



SUSAN OCHSNER

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Local Real Estate-International Buyers

All real estate is local. That is the mantra for most real estate professionals. The majority of buyers, whether they purchase a home as primary residence, a vacation home, or an investment property, take location into account when making that home buying decision. Fortunately, we live in a unique and well-loved location, filled with vast natural beauty and wonderful people. I just wanted to share with you a 2007 study of the National Association of Realtors on a profile of the International Home Buying Activity. It is a 13 page report which I will be happy to share with you in more detail (email or phone me). Right now just some thoughts about it: In Florida alone, the research indicated that 7.3 percent of home sales in Florida were to foreign purchasers. The

region of Origin of International Home Buyers are broken down with Europe (33%), Asia (24%), North America-includes Mexico (24%), Latin America (16%) and Africa and Oceania each with (2%). There is a vacation focus being that 47 percent bought for fun and frolic and 22 percent for investment. Given this information, my extensive experience living abroad and growing international database, it is quite natural that I will dedicate myself to this niche and thank you in advance for any opportunities and referrals. South Carolina is not yet in the Top Ten State Destinations for International Home Buying, and I plan to change this for the future. Georgia and North Carolina presently complete the top then

with 2% being international home buying transactions and being our neighboring states, I intend to put South Carolina ahead of both of those states! The top three countries purchased real estate primarily in the South followed far behind by the West. We already are a melting pot which I would like to see grow. I would be grateful for any real estate opportunity to serve you! Thank you for reading my newsletter.

Please call me if you would like a FREE market analysis of your property.

MY CELL PHONE IS 843-816-6388

What Buyers Want Most In A Home

The National Association of Realtors magazine, which I subscribe to as a Realtor, does regular research to Profile Buyers Home Feature Preferences and in connection with my first article about homes in the future, let me share with you the comparison from 2004 and 2007,: Ranked "very important" by buyers was central air conditioning for both years. In 2007-second place goes to oversize garage followed by walk-in closet in master bathroom in third place. In 2004, walk-in closet was in

second place and oversize garage in fifth place! I would be happy to share all three charts listing very important home features, percentage of buyers prepared to pay a premium for key features and percentage of buyers desiring key features. There seems to be an expectation to see energy efficiency in homes but despite these green leaning, the typical home was up to 1840 square feet compared to the median home of 2004 being 1727 square feet (+7%). The other main point is that luxury

is becoming standard. This is no surprise to the astute observation of The Greatest Generation, I am sure. I have many of them at my home for Sunday Suppers and they often talk about is point. Whatever the buyers, I hope you allow me the opportunity to help you sell your home for the best possible price and marketing all its most desired home features!



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Existing Home Sales Will Improve Markedly by the Fourth Quarter

Lawrence Yun, VP of Research for NAR makes this out on a limb prediction based on very good arguments, namely:

Pent-up demand. The country has added nearly 4 million jobs since home sales started cooling in mid-2005, and the typical worker's wages have risen 7 percent, leading to a \$1.35 trillion rise in aggregate national income. So people have the means to purchase and they will.

Delayed household formation. The number of households typically grows by up to 1.5 million a year, but in the first quarter, the yoy figure was only half a million. That weak performance

suggests that people are holding back because of uncertainty in the future, a trend that fuels pent-up demand.

Rising Rents. Average rents rose 8 percent the last two years. As renters start feeling squeezed, ownership start looking good.

Condos make modest gains. He states the condominium market has outperformed the Single Family market since early this year. I do not see this one supported here on the island.

Better mortgage quality. Mortgage applications for home purchases have been rising nearly 10 percent on a yoy basis since May. This data indicates a

flight to quality, which is good.

Dollar weakness. The falling dollar means Europeans can now buy a vacation home at essentially a 15 percent discount. A weak dollar in my days always leads to higher interest rates, but mortgage rates remain attractive around 6.8 percent, which is good.

2008 rate cut. Inflation looks to slide as the year proceeds. If it does, the Federal Reserve could lower interest rates.

There are forces out there that will turn the market around and buyers that make the commitment to buy now

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Homes of the Future

While no one can definitely predict what homes will look like 100 years from now, one thing is certain: research shows that natural resources will be less plentiful, and conservation will be an integral part of designing any "home of the future." Existing and new technology is evolving to give us "smart" homes that will help us breathe easier, conserve energy, enjoy more control and convenience, and live more comfortably. Technology we have now in cars like sensors for windshield wipers and such will also move into our homes. I imagine this will also be true in

our resort residences also. While I lived in Switzerland, so very long ago, we also had a phone line that automatically turned on the water heater in our weekend home in Falera, giving us warm water upon our arrival instead of frigid cold water. Computers now can make these conveniences and optimization more prevalent as the years pass. Just some food for thought of where we are heading. Either way, our primary or vacation homes in Hilton Head will only get better!

A Little Bit about Susan...

Susan knows that success comes from working hard, integrity and striving for excellence and results. She earned her business economics and marketing degree from the University of South Carolina and then began her financial career in the mortgage industry and later international private banking in Zurich. She put her career on hold to focus on her family. As her sons grew and became more independent, she was ready to focus on her career again and real estate was the perfect fit with her background and passion for serving others. Susan has been in Sea Pines since 1972 and knows the south end of the island in detail. Give her a chance to pleasantly surprise you with energy, professionalism and talent to get results.

You will be glad you did! Thank You.