



Karen & "Noodles"

Learn all about "Short Sales" in my in-depth article on Page 2 of this month's issue. And where you can get a pair of "Positivity Pants" here on Page 1

Volume IV, Issue 2
Monday, 3:50 PM
Big Bear Lake, CA

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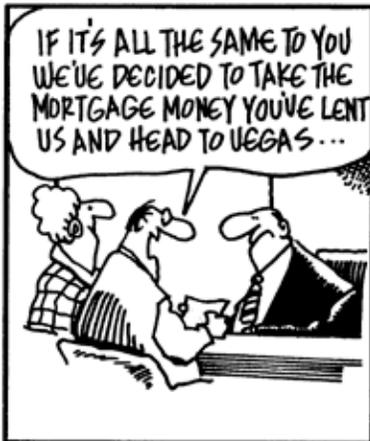
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"Insider Tips For Healthy, Wealthy & Happy Living..."

Could Optimism be the Secret to Living a Longer, Happier Life?

Recent scientific research now confirms the secret ingredient to a longer life is an optimistic attitude. And there's even better news...

Anyone can learn to be more optimistic.

A Dutch study found that optimistic people live longer; in fact, almost 30% longer than pessimists. Scientists found an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, heart attack, stroke, and weakening of the immune system associated with pessimism.

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic, reporting on a 30-year study, found that optimistic people live about 19 percent longer than pessimists do. These findings come from studying 839 people living in Minnesota. The researchers found people classified as "optimists" had significantly better survival rates. Optimists were less likely to develop depression, sought medical help when needed, and took better care of themselves.

With the increased stresses in our life, Tim and I found our need to vent. (see inset) So how can you become more optimistic? Here are six tips for becoming a more optimistic person:

- 1. Set Specific Goals.** A study of happy people found they set goals and consistently take action.
- 2. Project A Cheerful Voice.** Research has shown people feel the emotion they are acting. Use a positive voice.
- 3. Use Positive Language.** Use upbeat words: *opportunity, challenge, recharging, success, can do, solution.*
- 4. Practice Good Posture.** Optimists have good posture, stand tall, walk briskly, and take big steps.
- 5. Focus on Solutions.** When a difficult situation comes up, focus on the solution, and put it into action.
- 6. Be A Role Model.** When you act as a role model for your co-workers, employees, family, and friends, you'll become more optimistic.

Just by applying these six steps to your life, you can change your thinking, and reduce your risk of physical illness and live a longer, and more fulfilling life.

Get Yourself a Pair of "Positivity Pants!"

Sometimes you just have to blow off steam... Tim & I have found a method to reduce the negative energy we put out during a stressful day. We WAIT until the end of our day while we walk Noodles! The Official "Half Hour of Ranting" is open season for any and all rants, but when the walk ends, so must the rant.

If we start to complain at other times we remind each other to wait. By waiting, some of the things we might have complained about have lost their impact. By limiting the time and forum to complain we are able to maintain more positivity throughout the day. Surrounding yourself with negativity can be draining.

My Suggestion:

Try on a pair of Positivity Pants and see how they fit!

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Amazing & Strange Facts!

- Peanuts are one of the ingredients in dynamite!
- There are 293 ways to make change for a dollar.
- No word in the English language rhymes with **orange, silver or purple.**
- A cat has 32 muscles in each ear!
- Tigers have striped skin, not just striped fur!
- Al Capone's business card said he was a used furniture dealer.
- A dragonfly has an average lifespan of just 24 hours.
- John Lennon's first girlfriend was named Thelma Pickles.

Unusual Cleaning Tip!

Here's the Cream of Clean. To clean and polish aluminum pots and pans, simply fill them with water, add two tablespoons cream of tartar. Boil for five or ten minutes, then wash and dry as usual. You won't believe your eyes!

Save 81,000 Barrels of Oil While Doing the Dishes!

If every household in the U.S. replaced just one bottle of 25 oz. petroleum based dish washing liquid with a 25 oz. bottle of vegetable based product, **we could save 81,000 barrels of oil***. Enough to heat and cool **4,600 U.S. homes for a year!**

Tim and I have found several manufacturers who make a non-petroleum based dish soap and it works great!

*Source: Seventh Generation Natural Dish Liquid Label

Big Bear in April "Earth Month"

April is Earth Month and you can get the chance to show off your creative side by decorating your own Sierra Club Canvas grocery bag on April 12th at the Discovery Center. Use your bag on shopping trips to save valuable resources.

(909) 866-3437 (\$5 fee)

On April 19th you can volunteer to assist the Big Bear Ranger Station's Native Plant Nursery and Restoration program. (909) 382-2827 for information

Are You My Clients Of The Month?

Every month I choose a very special Client Of The Month. It's my way of acknowledging good friends and saying "thanks" to those who support me and my business with referrals, word of mouth, and repeat business.

