

Green Programs and Resources – shared by Expert Cheryl King

'King' of Turning Toxic Assets Green

Cheryl King likes puzzles. "It's similar to what I do in the real estate industry," she says. "It's a big puzzle. How do you take the pieces and rearrange them in a way that makes it a win-win for everybody?" The real estate "puzzle" box has been shaken so hard in recent years that the hope of finding the easy-fitting pieces has become a daunting challenge, to say the least. But a Valley REALTOR® is courageously rebuilding that puzzle, piece by piece, house by house, in a way that is not only helping to save the industry, but also helping to save the planet, one "green home" at a time.

ECO Broker®

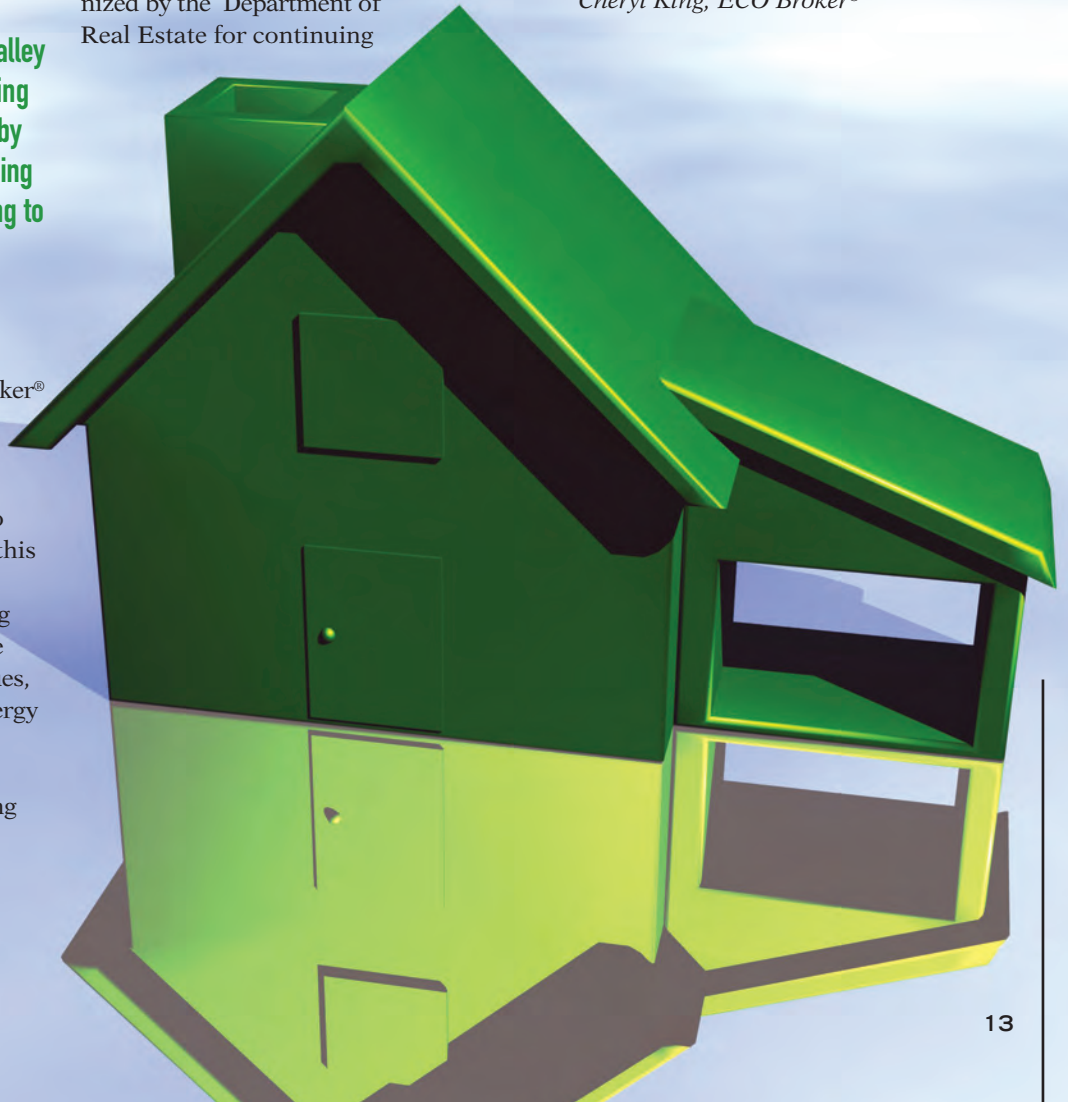
Cheryl King, a certified Eco-Broker® with Keller Williams Realty East Valley, specializes in eco-friendly, energy efficient homes. "A great opportunity for homeowners who are buying foreclosure homes in this distressed market is for them to finance those improvements using green loans," she explains. "These loans allow for higher loan to values, and allow you to finance those energy improvements." Her excitement is palpable, and her enthusiasm contagious. "As long as you're going to renovate it, you might as well renovate it green!"

