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May 2017

A Note from Ann:

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Happy May! The Real Estate “Season” is upon us. They say the “season” is from Easter to the start of school. We have seen an increase in activity since Easter (truly even before that with our crazy weather this year). I do expect it to get even busier as we head into summer. I’d like to pass along some tips that will help you (or those you know) prepare for these busy times.

For starters, let’s talk about the market itself. As our prices have risen, the lower price range is harder to come by. Anything below \$150K is going to be difficult to find in “livable” condition, most of these are fixer uppers. If you find one, be ready to move on it quickly. There are still some mobile homes to be had in this price range. The \$150K - \$250K price range is the most popular price range in this area and those can be harder to come by as well. We have a good supply now, most of them are new homes, but as it picks up the inventory of these will dwindle as well. This is a very competitive price range.

Tips for Sellers: If your home is priced well you need to be prepared that it could sell and close in as little as 2 weeks (if it’s a cash offer). You will need to be prepared for this option so you’re not caught unaware. Most deals will take 30 - 45 days (with 45 becoming more the norm as it picks up). Have your plans in order and be sure the house is show ready. You need to let the buyers in, they can’t buy it if they can’t get in and see it. Most will not come back if you turn them away as they’ll fall in love with another house they’re viewing. Do not be present at the showing, if you must stay then step outside when they’re inside and vice versa. Leave room for negotiation in your list price and plan on a few repair concessions as well.

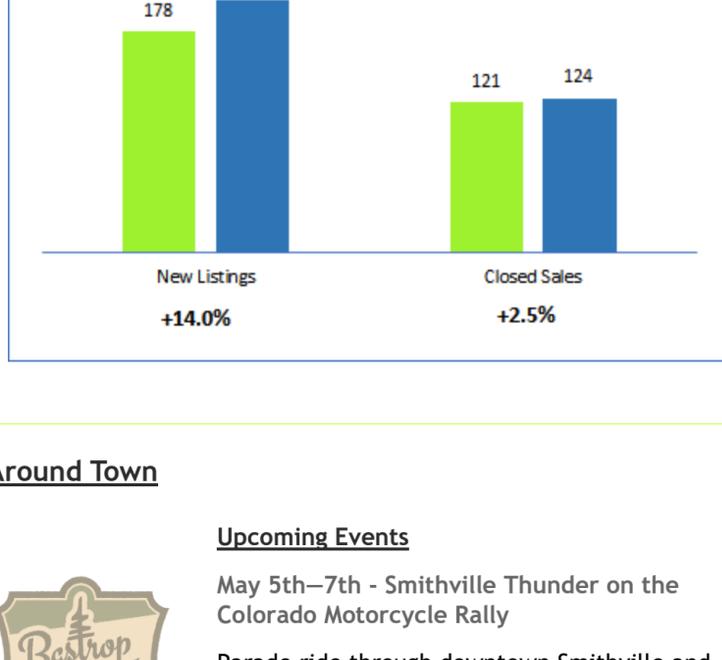
Tips for Buyers: First and foremost, you must be pre-approved before viewing any homes. If you fall in love with one and you are not, you will not be in a position to make an offer and possibly compete with other buyers so you will miss out. Please give your agent time to set up the showings. You cannot ask to see a bunch of homes on Friday night and expect to go early Saturday morning. We do a lot of work setting up the showings, printing out disclosures, flood maps, aerial views as well as planning a route and getting permission to enter the homes. Remember there may be someone living in the home and they would like time to make it show ready as well. Lastly, be emotionally ready to make an offer if you find “the” house. This market does not allow much time for “sleeping on it” - you can and will miss out. I hear too many times “gee I wish we had of made that offer on that first one”. Don’t have regrets, be ready.

Your agent’s job is to look out for your best interests. I and my agents take that job very seriously. We have your back and are ready to answer any questions you have. Don’t ever hesitate to ask - that’s what we’re here for.

I look forward to helping you and your family or friends find or sell their home in a timely manner with the least stress possible! Until next month, happy Spring!

Bastrop Area Monthly Statistics

Below are the current statistics for the Bastrop Area. The average home sale price for April was \$210,429, which is up +10.1% from the previous year. The average home sale price for 2017, so far, is \$203,437, which is up +6.8% from 2016.



Around Town



Upcoming Events

May 5th–7th - Smithville Thunder on the Colorado Motorcycle Rally

Parade ride through downtown Smithville and back to Riverbend Park. Biker games, rides, contests, live music and more during this-three day event the first weekend in May. For more information, [click here](#).

