

A Familiar Challenge: Mom and Dad Need to Go to Assisted Living

In my 13 years of listing and selling homes, I've had many opportunities to meet with elderly homeowners who were facing what many of us will eventually need to deal with — leaving our homes for a facility with supportive and/or medical care.

Sure, I can help elderly homeowners sell their homes, but, like most real estate professionals, I'm ill equipped — and not really trained — to help them identify the best facility for their final years.

The closest we Realtors come to this kind of help is finding a low-maintenance patio home with main-floor master when their 2-story home on a large lot no longer serves their needs. Beyond that, we can only hope they find what they need.

I have stood by as my elderly clients moved into Meridian, into Atria Applewood, into Windcrest, and into Golden Pond, unable to offer them more than our free moving truck, moving boxes and laborers. How wonderful it would be if I could do more for them in the way of providing expert counseling.

Well, I have found a solution. We are now working with Jenn Gomer, a former caseworker, registered nurse and senior consultant. Her organization has agreements with many of the "retirement communities" in the Denver metro area to pay for referrals. Before you think, "Aha! She'll just convince me to move to a facility that pays her a referral fee," let me say that I believe in the service that Jenn and her organization provides, putting the needs of their clients first and their

compensation second. It's no different than what I do, ethically, legally and morally committed to putting the interests of my buyers and sellers above my own.

Just as there is a lot to know about real estate or about mortgage lending, there's a lot to know about senior housing. Financial considerations are just the beginning. Jenn and her colleagues need to be experts in Medicare and Medicaid, long-term care and disability insurance. They need to know the different levels of assisted living, memory care and home care.

After familiarizing ourselves with Jenn's services, we've decided that, when we meet with a prospective seller about selling their home because it no longer suits their aging needs, we're going to invite Jenn along to offer the guidance they need beyond selling their home.

Let me give just one example of Jenn's expertise that hadn't occurred to me. When moving a person into memory care, they can't take all their furniture, but you want to take their favorite chair, paintings or other décor that they're used to seeing at home.

If a person with early signs of dementia needs to move to a supportive residential facility, it should be to a facility that has memory care capability so the person doesn't have to move a second time.

We all want to stay in our homes and live independently for as long as possible, but we also don't want to be a burden to our families. Part of stay-

ing independent is putting ourselves in a safe situation where we can live the remainder of our lives, even if we require additional assistance. Prior to having to make the decision out of necessity due to injury or a progressing chronic illness, make the decisions early so you can take an active part in the decision.

Choosing the right location can be an overwhelming decision. It helps to get connected with a senior living advisor who can meet with you and discuss your needs, finances, and preferences. Jenn's company is one such service. Unlike other senior housing advisory companies, Jenn will meet with you in person and actually tour facilities with you. Their team will investigate each facility for safety, security, and integrity. Your personal advisor can walk you through the process; provide guidance, compassion

and personalized service so that you can rest assured that you are not being taken advantage of. Another benefit to using Jenn Gomer's organization is that her services are completely free to you.

We feel strongly that offering such guidance is an appropriate extension of our service selling your last home. We are not going to simply earn our commission and say "good luck!" as you march into the unknown.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH,**
Realtor®

Learn More About This Topic:

On Sunday, August 9, at 2:30 pm, we'll host a free seminar at the Belmar Public Library, 555 S. Allison Parkway, Lakewood, where you can get your questions answered. Refreshments will be served. Call Jenn Gomer at 720-675-8308 to RSVP.

This Week's Featured New Listing

Watch Wildlife from the Deck of This Weaver Creek Condo

This well maintained upper unit condo at The Preserve at Weaver Creek has over 1,300 square feet of living space and has two bedrooms, two baths and a third room that can be used as an office or den. The address is 10457 W. Hampden Ave., Unit 10-202. With an open concept kitchen, living and dining area, you'll feel the spaciousness as soon as you walk in the front door. The living room has a vaulted ceiling along with a gas fireplace. A private deck overlooks The Preserve with its creek, where you can enjoy watching the wildlife or just relaxing. This unit also has a 1-car detached garage plus an assigned parking space. It's move-in ready. Call listing agent Mark Spencer at 303-842-4480 for a private showing, or take the narrated YouTube video tour simulating an actual showing, inside and out, at www.WeaverCreekCondo.info.



Price Reduced on Golden Heights Ranch

Enjoy sweeping views of the Front Range from the living room & back yard of the updated ranch style home at 15815 W. 2nd Ave. on 1/4 acre lot. It has 3 beds 2 baths, new Hickory hardwood floors, stainless steel dishwasher & range, walk-in closet, sun room, Lopi wood burning fireplace, 12x24 utility shed, and more. One-car attached garage. Listed by Carrie Lovingier, 303-907-1278. More info at www.GoldenHeightsHome.info. Now \$298,000



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