

HOUSECALLS



• Tim McBrayer The Triangles Broker 919-247-4667 April 2010 Edition •

Open-Air Living, Boost the Value of Your Home!

Relaxing and elegant, the new outdoor spaces are features that home buyers love.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau Housing Survey, homeowners spent more than \$40 billion in 2003 improving outdoor areas. Some improvements can fetch 75 percent of the cost when it comes time to sell.

At one time, outdoor living involved mainly a deck with a grill. Today outdoor rooms range from elaborate to simple and there are lots of choices.

At the high end, open-air outdoor rooms can include a full kitchen, dining area, fireplace and television.

New Florida rooms, also called knee rooms, are fully enclosed, climate-controlled, four-season rooms flooded with light from many windows. They often include a door to an open deck.

Finally, fully glassed-in sunrooms or solariums are a favorite to enhance a beautiful view. In cooler climates, sunny days can provide comfortable warmth. In warmer climates, the rooms require special glass so that they don't become too hot in the summer.

Enclosing the Patio

It's easier than ever to transform your patio, deck or breezeway into a place for living and entertaining during the spring, summer and fall. Manufacturer



enclosures can be designed to fit your space, lifestyle and budget. Styles include studio models with

cathedral ceiling and gabled roofs. They can include tinted glass, skylights, electrical outlets and phone and cable lines.

All-season patio rooms cost more but are best for those who want to use them during the entire year.

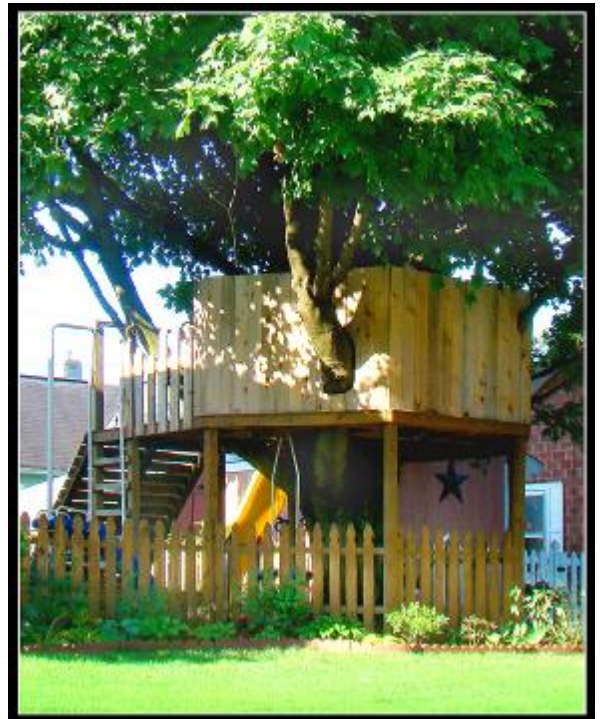
The kids are begging for one but you wonder what the construction will do to the value of your home.

Fear not. The National Association of Realtors says all types of outdoor space have become a big part of curb appeal. Including a tree house, outdoor living spaces attract buyers and can increase the value of a home.

If you have one or more substantial trees in your yard, you can start planning. The tree house can range from a model that an adult could also use as a hide-way to a roofless fort accessible by a ladder and guarded by wide boards around the sides. It should be no higher than 7 feet.

If you are handy with tools, you could build it yourself with plans

How About a Tree House?



from www.treehouseguides.com. check with the local planning commission for advice and safety requirements.

REMEMBER!
\$8000 Homebuyer
Tax Credit expires
April 30th!

Ask me how you can benefit!





ASK THE EXPERT



Q Do you have any opinions (or educated guesses) about what home sales will do this year? I'm thinking about buying but don't know when to jump.

A I believe we will see a strong spring selling season, and most agents nationwide agree. We'll probably see cream properties snapped out of the market early in the year, especially as investors move to collect bargains.

There is some evidence that residential buyers are more confident in the housing market, too, according to The Wall Street Journal's quarterly housing survey.

New surveys of builders show that buyers are more serious this year because they are feeling more comfortable about the future.

Remember the \$8,000 home buyers tax credit expires April 30. Expect to see some movement in this area.

Inventories are generally down right now.

