

Michael Saunders & Company

Licensed Real Estate Broker

Exceptional People & Properties



Reprinted from the company's special section in the Sarasota Herald Tribune — December 30, 2007

Annus Mirabilis

When the clock strikes twelve on December 31st, people the world over will cheer wildly and toast the New Year. For some, this event is little more than a hiccup on the calendar. For others—including us—every New Year symbolizes the promise of much better things to come.

To borrow a phrase from Queen Elizabeth, the past year was an “annus horribilus” (horrible year) for the real estate industry. But just as surely as Dec. 31 gives way to Jan 1, we have every reason to believe that 2008 will mark the beginning of the return to normal that comes after every downturn in the market. No, 2008 won't reprise the buying spree that marked the boom years of 2004 and 2005; but neither will we be at the lowest arc in the cycle craning our necks to see daylight. Been there, done that.

Happily, ours has been among the first markets in Florida to feel the first stirrings of a sustained recovery. This is no accident of luck. It has largely been the result of steps taken early-on to proactively address the new realities of pricing a home for sale that arose when the market became saturated with inventory. Indeed, we take tremendous pride in watching as the actions we took are now being studied and emulated by other markets throughout the Sunshine State.

2008 will be another year in which we continue to do all that is necessary to guide our clients to the timely realization of their real estate goals. This means we will continue to advise our sellers to price their homes with absolute correctness in order to meet their competition head on. This also means that buyers can now move forward with great confidence and comfort, knowing that inventories and prices are exhibiting stability.

Meanwhile in the past year, consumer usage of the Internet to search for real estate has risen

again—this time to 88 percent. With great anticipation we look forward to a New Year in which we deepen our leadership position in showcasing properties on-line with the market's broadest reach and most complete information. Further, we pledge to leave no stone unturned in our efforts to add still more sites to the number of appropriate, content-rich Web sites upon which we already upload our listings.

One of the most rewarding aspects of selling residential properties in Sarasota-Bradenton-Venice is that in this—or any other year—“paradise” sells itself in so many different ways. Year after year, we wind up topping many of the “Best of the Best” lists compiled by various members of the national media. In the final week of 2007 alone, Sarasota was awarded the eighth position on the top ten list of “Boom Towns” by *Inc. Magazine*, and second place among “Best Places to Grow a Small Business” by *American City Business Journals*. This was just a week after Sarasota County's Pine View School, a public school for gifted students, was named fourth best high school in America by *U.S. News & World Report*.

So even if 2007 was widely considered an “annus horribilus” for the nation's real estate industry, we will also dub it an “annus mirabilis”—a year of wonders—for our own ability to rise to the occasion, marshal our resources, and guide our clients through it. With 2008 just hours away, we extend best wishes for a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year and give thanks that ours is such a remarkable and resilient place to live.

What's Your Opinion?

Log on to our blog at michaelsaunders.com to share your perspective on a range of topics.
