



# News You Can Use

Brought to you by: REMERICA TC  
831 S. Garfield Ave. Traverse City, MI

## 3 Steps to Make Your New Year's Resolutions Stick

Every year it is the same thing: hopeful anticipation over a fresh start combined with a hint of anxiety over private failures.

Whether you want to drop those extra pounds or take control of your financial future, it is possible to truly change your life without pain and anguish with these simple steps for transforming your New Year's resolution into reality:

**K.I.S.S. it Goodbye:** K.I.S.S. stands for Keep It Simple Stupid...good advice for the overly ambitious. Contrary to popular opinion, most people don't fail to reach their goals due to a lack of planning – instead, one of the biggest problems facing many is the tendency toward complexity.

Tackle the goal one step at a time and keep it simple by breaking it into small tasks.

**Banish All-or-Nothing Thinking:** Change happens gradually over time, and even the most successful people occasionally fall flat and must pick themselves back up. Don't focus on the failure – just pick up where you left off and don't stop until you have reached your goal.

**Start!** All the planning and preparation in the world won't matter one bit until you actually put the plan into action. Procrastination, rationalization and excuses top the list of reasons why a plan fails.

Make it a priority to work toward your goal each and every day without fail; even if you are unable to fully participate due to illness or other issues, reserve the time and participate to the best of your ability until you're able to resume.

## Putting Your House Up For Sale? Get These Essential Tips



If you want to get the best price for your house, it's essential to prepare it for sale. Homes that have been "staged" go for a lot more money...and sell much more quickly too.

To give yourself a head start, get my free guide, "50 Essential Tips to Prepare Your Home for a Speedy, Top-Price Sale."

Just call me at (231) 941-8283 and I'll send it right out to you.

## A Year at the Movies: Best Pictures to Catch in 2009

A brief look ahead to the most exciting movie releases for the coming year.

**January:** Brendan Fraser and Eliza Bennett star in *Inkheart* – a fantasy about a girl who is able to bring fictional characters to life.

**February:** Teri Hatcher is among the stars of *Coraline*, a family movie about a girl who walks through a secret door and discovers a parallel version of her life, similar to her own but filled with much more adventure.

**March:** *The Accidental Husband* is a romantic comedy about a firefighter whose life goes terribly wrong as the result of some radio advice. It stars Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Uma Thurman and Colin Firth.

**May:** Based on the book by Da Vinci Code author Dan Brown, Tom Hanks reprises his role as Harvard religion expert Robert Langdon in *Angels and Demons*.

**June:** Terry Gilliam directs *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus*, a fantasy movie starring Christopher Plummer and the late Heath Ledger.

**June:** Sylvester Stallone is back in the fifth installment of the *Rambo* franchise.

**July:** Daniel Radcliffe is back in the next *Harry Potter* movie, *Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince*.

**July:** The third episode of the *Ice Age* animated movie, with voices from Queen Latifah and Denis Leary.

**September:** Kate Beckinsale stars in *Whiteout*, an action movie set in Antarctica.

**December:** James Cameron directs *Avatar*, a 3-D science fiction movie starring Sam Worthington and Sigourney Weaver.

# 4 Ways to Tell if You Can Add Value to a Home

Learn how to add value to any home with these quick tips:

**Deferred Maintenance:** Small repairs and the general neglect of a home can make it appear less appealing than it really is. Don't be distracted by deferred maintenance; instead, perform an inspection to eliminate the risk of serious problems, then use the condition as a negotiation tool.

**First Impressions:** More than one home has suffered from a bad first impression; overgrown shrubs, faded paint, lack of shutters and stained concrete walkways make any home look tired and dull. Fortunately, first impressions are fast and affordable projects; landscaping, pressure washing and a new doorknob quickly turn a tired entrance into an inviting space.

**Lights and Appliances:** Upgrading lights and appliances might be one of the best ways to add value to any home. Energy-efficient appliances and beautiful LED lighting not only provide a modern, up-to-date appearance but are quieter, easier to operate and more dependable than older models.

