



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS


The
ORCHARDS
Group

AUTUMN 2013

**ATLANTA MARKET
CONTINUES REBOUND**

**VOLUNTEERING MAKES
POSITIVE CHANGE**

AUTUMN 2013

REAL ESTATE CONTINUES TO SHOW STRENGTH

In the scant 90 days since our last newsletter publication, The Orchards Group sold 36 new homes accounting for over \$11 million in sales volume in our two current neighborhoods, The Orchards of East Cherokee in Woodstock and The Orchards of Brannon Oak Farm in Cumming. We must admit to being pleasantly surprised with the continuance of this strong rebound in the Atlanta residential marketplace. After nearly four years of economic and housing recession, the statistics coming in from all data sources show significant optimism and cause for celebration.

For example, looking specifically at the over \$150,000 market in the six major North Atlanta counties (DeKalb, Cobb, Cherokee, Fulton, Forsyth and Gwinnett), and comparing total homes for sale in July 2012 (10,237 homes) vs. July 2013 (9,381 homes), you will see that there was only an 8.4% decline in available listings. However, total sales in July 2012 (2,006 homes) vs. July 2013 (2,875 homes) shows an increase in over 43%! That is an astounding statistic! Equally impressive is the "Average Days on the Market Before Sale" figure. In July 2012, it was an average of 77 days. In July 2013 it dropped nearly 35% to an average of only 50 days. That's less than 2 months on average!

Whether you are a statistics maven or not, it is clear that we are experiencing a rebound in residential real estate here in Atlanta that is pushing prices higher and higher with "quality" available inventory at a record low.

What does this mean to you? It means you might be surprised as to how quickly your current home can sell, enabling you to finally enjoy the active adult lifestyle you deserve.

Many of the homes we have sold this year have been to folks who have been in our "prospect database" for two to three years. With their ability to sell their homes, they are now flocking into our sales offices looking for that new home, just for them.

We invite you to come out to visit soon, before opportunities vanish.

Enjoy the cooler autumn weather. See you in January 2014.

The Orchards Group Team
Mitch Block, sales and marketing director
mjblock@orchardsgroup.com

Data Source: TrendGraphix. Data supplied by FMLS Atlanta.



LET'S GET MOVING

What Can Exercise Do for You?

The Orchards communities are ideal for moving! Grab some neighbors and start a walking club. Plan ahead for swimming each summer at the Grand Clubhouse pools. Use variety to keep exercise interesting and beneficial for various parts of your body:

- Endurance, or aerobic, activities increase your breathing and heart rate. Brisk walking or jogging, dancing, swimming and biking are examples.
- Strength exercises make your muscles stronger. Lifting weights or using a resistance band can build strength.
- Balance exercises help prevent falls.
- Flexibility exercises stretch your muscles and can help your body stay limber.

Exercise Wisely

- Start slowly, especially if you haven't been active for a long time. Little by little build up your activities and how hard you work at them.
- Don't hold your breath during strength exercises. That could cause changes in your blood pressure. It may seem strange at first, but you should breathe out as you lift something and breathe in as you relax.
- Use safety equipment. For example, wear a helmet for bike riding or the right shoes for walking or jogging.
- Unless your doctor has asked you to limit fluids, be sure to drink plenty when you are doing activities. Many older adults don't feel thirsty even if their body needs fluids.
- Always bend forward from the hips, not the waist. If you keep your back straight, you're probably bending the right way. If your back "humps," that's probably wrong.

Source: NIH: National Institute on Aging

QUICK TIP: You don't need to buy special clothes or belong to a gym to become more active. Physical activity can and should be part of your everyday life. Go for brisk walks. Ride a bike. Dance. Work around the house. Garden. Climb stairs. Swim. Rake leaves. Try different kinds of activities that keep you moving. Look for new ways to build physical activity into your daily routine.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE: VOLUNTEERISM

Maybe you've heard a cynic say that no one person can change the world. Whether or not that's true has been debated time and again, but no one can dispute that a single person has the power to improve his or her own corner of the world.

Jerry and Mary Pontius, homeowners at The Orchards of East Cherokee since 2008, are trying to do just that by dedicating their time and energy to causes important to them.

Mary, a former teacher, spends time once a week as a classroom volunteer at the local elementary school. While Mary also has the experience of a Masters in library science to offer the school, she explains that the rewards are much greater for her than those she is helping.

"The children are so sweet and cute," Mary says. "I've got a stack of thank you letters from them that I just treasure."

