



News on the *Move*

Brought to you by: **Linda Hiller Novak**
Max Broock Realtors
248-408-7811

www.LindaHillerNovak.com

Has the Market Hit the Bottom?

The big continuing question is, are the last four months a real bottom and bounce up or just an illusion? The answer is a little of both. There is no question we are at a bottom, the bigger issue is how long will we stay here and is there a chance of a second "dip" down (i.e., a "W" vs. a "V" recovery). The second dip will be largely dependent on to what degree the government extends or adds to the current housing stimulus efforts. A reduction of the stimulus will cause a downward dip.

If there ever was an example of government dollars and intervention at work, the current housing market is it. There are four key government support elements at play and a fourth private sector effort that contribute to the improving housing numbers we are seeing both in Michigan and across the country.

- 1) The First Time Home Buyer Tax Credit, creating over 400,000 sales out of a national total of 1.4 million (both NAR and Moody's stats)
- 2) The government's financial support of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the FHA - Contrary to what the average person may think, these are the chief buyers and creators of mortgage products, not banks. FHA mortgages constitute nearly 70% of all John Adams mortgages. John Adams is the MaxBroock/Real Estate One owned mortgage company.
- 3) Low interest rates, created by a near zero % federal funds rate and the government's purchase of most of the mortgages being made (since other financial institutions don't want to buy them, without the government purchase, rates would have to rise to entice others to buy).
- 4) The banks current direction, with both a stick and carrot from the government, of a slower release of foreclosed inventories into the market, helping to stabilize home values.

Keep in mind these improving numbers have not yet moved up enough into the middle to upper range home values. That will not really take hold until employment stabilizes, giving two income families (one of the core engines to move up buyer growth) the confidence to sell and buy and the mass of former owners, now renters, the ability to become home owners again. In Michigan, the overall market in the next 12 months is most likely to be either the same (extended stimulus) or down (not extended), so regardless of the outcome of the stimulus programs, Sellers still need to price aggressively, focusing as much on current competition as comparable sales. Buyers should be aware that an extended stimulus will benefit them but it will, combined with the banks holding back their inventories, also help dry up the current supply, making the best buys scarce.

A Guide to Deciphering the Lingo of Real Estate

Whether you are buying or selling, the language of real estate is often complex and confusing. Following is a plain-language explanation of commonly encountered real-estate-related lingo.

Title: Title to a property essentially denotes ownership interest and is designated by the name(s) on specific legal documents such as mortgages and deeds. The title can be held by an individual, couple or even a corporation.

Deed: A deed is used to transfer ownership of property from one person or entity to another person or entity.

Deed of Trust: A deed of trust is a document that transfers title in a property, with the stipulation that the transfer is contingent upon repayment of an existing loan.



Thanksgiving Fun Facts!

Did you know...

- In 2007 an estimated 46 million turkeys were eaten on Thanksgiving.
- The largest pumpkin pie ever baked weighed 2,020 pounds and measured just over 12 feet long.
- The first time the Detroit Lions played football on Thanksgiving day was in 1934. The NBC radio network broadcasted the game on 94 stations across the country—the first national Thanksgiving football broadcast.
- Since then, the Lions have played a game every Thanksgiving (except between 1939 and 1944).

Mortgage: A mortgage is a loan you take out to buy property.

Clear Title: Clear title indicates that the property is free of liens or legal questions surrounding ownership.

Chain of Title: The record of historical ownership of a property. The title company or real estate attorney typically reviews the record in order to determine clear title.

Clouded Title: Any property that has an existing question regarding ownership, chain of title or even liens may have a “clouded” rather than “clear” title, which may adversely impact the ability to obtain financing or properly record the title. Most clouded title issues require a release, court action or other legal intervention to remediate.

Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

How has the price of your home changed in today’s market? How much are other homes in your neighborhood selling for?

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, I'll be able to help.

Just give my office a call for a no-fuss, professional evaluation.

I won't try to push you into listing with me or waste your time.

I'll just give you the honest facts about your home and its value.

And maybe I'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live!

Just give my office a call at

248-644-6700 to arrange an appointment.

Alternatively, stop by at the office. The address is on the back page of this newsletter.

4 Tips to ‘Plan Your Way to Success’

Setting aside time to plan the week ahead can help relieve any stress you might be feeling as a result of unfinished business.

It also allows an emotional release once the week is done and helps increase productivity.

The following suggestions will help you come up with a good plan and learn how to stick with it:

Prioritize by Importance: Planning provides a systematic method to increase productivity without sacrificing quality by establishing a hierarchy of needs. Make a list of “must do” versus “can do if time allows” items.

Time Management: Experts agree the first step in time management is the ability to properly prioritize one’s time. Beside each item you listed above, indicate how long you expect the activity to take. Build in a little buffer by adding 10% more time to each activity to accommodate emergencies or unanticipated events.

Stay on Track: Planning allows everyone to see the “big picture” while simultaneously outlining the details required to accomplish each task. Planning also keeps the lines of communication open and assures all stakeholders understand the proper process required to complete a job.

Reward: Not only does good planning help increase productivity, but it also reduces stress, helps you relax and it increases personal satisfaction by giving you a sense of accomplishment. Lower blood pressure, less anxiety and greater focus keep your mental faculties and emotional well-being running like a well-oiled machine so you are able to accomplish more in less time. Take time to reward yourself and others for meeting goals and objectives each week.

