



## Area Real Estate News

Ideas and information for home, family, community and good old-fashioned fun

### Central Texas tops the list for best places to buy

You have probably heard the "doom and gloom" being reported by the media, but before you throw in the towel, it's a good idea to really stop and read between the lines if you are contemplating a new home purchase or considering selling your existing home. Although we have seen a slight "slowdown" in Central Texas since last year, the median home price has actually risen 2% for the area. The largest drop in sales has actually been in homes under \$150,000, due to the fact that those home buyers are among the group most effected by the recent mortgage fallout.

Folks are also concerned about employment and the economy in general and the planned Dell layoffs have definitely added to this concern. However, since the layoffs are directed at the manufacturing plant and not at corporate headquarters (workers vs. management) it's reasonable to expect that these layoffs will have the largest impact on the rental market and sale of homes in the under \$150,000 price range.

While we don't have a crystal ball, it should also be noted that after the high-tech bubble of 2000 burst, Austin seems to have learned its lesson and now has a much more diversified workforce including bio-tech and healthcare. That confidence must be shared by others, since *Entrepreneur.com* recently picked three Central Texas cities as the top places to buy a home in the U.S.

**Killeen** was picked for having the lowest average home price in any market in the nation while still maintaining quality and **Austin** and **Round Rock** were cited for their job growth and stable home prices, despite the downturn nationwide.

### Special points of interest:

- 3 cities in central Texas are best places to buy a home in the U.S.
- Feds Take a Breather
- Why God Made Moms
- Spring Cleaning made Easy

So, what does this mean for you? Just make sure you have all the facts before you make a decision about buying or selling. There are tons of resources available, but one thing that isn't too reliable are those web sites that "calculate" a home's value. Did you know that they base their figures off of reported sales prices? The problem is in the state of Texas, individuals are not required to report the price they paid for a home to the taxing authorities, so the "estimates" or "calculations" on those web sites can be guesses, at best.

If you are planning on buying a home, enlist the help of a professional Realtor to make sure you are getting the home at a fair price. And if you're selling a home, get a professional opinion about the value of your home.

### Wall Street Journal's Greg Ip Says Fed May Take "Breather" After Cut on April 30th



Expectations for a pause in U.S. monetary policy were bolstered by an article in Thursday's Wall Street Journal, where noted Fed watcher Greg Ip said, "The Federal Re

"It is almost certain to signal continued concern about economic growth and a willingness to cut rates further if the outlook worsens," Ip wrote.

Concerns about inflationary pressures "means the option of standing pat will likely also be on the table," Ip wrote.



## Mortgage Money Woes

noted Fed watcher Greg Ip said, "The Federal Reserve is likely to cut its short-term interest rate by a quarter of a percentage point next week -- but then may be **ready for a breather.**"

However, the Journal article also points out that a pause in rate cuts would not necessarily signal the end of the financial turmoil in the U.S. economy.

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The FOMC will announce its rate decision on April 30. Economists expect a 25bp cut to bring the Fed funds rate to 2.00%.

Ip also said the Fed is concerned that further easing could aggravate rising inflation expectations as food and oil prices soar to new records.

Ip wrote.

Fed fund futures imply a 90% chance of a 25bp cut with a 10% chance of no change. Looking further out, futures show a 19.8% chance of a second cut at the June 25 FOMC meeting, unchanged from a day earlier.

By Adam Button and edited by Nancy Girgis  
CEP News Ltd. 4/28/08

***Pssst . . . Don't keep us a secret , , ,***

**The greatest compliment we can receive is your referral . . . So, if you know someone looking to buy or sale a home, please let us know and we will be happy to contact them.**

### On the Lighter Side . . .

With Mothers Day right around the corner, we thought this was a great time to share these little tidbits learned by asking 2nd graders a few questions about Mom — enjoy!

#### **Why did God make mothers?**

1. She's the only one who knows where the scotch tape is.
2. Mostly to clean the house.
3. To help us out of there when we were getting born.

#### **How did God make mothers?**

1. He used dirt, just like for the rest of us.
2. Magic plus super powers and a lot of stirring.
3. God made my Mom just the same like he made me. He just used bigger parts.

#### **What ingredients are mothers made of ?**

1. God makes mothers out of clouds and angel hair and everything nice in the world and one dab of mean.
2. They had to get their start from men's bones. Then they mostly used string, I think.

#### **Why did God give you your mother and not some other mom?**

1. We're related.
2. God knew she likes me a lot more than other people's moms like me.

#### **What kind of little girl was your mom?**

1. My Mom has always been my mom and none of that other stuff.
2. I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess is she would be pretty bossy.
3. They say she used to be nice.