ECO-Certified: What it Takes

As a certified Eco-Broker, Cheryl has completed 90 hours of training, which includes 30 hours of studies in environmental factors affecting homes (i.e., radon, asbestos, lead based paint), and 30 hours of residential energy efficiency training. The proprietary classes are offered online exclusively by Ecobroker.com, and the certification is officially recognized by the Department of Real Estate for continuing



Cheryl King, ECO Broker®



education for licensure. A similar program entitled, "Green Designation" is also offered by the National Association of Realtors.

Shanghai Surprise

King's passion for change finds its roots in her early career, when she spent several years working for a commercial real estate company in Shanghai, China. She was fascinated by the rapid urbanization of the city. She sees a similar pattern of growth and opportunity from her current residence in Phoenix, AZ. "It's very exciting for me to see all of the urbanization that's going on in the

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Karen Lueck-Hefel
Keller Williams Integrity First Realty

Karen Lueck-Hefel, with Keller Williams Integrity First Realty says, "I have never met someone so passionate about something before. Cheryl is taking 'going green' to another level." Ed Easley, a

you have to have a lot of inner strength," notes King. In the current economy, fears and anxieties abound. "There are a lot of naysayers, and as crazy as it sounds to say that 'eco' is cutting edge, at this point, it still is." Yet King is passionate about helping people to increase their current or future home's worth through energy efficient renovation and construction, "I like putting deals together, but I also like the fact that I can educate and help take away some of those fears and anxieties that people might have," states King.

Overcoming Hurdles

The typical homeowner wants to make their home more energy efficient and increase its market value. However, the internet has created perhaps the biggest hurdle in the pursuit of profit. An overabundance of information and lack of purposeful organization of information has prevented many people from converting their eco-desires into eco-action. Enter the basic eco-centric buzzwords into a search engine, and thousands of websites pop up, but few, if any, provide a holistic approach. Those in need of information are forced to piece together a renovation or construction plan from multiple, and sometimes contradictory, resources.

Eco Road Map: One Source Resource

Finding ways to fight the challenges of the eco confusion, King offers a solution. "I provide a 'single source resource' for a homeowner that is interested in retrofitting their home to be energy efficient. We provide the education on what that means, and we provide all the resources they would need. It's what I call the eco road map: the contractors, the lenders, the title companies, and everyone along the continuum to make their home more energy efficient."



"Green Street" <http://www.greenstreetdev.com>

central corridor," she states. "I live on the light rail, and it's really encouraging to me to see the ridership on the weekends and evenings, so it's not just the professionals using that mode of transportation to go to work."

Green Leader

King's hard work and dedication to the cause has fostered admiration among her peers and colleagues.

Valley developer, adds, "Cheryl is an innovative, high energy entrepreneur with a passion for real estate and cutting-edge technology."

"Eco-Preneur:" Cultivating the Positive

A true entrepreneur wrestles opportunity out of misfortune. But King takes it one step further, proudly describing herself as an eco-preneur. "There is opportunity in chaos, but

Cheryl King Shares Home Energy Use Facts and Figures

- Appliances account for nearly 20% of an average household's energy use.
- ENERGY STAR® windows block 70% or more of the solar heat gain in the summer.
- Water accounts for approximately 15% of a home's energy use.
- As much as half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling.
- An average homeowner spends \$600+ on space heating & cooling a year.
- For more information check out www.energystar.gov

Education is the Answer

King believes that education is the key to success for the industry: education for all the players in the real estate equation – the buyers, the sellers, the agents, the brokers, the appraisers and everyone else in between. She is working toward a collective understanding of the short and long term benefits of eco-friendly housing and green loan financing. Building educational programs and creating resources that serve as platforms for education are her future goals. “I want to have eco-renovated homes all across the country that are examples. Places where people can go and actually see it, feel it, touch it,” she says. “Canada offers \$5000 grants for retrofitting

