

News You Can Use

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Slowing Down: The Fast Route to Happiness?

Simplicity may well be the defining value of 2012. With money tight, most of us are homing in on essential needs.

Ironically, while many of us are “going simple,” we still find ourselves frantically busy. We still need our Twitter accounts and smartphones. We work more hours, cram too much into our days and find it hard to sit still.

Hence, the “slowdown” movement. Everyone from the slightly off-the-wall International Institute of Not Doing Much to psychologists and our family doctors suggest we slow down.

In 5 Reasons to Slow Down Your Life Today, and How to Do It, blogger Henrik Edberg offers simple suggestions for slowing down.

One is to lower your stress by continuing to do the things you do but doing them more slowly.

Running from errand to errand? Don’t stop. Just slow your pace. Take a deep breath and force yourself to relax.

But after years of pushing ourselves farther and faster, will we be able to slow down? And if we do, will we fall behind? Will we miss out on Facebook or life?

Maybe, but does it really matter? The simplicity movement sorts out what’s important. The slowdown movement helps us achieve it. What’s not to like about that?

How to Prepare for the Spring Housing Market

Spring is the time of year when sellers and buyers gird up for what has traditionally been the most important season for buying or selling a home. Following are some ways to prepare:

Sellers

Sellers should be aware that there’s a lot of competition for buyers in the spring. That means sellers should do everything possible to differentiate their home from others, including the following:

- Polish windows and floors, rake the yard, mow the lawn, and add flowers in containers.
- Wash blinds and curtains and have carpeting cleaned.
- If a seller has spent the winter renovating to sell, new pictures should be taken to show the renovated space to best advantage. Be sure to add the new information to the feature sheets and advertising of real estate agents.
- Consign dark linens and towels to storage and add bright or pastel accents in baths and bedrooms.

Buyers

Buyers should have a good idea of what they want, how much they can spend and the neighborhoods they’re interested in. Buyers should also:

- Have a network of experts in place, such as a real estate agent, lawyer, home inspector and mortgage broker.
- Obtain a copy of their credit report, and if there are errors, clear them up.
- Approach several lenders for preapproval.
- Decide before shopping for a home the most they’re prepared to pay, and resist the urge to pay more.

Houses for Sale

Sold Houses

3313 S 28th St	\$209,900	2818 S 25th St	\$208,500
3035 O’Reilly Dr	\$244,500	3009 S 26th St	\$238,500
3210 S 27th Dr	\$249,500	3084 Sheridan Blvd	\$366,000
3028 Woodsdale Blvd	\$272,000	2845 Manse Ave	\$440,000
3421 S 28th St	\$274,900	1901 S Pershing Rd	\$215,000
3830 Sheridan Blvd	\$274,900		
2035 S 33rd St	\$289,000		
2821 Sheridan Blvd	\$334,900		
2801 Manse Ave	\$387,500		
2712 Manse Ave	\$389,000		
3334 Woodshire Pkwy	\$259,900		

"Getting to know You..."

Justin Carlson grew up in our neighborhood and with his wife, Liz Ring Carlson have two children, Britta age 5 and Annika age 2 1/2. The Carlson's are also expecting their third child slated for arrival this summer. Growing up here Justin has seen the neighborhood change over the years. As a child he remembers biking down to Tom Whitcomb's Pharmacy for candy, many lazy summer afternoons at Irvingdale Pool and to this day still refers to Sun Mart as Hinky Dinky.

Justin is a financial advisor with Wells Fargo Advisors and enjoys helping his clients develop and implement strategies for building wealth and realizing their financial goals.

Justin has always recognized the value of giving back and volunteering. He has served on numerous boards and committees over the years and currently serves on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, President of the CCNA, active with The Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and Lincoln YPG and is a volunteer with leadership Lincoln. He has also been active in a variety of local, state and national political campaigns.

