



front porch news

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Fascinating Measures

Clouds are really heavy: Clouds are not as light and fluffy as they appear. In fact, one cloud weighs 1.1 million pounds, according to researchers. How do they know? That's calculated by taking the water density of a cloud and multiplying it by its volume. And the reason why it "floats" at that weight is because the air below it is even heavier.

One-quarter of all your bones are in your feet: There are 26 bones and 33 joints in each foot. That's 52 bones in both feet, out of 206 total bones in your whole body. All those bones and joints allow your feet to absorb and release energy efficiently.

It would only take one hour to drive to space: If you got into your car, turned on the ignition and drove up at 60 mph, it would only take one hour to get to outer space, says astronomer Fred Hoyle. Of



course, you'd need a Tesla to do it in style!

Castro Valley Happenings

Maybe we should all laugh a little bit more.

Recently we had the pleasure of helping a great family sell their parents' home on Almond Road right across the street from Parsons Park. As I got to know this family I learned a lot of great history about this house and who built this custom home. For those of you in the neighborhood you've probably driven by the house hundreds of times and always wondered about "that unique house on Almond". The home was built by Herbert and Rosalind Ow-Wing back in 1955. Herbert, most commonly referred to by his friends as "Herb" was a pharmacist in Castro Valley beginning his career back in 1944. Rosalind was a very busy mom raising her 4 children who loved living in Castro Valley. In

Herb's later years he was well known for walking around the neighborhood saying hello to everyone, then laughing all the time. Herb was just an all around happy person and he wasn't afraid to let everybody know. After a while Herb was known best for his contagious laughter he constantly displayed, brightening the day of all those he met. Herb passed away in 2007, but his family was sure to have his memory live on by dedicating a park bench to him inside of Parsons Park. If you haven't yet seen it, please take some time to find his special bench with the plaque that reads "In Loving Memory of Herbert Ow-Wing HaHaHaHa". We hope you enjoyed this story as much as we did and maybe see it as a friendly reminder that all of us should laugh a little more.

Do you have a Castro Valley Story? Please share it with us, we would love to hear it!

Castro Valley Market Update

Did you know there are approximately 22,348 homes in Castro Valley? (Data per last recorded census) Inventory of active listings remains at all time lows with only 29 single family homes, 1 condo and 6 townhouses.

The median home value in Castro Valley is \$855,100. Castro Valley home values have gone up 4.5% over the past year and many experts predict that it will rise at 6.7% within the next year. The average sold price per square foot in Castro Valley is \$515. Average days on market is 29. Average list vs. sale price is 100.62%. In summary, this data still indicates a strong sellers market. While we have seen a slight correction in the list vs. sale price and an increase in the days on market, well priced, well marketed homes are still selling quickly for top dollar.

Real Estate Questions? “Ask Jon & Leslie”

Q: I am planning on selling my home in the late spring of 2019. Why is it that some home sellers provide the home, termite and roof inspections to the buyers up front while other sellers don't provide reports and leave that responsibility to the buyers? What are the advantages and disadvantages of a seller choosing to or not to provide reports to buyers? As a seller am I required to provide reports to prospective buyers?

A: This is certainly an excellent question and depending on a few factors could be the difference in a home selling for many thousands more or less based upon how this is handled. Sellers are not required to provide reports to buyers, however there are many advantages in doing so. If all reports are provided up front by the seller then the buyer has peace of mind in knowing the true condition of the home prior to making their offer and the seller has peace of mind in knowing the buyer isn't going to turn up major problems during the escrow that were previously unknown and potentially cancel the contract or ask for a significant price reduction. Another big advantage to providing reports up front is that if there are several buyers interested in your home one or more buyers may elect to remove all their contingencies to cancel up front in the hope of becoming the strongest offer both in price and terms. This is a common occurrence for a seller to receive a very strong, contingency free offer when reports are provided up front when more than one buyer wants to compete to become the winning offer. Some sellers choose not to provide reports on their home and sometimes their sale still goes quite well, but depending on the condition of their home this can be a risky bet. If a seller is highly confident that the condition of their home is excellent, then the odds are there will not be any problems during the escrow with buyers conducting their own reports. Sellers who are aware of problems with their home are always advised to provide reports up front to avoid buyers requesting concessions.

