

# RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

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AURORA/KING  
VOLUME 7, ISSUE 3

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## Trekking across Sahara Desert In support of abused women



**IN NOVEMBER 2019**, local Royal LePage Your Community Realty broker CAROLINE BAILE will be departing with a group of colleagues to trek across the Sahara Desert in Morocco to show their support for the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation. This group of ardent hikers - four groups totaling 120 Royal LePage professionals - will trek more than 100 km over five days, crossing difficult terrain in desert temperatures that dip to almost freezing at night. They will sleep in group tents and go without indoor plumbing, electricity, cell service and other comforts of home to raise funds for Canadian women's shelters and programs to help end family violence.

The Sahara Desert Challenge for Shelter is a unique fundraising event in support of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation which encourages Royal LePage agents from across Canada to raise funds and train for a physically, mentally and emotionally demanding experience.

Continued on page 4



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# DECK trends

Custom-built decks can expand usable outdoor entertaining spaces.



Deck trends continue to improve on the form and function of outdoor living spaces.

**D**ecks can surround pools and create outdoor patio areas that make it easy to establish multitiered living spaces, improving the functionality of outdoor areas.

Certain deck trends have emerged as industry experts' top picks for the upcoming remodeling and renovation season. For those thinking of revamping an existing deck, or building an entirely new one, these trends are on point.

**ESTABLISHED PERIMETERS:** "Picture framing" is not a new trend, but one that has taken greater hold in recent years. The term refers to aesthetically appealing designs that conceal the ends of deck boards for a clean finish. Some designs feature contrasting material colors on the ends for even more impact. This helps create refined perimeters for a polished look.

**ROOF-TOP DECKING:** Urban areas also can benefit from decking to create usable outdoor spaces. In fact, many new condominium and townhouse communities are incorporating roof-top decks into their designs, particularly in communities with water views or other impressive vistas. HGTV experts suggest roof-top decks feature light-colored materials and fixtures to help keep the area cool even in direct sunlight.

**DISTRESSED HARDWOOD:** Builder and Developer, a management resource for professional homebuilders, says that the trend for using distressed hardwoods at home has migrated outside. Some decking manufacturers have recently introduced low-maintenance composite deck boards that mimic the look and feel of

distressed, rustic hardwood flooring. This weathered appearance gives the look of age without the upkeep of real aged wood.

**WOODEN WALKWAYS:** Decking can be the more traditional design people envision with a patio table or outdoor furniture. But it also can consist of wooden walkways or a low-laying patio to accentuate the yard.

**MIXED MATERIALS:** Homeowners may be inspired by commercial eateries, breweries and urban markets in their exterior design choices. Decks featuring composite materials and aluminum railings blend sophistication, urban appeal and comfort.

**PERSONAL TOUCHES:** Homeowners can customize their decks with personal touches. It's not unheard of to wrap columns in stone or glass tiles for more impact. And a vast array of decking colors now enables fun interpretations for outdoor areas.

**FIRE PIT CONVERSATION AREA:** Many decks can incorporate water or fire elements for visual appeal. Gas-fueled fire elements can expand the functionality of decks beyond the warm seasons, or make enjoying them practical on nights when the temperature plummets.

Decks are reimagined in many different ways with continually evolving trends.

## Did you know?

Fences can provide privacy and transform backyards into calming places to relax and unwind. But fences also may lead to disputes with neighbors if installation is not carried out with etiquette. Always place the fence within your property lines, which can be determined by examining a land survey for your home. Inform your neighbors of your intention to erect a fence, and give any concerns they might have substantial consideration. Face the more aesthetically appealing side of the fence outward to the street and to neighbors' yards. In addition, maintain the fence once it is installed so it does not become a neighborhood eyesore that irks your neighbors.





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**14 Elmwood Ave, Schomberg**



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Published By:



Continued from the cover

CAROLINE BAILE has set a goal to raise \$5,000 which will be donated to the Yellow Brick House in York Region. 80% of funds raised will go directly towards our local shelter, with the remaining 20% supporting domestic violence prevention programs across Canada; including those focused on youth, to help break the cycle of family violence.

