

Gabe's May 2014

# HOUSECALLS



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Gabe Sanders

## Light bulbs go flat and wireless

Used to be the only choice in light bulbs was 100 watt or 60.

Now the light bulb market is like the soft drink market: an abundance of choices from diet to super charged caffeine.

The star today is the LED light bulb, which promises to last so long that, if you sell your house, take the light bulbs with you. You can have your regular LED bulb that you get for your sweet sixteen and trash when you go on social security. Or you can get an LED that responds to commands from your smartphone, should you still have your smartphone when you are on social

security.

But the Korean appliance company LG has introduced a new light source with the unlikely name of Organic Light Emitting Diodes.

These light bulbs are no longer bulbs but instead can be flattened and formed into a sheet. That means even wallpaper, for example, can be a source of light.

But it isn't just the shape and style of lighting, it is the whole concept that is changing. According to CNET, a 16-year-old might well grow up today to buy houses that no longer have light switches.

Everything will be wireless.

## Ready to sell?

### *Store the art, organize the closets*

No one gets offended when the real estate agent tells them to remove all personal pictures from end tables and coffee tables before they show their house.

The idea is that the home staged for sale should be, as much as possible, a blank canvas, ready for the new owner to paint. The home should be kept in such a way that the potential buyer does not get distracted by the decor. The home should look calm, simple, and cared for.

But when it comes to art, lots of home sellers balk at the idea of storing the paintings and statuary but it can be one of the most important things you do to sell your house.

A study by Duke University in 2011 showed that buyers remembered the art rather than the house and often tended to evaluate the house based on the art.

Every art collector knows that taste is an individual thing, so individual that a painting of an ocean could be thought of as elegant by one person, but tacky by another.

That framed print of Dogs Playing Pool looks hilariously appropriate in the game room. To homeowners. And to people they know. But to a stranger? Maybe not so much.

And what about nudes?

It's a fact that the subject of many a famous painting is un-

clothed or partially clothed. If you have an original Modigliani nude in the right property, some agents will still argue that it isn't in the right place in a sales setting.

Nude paintings usually come as a shock to home buyers no matter how tasteful and expensive the paintings are.

According to the Wall Street Journal, buyers may be less shocked by female nudes, but they are nearly universally put off by nude or nearly-nude paintings or fancy photographs of the homeowner. Buyers just don't want to know the seller that well.

Context might help. A bathroom or bedroom nude is better than a living room display.

In any case, sellers must be ready to abandon their love for the home they are selling and that includes the arrangement and decor.

Better to store art, which is as personal as your pictures of family and friends, and concentrate on making the closets flaw-



less.

If you really want your home to sell, make sure the closets are something every one CAN agree on: Multiple rods, drawers and cubby holes. Home buyers want to see a place where they can store their Manolo Blahnik heels -- or their Harley boots -- and, after all, do you really care which?

## Ask the expert



*We have a nice older home but wonder what updates we should make, any suggestions?*

There are many to choose from. Your first goal should be to make your home more comfortable and more convenient to live in. If you can do that, it will be more desirable to prospective buyers when you decide to sell.

Kitchen updates are a good place to start. They can be expensive but you could do some of the work yourself, like refinishing the kitchen cabinets with paint or stain. Of course, replacing the countertops and adding a great new faucet will bring you joy every day.

The project that causes the least mess and inconvenience is replacing the appliances with stainless steel models. They can be brought in and installed in a day with no mess involved.

The National Association of Home Builders reports that 86 percent of home buyers want an eat-in kitchen. If yours isn't spacious, think about knocking out a wall between the kitchen and dining room. It's a messy job and you'll have to refinish parts of the ceiling and walls, but it gives you much more space.

The association also says that 93 percent of home buyers want a laundry room, and they want it on the main floor, not upstairs. If yours is upstairs, con-

## We Now Offer Aerial Videos

We are very pleased to announce that the Gabe Sanders BlueWater Realty team is now able to offer aerial videos for most of our listings. We have acquired the use of a Phantom DJI 2 quad-copter (commonly referred to as a 'Drone' by the media).

Along with this hardware we've also acquired video editing software and have started to produce our listing videos. Currently we are still facing a steep learning curve, but here's a link to one of our first videos. Click on the image below to see the video.



As we roll out this new technology, clients of the BlueWater realty team will be treated to the latest state of the art marketing and listing displays. And unlike other firms, all of this is being produced in-house giving us total control.



sider bringing it down. If it's downstairs, bring it up. The cheapest way, stack to front loaders in a three by three foot space net to a bathroom. Note that some people do like to have the laundry upstairs in a bedroom or close by. It doesn't have to take up a whole room but it should have an area big enough for the washer/dryer.

And 90 percent of buyers want a linen closet of some size in the bathroom.

How about the windows in the living room? You can guess the approximate age of a home as you drive by and see the type of big window it has.

The current favorite is a side-by-side series of tall casement or fixed windows, which can also be gently bowed. Just call the window man. No work for you.



## Study: The hot hand in sports is real

*Three points!*

*He's got the ball again: Score!*

*And here's his third trip down and he scores!*

*He's on fire!*

In the television land, fans are cheering the shooter's hot hand. Meanwhile spoil sport smarty pants academics are shaking their heads and rolling their eyes: There is no such thing as a hot hand in basketball.

