

# Real Estate Update



PETER BENNINGER  
REALTY, BROKERAGE

Independently Owned & Operated



508 Riverbend Drive, Kitchener

Winter 2010

## Year Ends With Record Setting Months!



Susan Hopkins  
Sales Representative

October, November and December 2009 all saw new records set for residential sales by the Kitchener-Waterloo Real Estate Board!

According to the Kitchener-Waterloo Real Estate Board (KWREB) low interest rates and desire for home ownership, along with general confidence in real estate as an investment helped October 2009 sales increase 40.5 percent from October 2008.

November was another record setting month with sales up a whopping 87.8 percent from November 2008. The demand in November 2009 was strong across all price ranges but higher priced homes in the \$300,000 to \$500,000 range totalled 90, an increase of 233 percent compared with November 2008.

November also saw an increase in the sale of builder product with

85 new construction homes sold through the MLS® System of the KWREB, marking a 214.8 percent increase over the same month last year.

Ending the year on a strong note, MLS® home sales reached 356 units in December, a 60 percent increase from the same month one year ago, and a 15 percent increase from the previous record set in 2006.

**The steady climb of residential property sales that began in the second quarter brought the year-to-date total in Kitchener-Waterloo and area to 6,467, a 5.8 percent increase over 2008. According to KWREB the third and fourth quarter sales in 2009 were the best on record!**

Your REALTOR®

*Susan Hopkins*

## Seven Home Staging Tips for Selling Your Home

When it comes to staging a home for sale, it's important that sellers create an inviting atmosphere that will appeal to as many potential buyers as possible. Due to historically low interest rates and government incentives such as raising the Home Buyer Plan maximum to \$25,000, first-time buyers account for a substantial portion of Canada's home buying prospects. The good news is, sellers looking to attract this coveted demographic group don't need to do a complete design overhaul. Staging a home for first-time homebuyers is easier than you may think.

Below are seven simple staging tips from Coldwell Banker to help boost a home's appeal and give owners the competitive edge necessary when selling a home.

**Stage rooms with one purpose.** Extra rooms that have a jumble of mixed uses can confuse and even deter first-time homebuyers. Staging rooms with one purpose is vital. Keep in mind that these buyers are generally young couples with few or no children, so rooms should be presented as areas well equipped to meet their current needs. So turn those playrooms into dens, storage rooms into a home office or the second kids' bedroom into a guest room.

**Tackle the easy "do-it-yourself" projects.** In a recent Coldwell Banker survey, 81 percent of brokers said today's first-time home buyers consider move-in conditions to be very important when searching for homes. To ensure that a home is in tip top shape, make sure to replace outdated kitchen and bathroom fixtures, apply a fresh coat of paint to a worn wall and refinish the kitchen cabinets. Providing a sleek

and modern look wherever possible can make a huge difference in the eyes of first-time homebuyers.

**Be informed about current style trends:** Ask your local Coldwell Banker sales representative about the styles seen in homes that are selling in the area, and purchase a current interior design magazine for ideas.

**Focus on the living areas.** A living room is an area in which potential first-time buyers should be able to envision themselves entertaining friends or gathering with their family. With that in mind, homeowners should make the area appear as large and functional as possible by removing any unnecessary furniture and decorations.

**Make sure the master bedroom appeals to both sexes.** The master bedroom of a couple's first home is often the first bedroom they will share. When staging this room, make sure that it appeals to buyers of both sexes. Remove any feature that seems too gender-specific and paint the walls a neutral colour.

**Clear the room of family portraits.** First-time homebuyers are looking for a home they can picture their family living in, not the previous owners. Coldwell Banker recommends taking down family portraits, personal collections and knickknacks. Removing these items will also eliminate clutter and ensure that people are looking at the house for sale, not at the photos from the last family vacation.

**Don't forget to spruce up the yard.** First impressions often play a role in a consumer's decision-making process. In fact, 21 percent of

participants in a recent Coldwell Banker survey knew their home was the one for them before even walking inside. Make sure the home's exterior is inviting by trimming the bushes, mowing the lawn and painting faded window trim. Couples looking for their first home often have less yard work under their belts and will appreciate the seller's attention to detail.





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## KW MLS® Home Sales Q4 Results 09

Number of homes sold	4th Quarter 2009	4th Quarter 2008
Detached Homes	926	610
Total Residential	1490	930
<b>Total number of homes sold by price category</b>		
Under \$50,000	43	13
\$50,000 - \$99,999	11	3
\$100,000 - \$124,999	30	25
\$125,000 - \$149,999	72	66
\$150,000 - \$174,999	96	64
\$175,000 - \$199,999	130	88
\$200,000 - \$224,999	187	120
\$225,000 - \$249,999	212	143
\$250,000 - \$274,999	159	108
\$275,000 - \$299,999	129	70
\$300,000 - \$349,999	174	86
\$350,000 - \$399,999	100	52
\$400,000 - \$499,999	80	48
\$500,000 - \$749,999	56	33
\$750,000 - \$999,999	8	9
Over 1 Million	3	2
<b>Average \$ Price</b>		
Single Family Detached	YTD 2009 297,757	YTD 2008 302,656
Semi-Detached	207,883	206,713
Condominium unit	176,393	174,351
Freehold Townhouse	224,754	227,917
Total Residential	261,379	264,294

The above information is based on MLS® data owned by the Kitchener-Waterloo Real Estate Board, Inc. October 1 09 to Dec 31 09.

## Event Nets 500 Toys for Local Toy Drive

On Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, Coldwell Banker Peter Benninger Realty hosted the Third Annual **Trees for Toys**, a special by-invitation customer appreciation event and toy drive organized by community minded Sales Representatives.

"We are delighted with the huge turnout of more than 1300 people," said Peter Kritz, Broker and Operations Manager at Coldwell Banker Peter Benninger Realty. "Approximately 500 toys were donated to the Waterloo Knights of Columbus New Toys for Needy Kids Toy Drive thanks to the generosity of our customers and the dedication of our Sales Representatives."

Participating REALTORS® purchased trees or wreaths for their clients, and invited them to come pick up their gift, enjoy some refreshments, and have their picture taken with Santa. To remember those less fortunate at this special time of year, clients were encouraged to bring new, unwrapped toys which have been donated to the Toy Drive.

Other fun activities included face painting, holiday movies in the Consumer Centre Theatre, photo opportunities with Frosty and Rudolph, as well as a visit from the Kitchener Fire Department.

"Once again we were astounded by the overwhelming support and compassion in this great community," said Scott Mills, Broker and Residential Sales Manager at Coldwell Banker Peter Benninger Realty. "This event will ensure 500 less fortunate local children have a gift to open this holiday season."



**25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
COLDWELL BANKER  
PETER BENNINGER  
REALTY, BROKERAGE

*Building Dreams Gala*  
Community Building with Coldwell Banker

**The real foundation of any home is  
the community that surrounds it**

Join us for our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and  
help raise the funds to build another Habitat for  
Humanity home in Kitchener Waterloo!

Friday February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
6:00 p.m. until Midnight  
Bingeman Park Ballroom

Superb Dining  
Top Notch Entertainment  
by the Kenry Manshaw Band  
Dancing  
Live and Silent Auctions

MC is the  
popular & hilarious  
Neil Aitchison!

Ticket Price \$125 + GST  
Corporate Table of 8 \$1200 + GST

Purchase your tickets at:  
[www.buildingdreamsgala.ca](http://www.buildingdreamsgala.ca) or by phone  
at (519) 742 5800 ext. 5020  
Please call if you require more details.

Business/Formal Attire No cancellations  
Substitutions permitted

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