



Real Estate Matters

March

Corned Beef and Cabbage

- 3 pounds corned beef brisket with spice packet
 - 10 small red potatoes
 - 5 carrots, peeled and cut into 3-inch pieces
 - 1 large head cabbage, cut into small wedges
1. Place corned beef in large pot or Dutch oven and cover with water. Add the spice packet that came with the corned beef. Cover pot and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Simmer approximately 50 minutes per pound or until tender.
 2. Add whole potatoes and carrots, and cook until the vegetables are almost tender. Add cabbage and cook for 15 more minutes. Remove meat and let rest 15 minutes.
 3. Place vegetables in a bowl and cover. Add as much broth (cooking liquid reserved in the Dutch oven or large pot) as you want. Slice meat across the grain.

(from allrecipes.com)

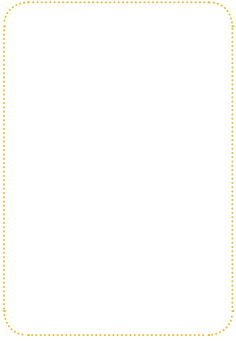
8 reasons to hire an agent to sell your home

The sale of your home is one of the biggest financial transactions of your life, and you want it to go smoothly. Here are some important reasons to have a professional working for you:



1. **The price is right.** We optimize your listing price by preparing a comparative market analysis to determine the value of your home.
2. **We'll handle the paperwork.** Real estate forms sometimes come with a lot of jargon – a good agent is able to explain what each part of the form does for you. It's all about transparency!
3. **Advertising that works.** We know how to promote your listing. With quality marketing, an agent reaches a wider audience and finds you a buyer.
4. **Agent expertise.** Working in real estate gives us exclusive knowledge and resources to sell homes successfully. Let us share this valuable information with you!
5. **Save yourself time.** Agents communicate with buyers on your behalf, handle all sale interactions and bargain to get you the best price.
6. **Professional advice.** Agents are privy to the legal aspects of real estate. We help reduce your liability by giving you direction.
7. **We'll make your home look its best.** Proper staging is vital to attracting buyers. An agent determines what homebuyers want and ensures your home makes a good impression.
8. **Access to a multiple listing service.** Our network can give your listing the exposure it needs to find you motivated buyers.

If you're serious about selling your home, call me today to set up a listing appointment!



6 tips when shopping for a neighborhood

There's more to shopping for a home than just looking for a house. A big part of the purchase is about the neighborhood and surroundings.

So before you move, know what to look for:

1. **Where is it?** The cardinal rule of real estate is location. Is the house close to schools, new jobs, parks, downtown or public transportation? Figure out the locations and distances that are most important.
2. **Keep your budget in mind.** Don't let high-gloss brochures interfere with your bottom line. Luxury neighborhoods are beautiful, but make sure you're financially comfortable buying a home in a fancy location before you commit.
3. **Thriving or declining?** Is your dream neighborhood improving, or settling into obsolescence? Are the neighbors keeping up their properties? Is there an abundance of 'For Rent' signs?
4. **Extra fees.** If your dream neighborhood has a homeowners' association (HOA), make sure you budget for monthly HOA dues.
5. **Holding value.** Shopping fixer-uppers? Remember not to improve the property beyond the rest of the neighborhood. Putting too much work into your house may mean you won't recoup all your investment when you sell.
6. **Go before you buy.** Explore your new neighborhood outside of the open house times. Are the streets usually full of cars? Is there a drummer or noisy dog living next door? Talk to potential neighbors and get the scoop before you submit an offer.

Of course, you don't have to find your dream house on your own. If you or someone you know is ready to buy a new home, **call me today!**

Your March Maintenance Tip

A roof's condition weighs significantly on the value of your home. A few simple criteria will help you determine if it's time to repair or replace.

How old is your roof?

A normal roof's lifespan ranges from 20 to 50+ years. Asphalt shingles generally last 20 to 30 years. Wood shingles can remain intact for up to 40 years. Newer synthetic materials have a life of 50 or more years.

Has your neighborhood experienced any extreme weather conditions?

Heavy hail and powerful storms can rip a roof apart. Even if the shingles aren't terribly damaged, it is wise to get an inspection. Sometimes only a few shingles need to be replaced, but the effort will save the roof from even greater damage in the future.

Have your neighbors started replacing their roofs?

Generally all roofs in a neighborhood will begin wearing out at the same time. If you notice your neighbors beginning to upgrade their roofs, it's probably a good time to begin gathering quotes.

Aside from replacing an old roof to better protect your home from the elements, it is important to keep up with the value of comparable properties. A new roof can return up to 65% of the cost as value added to the home, and priceless peace of mind from the risk of leaks.