

**M**y oldest son, a seventh-grader, took a couple of years of piano lessons at the insistence of his father and me, but, with more defeats than victories, it was mutually determined that perhaps a different musical instrument he could choose on his own would be more to his liking. This year, he asked (several times) to learn how to play bagpipes.

Bagpipes? Is there such thing as bagpipe lessons? Yes, and as a new member of the Knoxville Pipes and Drums, he is anxiously looking forward to the time when he, too, will be accomplished enough to play and march with the group and wear the uniform, complete with a kilt. Inspired by a bit of Scottish heritage from his great-grandmother, he is driven to succeed with this instrument. I'll support his choice whole-heartedly, even though I never would have thought to suggest bagpipe lessons myself. Hey, it's his choice.

The same thing happens with buyers of houses. I can take buyers to several different houses, and they'll

## Final decision belongs to the buyer

usually ask, "Well, which house do you think is the best choice?" I provide my clients with the information they need to make a well-informed decision, such as comparing asking price to other similar homes that have sold in the same neighborhood, helping them talk through their family's needs to determine if one house works better for them than another, and helping them compare the features of each home. I cannot choose the house for them. Hey, it's their choice.

Choose the house for them? Imagine that! If only I could choose all of my buyers' homes for them, I'd save a lot of time, effort and gasoline. However, if I had been doing that the whole time I've been in the business of real estate, some of my clients would be in very different houses, than the ones they ultimately chose.

It's kind of like choosing the



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piano for my son. It just wasn't the right choice for him. He had to find that on his own. Buyers have to decide themselves which house is the best house for them.

My son relied on me to do the necessary research and to help make his bagpipe lessons a reality, and buyers should rely on their real estate agent for the tools

they need to make purchasing a home a reality. Does the home meet the physical needs of the buyer? Is the asking price reasonable based on comparable properties? Does the home fall within the buyer's budget? Will the home be available to move into when the buyer is ready?

Making a choice can be difficult, even with lots of information. In fact, sometimes there can be too much information, which can hamper the buyer's ability to choose. Some buyers house hunt for months, unable to

decide on anything for fear something better may come on the market. Some buyers may find a house that they love but have a difficult time choosing whether the emotional pull of the property outweighs what the price statistics say, so they are unable to make a choice.

Use your Realtor to help you decide on the home you will purchase. However, the choice is ultimately yours, and yours alone. The best choice is usually made when the decision is based on both the practical side (statistics) and the emotional side (the house just "feels" right). Bagpipes or bugle? Piano or pennywhistle? Bonus room or bedroom? Two-story or townhouse? Hey, it's your choice.

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