

Community Advertorial

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INSIDEREAL ESTATE

k.c. BUTLER, ABR, CRS, MRE, ePro, CDPE

RE/MAX 100

K.C. has been a broker for over 30 years, and with RE/MAX from the start. He's earned the RE/MAX Hall of Fame Award, the RE/MAX Lifetime Achievement Award and the "Above The Crowd" Distinguished Service Award for industry and community contributions. K.C. has been in the top 5 percent for sales production of all Realtors nationwide, for most of his career. He is past president of the Jefferson County Association of Realtors, and past vice-president of the Colorado Association of Realtors. Past Jefferson County Realtor of the Year is but one more testament of his commitment. K.C. and his family have resided in Evergreen since 1998. Email KCButler@TheHomeTeam.com

In the same vein as "change is the only constant," it seems "uncertainty, these days, is almost certain." When the 9/11 attacks hit in 2001, most people didn't know our economy was already in a precarious state. That was a rude awakening—for a minute (Americans have very short memories). Then

"What's built on truth will have a solid foundation."

we got all patriotic and, as a world, united against terrorism. The economy seemingly improved, and once again people had the luxury of picking this cause or that to champion or, for many, just to complain about. Then, way too soon, another larger storm began to brew. Almost no one at all saw the termites at work on Wall Street that changed all our lives for the worse again in September, 2008. Four years of hell ensued for millions and millions of people worldwide. Then came the healing again. Families pulled closer. Values returned to a time long past, it seemed. We held onto hope and, with a little (a lot!) government infusion, we recovered yet again—kind of. I'm sorry to say we just seem to return almost addictively to our materialistic ways, like an unconvinced alcoholic to a drink, fresh out of rehab. I'm guilty, too.

For one thing, the sense of security that one would expect to return, along with jobs, consumer spending and housing and stock prices, seems illusive. Humpty Dumpty is not all put together again, and all the king's horses and all the king's men are simply called in too many directions by too many subjects feigning too many crises. If there is to be real hope, we the subjects need to lend our faith, commitment and effort to pulling it all together again **together**, and that is certain to be a challenge. The question looms, what is the remedy for this manic, seesaw existence?

Maybe it comes with age, as my fifties are waning, or maybe it's just these helter skelter times we live in, but I seem to be increasingly gravitating toward people, things and, yes, principles that are most enduring, or at least that I sense are truly more time-tested than not. Many people come and go in our lives, leaving their traces, be they sweet or sometimes bitter memories, valuable lessons or bits of wisdom. We do well to appreciate all of these. But the most precious ones are the people who linger on and on by their wanting and our own. They're a foundation of sorts for us really. **They** are the reason for having a solid place to call home. Is 'home' one of those enduring principles that's worthy of our effort and even temporary sacrifice for permanent security?

I mentioned people, and also things. There are the things we need, the things we want, and the things we 'must have' (recalling

the concept of addiction). There are things we collect and treasure. But the things we share are perhaps the most valuable of all—transportation, food, clothing and other items we may pass along to those in need. And a home is one of those things we share, in spades! But consider, and I know all precautions mountain dwellers do, if a wildfire were heading your way, what would you pack into your Subaru or SUV, and what would you leave behind. I can tell you there's a part of me that would be freer if I was suddenly relieved of 90 percent of my possessions. No, God. That was not a challenge to you, but a challenge to me to keep thinning and stop accumulating.

My real estate team has a mission statement that simply says "Happy Homes" to remind us the importance of our function to those we serve. We aspire for our clients and for ourselves to have that place where we recharge and also make so many wonderful memories over time. It's the place to feel safe and bring others in for a visit, a meal or even a stay. We love to share our homes!

The timeless principles and philosophies that I've gotten closer to over time are the ones we all remember our parents and grandparents emphatically espousing back in the day. "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." "Treat others the way you'd like to be treated." "Leave things the way you found them, or better." "Look people in the eye when they're talking to you." "Don't live beyond your means." "Build equity always..." and on and on. My list is very long, and I would challenge you to take out a pen and pad and make out your list. Share it.

"So why all this?" you might ask, in a column that's supposed to be about real estate. It all came to mind for me as I ran my monthly data reports that keep me on top of the various

market segments, and also remind me that there are as many anomalies as there are patterns in everything around us. And it's good to be knowledgeable and accurately informed when making critical decisions about something as significant as a home. It's as important to know what's misconstrued as to know what's true. What's built on truth will have a solid foundation. Otherwise, well... shifting sands.

There will always be speculation that prices have climbed too fast and therefore must fall again sometime soon. And there are assumptions that because one segment of the market is performing well that **all** segments are performing well (not true). And the current political climate certainly creates more questions than answers, and a **lot** of debate about what things will fall together and or fall apart going forward. What's most important is to identify constants upon which to build your foundation, be it your home, your health or your relationships. That said, while I appreciate you indulging me in my far-flung philosophies of life, take my advice on real estate. We won't enjoy the low interest rates that we have today much longer, and home prices will continue to climb for the foreseeable future, albeit at a slower pace. Denver is currently known to be the strongest economy in the country, so owning real estate here is money in the bank. And speaking of that, please read Dave Ramsey's "Total Money Makeover" so you can keep that money in the bank! Lastly, know that if you are not buying your own home, then you are buying someone else's for them. As always, we wish you Happy Homes for a long, long time!

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