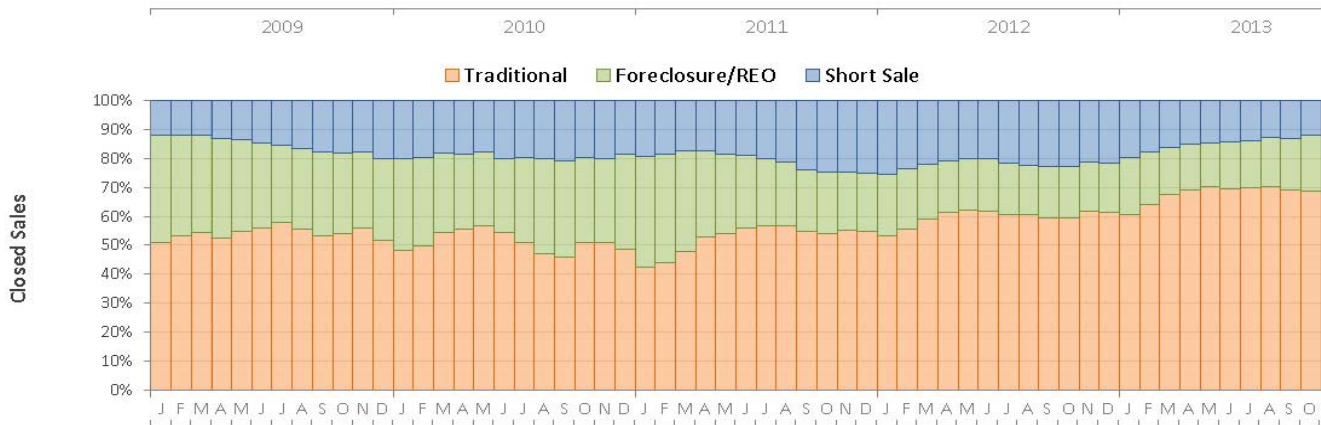
Offered for \$350,000

[Click here for more pictures and information](#)



Monthly Detail for October 2013 Single Family Home Sales for Florida

[Click Here for the full October 2013 Florida Single Family Market Data](#)



View **ALL** the Market Data for [Florida](#), [Martin County](#) and [Saint Lucie County](#) Here

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