Three Arizona Utility Rebate Programs

- APS offers an incentive for its residential customers to upgrade their AC units. The rebate amount is \$175/unit for units with a 13 SEER and 10.8 EER, and \$425/unit for units with 14 - 16 SEER / 10.8 EER, and \$525/unit for 17+ SEER / 10.8 EER. (To be eligible, AC units must meet both the SEER and EER values and be installed in accordance with the APS Quality Installation standard).
- The APS Quality Installation Rebate Program offers an additional rebate of \$100 for new equipment installations done by an APS qualified contractor. Instructions on how to find an APS qualified contractor are listed on their website.
- SRP's EarthWise Solar Energy Program provides incentives to residential and commercial customers who purchase PV or solar water-heating systems. (\$3/watt DC, with a maximum payment of \$60,000 per system.)
- For more information check out www.aps.com/main/green/choice www.srpnet.com/environment/earthwise/solar

Federal Tax Incentives offered for “green” improvements

- Energy saving improvements can earn a tax credit of 5% of installation cost, up to \$5,000 maximum in personal deductions.
- Installing renewable energy technologies can earn a tax credit of 10% of installation cost, up to \$25,000 maximum for a single building.
- Unused credits may be carried forward for up to five consecutive taxable years.
- To be eligible for the credit, interested parties can receive certification by applying to the Arizona Department of Commerce.
- For more information check out www.dsireusa.org.

homes. I want to be the driving force behind similar legislation in the U.S.”

Where to Start Greening

The purpose of all this education is, of course, to encourage action. According to Cheryl, one of the first steps for “greening up” your home is an energy audit. In a typical energy audit, the hired company performs a blower door test, which involves the temporary sealing of all windows and vents in the home. Various tests are then conducted, and the resulting analysis helps to identify recommended changes, and the potential savings in making these changes. “Whether you’re just starting out with a home, and you want to make it more energy efficient, or you are an eco-pioneer like Ed Begley, Jr., it’s a good way to just get a whole system analysis of your home,” Cheryl recommends.

As a side benefit, the energy audit is also providing green collar job opportunities for people who have been downsized. “The certification programs in Arizona are overwhelmed with the numbers of people that are signing up in order to be able to perform an energy audit,” she adds.

Offering Help

“There’s such a thirst for knowledge. I find that everyone has questions, and they’re very passionate and excited about retro-

fitting their homes...and how they can finance it. The biggest roadblock is that (the homeowners) don’t know how to find the contractors. That’s one of the competitive advantages of my team is that we can help with that. We not only help them get the energy audit done, but we can also help them finance these changes.”

Government Programs

The good news is that King has some help in her endeavors, especially from Uncle Sam. Under the Housing Economic Recovery Act (HERA) signed by former President

Bush, HUD allocated grant money for U.S. cities to not only renovate selected foreclosed homes, but also to rebuild the communities in which those homes existed. The City of Phoenix received just over \$39 million in neighborhood stabilization program (NSP) funds. The NSP funds are for down payment, closing cost assistance for eligible buyers, and rehabilitation for foreclosure homes. Mandates included in the program state that the money must be committed within 18 months. As a result, King states that we will see a revitalization of communities, a marked increase in affordable, energy efficient homes and tangible resources for continued education. It is definitely a win-win-win situation.

Opportunity - What’s Next After REO?

The ‘greening’ of Phoenix through the allocation of federal HERA money is one of the most positive economic and socially responsible stories to be told in recent months, but more importantly, it is an opportunity. Snowden Bishop, with Bishop Arts and Media, sees the genius in King’s efforts. “Cheryl is a visionary: she has identified an important, untapped niche in her industry and has brought it to the forefront of her practice.” A powerful proponent of change, Cheryl King is rearranging the real estate industry’s puzzle pieces to build a picture of responsible, sustainable growth. ●

www.ecolivinggroup.com

Beyond the Bulb: 5 Simple Steps to Increase Home Energy Efficiency

- **Reduce water use.** Putting aerators in sink faucets, and install low flow showerheads and toilets.
- **Unplug your electronics.** 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while they are turned off -unplug your computers and cell phone chargers when they are not in use.
- **Plug air leaks.** Plugging leaks around windows and doors with weather stripping and caulk can reduce your energy bill by \$100 or more.
- **Install ENERGY STAR appliances.** Qualified ENERGY STAR products translate into significant electric bill savings. Some utility companies also offer incentives for replacing with newer, more efficient versions.
- **Switch to Programmable thermostats.** Programmable thermostats allow you to program the systems to modify output based on need or occupancy.