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REAL ESTATE

ROLAND HAWKINS



Kids work during break

If you have no vacation traveling plans then this time of the year is a great opportunity to add extra curb appeal to your home. Give the kids something to do during the spring break.

I love this time of the year. Trees and flowers are bloom. Lawns that were dormant during the winter months are now green and growing again and with all this rain growing too fast. Everything looks livelier and pretty this time of the year

Real estate traffic also has a tendency to increase this time of the year. Prospective buyers are more inclined to get out and home search a little more with the kids out of school.

Most sellers can take advantage of this season to spruce up the exterior portions of their homes. Understanding that a home's exterior curb appeal creates that first (lasting) impression about one's home.

With the right curb appeal, a home for sale has a greater chance at attracting more homebuyers. Therefore, with more home showings you increase the possibility of your home selling for the best price.

Adding new flowers and shrubbery to the front landscape is one of the least expensive ways of enhancing curb appeal. Also, make sure exterior lights and fixtures are attached and in good working order. Of course you should keep your lawn well manicured at all times. You never know when a potential buyer may arrive. Attention to these details will show potential buyers how much you care for your home before entering it.

Painting or pressure washing the exterior of your home will definitely enhance its curb appeal. Prior to painting make sure any and all damage siding is repaired. All siding, trim and shutters should be well maintained. Making minor cosmetic repairs will eliminate some buyer's objections and negative opinions of your home.

Home repairs that are necessary to maintain a property's appearance and potential value are always recommended. A failure to make certain home repairs in a timely fashion could easily result into additional property damages and undesired losses of a home's potential selling value.

Too often homeowners make unnecessary home improvements that price their homes out of their neighborhood's market value. This may be monies loss since an expensive enhancement to you may simply be a nice bonus to the average prospective homebuyer.

Before making any unnecessary home improvements, contact your local realtor to find out if the contemplated improvements will increase or decrease your home's property value. Most realtors will provide this information free of charge.

Homebuyers are influenced by many factors in their home purchasing process. It's the seller's responsibility to eliminate as many buyers' objections as possible. The effective packaging of a home for sale could make the world of a difference in a buyer's purchasing decision.

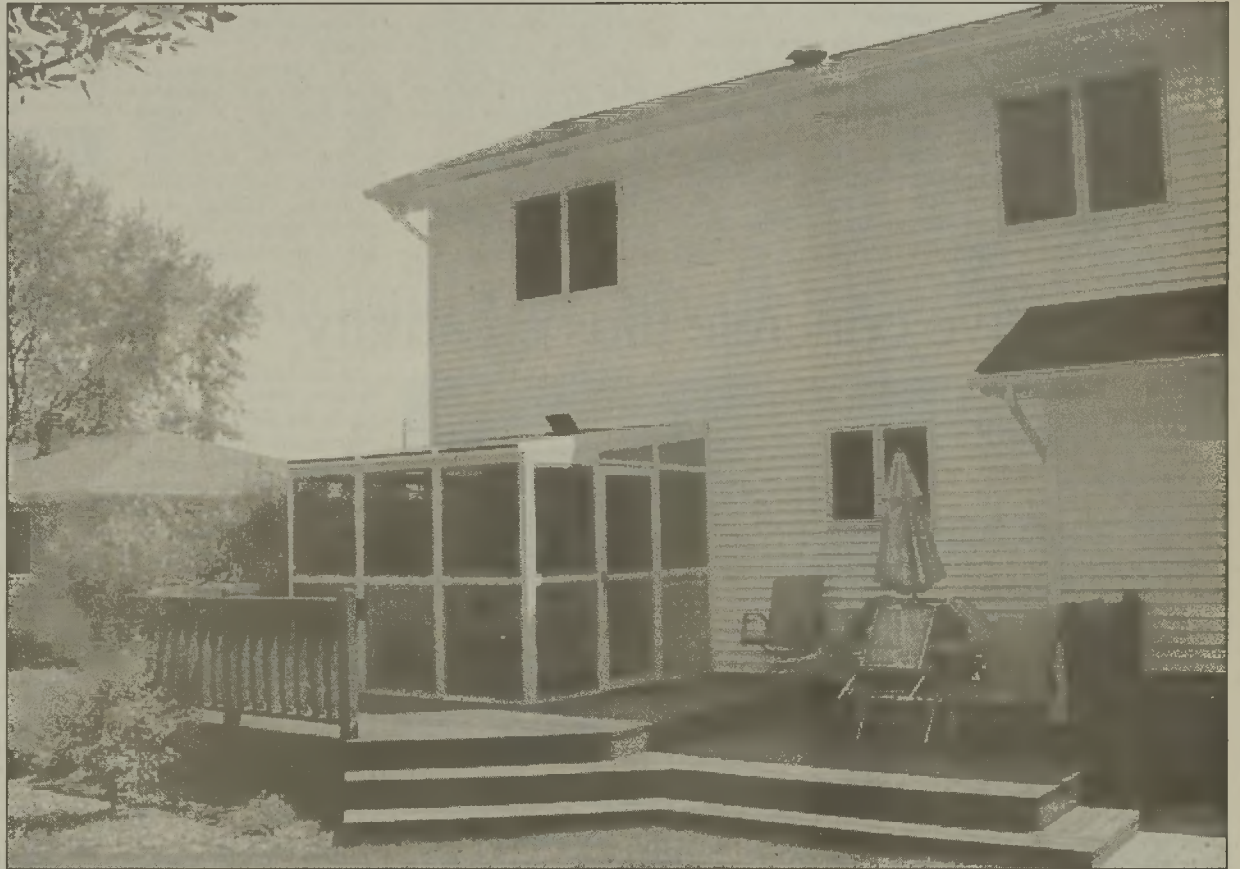
Buyers want a home to call their own. With the proper preparation, yours could be the one they choose. It is always in a seller's best interest to prepare their home for a successful sale. That is why a home's initial curb appeal is absolutely critical in a home's marketability.

