

REAL ESTATE NEWS

Tips on dressing your home for success

There's a technique to preparing your home for sale. Why do you start? What should be done? Before you can get the best price, you must seriously consider dressing your home for success...

driveway, steps and porch clear of debris. Then look around inside. Unclutter each room. Your goal is to create a roomy, comfortable feeling that will be inviting to prospective buyers...

efforts in those areas. In some cases, a fresh coat of paint, a new shower curtain, clean drapes or some basic carpet cleaning can spice up a house. And don't forget to wash the windows.

things in your house. Prospects actually picture themselves living there. Eliminate distracting colors and accessories. It helps buyers concentrate on positive impressions.

each family member to do on a daily basis. This keeps the house presentable and makes showings easier on everyone. Keep a small basket of cleaning materials handy in an out-of-the-way place for emergencies or inevitable last-minute showing that may occur.

Courts oppose transforming employees into contractors

I am a real estate salesperson and my broker has forced us to become independent contractors in order to cut costs. I am concerned about the benefits I may be losing and what recourse I have.

A recent Federal Court of Appeals ruled that forcing an independent contractor to become an employee under state law and the salesperson could sue to recover possible damages including benefits, back pay and reinstatement.

What the court seems to be saying is anytime you hire an employee into an independent contractor, you are ripe for a lawsuit.

Robert M. Meisner is a Birmingham attorney.

Sales of previously owned homes continue to ascend

(AP) - Low mortgage rates and affordable prices helped drive up sales of previously owned homes in June for the third straight month, and analysts predicted continued growth for the remainder of the year.

ators said. Sales in May were revised upward, to 3.62 million from 3.61 million. Realtors president William S. Chen said the June sales reaffirm previous predictions of a strong summer, traditionally a busy season as families try to get settled in newly purchased homes before school starts.

At the same time, the median price of an existing home was \$108,900, up 2.3 percent from May but just 3.2 percent from June 1992, the Realtors said. The median means that half of the homes cost more and half cost less.

the next few years, compared with the robust gains of the 1980s. "We expect appreciation to be steady and slow," he said. After sliding 2.6 percent in March, sales of previously owned homes rose 2.4 percent in April and 4.9 percent in May. For the first six months, they were 3.1 percent higher than the same period of 1992.

In the Midwest, sales fell 3 percent, to a 960,000 rate. The median price was \$85,800, up 4.1 percent from a year earlier.

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