



DORON WEISBARTH
Designated Broker/Owner

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HOMeward BOUND

More Than Just Real Estate News

Are You Ready for Smoky Summer Air?

Almost miraculously, our region was (mostly) spared from smoky air last summer. This year, with the dryer than normal conditions, things aren't looking too well. And I'm sure you've heard about the terrible smoke from the Canadian forest fires wreaking havoc on the eastern and mid-western states, with hazardous air quality warnings, cancelled activities, major disruptions to air travel, and more.

Smoke-filled air can be hazardous to your health. We cannot control the air quality outside – at best you can wear one of those N95 masks we all probably still have. That's why it is so essential that you create a smoke-free sanctuary inside your home. Here are a few things you can do to protect your and your family's and pets' lungs from the hazards of smoky air:

1. Get the AirNow app from the EPA

This free app reports on air quality measurements from around the country. With this app, you'll have some advance notice of upcoming air quality problems, and can prepare for it using the other tips on this list. You'll also know when the air quality has improved.

(continued inside left)

Join Me at Childhaven's Gala on Oct 14th



As you know, we've been supporting Childhaven for many years by giving a portion of the proceeds from every home we sell to this great organization. They help young kids who are born into challenging situations and give them a safe place to learn, grow, and become healthy. And 'healthy' includes all forms of health – physical, emotional, social, and mental.

Childhaven's program helps kids learn how to interact with other kids in positive ways. It prepares them to succeed in school. And it empowers them to not held down by the effects of abuse, neglect, drugs, or alcohol that may have played a harmful role early in their lives.

On Saturday, October 14th at 5pm, Childhaven is holding Illuminate, their annual fundraising Gala, and Weisbarth & Associates is the presenting sponsor.

I would love to see you there!

You can learn more and sign up for the Gala by going to this web page:
childhaven.org/events/



(continued inside left)

Are You Ready for Smoky Summer Air? (continued from front)

2. Put new HEPA air filters in your HVAC system

If you have some type of forced air system to heat and/or cool your home, such as a duct system, your system is equipped with a filter. You can use that filter to trap smoke particles. You'll want to use a HEPA filter that has a MERV rating between 8 and 13. A lower rating will allow smaller particles to get through, whereas a larger rating will clog up so fast that it will become ineffective and may choke off your system. So start now with a new filter, and when the smoke arrives, make sure to check your filter weekly to verify that it's not clogged.

3. Install HEPA filters in your windows

You can also install HEPA filters in your open windows. These cleanse the air as it comes into your house, allowing you to keep the windows open without polluting your home. For these, you want at least a 17 MERV rating, and use cardboard with tape to cover up any gaps between the filter and the window frame. And make sure that the arrow on the filter is pointing into your home so that the filter can clean the air as it comes in. Be ready to change the filters in these units once a week if the outside air is very bad.

4. Use an air purifier

If smoke does find its way into your home, you won't be able to clear it out just by opening the windows again if the outside air remains smokey for several days.

An indoor air purifier that uses negative ions to 'scrub' the air can clear out almost all the harmful particulates in just an hour or two. You can get a larger model for the whole



Photo by Marcus Kauffman on Unsplash

house, or use a smaller model and go room to room. Leave it running all night if conditions outside are especially bad.

5. Make a DIY air purifier

During the height of the Covid pandemic, two engineers, Richard Corsi and Jim Rosenthal, created a DIY air purifier that anyone can easily build at home, that would clean the home quickly, efficiently, and cheaply. All you need are four 20"x20"x2" HEPA filters, a 20" box fan, a flat piece of cardboard, and some duct tape. You can find many versions of how to assemble this Corsi-Rosenthal filter on YouTube. Scan this QR code to see one of them. More information at: weisbarth.com/diy-air-purifier



6. Use secondary home entrances

If you can enter and exit your home using the garage, a basement, or a side door, this can protect your primary living space from being invaded by harmful smoky air.

Join Me at Childhaven's Gala on Oct 14th (continued from front)

The #1 Variable Behind Long-Term Well-Being

Why does Childhaven work with families and not just their children? Because the top factor that determines lifelong mental and emotional health is the number and quality of relationships we have as children.

Kids need loving, stable, committed relationships, and they need positive relationships with other adults and kids as well. And – they need a good number of these, not just one or two.

That begins in the home, but it extends into the community. By working directly with kids, Childhaven provides quality relationships for kids. And by working with parents

and families, they also improve the quality of the kids' other key relationships.

Jon Botten, the outgoing CEO of Childhaven, says that "90% of brain development happens in the first five years, yet as a society, we only invest 14% of our resources into that age range. Instead, we invest much more later in life, paying for the repercussions of not having invested" in the early years.

