life@home

Century 21 Bill Nye Realty, Inc.

The CENTURY 21 Newsletter 9/1/2009

A Special Message

Snowbirds are trickling back to Zephyrhills. Just got a contract on one of my homes in a 55+ subdivision, and may be getting another one on a different home too. More phone calls and e-mails also forewarn that this could be a busy season and some of the worst of the economic slump could be behind us. Many indicators are pointing to a brighter future! Call me if you want to explore the market more. **813-783-4444**

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Thinking of Renovating? What Improvements Give You the Most Bang for Your Buck?

When Robin Benedick remodeled the kitchen and bath in her three-bedroom, 40-year-old home in Hollywood, Fla., she wasn't thinking about selling. She spent about $40,000 to update the master bath and kitchen with new fixtures and neutral colors. "The changes we made were definitely worth it because they improved the value of our house and upgraded it," she says.

Turns out Benedick did exactly the right thing to not only make her house more comfortable but to improve its sales value in the future.

Updates make a house more marketable, says Michael Hydeck, a remodeler in Telford, Pa., and vice president of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry. Buyers do not want to be inconvenienced by remodeling and prefer newer kitchens and baths, he adds.

According to Remodeling magazine's 2008-09 Cost vs. Value Report, a midrange bathroom remodel will recoup 74.6% of its cost on sale—even more than a bathroom addition, which nets only 63.5% of cost. A major kitchen remodel will recoup 76% of its cost.

With money tight, however, many homeowners can't afford a major remodel. Still, experts say there are things you can do to update your home and improve its ability to sell. Hydeck recommends cosmetic changes such as refacing cabinets, replacing countertops, tile or appliances, and painting.

According to Remodeling, improvements that improve a home's energy efficiency also add to its value because buyers understand these updates will save them money on their utility bills every month. As a result, replacement of vinyl siding will recoup 80.7% of its cost on sale, and wood window replacement will recoup 77.7%.

Before you embark on a remodeling project, consult with a reputable local remodeling firm about construction costs—and call our CENTURY 21 Office to speak with an agent who can tell you about home prices in the area.

Five Maintenance Issues Homeowners Shouldn't Ignore

Sure, times are tough, and money is tight. It may be tempting to put off home repairs. And while it's okay to rebuild your patio when you get that long-awaited bonus, some repairs can't be ignored because they can cause thousands of dollars in damage--or worse, they might affect your family's health.

The June 2009 issue of Consumer Reports listed five "red flags of home maintenance" that need immediate attention--even in a bad economy.

1. Keep water away from the house. Gutters, downspouts and leaders collect rainwater and move it away from the house. Check the gutter system seasonally. Also, make sure that soil slopes away from the house.

2. Inspect the roof. Use binoculars to spot damaged or missing shingles, and check for cracks around chimneys, skylights and roof valleys, all common sources of leaks.

3. Keep bugs out. Termites and carpenter ants can do major damage, so inspect the exterior of your home for signs of their presence, and keep mulch, firewood and shrubbery away from the foundation.

4. Avoid mold. Inspect the interior of the house for signs of mold. If indoor mold covers less than 10 square feet, you can treat it yourself with a bleach solution. Professional help is needed for larger areas.

5. Seal foundation cracks. Hairline cracks can be filled with epoxy. For cracks wider than 3/16", however, consider hiring a structural engineer to inspect. These can be a problem.

Best Place to Live

In its August 2009 issue, Money magazine named Louisville, Colo. as the best small town to live in due to its strong economy, great schools, affordable homes, low crime rate and more. Rounding out the top three are Chanhassen, Minn. and Papillion, Neb.

Featured Listings

35928 Hermoso Zephyrhills, FL 33541

MLS ID: t2374087

Located in the Casa del Sol mobile home subdivision, this spacious and furnished 2 bedroom/2 bath home is ready for its new owners. It has an "open plan" with 1,268 square feet of heated and cooled living space. Nearly the entire front half of the home is one large inviting space. Though the home is sold furnished, there is still ample room for your own items. The vaulted ceilings accent the roomy feeling here. A bank of windows ensure that this area is always light and bright. Just what you expect in Florida! There is an easy flow from the huge living room to the dining area and its nearby well-appointed kitchen. All the major applicances are included in the sale. You will have more than enough cabinet space and counter-tops for preparing delicious meals. There is even a snackbar where informal meals can be enjoyed. The master bedroom has a large mirrored closet and its own "en-suite" bath with a garden tub and separate shower. This master is a great spot where you can retreat from the hustle and bustle of the world. The laundry room is located inside the home and also has a built-in home office with desk and cabinets. How convenient! The washer and dryer are also included in the sale of this home. Attached to the home is a one-car carport to shade your vehicle from the sun. There is also a large Florida room where you will enjoy entertaining friends and neighbors, or perhaps just relaxing. Behind the Florida room is an even larger workshop/utility/storage area. This room is huge! A perfect place to work on projects, keep an extra home freezer, store seasonal items and tools, etc. I am sure you will find many uses for this versatile space. The low homeowner association fees that are currently just $25/month (as of 6/2009) give you access to the community's clubhouse, pool, and shuffleboard courts. This is a very social subdivision, and it seems like there is always someone to do things with. This is not a rental park. You own the land under the home. Sorry, but in Casa del Sol, no pets are allowed. Attractively priced at just $79,900, this furnished home is move-in ready and is awaiting its new owners. Could you be the ones? Call today for more information or to arrange a tour.

0 Forbes Road Zephyrhills, FL 33541

MLS ID: t2381334

I have listed this building lot on Forbes Road in Zephyrhills, Florida. It is located just to the south of Proud Mockingbird Road and north of the Lynbrook Drive turn-off. The county says it can be used for either a single-family home or a modular home. However, according to them, no mobile homes can be placed here. County says lot size is just over 3/4 of an acre, but owners have no survey so buyers should confirm this parcel size if it is important to them. Due to its location just to the east of Zephyrhills and only a bit off of County Road 54 you can have easy paved access to Zephyrhills, Lakeland, Plant City, Tampa, and Dade City. There is a Florida Power (Progress Energy) easement along the south side of the property. Buyers and agents should use a reasonable feasibility period to confirm to their satisfaction the lot's dimensions, area, size, easement placements, easement restrictions, zoning requirements, and any/all other matters of concern to them. Priced at just $44,900 this could be your place under the Florida sun.