

# PENNY EXPRESS

**Selling Hundreds of Homes in Kingston East**

PENNY EXPRESS IS A FREE NEWSLETTER FROM REALTOR PENNY BLAKE OF REMAX REALTY CONCEPTS IN KINGSTON.



## Penny Welcomes Santa Back to Kingston East

Before Santa Claus paid his annual Christmas Eve visit to kids around the world, he made a special stop in Kingston East. And over 250 kids and their families joined Penny at St. Martha's Catholic School this fall to celebrate his arrival.

Special thanks to Santa, to our fabulous entertainers: Nathaniel the magician, Silly Sally the clown, RJ Smith, a.k.a. The Balloon Dude, to our incredible professional face painters and to the wonderful Kingston East merchants who once again donated prizes and refreshments.

Not only did everyone have a fabulous time, the event also raised \$200. As she does every year, Penny matched that total and donated \$400 to the Kingston Frontenac Public Library's Gore Road branch so that they can add to their children's book collection.



## A New Perspective on the Economy

*by Michael Polzler, Executive Vice President and Regional Director, RE/MAX Ontario-Atlantic Canada Inc.*

A recent headline in The Globe & Mail screamed "Housing sales hit 20-year low as real estate slump widens." That was followed by a huge sub-head noting an 11 per cent decline in prices and a 44 per cent drop in Ontario housing sales in large RED print.

The problem with the article is that it's incorrect. The author writes: "Between May and November, the average price of an existing home in Canada fell by 11 per cent, matching the drop in 1990 that coincided with the onset of a painful recession. Housing prices would go on to fall about 20 per cent and it would be another decade before they managed to make new highs."

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### Vital Statistics

Name: Penny Blake

Phone:

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Born and raised:

Kingston

Lived in Kingston East:

33 years

Selling homes since

1989 - 20 years

Selling 100's of homes

in City East

Registered with DND

Relocation Services

Thousands of clients

served across Canada

Remax Hall of Fame

Recipient



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Unfortunately for the Globe, there was no 20 per cent drop. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association, the average price actually rose approximately 15 per cent from 1990 to 2000. And it has climbed consistently since 1998.

Meanwhile, average residential prices in Ontario have been on an upward trajectory since 1996 – the longest uninterrupted period of growth since 1980.

Despite the Globe's inaccuracies, it's true that we are in the midst of some tough economic challenges. Truth be told, there is not a sector - not even gold - that hasn't been hit hard. Despite this, real estate has held up remarkably well. We need to see some economic stability - and a recovery in consumer confidence levels - before we can expect housing markets to rebound. Job security will be key.

Inventory will also play an important role. If inventory levels subside, we could see stability return to housing values. To illustrate, new listings fell seven per cent in the Greater Toronto Area in November. If this trend continues, and existing inventory is absorbed, housing values may remain relatively stable in the year ahead.

I'd like to conclude with the story of a vendor who sold hot dogs by the side of the road. People loved his hot dogs, and his business increased steadily month after month.

He was so busy advertising and selling hot dogs and making lots of money, that he didn't even have time to read the newspaper or listen to the radio. Consequently, he never heard a word about a predicted recession. As long as he continued to sell delicious hot dogs, his customers bought them. He kept selling, and they kept buying.

Then one day his college educated son told him that the recession was coming and people wouldn't have enough money to buy his hot dogs. On his son's advice, the vendor cut back on his advertising and started ordering fewer supplies, because, after all, people would be cutting back soon. He even took down many of the billboards that led to his roadside stand.

Sure enough, people stopped coming. They stopped buying hot dogs, and the vendor eventually went broke. "How smart my son is in predicting this," he thought.

Don't be influenced by what the media tells you. It's true that market conditions have changed, but human nature has not. Real estate is still one of the safest investments you can make.

**Happy New Year!**

## The Reviews Are In

*How do you know that you've found the right real estate agent? With over 450 to choose from in the Kingston area alone, how can you possibly be sure you've found one you can trust?*

*You're the only one who can answer that question to your own satisfaction, but sometimes an outside perspective can help.*

*Penny Blake has been helping Kingston East residents buy and sell their homes for over 20 years. And what do her customers think? Let's hear from a couple of them.*

### **Fred & Christie Cooke, 950 Bluffwood Ave.**

*"We took our time deciding on an agent to sell our house. We had a few conversations with Penny and we liked the way she presented herself and the way she answered our questions, so we hired her.*

*The unique thing about Penny was the service she provided. For example, she hired a stager, which we thought was very proactive. The stager made some very good suggestions, which gave the house an uncluttered look and helped it sell faster than it would have otherwise.*

*Once the house was staged, Penny held an open house every weekend for six weeks. Three people came back for a second look and one of them ended up buying the house. The offer was within \$5,000 of our asking price. We're very happy with the job Penny did. The communication was good from the start. She was always straightforward and she didn't sugar coat anything. She responded promptly to all of our calls. She always gave us lots of notice when she was bringing someone over for a showing. We felt that she gave us a lot for our money.*

