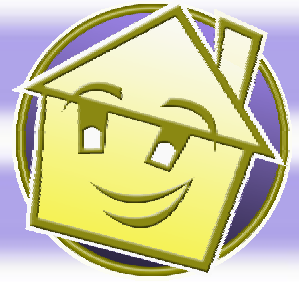


# HOUSECALLS



TIM MCBRAYER [www.TheTrianglesBroker.com](http://www.TheTrianglesBroker.com) 919-247-4667 [Tim@TheTrianglesBroker.com](mailto:Tim@TheTrianglesBroker.com)



## How to Show (and Sell) Your Home During Holidays

What months are best for attracting serious buyers to view your home?

November through January are not usually thought of as prime home-selling months, but they have advantages. Buyers who are house-hunting during those months are more serious about sealing a deal

and moving. Additionally, fewer homes are being actively marketed during the holiday season, so there is less competition among sellers.

Because prospects are more likely to preview homes on the web during inclement weather, giving them a tour of your place with high-quality photos on a Web site can help.

Include photos of your property as it looks in summer and

fall.

- \* Make curb appeal a top priority. Decorate the front door with a nice wreath and place small evergreens in red ribbon-decorated pots around the entry.
- \* Inside, do decorate your tree, but don't overwhelm prospects with big decorations and holiday collections.
- \* Reduce the number of family photos you display. Let buyers visualize themselves in the home.
- \* Experts at HGTV recommend giving house hunters a nice place to escape from the cold. Make your home feel cozy and inviting during showings by cranking up the heat, playing soft classical music and offering homemade holiday treats.
- \* Encouraging buyers to spend more time in your home gives them an opportunity to admire its features.

## What to Consider When Buying New Furniture

With holiday buying over, furniture stores will be offering some nice bargains in January. To find the good deals, however, it takes patience and knowledge.

It's easy to find good inexpensive furniture, but for quality that can last a lifetime, you have to take a closer look. If you want "better" or "best," the big difference is in the construction of the frame and materials put on it.

There are two basic types of furniture, upholstered and case. Case refers to furniture that has no upholstery, such as tables, chests and cabinets.

When looking at upholstered furniture, ask the salesperson if the piece has eight way hand-tied construction. It's the hallmark of comfort for sofas and big chairs. Hand-tied indicates quality construction in the frame, springs and back support.

Ask whether a case piece is made of hard wood or soft. Soft wood is less strong and tends to dent more easily.

Hardwood is used to describe woods

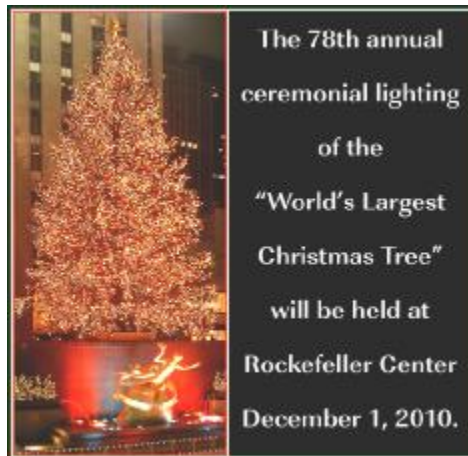
such as mahogany, walnut, maple, oak, cherry, birch, teak and pecan.

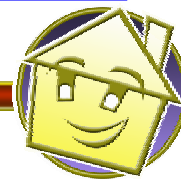
Soft wood is used to describe woods such as pine, redwood and cedar. It's less expensive and often used in ready-to-finish furniture.

Check to see if table and chair legs have bolt and screw construction rather than nails.

\* Some basic steps to take before you hit the stores:

- \* Decide just what you need and how long you will need it. You may want your bedroom furniture to last a lifetime but furniture for a teenager's room may only need to last five to 10 years.
- \* Know how, and how often, a certain piece will be used. If it's a recliner that's used every day, it has to have better construction than a side chair that is seldom used.
- \* Consider how much space you have. Measure the spot where you will put the sofa, chair or dresser so you don't buy one that is too big or too small.
- \* Decide how much you will spend. Spend more on a table you will use for many years and less for a baby crib you'll only use for a year or two. Remember to keep your needs, space and budget in mind in order to save time when you are shopping.
- Another consideration: If you decide to sell your home in the future, attractive furniture could make a prospective buyer want to live there.





**TIM MCBRAYER**

**ASK THE EXPERT**

**Q.** Are these low selling prices going to last forever? We want a bigger house but hate to sell ours right now.

**A.** Reported in October, the sale prices for existing homes rose slightly from the previous year. That's not saying much, but economists at Moody's Analytics say the market has hit the low point in the cycle. The worst is over.

Don't cheer just yet. Other economists say the market has just begun "a long climb out of a deep hole."

Low home prices won't last forever, but it could be some years before you could get the price you would like for the home you are selling.

Right now, buying and selling are a trade off. That is, you sell for a lower price, but you also buy for a lower price. With the home you buy at this time, you'll get a lot more for your money than what that home would cost in years to come.

