



Harbour Heights Real Estate News®

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Summer Vacation?

Years ago, when I was a grade school student we would start school after the Labor Day Holiday and almost every year a teacher would ask us to write an essay on "How I spent my Summer Vacation". I always dreaded that because after having two months off from school, and doing just what kids did during the summer, I thought that I didn't have very much to write about. Recently, I asked my grandson Cameron if he had to write a story about his summer vacation for school and he looked at me like I had two heads and said "why"?

Times Change. Well, I decided to write this month about how I spent the summer and about some very exciting and important happenings going on around the neighborhood.

Let's first talk about our real estate practice. I think possibly one of the more important tasks that we completed this summer was the overhaul of our website. Once you log on to our website you can't help but to notice the changes. Screen pages have been rearranged for easy access to our features which have been enhanced to accommodate our visitor's needs. The most significant upgrade is the addition of our IDX module MLS LIVE. This feature really gives the user the ability to customize

searches and save them, bring a search right down to the exact street that you want to live on and look at the particular home from an overhead view, another enhancement that we are working on now will enhance those features, it is the Blue Dasher and it provides a street view of your searches. We will roll that out in October, watch for the announcement. All of these upgrades continue to make shopping for real estate a much easier task.

Another feature that we added a few months back is Real Estate Radio™. If you have not taken the time to click on this feature and listen, you are missing out on valuable information; it is the CNN of real estate. Take the time to tune in and listen, I'm sure that the information you will hear will be of great benefit.

The advent of social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook etc. have made us realize that we have to change how we contact current and future customers with the fast moving pace of this new media. So, we have also dedicated a tremendous amount of time learning how the social networking site Facebook would benefit our business and community. We have created a site dedicated just for

Harbour Heights. The idea was to develop a site where neighbors could go to one spot on the internet to talk about their neighborhood. Find a tennis or golf partner, share a recipe, sign up volunteers for an event, or for businesses to advertise a special to the community. Become a fan at facebook.com/HHrealestate

and off you go. We think that besides the obvious business benefits for us, the community overall will see that more residents may find this as a very good way to keep up on happenings, and a way to stay in contact with some of our part time residents. We have mailed a post card to every home and business in Harbour Heights to announce both the enhancement of our website and the development of the Harbour Heights FaceBook site. Let's talk community. During the HH5K this past February, I had a conversation with a race participant who remarked that despite the cold weather, the park and the area in general really offer a lot for homeowners, "too bad, the park is getting run down". A week or so after the race I took the time to walk the entire park and take in the overall condition. I was able to find out that there is

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**Harbour Heights
Real Estate Run Down
2010**

Homes For Sale: 33
Homes under contract: 14
Homes sold: 21

Vacant lots For Sale: 80
Lots under contract: 2
Lots sold: 8
Give us a call to see any of these fine properties.

**Rediscover
Harbour Heights /
Punta Gorda, Florida**

GET READY FOR HARBOUR HEIGHTS THE MOVIE

One last thing that we have been working on this Summer is a 2 - 4 minute movie about our community. Some parts have already been shot and edited and we anticipate that we will have a premier on the Harbour Heights Face-Book site in early October.
See you on the red carpet!



Summer Vacation

a county committee that makes recommendations to the County Commission regarding repair, construction, and overall upkeep suggestions for parks. I spoke with the HH representative about presenting a "clean up" proposal to the committee. I was told in no uncertain terms that I had his support provided the project did not levy any type of assessment on property owners, I agreed, after all I thought that we were not getting our tax dollars worth to begin with. In July I presented a request on behalf of HH which was well received. At the August meeting a full presentation was made to the committee by the Parks Department regarding what needed immediate repair and maintenance, and what major construction was required. We now have a plan that will upgrade the park, improve drainage, and overall will enhance the beauty of HH in the future. It will not happen all at once but, watch for work being done in the near future and beyond.

Most people probably do not

give much thought to the bridge at the entrance to HH. About three years ago in the wake of the bridge collapse in the midwest I decided to see if the condition of our bridge was safe. I interviewed Tom O'kane Public Works Chief and Tom D'Aprille County Commissioner. I found that our bridge was "functionally obsolete" but relatively safe. Fast forward and the Bendorson Company is getting ready to break ground on their immense project along Harborview Road. I feel that the project will have a serious impact on our bridge. The good news is that the redesign and construction of a new bridge is provided for in the FY 2010-2011 County budget, paid for by gas tax dollars. Budget hearings begin this month so get out and voice your opinion to keep this project in the construction plan. Watch the paper for dates and time but please get there, it is important for the future and safety of our neighborhood.

