



**Sharon Cardwell**  
REALTOR®

***"Knowledge. Experience.  
Dedication."***



Sharon Cardwell  
AMERICAN HOME, INC.  
98765 West Iliff Avenue  
Lakewood, CO 80228

Prsrt Std  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #123  
Lakewood, CO

**DEADLINE FOR ORDERING THE APRIL ISSUE:**  
**5:00 p.m. MONDAY • MARCH 15**

**QUESTIONS? Call Brett Koller at 303-567-6677**  
**Or e-mail: [info@RealtyResourcecgd.com](mailto:info@RealtyResourcecgd.com)**

Dear Friends:

April showers will bring May flowers, and this year they'll also be bringing a better real estate market to the Front Range than we've seen in awhile. How much better will depend on what part of town we're talking. So if our Spring weather has you itching to make a move, call me. I'll be happy to provide you with the latest facts, figures and activity that are happening in any part of town.

You don't have to be thinking of buying or selling your home to give me a call. Consider me your personal resource for all things real estate related--and that can be simply to request a copy of this month's HOMEOWNER'S REPORT. On page two of my newsletter you'll always find an article that's too complicated to completely cover, but too important to gloss over. That's why I provide a detailed REPORT that's free for the asking. And don't forget--you can always call me with the referral of any friends who are in need of real estate help.

**Enjoy Spring in Colorado!**

*Sharon*

**Office: (303) 777-2222**

**Cell: (303) 567-2380**

**Fax: (303) 772-3277**

**Email: [SCardwell@comcast.net](mailto:SCardwell@comcast.net)**

**Web: [www.SCSellsHomes.com](http://www.SCSellsHomes.com)**



## COLORADO REAL ESTATE News & Views

NEWS AND ARTICLES OF INTEREST TO THE COLORADO HOMEOWNER

If your home is currently listed for sale, this is not intended as a solicitation.

APRIL 2010

### Be on the lookout for home improvement scams this spring

The Better Business Bureau warns homeowners that spring is the high season for home improvement scams. According to the BBB, the home improvement industry is consistently in the top five types of businesses that receive the most consumer complaints each year.

There's no surefire way to avoid being a victim of home improvement scams and even the most well-intentioned contractor or handyman can run into problems that may run up the cost of a project. However, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Don't deal with itinerant handymen who come to your door. If they are insistent, ask them to leave and call the police if they won't.

- Don't take the word of someone who comes to your door telling you that you need repairs. Get a second opinion from a professional.

- Do not permit itinerant handymen to examine your house so they can give you an estimate. This is often the set-up to a scam, a burglary...or worse.

- Don't hire someone from a postcard or flyer without checking the company out. Ask friends or neighbors for recommendations.

- When interviewing a contractor, get a written list of work he or she has done in your area. Examine those projects and contact the previous customers about their experience.



- Get all the details in writing. If the handyman doesn't have a contract form, you can get one at your local library or online.

- If you need financing, contact a bank or credit union. Never use contractor-provided financing.

- Demand to see the contractor's city or county business license and insurance certificate. Refuse to deal with anyone who will not provide this information.

- Always be certain you have the contractor's complete name, business name and his or her street address. Don't settle for a P.O. Box.

With all the cold, snowy weather we had in Colorado this past winter, roofing and chimney repair scams are expected to blossom this spring. If you think you may need some work done soon, here's an excellent web site with details on how to work with contractors.

<http://www.fool.com/personal-finance/home/2003/12/04/8-tips-for-dealing-with-contractors.aspx>

**APRIL 2010**

## NewsBriefs

▼ Colorado fell to 12th in the country for its foreclosure rate in January, according to a national report. In 2006, Colorado was No. 1 for most of the year. In 2007, it was usually ranked in the top three.

