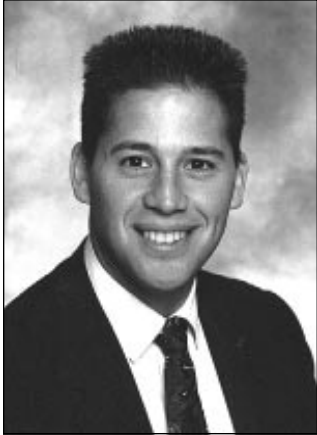


## Springing Forward



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By the time you read this newsletter, Spring should have arrived and the flowers should be beginning to bloom. I'm enjoying the unexpected warm days (and so is my energetic dalmatian, Clyde) and we're trying to look favorably on rainy days because at this point, we know their days are numbered! Luckily for us, El-Nino hasn't wreaked too much havoc in our region. As a matter of fact, the weather has been very cooperative for residential real estate. Home sales are going crazy just like last year, and we're once again seeing multiple offers in certain situations.



As of today, I have helped 12 clients make buying or selling decisions with the hopes of a few more by the end of the month. There's no better time than Spring to get out there and search for a home or to put your home on the market. If you want to spring forward into a new neighborhood, please give me a call! I value the opportunity to help you in any way I can.

*Jay*

## NEW HOMES VS. EXISTING HOMES

A basic question each prospective home buyer faces is whether to buy a brand new home or an existing home. If you are faced with this question, here are a few points to consider.

Although prices can vary greatly from one location to another, generally new homes cost 10 to 20 percent more than comparable existing homes. New



homes offer the benefits of modern designs and popular colors, near-perfect condition, and new appliances. In addition, builders often offer attractive financing and assistance that is superior to current market rates. And, new homes usually appreciate more rapidly during the first five years than existing homes over the same period.

Existing homes are more attractive to many buyers because they tend to be in more established neighborhoods, closer to shopping, schools, and other conveniences. The neighborhoods for existing homes are often more visually appealing since trees

and shrubs have fully matured. Many of my clients feel the character of an existing home outweighs the benefits of purchasing a new home in a subdivision.

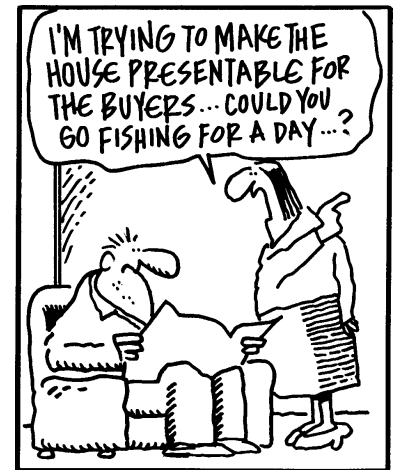
The financial advantage of existing homes must be considered since the prices are not only lower, but so are the immediate after-sale costs, such as fencing, lawns, shrubbery, drapes and blinds, etc. On the other hand, a new home is much less likely to incur any unexpected costs from things wearing out, such as the furnace, air-conditioning, water heater, appliances, carpeting, and the roof. It's very important to consider home inspection reports and to understand any warranties offered with the sale of the home, especially when buying an existing home.

If you are weighing the advantages and disadvantages of a new home versus an existing home, please call me with your questions. My daily experiences in real estate arm me with a wealth of information which you may find very helpful.

## The Net ...It's a Good Thing

I often take the opportunity to talk a lot about the importance of computers and the Internet in my business. I truly believe that both have played a very important role in making business more consumer-friendly. By using e-mail, I send listings of homes currently on the market to potential sellers to give them an idea of what their home is worth. As for purchasers, I e-mail active listings to them for viewing these homes from the comforts of their office or home before actually going out to see them. It has truly made my life and my client's lives so much easier that it has actually helped me gain incremental business.

