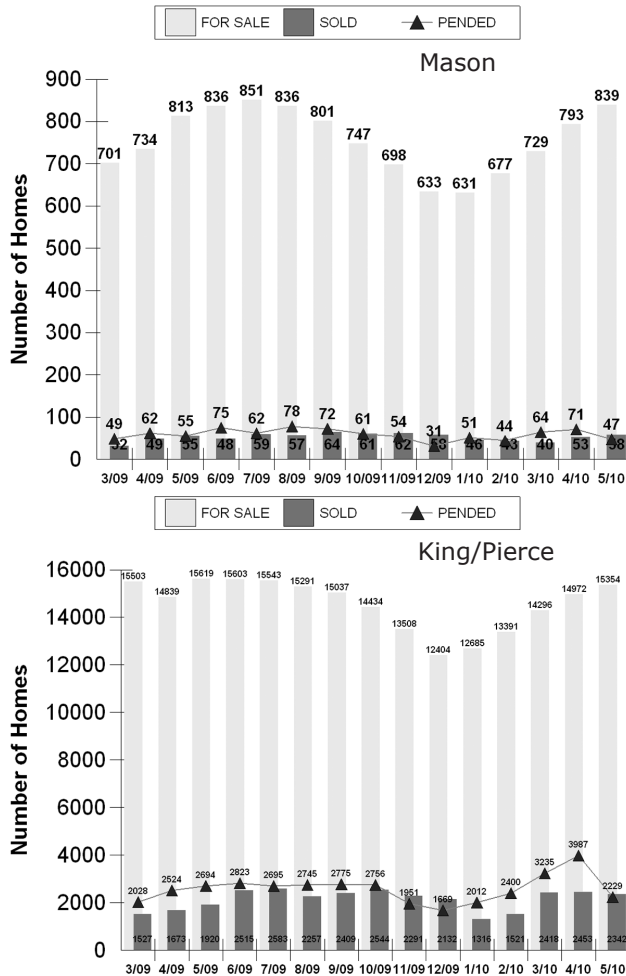


Real Estate Activity



The standard chart we use in real estate to measure our market is interesting these days. Supply (homes for sale) certainly exceeds demand (sold) which by definition is a buyers market. The troubling part is less than 6% of the properties on the market are being sold.

Sales were up marginally in April but took a downturn last month - probably due to the halting of federal housing incentives. To add to these figures, Mason County properties averaged 91 days to sell with an average price per square foot of \$132.

OK, prices are down but some properties sell quickly. Why? It's about condition. Well cared for houses with attractive staging is more critical now than years past.

As usual, the Olympic Peninsula followed the trends of the large metros to the east meaning this is at least a regional trend rather than something local.

We are beginning to see more investors coming through our doors. With conditions like this and interest rates still under 5%, this is an investors paradise. Appreciation potentials like this is less likely in the stock market or with banking instruments and with many Hood Canal properties now discounted up to 30% from 2005 highs, it appears to investors to be a market ripe for harvest.

Techie Tidbits...

Digital photography is one today's great marvels—putting professional features into the hands of more people. Yes, the results still take a fine eye and a good lens, however more and more, it's about the software.

When film was the media, we all suffered the same fate. The moment was right, we were there but something wasn't just right. The picture wasn't framed, the light was dim and grandma had red eyes. Even good photographs have to be touched up when they are being printed. Digital photo editing software now allows us to correct these ills.

Photo editing software isn't expensive. It varies in price from free to \$100 and everything in between. All photo editing software includes red eye removal, rotate, resize, flip, crop, adjust lighting, color management, multiple undos, the most common problems photographers have to solve. But which is best for you?

Adobe has once again produced the most powerful, most complete photo editing software called PhotoShop Elements 8 (\$99). If you want professional results without sacrificing excellence, PhotoShop is your choice. If on the other hand, you want a more user-friendly alternative in a high-function piece of software, take a look at Corel Paint Shop Pro Photo (\$59). For most users, I'm not sure you can tell the difference with the results.

