

July 2008

Summer Solstice

Summer Solstice already?! I hope this letter finds you having a good summer! We all know it's been slow coming, and I think we all hope we get to experience a lot of

good weather between here and October. Last week I got to spend the night with my son, Cody, and eight of his buddies at Camp Carlquist at Mirror Lake north of Eagle River. Whew, I knew I was getting old for a dad with an 8 year old, but after a full night with that many little boys, I knew I was completely out of my league! Ahhh, summer memories!



1804 S Salem Drive
\$419,000 On your first look, you'd say it was a brand new, never lived in home. The home is located in University Park, close to Geneva Woods and just south of College Village, which is a very established and respectable area in "mid-town" for a fast commute anywhere.

Over 2,600
feet & 4
bed-
rooms!

Our real estate market continues to move along. Often times, when the weather turns nice and families don't have family constraints with school in session, the market softens in June and July and to me, we are feeling that right now. A quick look at the number of sales in the Anchorage Bowl this year shows 770 closed sales of residential properties year to date. When I compare this year to last year at this time, I see there were approximately 10 percent more sales last year at 846 closed transactions. In other words, last year, 2007 the over all number of sales, were down about 10% over 2006. This year as of late June, we appear to be down about 10 percent from 2007 in the number of total sales.

Interest rates have crept up slightly and vary from day to day in the 6.5% range for fixed rate 30 year loans. I hear a lot of opinions from lots of people, but I don't think I've heard anyone speculate that we would see significantly lower interest rates.

It seems like I'm talking to people every week who tell me they are looking to buy a home in *insert your favorite vacation destination here* such as Tucson, Phoenix, Scottsdale or another great sunny destination. Tell you what, if you want me to use my resources to locate a realtor in an area somewhere else, please give me a call or shoot me an email and I'll find you an agent who can "fine tune" and assist you with your search. It makes perfect sense to buy when there are so many "deals" to be had out there!

My real estate selling machine continues to roll forward. I know we are blessed because we are "bucking the odds". So far this year we have closed 24 happy buyers into new properties, and have helped 31 sellers meet their property selling goals!

Here is another piece of personal news I can share with my friends; My wife, Kristi and I sold Powerhouse Gym this past month after owning it for over 7 years. Some of you will remember her working with me eight years ago. Many people have asked me what she's going to do now. For now, she has mixed feelings about not owning the gym, but for the most part she is enjoying some time to be a mom to our son and spend as much quality time with him this summer as possible. Who knows what the future will hold, but for now it's all good!



As always, I appreciate your real estate business and the referral of your friends, family and workmates. I'll do my best to take good care of them!

Train beyond your ability, perform beyond your expectations, reach beyond your imagination.

Words Can Make a Difference!

When you make an offer on a piece of real estate, the experience of the realtor you use can make a difference. On The Dan Wolf Team, we have thousands of transactions

under our belt and years of experience working between buyers and sellers to get transactions closed. That's not to say there isn't a "new spin" to come around every once in a while, but for the most part, we can save you time and heartburn because we've "been there – done that" many, many times.

For instance, when we write a contract with a clause in it, we try real hard to write it in such a manner that it cannot be interpreted incorrectly by other parties to the contract. An ambiguity in a contract can cause misunderstandings and hard feeling between the parties. An offer could say "this offer is subject to the buyers receipt of the survey," and leave it like that. There are a lot of "what if's" that could come out of this.

A better way of writing that clause might be to say "This offer is subject to the buyers receipt and approval of the survey not later than July 5, 2008. In the event the buyer does not approve of the survey, buyer has right to either renegotiate with the seller or cancel this agreement. In the event the buyer elects to cancel this agreement, all earnest money will be refunded to the buyer."

Do you see the difference? In the first clause, the seller could supply the buyer a survey before closing. If something was wrong with the survey, there isn't any obvious solution. In the second clause we say the buyer will receive the survey by a known date, hopefully early in the transaction, and has the right to approve. If he disapproves, he can either renegotiate or cancel, and we already know what will happen to the earnest money.

The first step toward getting somewhere is to decide that you are not going to stay where you are.

Retired Real Estate Agents?