**Cosmetically Challenged:** Some homes simply suffer from poor taste; horrid carpets and personalized paint choices may have been the pride and joy of the original owner but don't translate well into the general market. Rather than succumbing to the "shock and awe" when encountering a cosmetically challenged home, focus on the structure and surroundings instead. Cosmetic fixes often result in the largest "bang for the buck" when it comes to adding value to the price of a home.

## E-NEWSLETTER

Going Green? Sign up for our electronic newsletter now. It's simple!

Go to our website:

[www.RemericaTC.com](http://www.RemericaTC.com)

Click on **NEWSLETTER** and Subscribe.

## BLOG

Join in the conversation!

Go to our website:

[www.RemericaTC.com](http://www.RemericaTC.com)

Click on **REMERICA BLOG**

## Thanks for All Your Referrals!

I succeed when people like you refer me to their friends, neighbors and loved ones. It's the best kind of feedback I can receive.

So thanks for continuing to pass this newsletter around to people you care about.

## Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

Has your home gone up in value? How much are other homes in your neighborhood selling for?

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, I'll be able to help.

Just give my office a call for a no-fuss, professional evaluation.

I won't try to push you into listing with me or waste your time.

I'll just give you the honest facts about your home and its value.

And maybe I'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live!

Just give my office a call at (231) 941-8283 to arrange an appointment.

Alternatively, stop in at the office. The address is on the back page of this newsletter.

## Worth Quoting

Some quotes from the writings of Lewis Carroll, who was born on January 27, 1832:

"Sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

"It's a poor sort of memory that only works backward."

"If you don't know where you are going, any road will take you there."

"Everything has got a moral if you can only find it."

"Begin at the beginning and go on till you come to the end: then stop."

"'But I don't want to go among mad people,' Alice remarked. 'Oh, you can't help that,' said the Cat. 'We're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad.'"

"No good fish goes anywhere without a porpoise."

"One of the secrets of life is that all that is really worth the doing is what we do for others."

"Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves."

"The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday - but never jam today."

"'What is the use of a book', thought Alice, 'without pictures or conversations?'"

"Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

"Which form of proverb do you prefer Better late than never, or Better never than late?"

"There are three hundred and sixty-four days when you might get un-birthday presents, and only one for birthday presents, you know."

# Why it Makes Sense to Work with an Agent

If you have ever wondered why it's better to work with an agent rather than listing "by owner," you aren't alone. Superficially, selling a home seems easy – until you actually try it.

According to statistics, nearly 80% of people give up and list with an agent after months of costly and time-consuming delay.

Here is why agents matter more than ever:

## Time

Showing homes, answering calls, responding to email, scheduling inspections and appraisals plus much more are time consuming tasks; more importantly, everything involved in a real estate transaction is time sensitive.

Delays can cause a deal to fall through even at the last moment.

## Promotion

Agents specialize in a specific location and know exactly what buyers are searching for in your area.

Not only do they know how to price right and grab the attention of prospective buyers, but many agents have an established list of buyers waiting for specific types of properties.

Successful real estate marketing requires extensive experience, time and persistence to achieve top prices in a buyer's market.

## Cost

Selling a home requires more than

simply placing a sign on the front lawn; it also entails a lot of out-of-pocket expenses with no guarantee of success. Advertising can cost hundreds or even thousands of dollars, listing with a "by owner" agency or MLS service typically adds hundreds more.

Finally, it is important to remember that real estate agents split commissions between the listing agent and the selling agent. To attract attention to your home it is still necessary to split the commission with any agents who bring buyers to the table.

Working with a real estate agent is likely to save you money over the long run.

## Welcome to the World of Ikea Hacking!

There aren't many homes without at least one piece of furniture from Ikea. The Swedish furniture store has become extraordinarily successful by selling well-designed furniture at reasonable prices.

