

Kelly's Real Estate News You Can Use

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Breaking The Mold On Selling Real Estate

WINTER HOME-SELLING TIPS

You have decided to list your home this winter. Perhaps, you have had a job change, need to relocate out of the area, or have financial or family reasons for moving. No matter what is driving the move, you may be concerned about selling at this time of year. But just because you missed the boat on the spring selling season does not mean you cannot get your home sold quickly, and for a profit. A few tips can help get it moving.

Take photos early... or late: If you can take photos before the trees become barren and the grass goes dormant, do so! The last thing you want is for your home to look blah and depressing in photos. If you can capture a snowy day (with perfectly scraped walkways, of course), that works, too. It never hurts to have your home looking like a winter wonderland.

Go easy on the holiday décor: "Deck the halls, but do not go overboard," said HGTV. "Homes often look their best during the holidays, but sellers should be careful not to overdo it on the decor. Adornments that are too large or too many can crowd your home and distract buyers. Also, avoid offending buyers by opting for general fall and winter decorations rather than items with religious themes."

Always mind your curb appeal: Just because it is winter does not mean you can let things slide out front. Potential buyers will not give you a pass on chipping paint, a fence that needs repair, or a front door that is seen better days just because it is frigid outside.

Safety matters: Shoveling the walk from the street to your home is necessary to make it reachable, make it inviting, and also make it safe. The last thing you want is a slip and fall that could result in an injury, and a lawsuit. If there is no snow in your neighborhood, you will still want to make sure pathways are not slippery after the rain, and that any debris has been removed from walkways.

Get a good indoor mat: Perhaps you never use a mat for indoors or yours is worn from 10 straight years of winter wear. This one super easy move may not be noticed by visitors - but it sure will if it is missing or not in good shape. Little things like a new door mat can give buyers the impression that your whole house is well cared for, or just the opposite.

Clear the front door clutter: If you live in a climate where there is likely to be snow or rain, there are a few more steps you will probably have to take in order to keep your house looking great inside. How does your coat closet look? If it is full with jackets, scarves, boots, and gloves, relocating some to make room for potential buyers to put their stuff away while touring your home is a good idea - plus, a tidy coat closet gives the impression that there is plenty of storage space in the home. It goes without saying that winter wear and shoes that tend to stack up in the entry should be banished while your house is on the market.

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Winter Container Gardens

Spruce up the cool season of the year with winter container gardens. These pretty pots more than earn their keep by injecting a splash of much-needed color into frosty landscapes.

When creating winter container gardens, be mindful of two key things: soil and plant selection. Using the right soil is important because plants that grow through winter do not actually grow that excessively, except in the warmest zones. Winter container plants form new flowers and cold-hardy greens produce new leaves, but the growth will not be as intense or fast as in spring, when days are longer, the sun is warmer.

For this reason, it is important to use a quality soilless mix in your winter container gardens. Because plants are not growing vigorously, soil must drain well. Otherwise, you are assigning roots to soggy, heavy soil—and the root rot that usually occurs in those conditions. Try to avoid soil mixes containing moisture retention granules, especially if your winter is a rainy season. Blending composted organic matter into pots is a great idea to help enhance drainage.

For the plants, look at semi-hardy annuals include lobelia, petunia, diascia, China aster, French marigold as well as calendula, flowering stock, swan river daisy, pansy, pinks, sweet alyssum, painted tongue, and viola.

Also, consider adding vegetables and herbs to your containers. They yield a harvest while adding color to winter scenery. Leaf lettuces, Asian greens, kale, spinach, arugula, mustard, and collard greens make an excellent showing in the winter. Herbs that thrive in winter include thyme, parsley, oregano, lavender, and feverfew. ♦

*As The Weather
Cools Down,
Real Estate Sales
Heat Up!*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

WINTER HOME-SELLING TIPS

RETHINK YOUR LIGHTING

BEECHLER REALTY GROUP

Skillet Toffee

Ingredients:

1 pound unsalted butter
2 cups granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
8 ounces good quality semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
3/4 cup chopped toasted blanched almonds

Directions:

Line the bottom and sides of a 10-inch x 15-inch baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large cast iron skillet, melt the butter over medium-high heat. As the butter melts, stir in the sugar and salt. Continue stirring rapidly with a wooden spoon, keeping the sides of pan clean by brushing occasionally with a wet pastry brush. The mixture should bubble as you stir. Cook until the mixture turns a deep auburn brown and registers 300°F on a candy thermometer, taking care not to burn it. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla.

