



OBSERVATIONS FROM THE DESK OF ALICE OLDFORD

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Need a referral? Please give me a call.



We are a nation of many nationalities, many races, many religions — bound together by a single unity, the unity of freedom and equality. Whoever seeks to set one nationality against another, seeks to degrade all nationalities.

Harry S. Truman

Please check out my Realtor Facebook page



In an effort to keep the information flowing throughout the month, I've added a Realtor Facebook page. I hope you will "like" the page and check often for updates. <https://www.facebook.com/aliceoldfordrealtor>



The State of the Union Housing Address

Realtor.com released its own report noting a strong economy and unprecedented housing shortage are "pressuring potential home buyers striving to attain the American Dream.

According to Joe Kirchner, senior economist for Realtor.com, "The macro-factors that have defined real estate in recent years — strong demand and weak supply — continue to set the tone for the industry. The new tax law that caps the mortgage interest deduction and the deductibility of state and local taxes can be expected to impact the upper-end market in 2018 — precisely how and the extent of which remain to be seen."

Cybersecurity threats to watch for in 2018

Christopher Skinner, CEO of technology security firm Spider Oak contends "We trust our devices and systems to drive our cars, deliver vital medical treatments, and protect our homes and supply chains, but these have never been more insecure. Top threats:

- Software up-dates. Latest up-date could be a virus. How do you know?
- Spies on your phone. Bad guys who access your phone know all about you.
- Criminals wait to attack. After being stolen, it may be years before criminals use data
- Passwords failing. Not the time to "keep it simple." Develop strong passwords.
- Compliance keeps your security up-to-date but 10 years too late. Hackers think ahead
- Too many people have access.
- Breach fatigue. Do not become complacent.

Yikes. Bottom line is to take cybersecurity very seriously.



New programs help investors buy single-family homes

So you're thinking about investing in real estate? Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have announced programs to provide mortgage financing at competitive interest rates. Check it out.

Avoid wire fraud



Things to beware of. Recently hackers have targeted real estate transactions. A serious concern: Hackers send fake emails with bogus wiring instructions to homebuyers on the eve of closing.

Buyers are advised:

- ⇒ Be aware how wire instructions are sent. Accept instructions that are secure and encrypted.
- ⇒ Call to verify wire instructions with the title company or closing agent.
- ⇒ Be on the lookout for changes. Instructions rarely change so if you have an email requesting a last minute change, verify the validity.

Mark Twain said "Buy land they aren't making it anymore."

Good advice. Are you dreaming about building a home?

1072 Jonquil St \$48,500 — canal to Lake Carrie; golf and tennis at Lake June West Golf and Tennis Club

440 Cross Creek Ave \$8,000 — wooded double lot in Placid Lakes

231-235 Boston Way \$9,000 — a double corner lot (1/2 ac) in Placid Lakes

117 Vera Ln NW \$4,500 — golf anyone? wooded lot in Placid Lakes

601 Nebraska Ave \$2,000 — one half acre rural lot

816 Winston Dr \$5,000 — do you love racing? Check out this lot in Spring Lake Village, Sebring

Envision your future.

