

# Happy Thanksgiving to Our Readers — We Have So Much to Be Grateful For

As a homeowner, a practicing Realtor and the owner of Golden Real Estate, I have much to be grateful for as we celebrate one of my favorite holidays.

Although Colorado's recovery from the "great recession" which started in 2008 may be uneven, it has been strong, and one has to be grateful for that. We can be thankful that Colorado was not one of the "bubble" states like Nevada and California where home values had risen so fast and so far that they fell hard and far. With our modest year-to-year appreciation prior to 2008, our home values fell, but they did not plummet.

So, yes, I am grateful, first of all, that Colorado, including Jefferson

County, suffered less than other areas in the country and has, overall, more than recovered from that recession.

Beyond that, I am also grateful that Golden Real Estate, which was founded in 2007, was able to outlast that downturn and come out stronger than ever. At this writing, we now have nine excellent broker associates who work together well and have each been successful in their own right: **Jim Swanson, Carrie Lovingier, Karon Hesse, Kristi Brunel, Mark Spencer, Suzi Nicholson, Leo Swoyer, Chuck Brown, and David**

**Dlugasch.** You can read more about each of them on our website, [www.GoldenRealEstate.com](http://www.GoldenRealEstate.com).

Equally important, we now have an office manager, **Kim Taylor**, who

recently obtained her own real estate license but solely for the purpose of being a more effective assistant to our agents and myself. She also functions as our transaction coordinator and HDR photographer. Her contributions to us all have been invaluable.

I am also grateful for our clients who have helped to make Golden Real Estate one of the leading real estate brokerages in the county, selling over \$35 million in real estate in 2013, a figure we'll exceed in 2014. (Every year since the founding of Golden Real Estate has been better than the year before.)

In that regard, I have to thank the Denver Post, which introduced YourHub as an affordable local advertising medium just as I was gaining traction as a Realtor. Because of the exposure I get through this advertising, my agents and I have been successful in attracting clients and in

selling our listings, which we feature in this space. Sometimes, like this week, I don't have a new listing to feature, but that just means I get to write more!

Speaking of this ad, the writing of which is frankly the highlight of each work week for me, I should also thank the late Ben Bradlee of the Washington Post, who gave me my first job in journalism way back in (gasp!) 1968. It was an internship during which the city editor, Steve Isaacs, actively taught my intern class all facets of professional journalism. Combined with an excellent education in English (and many other languages, including Latin!), that training laid the basis for my success in real estate and, in turn, the success of Golden Real Estate.

Last but definitely not least, I am grateful for my wife Rita and for my friends, especially those in the renewable energy community, who reinforce our company's sustainability efforts.

## REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH, Realtor®**

## Climate Colorado Summit Gave Birth to Many Sustainable Initiatives, Including Mine

I was honored to be one of the presenters at the Climate Colorado Summit held Nov. 15 & 16 at the Wolf Law Building on CU's Boulder campus. My own presentation had to do with hastening the adoption of electric vehicles as a way of reducing transportation's contribution of CO<sub>2</sub> pollution. I have posted a link to my PowerPoint presentation at [www.JimSmithColumns.com](http://www.JimSmithColumns.com) in case you would care to view it.

Other presenters, including my friend Steve Stevens, developed projects during the summit aimed at reducing sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the other sectors shown on the chart (right).

Steve's presentation was on how he has slowly transformed his 1970s Golden home from an annual emission in 2002 of 12 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> to a "Beyond Net Zero" emission of negative 7 tons by 2012. This was achieved both through adding active and passive solar systems and implementing strong energy efficiency measures, including "super-insulation." Steve calls this the "catch it and keep it" program for the use of energy from the sun.

Each of the other presenters had the opportunity to share with attendees a "challenge" for a project that would advance their work. A method of "Rapid

Prototyping" (developed by Google) was taught, and we worked in groups to develop programs to meet the presented "challenges."

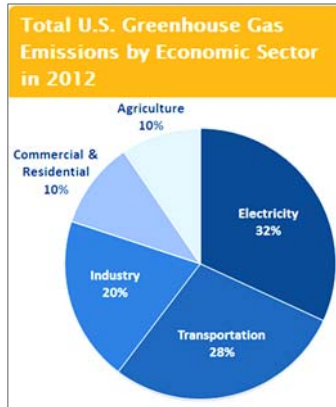
My challenge was how to convince business owners to install electric vehicle charging stations as an employee benefit. The half dozen attendees who joined my team developed a PowerPoint presentation to share with employers. You can view that PowerPoint presentation, too, at [www.JimSmithColumns.com](http://www.JimSmithColumns.com).

Steve's challenge to the attendees was to spread the transformation of the existing housing stock to and beyond "Net Zero." His team came up with a publicity campaign which included a corporate sponsored homeowner

"sweepstakes." Entry in the sweepstakes is made with "earned tickets" which are awarded based on the homeowners' effectiveness in dropping their energy usage from a baseline measurement, with additional tickets for greater percentage drops.

Other teams addressed other challenges tied to their presentations. One, for example, focused on getting racially underrepresented communities more engaged in the climate movement, with an immediate focus on promoting a Latino Eco Festival. Another focused on creating an "energy literacy" curriculum for schools. Yet another developed a plan for creating "energy savings advisors" to work with an educate homeowners in Lafayette on reducing their carbon footprint while saving money on energy.

You can read more about the summit's accomplishments and future Climate Colorado programs at [www.ClimateColorado.org](http://www.ClimateColorado.org). My thanks to Bob Castellino for creating Climate Colorado and the summit.



Serving the West Metro Area

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