

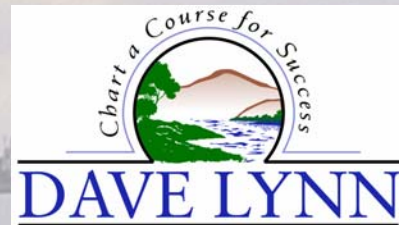


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April 2006

## Keeping in Touch

**Welcome** to my first newsletter. My wife, Agnes and I have been looking at the more generic newsletters for years and have never found one we both liked. The solution seemed to be to do our own (easy to say but putting some action to the words is another story). Besides including the current Real Estate and mortgage information we are including articles on gardening by Agnes, the music scene by daughter Tara and gourmet recipe and dining tips from renowned chef Darcy Ladret. For years I've wanted to record some of the experiences and antics I encountered in the fishing industry over the 25 years I was trolling. Each newsletter will carry a new episode. Maybe by the time I retire I'll have a book. Please let me know what you think of the newsletter and feel free to make any suggestions to improve it.

It is a work in progress. *Dave Lynn*

### Average House Prices Forecast to Rise by 6% Nationally in 2006

After posting record growth in both price appreciation and sales in 2005, Canada's housing market is expected to enjoy solid but more moderate growth in 2006 according to the Royal LePage Real Estate Services 2006 Market Survey Forecast. National average house prices are forecast to rise by 6% in 2006, while transactions are projected to fall slightly from last year's record high of 482,000 unit sales to 467,540 (-3%) unit sales.

The strength of the Canadian market is expected to mitigate the expected slowdown in residential housing resale activity in 2006 as strong economic fundamentals sustain healthy growth in the housing market across the country, with particular strength seen in the West. However, higher home prices in major markets, a general public perception of slower market conditions and moderate interest rate increases are forecast to temper market activity as unit sales pull back from the record highs of 2005.

Highlights of average house prices for the nine markets examined reveal that in 2006 the three most affordable cities to buy housing will be Regina, Winnipeg and Halifax, while the three most expensive cities to purchase real estate will be Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary.

Reflecting Alberta's current economic strength, Calgary property values are expected to post the greatest increases next year, rising by an anticipated 9%, closely followed by Edmonton at 8%.

#### 2006 Trends at a Glance

Market fundamentals: Canada's economy is poised for continued growth in 2006. With unemployment levels at near historic lows, positive job and income growth across the country and solid population growth resulting from higher immigration quotas in 2006, a positive and healthy housing market is expected.

*You are Invited to our Open Garden*  
*3913 Woodhaven Terrace*  
*Dave and Agnes are holding their Open Garden*  
*Sunday May 7 from 1 to 4 pm.*  
*The garden is at its peak at that time.*  
*It contains over 2000 shrubs, rhododendrons and*  
*native plants.*  
*You are welcome to bring your family and friends.*

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## Average House Prices cont'd

Mortgage rates: Anticipated interest rate increases in the coming year are expected to be modest and the effect on the real estate market should be minor to moderate.

Canadian dollar: Economic growth in the US, and a subsequent increase in demand for Canadian exports, has mitigated the negative effect of a higher Canadian dollar on the manufacturing sector.

Momentum in the West: Momentum in the country's housing market has clearly shifted from Central Canada to the West. Looking ahead to 2006, housing markets in Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan will continue to benefit from high energy prices and are expected to enjoy growth well above the national average.

### Agnes' Garden Tips



Attractive landscaping will not only allow you to enjoy the beauty surrounding you, it will also add significant value to your home. However, we don't want to become slaves to our gardens. The choice of plant material will determine the amount of maintenance required. In our garden, I have limited myself to easy-care shrubs and trees with an under-planting of bulbs so they look after themselves. I do still have maintenance such as pruning but I can do it when I have time. I have very few herbaceous perennials which are labour intensive.

This doesn't mean you are stuck with blobs of stiff conifers. In Victoria, for example, you have fantastic choices in broadleaf evergreens. These plants look great all year because they do not lose their leaves in winter. The prime example is rhododendrons but it doesn't stop there. Try plants like camellia, pieris, daphne, escallonia, cistus and hebes for a long season of bloom.

It's also interesting to add some deciduous shrubs. Chose ones with beautiful flowers like witch hazel, hardy fuchsia, weigela and mock orange.

To give a layered look with the shrubs, you can chose plants that vary in overall size. Usually the description of a shrub will give you the size in 10 years to help your decisions.

Add some height with some small trees. Ones that people enjoy at our house include red bud, silk tree, clerodendron, magnolia and Japanese maples.

Don't forget our natives such as flowering red currant, mock orange and Oregon grape.

Also to extend the interest in your garden, visit the nurseries every month of the year rather than just in the spring. To get some ideas of what to choose for your garden, don't forget to stop by our Open Garden on Sun May 7.

Happy gardening!