#### **Who's the boss at your house?**

1. Mom doesn't want to be boss, but she has to because dad's such a goof ball.
2. Mom. You can tell by room inspection. She sees the stuff under the bed.
3. I guess Mom is, but only because she has a lot more to do than dad.

#### **What's the difference between moms & dads?**

1. Moms work at work and work at home and dads just go to work at work.
2. Moms know how to talk to teachers without scaring them.
3. Dads are taller & stronger, but moms have all the real power 'cause that's who you got to ask if you want to sleep over at your friend's.
4. Moms have magic; they make you feel better without medicine.

#### **What does your mom do in her spare time?**

1. Mothers don't do spare time.
2. To hear her tell it, she pays bills all day long.

#### **What would it take to make your mom perfect?**

1. On the inside she's already perfect. Outside, I think some kind of plastic surgery.
2. Dye it. You know her hair. I'd dye it, maybe blue.

3. They say she used to be nice.

**What did mom need to know about dad before she married him?**

1. His last name.
2. She had to know his background. Like is he a crook? Does he get drunk on beer?
3. Does he make at least \$800 a year? Did he say NO to drugs and YES to chores?

2. Dye it. You know her hair. I'd dye it, maybe blue.

**If you could change one thing about your mom, what would it be?**

1. She has this weird thing about me keeping my room clean. I'd get rid of that.
2. I'd make my mom smarter. Then she would know it was my sister who did it and not me.

**Don't forget to do something special for your Mom on Mothers Day!**

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**Are You in the Mood? For Spring Cleaning, of course!**

By: Janice Ferrante

In my neck of the woods, it's getting to be that time of year when renewal and regeneration are at it's peak – it's finally spring time!

If you find yourself in the mood to spring clean and get things in order, you may be stumped at exactly where to start. So I've put together a list of 10 minute tasks that you can use to jump start your spring cleaning this year.

The trick is to set your timer and work for 10 minutes. When 10 minutes is up – you're finished! We are going for progress, not perfection. You will be surprised at how good it can be.

**25 Spring Cleaning Tasks That You Can Do In 10 Minutes**

1. Clean your dirtiest and most used windows for 10 minutes.
2. Wipe light switches, telephones etc. with a germ killing solution. I use essential oils and water.
3. Put away winter boots.
4. Wash winter coats and pack them away.
5. Put a fresh, springy table cloth on your table. Get some flowers as well.
6. Deep clean your kitchen counter. Make it shiny and inviting to make some good spring salads.
7. Declutter anything that is out of season or grungy. It's time for it to go!
8. Clean your fridge and get some fresh produce.
9. Make a meal plan to clean out your freezer and cupboards.
10. Declutter your biggest pain in the butt pile to clear a fresh space.
11. Wash mirrors and taps.
12. Do a garbage purge. Anything that is not good enough to give away that you don't want to keep, any garbage collecting spots, etc.
13. Sweep and declutter your front porch or entrance area.
14. Replace any winter throw rugs, blankets, etc. for bright and light spring ones in their place.
15. Vacuum the couch, under the cushions and under the couch.

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16. Put out some air fresheners or spray using pure essential oils, not synthetic fragrance.
17. Do the bedding and hang it outside.
18. Replace curtains, etc. with a spring set.
19. Do some yard work.
20. Decorate your windows with some window paint or decals, especially if you have a problem with birds hitting your windows.
21. Get the kids to do some spring artwork for you to hang up.
22. Clean off any dry erase boards and bulletin boards that are out of date and update them.
23. Update your calendars, make a plan to keep your house nice and things running smoothly.
24. Organize your finances, create a budget or decide on a financial goal for 1 month and 3 month time periods.
25. Clean your desk.

Print these out and use them anytime you are in the mood to spring clean but can't think of what to do first, only have a few minutes to do spring cleaning, or just need some motivation to get started.

As with all things, you can get exceptional results with only minutes a day if done consistently. Challenge yourself to check off the list, doing 10 minutes per day. You will be amazed at the difference this small amount of time will make.

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### **A word about our transition from RE/MAX to Park One Realty . . .**

The change was delayed slightly by some paper work required by the new RE/MAX broker, but we still expect the change to take place within the next week or two. So, you should expect to begin seeing Park One Realty very soon!

If you no longer wish to receive communications from us, please reply to this email and type UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line..

Questions or comments? E-mail us at [arlene@parker-re.com](mailto:arlene@parker-re.com) or call 512.924.0900.

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