Pour the mixture onto the lined baking sheet. Allow it to cool slightly, about 5 minutes, then sprinkle the mixture with the chocolate. When the chocolate looks glossy, spread it with an offset cake spatula, and sprinkle with the nuts. Gently press the nuts into the chocolate.

Cool completely (at least 6 hours) then break the toffee into chunks. ♦



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*During the Holiday Season more than ever,
our thoughts turn gratefully to those who
have made our progress possible.
And in this spirit we say, simply but sincerely...
Thank You and Best Wishes for the
Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.*

*Tom & Kelly
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Make sure everything is functional: Imagine you live in a climate that stays relatively temperate year-round, and then you have a cold spell. You turn on the heater for the first time the night before your first showing and...nothing. Same for the fireplace in the living room. Your freezing cold house is probably not going to make a great impression on buyers. As soon as you decide you are going to sell your home, go through it room by room, checking all major appliances and home functions and looking for little things that may escape notice on an everyday basis - cracked light switches, chipped baseboards, light bulbs that need to be replaced - so your home is perfect for showings.

Light it up: Shorter days with earlier sunsets limit the amount of natural light in your home. Turning on all the lights before showings is more important than ever. Think about the exterior when it comes to lights, too. If you only have a porch light, you might want to consider adding some landscaping lighting, which will help accentuate your outdoor space. ♦

RETHINK YOUR LIGHTING

You step into a dark room, turn on the light switch and go about your day without giving it another thought. But here is the thing - you should.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the average American home has approximately 50 light sockets and most of those still contain inefficient light bulbs. These bulbs spend 90 percent of the energy they use creating heat around the bulb and only the remaining 10 percent providing any actual light. To get you thinking about your lights in a whole new way, here are eight more surprising lighting facts.

■ **Small costs, big savings for you.** An ENERGY STAR-certified LED light bulb will cost you about \$2 in most parts of the country. Yet over the course of its lifetime, a 15,000-hour bulb will save you around \$80 compared to the cost of using a 43-watt halogen-incandescent bulb over the same time.

■ **Big savings for the country as a whole.** If every American replaced their existing bulbs with energy-efficient solutions, the country would save \$6 billion per year in lighting expenses.

■ **Same options in an energy-efficient offering.** LED bulbs that have earned the ENERGY STAR look and act just like the conventional bulbs you are used to. They turn on instantly and provide quality light all around. There are even LED solutions designed to match the look of trendy vintage-style bulbs, so you can have the look you want without wasted energy expenses.

■ **Look for the ENERGY STAR seal.** The government-backed ENERGY STAR label is a "seal of approval" ensuring that the certified product saves energy, delivers on brightness and meets myriad other requirements proven by extensive testing and third-party certification. Select products bearing this seal and you will attain your lighting and energy efficiency goals.

■ **Finding the right solution for your home.** Like conventional bulbs, there are specific LED solutions for every socket in your home. To find the right bulb for your space, remember the ABCs: Application, Brightness and Color. ENERGY STAR offers a guide that can help you choose the right bulb. You can find the guide at www.energystar.gov/choosealight.

■ **An ever-evolving market.** Today LED lighting solutions are available in many options, but the potential for the future is nearly limitless. For example, many manufacturers are integrating microchips into LED bulbs, enabling them to be controlled remotely or operate based on a schedule. All of which will provide ease of use, reduced energy expense and the lighting consumers need.