Under the present conditions, you and other prospective buyers would do well to ask yourself what the personal cost of not moving forward would be.

**December Puzzle**

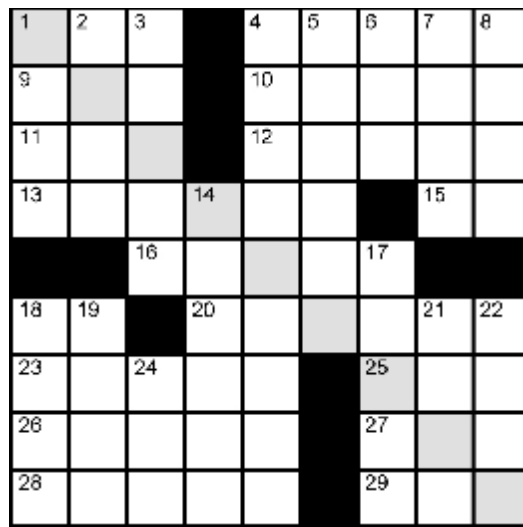
**Across**

- 1. 100 lbs.
- 4. Excitement
- 9. "Got it!"
- 10. Make another offer
- 11. Alpine sight
- 12. Verbal white flag
- 13. Member of the US Navy
- 15. Atop
- 16. Atlas enlargement
- 18. Exists
- 20. Be there
- 23. Durable fabric
- 25. Dairy farm sound
- 26. Peter, Peter, pumpkin \_\_\_
- 27. \_\_\_ de deux
- 28. Beach
- 29. Circus cries

**Down**

- 1. Bistro
- 2. Irish gorse
- 3. Anklebones
- 4. Pharmacy
- 5. Milk curdler
- 6. Fox competitor
- 7. Venus de \_\_\_
- 8. Former British protectorate
- 14. More foolish
- 17. Beat
- 18. Frosts, as a cake
- 19. Deposed leader

- 21. Ark builder
- 22. Work avoidance
- 24. "Am \_\_\_ believe ...?"



The home you would buy is the place you need today. It would have more rooms and be more efficient for everyday housekeeping and activities. The enjoyment and excitement factors involved in getting the new place could be significant.

One of the big questions involved in buying is whether you have enough equity in your present home so the mortgage can be paid off.

If that's not a problem for you, this is an excellent time to begin your search for the right home.

How long would it take to sell your present

home? If it's in a neighborhood people like and it's in good condition, it might not take very long. Friends of mine were shocked when their home sold in two weeks.

It's true that if you wait several years before selling your place, you will probably get a few thousand dollars more for it. But why wait until your children are grown up or away at college before going into a home where each could have their own room, or a guest room for visiting grandparents or maybe a recreation room they would all enjoy?



## Decorating Tips For the Holidays From Mary Ann Grote Grote of Interior Inspirations

Decorating for the holidays doesn't need to be expensive. Dollar stores and thrift shops can provide most items needed to accomplish each of these wonderful holiday ideas.

A simple way to give your holiday decorations a professionally decorated look is to stick to just two or three colors. Deciding on a palette before you shop makes the selection process quick and easy.

Take down your pictures and wrap them like a gift, then hang them back on the wall for great holiday cheer! You don't have to do this all around the house, how about just in the entry, or maybe the dining room?

Forgo a traditional floral centerpiece on the dining table and instead create a charming holiday scene featuring gingerbread houses or ceramic Christmas village miniatures. First sprinkle faux snow along the center of the table, then place homes, stores, trees and people to create a focal point that will delight guests of all ages.

Flickering candlelight is beautiful, but if small children or pets will be part of the celebration substitute battery-powered votive and pillar candles for a warm glow without the worries.

For a custom look that's easy to achieve, add ornaments, wrapped candies, children's toys or glittered greenery to a plain wreath. The decorating options are nearly endless and embellishing a wreath is a fun project to do with the kids.

Go branch hunting outside. Spray-paint the branches in a silver or gold, pop them in a vase and voilà ... elegant holiday decor. Take it a step further and dangle some ornaments on them or tie a few bows.

Decorate with old or new Christmas cards. Tape a bunch of cards to a string and hang them like a garland across a mantel. Frame pretty cards and hang them up. Or, let kids cut up cards and make new decorations out of them with construction paper or card stock and markers. You can even punch holes in these and hang them on the tree with yarn.

### Santa Snickers

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summertime, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers until after they give birth in the spring.

Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be a female.

We should've known. Only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost.

For Other Decorating Tips  
Contact Mary Ann Grote at  
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919-868-3512

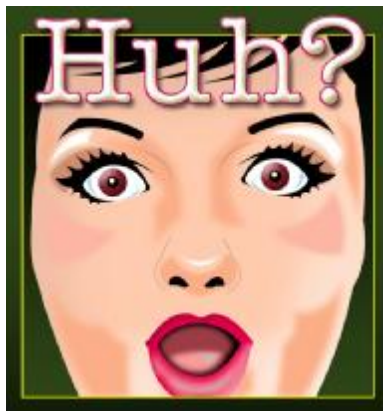
### How to Deal with Annoying People at Holiday Parties

Whether it's a company Christmas party, a gathering of friends or a big family get-together, chances are that at one event or another you'll meet up with a jerk who could spoil the evening. Here are some ways to handle the situation.