I'll bet you didn't know that very few real estate agents actually retire from a career in real estate. This is surprising to many people, partly because agents "look successful" in outward appearance, the clothes they wear and the vehicles they drive, however, according to the National Association of Realtors (NAR) the "average" income for people claiming their occupation to be real estate is about \$35,000 per year. This is because it is very competitive for business between agents. The more experience an agent has, the better property listings they get, and because of their experience they close

a higher percentage of their transactions.

The initial cost to get licensed is negligible, but the cost of the experience in terms of time is huge. Many agents simply can't hang in there long enough to be successful, regardless of their knowledge and education. Because of the "self employed" nature of the work, many agents tend to treat real estate as a second job or hobby, in favor of keeping their own schedule.

Since most agents cannot actually save any money from their commission sales income to retire with, the smart thing for both real estate agents and for you to do, would be to do what wealthy families have done for generations; that is buy real estate periodically through out their career. This real estate will go up in value in the long run, and your tenants will make the payments. The government will give you special credits and deductions for your time, too.

Here are some good "wealth building" real estate goals that rich families practice:

Buy good properties without any intention of selling them...buy and hold long term

Do not buy knowing you will have negative cash flow (mortgage higher than rental income)

Buy with fixed interest rate mortgages, not adjustable rate mortgages

Don't have "balloon" payments (a larger than normal final payment)

Don't buy real estate in "scary" neighborhoods.

Don't buy property further than two hours away from you, so you can keep an eye on it.

The smartest people buy when there are more sellers in the market, thus the competition for buyers allows them to get better prices and terms. Another buying sign is low interest rates, and the best time to sell is when there are lots of buyers and not a lot of home inventory.

My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there.

Brokers Seeing Positive Signs

A Real Trends survey of real estate brokers nationwide finds that 64% of those polled believe market conditions are improving in their areas.

Asked what key factors were holding down their markets, most respondents cited "buyer hesitation to purchase" in the belief that prices would go down.

Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others. It is because we are different that each of us is special.

New Listings!

9020 Honeysuckle Street **\$295,000** This sunny home has been updated and shows well. The large "chef's kitchen" will make mom proud as well as the big (500 square foot) deck. The home is over 1,900 square feet with three bedrooms and two full bathrooms. The home has



very attractive wood laminate floors and updated bathrooms. There is a large "two door" double car garage and expanded parking area which would be great for your RV or extra vehicle. See this home online at www.AnchorageHomeSearch.com.

1804 S. Salem Dr. **\$419,000** This is a very unique property! On your first look, you'd say it was a brand new, never lived in home. The home is located in University Park, close to Geneva Woods and just south of College Village, which is a very established and respectable area in "mid-town" for a fast commute anywhere. Thing is, this home burned almost totally and has been rebuilt on the same foundation. The home is stunning. First is it's large, over 2,600 square feet and the lot is equally impressive at 10,674 sq. feet, or roughly .25 acres in midtown. The home has bamboo floors, granite counter tops, of course brand new carpet and paint! The master is very large with a private bathroom with a Jacuzzi tub (with a heater installed!) and double closets. This house is really a "keeper"!

131000 Von Scheben Drive **\$569,000** Country living! This home will really work well for the family that wants

perspectives

room to spread out and loves privacy! The home sits deep on a 1.2 acre home site looking into heavy trees. The home is 3,100 square feet, four bedrooms and 2.5



baths and with a three car garage. One bay of the garage doubles as a shop with work benches, 220 volt wiring for a welder and there is 880 feet of deck wrapping the home. If you want to get away from restrictive covenants, this might be the right home for you and your family! Check out the photo's on www.AnchorageHomeSearch.com.

16429 Noble Pointe Drive **\$615,000** Pride of Ownership in Goldenview Subdivision! Check out the curb appeal on this home! Sharp, huh? It is just as nice inside! The home has 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, a three car garage and over 3,500 square feet of living space! There

are nice views of Cook Inlet from the back of the house and master bedroom as well. This home has an unfinished



basement which really works well if you have kids that want space to live and play or hobbies that you need elbow room for. It would be a snap to finish the square feet if you wanted.

The lower level has very large oversized windows and a walkout door to the back yard. One more thing; Did you know that Goldenview is one of the few hillside homes with city water and sewer? Look my website for more photo's and check out the virtual tour at www.AnchorageHomeSearch.com.

Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.