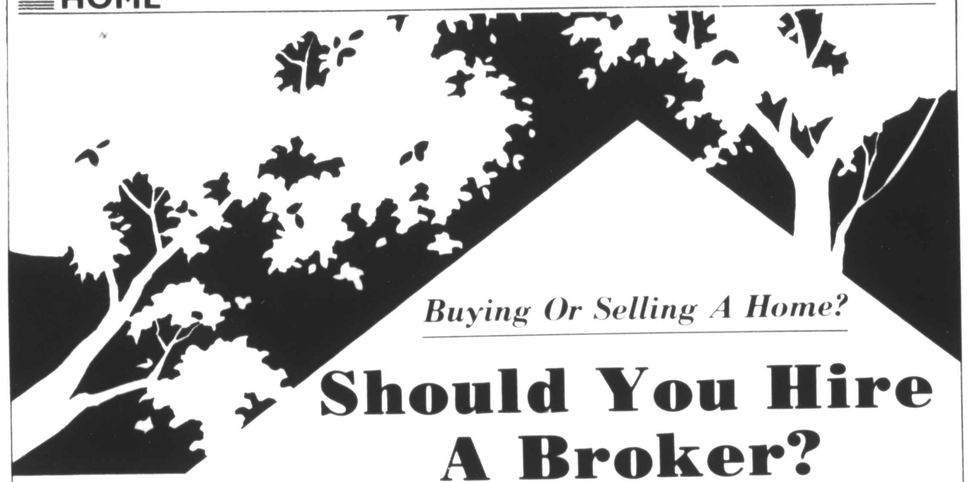

Buying Or Selling A Home?

Should You Hire A Broker?

Part II of II
By Ed Julian

If you plan to buy a home with the help of a real estate broker, be sure to discuss the following information with the agent:

Who does the broker legally represent?—The buyer, seller, or both?

There are times when a real estate broker may represent both the home buyer and seller. If you want to be sure the broker represents just you, you should obtain a written agreement or letter from your agent specifying this pertinent information.

Just who the broker is "beholden" to is important. For example, if a broker also represents the seller, he or she is obligated to secure the highest possible price for the seller and therefore may not be able to advise you - the buyer - what the approximate lower price the seller may be willing to accept.

If you, the home buyer, tell a broker the "top price" you are willing to pay for a house without having an agreement of confidentiality, such information might be passed on to the seller without your knowledge or approval.

The possible result? The seller asking for that higher price and you winding up paying more than you otherwise might have paid.

Will You Agree to represent me as a "Buyer's Broker?

Some brokers specialize in representing only buyers. Having a buyer's broker offers you several advantages. A buyer's broker may be more motivated to spot defects in a home you are considering.

He or she may be able to get more favorable purchasing terms. A buyer's broker can legally share in the commission paid by the seller as long as you, the home buyer, the home seller and the seller's broker agree to this.

Buyer's brokers usually are listed in the yellow pages. Some also advertise in newspapers.

Special Benefits or Discounts

Whether you are buying or selling a home, you may want to consider looking for brokers who offer special benefits. These may include discounts for home furnishings, home repairs, moving services, rental cars, motels, air travel, actual cash bonuses, or a promise to buy your home if it is not sold within a certain period of time.

Complaints

All real estate agents or brokers must be licensed by the state or states in which they do business. Complaints can be filed with the state licensing or regulatory agency.

This usually is the Real Estate Commission or the Department or Division of Real Estate. Contact your local consumer protection agency if you need help in contacting the licensing authority.

Complaints about a "realtor," a registered title limited to people who are members of the National Association of Realtors, also may be taken to any of the 1,800 local Boards of Realtors.

These boards have standard grievances committees for handling consumer complaints. The National Association of Realtors is headquartered at 777 14th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. The telephone number is (202) 283-1000.

Ed Julian is a Massachusetts based free-lance writer.

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The more athletic tank top and biker short styled swimwear in spandex and lycra works well for general frolicking in sand and surf.

The new wave of neoprene type wet suits and accessories fill the bill for surfing, scuba diving and windsurfing.

Neoprene has evolved from the basic wetsuit to shorts, tank tops and even bikinis for women.

There are not enough hours in the day to experience all of the activities the Bahamas have to offer.

There are not enough days in a lifetime to absorb the full aesthetic appeal of the islands.

Day or night, fun in the sun or romantic notions beneath the stars, the Bahamas is paradise found.

(Above) Beneath the archways of Divi Beach Resorts, Catherine and Yvonne Pratt, Miss Divi Beach, Bahamas, wear matching black and white, giraffe print bikinis of lycra and nylon. Candace is wearing an exclusive design by Lynne R. Dixon-Speller, a monokini with criss-cross top and a very french cut bottom of lycra and nylon.

(Bottom, left) Wind power. Candace and Catherine prepare to catch a wave or two at Divi Beach on a windsurfer provided by Divi Beach Resorts.

(Bottom, middle) Native sun. Miss Divi Beach Bahamas. Yvonne Pratt is wearing a colorful, two-piece swimsuit with a modest hi-rise brief bottom and bandeau top of nylon and lycra.

(Bottom, right) Catherine and Candace work the surf in neoprene wetsuits provided by Divi Beach Resorts.

Photos by P.A. Greene