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So, doctor, where is the real estate market headed?

BY CATE FITZPATRICK
cfitzpatrick@islandpacket.com

As discursive as much of the nation is today, one thing the majority of Americans can agree on is what constitutes the American Dream.

“Even though we face a 50-year low in homeownership rate, the vast majority of Americans — 80 percent — still consider owning a home as part of the American Dream,” said Dr. Lawrence Yun, chief economist and senior vice president of research



Yun

for the National Association of Realtors.

Yun, who directs research activity for the association and regularly provides commentary on real estate market trends, was the keynote speaker last week at the Hilton Head Beach and Tennis Resort. His presentation Oct. 30 about housing and economic trends was a kick off to the Hilton Head Area Association of Realtor's 12th annual Realtor Affiliate Expo.

Yun shared his impressions on the housing market — both local and national — and where it's headed.

Q: How does our market compare to what's happening nationally?

A: Local market statistics are very similar to what's happening in similar markets across the country, and I think the long-term prospects for the area are really good. Home sales are up modestly in the Hilton Head area, which is on par with the national average.

Q: What insight can you offer about Hilton Head's long-term prospects?

A: Market conditions have been improving and the long-term prospects for Hilton Head are positive. There will be the baby boomers who will be shopping for homes and there's also the potential for increased economic activity from the new port (the Jasper Ocean Terminal) along the river between Savannah and Hilton Head.

SEE MARKET, 7D

HILTON HEAD AREA HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

Matt Bader named 2017 Premier Builder of the Year

BY MEG JAMES
Hilton Head Area Home Builders Association

The Hilton Head Area Home Builders Association named its 2017 Premier Builder of the Year during the 18th annual LightHouse Awards ceremony Oct. 27 at the Hilton Head Marriott Resort & Spa.

First introduced in 2012, the award is presented to one Premier Builder Program participant who not only meets the program requirements, but takes “doing business with a member” to another level.

This year's award was

presented to Matt Bader of Full Circle Development.

Bader has been an active member of the Home Builders Association for more than 10 years and has served multiple terms as a builder director on the association's Board of Directors.

Bader lives up to the commitment of being an association Premier Builder, and encourages his staff and fellow builder members to strive for the same. He advocates, participates and supports all aspects of the association including preserving the integrity of

SEE BUILDER, 2D



ROB KAUFMAN Submitted

Matt Bader of Full Circle Development was named the 2017 Premier Builder of the Year by the Hilton Head Area Home Builders Association.

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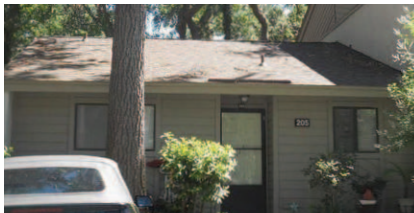
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Master Gardeners volunteer across Beaufort County



BY LAURA LEE ROSE
lrose@clemson.edu

Knowledgeable volunteers assist local Clemson Extension agents and office staff by providing research-based information to homeowners and residents. Plant clinics and workshops are staffed by certified Master Gardeners and interns who obtain continuing education by doing research while giving back to the community. Beaufort County Master Gardeners report more than 5,000 hours of community and educational service annually.

Do you need to bring in a soil test to check pH and soil fertility on your property before purchasing fertilizers? When is the right time to put out fertilizer? Are you worried about lawn pests and diseases? Would you like help with a school or home garden? Do you need help with landscaping in the Lowcountry? These are just a few of the many questions and problems Beaufort County Master Gardeners can help with.

SOIL TESTS

Climate and soils can be challenging to folks moving to the coastal south from other growing regions, but a \$6 soil test can help. The tests are submitted to the Agricultural Laboratory and offer recommendations on lime and fertilization.

PLANT CLINIC

New residents may be unfamiliar with our area's plant materials or warm-season grasses that have different requirements than those grown farther north. If a homeowner is experiencing a problem with turf or ornamental plants, the Plant Problem Clinic can help. Samples are examined by specialists, and for \$10, clients can receive a



Master Gardener volunteers and budding gardeners have fun with plants during a Family Fun Day event at Honey Horn recently.

diagnosis and recommendations for treatment. The clinic offers additional tests including weed and insect identification, irrigation water tests, aquaculture ponds, orchard leaf, and feed and forage analysis.

The Hilton Head Plant Clinic is held from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays at the South Beaufort County Government office, 539 William Hilton Parkway, Hilton Head Island. The clinic has forms and collection bags for submissions. Cash or check only.

VOLUNTEER WORK

Master Gardeners volunteer to help others become successful gardeners in many ways. They “coach” teachers and students in school vegetable gardens, weed and plant public ornamental gardens, speak to civic and environmental groups, and serve on community boards.

Master Gardeners have also organized the award-winning Lunch and Learn program, which brings garden speakers and demonstrations to the Port Royal Farmers Market on Saturdays.

The Lowcountry Master Gardener Association's fundraiser, Rent a Master Gardener, provides home visits by a team of Master Gardeners and interns. The team makes recommendations on specific problems and offers suggestions

about plant materials for your landscape. Proceeds from this program have gone toward Clemson University scholarships for area students studying horticulture or natural resources, in addition to funding other local programs.

Volunteers also have a presence each Thursday at the Bluffton Farmers Market. Master Gardeners are on hand to answer questions and distribute brochures on gardening, landscaping, water quality topics, and to help raise environmental awareness.

To learn more about Master Gardeners and their work, go to www.lowcountrymastergardeners.org or www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic. The Beaufort Extension office, 18 John Galt Road, Beaufort, is open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday. 843-255-6060.

Laura Lee Rose is the Consumer Horticulture Agent and Master Gardener Coordinator for the Beaufort County Clemson Extension Service. Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.



Master Gardener volunteers work on a Habitat House in Seabrook.

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FROM PAGE 1D BUILDER

the Premier Builder Program. Bader is commended for stewarding recruited members through new membership to their renewals each year.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Premier Builder Program recognizes builders who first look to fellow HBA members when building or remodeling a home.

Builders must apply to the program and provide a listing of all subcontractors, suppliers and industry

professionals who have contributed to their projects over a year's time. To be approved, at least 80 percent of the builder member's subcontractor and suppliers list must be members of the HBA.

In addition, the builder must attend at least one HBA event or meeting per quarter, actively recruit at least two new members to the HBA each year, and complete at least six hours of industry-related continuing education.

Eight HBA builder mem-

bers hold the designation of Premier Builder for 2017-18 including Allen Patterson of Allen Patterson Residential; Ben Kennedy of Brighton Builders; Brian Esposito of Esposito Construction; Matt Bader of Full Circle Development; Dave Gaal of Gaal Custom Homes & Remodeling; Randy Jeffcoat of Randy Jeffcoat Builders; Ron & Patricia Strimpfel of Reclamation By Design; and Richard Creamer of Reminiscent Homes.

Meg James is the executive officer of the Hilton Head Area Home Builders Association.

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