

Real Estate Today

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Some Real Estate Items Just Not Worth an Entire Column...

By **JIM SMITH**
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I keep a folder labeled “Column Ideas” into which I throw slips of paper during the week. Few of these ideas are worthy of an entire column, so I’m going to do some housecleaning and throw them together in a column of totally unrelated topics.



• **How to clean oil stains from your driveway or garage.** Cat litter (regular or scoopable) is the magic ingredient because of its absorbent qualities. Sprinkle it on any oil stain and grind the stuff into the concrete with your shoe. Then sweep it up. You may need to repeat. It’s magical how effective it is.

• **Keeping your house warmer and saving heating costs.** When closing horizontal Venetian or mini-blinds, always turn them so that they angle downward toward the glass instead of upward. Cold air is heavier than warm air, and if you angle them wrong, you are inviting the cold air next to the glass to spill into your room. (This makes a huge difference!)

• **Know when your garage door is open.** An open garage door is an invitation to thieves. Sears sells a “Craftsman Wireless Garage Door Monitor” for

\$34.95. You stick the sensor on the top panel of your garage door, and when the sensor goes parallel to the floor it triggers a flashing red light on the receiver which you have plugged into an outlet. Mine is on the landing at the top of the stairs so I see it every time I go up or down stairs, including at bedtime. Additional sensors can be placed on additional garage doors. I have bought a case of these units and sell them at wholesale to clients and others.

• **Condo/Townhome HOA fees may actually be a bargain.** Condo and townhome fees generally include insurance on the structure and roof, so that you don’t have to buy standard homeowner’s insurance. Instead, you buy a more limited condo/townhome policy averaging \$150 per year which covers your possessions and internal improvements. This alone can represent a savings of \$100 per month.

• **FHA guidelines have changed.** The FHA used to require sellers to contribute to the closing costs of buyers when they have an FHA loan. That disincentive to accept FHA buyers was removed recently.

• **Another staging class is scheduled for Monday.** If you missed my free staging class, taught by Johanna Wells of the Look Group, you can still get into one being taught this coming Monday, Mar. 20th, 6 to 8 p.m. in Golden. Call or email me at jimsmith@remax.net to reserve your seat.

This Week’s Featured Listings

2 Mountain Ridge Homes Listed Last Thursday



180 Eagle Drive, Golden 80403
4BR, 4 Baths, 3,104 Fin.SF \$400,000
Newly painted, new carpet in basement, great house in quiet area! www.180EagleDrive.com



385 White Ash Drive, Golden 80403
4BR, 4 Baths, 3,471 Sq.Ft. \$475,000
On mini cul-de-sac, backs to greenbelt. Big grassy backyard! www.385WhiteAsh.com



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