

From: [HeartWork Organizing](#)
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Subject: Getting It Together: Spring is for Sprucing (and Selling)
Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2010 11:30:58 PM

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Spring is for Sprucing (and Selling!)

In This Issue

[Events & Info](#)

[Quick Tip](#)

[Next Month...](#)

[Survey Results](#)

[Staging and Sprucing Tips](#)

Events & Info

We just finished the latest in the Clear Path Strategies clutter support group. All participants received a paper filing system, training, five weeks of ongoing support on how to implement it and a follow up teleconference. They said things like:

"Wish I had taken this class 30 years ago."

"Will save me lots of time!"

"The tickler system changed my life!"

The next Clear Path Strategies clutter support group will be scheduled for the fall (October-ish) and will focus on time management, procrastination, and decision making. If this sounds like a topic that you would like to tackle in a supporting group, please [contact me to receive a personal invitation](#).

Need a professional speaker for your

Dear Dan,

Have you noticed more For Sale signs in area yards lately? That's a good thing. The resale real estate market has been steadily improving for months now, and that's good news for sellers, their neighbors and even buyers. As people put their homes on the market, buyers have a better selection of really great homes. If you are a seller, how can you be sure to benefit from this market? Be sure that your home is the one that stands out, with great curb appeal, inviting decor, and at least one special and memorable feature.

Even if you aren't selling, but just want that model home look, take some tips from tried and true staging techniques to make your home feel springtime fresh. Here's wishing you lovely springtime days!

Sincerely,
Darla DeMorrow, owner

Staging and Sprucing Tips

...even if you are staying

As I was walking around my own neighborhood today, I noticed several new For Sale signs. Just from the street, I could tell some key things about those properties. One home had previously For Sale By Owner property was now listed by an agent. It looked cleaner and brighter with the few changes that the realtor had obviously suggested. Unfortunately, the homeowner probably missed a chunk of the market by not having it on the MLS listing for the last couple of months, and they are likely to have priced it unrealistically during that time, too.

Family room before



Family room before

Another home screamed, "DESPERATE!!" from the curb, with it's dirty

next event? [Please request a speaker's package.](#)

Quick Tip

New or replacement windows are a great feature of your home, but not always a wise investment. There is lots to consider when choosing and installing them. Check out my blog to hear how our [recent window replacement project](#) unfolded.

Next Month

Decorating for Dad

Survey Results

Respondents last month said the most popular organizing hot spots are paper and home offices, the kitchen counter, closets, and time.

Please answer to this month's survey:

Do you sometimes visit real estate open houses just for fun? [Click Here](#)



front porch, obviously unprofessional repairs, unkept lawn, and several TV dishes and antennae jutting from the roofline. This seller may as well have a banner draped across the front porch begging for a low ball offer.

At a luncheon this month, a friend asked what the biggest mistake is that home sellers make. Clutter! Not doing repairs! Painting! Lighting! My table mates shouted their own answers before I could respond, and they were all right. Then one of them told of her experience with staging before leaving California last year, where it is the norm to completely clear out your house and even rent new furniture while your house is on the market. That's just crazy!!! But it does pay to organize, pare down, paint, and maybe buy any new furniture you know you'll be buying for your new home.

Another event had me talking to two friends who both currently have their homes on the market. They both told me that they hired a stager, and they described the process of having a professional stager in to advise them on how to stage their home. While I also offer a staging analysis and report for just \$150, this is a great option for only the most serious do-it-yourselfers. For everyone else, this is just the first step in the staging process. Having a stager in to actually move the furniture, hang the artwork, and organize your stuff can be so much more successful than doing it yourself, and the results are not just pretty, but they end in SOLD signs in the yard. (All of my staged properties but 3 have sold in less than 30 days!)

And if your stager recommends renting a storage unit, think twice. It is usually more economical and helpful to your sales process to pare down and clear out rather than store stuff you may not want to move anyway. I've never asked a client rent storage to successfully stage their home!

Be sure your listing pictures do their job. I couldn't believe the listings for homes in the \$600K range that I viewed last week. They were out of focus, bad angles, multiple shots of one single space, not showing the kitchen, not labelled, and generally bad quality. Over 90% of buyers search the internet for listings before deciding whether to schedule a showing, so be sure that you, your realtor, or a professional photographer takes some excellent pictures to showcase your biggest investment. And if the photos aren't great, demand that your realtor improve them.

Family Room After



Family Room After

The realtor whose home I am staging this month tells the story like it is. Yes, it can be hard to spend money on a home you know you are leaving. But she said she had to live by the same advice she gives her clients: would you rather spend a couple thousand on staging, or would you prefer to take a \$10,000 or more price reduction? The HomeGain 2009 national survey stated that \$300-400 investment in staging can increase home price by \$1500-\$2000, or 82%. Wow!

But my most important staging advice is this: stage your home while you

are still living in it. Why make it beautiful for someone else? Make the improvements while you can enjoy them. Whether you have a one year or ten year timeline for moving, do what you want to make your home truly beautiful, and you will enjoy it every day, not just the last 60 days you own it.

About HeartWork Organizing

Our mission is to help you find peace and purpose. 856-905-3202

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