



# OUR PROPERTY news

ISSUE FOUR | WINTER 2023



As the temperatures start to drop it reminds us that Christmas is right around the corner! The City has Main Street looking super festive and the Cornerstone front window is all decked out for the holidays, which can mean only one thing..... The Christmas House Walk is coming!

The Farmer City Genealogical and Historical Society is presenting the 2023 Christmas Housewalk on December 3rd from 1:00pm-4:00pm. The houses include:

- 301 N Lincoln - Mark & Christine Bane
- 23780 State Highway 54 - Star Williams
- 211 E Market St - Carrie Nausbaum
- 443 S Woodward Ave - Dean Scarbrough
- 217 S Main St - Merry on Main

The cost is \$10 per person and you can get your tickets by calling the Historical Society at 309-825-1196.

## 5 Energy Saving Tips That you might not know!

An El Niño weather pattern is in place for this winter, which could mean extreme cold and snow storms for many areas of the country this winter. But with energy costs on the rise, the last thing you want to do is to crank up the thermostat (as tempting as that may sound). Keep reading for some unique tips you might not have thought of to keep your energy expenses down this winter!

**1. Lower Your Thermostat** - It's a fact heating and cooling systems work harder in extreme conditions. For every degree you lower the temperature, you can save between 3% and 5% of energy costs. Even just turning down the thermostat during the night and throwing another blanket on your bed can lower your monthly bill! Smart Thermostats, or programmable thermostats, can greatly help in this area when it comes to setting your temperature to stay lower when you're not home and during the night.

**2. Lower Your Hot Water Heater** - Lowering the temperature down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit will keep it from working so hard but, since most appliances won't be affected by such a low setting, you're likely to not even notice the difference. The water heater will have to expend less cycles to keep the water warm, thus using less energy!

**3. Optimize Your Fridge and Freezer Temperatures** - If your fridge and freezer are at their coldest settings, you're using more energy than you need. Fridges can safely be set at 38 degrees F while freezers optimize at 5 degrees F.

**4. Wash Your Clothes in Cold Water** - The vast majority of garments don't need to be washed in hot water to meet care guidelines. Unless you need hot water to help remove set-in stains, make cold the default setting on your washing machine and save up to \$12 a month for the average family.

**5. Unplug Appliances When They're Not In Use** - Appliances draw power even when they're not in use! "Standby power" can eat up 10% of your home's total energy consumption. Or get a "Smart plug" that you can program to turn on and off during times of use, such as your coffee maker, to minimize the amount of standby power that's getting used.

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# The Housing Market 2024 Edition

What is going on with the market? Is it going to crash in 2024? Are interest rates going up higher? Is it going to be a buyer's market? Sellers market? Let's talk about it!

Homes in Illinois have continued to sell at record highs this year. The median home sale price rose 5.9% year-over-year from \$256,300 to **\$272,300** in September. Farmer City homes sold for a median sale price of \$172,837 in November, up **9%** year-over-year.

Interest rates are at record highs, with few home buyers. But as few buyers as there are, there's even less sellers with the inventory is so low that **39.9%** of homes sold in Illinois closed above the list price this year! So what does that mean for next year?

Experts have suggested that buyers who have been waiting for interest rates to lower will jump into the market as rates remain **above 6%**, but will likely stabilize in the second half of '24. Experts also predict home prices will continue to rise until the low supply-high demand dynamic changes. The demand for Illinois houses will increase – and that's why sellers may be able to dominate the market in 2024.

Realtor.com has released their housing market prediction for 2024, which suggests both mortgage rates and home prices will edge lower, helping to spark the beginning of an affordability turnaround.

So what does all of those numbers and predictions mean for the local market? It's hard to say, the national housing market can vary greatly from one area to another, but locally the housing market continues to hold strong throughout all of the turbulence of interest rates, low inventory, and economical uncertainty. So if you're looking to buy or sell, 2024 is as good a year as any, and we can help you get the best deal for your situation. Just call us!



# Support Local

Easy ways to support local businesses that won't cost you a penny!

Your local town's character comes from the vibrant & unique shops, restaurants, art studios, and stores in it. Without them, the soul of your community is missing. Supporting local businesses ensures that you'll have storefronts alive in your local neighborhood, instead of hollow commercial space that creates an eye sore on Main Street. Here's a couple of easy ways to Support Local:

- The easiest way to support a small town business is to comment, like, subscribe, and share a businesses' social media posts! By doing so you automatically boost a businesses marketing reach by hundreds of views!
- Another way to help local businesses is by leaving a review for them on their social media, website, or other review service so that other customer's can know what to expect from them.
- Buy gift cards! You might not use a gift card immediately, but the immediate revenue can really help a small business stay alive during the slow seasons. A gift card is a physical promise that you'll support that store later. Plus, it's a wonderful present to give someone for Christmas!
- Supporting local businesses can be as simple as sharing photos of them with your friends. The next time you're at your local unique store, snap a picture of something you think a friend might like and tell them to come visit our town!



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