

# Real estate specialists trained to cater to needs of the public

If you think back to the times when a bottle of cola cost a quarter, when Peter, Paul and Mary would sometimes make your day and your neighbours were happy to loan you their lawn tools, you'll probably remember how friendly service in business was a golden rule.

The rule hasn't changed since then; service is always the crux of any transaction, and when it comes to selling your home, you need only discover what real estate specialists will provide for you to reap all the benefits.

Very few people in the housing market are aware that the real

estate industry has been responsible for establishing the standards that govern licensing and registration. This means that each aspiring real estate practitioner must first satisfy the requirements imposed by provincial governments before being allowed to transact real estate property, be it commercial or residential. Furthermore, those who opt for membership in The Canadian Real Estate Association, through the local real estate board, are additionally bound by a strict Code of Ethics to provide consumers with the best of their expertise in - and knowledge of - the housing market.

This membership gives them the right to use the realtor certification mark, which you may have seen in classified advertising and on "For Sale" signs in and around your community.

It's important for housing consumers to be satisfied with the services they'll receive, and confident in the realtor who will provide them, before signing the listing contract. Because the real estate industry is one of service, it is intrinsically driven by a healthy level of competitiveness that, ultimately, inspires various service packages from which to choose. One of many

examples of such a package could be: helping you establish fair market value for your property, having it listed according to your wishes, advertising in the local media, organizing and hosting open houses, qualifying prospective buyers and assisting with the financial arrangements, before closing the sale. Of course, the cost of these packages may vary from one real estate company to the next. Consumers should be aware of what the marketplace has to offer. Once you actually list your property for sale, you can count on your realtor to work hard so you can enjoy the best results possible from your family's most important asset.

It is always wise to draw up a list of all the services offered by each realtor for comparison. Then, carefully look at the proposed costs, weighing the dollar value of the services as a package against your own financial abilities. It's your call to determine whether the amount is justified by the time and effort to be spent on closing the deal. When all factors are considered, you'll be in a good position to select a realtor with whom you can team up to effectively sell your home.

In any event, you have the option of accepting or declining any proposal to sell your home. But, if you and your realtor have agreed on the fee for service, you will begin immediately to get the most for your money while enlisting a now familiar specialist whom you can count on when again you decide to sell your home.

This article is supplied by The Canadian Real Estate Association to benefit consumers in the housing market. For more information about the purchase or the sale of property, contact your local real estate board, or get in touch with your neighborhood realtor.

## Consulting a discount broker may save some people money

By DON CHMARA, CA

If you're wagering on the stock market, you can save a lot of money with a discount broker.

But with a discount broker, you're flying on your own. He won't give you advice - or a crying towel. A full-service broker will.

That's the major difference between the two types.

Considering savings alone, the discount broker is the clear winner. Let's take two examples.

Buying 1,000 shares at \$5 each would cost you \$180 in commissions with a full-service, or traditional-type broker compared with \$50 by trading through a discount broker. The savings is 72 per cent.

Buying 1,000 shares at \$20 would mean \$430 versus \$80 in commissions.

It depends on how much value you place on service - the cautionary advice and stock quotations you want if

you follow the market closely and have a range of stock investments.

Some discount brokers charge you for stock quotations if you haven't traded in the month or ask beyond a set limit.

Offsetting this disadvantage is the convenience of being able to phone in a buy or sell order to a discount broker any time round-the-clock, and not just during office hours.

If you're a small-time dabbler in the market, paying for the advice from a full-service broker may be overrated.

Studies have shown that the research on which they base their advice barely outperforms the market. Also, brokers tend to confide their sure-winner advice to their biggest customers, once the word gets out on the street, it's usually too late for the little guy to make a worthwhile score.

Still, if a broker develops a track record of recommending losers,

he'll soon lack customers.

Even if you're a small player, you can reap the benefits of dealing with a discount broker if you're able to do your own research.

Some discount brokers are beginning to offer research publications, such as the Low Price Stock Analysts Weekly. The Financial Post offers cards on individual companies. InfoGlobe offers a plethora of financial news. However, you pay for these services. A full-service broker provides the advice free.

Investment guru Peter Lynch advises people to invest in things they know about - or those that are obvious. One example would have been to invest in condom manufacturers when the AIDS epidemic first became news.

It comes down to this: If you're sure of the stock you want to put your money in, deal with a discount broker. But if you need someone to bounce ideas off, or to filter out your wilder enthusiasms, go with a full-service broker.

For CA's advice on TV - see Your Wealth, available on broadcast channels in Ontario and on satellite across Canada, or see Money in the Bank, on your community cable channel.

