

# homefront

A HOMEOWNER NEWSLETTER FROM DON STODDART, AGENT # M08002829

News and views...  
from our house  
to yours



FALL 2010

## Our debt situation is scary, but true!



The past few years have been difficult, with an uncertain economic environment that included job losses across many different sectors. Many of us have been putting in longer hours at work and have made adjustments to our personal lifestyles to make ends meet.

Over the last six months we have spent a lot of time with our customers helping them to understand their mortgage plan and how it fits into their lifestyle. Many of you looked at the "10 Going-Forward Recommendations" that I made in our last newsletter and have taken advantage of them. Thank you for your continuing support and trust in our service. We truly do care.

The real estate market has slowed and looks like it may remain this way for the near future. Although this may seem to be bad news, it is in fact good news. Having stability in the market will benefit the great majority of homeowners. With today's low interest rates, you are starting to pay off some of the principal on your mortgage and building what I refer to as 'sweat equity'. I had a chance to meet with Avery Shenfeld with CIBC, one of Canada's renowned economists, who made this statement:

**“Unprecedented Debt Accumulation  
During the Recession for Canadians”**

When I questioned him further, he explained that the average debt per Canadian was almost one-and-a-half times more than their earned income per year, the highest of the industrialized countries. I found this to be amazing because Canadian's are usually known to be debt adverse. So what does this tell us? To me, it speaks volumes that we were not nearly as affected with the subprime market crash as the rest of the world. Canadians understood there were problems but used the resulting lower cost of money to purchase big ticket items.

So where does this leave us now? Certainly no need for panic. Rates remain low and overall equity in the housing market is strong. We do however need to re-look at our spending habits before it causes us major issues, and start to focus on reducing our debts. Interest rates tied into prime have started to slowly climb so we need to keep that in mind.

No one can truly predict interest rates and be right 100% of the time, but if you happened to be one of these people who may have over indulged in your spending and are carrying too much credit card or line of credit debt, you may want to take the time to revisit our mortgage/life plan. We may need to consolidate your debt and start reducing the overall amount you owe to protect you and your family in the future. So please if you need help give us a call.

If you find your finances are in good order, let's start taking advantage of our prepayment privileges, which could result in thousands of dollars in savings and allow you to retire sooner.

## From the Heart

2010 has been a great year for the Stoddart family. On August 13 Deb and I celebrated our 27th wedding anniversary. I overheard her telling one of her friends that it has been the best 22 years of her life. I was very happy that I have an 81% approval rating!

Our oldest daughter Raine continue to impress us at University and on Ficelle, her horse. Most recently, Raine and Ficelle placed first at the Will 'O' Winds Event. But more importantly, she received acceptance to the Ontario Veterinary College at Guelph University. This means an additional four years of University on top of the three she has already completed. So although I am extremely proud, I will also be very broke, so please feel free to refer friends; I will not be retiring for a while.

Brooke's dream of playing hockey for her country continues to live on. Brooke and her teammates brought home the Gold Medal from the Ontario Games. Brooke and Deb once again crossed the pond to play hockey, travelling to Hungary, Austria and Italy. Brooke recently came back from the States where she was once again named as a first team all star at the North American Prospects Tournament. She will be playing for the Brampton Canadette's Jr Thunder team this year, breaking into the league as a 15 year old rookie when the players can play until 22.

I've been coaching in the Brampton Canadettes girls hockey league for the last 10 years as both a coach and helping the league in various capacities, which has been an extremely rewarding experience. There are so many

*cont'd on reverse*

## From the Heart (cont'd)



wonderful aspects of sports that really benefit our kids – commitment, dedication, teamwork, respect, exercise, keeping busy, among others. It's been a great way to give back to the Brampton community. This year the

Canadettes raised money for a scholarship program that for 2010 included 12 post-secondary scholarships and 18 RESP contributions. I helped with fundraising and donated two of the post-secondary scholarships. At the first-ever scholarship banquet, four of the players I had the privilege to coach received scholarship awards. Congratulations to (from left in the picture) Jennifer Farrow (Queen's), Katie Doherty (Laurier), Caitlin Terry (Windsor), and Michelle Moon (Guelph). Ladies I love you all, you made us all very proud, please keep in touch, I will truly miss you.

Coach Don

## Raving Fans

**Robert Rutledge**  
of Al's Barber Shop/Salon  
247 Queen St. W., Brampton, ON L6Y 1M7  
**905-457-6611**

Rob purchased Al's Barbershop, the oldest Barber Shop in Brampton, just over 15 years ago and recently moved to a new location on 247 Queen St. When you drop in, it's like visiting the mayor's office. You are always running into the who's who of Brampton and finding out what is happening around our fine town. Rob is truly a community person and supports two great charities – The Lucas Foundation in the summer and Adopt a Dog in the winter. I am not sure if they wrote the book "The Wealthy Barber" about Rob, but if wealth was measured in friendship and community support, Rob would be a millionaire. If you are looking for a great place to have a chat or a coffee, stop in and see Rob; he might even have time to cut your hair.



*Talk to us today, especially if any of the following apply:*

- You wonder if you can tap into some of your equity for a special renovation project to upgrade your home;
- You're concerned with rising rates, whether to lock in or even break your mortgage to take advantage of today's amazing rates;
- You may have to deal with a downturn in income sometime this year or you have a large expense looming;
- You're carrying too much credit card or other high-interest debt that is eating away at your monthly cashflow and you are interested in consolidating this debt into your mortgage so you can pay less each month.

### Referral Program Reminder

In our ongoing effort to say "Thank You", every time you refer a client I will send you a gift certificate to your favourite store or restaurant. This way, you can have dinner on us, or get something special for yourself. Or I can make a donation to your favorite charity, sports team or youth organization. It's up to you. And for your referral, there is no pressure, and no obligation. But whether they need a new mortgage, are renewing an existing one, or just want a frank assessment of their financial options, we're honoured to help. Referrals are the sincerest compliments we can get. Thank you!

**Don Stoddart**

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