Make the change in your home today to more energy-efficient LED bulbs and you will feel better about your decision with every flick of the switch. ♦



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DELIVERING RESULTS AND EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS



You don't have to be penalized by the Traditional Way of Selling Real Estate

After spending 17 years successfully selling real estate the traditional way, that being ...You pay a 6% commission that is split at closing between the listing and buyer agents...we decided it was time to re-look at our fee for service programs. Our industry has traditionally charged home sellers a 6% commission, but why? Well, when the market is soft an agent must charge a higher commission to cover their cost investments for the properties that they did not sell. However, that is not the market we are in now. So we agree with you, why should you pay 6% to get your home sold?

Selling a Home Doesn't Have to be Expensive

Here is the program we created ... If you are willing to partner with us on your sale, you will get a substantial discount on the listing commission by paying for your advertising upfront, plus a small commission at closing. The breakdown is \$395.00 at listing, 1% of the sales price at closing and you will need to offer a 2-3% (you choose) buyer's agent commission at closing. Our program saves you at least 2% of your sales price. This is money in your pocket! This is a "Full Service Program" not a "Flat Fee" Program. Your home will be professionally photographed and with over 94% of consumers searching the internet for their next home, we will be aggressively marketing your home on Zillow, Trulia, Homes.com, Realtor.com and over 700 additional sites worldwide. We will provide staging advice, negotiating assistance, recommended pricing, along with immediate showing feedback once your home goes to market and showings begin. We take you from listing to closing and handle all the details in between. We are happy to show you all of the services we provide!

You no doubt, are looking for a 'catch'. Well, there is no catch. We simply believe we can run our business the way we like and give back to you, our customer. We have many satisfied customers who have taken advantage of our program.

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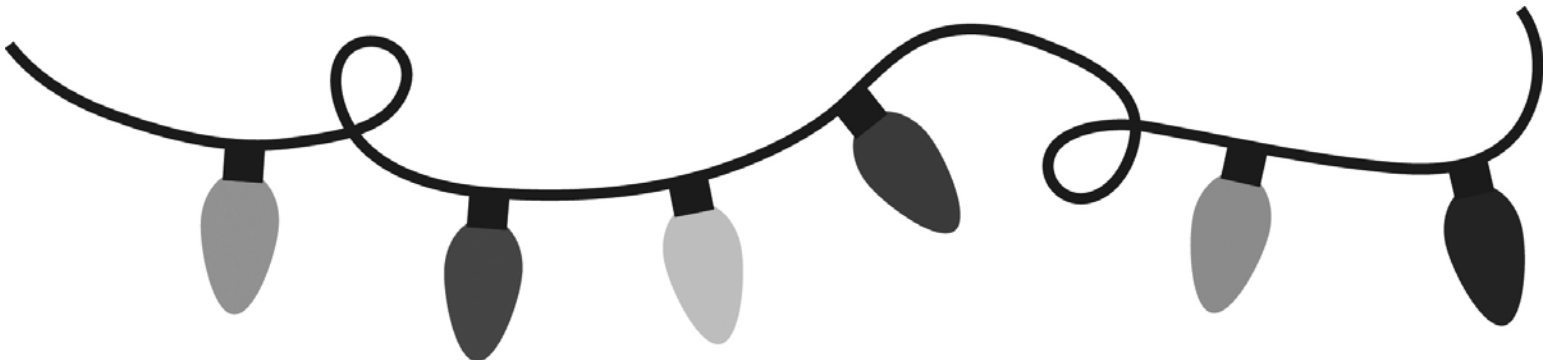


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Light Up The New Year With \$1,000 Cash!

Prize to be awarded by a drawing of all entries. Drawing to be held **January 26, 2018**. Winner need not be present. Odds of winning are 1 in 1,000. No cost or obligation to participate. Gift Card awarded where available. Cash may be substituted if prize cannot be purchased for any given area. ©Farm Net.

Congratulations to the winner of the \$250.00 Fall Fix Up Cash... Lauren Black!