

# Real Estate Matters



Brought to you by Kim Nelson Homes  
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## Happy Holidays!

In November, the FREE pie giveaway and open house was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who stopped by our house. It was so great catching up. We not only got to eat amazing pies, but because of it, we gave back to the community. Thank you!

With the holiday season in full swing, I'm reminded of those that have influenced, inspired and impacted me throughout my life and professional career. For all of you, may the joy and love of the holidays extend to you and your family now and throughout the coming year. 2019 will be the best one ever! I just know it!

From our family to yours...Happy Holidays! Kim, Jimmy, Ashley & Ian



Photo credit: [www.marniraephotography.com](http://www.marniraephotography.com)

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## Want to Sell Your Home Fast? Get My Free Guide



Preparing your home for sale can make the difference between getting the price you want – or ending up disappointed.

Discover some easy things you can do by requesting my **free guide**, “50 Tips to Prepare Your Home for a Speedy, Top-Price Sale.”

Just call me at 408-718-7443 and I'll send it right out to you.

## Can HOA Restrictions Stop Me From Renting My House?



*Guest blog authored by James P. Hillman, Esq. of White & MacDonald LLP. Mr. Hillman's firm represents residential and commercial property owners, community associations, developers, contractors and corporations throughout CA in real estate and construction law matters.*

With Bay Area housing prices and rents rising alike, many owners of condos, townhouses or single-family homes located within common interest communities, subject to CC&Rs, want to know if they can lease their property because their friends tell them that the HOA may say no way! HOA rental restrictions can be important as circumstances in our lives change and when purchasing a new property.

**Subject to certain limitations under the law, rental restrictions that can be enforced by an HOA typically fall into one of the following three categories:**

1. Minimum length of time the property can be rented
2. Percentage of homes in a community that can be tenant occupied
3. Minimum length of time the property can be owner occupied

As part of a HOA, you have to follow the rules. Each community is different. We advise homeowners and buyers to seek expert counsel when reviewing CC&Rs to ensure there are no gotchas when considering renting your property.



## Five Things Under \$5 That Can Improve Your Day Fivefold

As you make last-minute dashes to the store this holiday season, keep in mind that some small impulse buys can be guilt free. In fact, some inexpensive items purchased on the fly can give you something truly priceless: peace of mind.

First, get yourself a decent pen. Too much time spent using screens and other digital technology can leave you tired and drained. Nonelectronic writing devices can rejuvenate you.

Purchase good-quality pens that will make writing feel good. You may love writing so much that you'll revive the holiday tradition of sending cards and letters to friends and relatives.

Second, double the happiness with a good notebook or a paper day planner. Some planners even force you to carve out time for reflection and quiet.

The holidays, with mounds of wrapping paper and packaging, may give you a great opportunity to test out a third simple pleasure: a high-quality pair of scissors. Scissors that can quickly and cleanly cut through layers of tape, packaging, and the odd cardboard box can make opening tightly wrapped presents enjoyable and painless. They also come in bright colors, making holiday cheer last all year long.

For those not fond of returning to older technologies, there are still simple delights. Wireless earbuds are one such item. Listen to your playlist without cumbersome wires.

Last, if you're struggling to stay on budget this shopping season, try a simple budgeting tool. A free budgeting app can help keep your bank account in the black, both now and year-round.



### Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Just email me at [knelson@apr.com](mailto:knelson@apr.com) or call 408-718-7443 for the answer.

**What was the most popular dog name for 2018?**



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 quick professional evaluation.

I'll 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 me a call at 408-718-7443.

## Worth Reading

### How to Create a Homework Space

*By Amanda Knoles  
Education.com*

If you want to help your children become better students, consider creating a designated homework spot. You don't need to turn an entire room into a classroom. This article contains tips about how to turn closets, hallways, and even walls into study spaces. Remember to keep the area free of distractions, especially smartphones and televisions. Involve your children, too. Homework may not always be enjoyable, but creating a space to do it can be fun. More:

<https://tinyurl.com/worth10181>

### 51 Simple Holiday Decorating Tips

*By Lucy Fitzgerald  
Traditionalhome.com*

The tips in this slideshow can take the stress out of holiday decorating. Some involve traditional holiday décor, like evergreen and candy canes. Other suggestions include rearranging your usual holiday decorations, like placing ornaments in decorative glasses. But not everything has to be completely new for the holidays. It can be just as effective to use your house's current colors to inspire holiday decor. Read this list for ideas:

<https://tinyurl.com/worth10182>

### Four Tips to Keeping Your New Year's Resolutions

*Alexandra Kay  
RealSimple.com*

Keeping a New Year's resolution is possible. Half of the people who make these goals still stick to them six months later. Some basic strategies provided in this article can help. If you're looking for advice tailored to specific resolutions, this piece offers links to tips for maintaining goals about relationships, health, work, and money:

<https://tinyurl.com/worth10183>

### Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbor, friend or co-worker.

