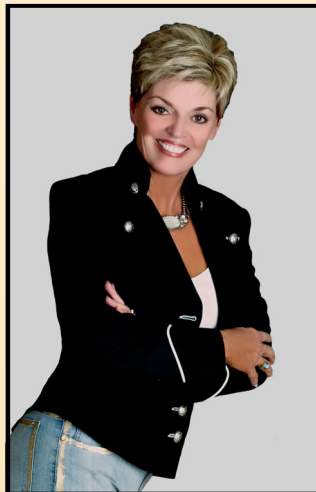




August, 2009

[www.PeggyRauchGroup.com](http://www.PeggyRauchGroup.com)



I appreciate the many kind words and "office warming" gifts that so many of you sent. Thank you!!!

We held an open house on July 28th and were thrilled with the turnout. Over 200 clients and industry friends. I had so much fun talking with everyone that I told Michael we should open another office—he just rolled his eyes.

I am pleased to announce that a few people have already joined our group. **Jodi Swan, Gretchen Marquez and Santina Harmon** are now a part of "The Peggy Rauch Group" and we are honored that

they have chosen to work with us.

If you're ever in our neighborhood (Scottsdale Road & Indian Bend) please stop in for a visit, we'd love to give you a tour.

## MOVIE REVIEW

You don't have to be a "foodie" to appreciate **Julie & Julia** but if you are you will appreciate it even more.

It is about a young women in New York, once voted *most likely to succeed as a writer* by her friends. Unfortunately she finds herself turning 30 and feels the desperate need to finally finish something.

Her *something* is to cook all 524 recipes in Julia Child's **Mastering the Art of French Cooking** cookbook in a year and share her experiences in a blog. In doing so, she "channels" Julia wonderfully.

The flashbacks of Julia Child's transition from wife of an American French Embassy official to the food expert we know her as are hilariously and wonderfully played by Meryl Streep—some say Oscar worthy. Amy Adams as the young writer/chef/ blogger holds her own onscreen against Streep.

This is definitely an "up" movie. If you're anything like us you too will follow the movie with a trip to your favorite place for bruschetta and a glass of wine. **ENJOY!!!**



## BOOK REVIEW

I have previously recommended a **Lee Child's** novel and I am not accustomed to reviewing another book by the same author (*unless I like it or feel like it!*) but - on the off chance you missed the first one and thus, have not become a Lee Child's fan, I offer this.

The "**Hard Way**" is another of Child's action packed thrillers featuring the magnetic, Jack Reacher. There is tons of engrossing action, evil bad guys and Jack's "Take no Prisoners" style.

The story is about an ex army officer, Edward Lewis who enlists Reacher to help find his wife and daughter who have been kidnapped without involving the police. This is definitely not your typical kidnap story. It is well written and well thought out. The dialogue is excellent and the characters well drawn.

I'm sure after reading this you will be hooked on Lee Child's and his Jack Reacher character. As an author, many have referred to Child as a National Treasure



## TRIVIA

Oh, I just love these!!!! Answers below. Don't cheat!!!!

1. How long did the 100 Years War last?
2. Which country makes Panama hats?
3. From which animal do we get cat gut?
4. In which month do the Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
5. What is a camel's hair brush made of?
6. The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
7. What was King George VI's first name?
8. What color is a purple finch?
9. Where are Chinese gooseberries from?
10. What is the color of the "Black box" in a commercial airplane?



Too easy??!!! Well here are the answers . . .

- |                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. 116 years      | 2. Ecuador  |
| 3. Sheep & Horses | 4. November |
| 5. Squirrel fur   | 6. Dogs     |
| 7. Albert         | 8. Crimson  |
| 9. New Zealand    | 10. Orange  |

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## Fudge Brownie Trifle

Now that summer is drawing to a close, we all think about entertaining more so I decided to share a great dessert recipe. This one is simply spectacular and always gets rave reviews and requests for encores.

- ◆ 1 package Betty Crocker fudge brownie mix
  - ◆ 1/4 cup water
  - ◆ 1/2 cup vegetable oil
  - ◆ 2 eggs
  - ◆ 1 Tablespoon freeze-dried instant coffee (I hate coffee so I omit that)
  - ◆ 1 package (4 serving size) chocolate fudge instant pudding mix
  - ◆ 2 cups cold milk
  - ◆ 1 package English Toffee bits
  - ◆ 1 container frozen whipped topping, thawed
- ▶ Heat oven and grease bottom of 13x9 pan
  - ▶ Prepare brownie mix as directed. Stir coffee into batter and spread in pan.
  - ▶ Bake as directed
  - ▶ Cut brownies into 1" squares and place 1/2 of them in bottom of glass trifle bowl.
  - ▶ Prepare pudding mix and pour half over brownies.
  - ▶ Top with half of toffee and half whipped topping.
  - ▶ Repeat and cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours

## HOUSEHOLD TIPS

Has your energy bill got you hot under the collar? The best way to reduce your air conditioning bills this summer is to reduce heat in your home.

For instance, reserve heat-generating activities such as cooking, washing or drying clothes, and running the dishwasher for late evening or early morning, when it is cooler outside.

Install mini-blinds or solar film on your windows to cut down on the solar heat from the sun. Switch over to compact fluorescent light bulbs – not only do they use less energy, but they produce very little heat. Set the thermostat a few degrees higher – most people can be comfortable with a setting of 78-80 degrees Fahrenheit; plus, you'll save 7 percent to 10 percent of your cooling costs for each degree above 78!

Also, try using a ceiling fan or portable fan to supplement your air conditioning. A fan can make you feel three to four degrees cooler and only costs a half-cent per hour to operate.

**SAVE MONEY & STAY COOL!!!!**



## MARKET-UPDATE

Here's a quick summary of the year to-date and some considerations we should acknowledge as we look to the remainder of the year.



◆ Despite "sky is falling" fears put forth by many, the market is ever-so-slowly working at rebuilding itself this year.

◆ We are currently at 24,073 single family home listings. This is the lowest inventory since February of 2006 and 1/2 of what the inventory was at the peak in September, 2007.

◆ Total inventory including condos and townhomes is around 31,000. A few years ago everyone said "If we can only get back to an inventory of 35,000 units we would be back to normal." Well folks, we're there, it's just that "normal" doesn't always look the same.

◆ Closings have been very strong and we should surpass 2008 closings by the end of August. Leaving the last third of the year to underscore the positive direction of the Valley real estate market.

As we look backwards and forwards . . .

◆ The activity has been at the lower pricing levels. There simply isn't enough inventory to meet the under \$150K buyers.

◆ There will be a little bit of frenzy as first time buyers try to beat the deadline for the \$8,000 tax rebate.

◆ We are going to have a clash between buyers and sellers due to market indicators. Buyers will feel they should be able to continue to get lower prices, even for non-distressed properties, because of the short sale and REO properties. Sellers, particularly of non-distressed properties, will feel they have gone as low as they need to. This will be a contentious front for the remainder of the year.

◆ The continued release of bank owned properties, short sales and the lowering in price of other distressed properties will continue to skew the market.

◆ Determining fair market value will continue to be difficult due to the range in property conditions and new appraisal guidelines. This will hinder the closing of transactions even though willing buyers and sellers are involved.

◆ The political and economic markets will continue to give off mixed signals and misinterpret conditions because we truly are in a place "we've never been in before" and past models do not really offer clear answers.

Despite it all, just remember . . . There are great values in the market and a good value is always a good value!!!