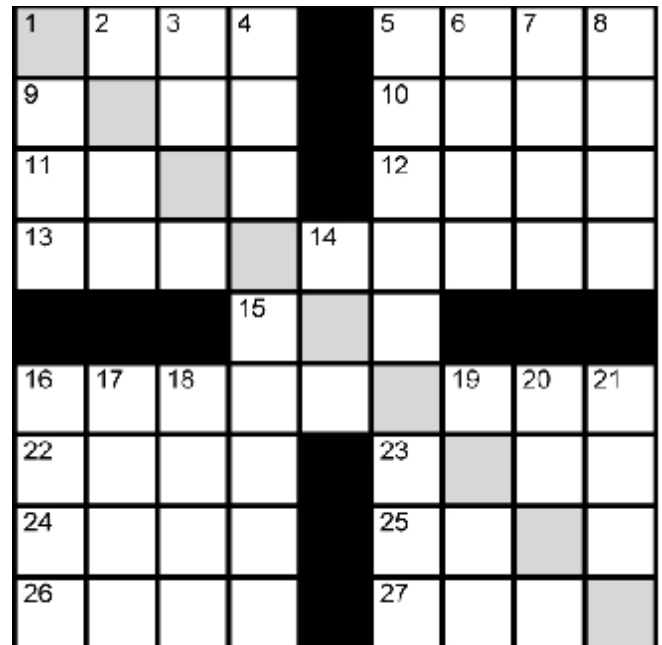
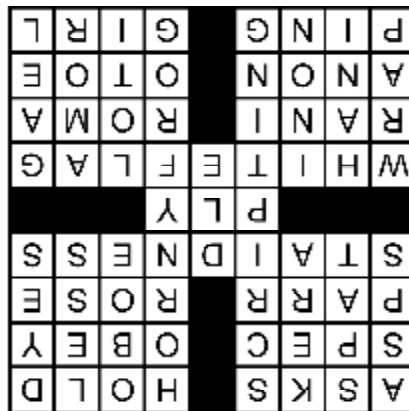
PUZZLE TIME

Across

1. Questions
5. Retain
9. Design criteria for a piece of work
10. Take orders
11. Late night host
12. Type of wine
13. Solemnity
15. Provide
16. Truce symbol
22. Sari wearer
23. Capital of Italia
24. Soon
25. American Indian
26. Short high-pitched sound
27. Tomorrow's woman

Down

1. Vipers
2. Quarrel
3. Language spoken in Chad
4. Writing
5. Iguanid lizard
6. Double reed instrument



7. Not more but ___
8. Tints
14. Chronic skin disease: Abbr.
16. Cloak
17. Loloish language
18. Knowledgeable about
19. Basic unit of money is Lesotho
20. Roman god of love
21. Celt



Inventories of homes listed for sale are down sharply in some east and west coast housing markets. The decrease in available homes has caused bidding wars on lower-end properties in some neighborhoods in Boston and Sacramento, Calif.

As the year progresses, jobs and mortgage problems will influence the market, the WSJ predicts. Mortgage defaults may put more homes on the market again. Lenders haven't

even started the foreclosure process on more than 2.5 million homes now 90 days or more behind on payments.

According to Moodyseconomy.com, mortgage defaults tend to follow unemployment. If unemployment rises even incrementally, we'll see more homes on the market again. It will be an excellent investment and residential home buying market at that time, but interest rates may be higher.



APRIL FOOLS' DAY

APRIL 1, 2010

April 1 can bring out the prankster in many of us. The trick can be as small as changing the time on someone's clock, serving cereal that has been placed in the freezer, or telling someone there's a spot on their shirt.

But April Fools' Day hoaxes can catch the world by surprise. Over the years, many have gained "elite" status.

* In 1957, the BBC show Panorama announced that Swiss farmers were enjoying a bumper spaghetti crop from their spaghetti trees. Accompanying footage showed spaghetti strands being pulled out of the trees. Calls flooded in asking where the viewers could obtain a "spaghetti tree".

* One year, Burger King ran an ad for a

"Left Handed Whopper" whose ingredients had been shifted so condiments would leak out the right side. Not only did people attempt to order the "Left Handed Whopper" but some customers came in and specified they wanted a "Right Handed Whopper".

* Comic strips often join in the April Fools' Day fun. Cartoonists of syndicated strips will draw each other's strips or incorporate "visiting" characters into their own. In one strip, Garfield ate Dagwood's sandwich.

* In 2005, a news story was downloaded to the official NASA web site announcing a picture of water on Mars. The photo consisted of a glass of water on a Mars candy bar.