This month's Clients Of The Month are Ernie & Sandy Best. The Bests found Noodles & Me on the Internet. They were looking for a special mountain retreat that would be a wonderful place to spend time with their grandchildren, friends & family. They are experienced in real estate investment and together we left no stone un-turned. Clients like Ernie & Sandy definitely make me a better agent and for that I thank them.

I am sending an El Jacalito Grill/Hacienda Restaurant Gift Card. ENJOY!
You might be my next Client Of The Month too! Watch for your name.

"Short Sales" Explained. Owing more than your home is worth!

If you purchased your home in the last couple of years, and put little or nothing down, it is very possible you owe more on your mortgage than your home's current value. Many borrowers are unaware that they can still sell their home even if the proceeds will be insufficient to satisfy all encumbrances on the home.

This scenario, in which the bank is willing to accept less than the full amount owed (short payoff), is called a "Short Sale".

Why would the bank accept less than the full amount they are owed?

Banks are for-profit enterprises, and are in business to make money. They want to minimize any losses they will take on their loan portfolios in order to improve their bottom line to keep the stockholders happy. When a borrower is facing financial hardship and will no longer be able to maintain the mortgage payments, the bank has to face some hard facts and make a decision. If they foreclose on the property, the process will take approximately four months from start to finish (in CA). During that time, payments are not being collected, and other costs are adding up; such as attorney fees for handling the foreclosure process, accruing interest on the loan, late fees, etc.

Once the property is foreclosed upon, if there are no acceptable bids at auction, the home then becomes bank-owned (REO). At this time, the bank usually needs to spend more money for property maintenance and possibly repairs needed to make it marketable. They then hire a Realtor to list the home, and continue accruing interest on the unpaid debt until it finally sells. In many cases, the bank will decide that accepting an offer today, is better than incurring the additional cost and expense of taking back the property, just to sell for the same amount or even less several months later.

There are some ramifications of a "Short Sale" that sellers need to be aware of. First, there can still be some negative effect on the seller's credit report though it is much less damaging than a foreclosure. This depends greatly on how the mortgage company chooses to report it. Also, there can be tax ramifications due to the forgiven debt. A bank can report the loss to the IRS, which can become taxable income to the seller. However, the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of 2007 provides exemption from this in some cases. Be sure to consult with your tax professional to fully understand how this could affect you.

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Famous Last Words...

If you're prominent in any field, be careful what you say. It just may become a famous quote...

- **"I'm just glad it'll be Clark Gable who's falling on his face and not Gary Cooper."** (Gary Cooper on his decision not to take the leading role in "Gone With The Wind.")
- **"Stocks have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau."** (Irving Fisher, Professor of Economics, Yale University, 1929)
- **"Everything that can be invented has been invented."** (Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899)
- **"Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?"** (H. M. Warner, Warner Brothers, 1927)
- **"This 'telephone-thing' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us."** (Western Union internal memo, 1876)

Could It Possibly Be TRUE?

Could you imagine working at a company with a little over 500 employees where...

- 29 have been accused of spousal abuse
- Seven have been arrested for fraud
- 19 have been accused of writing bad checks...
- 117 have bankrupted at least 2 businesses
- Three have been arrested for assault
- 71 cannot get a credit card because of their bad credit
- 14 have been arrested on drug charges
- Eight have been arrested for shoplifting
- 21 are current defendants in lawsuits
- In 1998 alone, 84 were stopped for DUI

Can you guess what organization could possibly have this type of record over the course of its history? It's the 535 members of your United States Congress...the very same group that perpetually cranks out hundreds upon hundreds of new laws designed to keep the rest of us in line!

Continued From Page 2...

From a buyers perspective there are several attractive aspects of a "Short Sale". The current California real estate market is price driven. The buyers that are out there are looking for value. Typically a "Short Sale" property is below market value, giving a buyer instant equity and a bit of a buffer against further price declines after their purchase. The predominant reason that buyers look at distressed home sales be it default, foreclosure or an REO is because they want a better price. With an increasing number of "Short Sale" and Foreclosure properties there are good opportunities. However, with those opportunities come some potential negatives to be aware of before deciding this is the type of property for you.

- 1) **Banks are slow to respond to offers**-Expect as much as 30-90 days to approve/deny requests
- 2) **Banks may not participate in costs associated with closing**-Such as Escrow Fees, Title, Termite, Repairs or Home Warranties
- 3) **Slow, Slow, Slow**-Rarely can be closed in 30 days -Can Take Months
- 4) **Stressful**-Uncertainty and Lost Time if "Short Sale" Request is Denied
- 5) **Properties Often Need Repairs**-Minor or Major

This valuable information was provided by Russell Foster of Extra Mile Financial, an experienced "Short Sale" negotiator and Mortgage Consultant I will be consulting with Russell on "Short Sale" and REO purchases to ensure my clients the best possible advantages when pursuing these types of properties. If you would like further information, just give us a call.

Would You Like a List of Foreclosures and Short Sales in Big Bear?