▼ Colorado Foreclosure Hotline hit a milestone recently: 100,000 calls placed to the statewide hotline that has been in operation since October 2006. Averaging 180 calls per day, Hotline staff members have seen call volume increase by more than 60 percent in the past two years. To schedule an appointment with a housing counselor, call 1-877-601-HOPE (4673). For more information, visit [www.coloradoforeclosurehotline.org](http://www.coloradoforeclosurehotline.org).

▼ Colorado's own Loveland/Fort Collins area was recently named the #1 Best Retirement Spot by AARP. The report indicated that Boomers are willing to move farther than previous generations when they retire, and they are choosing places unlike stereotypical retirement hotspots.

▼ Among Colorado metropolitan areas, living costs in Denver were above the national average last year by 2.9 percent. Living costs in four of the other metropolitan areas included in the survey all were below the national average: Colorado Springs by 7%, Grand Junction by 0.5%, Fort Collins by 7.3% and Pueblo by 15.7%. The survey was conducted by the Council for Community and Economic Research.

▼ An annual survey of buyer preferences recently identified these must-haves in new homes:

1. Large kitchens with islands
2. Energy efficiency, including energy-efficient appliances, super insulation, and high-efficiency windows
3. Home offices
4. Main-floor master suite
5. Outdoor living space
6. Ceiling fans
7. Soaking tub in the master suite and/or an oversize shower with a seating area
8. Stone and brick exteriors rather than stucco or vinyl
9. Community walking paths and playgrounds
10. Two-car garages, but three-car garages are even better.

## Garage sale strategy: make it easy & profitable

It's April in Colorado . . . and now is a perfect time to plan for a Spring garage sale. In fact, many seasoned veterans of garage sales believe that the first weekend in May and the first weekend in October are the best weekends for a successful sale. So start your planning now because a successful garage sale takes a lot of organization.

If you're thinking of selling your home this year, decluttering your home

will make a tremendous difference in the speed of your sale, and the price you can command. But even if you have no plans to sell, it just feels good to get rid of the junk in your life you no longer need or want. In short--clutter causes stress. So whether you give it away or hold a yard sale, start planning your attack on clutter.

This is a huge topic--so let's break it down into a few broad subjects, then cover the details in the HOMEOWNER'S REPORT for April. (It's free for the asking!)

*Four steps to a good foundation:* The preparation for a successful sale starts long before your actual event. Here are four crucial steps to take:

1. Don't go it alone because a neighborhood sale always draws considerably larger crowds. So start by asking your neighbors to join in. Decide which weekend is best for everyone and set the date.

2. Before you start planning, phone your local authorities to inquire about any permits you may need and any provisions or ordinances they may have.

3. Set aside one area in your home where you can start gathering items for your sale. The garage, basement or a spare bedroom might be good areas. By having one designated area, you won't forget items and the entire "sale day" preparation will go considerably smoother.

4. Do a little research to determine ballpark pricing. One way would be to attend other garage sales in your neighborhood and make notes. Also, here's a really good web site that's filled with great detailed information on proper pricing, and "Do's and Don'ts of Garage Sale Pricing." <http://www.stretcher.com/stories/09/09apr20a.cfm>

If holding a garage sale is in your future--you'll want this Report: "Garage Sales: Trash to Treasure." You'll get tips for generating crowds, resources for online printable signs, security secrets to thwart thieves, tips on how to bargain with people, how to get your kids excited and involved in the garage sale...and much, much more. It's free. Just call or e-mail to say you'd like this money-making Report for April.



## COLORADO CORNER

### Coors Field: Baseball Stadium Trivia

April ushers in baseball season, and here in Colorado we have one of the most fabulous stadiums in the country. Coors Field opened in 1995 and has been the home of the Rockies for all but the first two years of the franchise's history, when the team played in nearby Mile High Stadium. Here are some interesting trivia tidbits about Coors Field.

• It was the NL's first new park built exclusively for baseball since Dodger Stadium in 1962.

• Originally designed to include 43,800 seats, record crowds in 1993 convinced Rockies ownership to expand the original plans. The updated park holds 50,000 fans, including 63 luxury boxes and 4,500 club-level seats.