Most recently, he and several other members of the CCNA board coordinated the neighborhood's first annual Holiday Fun Run 5K. With over 230 runners and 50 plus post party friends. The course ran through the neighborhood and after runners completed the course they were welcomed to a post party in the Country Club Ballroom. Feedback from runners, participants and guest was extremely positive especially around how festive it was in spreading holiday cheer and in fostering positive neighborhood friendship and fellowship.

*Thanks for you time, Justin! It's nice to know a member of our neighborhood a bit better.

*Don't forget to send us an email if you are a business owner or have other talents you would like to share in our "getting to know you..." column!

SPECIAL ALERT

This past month has been busier than ever. We are seeing many more buyers and very active open houses. I have numerous people looking for homes in the Country Club so if you are even barely considering a change, let me know.

The market is so primed due to the following:

- very low inventory of houses for sale
- Historically Low Interest Rates and it is Spring time!!!

Grace's Jokes

What kind of shoes are made out of banana peels?

*Slippers

How do you catch a rabbit?

*Hide behind a tree and make a sound like a carrot.

THANKS FOR A GREAT YEAR

Thank you to all of my clients, friends and family for helping me become the "RISING STAR" in Woods Bros Realty this past year. The award is for having the largest volume of sales in the first twelve months of business.

Referrals are a realtors best friend, so a special thanks to all of you for trusting me enough to tell your friends about me.

I wanted to add another big accomplishment and that was reading books 1-6 of the Harry Potter series. Each night I get to share this special time reading to Grace. (When I give out she takes over!)

All of you that read this know that I love to garden. As such, I have accepted the vice-president's position on the board of COMMUNITY CROPS. You can rest assured that you will hear much more about local food being grown in schools, vacant lots and back yards up and down the Country Club.

Worth Reading

Less Stuff, More Happiness

By *Graham Hill*

TED

Graham Hill, writer, designer and founder of treehugger.com, is all about less is more. He makes the case for taking up less space and lays out three rules for editing your life. Ergo, viewers are introduced to his crowd-sourced, 420-square-foot Manhattan apartment that evolved out of a project called Life Edited. This brilliant space includes a Murphy bed, movable walls, and a coffee table that grows up and out to seat 10.

More: <http://tinyurl.com/65897nd>

Three Financial Lessons Gen Z Needs to Learn to Survive

By *Nancy Anderson*

Contributor

Forbes

Generation Zers (children born between 1997 and 2004) have a problem. They're facing one of the most uncertain periods in recent memory, yet they're used to instant gratification. They also face significant changes in approaches to retirement planning that will be institutionalized by the time they reach the workforce. The solution: don't indulge them but model values such as self-sufficiency, saving and even the out-of-fashion puritan work ethic.

More: <http://tinyurl.com/7xj55ko>

6 Steps Successful People Take

By *Mike Michalowicz*

OpenForum.com

This is pretty much the usual advice like setting goals, getting started, taking action, thinking positive and being determined, until Michalowicz introduces "the law of attraction," whereby your thoughts draw success to you. Or as the Buddha says: "What we think, we become."

More: <http://tinyurl.com/7b9cgdg>

Green Your Home: Save Now and Profit Later

With apologies to Sesame Street's Kermit the Frog, it *is* easy being a green homeowner. And it may be profitable, too.

To green your home you need to invest in a number of energy and water-saving measures that result in lower energy costs. While the initial cost of your green investment may be higher, greening your home can give you an immediate saving of 30% to 60% off your energy costs. Incentives offered by government and local electricity distribution companies will help too.

Best of all, when it's time to sell, you've increased your home's resale value - some say by as much as 10%.

A simple change of habits can start you

on the road to a green home: For example, toasters, microwaves, computers and TVs steal "phantom power" – even when they're not in use. Unplug them for lower electricity bills.