While Mary impacts children's lives through one-on-one reading and other education oriented tasks, her husband Jerry dedicates much of his free time to The Orchards of East Cherokee's homeowners' association.

From monthly meetings and day-to-day duties, Jerry says volunteering his time in his own neighborhood has to do with "pride in my community, interest in getting the best value for the residents... by doing something that I enjoy..."

What advice does this giving couple have for others looking for a way to serve? "Look for something where your participation makes a positive impact," Jerry says. Many community and religious organizations have volunteer opportunities that are worthwhile and rewarding.

Online searches for volunteer opportunities in your area are another good way to find meaningful work. Just try Google or check out sites such as www.volunteermatch.org.

HAPPY TO HELP!

If you're looking for a place to serve but are not sure where to start, try giving these local organizations a call. Ask questions such as are opportunities once a month or once a week? Find out volunteer requirements such as age, background checks, and if there is a minimum time commitment. Choose a location where you feel your talents and interests will be the most help.

- After School Programs
- Animal Shelters
- Animal Rescues
- Churches
- Elementary Schools
- Food Banks
- Hospitals
- Senior Centers
- Women's Shelters



FALL INTO FUN

It's time for fall festivities all around the metro Atlanta area. From pumpkin pickin' to leaf color watching, there's an activity perfect for every Orchards family.

STONE MOUNTAIN PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

Weekends only through Oct. 28

Make family memories this fall season at Stone Mountain Park's 11th annual Pumpkin Festival. Enjoy fun-filled games and family shows such as "Pumpkinpalooza," scavenger hunts and the Pumpkin Mash at the Mayor's Rockin Costume Party.

Stone Mountain Park
Highway 78 East
Stone Mountain, GA 30086
770.498.5690

www.stonemountainpark.com

BERRY PATCH FARMS PUMPKIN PATCH

Weekends, Oct. 6-28: 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Weekdays, Oct. 15-30: 3:30 – 7 p.m.

Your visit includes a hayride out to the pumpkin patch where you can choose from giant pumpkins or adorable minis. Return on the hayride for apple cider, a homemade fried pie and some boiled peanuts and popcorn. The kids will enjoy the playground and baby farm animals.

786 Arnold Mill Road
Woodstock, GA 30188
770.926.0561

www.berrypatchfarms.net

BURT'S FARM PUMPKINS AND HAYRIDES

Hayrides offered through Nov. 10.

See website for daily hours.

Surrounded by the fall foliage of the North Georgia mountains, Burt's features thousands of pumpkins. Leave time for traffic if you're visiting on the weekend, because this farm is a popular destination well worth the visit.

5 Burt's Farm Road
Dawsonville, Georgia 30534
706.265.3701

www.burtsfarm.com

MERCIER ORCHARDS

Pick your own apples each weekend through October!

\$10 gets one customer a peck-sized bag to fill with freshly picked apples and a guided tractor tour. If you're not interested in picking, but would still love the tour the cost is \$2 per person. Children 2 and under are free to ride!

8660 Blue Ridge Drive
Blue Ridge, GA 30513

706.632.3411

www.mercier-orchards.com



THE ORCHARDS OF BRANNON OAK FARM



Lush Entryway Landscape



Magnolia Southern Classical



Reading Den in Clubhouse

The Orchards of Brannon Oak Farm. Less than 20 Homes Remain!

More than 20 homes have been sold in this flagship community since our last publication in July. And with the apparent continuing strength of the Atlanta real estate market, we are proud to announce that fewer than 20 total opportunities out of the original 218 remain.

"Offering three distinct product lines at Brannon Oak Farm has proven to be a fantastic strategy," said Mitch Block, sales and marketing director. "Each of the three product types offers unique lifestyle benefits, so finding the right home for each prospect has been significantly simplified," Block added.

Craig Smith, sales associate for The Orchards Group explained, "The increased urgency created by adding more SOLD pins to our Site Plan map has also benefitted our sales pace." All in all, we expect to be SOLD OUT by years' end. So if you are seriously considering making a move to a new "Orchards Lifestyle," then you need to come to visit very soon. Inventory is limited, with the remaining best properties being sold quickly. Low maintenance lifestyles coupled with an incomparable location are the keys to this incredibly successful Orchards neighborhood. **Come out to see the selection of homes and homesites now, before it's too late. Open Monday through Friday, 10am – 5pm; Saturday, 11am – 5pm; and Sunday, 1 – 5pm. Model Home: 678-513-8879**

FUN FACT:

The state motto of Georgia is "Wisdom, Justice, and Moderation."