Have a real estate question? Please email it to us: JandLrealestateteam@gmail.com

FEBRUARY QUIZ QUESTION

From what festival did the month of February get its name?

4 Clever Kid Hacks for Parents

1. Make a table-top hammock for the little ones by tying a sheet all the way around a small table.
2. Get the kids do chores in a snap by changing the wifi password, then giving it to them when chores are done.
3. Stinky kicks? A dry tea bag in the shoes will help reduce the smell.
4. Kids won't eat brown apple slices? Preserve the slices and give the kids a little fun at the same time by rubber-banding the sliced apple back together.



THANK YOU!

Thank You friends who've trusted us to work with you, your friends, and family.

A very special thanks this month to...

Larisa B. & Bryan F., Alla & Justin H., Kristy D., Ken H., Erica & Damon S.

Our business depends on referrals. We hope you feel comfortable introducing us to the people you care about.

Want to Win a \$10 Coffee Card?

It's easy to win! Just send in the answer to the **quiz question** on **page 2**. Each month, the first 10 correct entries can win a \$10 coffee card. Put **QUIZ** in the subject and email it to: JandLrealestateteam@gmail.com

Last Month's Question: *In a small room, there are four cats sitting at each of the four corners. Opposite to each cat are three cats and adjacent to each cat are two more cats. How many cats are there in all?*

Last Month's Answer: *4. The bulk of the question is designed as misdirection.*

Congratulations to last month's winner!



Getting to know the Foster's

Although you may know us in other context, or maybe you don't, Jon and I just wanted to tell you a little bit about us and our family. Jon and I are coming up on our 13th wedding anniversary this month. We met through friends and dated long distance for 1.5 years before we said "I Do" at the most magical place on earth... Disneyland!

We have been working together since day one, selling hundreds of homes here in the East Bay and focusing our business here in Castro Valley. We love this town and everything it has to offer. Raising our two small kids here has been amazing. Our son Grant just turned six and his smile is contagious, he is smart and so kind. He just started Kindergarten and we are so blessed to have such a wonderful teacher. He loves everything baseball, soccer and his new-found love, X-Box. Our sweet baby Nora turned three in November, she is all girl and sassy!! She defiantly has a mind of her own. Sometimes I forget she is only three, she is more a three-nager. She loves ballet and anything princesses. We had to hang up a curtain rod in her bedroom for all her dresses.



Jon and I love our community and the friends that we have made here. Jon is a Castro Valley Native having gone to Proctor, Canyon and CV High School. It is fun to raise our kids here and do the things he used to do as a kid with his family. We love riding our bikes at Lake Chabot, walking downtown to the village and eating at Mod Pizza.

Not only do we sell real estate and help people with their biggest asset, "their home" we also like to be involved in our community. Castro Valley is the hidden gem of the East Bay and we love our life here. Jon sits on the board of CVI baseball league and helps coach Grant's baseball team. I am extremely involved in the Castro Valley Mother's Club. If you are new to town and have kids.... this club is a must! I have met some of the most amazing families through this club. I loved it so much that I have been on the board for the past two years. I love what I do and co-chair the Mom's Nights Out each month!

Thank you for a taking the time to meet our family. If you see us around town come up and say hi. We'd love to meet you! Jon and Leslie

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"I think my house is worth more than the price you're telling me..."

It makes perfect sense that a home owner would have their own ideas about how much their home is worth. They've probably spent a while doing their own research. By the time they start interviewing listing agents, they already have an expectation about price.

Then the real estate agent comes along and uses comparable properties to evaluate the likely price of the home as objectively as possible. But an agent hasn't lived in the home and may not be able to see its value from the seller's perspective. That's why it's important to have a dialog with the agent about why they came up with that price and why you came up with your price. Together, you can develop a pricing strategy that makes sense to you.

If you're selling your home this spring, call me for a listing consultation as far ahead as possible. A well thought out and executed plan will always yield the best results.

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