

Looking at both sides of the pre-sales home inspection coin

Home inspections have long played an important role in helping buyers identify home defects when negotiating a home purchase. Finding defects then, however, can put the seller in a bad negotiating position. In today's competitive real estate market, pre-sales home inspections are becoming a popular tool for sellers, too.

When selling your home, you want to put your home in the best possible position to sell quickly. When you schedule a pre-sales home inspection, you'll get

John Wilt

Dollars and Sense



a professional inspector's impartial opinion about any potential sales roadblocks.

With a pre-sales inspection, your home will be examined inside and out for structural defects such as cracked foundations, missing roof shingles, leaks in the attic, and life safety issues like electrical problems – all items that

can make or break a sale. If an inspector finds defects before the home is put on the market, you can make repairs before potential buyers ever visit your home.

It is recommended that you get the repairs done while you have time to get competitive quotes for the work. But even if you decide to sell your home without making the repairs, you must disclose the defects and you should get several repair estimates so you will know the cost to correct the problem. Providing repair estimates

from reputable tradesmen can reduce potential delays during the negotiation process.

If the pre-sales inspection shows no major defects, the inspection fee (usually around \$300) is money well spent. You may even be able to set a higher asking price. Be sure to get a written inspection report on the condition of your home. Your real estate agent can use it as a sales tool that provides unbiased information about your house. Having this data available can make the difference to a buyer considering an offer

for your home.

If you skip the pre-sales inspection altogether, be prepared for the buyer's inspection to find unexpected defects. And when this happens, both buyer and seller will need to quickly get repair estimates. Because negotiations will have time constraints, you won't have time to get careful estimates. You could be faced with an inflated repair estimate that can hurt your bottom line. Negotiations can even break down over repair costs and your buyer may opt to go with another house.

A pre-sales home inspection is the best way to determine the true value of your home. It can help you decide what to fix before you sell your home, save thousands in repair costs and get you a better offer for your house. Ask your real estate agent for the names of qualified inspectors.

John Wilt is a real estate broker and owner of RealStar Realty, with offices in Naperville, Oswego and Glen Ellyn. He may be contacted at 630-420-7400 or john@realstarrealty.com.

MORNING BRIEFING

Real estate agents honored for sales

Carol Gavalick, Jim Kock, Mary Beth Schultz and Elana Wittenburg, all Naperville sales associates with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, earned membership in the company's International Diamond Society.

Nine percent of the company's more than 127,700 sales associates worldwide achieve this level.

Engineer earns green building credentials

Brandon Fortier of KJWW Engineering Consultants earned accreditation from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program by passing a certification exam.

Fortier is a mechanical engineer in KJWW's Naperville office, where he has worked for three years. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is a member of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

Lawyer elected to bar association assembly

Naperville attorney Fred Spitzzeri was elected to a third term on the assembly of the 35,000-member Illinois State Bar Association. The assembly is the association's governing body.

Spitzzeri is a Naperville Sun columnist.

Nicor employees volunteer locally

Employees of Naperville-based Nicor participated in the 11th annual Volunteer Day May 19.

Projects included landscap-

ing and beautifying the headquarters of United Cerebral Palsy of Will County, as well as its two Joliet group homes.

Employees conducted appliance safety inspections and the company gave a \$6,000 grant to the organization for energy-efficiency projects.

Volunteers worked on 26 sites in 19 communities across the state, including the DuPage Children's Museum and the Conservation Foundation's McDonald Farm.

Real estate agent earns certificate

Irv Scherman of Naperville earned Cartus Network Referral Specialist certification, a two-year certificate involving coursework and an exam, that is part of the Certified Agent Advantage program, available only to members of the Cartus Principal Broker Network.

He is an employee of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage.

The certification covers topics including helping customers research communities and find a new home.

Country agents noted for achievement

Country Insurance & Financial Services agents Michael Zaur of Naperville, with offices in Naperville; Jim Van Ham of Naperville, with offices in Lisle; Rich Mohawk of Plainfield, with offices in Lombard; and Hieu Tran of Bolingbrook, with offices in Lombard; Peter Minus of Carol Stream, with offices in Wheaton; and agency manager Jeff Orman of Batavia, with offices in Countryside; were named to the company's All American team.

The employees are among a group of 372 Country agents and agency managers who qualified for the award.

Van Ham was also named to the organization's National Advisory Council, made up of top performing agents, agency managers and district directors.

Recruitment ad firm receives 11 awards

Shaker Recruitment Advertising & Communications, with offices in Oak Park, received top creative honors at the Staffing Management Conference & Exposition's Annual Creative Excellence Awards, held in New Orleans in April.

The company won 11 Creative Excellence Awards – three first place prizes, three second place awards, four third place awards and one honorable mention.

Shaker's services include recruitment advertising, interactive communications, employer branding, employee communications, and global advertising.

New associate named at Joliet law firm

Bradley Hammond was named an associate in the Joliet law firm of Michael W. Hansen, P.C.

Hammond, a Naperville resident, is a graduate of Illinois State University and Southern Illinois University Law School and specializes in probate and estate planning, business formation and real estate transactions.

Real estate agent joins Wheaton firm

Weichert Realtors – Kingsland Properties added Jack Norris to its Wheaton office sales team.

Norris is a member of the Realtor Association of West/South Suburban Chicagoland

and holds a bachelor's degree from the Moody Bible Institute. Before working in real estate, he worked in the precision-machined components industry with automotive applications.

Consultant honored for sales, service

Steve Below, a financial consultant in Naperville, is among 53 financial consultants and financial advisors within U.S. Bancorp Investments and Insurance who received the 2006 Five Star Elite President's Club Award.

The award is given to employees who rank in the top of their district in sales and display outstanding leadership qualities and client dedication.

Jaycees recognize two area businesses

Two local businesses received awards from the Naperville Jaycees in May.

Hitchcock Design Group, a landscape architecture and land planning firm with offices in Naperville and Chicago, received the Naperville Jaycees 2007 Distinguished Service Award in the business category.

Dr. Laura Bokar received the Distinguished Service Award in the Wellness Category for 2007. She founded Fox Valley Institute for Growth and Wellness, which offers counseling services, in 2001.

Doctor honored for cancer patient work

The Visiting Nurse Association of Fox Valley honored Dr. Allen Bloom at a special lun-

cheon in May, recognizing him for his dedication and commitment to the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program.

The state program benefits uninsured women who meet financial and age guidelines.

Bloom performed procedures for more than 100 women over the past year-and-a-half who have been diagnosed with breast and cervical cancer through the program.

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SHOWTIMES FOR JUNE 1 - 3

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END (PG-13)
10:00AM 11:00AM 11:30AM 12:00 12:30 1:00
1:30 2:00 2:40 3:10 3:40 4:10 4:50 5:20
6:05 6:30 7:00 7:30 8:00 8:30 9:00 10:00 10:30

GRACIE (PG-13)
10:50AM 1:20 4:00 6:40 9:10

KNOCKED UP (R) 10:40AM 12:50 1:40
3:50 4:40 6:50 7:40 9:50 10:40

MR. BROOKS (R)
10:20AM 1:10 4:20 7:20 10:20

BUG (R) 10:10 PM

WAITRESS (PG-13)
10:30AM 1:45 4:15 6:45 9:20

SHREK THE THIRD (PG)
10:10AM 11:15AM 11:50AM 12:40 1:50
2:30 3:30 4:30 5:00 6:15 7:10 7:50 8:45 9:40

SPIDER-MAN 3 (PG-13)
11:40AM 2:50 6:20 9:30

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