This is a cause close to the heart for CAROLINE BAILE, and one she is very passionate about. "As realtors, helping people find their dream home is our job. A home is supposed to be a place of comfort, safely and love. Sadly, this is not the case for everyone in our community. Domestic Violence affects women and children across the country, regardless of geographics or demographics. Young, old, wealthy or oppressed; sadly, domestic violence is seen across the spectrum. Unlike illness which we have no control over, domestic violence is a cause we can bring an end to. Together we CAN make a difference! Every step we take and every dollar raised goes directly towards adding additional shelter beds so women and children are not turned away in their darkest hour."

Sadly, on any given night in Canada close to 6,000 women and children are forced to stay in emergency

shelter beds because it is not safe for them to stay at home. At the same time, hundreds are turned away each night as the shelters are full. Even more tragic is on average, every 6 days in Canada a woman is killed by her current or former partner! In too many cases women go to their local shelter because they are literally running for their lives.

Half of all women in Canada have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16.

- 67% of Canadians personally know a woman who has been abused.
- On average, every six days a woman in Canada is killed by her intimate partner. However, in the first eight months of 2018, a woman or girl was killed on average every other day, in most instances by a man she knew.
- 362,000 Canadian children are exposed to domestic violence each year.
- Shelters are critical to the safety and well-being of women and children fleeing domestic violence; the most dangerous time for a woman is when she leaves her abusive partner.

To join CAROLINE BAILE in making it easier for women and children to walk safely and bravely away from violence and gain hope for a future without abuse, please join her and her team on Saturday, March 30th, 2019 from 9-11am for a self-defense course located at the Aurora Seniors Asso-

ciation (90 John West Way, Aurora). Participation will be \$25 per person and all proceeds will go directly to the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation and the Yellow Brick House. Kindly RSVP to info@CarolineBaile.com

About Royal LePage Shelter Foundation

The Royal LePage Shelter Foundation is Canada's largest public foundation dedicated exclusively to supporting women's shelters and ending violence against women and children. Through agent commission donations and the fundraising activities of the Royal LePage network, over \$27 million has been raised to help provide a safe haven and new beginnings to more than 50,000 women and children each year. For more information, visit [royalpage.ca/shelter](http://royalpage.ca/shelter)

To donate to this amazing cause please visit:  
[www.CarolineBaile.com/ShelterTrek/](http://www.CarolineBaile.com/ShelterTrek/)

For further information to donate, please contact:

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# Decorating small spaces

Warm weather often inspires renewed vigor in decorating or organizing a home.

People who live in apartments, small homes or condos or those who have embraced the “tiny house” movement must rely on clever decorating to maximize their spaces. Here are some ideas when space is at a premium.

**GO VERTICAL.** Utilize vertical space, such as lights hung on a wall beside a bed instead of lamps on a nightstand or bookshelves and other shelving to keep items off of the floor.

**BENCH SEATING.** Benches can provide more seating when entertaining guests and also can be moved to the living room or elsewhere as needed. Place a small bench in a foyer and put some wicker bins beneath for storage.

**UTILIZE NATURAL LIGHT.** Rooms that have ample light can seem more spacious. Pull up blinds (or skip them if privacy isn't an issue) and use the sunshine to help spaces appear more airy.



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## How to create an effective workflow in the kitchen

Bathroom and kitchen makeovers are some of the most coveted and profitable improvements that can be made to a home. Installing new cabinetry, countertops and appliances can transform the look of a kitchen, but homeowners also must consider the functionality of design when renovating.

The National Kitchen and Bath Association suggests applying the kitchen “work triangle,” which is a concept used to create efficient kitchen layouts. The triangle comprises imaginary straight lines drawn from the cooking appliance, sink and refrigerator. These are where much of the work in the kitchen takes place. The general idea is that when the work triangle is positioned accordingly — with the three components in close proximity to one another — the kitchen is easier and more efficient to use. Homeowners will be able to move freely among these elements when they are placed at appropriate distances, reducing wasted steps. The NKBA suggests following these guidelines to create efficient kitchens.