By working with kids and their families, Childhaven is building toward lifelong well-being for kids.

REGISTER AT: childhaven.org/events/

Are Seattle Homeowners Really Losing Equity? (continued from back)

But if you read the rest of the article, you quickly realize this headline is just fearmongering and misleading. How many homeowners in our state are underwater right now? 2%. That's not a misprint. Not 20%. Two percent. Compared to 33% during the Great Recession.

As Yoda might say, "Time to panic, this is not."

How about Seattle? Just 0.7% of Seattle homeowners are underwater on their mortgages.

That headline is stoking an awful lot of anxiety considering it only applies to 0.7% of Seattle homeowners.

For some reason, the media seems to gravitate toward the immediate, present-day data and ignore all of history, even history from just last year.

Last year, the market peaked in the spring, in an uncharacteristic acceleration of home prices. Since then, it has gone down, returning to its original trajectory of a slower but steady upward climb.

Consider these statistics:

Last year in June of 2022, the median sales price of residential homes in King County was \$925,000. In June of this year, after the drop in values, it was already back up to \$938,000 – up 1.4% from last June, and still climbing.

Likewise, in Seattle, the median price in June of 2022 was \$965,000. This year, it's moving upward after its earlier decline, and in June reached \$920,000 – down only 4.7%, but with a trajectory that will bring it back to its peak within a couple of months or so.

In the chart I marked the datapoints for June of last year in both datasets. You can easily see how the median sale prices for single family homes (SFH) in King County and in Seattle have been steadily increasing since January of this year. At the current rate of appreciation, median prices are likely to reach the peak prices from last year, and perhaps even overtake them in the near future.

By the way, these trends hold true in other counties and cities in our area.

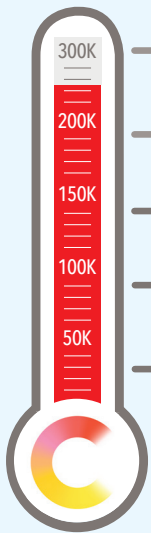
So who is affected by this supposed "loss of equity"? This only matters to people who bought at the very height of the peak sales prices last year and need to sell their home now. As you might imagine, that is a very, very small slice of the population.

For all the rest of the homeowners in Seattle, King County, and elsewhere, your equity is fine. If you need to, you can sell whenever you want and make a nice profit.

Now that you have the facts, help spread the word to others, so that we don't let this kind of fearmongering scare people.

If you know anyone who is thinking about selling or buying and home, please refer them our way. You can give them this newsletter, or give them our contact information, or connect us through our website [Weisbarth.com/refer](https://weisbarth.com/refer). We've created systems, plans and strategies for sellers and buyers that help them maximize their results. And remember that your business and referrals go a long way to help the kids at Childhaven.

Our donations to date for Childhaven!



— **2024** A portion of every sale from Weisbarth & Associates is given to Childhaven and in the past 5 years we have donated over **\$250,000** to them.

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Like and follow us on:



Your business and referrals help the kids at Childhaven

Through all of COVID-19 the Childhaven staff continues to care for every child, delivering counseling, developmental therapy, wrap-around supports, home learning, meals, family meetings, and much more.

Every referral you send our way helps the kids at Childhaven, because we donate a substantial portion of our income from every home sale to this amazing organization. If you know anyone considering buying or selling, you have three options:

1. Send an email with your referral's name, phone and email to **refer@weisbarth.com**
2. Call me direct or pass on my number – **206.779.9808**
3. Go to our website at **[Weisbarth.com/refer](https://weisbarth.com/refer)**



Our team offers a no-obligation consultation to show you how to maximize your results from buying or selling a home.

Find out more at [Weisbarth.com](https://weisbarth.com)



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Also In This Issue:

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- > Are Seattle Homeowners Really Losing Equity?
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If your home is already listed, this is not intended as a solicitation

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GeekWire



Real Estate Results That Move You

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Are Seattle Homeowners Really Losing Equity?

I usually try to avoid being publicly critical of media reports. Lots of people do it, and it's easy and can be fun, but it's not what I want to be known for.

But in June, a Seattle Times article came out with a headline that I felt had to be addressed. So, on this rare occasion, I am going to respond to a media report. The headline reads:

"Homeowners in Washington lose more equity than any other state as market cools."

This headline conjures images of hordes of distressed, underwater homeowners trapped in mortgages they can't escape. It reminds us of the Great Recession, when – as the article itself points out – about a third of Washington homeowners were in fact underwater on their mortgages.

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