THE ORCHARDS OF EAST CHEROKEE

The Orchards of East Cherokee. 90th Home SOLD!

Unbelievable as it seems, we have now sold our 90th home, out of a total of 140, at this beautiful, country-setting community. In fact, sales have been so strong we are proud to announce that all of the single-family Gallery homes have been sold with the exception of just four basement-home opportunities. With their popularity, we expect they will not last long.

In addition to the Gallery series, the Southern Heritage Collection of four award winning ranch condominium home styles continues to sell well. More than 50 of the 92 planned homes are now sold, and with the current sales rate we expect to be sold out within 18 months.

FUN FACT:

Cherokee County is home to Lake Allatoona, fed by the Etowah and Little Rivers.

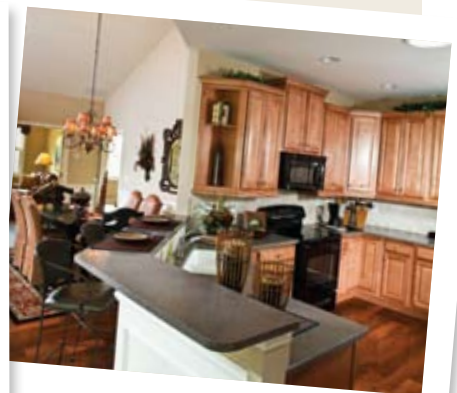
“Our buyers are flocking to these wonderful condominium floorplans due to their affordability and value pricing per square foot,” said Deborah Reahm, sales associate for The Orchards Group. If the term “condominium” sounds unappealing, you need to come out to see for yourself the surprises in store. Lots of windows and tall ceilings adorn these homes, making them feel much more like a traditional single-family home than one would expect. The ranch condominium format has been the “bread and butter” for The Orchards Group since 1998, and with more than 1,600 sold since then, we feel that they are well deserving of serious consideration. **Come see us soon. Open Monday through Saturday, 11am – 5pm and on Sunday, 1 – 5pm. Model Home: 770-345-5409**



Beaumont Ranch Condominium



More and More Construction



The Charleston Ranch Condominium

PUMPKIN SURPRISES

Tired of the same old pumpkin pie? Here are some unexpected uses for autumn's most popular fruit. (Yep, it's technically a fruit, not a vegetable!)

FUN FACT:

PUMPKINS BELONG TO THE SQUASH AND CUCUMBER FAMILY.



MAKE PUMPKIN SPICE OATMEAL

– in your crockpot.

What you'll need:

- 2 cups water
- 2 1/2 cups milk*
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin spice
- 1 cup steel cut oats

What you'll need to do:

1. Place all the ingredients in the crock pot and stir to combine.
2. Cover and cook on low for 5-9 hours (note that the cooking time can vary depending on your crock pot. Crock pots without non-stick surfaces tend to get hotter, so you'll want to stick closer to a 5 hour cooking time).
3. Serve.

*You can also use rice or almond milk if you want to make a dairy free or vegan version of this recipe.

Source: *Weelicious.com*



MAKE PUMPKIN BUTTER

Perfect for spreading on toast or waffles or scooping by the spoonful.

What you'll need:

- 2 cups pumpkin puree
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup apple cider
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon cloves

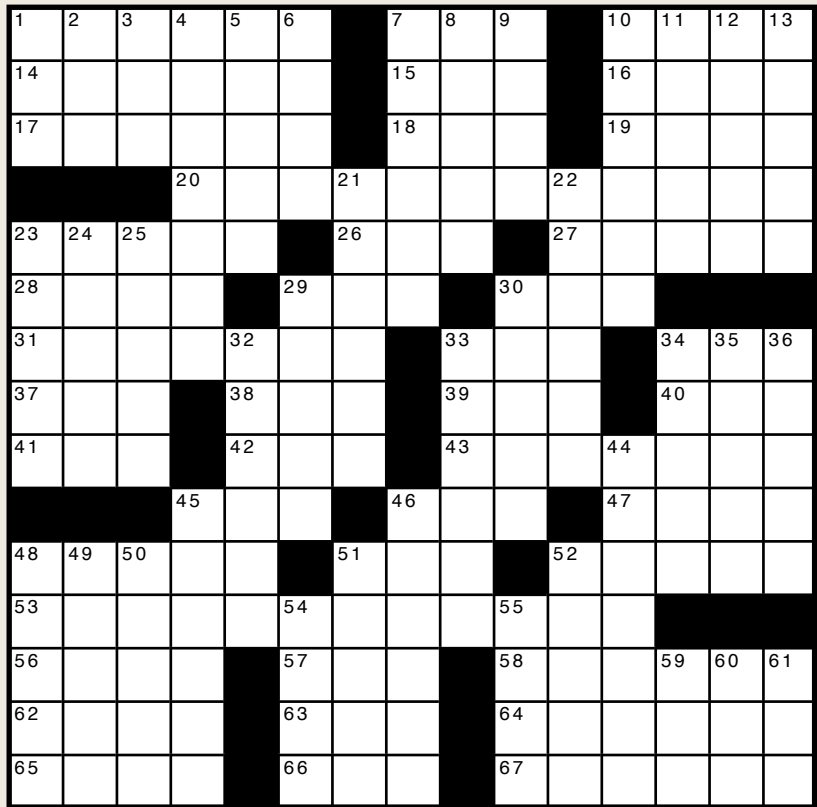
What you'll need to do:

1. Simmer everything in a pot until most of the liquid has evaporated and the sauce has thickened.

Source: *closetcooking.com*

Across

1. Capital of the Philippines
7. CD-____
10. Baby powder
14. Lets up
15. Altar in the sky
16. "East of Eden" director
Kazan
17. Dwarfed tree
18. Droop, sink
19. K-6
20. Loving
23. Inspire anew
26. ____ kwon do
27. Playground retort
28. Yours, in Tours
29. Cambodia's Lon ____
30. Foxy
31. Breed of dog unable to bark
33. Numbered rd.
34. This ____ stickup!
37. Exist
38. "You've got mail" co.
39. Attention
40. Romanian coin
41. ____ the season...
42. Opposite of post-
43. Angling
45. Free
46. Central
47. Leisure
48. First name in cosmetics
51. Proverb ending?
52. Bird that gets you down
53. Vexing
56. Growl
57. Actor Erwin
58. North African desert
62. Farm unit
63. Flub
64. Besides
65. Take it easy
66. Female rabbit
67. Monster's nickname



Down

1. Fairy queen
2. Blood letters
3. A Bobbsey twin
4. I've been framed!
5. Like spinach
6. "Clueless" catchphrase
7. Mischievous person
8. Use a soapbox
9. Wise trio
10. Wee
11. ____ once
12. Mislead
13. Walk-on role
21. Prima ballerina
22. Edmonton team
23. Capital on the Atlantic
24. Maker of Pong
25. Misplaces
29. Norse god of winds
30. Sedate
46. Ripe
48. Mystery writer's award
49. Subsequently
50. Former Russian rulers
51. Emcee's job
52. Related on the mother's side
54. Second hand, took advantage of
55. This ____ outrage!
59. Sighs of relief
60. Thor Heyerdahl craft
61. Bolted down

Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com (<http://www.bestcrosswords.com>). Used with permission.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

October 19

The Great Bull Run

Looking for something totally different to do this month? Check out the Georgia International Horse Park as it hosts The Great Bull Run. Spectators get in for \$10, and ages 13 and younger get in free. For more information, visit www.thegreatbullrun.com.

Oct. 19-20 & Oct. 26-27

Boo at the Zoo

The Atlanta Zoo hosts its annual Halloween festival. Fun for all ages. www.zooatlanta.org

Nov. 1-3

Indian PowWow

See and hear Native American dance, drumming, bow making, open-fire cooking, storytelling, and artistry at Stone Mountain Park. www.stonemountainpark.com.

Nov. 9-11, Jan. 20

Free Entrance Days at Georgia National Parks

One great local park to check out for free this weekend is the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.

Nov. 11 - Dec. 30

Christmas in Roswell

Tour decorated homes, meet Mr. and Mrs. Claus and more. www.visitroswellga.com

Dec. 13-14

Christmas with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

www.atlantasymphony.org.



Jan. 9-12

Atlanta Boat Show

Georgia World Congress Center,
www.atlantaboatshow.com.



October 26

Owl O Ween Hot Air Balloon Festival

The Kennesaw State University Owls' campus hosts this fun filled festival. Discounted tickets available online at www.owl-o-ween.com.

SCENE AROUND THE ORCHARDS

The Cypress Townhome Villa at Brannon Oak Farm



Another Building Ready to Start



A Customized Winston Gallery Home at Brannon Oak Farm



There's No Place Like Home

Homes are hopping off the market at our Orchards neighborhoods — and that means construction, construction, construction!