- No major traffic patterns should cross through the triangle.
- The sum of the work triangle’s three sides should not exceed 26 feet. Each portion of the triangle should be between four and nine feet.
- Avoid cutting through an island or a peninsula.
- If the kitchen has only one sink, it should be placed between or across from the cooking surface, preparation area or refrigerator.

The work triangle is a suggestion, not a law of design. As kitchens evolve and more people use them simultaneously, designers may take certain liberties — even having multiple triangles at play. Homeowners should also design their kitchens so they function best for their own individual lifestyles. Kitchen layout can be just as important as the decor and appliances within the kitchen.

### Did you know?

According to a survey of its users, the home improvement resource HomeAdvisor found that the average kitchen remodeling project took six weeks to complete. While some homeowners might be turned off by the prospect of having little or no access to their kitchens for more than a month, HomeAdvisor warns that the length of time it takes to complete a kitchen remodeling project depends on a host of factors, including the scope of the project. Some homeowners reported to HomeAdvisor that their projects lasted for several months, though those projects required extensive work, including moving walls and rearranging plumbing. Others who only replaced the flooring and countertops in their kitchens were back in business in just three weeks. Homeowners should always receive a projected completion date when soliciting estimates from contractors. But it’s also important that homeowners plan for unforeseen problems that may arise during the project, thereby extending the length of time necessary to complete it.

### Ask A Realtor®



## The Silent Buyer

**S**ilence is golden when touring homes for sale as a Buyer, technology advances every day and many home Sellers are recording everything that’s being said throughout the home when they aren’t present whether the parties are aware or not.

It’s ideal to tour a home for sale and reserve comment until after. Set a plan to write down what is liked or disliked about the home. Capture questions, concerns and share upon exiting the home. Come together with your REALTOR® after seeing considered homes and discuss all findings. A discovery and debrief session is essential as next steps are planned on the journey towards buying a home. The concerns with being heard may be that the Buyers motivation is revealed and that may negatively impact negotiation power.

Speak to an Accredited Buyer’s Specialist ABR® to plan the steps towards purchasing a home.

– Written by Connie Power

Connie Power is a Real Estate CNE® SRS® ABR® SRES® Sales Representative, Assistant Manager and New Agent Mentor and Career Development for RE/MAX Hallmark York Group Realty Ltd., Brokerage serving York region and beyond. EmPOWERing YOU in Real Estate!

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## Ask Big Tuna, The Renovating Realtor



By Julien Laurion  
The Big Tuna of Real Estate

Dear Big Tuna: A friend of mine is looking to buy and he had to sign a buyer representation agreement before the agent would show him anything. Why would he have to do this? If you could clarify this, it would be appreciated. Thanks in advance, Tim.

Hi Tim! First of all, you never HAVE to sign anything! Now that we have that out of the way...

A Buyer Representation Agreement or BRA is a document that is a clear and concise agreement that protects the Consumer and Realtor. Many clients are apprehensive to sign a BRA as they are often viewed as the same type of contract as cell phone or cable contracts. These types of contracts are often intimidating to read and many people prefer not to enter into any additional contracts, especially if they are early in the buying process.

However, as a Realtor, it is my job to explain how a BRA protects both the client and myself. When your friend was shown a BRA, it should have been discussed with him that you get to choose the duration of the contract, the type of homes that qualify and the areas in which it would apply. For example: 90-day duration for a Single Family home/condo in Aurora and Newmarket. Everything is in writing so there are no misunderstandings.

How does it protect Realtors? Well it ensures we are compensated for our hard work.

As you may know, Realtors put in countless hours of unpaid work with no certainty on when or if we may have a listing or purchase. A BRA is an agreement that offers some protection to the agent that efforts will be compensated should there be a successful purchase. A very important section that you will want to pay attention to is the "carry over



clause." This clause, added by the agent, specifies the timeframe that he or she will be compensated should you buy a home that they showed under contract after the contract expires. In short, if you buy a home they showed you during that period by yourself or another agent, the agent you signed the BRA with could be entitled to a portion of the commissions owed. Not unlike a short term employment contract that clearly outlines what is expected of an employee to get paid. A BRA is our employment agreement with you, our boss!

A BRA is nothing to be worried about. It should actually provide some clarity and comfort. Also, if at anytime you are unhappy with your service, it is your right to cancel the contract.

