

Identify the warning signs

Warning: Children can endanger home values



Realty Check

By RICHARD COURTNEY

As the New Year rolls in, the residential real estate inventory will increase in volume from its current surprisingly low levels. Many of these homes have served as rental properties as the homes were worth less than the loan balances, yet the owners, with the assistance of rental income, were able to avoid foreclosure and opted not to fight the short sale dragon.

As these homes hit the market, most will not have been maintained as well they would have been in an owner-occupant situation. One of the most often-occurring conditions encountered is that of "child erosion," as any home occupied by humans under the age of 12 is subject to abuse that is incomprehensible to those that have never shared a home with toddlers or adolescents.

Admittedly, in the first 53 years of my life, I found it inexplicable that CEOs and seemingly successful leaders in the community could live in such execrable conditions. Then, as my wife and I accumulated some 98 years between us, we had our first children. – twins no less, a boy we call Tom and his sister Adeline. Not since the Old Testament have any two parented later.

As they grew, we outgrew our home and were forced to place it on the market. I fell victim to the "cobbler's children have no shoes" cliché. As I inspected our own home with somewhat objective eyes, I found that our house suffered from a number of maladies that I had observed over the years. Our house was childproof, as in there was proof that children roamed the floors.

There runs a consistent thread through these homes under attack by brat packs, and they can prove as damaging to a home sale as a swarm of termites, a dose of radon or a mountain of mold. Those sellers who face the parental challenge should be aware of a number of conditions to correct prior to showing their homes.

Sticker Shock: All those loveable stickers of unicorns, Hello Kitty, Thomas the Tank Engine and all of the others are equipped with greater adhesion qualities than any glue ever made. The cute arrangements on the kitchen cabinets some 20 inches over the floor suggest a \$20,000 set of new cabinets to the would be buyer.

Diaper Genie/Diaper Pail: It's a litter box without the sand. They stink and conjure fear of disease.

Pigley Field: The most meticulously maintained and landscaped yards can be reduced to a ghetto décor when littered with scores of balls, including footballs, soccer balls, basketballs, all the balls on sale for \$1.99 everywhere, not to mention the vehicles with sun-faded plastic illegally parked amid rusted

scooters and tricycles, bicycles and popsicle sticks.

Mini-Monet: While water colors produced by the children evoke great compassion from those of close relation to the painter, they are as misunderstood as Van Gogh was in his day by any outside the familial circle. The paintings must be removed, and Jackson Pollack-style wall treatments should be painted over.

Bobby Goldsboro Syndrome: Goldsboro, a Nashville dweller from time to time, scored an enormous hit in the late 1960s with his recording of the song "Honey" ("See the tree how big it's grown, but friends it hasn't been too long ...") Anyway, a follow-up No. 1 was a song called "Watching Scotty Grow."

It includes the lyrics such as "Mickey Mouse says it's 13 o'clock/Well that's quite a shock, but that's my boy." It's a very cleverly written song and the tag line is that the singer/father needs nothing more in life than to watch Scotty grow. And that is exactly what the parents selling houses should do, watch their children grow and chart it on a computer or legal pad, if they must.

What they should not do is chart the growth on the wall. The sight is frightening from afar as, generally, the parent takes the nearest writing utensil available to include the current day's progress, as if the children would shrink if they sought similar ink. These markings are in black, blue, red and all the colors of the rainbow, and are applied with Sharpies, paint, Magic Markers, pens and crayons, and they suggest new paint and gallons of it.

Harry Chapin Syndrome: Sticking in the music genre, if a seller has a cat in the cradle, there are a number of problems looming.

Poster Child: As the children age, the rooms are overtaken by posters – big posters – many of them life-size and of larger-than-life people, usually athletes. Of course there are even scarier posters now; some of music stars that make Ozzy Osbourne look tame. And the posters of some of the women recording artists feature more cleavage than an entire season of "Leave it to Beaver." Be gone posters.