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

1	M	2	A	3	N	4	I	5	L	6	A		7	R	8	O	9	M			10	T	11	A	12	L	13	C
14	A	B	A	T	E	S							15	A	R	A				16	E	L	I	A				
17	B	O	N	S	A	I							18	S	A	G				19	E	L	E	M				
					20	A	F	F	21	E	C	T	I	O	N	A	T	E										
23	R	24	A	25	L	L	Y		26	T	A	E			27	I	S	T	O	O								
28	A	T	O	I				29	N	O	L			30	S	L	Y											
31	B	A	S	E		32	N	J	I				33	R	T	E				34	I	S	A					
37	A	R	E			38	A	O	L				39	E	A	R				40	L	E	U					
41	T	I	S			42	P	R	E				43	F	I	S		44	H	I	N	G						
					45	R	I	D			46	M	I	D			47	E	A	S	E							
48	E	49	S	50	T	E	E		51	I	A	L			52	E	I	D	E	R								
53	D	I	S	G	R			54	U	N	T	L		55	I	N	G											
56	G	N	A	R				57	S	T	U			58	S	A	H	A	60	R	A							
62	A	C	R	E				63	E	R	R			64	A	T	T	H	A	T								
65	R	E	S	T				66	D	O	E			67	N	E	S	S	I	E								

The LAST Single Family Home at Brannon Oak Underway





11660 Alpharetta Hwy
Suite 515
Roswell, GA 30076

Presorted Std
US Postage
PAID
Mailed From Zip 30304
Permit # 6849

RESALES & LISTINGS...



FOR SALE

Orchards of Roswell. 3901 Village Lane. Two-bedroom Abbey floor plan with a great location in the community. A lovely home with hardwoods throughout. Chef's kitchen has extra cabinets for storage. Current owners love to spend their mornings in their bright sunroom.

Orchards of Sugarloaf Parc. Villa 702. Canterbury floor plan with a den conversion. Hardwoods in all living areas. Warm cherry cabinets in kitchen, laundry room and bathrooms. This home features granite countertops in baths and Silestone countertops in the kitchen. Move in ready!

Harris Orchards of Duluth. 3061 Orchard Ridge. A three-bedroom Chateau floor plan. This home has fresh paint and new carpet. A great courtyard area for outdoor living and entertaining. Located close to Clubhouse.

SOLD

Sold - 2200 Village Lane

Sold - 2601 Village Lane

Sold - 3803 Village Lane

Sold - 1904 Village Lane

Sold - 2237 Orchard Place

UNDER CONTRACT

Under Contract - 1702 Village Lane

Under Contract - 1705 Sweet Apple Circle

Attention Homeowners! I have people calling daily looking for The Orchards Group homes. If you would like to sell your Orchards home, please give me a call!

DEAR FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS,



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

What a great summer to have had a house on the market in The Orchards. Homes are selling quickly and for more money than in the recent past. Inventory is at an all-time low. I get calls daily inquiring about future homes coming on the market. So now is a GREAT time to put your home on the market.

Interest rates are hovering at about 4.5%. Low inventory in The Orchards communities means it's a seller's market. It's an ideal time to sell your Orchards home.

According to several recent articles on Bizjournal.com, statistics are reflecting high buyer motivation and confidence in the market. The positive momentum is not expected to slow down. We are looking for an exciting and busy fall season.

If you are thinking of putting your home on the market, as always, here are some tips to prepare your home to sell for top dollar.

1. Clean, clean and clean. Do not let your home be remembered as the messy home with cobwebs.
2. If your paint is tired, freshen up with neutral beige. Something with a little pop.
3. If your flooring is old and stained, clean. If that does not work, replace them. No one wants to move in to a home with old worn carpets.
4. Replace any fogged or broken windows. They will be noted in the inspections so you might as well enjoy the bright new windows. Some of your windows are under warranty. If you have any questions, call me.
5. Clean off all counters in the bathroom and kitchens.
6. Closets should be half full. Pack all those things away.
7. Buyers want a move in ready home. Take care of all your repairs.

Call me for a free market analysis to estimate the value of your home in this wonderful sellers' market.

Geri Beckmann, Orchards' Resale Specialist

404-290-2330 Direct, 678-795-0200

gbeckmann@orchardsgroup.com

Visit my website www.orchardsgroup.com/resale/

Special Offer to New Orchards Customers. If you are interested in one of our two currently marketed The Orchards neighborhoods and have a home to sell that is NOT currently on the market, contact me immediately to discuss our Special Listing Incentive Program designed for sellers just like you. **Call today: 404-290-2330.**