

Buyers, are you late?

Have you ever missed the bus? A flight? Or the start of a movie? Ever had a hard time getting out of bed on a cold, dark morning so you lay there under the covers until the very last minute, then you were angry at yourself because you were late for work? Do you sometimes kick yourself because you wish you had gotten ready sooner and been more prepared? Personal suggestion . . . don't ever be late to a potluck dinner or you'll be sorry.

We all know what it's like to be late. There's that feeling of being rushed, hurried, stressed, and when you finally arrive at your destination, you're frazzled and it takes a while to get into the groove with those who arrived before you.

Buyers, you are late. But that's OK. The party is still going on, and you have time to get it together.

What am I talking about? The market is slow, right? Now is not the time to get involved in real estate, or so you've heard.

Au contraire, my friends. Now is a great time to jump into the world of real estate. Interest rates are low, and mortgage companies continue to offer all kinds of programs to get buyers into homes for zero down or a small percentage down. The best news of all is that there are tons of choices of homes on the market, prices are reasonable, and sellers are offering incentives to get buyers in the door.

The market is especially attractive to buyers who don't have a home to sell, such as first-time buyers or investors. It's also a good plan to hold on to the property you purchase for a little while, so that



**CLAUDIA
STALLINGS**
Homework

when the market changes again, you'll be poised to make the most of your investment.

If you have a decent credit score and haven't racked up too much monthly debt, then many financing options are available to you. For those of you who are renting, now may be the right time to get into a place of your

own. For those of you who are thinking about buying a property and renting it out, it is likely that the rental market will start to increase, as those who can't afford to buy right now (because the sub-prime loans have disappeared) are choosing to rent.

Just a few months ago, buyers were in battle with each other over listings, and there was a race to submit offers on homes in the area. Sellers' agents often had the joy of

presenting their sellers with multiple offers, resulting in sales over and above the home's asking price. With the real estate seesaw tipping back to the buyers' side, it's now time for buyers to take action.

Just because sellers say it's cold out there doesn't mean it's not a beautiful day for buyers. So get out from under the covers, call your mortgage lender and real estate agent and go house shopping while the choices are plentiful. And don't be late because, like a good potluck dinner, the best choices will soon be gone.

Claudia Stallings is a real estate agent with Coldwell Banker Wallace & Wallace Realtors®. She is a seniors real estate specialist and has 15 years of experience in advertising, marketing and promotion. She can be contacted at 865-966-1111, via e-mail at LetMeDoYourHOMEWork@charter.net or on the Web at www.LetMeDoYourHOMEWork.com.