Remodel or Buy? Which Is Right for You?

The decision of whether to remodel an existing home or buy another one has become more difficult because of the price of real estate declining across much of the nation.

A few years ago, the benefits of remodeling were quite simple due to the cost savings. Today it isn't as straightforward.

The following are some things to think about when deciding whether to remodel or purchase a new property:

Lifestyle: Does your home continue to reflect your lifestyle? Experts agree the home should reflect anticipated lifestyle changes for the next five to seven years. If not, it might be a good idea to consider purchasing a new property.

Maintenance: Does your home require more maintenance and upkeep than desired, especially compared to newer homes? New homes offer the ability to "right size" the levels of yard work, repairs and other needs associated with home ownership.

Cost and Value: There are many factors that can weigh into the cost and value of a given property, including tax credits/write-offs, long-term appreciation, current level of depreciation, access to amenities, property taxes and insurance, utilities, maintenance, and much more. If you are not sure how to properly evaluate the true cost and value of your current property compared to a prospective property, ask your agent to provide

estimates of principal, interest, taxes and insurance for comparable properties in the same neighborhood.

Community: Access and affiliation with friends, family and the local community are important when deciding whether or not to remodel or buy new, yet they are easily overlooked by many homeowners.

Depending upon the age of the neighborhood, it may be difficult or even impossible to find other properties in the immediate area.

On the other hand, over time many communities experience a decline in desirability as crime rates, traffic and other problems start to creep in.

First Time Home Buyer?

Here are a few things you should *not* do prior to purchasing

When you get a raise or accumulate some savings, you may find yourself confronted by an innate instinct of modern civilized men and women: the desire to spend money.

It begins simply, by going out to restaurants, then accelerates to purchasing clothing, electronic gadgets, and since North Americans have a special fondness for the automobile, you may even buy a "brand new car."

If you're married or ambitious, a few months later your thoughts eventually turn toward buying your own home. Or a move-up home, if you are already a homeowner.

Next, you contact a loan officer to get prequalified for a mortgage loan. You state your desired price and how much you can put down. You provide your income and may even supply pay stubs and W2 forms. The loan officer methodically crunches the numbers.

"If only you didn't have this car payment..."

What is a Short Sale?

Over the last several years a lot of buyers bought homes, intending to live in them for many years. Then something happened—maybe good, maybe bad, but regardless—they don't have a choice. Some owners have to move.

When most homeowners move, they sell their house. Usually, that's not a problem. For some people nowadays, it is a problem.

Because of the easy financing, rampant speculation, flipping and sometimes fraud, home values skyrocketed almost everywhere. That came to an end recently and values plummeted in some areas. Even when values are stable, sometimes there just isn't enough money in the property to pay off the mortgage, then pay all the selling and moving costs.

What happens then?

Default, sometimes bankruptcy, and maybe even foreclosure.

Or a short sale.

A short sale is when the lender agrees to accept a mortgage payoff that doesn't cover the outstanding loan.

Why do lenders accept short sales? Lenders almost always lose money when they foreclose on a property. In many cases, they will lose less money through a short sale than they would by foreclosing on a home and selling it as a bank-owned property.

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

I want to sell my home, but with three children it's hard to keep the place looking tidy. Any tips?

It's important to get your storage in order. Invest in taller shelving units, which will take up less floor space, while providing space for books or storage containers.

Line the top of your child's bedroom walls with shelves, and place items up high that you would rather your child not have access to. Pegs are another fantastic way to use wall space, and young children will enjoy hanging up things on the pegs.

Closet organizers should reach all the way from floor to ceiling. Place rarely used items on higher shelves, and keep frequently used items within your child's reach.

Do not overlook the available space on the back of your child's bedroom or closet door. Shoe organizers with clear plastic pockets make wonderful storage containers for small stuffed animals and cars, art supplies, and dolls.

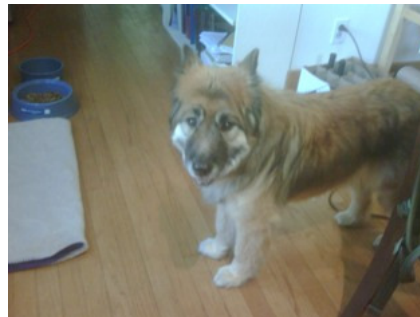
Piper & Tucker's Pawspace



Pepper, a 14 year old German Shepherd/ Chow Chow, who looks remarkably like an Ewok.



Hobbes, already excited for Thanksgiving!



Piper & Tucker enjoying the park before the snow comes!

Orange Chipotle-Spiced Pecan Mix

1 tablespoon grated orange rind
1 tablespoon fresh orange juice
1 large egg white
2 cups pecan halves
1 tablespoon dark brown sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon ground chipotle chile pepper
1/2 cup sweetened dried cranberries
Cooking Spray

- 1) Preheat oven to 225°
- 2) Combine first 3 ingredients in a medium bowl; stir with a whisk. Stir in pecans. Combine sugar, salt, and pepper. Add to pecan mixture; toss well. Spread mixture in a single layer on a jelly-roll pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 225° for 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Remove from oven; cool completely. Stir in cranberries. Yield: 2 1/2 cups (serving size: 2 tablespoons).

Note: Store in an airtight container for up to one week.

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News on the Move is brought to you free by:

Linda Hiller Novak

Birmingham, MI 48009
248-644-6700
lnovak@maxbroock.com
LindaHillerNovak.com



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