

When I Became a Realtor 15 Years Ago, I Didn't Know What I Didn't Know

As a new Realtor in 2002, I thought experience wasn't all that important. I had taken the required courses and passed the state licensing exam on my first attempt, and I benefited from the terrific "Fast Start" training at Coldwell Banker. How complicated could it be, I figured, to help a client buy or sell their home?

Obviously, I didn't know what I didn't know, and, of course, that will always be the case. But it's clear to me that I do know a lot more now than I knew in 2002!

I still learn from every transaction, and that's the key. The more transactions that an agent does, the more he or she learns. That's why we have office meetings every Monday, so that we can keep learning and share what we learn with our fellow agents.

Golden Real Estate agents participated in 104 closings over the last 24 months. With nine active agents during that time period, that comes to an average of 11.5 closings per agent, which translates into experience you don't get from all agents.

I advise buyers and sellers to consider how many transactions an agent has completed rather than how many years they've been in business. That information is available at www.FindDenverRealtors.com.

When you decide to hire a broker you can't know what that broker doesn't know – and that could be a lot. Still, you've made a wise decision because it's a virtual lock that they know more than you do and can more effectively navigate the often tricky waters of real estate transactions than your neighbor who insisted on trying "for sale by owner."

All brokers are required to take 36 hours of continuing education (CE) classes every three years, and I have taken more than required. However, I think of this newspaper column as my "personal continuing education classroom." That's because nearly every column I write requires me to research a particular aspect of real estate. Regardless of the topic, I need to learn more before I can write about it. My practice is to send a draft of each column to one or more known experts on that topic, as well as to my broker associates, for feedback before going to press.

As a result, I can't recall embarrassing myself by

publishing a column that was factually incorrect.

Continuing education is important, and you'll find many agents who have certifications indicating they've completed additional training on one or more real estate specialties. Some popular certifications I look for in other agents when referring business to them include: **ABR** (Accredited Buyer's Representative), **CRS** (Certified Residential Specialist), **GRI** (Graduate Realtor Institute) and **SRES** (Seniors Real Estate Specialist). These certifications point to extra training which sets them apart from agents without those certifications. Having these certifications is particularly useful when the agent does not have a high number of transactions under his or her belt.

EcoBroker is another certification that most of the agents at Golden Real Estate have (and that the newer ones are pursuing), indicating special training in energy efficiency, sustainability and solar power, which we feel is so important nowadays, both to save

money for the homeowner and to combat the effects of climate change.

Because a home purchase is typically the biggest one most of us ever make, it's critical that you arm yourself with as much useful information as you can. When you sell your home, you want to make sure that you reap all the gains you deserve.

Toward that end, Golden Real Estate is holding another of its popular workshops, next **Tuesday, September 5, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.** in our South Golden Road office. I'll be the primary speaker and I'll answer your questions pertaining to both buying and selling real estate. The fee is \$10, and includes hors d'oeuvres and other refreshments. It also entitles you to a one-hour personal consultation at a later date with myself and/or another Golden Real Estate agent you might meet at the workshop. It's important that you register in advance. You may do that by calling me at **303-525-1851** or by sending an email to me at Jim@GoldenRealEstate.com. My promise to you is that you will leave empowered to get the best deal for yourself, whether buying or selling.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH,** Realtor®

Just Listed: 2-Story Home in Littleton's Westfield Park

This home at **4927 S. Miller Way** is located in the Westfield Park subdivision northwest of Belleview Avenue & Kipling Street in unincorporated Jefferson County. It has 3 bedrooms and 2 baths upstairs and no basement. Within the attached 2-car garage is a cozy heated office (call it a man cave) that's in addition to the 1,638 square feet listed on county records. Also not shown on county records is the 12'x20' enclosed patio. The 71-sq.-ft. covered porch is south facing (as is the driveway) and must be quite pleasant to sit on during sunny winter days! The quarter-acre lot is quiet and private. A narrated video tour will be posted shortly to www.LittletonHome.info. I'll be holding it open this **Saturday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Call your agent or me at **303-525-1851** for a private showing!



Wheat Ridge Ranch Just Listed by David Dlugasch



This is a one of a kind well maintained and updated custom built home. The address is **4505 Teller Street** It has slab granite counter tops, hardwood, tile, and new carpeted flooring. The bathroom has two sinks with slab granite counter top. The windows, hot water heater, forced air furnace and A/C are all newer. It has a brand new roof. The 2-car garage has a half bath and an attached large work area that can be used as a craft, hobby, wood shop, or anything you like. The 1/3-acre lot has its own irrigation well. Don't miss this home on a quiet tree-lined street. Take a narrated video tour (with drone footage) at www.WheatRidgeHome.info, then call David at **303-908-4835** for a showing.

Bring Your Electric Vehicle to Our Event on Sunday, Sept. 10th

Every September, our parking lot is one of the sites for **National Drive Electric Week**. Our event is being held from **10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday, September 10th**, and we already have 9 sign-ups bringing different brands and models of electric vehicles. If you have an electric vehicle of any type, you can sign up at www.DriveElectricWeek.info, and take this opportunity to share your knowledge and experience with members of the general public. Call me at **303-525-1851** for more info.



Jim Smith

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Listen to the Golden Real Estate show on AM 630 KHOW Saturdays at 3 p.m.