• Concession stands in the concourse are laid out so that a fan can walk 360 degrees around the stadium and never lose sight of the field.

• There is a heating system under the field that melts snow the moment it hits the ground.

• While building Coors Field, construction workers discovered dinosaur fossils on the grounds.

• A row of purple seats ring the park to mark a spot that is exactly 5,280 feet above sea level.

• Because of our altitude, a ball that flies at 400 feet at sea level will soar to 430 feet at Coors Field.



### Garage sale tips to make your sale easy and profitable.



*Call or e-mail for this free report:*  
**"Garage Sales: Trash to Treasure!"**

**Here are just a few things you'll discover:**

- How to attract big crowds to your sale
- Secrets to displaying goods so they sell faster
- Price negotiation tips
- Important thoughts on safety
- Ways to make it easier for people to buy
- Ways to get your kids involved (and love it)

**GARAGE SALES: MAKE IT EASY. MAKE IT PROFITABLE.**

**Call or e-mail for this FREE April Homeowner Report!**

Use the phone or e-mail numbers shown on the front and back of this newsletter.



## GREEN IDEAS FOR THE COLORADO HOMEOWNER

### Going Green in the Garden

One of the biggest challenges facing homeowners along the Front Range is getting things to grow. Our soils are less than desirable, our summer sun is relentless, and rain can be nearly non-existent. Now toss in the periodic droughts and arid conditions and the challenge can be downright daunting. By "going green" and planting Colorado native plants, trees and shrubs to replace a large portion of your thirsty lawn, you'll be doing your wallet, your neighborhood, and your home's value a world of good.



**Lower Maintenance** - Native plants evolved to grow in local conditions and to predictable sizes. They do not require watering (except during establishment or extended drought), chemical pesticides and fertilizers, or frequent cutting, so maintenance is minimal.

**Less Water** - In the West, 60%

of consumed water goes to lawns. This water diversion harms the environment, and returns polluted water to our streams and rivers. It also costs homeowners for irrigation system installations and maintenance, as well as in hefty water bills.

Here are some resources for additional information on incorporating native plants into your landscaping:

The Colorado Native Plant Society: <http://www.conps.org/conps.htm>

Front Range Living: <http://www.fronrangeliving.com/garden/DanJohnson.htm>

For information or a list of upcoming classes, visit the Denver Botanic Gardens web: [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org) or call 720-865-3500.

Helpful websites:  
High Country Gardens: [www.highcountrygardens.com](http://www.highcountrygardens.com)

### Will Rogers: Thoughts on Aging



Photo: Culver Pictures

Will Rogers was one of America's brightest media stars during the 1920s and '30s, a Cherokee cowboy-philosopher who did rope tricks while making pointed, humorous observations. Here are a few of Will's candid thoughts on aging.

\*\*\*\*\*

Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

One of the many things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.

Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.

When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of Algebra.

You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks.

One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.

Being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable.

If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you're old.

Q

Name the three events and/or purchases under which the U.S. obtained the present day land of Colorado.



### Real Estate Trivia

The U.S. obtained eastern Colorado as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the central portion in 1845 with the admission of Texas as a state, and the western part in 1848 as a result of the Mexican War.

A

### The dangers of going it alone in our Front Range market

The wealth of information available on the Internet, as well as the ability to reach thousands of people, has tempted many a seller to try selling their home themselves. However, there are many problems inherent in becoming a FSBO, especially in a tough competitive market as we will experience here in Colorado this year. Below are some of the largest problems a FSBO will face in today's market:

1. Your ability to reach the most qualified buyers is limited. A yard sign, classified ads and listings on the Internet are pretty much the extent of advertising available to the FSBO. However, real estate agents have national and international networks, real estate community resources, as well as MLS

access and numerous other valuable marketing avenues to help find qualified buyers.

2. Most of your competition in the neighborhood will be represented by a real estate professional who will be helping the seller present the home in the best possible light to increase traffic, curb appeal and overall interest.