Transportation and traffic congestion: The cost of gas as well as increasing congestion affect buyers in the two areas they value most - time and money. Existing homes close to transportation corridors and public transit will be increasingly sought after and this will be reflected in higher market activity in these areas. Infill new housing construction in inner city and downtown locations will also increase as a result

### High-Priced Waterfront Sales Push Average Prices to New Record High April 3, 2006

*from Victoria Real Estate Board*

Twenty-one sales of over \$1 million through the Victoria Real Estate Board's Multiple Listing Service® pushed the average price of single family homes in Greater Victoria to a new record high of \$565,217 in March. These sales included two in Oak Bay - one for just over \$10 million and one for just under \$10 million. The median or mid-point price for single family homes, however, was substantially lower at \$439,500. There were 843 MLS® sales of all kinds of properties in March -- a 28% increase over the 658 sales in February. There were 924 sales in March of last year.

Victoria Real Estate Board President, Scott Kendrew, notes the sale of expensive waterfront properties had a significant effect on the overall average price for single family homes last month, "There were 22 sales of waterfront properties with an average price of over \$2 million. Such high-priced sales can have a substantial impact on the overall average price and in these circumstances, the median price, which was much lower, is a more meaningful statistic." Kendrew noted that while prices for condominiums remained stable, average prices for townhomes also reached a new record high, again affected by a number of high-priced sales, "Three townhome sales of over \$700,000 helped push the average to \$385,284. The median was again lower at \$360,500."

The six-month average price for single family homes in Greater Victoria last month was \$506,273. The average price for all condominiums sold in March was \$276,540; the average for the last six months was \$268,378. The median was again lower at \$240,000. The average price for townhomes for the last six months was \$362,151.

In March, there were 2,480 properties of all kinds available for sale - that's 22% higher than in March of last year.

## Dave's Tacks & Tales

### What am I Doing Here?

It was my Dad's fault really. He had got this bright idea to quit his Office Manager's job at one of the local car dealerships and go commercial fishing. Most males buy a sports car at that stage of their lives, what can I say. He went as far as to actually buy a little 36 foot troller. A somewhat strange looking double ender (pointy on both ends) with a raised foredeck so the waves would roll in the front cabin windows if they were left open when you dipped the bow. It was called the Gaylord II. I couldn't believe there was a Gaylord I. Meanwhile I had just finished my first summer job after first year UVic. It consisted of working for the BC Forestry Dept, living in an 8x10 canvas tent with two other guys and hiking through the woods everyday marking the future water levels for the lake that would be formed by the Peace River/Bennett dam. \$250/month including room and board and all the mosquitoes, deer flies and black bears you could want. That winter Dad came to his senses and realized that quitting his real job might not be the smartest thing to do. Me on the other hand not being too impressed with spending four months in a tent came up with the bright idea of leasing the boat from Dad and fishing for the summer. Nothing's impossible when you're 18. How hard could it be, right?

So, the plan was set. Agnes (yes I knew her way back then) and I drove out to Sooke to see ol' Ed Palliser and his partner Millie. After explaining my plans they shook their heads, took pity on me and spent hours showing me what fishing gear I'd need for which species (different gear for different fish? Huh). Getting used to piloting a boat was a whole other learning curve. No brakes! One docking attempt at Fisherman's Wharf on Erie St took 6 other fishermen to get me

tied to the wharf as a gust of wind spun the boat sideways right down between the other boats tied to the fingers. Another attempt ended abruptly as the reverse gear lever fell off the gear box just as I was coming in to land. Yikes, no brakes and no reverse.

In those times you could still fish commercially off Victoria. My routine for the first couple of weeks was to drive down to the boat at dawn, well maybe a little later, and troll along the waterfront from Esquimalt to Trial Island. After two weeks I'd caught one fish, which we had for dinner because it's supposed to be good luck to eat your first fish. It was becoming clear why there were no other boats fishing out there. Ron Hopkins, the fellow who sold Dad the boat, said his new boat, the Lady Doris, was in Sooke and I could follow him up the coast in a few days to where some of the fleet was fishing.

Next Time: The Adventure Begins

### Tara's Scene



The music scene in Victoria is alive and well whether it's Classical, Jazz or good old Rock n' Roll. Here are few tips on what's going on around town, who to keep an eye on and local CD's to look out for.

Jets Overhead, formerly known as "The Special Guests" are set for a national release of their debut full-length album *Bridges* on April 25 through Microgroove/Warner. You can check out their newest Video on their website [www.Jetsoverhead.com](http://www.Jetsoverhead.com).

Jets Overhead will be opening for Our Lady Peace during their Canadian tour in late April and May, which will include April 26th at the new Save On Foods Memorial Arena.

