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A Note from Ann:

We've navigated droughts, floods, hurricanes, ghosts & goblins and are heading into the Holiday Season! Wow, where did the year go?! I hope everyone is enjoying the cooler weather! This month I'd like to talk about the Intermediary Relationship status of a real estate agent.

What is an Intermediary?

An intermediary status would be obtained if the agent represented both the Buyer and the Seller. It would also occur if 2 agents working for the same broker had a deal on the same house (ie: one works with the buyer and one works with the seller) - in this case both parties have an agent representing them; so we will focus on the first situation - one agent, 2 parties to the transaction.

In Texas it is legal to represent both sides of the transaction, so long as the agent stays in compliance with the laws regarding Intermediary Relationships. The rules state the agent must:

- Obtain a written agreement of each party to the transaction (Intermediary Relationship Form)
- Must treat all parties fairly and impartially
- Must not disclose the confidential information of either side (ie: that the seller will accept less or the buyer will pay more)
- Must not disclose any other information that is specifically instructed by either party in writing (unless required to do so by law)



Happy Thanksgiving

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If the agent walks this fine line, and carefully handles the transaction, intermediary status is fine. The agent is basically required to stay mute in the negotiation arena, not giving advice to either party. So the only time this would be advisable is if the parties were well versed in the process. Meaning, both parties need to be experienced buyers/sellers. The buyers have to present an offer and the sellers have to accept or counter without any advice from the agent, as the agent knows too much. At this point they are just a facilitator doing the paperwork for each side. If this hoop is jumped through, the rest of the transaction pretty much proceeds as normal, with the agent taking caution with their actions and advice throughout.

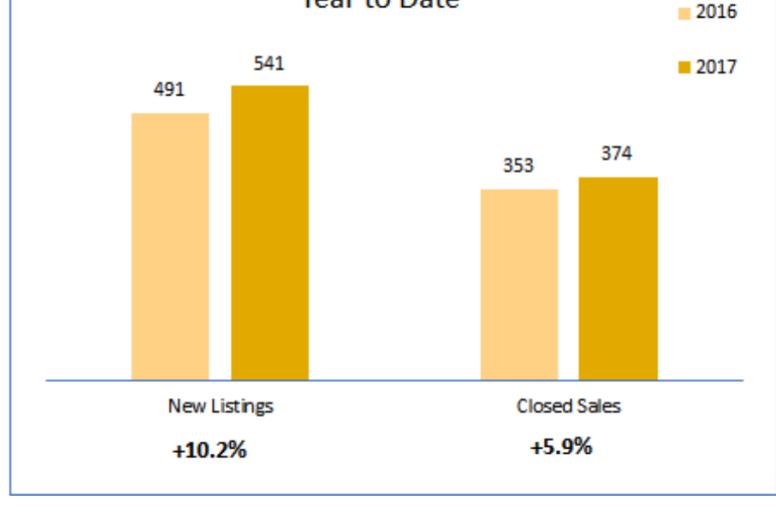
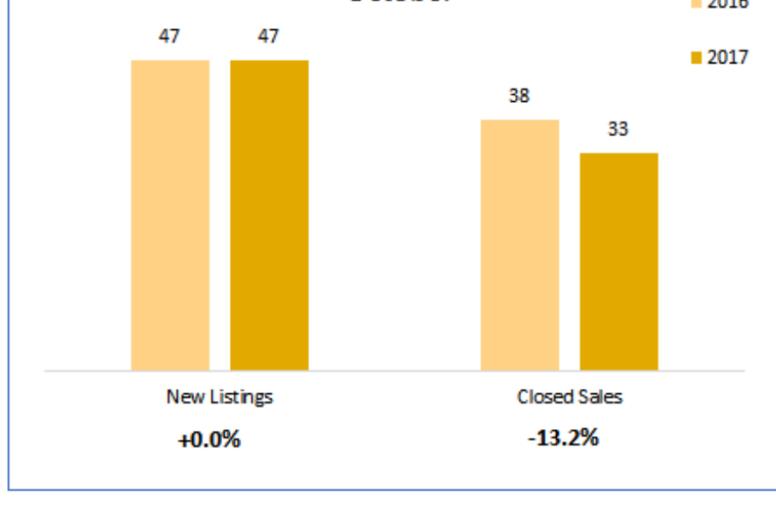
The other possibility is for the buyers to be appointed another agent, or they can choose to go unrepresented. With buyer's representation being free to the buyers, I don't understand why buyers wouldn't want someone looking out for their best interests. However, it does happen and I've done them. Many unknowing buyers think that by going through the listing agent, they can save some money as they're not having to pay another agent - this couldn't be farther from the truth in most cases. The broker's fee is negotiated in the listing agreement, long before a buyer is found and the seller has already signed a legal contract stating they will pay "X" to the respective agents. A buyer nor a buyer's agent is able to change this contract - so you're not going to save any money for you or the seller, the list agent will just happily accept commission for both sides of the transaction.

View the [Intermediary Relationship](#) form through the link provided, that explains what I have tried to put in a nutshell.

I hope this makes you a more informed consumer! Let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything I can do to help! Until then, Happy Fall!

Bastrop Area Monthly Statistics

Below are the current statistics for the Bastrop Area. The average home sale price for October was \$217,315, which is down 0.2% from the previous year. The average home sale price for 2017, so far, is \$213,507 which is up +6.9% from 2016.



Around Town

Upcoming Events

November 10th-11th - Bastrop Veteran's Day Celebration and Classic Car Show

Friday is the Friday Night Cruise In Car Show on Main Street. Saturday is the Veterans March & Tribute Ceremony and Car Show, along with a silent auction, raffle, and live auction. For more information, [click here](#).

November 11th - Smithville Airing of the Quilts & Garden Club Home Tour

Come take a walk along our historic Main St, view the beautiful quilts that are hung on Main St and all around town. Shop the vendors and get a bite to eat at one of our local restaurants. Also, take the Historic Home Tour sponsored by the Smithville Garden Club. For more information, [click here](#).

Kill the Clutter

There's a reason REALTORS® always advise home sellers to remove all clutter when selling their homes: The difference is remarkable.

The clutter-free home often looks like a new one entirely, and homeowners even wonder how their home could look that good.



You don't have to wait to sell your home to make it look better. Plus, decluttering physically and mentally stress us out. By breaking your clutter down into five-minute sessions, you can slowly conquer your clutter. Leo Babauta of Zen Habits offers some ways to start:

- Designate a spot for incoming papers, and don't put them anywhere but that spot until you can sort and file them.
- Clear one area and designate it your "no-clutter" zone. There is one rule for that area: Nothing can be placed there that's not actually in use. Everything must be put away. Once you have that, expand to more areas.
- Pick up five things and find places for them. These should be things you actually use, but which don't have a good spot to live.
- Pull everything out of a drawer, evaluate it and sort it into three piles: stuff that really goes in the drawer, stuff that belongs elsewhere and stuff to ditch.
- Create a "maybe" box. When you're organizing, you often know exactly which items you want to keep and which you can trash or donate. But sometimes there are items you can't trash, and yet you're not sure what to do with them. Put them in the "maybe" box and pull it out every six months to re-evaluate.
- Keep it going: After you've decluttered, don't get tempted to buy new things. Instead, create a 30-day list and put any non-essential items you want to buy on it along with the date. If an item has sat on the list for 30 days and you still want to buy it, you can.



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