Crank up the lawn mowers and get out there with the rest of your neighbors. The hot days of summer are just around the corner, so why not enjoy enhancing your home's curb appeal while our weather is still mild. A little sprucing and enhancing will more than likely pay off in the long run in selling a home.

Homes that are priced right and shows well has the best chance at selling for the best price and in the least amount of time.

Spring break is a great time for the kids and home enhancements.

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PHOTO/ARA CONTENT

Enjoy the great outdoors all year

Get a convertible sunroom added to home

ARTICLE RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

Spring showers will soon give way to May flowers and warmer temperatures, but you don't have to wait until after the spring thaw to comfortably enjoy the great outdoors. You could be in your sunroom right now watching the flakes fall without getting cold.

A sunroom, by definition, is an enclosed space which receives light and fresh air and makes a transition from an indoor environment to the outdoors. According to the National Sunroom

Association, they are one of the most popular additions people make to their homes. Between 100,000 and 200,000 of them are added onto existing structures in the United States every year

"Adding a sunroom to your existing structure is a great way to increase your property value and resale appeal," says Jerry Ritten, an agent with Counselor Realty in Minneapolis, Minn.

"It's also a great thing to have while you live in a house," says Clark Peterson, 50, of Decatur, Ill. After years of talking about

getting one, he and his wife, Tari, finally decided to do it this past September. "We had 4 or 5 different dealers come out and give us estimates, and they came in very high," says Peterson. "Then while doing a little research online, I came across the Web site for a company called SunPorch Structures. They were thousands of dollars less expensive, with many unique features for greater value, and there was no sales pressure."

Peterson ordered a sample kit

from the company and says he was so impressed with the parts and videotape that he received, he put in his order the same day.

"When my SunPorch arrived, it included everything I needed. All the materials were labeled, the frame pieces were pre-cut and holes were pre-drilled, and the instructions made perfect sense," he says.

Peterson and his wife only worked on installation of their SunPorch a few hours a day, but from start to finish, it took less

Please see ADD/6C

NO CRAMPED QUARTERS

Home decorating eliminates clutter

ARTICLE RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

No matter how big your house is, you've probably desired more space at one time or another. We all accumulate clutter and sometimes there just doesn't seem to be anywhere to put it.

But before you call the contractor for bids, consider this: maybe it's not a shortage of space but a lack of organization that's the problem. Using your space effectively goes a long way toward keeping your home both functional and beautiful at the same time.

By thinking and constructing creatively, you can gain more storage while enhancing the beauty of your home. Here are some ideas for creating more space that has style:

- Add a drawer or sliding shelf. Hardware and houseware stores stock drawers that can be installed underneath a cabinet. If you have a home with limited drawer space, this is a great way to add more storage discreetly. Then you can get all that clutter off the kitchen counter or the dining room table.

You can also install shelves under cabinets that slide out when you need them.

- Don't forget wall space. Look around your house and you will probably find there is a lot of wall space that you could put to good use. Pots and pans can be taken out of cabinets and hung on walls; tools can be hung on pegboards; books, CDs and small treasures can be stored on shelves.

- Utilize "lost space" by creating additional storage.

"A new cabinet or bookcase provides a nice focal point for a room as well as additional storage," says Glen Kaszubski, of Liquid Nails, a national construction adhesive brand.

He suggests that homeowners think about those areas that are "lost space" such as the



PHOTO/ARA CONTENT

alcoves on either side of a fireplace or the corners of a dining room.

Using a construction adhesive like Liquid Nails and various types of building supplies (MDF or bead board are two inexpensive options), you can build your own durable bookcase without using a lot of nails and screws.

To obtain a finished look and add an element of beauty, apply facings and crown molding along the edges with construction adhesive. Ready-to-install cabinets (fabricated cabinets) are also an easy option for additional storage.

You can add your own decorative touch by applying ornamental tiles that match your décor on the countertop using Liquid Nails.

- Clear your desk. A clean desk will not only look better it will increase your productivity.

Invest in a sturdy full-suspension filing cabinet or portable file boxes that hold hanging file folders so you can get everything organized and out of sight.

Stow away your desk supplies in an on-desk caddy or in a drawer.

- Think multi-function. Add some furniture that can also be used for storage.

A cedar chest makes a great coffee table and can also be used to store blankets or clothing. An antique chest of drawers will look great in your living room, and is useful for storing office supplies, linens or CDs.

For more information about Liquid Nails construction adhesives call (800) 634-0015 or log on to www.liquidnails.com. Click on the Hands-on Home Guide to receive a free 46-page how-to instructional and inspirational booklet featuring additional home projects.