3. You'll have a mountain of legal paperwork to complete, plus you will still need assistance from a lawyer, a title company and other professionals.

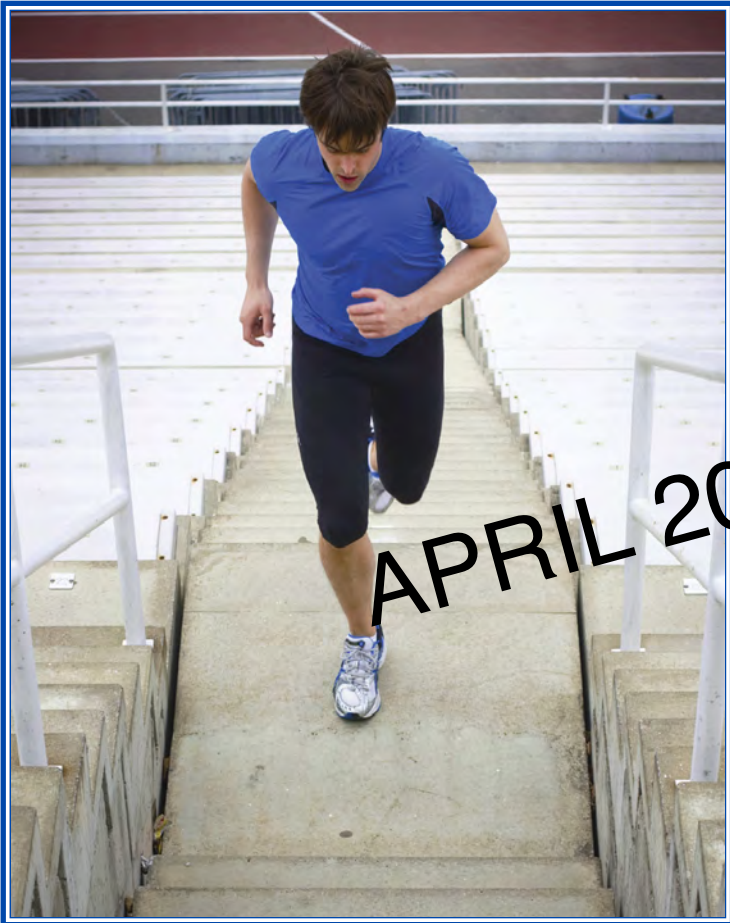
4. It will be difficult to sell your property for the highest value. According to the National Association of REALTORS®, the typical FSBO home sold for \$198,200 compared to \$230,000 for broker-assisted home sales.

5. Opening your home to strangers can be dangerous. Buyers with an agent are supervised and pre-screened to reduce the risk.

6. When a problem arises in the transaction, an experienced agent can move swiftly to "nip it in the bud". Their thorough understanding of the myriad facets of real estate transactions can help them to identify the real problem, and then to either solve it themselves, or seek help calling upon resources that the typical seller simply does not have access to.

Are you thinking of selling your Colorado home this year? Let's work together. By working together, you'll increase the odds of selling your property faster, for more money, while at the same time reducing the many risks that are involved in selling a home in today's complex world.

APRIL 2010



# PERSISTENCE

There is no giant step that does it. It's a lot of little steps.

*Helping you reach your real estate goals,  
one step at a time.*

*Sharon*

**SNAPSHOT OF MY BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY:**

**Go to bat for my clients . . . to help them achieve a home run every time.**

**YOUR BUSINESS AND REFERRALS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED.**



*Sharon Cardwell*

REALTOR,<sup>®</sup> GRI  
American Home, Inc.



98765 West Iliff Avenue • Lakewood, CO 80228

Office: (303) 777-2222 • Cell: (303) 567-2380

Fax: (303) 772-3277

E-mail: SharonC@comcast.net

Website: [www.SCSellsHomes.com](http://www.SCSellsHomes.com)

***"Knowledge. Experience. Dedication."***