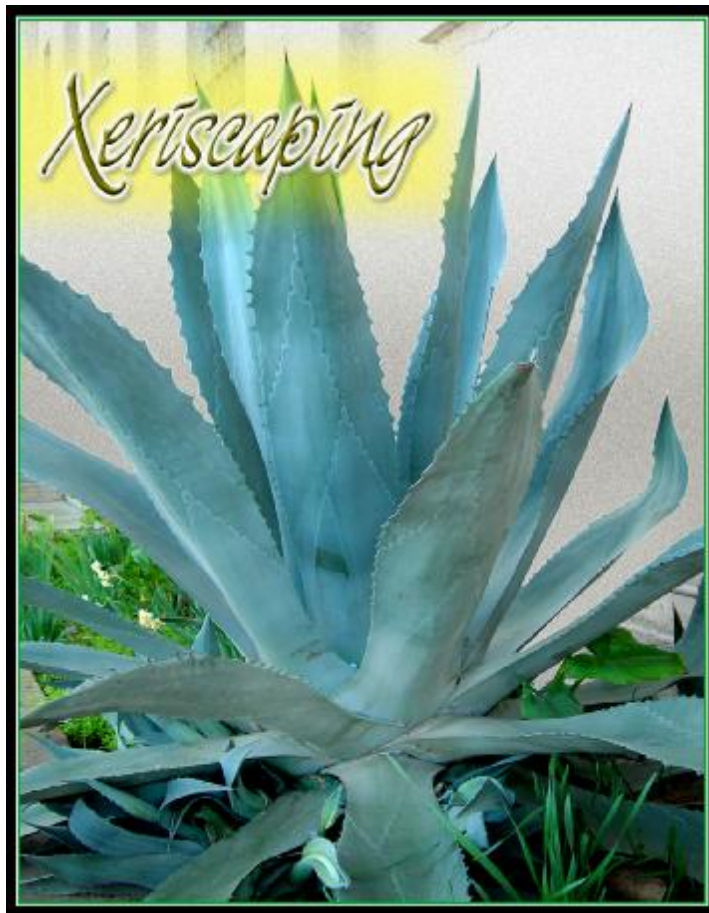
XERISCAPE : *Developing a Beautiful Landscape that Saves Water*

Xeriscaping is a practice of landscaping with drought-tolerant plants, which conserve water and save maintenance time. The name comes from the Greek word xeros, which means dry.

Using this theme, you place plants that need more water closest to the house. Those that need little or no irrigation can be planted farther away or at the lot's farthest points.

Xeriscaping makes use of many plants you may already have, such as hen & chickens, yucca, sedum, Coronation Gold or Moonshine yarrow, sagebrush and lavender, all of which are perennials.

Winter-hardy succulents that thrive in USDA Hardiness Zone 5 and 6 (middle America) include



agaves. Agaves, with their fleshy, wide leaves, are an attractive choice. Harvard's Century Plant is one example. It can make an architectural statement in a garden. It can reach 36 inches high at maturity and makes a dramatic statement with low-growing flowering plants in front of it.

Container plantings and annuals need more water and should be planted closest to the house and the water source.

To xeriscape more of your property, consider increasing the size of a patio, creating a stone walkway, or turning one or more sections of your lawn into an area for attractive, drought-resistant bushes and plants.



Tim McBrayer

Realtor/Broker

5000 Falls of Neuse Rd

Raleigh, NC 27609

**QSC, SRES, ePRO,
ASP, EcoBroker
ABR, Previews, FSR,
MBA**



APRIL 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
					Good Friday	
4  EASTER	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 New Moon ●	15  Tax Day	16	17
18	19	20	21 Administrative Professional Day	22  Earth Day	23	24
25	26	27	28 Full Moon ○	29	30	

Disclaimers: All real estate information deemed reliable but not guaranteed and should be independently verified. All properties are subject to prior sale, change, or withdrawal. Neither listing broker(s) nor this company shall be responsible for typographical errors, misinformation, misprints and shall be held totally harmless. If your property is currently listed with another real estate broker, this is not a solicitation of that listing.

My Listings as of April 1, 2010



3 Bedrooms 2.5 Baths end unit cottage home in Harrington Pointe off Leesville Road in north Raleigh 1,950 SF 2 car garage **\$255,900**



4 BR 2.5 BA 3,240 SF 2 car garage in downtown Raleigh in Historic Oakwood Built in 2006 Gourmet kitchen, formal DR, 3rd floor Bonus **\$700,000**



4 BR 2.5 BA on .51 acres 2071 SF, Formal DR, Screen Porch, In-Ground Swimming Pool, 2 Car Garage

\$1.785 million

\$250,000



4BR 4.5 BA 6,500 SF Large Lot, 3 car garage, huge bonus, 2 story great room, gourmet kitchen, keeping room.