The Petri Cereal Dish: Juggling children and jobs is challenging, if not impossible. All too often, parents feed the children breakfast, bath them, dress them and drive them to school. Yet, cleaning the breakfast table is overlooked, as it is the least important of the functions. The day the dishes are at least rinsed is the day the home is showed four times. In the summer, the flies can find their way into the homes and into the cereal floating in its sour milk sea.

So, even if you teach your children well, your house may smell. And no one will buy.

Sales of the Week

The sales of the week are in the

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Submitted

Nashville singer-songwriter Jim Lauderdale is familiar with the Tamworth Festival, having played it for two years.

Australia calls, Music City Roots hits the road

By **Tim Ghianni** | Correspondent

Music City Roots: Live from the Loveless Cafe embarks on a music and marketing mission in late January, when the broadcast moves for a week from the Pasquo Community, in the shadow of the Natchez Trace, to Tamworth, Australia.

The radio variety show – sort of an Americana-and-beyond version of the venerable Grand Ole Opry – accepted an invitation to move announcers, artists, producers and the works to the 41st Annual Tamworth Country Music Festival.

The show will take place at 7 p.m. Jan. 24 in Town Hall in Tamworth, Australia's Country Music Capital. It will be webcast live on the internet at 2 a.m. Nashville time.

"We've had a long-term dialogue going on with Australia," says John Walker, who is co-executive producer (along with Todd Mayo) of the weekly show that airs on Lightning 100 as well as being carried online, in podcasts and in syndication. Australia's Country Music Channel has begun airing a series of Music City Roots performances. Another 13 episodes will find their home in America on PBS this spring.

In Australia, "their definition of country music is much broader than it is here in the States," says Walker, explaining that what is termed in the U.S. as "Americana" – the music of rootsy traditionalists and genre-jumping acoustic and amplified explorers – "all is under the country music umbrella" with mainstream radio artists (think Blake Shelton and Taylor Swift) in Australia.

Walker says Tamworth organizers "are really into what we are doing and they wanted to have that authenticity of that Nashville experience," he says.

Tamworth Country Music Festival Coordinator Kate Baker emphasizes that desire for an authentic Loveless experience in the Land Down Under.

"We wanted to make sure that this show accurately reflected what is staged and broadcast every week at the Loveless Cafe," she says. "We believe that when festival-goers walk into the Town Hall on Thursday, Jan. 24, they'll feel as though they've been transported to Nashville for a couple of hours. This will be about as authentic as it gets."

A key player in helping to build this bridge is Jim Lauderdale, the affable Nashville singer-songwriter who is equally at home with Hank Williams as he is with Jerry Garcia. Lauderdale, regular master of ceremonies for the weekly Wednesday night broadcasts at the Loveless Barn, has an Aussie fan base.

"Lauderdale has been playing the festival the last couple of years. And they were able to book Elizabeth Cook this year as well," says Walker.

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1212 Stockell St.



1116 Stockell St.

Cleveland rocks with two quick closings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

highly popular Cleveland Park area, where housing remains affordable in this established, architecturally diverse neighborhood.

Both sales are on Stockell, with the house at 1212 selling for \$52,100 and the home at 1116, only a block away, going for the list price of \$179,500.

1212 has 1,010 square feet, three bedrooms and one bath. It was listed by Sharon Bennett with Progressive Realty, while Michael Tinsley with Southern Realtors brought the evidently eager buyer, who closed in 10 days.

The property at 1116 has 1,520 square feet and sold equally as fast with its three bedrooms and two baths. Robert Drimmer from Village Real Estate had the buyer for this sale. The home was completely renovated with a new master and granite countertops, stainless steel and all the trimmings.

Richard Courtney is a partner with Christianson, Patterson, Courtney, and Associates and can be reached at richard@richardcourtney.com preferably after the twins go to sleep.

Granberry's hot spots? Depends

By **Brad Schmitt** | Correspondent

The great-grandson of H.G. Hill Sr., Jimmy Granberry started working with H.G. Hill Realty in 1981 and was named CEO in 2002.