If maximum user-friendliness and lower cost is your target, check out Photo Impression by ArcSoft (\$39). It is a mid-priced photo editing program with adequate editing tools, dated clip art, a quick slide show function and email. It's simple, fast, and intuitive with reasonably good results.

Then again, if you first want to play with photo editing software without the financial commitment, how about a freebie? Download PhotoScape at www.photoscape.org and donate a couple of dollars to them if you find the program useful.

Either way, your pictures will thank you for it.

THE SOUTH SOUNDER

Upcoming Events...

6/22 — United Way Day of Caring, countywide call to action, call (360) 426-4999 or uway3@hctc.com

6/26-27 — Relay for Life, help fight cancer, Shelton HS, 4pm Fri to 4pm Sat

6/27 — MC Historical Society Car Show & Ice Cream Social, 9am-2pm, downtown Shelton

6/27-28 — Explore Hood Canal Geocache Bash, find one of 50 hidden treasures around the area, for info call (360) 898-2628

7/2-4 — Celebrate Hoodsport, fair, fireworks, 10am, downtown Hoodsport

7/3 — Tahuya Day & Parade, booths open at 10am, parade begins at 1pm, downtown Tahuya

7/5 — Thunder Over the Canal, entertainment, fireworks, starts at 3pm, Alderbrook Resort, \$5 admission

7/15 — Shelton Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast, 7am-1pm, Kneeland Park, downtown Shelton

7/18-19 — Allyn Days Festival, music, salmon feed Sat 12-6pm, BBQ chicken Sun 12-5pm, Allyn Waterfront Park

7/23-25 — Mason Area Fair & Rodeo, 10am, Fairgrounds

7/31 — Grapeview Water & Art Festival, 10am-4pm, Fair Harbor Marina

8/14 — Taste of Hood Canal, food, live music, car show, and more, 10am-6pm, Clifton Lane, Belfair

8/15-16 — Hood Canal Salmon Derby & Seafood Feast, downtown Hoodsport

8/18 — SummerFest at Harmony Hill, a celebration of gardens, 10am-3pm, 1 block east of the Alderbrook Resort

8/22 — Tahuya Salmon Bake, 1-5pm, Tahuya Fire Hall

8/28-29 — RAPSody, 170-mile bicycle ride thru 5 counties, for info www.rapsodybikeride.com

9/11 — Theler Motorcycle Poker Run & BBQ, 9 am, Theler Community Center

Send us your event information, comments, or questions: mostyn@windermere.com, or call Mike at (360) 275-5002 or (360) 229-2479.

The South Sounder Summer Low-Salt Recipe

Black Bean & Pepper Salad with Feta

This is a personal favorite. Not only colorful, but it is quick and easy to make. Perfect for a picnic or potluck – make lots as everyone will come back for more!

Sodium per serving: 71mg

Makes 10-12 servings

Salad:

2 (15-oz) cans no-salt-added black beans, drained and rinsed
2 green bell peppers, diced
1 red bell pepper, diced
1 yellow bell pepper, diced
1 sweet onion, diced
1 (15-oz) can no-salt-added whole kernel corn, drained
2 oz Athenos Basil and Tomato Feta cheese (or other flavored feta with 220mg sodium or less per ounce)

Dressing:

¼ cup balsamic vinegar
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ tsp finely minced garlic
1 tsp Dijon-style mustard
2 tsp sugar or sugar substitute
2 tbsps chopped fresh flat-leaf (Italian) parsley (optional)

For the salad: In a large bowl, combine beans, peppers, onion, and corn.

For the Dressing: Blend together vinegar, oil, garlic, mustard, and sweetener, either by whisking in a small bowl or by shaking well in a screw-top jar. Pour over bean mixture and mix thoroughly; cover and refrigerate several hours. Before serving, mix in parsley and feta; stir well.

— taken from *The Hasty Gourmet™ Low Salt Favorites*, ©2005, www.lowsaltfoods.com

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