We have created an updated list of current short sale and foreclosure properties listed in Big Bear.

Call me at 909-866-9888 and I will happily forward you the listings.

"Who Wants To Win A Visa Gift Card?"

Take my Trivia Challenge and you could win too!

Guess Who Won Last Month's Trivia Question? Surprisingly enough, we had three winners! Two people called at the same time. Tim took one call while I was on the other line. Congratulations to: Barbara & Landa Oneal, Corinne & Tim Morin and Marie & Jim Smith.

The Body Of An Average Adult Has Approximately How Many Square Feet Of Skin?

- a) 82 sq. feet b) 58 sq. feet c) 18 sq. feet d) 24 sq. feet e) 126 sq. feet

No need to grab your tape measure - *the correct answer is "C," 18 square feet.* Thank you to the winners...enjoy your Home Depot Gift Cards!

HERE'S THIS MONTHS QUESTION:

How Many Toothpicks Can Be Produced From A Cord Of Wood?

- a) 75,000 b) 750,000 c) 7,500,000 d) 75,000,000 e) 750,000,000

Call Me Right Now With Your Answer!

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Random Thoughts on Stress...

I read this article that said the typical symptoms of stress are: eating too much, impulse buying and driving too fast...

Who are they kidding? That's my definition of a perfect day!

Helpful Hints To Make Homemaking Easier...

Throughout history, people have discovered tricks that can make life easier in the kitchen. Here are a few that have been passed down:

- Stuff a mini-marshmallow in the bottom of a sugar cone to prevent ice cream drips...
- Use a meat baster to squeeze your pancake batter onto a hot griddle and you'll get perfectly shaped cakes every time
- To keep potatoes from budding, place an apple in the bag where the potatoes are stored...
- To prevent eggs from cracking, add a pinch of salt to the water before hard-boiling...
- To get more juice out of fresh lemons and limes, bring them to room temperature and roll them under your palm against the kitchen counter before squeezing.

THANK YOU for reading my Service For Life! ® personal newsletter. I wanted to produce a resource that has great content and is fun and valuable to you. Your constructive feedback is always welcome.

AND... whether you're thinking of buying, selling or financing real estate, or just want to stop by and say "Hi," I'd love to hear from you...

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Know Someone Who Would Enjoy this Newsletter?

I like helping people, and I hope you enjoy reading my newsletter each month. If you'd like your friends, co-workers, relatives, business-acquaintances, etc. to receive a FREE subscription, just email their information to info@yourbigbearhome.com,

OR just call me at (909) 866-9888

and I'll make sure they receive a free subscription.

I'll also send them a note with their first issue letting them know that you were the thoughtful person who suggested they receive this newsletter. It's that easy!

Don't Get BURNED by the HELOC Freeze!

There is a growing trend among many mortgage lenders of freezing withdrawals from existing Home Equity Lines of Credit (HELOC). Bank of America just sent Tim and I a letter freezing our existing HELOC. We would have loved some advanced notice, in case we wanted to squirrel a little away. Keith Murphy, from Lower Our Rate.com has provided some great information on the subject:

Many savvy homeowners have their HELOC in place as a safety net for emergency purposes or tucked away in case a great real estate opportunity presents itself. HELOC's, though secured by your real estate, are treated by lenders as consumer credit. And just as a lender can revise the terms of your credit cards, or even cancel them, the same can be done with your HELOC.

Previously, HELOC withdrawals were usually only frozen for reasons such as bankruptcy, declining credit and payment problems. While these events can still cause a freeze, there is another factor that lenders are considering *more often today*: the value of your property. You should be aware that the lender retains the right to suspend or reduce the line of credit available if your property value falls below the appraised value used to originate the loan. Lenders are actively assessing properties and then suspending access for account holders who have seen a downward slide in their home value.

Most of us, in California are in a market that banks consider declining. As a result, access to your HELOC may be at risk. Your financial security and success are our highest priority. You may want to discuss your options with your financial advisor. If you do choose to access your HELOC, please be aware that you will be paying interest on any monies you access even if you haven't actually put the money to work.

This valuable information was provided by: Keith Murphy, senior loan advisor for "lowerourrate.com". If you would like further clarification or help, simply give us a call in the office at 909-866-9888

• • **BIG BEAR LAKE REPORT** • •

The lake officially opens April 1st!! The public launches are now open for your use and lake permits are available at the public launch ramps and at the Municipal Water District office just West of the Pine Knot district at 40524 Lakeview Drive. MWD reports that as of March 24th we are only 3'11" below capacity. (Some marinas may not open until May).

Only one month away (May 19-20) is the May Trout Classic. This event provides major funds for fish plants, artificial habitat structures, conservation projects and monthly tournaments for designated species. Organized and implemented in 1983, the May Trout Classic has returned Big Bear Lake to a trophy trout status. Call the Fishing Association of Big Bear Lake for information (909) 585-4007.