

# Cherri and Sandra's

## News You Can Use

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### HOUSING SALES AND PRICES STABILIZING IN FRASER VALLEY

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The Fraser Valley Real Estate Board's Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) posted its highest sales volume in a year in May, processing 1,501 sales, the fourth consecutive monthly increase this year. Although that number is still six per cent less compared to the 1,599 sales processed in May of 2008, Board President Paul Penner says it's a significant improvement compared to where the market was a few months ago.

"We're the closest we've been to a balanced market since early spring last year. Sales have increased, inventory has dropped and prices are stabilizing," Penner says the market remains competitive. "REALTORS® are seeing an increase in multiple-offer situations, but only on properties that are priced right and at the more affordable end of the market. "With 10,000 active listings in the Fraser Valley, there is plenty of selection. REALTORS® continue to advise clients to be realistic with pricing, both on the listing and buying side."

**BUYERS ARE LOOKING FOR HOMES!!  
LISTINGS ARE NEEDED!! Please contact  
Cherri or Sandra for a free market evaluation of  
your home.**

### Easy Touch-Ups to Give Your Home Curb Appeal

Spruce up your yard in time for summer entertainment with these quick and affordable fixes for the most common complaints.

**Pressure Wash and Spray.** Start at the roof, then work your way down, to remove stains and dirt from walkways, driveways and even fences. Whiten and brighten the concrete, crevices and other corners of your home and yard to lighten the entire area.

**Clear the Clutter.** Trim and remove low branches and excess clutter to create the look and feel of clear, open space. Consider purchasing plastic partitions or other low-maintenance storage units to hide away trash cans and other unsightly items that add to the perception of clutter and detract from the beauty of your home.

**Touch Up the Paint.** Shutters, doors and awnings are all prone to excessive wear and tear over the winter months; make a point of touching up the paint. It's an easy and affordable way to revitalize the look of your home.

**Add a Touch of Colour.** Bring in fresh mulch; then follow up with strategically placed flowers, potted plants and other enhancements throughout the yard. This will add interest while helping hide those tough trouble spots.

**Create a Focal Point.** The most successful landscapes incorporate a central element that serves as the focal point for the entire area. Use the same strategy in your own yard. Begin with something affordable and small like a garden bench or pond to add elegance and appeal.

### Want Your Home to Sell Faster? Get These Fix-Up Tips

In a buyer's market, it's important that your home compares well with other homes on the market. That can often mean making sure it looks its best. To give yourself a head start, get our free guide, "Great Ideas for Quick, Easy Fixes that Will Help Your Home Sell." Just call Cherri at 604-866-0303 or Sandra at 604-785-9012 and we'll send it right out to you.



TREELAND REALTY

## Chance of a Lifetime: Tips for First-Time Buyers

While lower real estate prices might be bad news for the economy, it could be good news for first-time homebuyers. In fact, now might just be the best buying opportunity of a lifetime. Follow these steps to determine where to begin:

**Establish a Realistic Budget.** Owning a home involves more costs than meet the eye. In addition to mortgage, taxes and insurance, wise homebuyers set aside a little savings toward maintenance and unexpected emergencies. Remember, you will eventually need to repair or replace many items in the home.

**Buy What You Need.** While real estate is often considered an excellent investment, it's important to only purchase as much home as you actually need. Bigger isn't always better; sometimes it's simply more expensive. Higher taxes, bigger insurance bills and more maintenance can eat away at even the best budgets. So buy what you need, unless it's wise for you to...

**Plan for Growth.** First-time buyers can also be too modest when it comes to purchasing their first homes. If you intend to begin a family, you may quickly outgrow the home. Plan for growth to ensure you will be as happy in the home tomorrow as you are today.

**Understand Appreciation.** Although you don't want to base the purchase of your home solely upon appreciation, it's important to understand how the future value of your home is likely to impact your ability to move up later in life. When the time comes to sell, rent or exchange the current property, a home with long-term appreciation provides greater buying options in the future. Search for neighbourhoods expected to rise in value over time.

**Work with a Reputable Agent.** A great real estate agent or broker is often worth his or her weight in gold, which is why you will typically find that investors would never think of going it alone. Unfortunately, many first-time buyers are under the mistaken impression they can save money by helping the seller eliminate or reduce the commission. Research shows this is rarely the case. Most agents help negotiate a lower sales price and ensure that funding, necessary paperwork and other important legal considerations are all taken care of.

## 4 Back-to-the-Future Tips to Keep the Family Entertained

**Renew those library cards.** If you haven't visited the library in a while, you are in for a pleasant surprise. Rent videos and books and encourage children to participate in storytime or other fun activities. Not only is a library visit fun and educational, but it provides plenty for kids to do back at home.

**Rediscover yard games.** Break out the lemonade; then plan a day of fun by rediscovering old-fashioned yard games: horseshoes, croquet, volleyball and other great games are sure to be favourites.

**Picnic in the park.** Take the family out for a little quality time at the local park. Let the kids help pack the sandwiches; then just sit back and relax while everyone enjoys the fresh air and sunshine.

**Roast and toast hot dogs and marshmallows.** Summer is a special time, even when the sun goes down. Let your kids share in the simple delight of roasting marshmallows and hot dogs on an open fire; then chasing lightning bugs or watching the moon for a summer full of memories that will last a lifetime.

## Enjoy a Sneeze-Free Summer with These Allergy Busters

Summer allergies are nothing to sneeze at, especially for those with potentially severe insect or food allergies.

Learn how to relieve summer allergies and rejoin the summer fun with these helpful hints.

### Prevention

Avoid contact with known allergy triggers such as plants, pet dander and other common culprits by reducing exposure and eliminating possible contact. Cut back trees and keep areas where insects can hide free of debris.

### Keeping It Clean

Keep pets and the household clean with frequent dusting, mopping and washing and by using a HEPA air filter. Cleaning upholstery and air ducts is also a great way to reduce watery eyes, asthma symptoms and other air quality issues associated with pollen, pet dander and spores.

### Medication

Use an age-appropriate allergy medication that won't leave you sleepy, and keep a variety of gels, creams and oral and topical medications on hand. For more serious allergies, make sure to wear a medical alert bracelet and, if it has been prescribed, keep your EpiPen handy at all times.

### Wear Protective Clothing

Invest in a lightweight hat, gloves, eye-glasses and other protective gear that will reduce direct exposure to potential irritants such as grass, pollen or plants. Remove clothing and wash carefully to minimize exposure.



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