Moneycare is general financial advice by Canada's chartered accountants. Don Chmara is with Marathon Realty Co. Ltd.

## Small communities are buyers markets

TORONTO - Interest rate levels continue to deter potential buyers from entering the housing market in Ontario.

According to the latest issue of the Survey of Canadian House Prices released by Royal LePage, most smaller communities in Ontario are experiencing a buyers' market, characterized by an over-supply of good homes listed for sale, and in some cases, a softening in prices.

"Homes priced under \$150,000 are generally moving well," says Elmar Moser, Senior Vice President and Divisional General Manager, Royal LePage Residential Real Estate Services. "Vendors of more expensive properties are 'sweetening the package' by offering attractive financing."

"For many potential buyers, financing is critical - a one-quarter per cent increase in mortgage interest rates can make or break the sale," says Moser. "I suspect that's why we've received a great many inquiries from our clients about the vendor-assisted and buyer paydown financing programs we recently introduced in Ontario."

Moser made his comments with the release of the July issue of the Royal LePage Survey. The quarterly cross Canada study tracks the estimated selling price of seven categories of housing in over 200

communities from coast to coast.

Ontario markets that are in close proximity to Metropolitan Toronto experienced a greater decline than those situated farther away. For instance, St. Catharines, Parry Sound, Niagara Falls and Belleville all reported increases in excess of 10 per cent in their Detached Bungalow category within the last year.

The Detached Bungalow in Belleville increased 22.9 per cent, rising from \$118,000 to \$145,000 from July of 1989 to July of 1990. The same type of property in Parry Sound jumped 22.2 per cent, from \$90,000 to \$110,000, in a one year period.

In the Ancaster area of Hamilton, the Standard Two-storey home rose 11 per cent to \$220,000 from its July, 1989 level of \$198,000. In Hamilton West, the Executive Detached Two-storey home increased to six per cent in value, rising from \$224,500 to \$237,000.

On the other hand, properties in Oshawa and Whitby declined marginally in value.

Royal LePage is Canada's leading full service realtor, with approximately 10,000 employees in over 370 residential and commercial offices in Canada and the United States, with affiliates overseas.

A complimentary copy of the Survey of Canadian House Prices is available from any Royal LePage real estate office in Canada.

# HOME OF THE WEEK

## BOB MORROW & SON CARPENTRY LTD.

KITCHENS & BATHROOMS

- Decks • Ceramics
- Drywall • Additions

• Doors and Windows

CUSTOM CARPENTRY  
Lic. No. L103108

53A ARMSTRONG AVE.  
GEORGETOWN, ONT. L7G 4S1  
Bus: 873-0690 Res: 877-0413

## KINGSWAY CONTRACTING

- Commercial • Industrial
- Residential

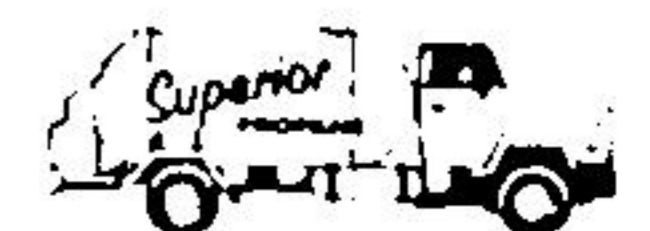
- New Construction
- Additions • Renovations

• Country Lots Available •

CALL

**878-5222**

For Early Spring Booking



• AUTO PROPANE •  
RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL  
& INDUSTRIAL

GUARANTEED SUPPLY  
GUARANTEED 24 HOUR  
SERVICE

MILTON 878-2318  
GUELPH 822-7780

## Les Lafferty Construction LTD.



"RENOVATIONS  
FROM ROOF TO  
BASEMENT"

- Drywall Taping
- Ceramic Tile
- Carpentry

AFTER 6 CALL  
**877-4080**

A new spirit of giving  
A national program to encourage giving and volunteering

# 30% OFF

Custom Mini Blinds, Verticals and Pleated Shades

HunterDouglas  
Celebrity  
Horizontal Blinds

Installed at  
NO EXTRA COST

FULL LIFETIME WARRANTY

**OSBORNE DECOR LTD.**  
509 GUELPH STREET  
NORVAL, ONTARIO  
CALL NOW **877-6086**

## Les Lafferty Construction LTD.

"RENOVATIONS FROM ROOF TO BASEMENT"

- Drywall Taping
- Ceramic Tile
- Carpentry

AFTER 6 CALL  
**877-4080**