## Who is Big Tuna, The Renovating Realtor?

Julien Laurion AKA Big Tuna, is a local Real Estate Sale Representative with RE/MAX Hallmark York Group Realty in Aurora. I am a real estate agent who has expertise in both Real Estate and Renovations and have been involved in this community for over 20 years. If you have a question for my monthly article or if you are considering buying, selling or leasing a home please feel free to call or email me directly at (416) 402-5530 or julien@bigtuna.ca or by alternatively by visiting my website www.bigtuna.ca or Facebook page @bigtunarealty

## How to pay off your mortgage before maturity



**HOMES** are the most expensive purchases many people will ever make. While home ownership can be rewarding, first-time homeowners may experience some sticker shock when shopping for homes and calculating their potential mortgage costs. But as expensive as home ownership can be, there are ways for homeowners to pay off their mortgages long before those loans reach maturity.

**PAY EXTRA EACH MONTH.** Factors like home value, property tax and your mortgage loan interest rate determine how much your monthly mortgage payment will be. But there's still room to save. According to the Chase extra payments calculator, homeowners who borrow \$200,000 (after making an initial 20 percent down payment of \$50,000 on a home valued at

\$250,000) at 4 percent interest and pay \$4,000 annually in property taxes and homeowner's insurance can save more than \$26,000 in interest over the life of the loan by paying as little as \$100 extra per month. In addition, including an additional \$100 each month will trim 59 months, or just about five years, off the life of your loan.

**STOP PAYING PMI.** If your initial down payment was less than 20 percent of the value of your home at the time you purchased it, then you were likely required to pay private mortgage insurance, or PMI. PMI may be costing you a couple hundred dollars per month, but once your mortgage balance falls below 80 percent of your home's appraised value, you can ask your lender to stop charging PMI. While it might be nice to pocket those

PMI costs for a rainy day, continue paying that money each month so you can shorten the life of your loan.

**HAVE YOUR HOME REASSESSED.** While homeowners would like to think the value of their homes is always on the rise, some homes decrease in value over time. If your home is reassessed at a lesser value, your property taxes will decrease. Put the money you're saving on property taxes toward your monthly mortgage payment each month.

**REFINANCE YOUR MORTGAGE.** Refinancing to a lower interest rate can lower your monthly mortgage payment, but be sure that the costs to refinance do not exceed the savings you will earn. Apply any money you save from refinancing to your monthly payment.

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# Items to improve outdoor living spaces

The popularity of outdoor living spaces has been growing for years.

A 2014 study from the home remodeling and design platform Houzz found that 56 percent of homeowners were making updates to improve their yards for entertaining. Similarly, nearly 60 percent of architectural practices surveyed by the American Institute of Architects in 2016 said outdoor living spaces were popular features in the homes they built.

Outdoor living spaces may also be sound investments for homeowners looking to improve the resale value of their properties. According to Remodeling magazine's 2017 "Cost vs. Value" report, outdoor living spaces returned between 55 and 71 percent of homeowners' initial investments at resale.

When planning an outdoor living space, homeowners with ample backyards have much to work with. However, to make the most of the space while simultaneously hoping to get as strong a return on

their investments as possible, homeowners should look to create spaces that offer broad appeal and are not too personalized. The following are some popular outdoor living space features homeowners may want to consider.

## OUTDOOR KITCHENS

Outdoor kitchens allow homeowners to prepare more than just traditional backyard barbecue fare. A standalone charcoal grill in the backyard might get the job done, but a built-in gas grill complete with burners and surrounding granite countertop makes for a more functional outdoor entertaining space.

## BARS

Indoor entertaining areas often include bars, so it makes sense that homeowners want to include a place to prepare and serve beverages to their guests. Homeowners with room in their budgets may want to install wet bars where they can rinse mixers, glasses and other items needed to prepare drinks for their guests.

## WARMING FEATURES

Features that can keep homeowners and their guests warm after the sun sets include outdoor fireplaces and firepits. A 2016 survey conducted by the American Society of Landscape Architects found that fireplaces and firepits were the most popular outdoor design element in 2016. Such features can provide a focal point in the backyard while also extending the outdoor living season into autumn and even early winter.