They say you might as well believe in a tooth fairy because you got a quarter under your pillow three times.

For at least 30 years, statisticians and researchers have studied streaks and pronounced them nothing more than people seeing patterns in random occurrences.

The coaches, players and fans always disagreed. According to psmag.com, when Boston Celtics coach Red Auerbach heard about the research in 1985 that dismissed the hot hand, he shrugged, "So he makes a study. Who cares?"



Now at last there is new research that has the pointy headed academics thoughtfully packing their pipes.

Three Harvard students have analyzed 70,000 NBA shots and concluded that a player can be more likely -- not less likely or equally likely -- to make his next shot if that player has made several shots in a row.

Hot streaks exist, the researchers said, but the players themselves sometimes made the hot hand harder to see. Seems when the players are feeling as if they

can't miss, they are also more likely to take riskier shots.

In reality the hot hand streak increases the likelihood of a good shot by a maximum of 2.4 percent -- not 100 percent as players in the zone seem to believe.

Interestingly, an October 2011 study published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology also concluded the hot hand existed, this time in volleyball, and was used by team members to make decisions about who got the ball.

Since 1985 researchers have studied (and dismissed) the hot hand in sports like tennis, horseshoe pitching, bowling, golf and baseball.

In recent years, however, statisticians have been greatly helped by the abundance of new camera and computer data in basketball.

If academics are convinced that hot hand streaks can exist in sports, the understanding may open the way for more research into the mental zone that players say they experience when they are feeling the game.

### Experts: New building pressures home prices

Home buyers might find more properties for at a lower cost in coming months as more new construction puts some downward pressure on prices, analysts say.

For the first time in 14 years bank lending for new construction is up. That means the supply of homes could increase and the price of homes could decrease, according to Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation data.

According to Census bureau data, last year the average price of a new U.S. home was \$322,100 -- up a whopping 10 percent from 2012. Home prices overall have been rising rapidly in the last two years.

"The increase in construction lending is an encouraging signal," says David Crowe, chief economist for the National Association of Home Builders.

## The obsession with Harvard

If your kid gets into Harvard, that is truly an achievement.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of students with 4.0 GPAs are rejected from Harvard every year. You can't just be smart and have 1400 SATs because even Harvard says on its own website that 1400 SATs alone don't get you admitted.

No.

A student has to demonstrate other talents: Leadership, attractive personality, maturity, creativity and, on top of all that there are things no kid can't control: minority, geographic, or income status, for example.

So, yeah. It's an honor. But is it the right choice?

Malcolm Gladwell, author of David and Goliath, writes extensively about the ironic tendency of Ivy league schools to chew up and spit out highly intelligent students. A promising science student with a 600 science SAT might well find the competition extreme, and begin to feel unworthy of a science or math degree. While in a state university, the same student would have less competition and gather all the honors the school bestows.

San Francisco Bay career coach Marty

Nemko agrees.

"My daughter was admitted to Williams College, one of the nation's most prestigious, and she turned it down to go to an easier-to-get into public institution that costs 70 percent less," he writes on his website martynemko.com. "There, as a top student, she was taken under wing by professors, got appointed to university-wide governance committees, and got touted for terrific post-college opportunities. Had she attended Williams, she would likely have been lost among its many top students and we would have been \$100,000 poorer."

Every observer admits that Harvard and Yale and the rest of the Ivy League seem to produce students that land in high-profile positions. The question is: will you graduate? Gladwell says that you reduce your chance of graduating by 30 percent if you choose Harvard over a state university.

Harvard has, in recent years, taken a lot of criticism, but it's a big target. As the oldest university in the country, it has unmatched legacy in libraries, art collections and student enrichment programs that bring world leaders together with underclassmen.



## Featured Listing

### Osprey Creek in Martin Downs

Country Club Living Under 200,000. 2 bedroom plus den/ office or possible 3rd bedroom, 2 bathroom, 1 car garage home in Martin Downs Country Club in Osprey Creek. Covered screened patio that's perfect for entertaining. Large eat-in kitchen, separate dining room, Florida and living rooms. Private setting with golf course views from the screened lanai. Martin Downs is a guard gated community that offers memberships for golf, tennis and social. Two large pools, workout room, Tiki Sports Bar and Main Dining Room. A rated schools, Public Parks, Dining, Entertainment, Boating, Fishing, Horseback Riding and other activities just minutes away.



Offered for \$189,000

[Click here for pictures and info.](#)

## Martin County Townhouse and Condo Market Report for March 2014

[Click on the Image for the full report](#)

Monthly Market Detail - March 2014  
Townhouses and Condos  
Florida



Summary Statistics	March 2014	March 2013	Percent Change Year-over-Year
Closed Sales	9,580	10,110	-5.2%
Paid in Cash	6,796	7,572	-10.2%
New Pending Sales	13,075	13,940	-6.2%
New Listings	15,930	14,447	10.3%
Median Sale Price	\$140,000	\$120,000	16.7%
Average Sale Price	\$228,167	\$196,568	16.1%
Median Days on Market	56	61	-8.2%
Average Percent of Original List Price Received	92.5%	92.9%	-0.4%
Pending Inventory	22,005	26,967	-18.4%
Inventory (Active Listings)	54,369	50,800	7.0%
Months Supply of Inventory	6.0	5.9	3.0%

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

[Click on the name of the region above to view the reports.](#)



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