*In a world where it's tough to give good customer service, Penny did an admirable job. We never felt ignored. Would we use her again? Absolutely."*

### **Don, Melanie and Sam Haisell, 79 Schooner Drive:**

*"We can't thank you enough for all you have done for us. We have really appreciated your calm personality, patience and professionalism.*

*Although you were very busy you always had as much time as we needed and made us feel like we were the only people you were working with. Thank you for representing us as buyers and sellers of 79 Schooner.*

*Have a wonderful year. Thanks for everything!"*

**For more Client Testimonials visit [www.pennyblake.com](http://www.pennyblake.com)**

## Professional Partners

Selling a house is hard work. With so many details to tend to, you need a wide range of skills to pull it off. You need the artistic flair of a decorator, the know-how of a contractor and the education of a lawyer. And that's just for starters.

While some people try to handle all of the details themselves, I prefer to put together a talented team of professionals to make sure you get the service you deserve. Here are a few of the partners I turn to in order to turn For Sale signs into Sold signs.

### **The Ambassador Conference Resort**

Doug Thorne, Manager  
1550 Princess Street  
(613) 548-3605  
dthorne@ambassadorhotel.com

### **Bruce Bark**

The Mortgage Professionals  
775 Blackburn Mews West  
(613) 384-4000, ext. 238

### **BCM Computer Technologies Inc.**

Brian Monroe, President  
805A Bayridge Drive  
(613) 389-1289

### **First Impressions Beauty**

Beautify Your Home for Living or Selling  
Valerie Cummings, Owner  
(613) 545-0525

### **In Orderly Fashion**

Home/Office Organization  
Space Planning/Clearing Clutter/Storage  
Heather Robinson  
(613) 382-8115

### **Investors Group Financial Services**

Lorne Matthews Glasspoole  
Financial Consultant  
(613) 384-8973  
lornematthewsglasspoole@investorsgroup.com

### **Lili Kramil-Marcus**

Barrister & Solicitor  
The Woollen Mill  
4 Catarauqui Street, Suite 21  
(613) 542-0404

### **Style Sells**

Real Estate Home Staging & Interior  
Redesign  
Patricia English  
(613) 541-1373

### **T & A Painting**

Tim Bond, Owner  
(613) 561-9972

### **Villa Gardens Limited**

Landscape Architects and Contractors  
Alex J. Mut, B.L.A., O.A.L.A., C.S.L.A.  
Landscape Architect, President  
villagardens@bellnet.ca  
(613) 532-5740 (cell)



**4314 Highway 2 East**  
**\$369,900**



**903 Jasmine Street**  
**\$274,900**



**4704 Watson Road**  
**\$59,900**



**839 Lotus Avenue**  
**\$279,900**



**368 Quarry Pond**  
**\$314,900**



**163 Rose Abbey Drive**  
**\$449,900**



**18 Hermes Drive**  
**\$54,000**



**497 McCallum Street**  
**\$224,900**



**816 Lotus Avenue**  
**\$334,000**



**36 Limeridge Drive**  
**\$225,000**



**13 Speers Blvd.**  
**\$182,900**



**1131 Draper Avenue**  
**\$259,900**



**1612 Grousewood Lane**  
**\$439,900**



**278 Vanguard Court**  
**\$169,900**



**87 Point St. Mark Drive**  
**\$428,900**



**2101 Deer Ridge Drive**  
**\$299,900**



**425 Maureen Street**  
**\$262,500**



**534 Aragon Road**  
**\$569,900**

## Words of Wisdom from Lorne Matthews- Glasspoole

**Running to the sun?  
Great – but don't run over  
your finances.**

If you're snowbirding south this winter, give the following "to do" list some thought before taking flight.



LORNE MATTHEWS

**Insure your financial health:**

Provincial health insurance is never enough to cover U.S. medical costs. To avoid financial devastation, it's vital that you consider adequate (not just the cheapest) medical insurance before leaving Canada.

**Use your will power:** Wills and Powers of Attorney should be up-to-date before you leave – that's especially important if you own property in the U.S. Death in a foreign country can really complicate estate issues. Your executor should know where to find all vital documents.

**Watch those taxes:** Staying away longer than six months could jeopardize your provincial health coverage. The U.S. requires you to file tax forms if you stay more than six months, including average time over the past three years. If you'll be away at the end of April, arrange to have your 2008 Canadian tax return filed on time.

**Pay those bills** Pay outstanding bills before you leave, and make arrangements to pay any that will arrive during your absence. If you'll be accessing cash through ATMs, get a duplicate ATM card in case your original is lost or stops working.

There are plenty of details to take care of before you head for the sun. Consider sitting down with your financial advisor prior to departure, so your nest will be secure when you return.

**There she goes again!** *Having sold hundreds of homes in Kingston East no wonder Penny is considered by her clients as the #1 choice in Kingston East. If you want results call Penny Blake, member of D.N.D Relocation Program with over 20 years of experience in negotiating sales.*



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**RE/MAX**<sup>®</sup>  
REALTY CONCEPTS CORP.