

# Year in Review

by Andi Peterson Brown

It's no surprise that this year's local real estate market was affected by both national and global economic uncertainty. But all in all, how did we do?

## Trending this past year:

**The Springtime Surge.** The 2011 Lamorinda market was in like a lion, out like a...mouse. Attracted by historic affordability, buyers came in droves this past spring. Compared to 2010, we experienced a 13% increase in sales volume during the first half of year. But come August, the market pulled back due to (you guessed it) economic uncertainty, and we are ending the year with near identical sales volume to 2010.

**Low Inventory.** "Is that it?" a client asked me in June as we were out touring homes. Across the board, Lamorinda inventory was down about 15%. For various reasons, many move-up buyers decided to stay put and the market felt their absence. And the springtime surge, coupled with the tight inventory, meant homes that were priced accurately and showed well sold within a matter of days and oftentimes with multiple offers. Many buyers were surprised to experience that level of competition.

**Mid-Year Price Adjustment.** After the market's stellar springtime performance, pricing adjusted down about 5%. And that's not that bad, all things considered. We seem to be bouncing along the bottom of the market, and I am hopeful that we will bounce back up a bit next spring.

And as we gear up for next year, it's important to remember that regardless of what the national news says, there are still many opportunities in Lamorinda for smart buyers and smart sellers. And if you just read this column, you're already smarter.



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# Merry Christmas!



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## WINTER TIPS

Cleaning and thinning your trees may reduce the potential storm hazards without compromising the shade. In some situations the risk of failure cannot be reduced without removal of branches. Remember that healthy structurally sound trees are generally wind fast even when mature.

Storm damage is usually, but not always, related to structural problems that could have been addressed with proper structural training when the tree was young. Co dominant (two trunks with a narrow angle of attachment) trunks account for many trees failures. The hazard of wind damage is higher on the regrowth of trees that have been "topped".

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