And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give me a call or send me an email!



# Attention Sellers: What Buyers Want



Today's television lineup is packed with shows about property ownership. From remodeling to purchasing to flipping homes, HGTV and other similar channels have inundated homeowners with ideas about real estate.

As a result, many buyers now have high expectations as they search for a potential home. They've seen the magazine-worthy houses on TV and that's what they want to find when they

view a home. Things should be picture perfect to grab their attention. Fresh paint, new kitchens and bathrooms, neutral décor, and modern conveniences top the lists of many buyers.

It's important for sellers to keep these standards in mind as they prepare to place their homes on the market. To get that coveted buyer, sellers must give buyers what they want. If they are looking for a picturesque setting, then give them one.

Invest in upgrades for outdated interiors. Allow a professional to stage the home. Take the time to boost curb appeal. Ask a real estate agent for recommendations to decide what changes would make the best investment.

As sellers make these changes, one

concept is essential to keep in mind: location. While upgrades can help sell a home, it's important that sellers not price themselves out of their neighborhood. Remodeling and redecorating should be appropriate for the location.

If a seller builds an addition and updates a kitchen with all the bells and whistles, the home might be beautiful, but also overpriced. The seller may have created a \$2M home in a \$1M neighborhood.

Again, it's important to consult with a local real estate agent who is familiar with the area. She can determine what projects should be completed to properly prep the home for the market.

With the right upgrades at the right budget, sellers are more likely to sell the home quickly and get top dollar for their property.

## Wrap Up the Holidays in a New Way

Wrapping holiday gifts shouldn't take as long as choosing the present. Nor should the paper cost as much as the gift it hides.

With the holidays nearly here and the wrapping of gifts on the horizon, you might want to get creative about how to wrap your gifts this year. And while you're being thoughtful of friends and family, you can be kind to the earth, too. Think recyclable.

Instead of expensive wrapping paper, how about using a large roll of craft paper? Whether it's the traditional brown or the attractively modern black, tie it up with butcher's string and paint directly on it or decorate the package with cookies hanging from the bow.



You might try hand-printing the paper by using doilies as stencils and spray painting them to create a wonderful, original design.

Recyclable shopping bags make great gift containers, and they generally cost far less than throwaway paper. Grocery bags decorated with twigs, confetti, crepe paper, or

ribbons also work well especially for those hard-to-wrap. Newspaper and old maps also make fun and creative gift wrap. Finished with a colorful bow or silver cupcake liners gathered into a flower, your gift will show you really care.

## Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

**What is a "buyer's market" and what is a "seller's market"?**

These terms are often thrown around in conversations about real estate, but they are often misunderstood.

In a seller's market, there is high demand for homes, which drives up property prices.

This demand is often caused by an influx of new residents, downward-trending interest rates, and low inventory/lack of new construction. A seller's market may also be created by a quick spike in interest rates. This can cause waffling buyers to take the plunge due to a fear that the upward trend will continue and they will lose their window of opportunity to buy.

On the flip side, reduced demand and declining home prices create a buyer's market.

A decline in demand can be caused by high unemployment, climbing interest rates, high inventory/new construction, and natural disasters.

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**Sudoku instructions:** Complete the  $9 \times 9$  grid so that each row, each column and each of the nine  $3 \times 3$  boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact me for the solution!

## Peppermint Brownies

- 2/3 cup oil
- 2/3 cup Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/3 cups powdered sugar
- 2/3 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon peppermint oil
- 3 candy canes, crushed

Heat oven to  $325^\circ$ . Grease a  $9 \times 9$  baking pan and line the bottom with parchment paper, allowing some to hang over the sides.

Heat the oil in the microwave until warm, then add the cocoa powder and whisk until combined. Set aside. Place the flour, salt, and baking powder in a small bowl. Set aside.

In a larger bowl, beat the eggs and both sugars until light and airy. Stir in the peppermint oil. Add the cocoa mixture and dry ingredients, alternating in two to three additions until all ingredients are fully combined and the mixture is smooth.

Transfer to the prepared baking pan and bake for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and sprinkle the crushed candy canes on top, then bake for another 10 minutes, until the brownies start to pull away from the edges. (FYI: A knife inserted in the middle will not come out clean.)

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**Real Estate Matters** is brought to you free by:

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