

# Message from South Tahoe real estate president

By Theresa Souers

Members of the South Tahoe Association of Realtors leadership team attended the October business meetings for the California Association of Realtors in Anaheim. In attendance were Amanda Adams and Ken Daley from Re/Max Realty Today, Jill Teakell from Century 21 At Tahoe Paradise, Deb Howard of Deb Howard & Co, myself representing Pinnacle Real Estate Group of Lake Tahoe and Sharon Kerrigan, EVP for STAR.

Among the many topics of discussion was the projected market forecast for the state of California in 2011. A few key points showed that while a weaker-than expected economic recovery will most likely result in a decline of California home sales for 2010, throughout the state, economists say that we should be seeing small increases in both home sales and median prices in 2011.

After two consecutive years of record-setting price declines, the median home price in California is expected to climb 11.5 percent in 2010 to \$306,500 and increase another 2 percent in 2011 to \$312,500, according to the forecast. It was also pointed out that distressed properties will figure prominently in the market again next year, but we can also expect to see discretionary sellers play a larger role. At the same time, the economic team pointed out that the unknown factors that could impact the market are the strength of the economic recovery, federal housing policies and the actions of underwater homeowners.

These meetings held three times a year provide local leadership the opportunity to learn firsthand about anticipated real estate trends, news, advances and changes in

contractual documents, and allows them to voice their opinions on legislative bills related to property homeowners rights.

When asked what they felt were highlights of the week's activities, Daley commented, "I continue to be fascinated by the process and inner workings of the California Association of Realtors. Especially the political aspect."

Teakell went on to add, "As we reviewed new California laws for 2011, one particular bill (SB 931) stood out. Starting January 1st, a seller's first trust deed lender cannot obtain a deficiency judgment against the seller after a short sale. Providing written consent to a short sale shall obligate the first trust deed lender to accept the sales proceeds as full payment and discharge of the remaining amount owed on the loan. Unfortunately, Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed SB1178, which would have extended California's anti-deficiency protection to refinance loans."

Our everyday lives are dramatically affected by a dedicated team working behind the scenes to achieve common goals, all in the best interest of the organization they represent.

Adams added, "Now is the time when we can make a real difference that can affect many people. We were told that when times are rough, (like they are now) the best of us stand up to make things happen and to help out. Professional education provides us access to ways to assist our clients through their hardships, such as losing a home to foreclosure, and guide our buyers through the time consuming short sale and REO purchase procedure."

The most recent statistics provided by the South Tahoe Association of Realtors Multiple Listing Service is showing some encouraging news. Following the method used by both the National Association of Realtors and the California Association of Realtors, STAR provides a median home price based upon the average of the previous twelve months, or a

rolling average. That number is compared to the previous year at the same time.

Based on these numbers, as of Oct. 31, the median home price was posted at \$326,500 for single-family residences.

While still much lower than the peak of 2006 (\$489,000), the good news is that it is slightly up by approximately 2 percent from October 2009, and represents a steady pattern (with the exception of a slight drop in August) of gentle increases during the past nine months. Another positive note is that as between Nov. 1, 2009, and Oct. 31, 2010, there were 520 closed escrows. This was quite an improvement over the 407 for the same period the previous year.

Of course there are a variety of factors that are playing a role in this increased activity, but we will take them all. This data is available for the public to reviewed at [www.STAOR.org](http://www.STAOR.org), under statistics.

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