The company has more than two million square feet of retail, office and apartment space, and its projects include the upscale shopping/restaurant area Hill Center in Green Hills.

Q: Folks are having a hard time selling their homes right now. Can you give us a snapshot of the commercial real estate market in Nashville?

A: "Backing up, my wife's in the real estate market, and the right house sells before it hits the market. It really depends what the price point is, where it's located, the schools, all that kind of stuff. But the markets in the residential world are very, very strong.

"On the commercial side, overall, I think the market is very strong. But there are obviously weak spots, Hickory Hollow, for example. Not everything's peaches and cream, but there are some very strong fundamentals to the overall market as a whole. But there are some weak spots.

"Hickory Hollow's obvious. We've all read stories about Hickory Hollow. And there are enormous amount of vacancies downtown."

"I think Cool Springs is a very dynamic market, as is Brentwood, as is Providence in Mount Juliet. That's on the retail front.

"And there are a couple of very exciting residential projects announced in the Green Hills market, so I think there is more than one hot spot in the Nashville area.

"You know, Murfreesboro is a very vibrant, growing community with MTSU, and Midtown with Vanderbilt and the HCA project."

Q: What's the steal right now? Where's the area you can own cheaply that's going to take off?

A: "I don't know. I'm not really into saying what's a great deal. Depends what you want. What you perceive as a great deal if your time frame is 50 years would be down the 65 corridor towards Columbia. Out west to Dickson. Mount Juliet, out in that direction. It depends what your definition of a deal is.

"In my short lifetime, Cool Springs was a farm, not too awful long ago. Mount Juliet was way out. Brentwood in the 70s



Granberry accumulating land along Charlotte Avenue in West Nashville. Any master plans?

A: "Well, anytime we put together pieces of property we have an idea of what we're going to do. As far as developing working drawings and schematic studies, we haven't done anything on that.

"I guess the answer to your question is no. Our plate's pretty full with some other projects. We have tenants over there and it's holding its own.

"Everything that's happening on Charlotte, it's better. Every day, it gets a little better."

Q: Your realty company has such an interesting history, from family-owned grocery chain to commercial realty giant.

A: "Well, when we got in the grocery business, everything revolved around the grocery business. Mr. Hill Sr. decided early on he was going to own his own real estate because he didn't want to be at the mercy of his landlords to decide if he wanted to change the color of the store, whatever he wanted to do.

"He decided he wanted to control his own destiny. So over time, we started acquiring property Over time we decided to get out of the grocery business and concentrate on the real estate

was way out.

"Nashville continues to grow, and that's good because it spreads it out.

There's tremendous growth and vibrant communities all around Nashville."

Q: You've been

development business. So we've always been in the real estate business. It just wasn't our main focus."

Q: It sounds really exciting, acquiring land and developing it. What do you love about your job?

A: "What we do is so different every day. It's so different, the types of properties, the challenges, it's fun to solve those challenges."

Q: Is there one particular project that's your baby?

A: "Oh, you know, I'm involved in every one from the start to the finish. No, there's no one. We've had lots of success and lots of fun projects that a lot of people don't necessarily know about. Like where we are in the 100 Oaks area, and Harris Teeter on 21st and Pancake Pantry, and the Green Hills project is obviously very well accepted and turned out great.

"They're all so different. Some are more challenging than others. But at the end of the day, they all serve the community well, and that's what's important."

Q: So you're not going to tell me which one of your children you love the most?

A: "Well, I have two – my daughter and my son."

Q: Where's your favorite place to eat at the Hill Center?

A: "All of them, man! I'm not gonna pick a favorite. They're all good!"

Q: You're good at this.

A: "It's so different. One day, you might eat a pizza, the other day, a salad at Whole Foods, and then a burger at Five Guys. I'm not big on Asian food, so I'm not a big Pei Wei lover, but my kids would rather go there than anywhere."

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