But sometimes you can't find exactly what you need in the giant blue warehouse. That's where Ikea Hacks come in – ways to modify Ikea products to fit your needs. Indeed, entire websites have sprung up dedicated to the topic. Here are some ideas from Ikea Hacker ([ikeahacker.blogspot.com](http://ikeahacker.blogspot.com)):

- Putting two CD holders together to make a dish drainer
- Using outdoor decking to make a spa-like bathroom floor
- Butcher's block kitchen countertops used to make an attractive desk
- A coffee table made from a stainless steel shelf
- A room divider made from chests of drawers
- A medicine cabinet that hides a bar
- A dresser that makes a neat CD holder
- ...and a model train inside an Ikea coffee table!

## Birthdays to Remember This Month

Gustav Albin Whitehead, the aviation pioneer, was born on January 1, 1874. Whitehead was reported to have made powered flights two years before the Wright brothers. Aviation buffs continue to dispute the name of the first person to fly a plane.

Arthur H. Robinson was born on January 5, 1915. The cartographer is best known for the Robinson Projection – a map of the world that transformed

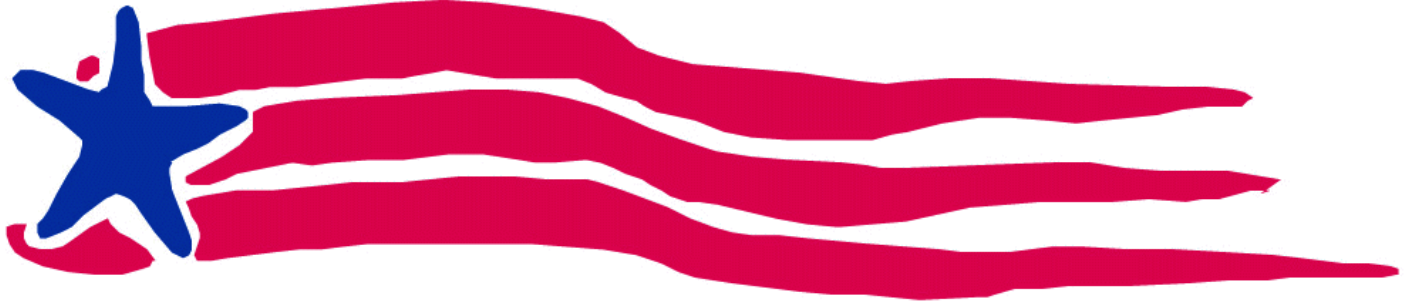
the globe into a flat sheet in a way that was pleasing to general viewers.

Luis Marden, who would have been 96 on January 25, was a photographer and explorer. He pioneered the use of color photography, particularly underwater, and traveled all over the world for National Geographic magazine. As a child, he taught himself five languages as well as Egyptian hieroglyphics.

## Fascinating Facts about January

- A fire damaged the Eiffel Tower on January 3, 1956.
- An ice storm caused massive disruption in the northeastern United States on January 4, 1998.
- Construction of the Golden Gate Bridge began on January 5, 1933.
- The RMS Queen Mary 2, the largest passenger ship ever, was christened on January 8, 2004.
- Popeye the Sailor Man first appeared as a comic strip on January 17, 1929.
- Commercial service of the Concorde began on January 21, 1976.
- The first jet airliner, the de Havilland Comet, entered service on January 22, 1952.
- Duke Ellington played at Carnegie Hall for the first time on January 23, 1943.
- The first Apple Macintosh went on sale on January 24, 1984.
- The first inductees into the Baseball Hall of Fame were announced on January 29, 1936.

# REMERICA®



## Traverse City

### NEWS YOU CAN USE

Your  
Name Here

#### *This Month's Sudoku*

	9					6		
			4	6		2	9	5
5			9		8			
					3	1	5	4
	5						2	
4	7	2	5					
			1		6			8
3	4	6		9	2			
		5					6	

*News You Can Use* is brought to  
you free by

### REMERICA®



## Traverse City

This newsletter and any information contained herein is intended for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. The publisher takes great efforts to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this newsletter. However, we will not be responsible for errors or omissions or any damages, howsoever caused, which result from its use. Seek competent legal counsel for advice on any legal matter. This newsletter is not intended to solicit properties currently for sale.