



Cherri and Sandra's

News You Can Use



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Realtors® See Signs of Spring in Fraser Valley Housing Market

FVREB News Release, March 3, 2009

February sales on Fraser Valley's Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) experienced a typical 'early spring' surge, increasing by 75 per cent in one month from 389 sales in January to 682 last month. However, by historical standards, they continued to reflect sales levels last seen in the mid-1980s, according to the Fraser Valley Real Estate Board.

Sales showed a 48 per cent decrease compared to the 1,308 sales processed in February 2008. The Board also received fewer new listings last month compared to the same month last year – 2,369 compared to the 2,808 new listings received in February 2008 – however, the total number of active listings at 9,594 was still 11 per cent higher than in January and almost 30 per cent higher than the 7,415 active listings available in February 2008.

Paul Penner, President of the Fraser Valley Real Estate Board explains, "High inventory and low demand over the last few months have created the best buying opportunity since 2006, which buyers started capitalizing on in February."

Penner feels that though consumers are still cautious about the global economic situation, based on February's real estate market, he is guardedly optimistic. "For the first time since last September, Fraser Valley REALTORS® had higher traffic at open houses, more multiple-offer situations and an increase in home sales.

"Because of lower prices and mortgage rates, consumers are gaining confidence."

Residential benchmark prices, the value of a 'typical' Fraser Valley detached home as determined by the MLSLink® Housing Price Index (HPI), decreased 10.4 per cent compared to February 2008, however, increased from the previous month for the first time in nine months. The benchmark price was \$456,683 in February 2009 compared to \$509,958 last year.

March 2009

Electronic Picture Frames Revealed

Perhaps you have seen them in the stores or even received one as a gift this past holiday season; after all, electronic picture frames are all the rage.

Join the ranks of those able to proudly display their favourite photos of family, friends or even business projects with the assistance of an electronic picture frame.

Although there are many brands, sizes and features to be found when shopping for an electronic picture frame, essentially each provides a method of showcasing photos stored in a digital format.

Most use an LCD display and include specialized features such image correction, slide show styles, clock, and calendar modes plus other enhancements.

Photographs can be changed by updating the memory card, although more expensive models can easily hold up to 10,000 photos and may require few updates.

It's the perfect solution for small apartments, offices or other areas where bulky photo albums just won't fit.

Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, we'll be able to help. Just give either Cherri or Sandra a call for a no-fuss, professional evaluation. We won't try to push you into listing with us or waste your time. We'll just give you the honest facts about your home and its value. And we'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live. See the back of this newsletter for our contact information.



TREELAND REALTY

Easy Fixes to Give Your House New Life

You can make huge improvements to your home with just a few simple fix-ups. Not only will you make it more attractive to buyers, but you'll also make your house a nicer place to live!

Paint

If you've got cracked or peeling paint, you'll certainly want to repaint before you put your house on the market. If you have imperfections in your walls, choose a paint with a flat finish, as this will conceal them. Make sure you use washable paints in bathrooms and kitchens - an interior flat enamel is good for this.

Focal Points

Having a focal point is critical if you want to create a room that feels comfortable and useable. Some rooms have natural focal points, such as a fireplace, architectural details or a picture window with a view. But if your room has none of these, you could try placing a large piece of furniture such as an armoire or a tall bookcase along one wall, using an ornate mirror or large painting, or adding a table with your favourite ornaments or mementoes arranged on it.

Kitchen

Damaged or dirty cabinet doors are easy to fix. Most cabinetry can be re-painted after cleaning it and applying a coat of primer. Just check that the materials can take paint or whether you need to give any special preparation to the doors first. Alternatively, you can just replace the doors. There are companies that provide doors to fit existing kitchen cabinets. Another way to fix up cabinets is to replace the hardware, perhaps changing out-of-date fixtures for sleek, modern ones.

Bathroom

The caulking between tiles gets very dirty. Clean it - and you'll immediately make your bathroom fresher. A big turn-off for many house-buyers is carpet in the bathroom. If you replace it with a more washable surface, you'll have a much cleaner-looking room.

How to Save Money on Printer Ink

Check Expiration Dates—Cartridges with expiration dates can appear empty even if never used. The solution is simple: reset your computer clock to fool your PC and bring cartridges back to life.

Buy Generic—Depending upon your make and model of printer, chances are there is a generic equivalent.

Recycle—Trade in old cartridges for a discount. Not only will it save a few dollars, but it's good for the environment.

Refill—Buy ink and refill old cartridges. Most makes and models can be refilled for a fraction of the cost of buying new.

Easy Ways to Make Spring Cleaning Painless

If spring cleaning isn't your idea of family fun, don't distress: these fast fixes will have your home looking its best with plenty of time to spare.

Recycle

Every home has those little corners or cupboards filled with unwanted gifts, outgrown clothing or worn-out toys that take up space. Collect everything that hasn't been used in the past year and then either donate it or advertise it on a local recycling group for pickup. It's a great way to make someone's day brighter while clearing the clutter.

Maintenance

Now is the time to perform those small repairs and other routine maintenance tasks before they become major annoyances. Replace bulbs and batteries in hard-to-reach fixtures and fire alarms, repair leaking faucets and replace filters for the furnace, then tackle the yard. Hire a handyman for anything outside your ordinary skill set. You will be surprised to find how much better your home feels to you without the minor annoyances.

Clean

After clearing the clutter and making needed repairs, it's time to get down and dirty by scouring the house from top to bottom. Either hire a company or rent a machine to clean the carpets, upholstery, air ducts, windows and other surfaces. Use an environmentally friendly enzymatic cleaning formula to disinfect and deodorize at the same time. Once everything is clean and disinfected, consider purchasing a HEPA air filtration system to help improve air quality for the whole year long.



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