In keeping with the times, and practicing what I preach, I have developed my very own web site – [www.jayagoado.com](http://www.jayagoado.com). By the time you receive this newsletter, hopefully the site will be 100% complete. By viewing the site, you will find such things as my Seller's Booklet, 1st Time Buyer's Booklet, links to other real estate related sites, feedback forms, and hilarious cartoons. If you are thinking of selling or buying a home, the booklets give comprehensive answers to the many questions about the entire process. Next time you're on the Web, please visit [www.jayagoado.com](http://www.jayagoado.com) and let me know what you think. I'm looking forward to hearing your feedback.



## justthefacts

NWMLS Statistics for King, Pierce, & Snohomish counties for the month of Feb 1998

| Number of Bedrooms | Number Sold | Average Sale Price | Average time on market |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| <b>homes</b>       |             |                    |                        |
| 3                  | 567         | \$192,731          | 53 days                |
| 4                  | 270         | \$244,907          | 62 days                |
| 5 or more          | 51          | \$390,765          | 75 days                |
| <b>condos</b>      |             |                    |                        |
| 1                  | 41          | \$98,763           | 45 days                |
| 2                  | 69          | \$145,633          | 50 days                |

\* If your home is currently on the market, this is not a solicitation



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## Forcing Flower Branches

If you would like to bring a little bit of spring indoors this year, try forcing flower branches from your outdoor plants. It's easy and rewarding.

### Supplies needed:

1. A sharp, clean pair of pruning shears.
2. A vase or bucket at least half full of room-temperature water.
3. A yard full of plants (or a neighbor's yard will do—with their permission of course!!) Forsythia, most Fruit Trees, Flowering Cherry, Flowering Pears, Quince, Dogwood, Rhododendron, Magnolia, some Viburnum, Pussy Willow.....

The flower buds on the branches you choose to cut should be the most prominent buds on the branch—

if you don't see buds, you won't get flowers! The best buds will be swollen and look like they are almost ready to open but less prominent buds will work also. When cutting the branch, keep in mind that branches take up a lot of space when you bring them inside—don't overdo it — you can always cut more when the ones you chose finish flowering, right up until the time when the plants flower naturally in your yard. If you are a beginner, it's always wise to remove pieces from the backs of the plants first to avoid "overpruning" and ruining your favorite rhododendron or magnolia.

Once they're brought indoors, recut the stems on

an angle before placing them in the water. Different branches will take between a week and three or more

weeks to bloom, depending on the temperature inside your home and how far from their regular bloom time it is when you cut them. Try keeping different branches in their own, separate containers so that you don't have full-blown or dying flowers in with buds that are just starting to open. Which will you enjoy more: having a chance to



work with your plants early or the beautiful colors of spring inside your home?

## Throw out the old 2% rule

You don't need to lower your rate by 2% for a refinance to make sense.

In order to determine if you can benefit from refinancing, please consider the following questions.

### HOW MUCH LONGER WILL I BE IN THIS HOME?

If you are going to be in the home for a number of years, a refinance might make sense. If you are planning on selling in the next couple of years, you will most likely not benefit from refinancing.

### WHAT IS MY CURRENT LOAN BALANCE?

If you have a large loan amount, your payment could be reduced by a small reduction in the interest rate. However, if you have a small loan, you would have to reduce the interest rate by quite a bit in order for you to save on your monthly payment.

### WHAT IS THE MOTIVATION TO REFINANCE?

- I want to lower my payment.
- I want to get out of my current adjustable mortgage and fix the rate.
- I want to pull some equity out for college, home improvement, payoff credit cards, etc.
- I want to shorten the term of my loan (i.e. 30 year to a 15 year).

### WHAT IS THE COST vs. THE SAVINGS?

If it costs you \$1,600 to refinance and you save \$100 a month you will break even after 16 months. Will you still be in the home 16 months from now?

If you have any questions you would like answered regarding refinancing, mortgages or loans, please get in touch with me by phone, Email or fax. It would be my pleasure to help you in any way I can.



**Jeff Tisdale**

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