



## MARCH NEWSLETTER

*Market update, area events, real estate tips & more*

*"In winter, I plot and plan. In spring, I move."*

*- Henry Rollins*

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Happy March! Winter is slowly (quickly even!) shedding its cloak. I went skiing this past weekend and the thermometer was pushing 60! March also contains St. Patrick's Day which may remind us of the "luck o' the Irish" and, this year, the majority of the Lenten season when we are encouraged to reflect on the things we might do without, a personal mental and spiritual "spring cleaning" of sorts.

What do you need to clear away in your life that may be holding you back? What goals do you have for this spring? Whether you consider yourself Irish or not, don't just leave it up to luck, get moving! Even those seeking the pot of gold have to put in the effort to find the end of the rainbow.



A double rainbow over North Idaho that greeted us serendipitously, even prophetically, a few days before we made the decision to move here in 2020.

### Free Download

#### THE INCOMPLETE GUIDE TO BUYING AND SELLING YOUR HOME



Mark Griswold, ABR, SRS, CNE

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### Market Update

We're well into 2025 and the new administration. Some had hoped that the uncertainty preceding the election and the amount of people waiting on the sidelines to buy a house would have waned by now, but many are still not making a move. Some are waiting for rates to go down (they're down .28% since last month and a .37% since last year but still not down to their 52-week low of 6.11% and nowhere near the "5s" that many people are hoping for). Others believe prices may even come down.

Rates will, hopefully, come down a bit more. The Fed has hinted that it will cut rates more throughout the year, but who knows how much. I wouldn't bank on things dropping into the "5s" anytime soon and I'd bet big money that prices won't come down. (As a real estate investor, I do "bet" money on that.) In fact, since 1942, there's only been one year, 2006, that the 10-year cumulative appreciation was negative. Real estate is the surest investment there is in an uncertain world and even more so if you need a place to live.

Buyers, let's get moving! While inventory in Kootenai County is still on the low side, let's start that search now with a real commitment to buy something in the next few months. You won't regret it.

Sellers, spring is the busy season. If you're planning on selling in 2025, let's get started on the to-do list now so we can hit the market with a bang in late March/early April.

And now of the stats: in Kootenai County, the median sales price for February was \$549,620. Sales increased 13.4% year-over-year and 2.9% since last month. Average days on market was 112, down 1.8% from last year.

If you want an estimate of what your home is worth, contact me today.

## Real Estate Term of the Month

**Contingency:** A condition that must be met before a contract is legally binding. For example, home purchasers often include a home inspection contingency; the sales contract is not binding unless and until the purchaser has the home inspected.

## How to Boost Curb Appeal Without Breaking the Bank

First impressions matter, especially when it comes to your home. Whether you're looking to sell or simply want to improve your home's appearance, boosting your home's curb appeal is a great place to start. Fortunately, you don't have to spend a fortune to make a big impact. With a little creativity and elbow grease, you can transform your home's exterior without breaking the bank.

Here are some simple, cost-effective ways to improve your home's curb appeal:

### 1. Freshen Up the Front Door

The front door is one of the first things people notice when they approach your home, so make sure it's welcoming. A fresh coat of paint in a bold or complementary color can make a huge difference. Consider shades like navy blue, deep red, or even a classic black. Don't forget to polish or replace the door hardware, such as the doorknob and knocker, to give your door a polished, updated look.

### 2. Add or Update Landscaping

Landscaping is an easy and affordable way to make your home's exterior pop. Start by trimming bushes and hedges to create clean, defined lines around your property. If you don't have a lot of greenery, consider adding low-maintenance plants or flowers. Colorful flowers in simple planters near the entrance can create an inviting atmosphere. Try using perennial plants that come back every year to keep costs down while maintaining a lush garden.

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## March/April Events

**Book Release Party** – Okay, shameless plug on this one. I wrote a novel, *An Acquired Taste*, and it's now out. I will be having a book release party. The book is set during Golden Age Hollywood so feel free to come dressed as your favorite 1940s-era star or starlet or just any glitz and glamour outfit you've been wanting to throw on! In addition to a reading and some Q&A, there'll be some fun Hollywood trivia, a photo booth, 40s-era music, and light refreshments. **Friday, March 14, 6:30pm, Innovation Collective** (5<sup>th</sup> & Lakeside in Coeur d'Alene).

**Inlander Restaurant Week** – Fixed price, three-course meals at some of North Idaho's best restaurants. **Now through March 8<sup>th</sup>**. See list at [inlanderrestaurantweek.com](http://inlanderrestaurantweek.com). One of my favorites is 315 Cuisine.

**St. Patrick's Day Parade** – Get your green on and line up on Sherman Ave for the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual parade of festive floats, marching bands and such. Parade starts at 3pm, Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup> and runs from 8<sup>th</sup> Street down to the clock tower. More info: [cdadowntown.com/cda-events/st-patricks-parade/](http://cdadowntown.com/cda-events/st-patricks-parade/)

**Winefest** – Enjoy local and regional wines paired with flavor enhancing small bites at up to 15 different locations around Coeur d'Alene. **April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2-6pm**. Tickets: [cdadowntown.com/cda-events/winefest/](http://cdadowntown.com/cda-events/winefest/)



## The Home Inspection Process: Why It's Essential and What to Expect

Buying a home is one of the biggest financial commitments most people will make in their lifetime. It's an exciting journey, but it also comes with its own set of challenges. One of the most important steps in the home-buying process is the **home inspection**. This step helps protect buyers from future surprises and ensures that the property is in good condition before finalizing the sale.

A **home inspection** is a thorough evaluation of the property, typically conducted by a licensed inspector. The goal is to identify any potential issues or hidden problems that may not be obvious during a standard walk-through. These issues can range from minor cosmetic flaws to major structural or safety concerns, such as a faulty roof, electrical issues, or plumbing problems.

### Why Is a Home Inspection Important?

A home inspection gives buyers a clearer understanding of the property's condition. Even a well-maintained home can have underlying issues, and it's essential to identify these before committing to the purchase. While a home might look perfect on the surface, there could be costly repairs lurking underneath. The inspection report can help buyers avoid taking on a property with significant problems that could drain their finances or require extensive repairs down the line.

Additionally, if the inspection uncovers issues, buyers can use this information to **negotiate with the seller**. Depending on the severity of the findings, the buyer can ask the seller to make necessary repairs before closing or negotiate a price reduction to account for the cost of repairs.

### What Does a Home Inspector Look For?

A professional home inspector will evaluate several key areas of the home, including:

- **Roofing:** Checking for damaged or missing shingles, signs of leaks, and the overall condition of the roof.
- **Foundation and Structure:** Looking for cracks, settling, or moisture issues that could indicate structural problems.
- **Plumbing:** Inspecting pipes for leaks, water pressure, and functionality of faucets, toilets, and drains.
- **Electrical Systems:** Verifying the condition of wiring, outlets, and circuit breakers to ensure they meet safety standards.
- **HVAC Systems:** Evaluating the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems to ensure they are working properly.
- **Pests:** Looking for signs of termite or rodent infestations.

While home inspectors are thorough, they are not typically responsible for checking hidden systems (like behind walls or beneath the foundation) unless there's an obvious concern.

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*The greatest compliment you can give is referring me to those you know who are looking to buy or sell a home.*

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