Home buyers age 28 at first

In 1979, the typical first-time house buyer was 28 years old, had a family with 2.5 persons and took 3.9 months to look for a house. He paid a median price of $50,800, and made an average down payment of 17.6 percent of the purchase price.

The repeat buyer in 1979, on the other hand, was 34.7 years old, had 3.5 persons in the family and took 3.5 months to seek a house. He paid a median price of $64,600, and made an average down payment of 29 percent of the purchase price.

THESE BUYERS' profiles are provided by the Family Housing Bureau, a public information service of Chicago Title Insurance Co. They are based on the bureau's fourth annual survey of recent home buyers. The survey was conducted in 11 representative markets nationwide and involved 400 completed interviews.

Most house buyers surveyed — 82.8 percent — were married, the study revealed.

The ratio of used houses to new houses purchased paralleled other survey years, with those purchasing existing houses in accounting for 82.2 percent of the total in 1979. In 1978, the percentage was 85.6.

The median price of $50,800 paid by first-time buyers in 1979 compared with $46,700 in 1978; $43,160 in 1977; and $37,670 in 1976.

For repeat buyers, the median price of $64,600 paid in 1979 compares with $59,180 in 1978; $58,730 in 1977; and $50,090 in 1976.

First-timers in 1979 made down payments averaging 17.6 percent of the purchase price, up from 12.4 percent in 1978. Repeat buyers put down 29 percent of the price, compared with 27.6 percent in 1978.

THE REPEAT buyer made a buying decision more quickly than the first-time buyer did. First time buyers surveyed shopped for an average of 3.9 months vs. 3.5 months for repeat buyers in 1979.

The repeat buyer apparently has a better "feel" for the market and relies on past experience in making a selection more quickly, the Family Housing Bureau said.

While some fluctuation would be expected based on local market conditions, nationally single-family houses accounted for 87.5 percent of purchases made by survey respondents, multiple family houses for 5.3 percent and condominiums for 6.8 percent.

EXISTING house sales continue to outdistance new house sales, but new house sales did register a slight gain in the most recent survey.

In 1979, 82.2 percent of respondents purchased houses previously lived in vs. 85.6 percent in 1978, 87.2 percent in 1977 and 84.9 percent in 1976.

Research site

Michigan State University, a national center for plant research, is the site of a plant research facility for the U. S. Department of Energy.

On the beam

Michigan State University's broadcast stations — WKAR-AM and FM and WKAR-TV — serve the mid-Michigan broadcast area with educational entertainment and public service programming.

A first

Michigan State University was the first university to teach scientific agriculture.

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