Easy changes

Going greener may be as simple as installing energy efficient lighting, upgrading your appliances to Energy Star-rated products and switching to low-flow toilets and water-saving shower heads

Outside, planting large deciduous trees on the west and south sides of your home moderates the temperature. The result: lower heating and cooling costs and an attractively landscaped yard.

To kick it up a notch, you could really reduce costs with energy efficient windows and insulation. A high-efficiency furnace will quickly pay for itself; as will an energy friendly air-conditioner.

You may even opt for installing solar panels to reduce your dependence on the electricity grid.

And when you're renovating, why not consider a green reno, using toxin-free building materials, cork or bamboo floors and low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) paint.

Ready to sell? Don't forget to trumpet your green investments. They may just sell your home.

3028 Woodsdale

Now \$272,000

This is a Classic Country Club stone two story home featuring the character of the past with all the modern amenities including a new high efficiency furnace and heat pump, electronic & UV air cleaner, water softener, water heater and dishwasher. With a new roof and porch in 2010 and remodeling in the sun room/office, this home has it all: updated kitchen with corian counter tops, breakfast nook, spacious formal dining with built-in hutch, shining wood floors, beautiful bath areas and nicely finished family room in basement with the second wood burning fireplace. The yard is an extension of the home's character with massive oak trees and extensive perennial landscaping in the private, fenced backyard. A must see.



Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

How should I prepare my home for sale?

You want your home to show well, which means getting rid of clutter and making sure it is clean, neat and well maintained both inside and outside.

1. Remove all clutter. Pack or store anything you do not need. Donate the rest to your favorite charity or having a garage sale.
2. Store your valuables or lock them up in a safe place. This includes jewelry, collectibles, artwork and medicines in your medicine cabinet.
3. Eliminate smoking odors and pet odors.
4. Paint the inside and outside with neutral colors, steam clean carpets or replace with new carpeting or flooring. Stage the furniture and accessorize with pillows, plants, candles and other accessories.
5. Curb appeal matters. Manicure your lawn and trim trees and shrubs. Plant new flowers. Mend broken fences or gates.

Four Tech Tips to Make Your Life Simpler

The world of technology moves quickly.

Following are four products that will help simplify your tech life:

- Have an iPhone? Download the magicJack application to make free local and long distance calls in North America.
- Check out StumbleUpon, a search engine that lets you save the cool photos, videos and stories you find online. You can also check out what other users have saved.
- Want to tag, share and edit photos with family and friends without making them public? Try Fotobounce, a photo-organizing program with face recognition.
- Protect your phone, laptop and tablet from theft. Download Prey, a program that tracks the location of your products and helps you find them if they get lost or are stolen.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

David Kaseman

	5	1	4					
		2	8		3	5	4	6
			2			7		8
		3			1			
		6				3		
			5			1		
4		5			7			
6	1	7	3		9	8		
					4	9	7	

Sudoku instructions: Complete the 9x9 grid so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact me for the solution!

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California Chicken Salad

For lunch or dinner this recipe from SonomaDiet.com is a big hit! So easy to make & includes 4 food groups. (Sally, this one passes the test!)

Ingredients

1 lb cubed cooked chicken breast
 1 small Granny Smith apple, cored & chopped
 3/4 cup chopped celery (2 stalks)
 1/3 cup chopped green onions
 2 Tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
 2 Tbsp light dairy sour cream
 3 Tbsp red wine vinegar
 2 Tbsp light mayonnaise or salad dressing
 1/2 tsp kosher salt
 1/8 tsp freshly ground black pepper
 2 Tbsp chopped walnuts, toasted
 6 cups torn mixed salad greens

Instructions

In a large bowl combine chicken, apples, celery, green onions and parsley. Stir in sour cream, red wine vinegar, mayonnaise, kosher salt, and pepper. Stir walnuts into chicken mixture, Divide greens among 4 serving plates; top with chicken mixture.

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Thanks for reading! If you'd like to tell me what you think about this newsletter, or if you're thinking of buying or selling real estate, please get in touch.