- \* Walk away. After a brief greeting, move on.
- \* Ignore the jerk if you can. Jerks thrive on talk about controversial subjects and gossip, and they want to get you involved.
- \* Be gentle but clear in your replies. Say things like you didn't mean to cut him off, but you have to talk to someone else.
- \* Don't retaliate. It justifies their bad

behavior. Don't argue, just leave.

- \* If he or she criticizes you, your boss or your child, don't be defen-



sive. It doesn't hurt to say you will think about their criticism.

- \* Hold back. Toxic people want to trigger rage, fear or guilt. Don't let them do it. It's their issue not yours
- \* Remember the power of "Huh?" Psychiatrist and author Mark Goulston says "Huh?" stops a toxic person because it indicates a statement doesn't make sense.
- \* Ask this question: "Do you really believe what you just said?" Ask in a calm tone, and the jerk might walk away.

We hope you don't meet a toxic person at events that should be a pleasure. If you do, try these tactics.



**QSC, SRES, ABR, SFR,  
EcoBroker, ePro, MBA**



**Kelly Fox**  
Towne Mortgage Carolinas  
919-573-4580

# DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 
26	27	28	29	30	31	



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**On .72 Acre Lot With 3 Car Garage**  
**Gourmet Kitchen, 2 Story Great Rm**  
**w/See-Through Gas FP**  
**2 Story Foyer Lrg Bonus Room 1st**  
**Floor MBR, Sun Room, Hearth Rm,**  
**Game Room, Formal DR, Office**





< < < < **My Listings as of December 14th** > > > >

N Raleigh 6,536 Square Feet on 1.16 acres. 4BRs, 4.5 BAs, Gourmet Kitchen, Family Rm w/Stone FP, 2 Story Great Rm w/FP, 1st floor Master Suite with adjoining study, huge W-I-C, Large Bonus with web bar, walk up unfinished attic with over 1K Sq. Ft.



**\$1,785,000**  
[www.5201Wynneford.com](http://www.5201Wynneford.com)

5,800 Sq. Ft. Estate Home On Golf Course at North Ridge CC, 4 BRs, 3.5 BAs, Gourmet Kitchen w/island, Family Rm w/wet bar, stone FP, 2 Story Foyer, Master BR with W-I-C, Lrg. MBath, Huge Bonus Rm w/back stairs, Multi-Level back deck, Formal LR & DR



**\$1,000,000**  
[www.7605Wingfoot.com](http://www.7605Wingfoot.com)

3,430 Sq. Ft. 4BR, 2.5 BAs in Historic Oakwood in downtown Raleigh. 3 Story, with bonus Rm and Guest BR and Full Bath on 3rd floor. Gourmet Kitchen w/ island. Family Rm w/ Gas FP, multi-level back deck, lrg Front Porch, 2 Car Detached Garage.



**\$610,000 Short Sale**  
[www.403Edenton.com](http://www.403Edenton.com)

North Raleigh Contemporary Ranch in Stone Ridge. 4,236 Sq. Ft. 4BRs, 3.5BAs. Updated Kitchen & Baths, Large Garden Rm, Formal LR and DR, Family Rm, Multi-Level Deck, Office, on .92 acre lot.



**\$525,000**  
[www.813ThatcherWay.com](http://www.813ThatcherWay.com)

North Raleigh home in Wakefield. 4BRs, 3.5BAs, 2 Story Great Room, Sun Rm, Gourmet Kitchen w/island, breakfast nook. 1st floor Master Suite with W-I-C, Separate Tub/Shower, twin vanities, back deck, 2 car garage. Formal LR and DR.



**\$369,900**  
[www.11904PawleysMill.com](http://www.11904PawleysMill.com)

1,500 Sq. Ft. 2 Bedroom Garden Home with 2 full baths, living/dining area with gas FP. Garden rm with tiled flooring. Kitchen with eating area, & under cabinet lighting. Comes with refrigerator and washer/dryer. 2 Car Garage. Minutes from Crabtree Valley Mall



**\$254,900**  
[www.4602LudwellBranch.com](http://www.4602LudwellBranch.com)

Wake Forest home off Burlington Mills Rd. 3,111 Sq. Ft. 4 BRs, 2.3 BAs. Kitchen has granite counter tops, island, gas cook top, double SS sink. Large Family Rm with gas FP. Living/Dining area. Lrg Master BR with two closets, separate tub/shower.



**\$234,000**  
[www.8705Poteat.com](http://www.8705Poteat.com)

In Falls Landing off Mitchell Mill Rd in N Raleigh off Hwy 401N. 2,220 Sq. Ft. 4 BR, 2.5BAs. Large Family Rm with gas FP, kitchen has lots of cabinet space, w/ island. MBA is large with separate Tub/Shower, twin vanities, w/2 Car Garage & Front Porch.



**\$225,000**  
[www.3222LandingFalls.com](http://www.3222LandingFalls.com)

