

Everyone Has a Friend in Real Estate, But Should You Use Him or Her?

I probably lose more listings to sellers' friends and relatives than I do to my more deserving competitors — and I understand their dilemma. I so admire those sellers who resist the pressure to go with their friends or relatives and choose to use a seasoned and successful professional.

One factor that makes it hard on such sellers is not knowing how to assess a friend's effectiveness as a listing agent. In the last paragraph I'll give you a tool that could help.

Unless you're in real estate yourself, you really have no idea of what makes a Realtor successful both for himself and his clients. Indeed, most members of the public don't know the difference between a Realtor and a non-Realtor and why it matters. Therefore, the typical seller finds himself at a loss

when it comes to explaining to the friend or relative why he or she didn't choose them.

Let's say, for example, that your nephew just got his license and joined a brokerage in Parker. You want to show your loyalty and help him get started, but you also know he's not the best person to list your home. The best agent to list your home is one who lives and works in or near your home town. And, yes, experience does count.

If that is your scenario, how about asking the right agent — an experienced nearby Realtor — to pay a referral fee to your nephew? Your nephew will be grateful for the money, and you'll get the agent who can serve you best.

But how do you find that best Realtor? My suggestion is to look online for the agent who has existing listings and a strong online presence. Search for listings in your ZIP code on the Denver MLS, www.REcolorado.com. Unlike other websites (especially Zillow), this website will display the name of the listing agent on each listing, not someone who paid to be displayed on other agents' listings. Click on the agent's name and then "View My Listings." It will

show you active, under contract and sold listings — a good measure of success. My 2009 column has other useful advice: www.The18Questions.com.

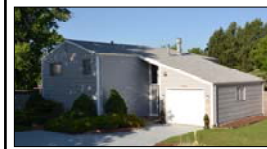
REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH**,
Realtor®

Prices Reduced on 2 Listings

First up is my listing at 1130 Seacrest Street in the Pleasantview section of Golden. Now listed at \$575,000, it's the best of both worlds—a great home atop an amazing oversized 5-car garage. Best man cave ever! Video at www.PleasantviewHome.info.



Next up is my listing at 9184 W. Warren Drive in Green Gables, now reduced to \$305,000. Features include the living room's aspen wood vaulted ceiling, and the wrap-around wood deck with mountain views. See www.GreenGablesHome.info

This Week's Featured New Listings from Golden Real Estate

Arvada Ranch-Style Home With Great Backyard

This fine home at 8845 W. 81st Drive is directly across from Meadowglen's swimming pool and tennis courts, but don't worry about noise. The large and beautifully landscaped backyard is a quiet retreat that you'll enjoy year-round. Inside, there are three bedrooms and two baths on the main floor and another bedroom and bathroom in the fully finished basement. The oversized 2-car garage has a bump-out for a workshop. Other features include hardwood flooring, central air conditioning, stainless steel appliances, gas fireplace, and a full-width concrete patio the color of flagstones. Click on the video tour at www.MeadowglenHome.info to see it all, inside and out! Open this Saturday, 1 to 4 pm, or call me for a private showing!



Golden Home With Awesome Mountain Views

This home at 479 Somerset Drive in Golden is convenient to everything that draws people to Golden. It is less than a mile from the Apex Open Space trailhead and less than a mile from the Golden light rail station. The attractions of downtown Golden are a short bike ride or healthy walk away on well maintained city trails. The home stands on a ridge with panoramic views of the foothills, as shown in this picture. It has three bedrooms and two full baths on the upper floor, two of which (including the master suite) have that beautiful mountain view. The fully finished basement has a large craft area but could easily accommodate a 4th bedroom and bathroom. Take a video tour at www.EagleRidgeHome.info, then call for a showing. Open Sat., 1-4 pm.



September's 5280 Magazine Is Out With the Five-Star Professional Insert

Every September I like to remind readers that 5280 does not rate real estate agents the way it does doctors and other professionals. A Minnesota company "nominates" agents with minimum sales and no complaints and then upsells them to buy display space in a paid advertising supplement published by 5280. Any agent who says he or she has been named a 5-Star Professional by 5280 Magazine is bending the truth. .



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