



Sandy Gross Sells Homes

Your Contra Costa County Real Estate Specialist

(925) 930-1540

The Economy and Local Real Estate

While nobody has a crystal ball to peer into the future, many economists now believe that our economy is finally positioned for a strong rebound. This is due to a combination of several factors:

- New tax cuts
- A weakened dollar (which makes U.S. exports more competitive)
- Falling interest rates
- Reduced energy prices.

In addition, manufacturers are seeing a strong increase in new orders which, combined with currently low inventories, will necessitate they increase production. This will ultimately help unemployment. A number of analysts expect the unemployment rate to peak at 6.4% and then begin declining, probably close to 5% by late 2004. Further adding to the mix is the recent interest rate cut by the Federal Reserve in late June.

But what do all these indicators mean for home prices in our area? Tax cuts give more people more money in their pockets. Low interest rates make homes more affordable for more buyers. As unemployment rates decline, consumer confidence increases and more people are in the market for large purchases, including a new home.

Is now the right time for you to make a home buying or selling decision? **Call me and I will help you decide whether now is the right time to make a move.**

Tips for Making an Offer

There are many different items that go into making an offer that will be taken seriously by a seller. These items require an in-depth understanding of the real estate and financial industries. It is always a good idea to work with a professional real estate agent early in your house-hunting process.



After you've decided on the perfect new home, we're ready to start the negotiation process with that first offer. There are several elements to a good offer:

• Realistic offering price

Your Realtor is the best person to help you decide upon a realistic price. When I assist my clients in making an offer, I examine many different factors, including homes sold in the neighborhood in the past six months and current market conditions. For example, if homes are selling quickly and multiple offers on one home are the norm, than your bid needs to be competitive.

• Realistic financing terms

Ideally, you should be preapproved for a loan. If you are preapproved, I will make sure the seller knows this. Being preapproved shows that you're a serious buyer and gives you an edge over buyers who have not taken this step. If you're in a hot seller's market, you should definitely be preapproved before you even consider making an offer. If you've chosen not to be preapproved, you may make an offer contingent upon approval of a mortgage with a specific rate and term.

In addition to those listed above, there are a number of other elements that are crucial to a good offer. These include:

- Inspection clauses
- Concessions (such as a new roofing allowance)
- Conveyances (items included in a sale)
- Deposit amount and deadlines

Call me anytime you are thinking of buying or selling a home. With over 18 years real estate experience in Contra Costa County, I can make the entire process run smoothly and help you get settled into your dream home in no time!



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975 Ygnacio Valley Road
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Walnut Creek, CA
Permit #503

**Karen Degen and Tom
Maneloveg
816 Casita Court
Danville, CA 94526**

If your property is currently listed with a real estate broker, this is not intended as a solicitation of that listing

Helpful Hints

Keep Your Cut Flowers Longer!

Want to keep your cut flowers for a longer period of time?

Take 2 tablespoons of white vinegar and 2 tablespoons of sugar and mix in a quart of water. Use this water in your flower vase. It should extend the life of your flowers for a few days longer! And, before you place the flowers in the vase, be sure to cut each stem at the bottom at an angle



Savor the Flavor with Diablo Dining

Fresh Fruit with Special Dip

The fruits used with this delicious dip are smart choices for a buffet, as they do not darken or discolor as they stand.

2 16-ounce dairy sour cream
1 16-ounce container frozen whipped dessert topping, thawed
¼ cup packed brown sugar
¼ cup amaretto
3 pounds green and/or red seedless grapes, separated into small bunches
3 pints strawberries
1 pound kiwi, peeled and sliced
2 to 3 dozen butter cookies or desired shaped cookies



In a large bowl gently stir together the sour cream, thawed topping, brown sugar, and amaretto. Cover and chill up to 24 hours. Transfer to a serving bowl. Serve with fruit and cookies. Makes about 9 cups (36 servings).

Do you have a recipe you would like to share with our readers? Call Sandy at 925-930-1540 with your favorite recipe.

Sandy Gross - Diablo Realty 925-930-1540