HH5K 2011

There will be a meeting of the volunteer committee for the HH5K on September 15th at my home in Harbour Heights.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help with the many tasks that we have to prepare for, your time would be appreciated. We are expecting to have our best event yet and literally expect double the crowd of last year. Please give me a call for directions and details.

Steve 941-258-2891



Progress In The Recession

Have you noticed that the site of the old Woody Lee Tire center on Broadpoint has been cleaned and is under repair. I am told that an auto body and paint shop will soon occupy the premises. Also in that same area the former site of the Bill Scheetz Barber & Beauty Shop is also getting a facelift. The only information available right now is that a local partnership has taken possession and is contemplating its options. We'll keep our ear to the ground and keep you informed.



10 Cities For Steals On Retirement Property

Although the financial crisis has hammered retirement accounts, it has also converted a number of popular retirement destinations into bargains for homebuyers.

Indeed, the very states that took the brunt of the housing bust -- Florida, California, Nevada and Arizona -- also contain some of the nation's most enviable markets in which to retire. This development has handed seniors a chance to scoop up properties in many top-notch retirement spots at attractive prices.

To get a sense of which retirement markets offer the most compelling valuations, we obtained fourth-quarter 2009 price-to-income data for 384 metropolitan statistical areas from Moody's Analytics. The price-to-income ratio, a key yardstick of housing affordability, expresses the relationship between home values and earnings. For example, in a market with a price-to-income ratio of 2.5, median-priced homes sell for 2.5 times average household incomes.

By comparing a market's most recent price-to-income ratio with its longer-term averages, we can pinpoint areas that have become particularly affordable. Here is a look at 10 cities offering retirement property steals:

Bend, Ore.

Rank: 1 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.7 Perks: There are a number of activities that can keep seniors busy in Bend year-round, including hiking, mountain biking, skiing, fishing, boating, and volunteering, said Lester Friedman, president-elect of the Central Oregon Association of Realtors.

Las Vegas

Rank: 2 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.4 Perks: This is a sunny, low-tax community surrounded by golfing, gaming, fine dining and entertainment, said SalesTraq President Larry Murphy. "There hasn't been a better time [to buy here] in the last 12 years," he said.

Phoenix

Rank: 3 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.5 Perks: "You don't have the snow and the cold and dangerous weather here, and you have a lot of nearby shopping centers and other things that make it easier for people to sort of carry out what they want to do," said Jay Butler, an Arizona State University associate real estate professor.

Napa, Calif.

Rank: 4 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.7 Perks: Napa's beautiful wine country offers "an extraordinary quality of life." And with home prices having returned to 2002 levels, the area is ripe for seniors hunting for deals, said DataQuick President John Walsh.

Fayetteville, Ark.

Rank: 5 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.2 Perks: Fayetteville has low real estate taxes, natural splendor and is home to the University of Arkansas, said Steve Clark, president and CEO of the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce.

Punta Gorda, Fla.

Rank: 6 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.4 Perks: Punta Gorda is "very nice, very laid back, very quiet, [and has] excellent fishing" and boating, said Jack McCabe of McCabe Research & Consulting.

Burlington, Vt.

Rank: 7 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.7 Perks: Burlington provides "small-town comforts and small-town values in [a] community where [people] can also enjoy arts, fine food [and] performances that you wouldn't expect in a community of 39,000 people," said Yves Bradley, of Pomerleau Real Estate.

Fort Myers, Fla.

Rank: 8 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.0 Perks: This area has "more of a relaxed, laid-back, slower-paced environment with Midwestern values [that would be] very appealing to that kind of core of the country: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Iowa, Minnesota," said Jack McCabe of McCabe Research & Consulting.

Santa Fe, N.M.

Rank: 9 - Price-to-income ratio: 1.8 Perks: Attractions include great skiing, hiking, medical facilities and arts, as well as a rich cultural history. "Here we have this beautiful, sometimes cobalt-blue sky that sits on your shoulders," said Lois Sury, president of the Santa Fe Association of Realtors.

Santa Cruz, Calif.

Rank: 10 - Price-to-income ratio: 2.8 Perks: "Santa Cruz (and Napa) ... are trading at the exact same price they were eight years ago," said DataQuick President John Walsh. Median home prices in the California coastal community of Santa Cruz have plummeted more than 57 percent since 2007.

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