Kincaide is another band name you may have seen in the papers lately. Right after their CD release of *Landscape Verses*, produced by Adam Sutherland of the 604 recording artists Armchair Cynics, they set off on their self-supported three-month tour across Canada. [www.stopkincaide.com](http://www.stopkincaide.com)

As for Juno nominees, Victoria did pretty well for itself. Ian McDougall's latest release *In a Sentimental Mood* was nominated for Traditional Jazz Album of the Year. [www.ianmcdougall.com](http://www.ianmcdougall.com)

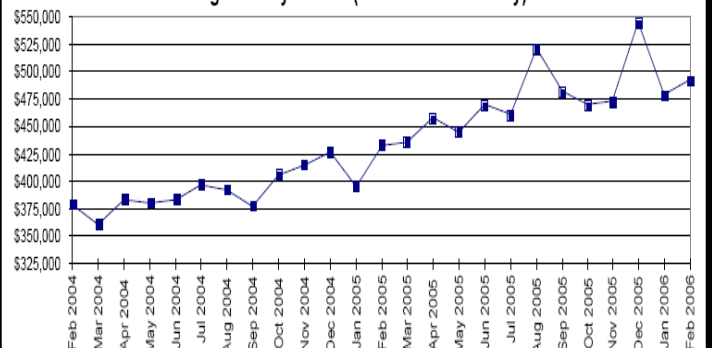
And local boys Hot Hot Heat's album *Elevator* was nominated for Alternative Album of the year.

For an eclectic alternative collection of Victoria artists check out, *Cavalcade of the Scars* compilation CD put out by SRR. [www.brandxmedia.ca](http://www.brandxmedia.ca)

For other great sources for what's new and going on around town, check out [www.liveinvictoria.com](http://www.liveinvictoria.com) or [www.thezone.fm](http://www.thezone.fm).

### Average Sale Price of Single Family Homes

Single Family Homes (Greater Victoria Only)



## Rate Watch

From Prime Mortgage Works Inc  
As of April 13, 2006

Term	Best Rate	Bank Rate
6 Month Open	5.70%	6.55%
6 Month Closed	5.45%	5.95%
1 Year	5.00%	6.25%
2 Year	5.10%	6.25%
3 Year	5.15%	6.30%
4 Year	5.20 %	6.40%
5 Year	5.24%	6.60%
6 Year	5.25%	6.85%
7 Year	5.25%	7.15%
8 Year	5.35%	7.10%
9 Year	5.45%	6.75%
10 Year	5.35%	6.40%
15 Year	5.85%	6.15%
18 Year	5.90%	6.20%
25 Year	6.00%	6.30%
Prime Rate	5.50%	

## For the Birds



If you don't like the idea of using pesticides in your garden, encourage the birds to take care of your unwanted critters naturally. If you encourage the birds, you will have less bugs and a lot of enjoyment from watching those amazing critters. Choose a seed feeder that won't get wet in the winter. Currently we find Bosley's Premium seed mix has very little waste in it. It is mainly sunflowers and yellow millet. Typical birds at our feeder are finches, chickadees, sparrows and sometimes band-tail pigeons. Have a tray or clear area under the feeder as many of our birds are ground feeders. The golden-crowned and fox sparrows and juncos eat from the ground. Avoid shelled sunflowers as they get rotten very quickly which is fatal to birds. For the nut-hatches and woodpeckers, even those bought cakes of suet keep them coming. Some people quit putting out the suet in the summer but we keep it up all year. As a reward, you might see daddy downy woodpecker feeding his kids from your suet. A new addition at our house has been a whole shelled peanut feeder. The bushtits are now here all the time and spend their days eating bugs in the garden when they aren't at the feeder. Watch for their nests that look like dirty grey socks. Keep your hummingbird feeder filled and clean. All year round we have annas and from April till September we have the rufous. Just use 1/3 cup sugar to 1 cup boiled water, no colouring. Finally don't forget clean water for the birds to drink and bath in.

## Darcy's Gourmet Corner



### How to Cook Your Catch

Here on the West Coast I think we take fish for granted and sometimes forget how lucky we are to have such a selection. We have so much variety to choose from.. Sablefish, Rockfish, Wolf Eel, Tuna.... Here are some quick tips for choosing and cooking fish.

1. Fresh Fresh Fresh!!! If it's still moving that's a good sign.
2. For buying a fresh fish: The eyes slightly protruded, bright and clear. The gills should be red or pink. A stale fish has eyes that are pink, sunken and cloudy, and the gills are gray.
3. Squeeze lemon juice over it, season with salt and pepper and let it stand at room temperature for about an hour. The acid of the juice will soften the connective tissues of the fish so that a shorter cooking time is necessary and will also keep it a nice color.
4. At 450 degrees F, cook it 10 minutes per inch thickness of the fish, turning the fish halfway through the cooking time. For example, a 1-inch fish steak should be cooked 5 minutes on each side for a total of 10 minutes. Pieces of fish less than 1/2-inch thick do not have to be turned over.

## I Referrals

### Better than a Free Lunch? A Free Dinner!

Marketing for new clients cost me a lot of time and money. Time I'd rather spend with friends and clients. A major part of my business is built on referrals from friends and satisfied clients. So here's the deal.

If you know of somebody thinking of buying or selling, ask if you can pass their name on to me. I'll look after them promptly and professionally, I won't let you down. They are under no pressure or obligation to work with me.

If the referral results in a sale, I would like to treat you to a dinner for two at your favorite restaurant as a token of my appreciation.