## PORCH SPACE

Outdoor living spaces are often found in the backyard, but homeowners with bigger front yards than backyards may want to expand or open their porch spaces to create more space outside. Porch swings and rocking chairs provide a great place to relax, and porch spaces are covered, meaning homeowners can continue to enjoy time outside even when it begins to rain.

Outdoor living spaces are growing in popularity. Homeowners who want to capitalize on this trend can do so in various ways.



DURING THE COLD MONTHS OF WINTER, many people stare longingly out of the window dreaming of spring and time spent outdoors. For those with green thumbs, images of tending to the garden and other aspects of their landscapes no doubt dominate such daydreams.

Draw inspiration from those budding crocuses and daffodils pushing through the last remnants of snow and employ these tips to prepare for the upcoming gardening season.

- One of the first steps is to apply a preemergent weed killer to get a head start knocking out weeds that can plague the lawn during the growing season. Killing weeds at the roots early on can mean far fewer hassles in spring and summer, and may prevent new generations of weeds from cropping up each year.

- While it may be tempting to take a prematurely warm day as a sign that spring is in full force and purchase a bunch of annuals, it's better to know the last of the possible frost dates (check "The Farmer's Almanac"); otherwise, you may waste time and money planting flowers or vegetables only to have them zapped by another frosty day.

- Amend the soil so that it is the right consistency — just crumbling when lifting it. Soil that is too muddy after spring thaw can harden, making it difficult for plants to flourish later on. Speak with representatives at a local lawn and garden center about which types of amendments you can add to the soil in your particular area to enrich it.

- Lawn and garden experts at The Home Depot suggest filling in bare patches of lawn now by mixing a few shovelfuls of soil with grass seed. Then apply this patch to the bare areas, water, and continue to care for the area until the spot fills in.

- Spend a day in the garage or shed tending to the lawn mower and other gardening equipment. Clean all tools and ensure that everything works, repairing parts as needed.

- Give outdoor entertaining spaces a good scrubbing, clearing away dirt and grime that may have accumulated over the winter. Use a leaf blower to blow away any leftover leaves.

- Check if the front porch, railings or decking need painting and/or staining. Tackle these projects when the weather is cooler so everything will be ready for those peak spring days.

- Think about any annuals you might want to plant in the landscape this year that will complement any existing shrubbery or perennials. Come up with a theme so that the entire yard is cohesive.

Before homeowners know it, winter is gone and it is time to once again enjoy long days spent outdoors. Get a jump start on spring lawn prep as soon as you can.

## Real Estate Market Update – Aurora



# Inclement Weather for Buyers

Winter's fury didn't stop Buyers who were committed to making Aurora their new address, 50 homes sold throughout the 28 day month at an average price of \$939,253 which is a about a 9 per cent improvement in value since the January report from the Toronto Real Estate Board an almost identical home value as the same time last year. Sellers added an additional 152 homes of all descriptions to the market and at month end 238 homes remained available for sale throughout Aurora. Typically Seller's received 98 per cent of their asking price on their homes which on average sold in 32 days. At current rates of Buyers' demand it would take about 4.5 months to sell through the current number of offerings available.

Looking closer at the top two types of homes that sold in February, 29 detached homes were

bought at a median price of \$995,000 while 10 townhomes or attached dwellings sold for a median of \$690,000. For more details on the market and market values across Aurora and beyond contact a REALTOR® for a face to face discussion.

– Written by Connie Power  
 Connie Power is a Real Estate Sales Representative CNE® SRS® ABR® SRES®, Assistant Manager, Mentors and Develops New Real Estate Sales Representatives for RE/MAX Hallmark York Group Realty Ltd., Brokerage serving York region and beyond in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).  
 Empowering you in Real Estate, Call Connie today to make an appointment to discuss your next move at (905) 726-0856.

\*The statistics provided herein were obtained from the Toronto Real Estate Board; Regional Housing Market Tables; York Region, Aurora for February of 2018, 2019 and the Summary of Existing Home Transactions of all home types, February 2018, 2019 for all TREB Areas.

\*\*\*Not intended to solicit those currently under a real estate contract.





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