May 6th–7th - Tough Mudder

Probably the toughest event on the planet, Tough Mudder is a 10-12 mile mud and obstacle course designed to drag you out of your comfort zone by testing your physical strength, stamina, and mental grit. With no podiums, winners, or clocks to race against, it’s not about how fast you can cross the finish line. Rather, it’s a challenge that emphasizes teamwork, camaraderie, and accomplishing something almost as tough as you are. For more information, [click here](#).

May 13th - Smithville Fly-In & Lunch

Hundreds of small planes land at the Smithville Municipal Airport to celebrate aviation and the adventuresome spirit of pilots with a delicious meal at the county's only airport. Youth are able to attend the Young Eagles Flying School and qualify for a ride in a plane. For more information, [click here](#).

May 29th - Memorial Day Splash and Bash

Zip into summer the right way with Zip Lost Pines Memorial Day Splash and Bash; FREE event entry. Come enjoy a day full of food, various vendors, face painting, games, arts n’ crafts, snow cones, water slides and other attractions. Zip our first line for our low Memorial Day rate, or Kinney Roughs Nature Park. Active Duty and Veterans will receive special discounts for our FULL zip tour. This is a great way to celebrate Memorial Day . Fun for the whole family, so come see what all the hype is about! 11 am to 5 pm, FREE entry (pay for rides). For more information, [click here](#).

Featured Recipe: Key Lime Bars

By: Lauren Burgan

These are a nice twist on lemon bars. I have been making this recipe for years and they are always a hit. Great to bring to a summer BBQ or get together. Just make sure to cut them small, because they are very, very rich.

Key Lime Bars

Total baking time: 1hr
Servings: 12-16

Ingredients:

- Crust**
- 8 Tbsp. (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
 - 1/4 cup sugar
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1/4 tsp. salt



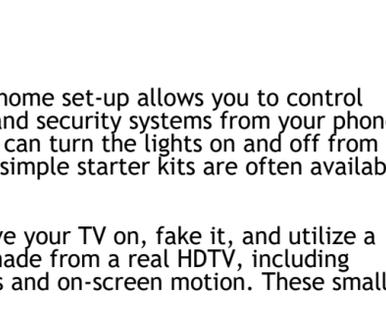
- Filling**
- 2 large eggs
 - 1 egg yolk
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1/3 cup key lime juice
 - 1 tsp. grated lime zest
 - 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
 - Powdered sugar for dusting, optional

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Line an 8-inch square backing pan with foil, leaving an overhanging. Mist foil with cooking spray.
2. Make crust: Using an electric mixer on medium-high speed, beat butter and sugar until light, about 2 minutes. Beat in flour and salt. Press evenly over bottom of pan. Bake until firm and light golden around edges, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool slightly.
3. Make filling: Using an electric mixer on medium speed, beat eggs, yolk, an sugar until smooth. Stir in lime juice and zest. Fold in flour. Pour filling over crust and bake until set, 20 to 30 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight (I recommend overnight). Use foil overhang to remove bars from pan to cut. Dust with powdered sugar just before serving, if desired.

Summer Security

Summer is a care-free time: School’s out, the weather’s nice and vacations are planned. But that easy-going attitude can leave your house vulnerable, especially if you’re leaving it unattended for while you’re kicking back at the beach. You know the standard tricks—stop the mail, have a trusted neighbor on the lookout—but you don’t have to stop there.



Go for a smart home. A smart home set-up allows you to control lights, appliances, thermostat and security systems from your phone. So with the tap of a button you can turn the lights on and off from anywhere. Products differ, but simple starter kits are often available starting at around \$100.

Fake your TV. Rather than leave your TV on, fake it, and utilize a product that mimics the light made from a real HDTV, including mimicking scene changes, fades and on-screen motion. These small devices start at around \$20.

Install fake security cameras. A security camera can be a strong deterrent, but it is expensive. Fake ones, however, are quite cheap, as little as \$10.

Get a sophisticated light timer. Plugging your lights into a timer is the age-old burglar deterrent, which means that determined burglars are able to this trick. So make sure your timer either turns the lights on and off at random, or allows you to program separate times for each day of the week.

Activate a barking dog. Although a little more expensive, several products allow you to mimic the sound of a barking dog as someone approaches the home. Attached to a motion sensor, the “dog” will start barking if someone is near the home and get louder and more persistent as the person gets closer.

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