

In Today's World, Real Estate Professionals Need to Be EcoBrokers

It's hard to deny that we are facing a serious global challenge in energy, water, pollution, health and climate. We ignore these challenges at our peril. The good news is that God

has brought us solutions to the problems which confront us. These solutions can only be implemented by us as individuals in our own lives and in our own homes, and that's where EcoBrokers can serve you.

Since founding Golden Real Estate in 2008, I have been the only EcoBroker at our firm, although I haven't promoted that, preferring simply to write about related issues on occasion.

So when John Beldock, founder and CEO of EcoBroker, asked to have lunch with me and I suggested he use the occasion to speak about the EcoBroker designation to our

agents, you can imagine my delight that all nine of our broker associates chose to sign up for the training and to become EcoBrokers themselves.

This Monday I joined them as they took part 1 of the 3-day training. Parts 2 and 3 will be next Monday and the following Monday.

I'm glad I joined them not only to refresh my own training on "green" topics but to be part of the lively conversation that only happens in a classroom. (You can take the training

online, as I did in 2008, but John Beldock offered to teach the course personally to our agents, plus a title rep and a real estate attorney with whom we work on occasion.)

This week's day-long class was on environmental issues. John taught us about radon, lead, water quality, mold, asbestos, indoor air quality, historical contamination, green building and health. You'd think a 6-hour class might drag on, but it was so interesting and interactive that we took only one break, and before we knew it, the day was over!

One of the big takeaways from this week's class is that no one can learn it all, because the fields of energy and sustainability are always evolving. What we learn above all is to be sensitive to these issues, not pretend to know all the answers, and to build

a network of specialists who can help our clients achieve "LOHAS" — a Lifestyle Of Health & Sustainability.

Although I was only auditing the class, I learned so much that I didn't know, reinforcing John's point that we can never learn everything there is to know about these topics.

That point was also reinforced last week by an email I got from a local solar photovoltaic contractor in response to my column with the headline "Second Thoughts About Rooftop Solar." As a person who has both a solar-powered home and solar-powered office, I try to stay current on solar PV, but I was stunned by the changes in solar PV of which I was unaware. See the article below.

Next week's EcoBroker class is about solar, and I look forward to sharing what we learn with you.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By JIM SMITH, Realtor®

Solar PV Vendor Responds to What I Wrote on Rooftop Solar

From Buglet Solar Electric Installation:

Community Solar Gardens provide an excellent avenue for renters and those with shaded rooftops, but the financial proposition is very poor for a homeowner with a shade-free rooftop, in comparison with owning a solar system. When advocating for solar gardens, it is important to disclose that the value of a kilowatt-hour generated by a solar garden is about half the value of a net-metered kilowatt-hour generated by an on-site installation.

We want to be sure that you have accurate information because there have been some shifts in the market that aren't reflected in your column. Here is some information to keep you up to date:

Solar leasing is quickly fading in our market, as the financial attractiveness of this approach has dropped sharply. The financial proposition for a lease is not viable for many projects in our area at this time. Companies traditionally focused on leases are increasingly transitioning to solar loan or cash purchase options. This is due to the reduction in overall price of PV to about \$3 per installed watt, as well as dropping incentives in the Solar*Rewards program for third-party leases.

The reduction in cost for PV also has affected the financial proposition for tracking. At this time, it is less expensive to own a fixed array with a few extra solar panels than it is to install and maintain trackers with a slightly smaller solar installation.

Continued online at www.JimSmithBlog.com

This Week's Featured New Listing

Vacant Applewood Lot With Mountain View

This buildable half-acre lot at 11650 W. 20th Ave. is at the top of the hill, just west of Simms Street. Although its frontage is on 20th Avenue, this flat lot is about 10 feet up a bluff from 20th Avenue, so the access is via an easement on Tabor Street as you can see on this satellite view. Seller has been told by Lakewood that a Tabor Street address would be allowed. You can take a narrated video tour up that easement and onto the lot at www.BuildYourDreamHomeHere.info,



where you can also see the expansive view of the mountains which you'd obtain if you build a 2-story home here. A soils test has been done showing no expansive soils, and the seller can provide a buyer with the architectural plans for a home they were going to build. There is a carport on the lot dating to

when this lot was attached to 1955 Simms Street. Buyer can use our moving truck to help with bringing building or landscaping materials to the lot, subject to availability. Live in your RV while you build your dream home! Call me at 303-525-1851 if you'd like more information about this special property.



Serving the West Metro Area

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