

# *The Community* **VOICE**

Rohnert Park, Cotati & Penngrove

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Turn the spotlight on your home with staging

By Jenny Lauck

Home staging is a red-hot trend in real estate sales. Sonoma County homeowners and realtors are increasingly embracing home staging as an effective tool to showcase their listings.

“Staging a home creates a neutral and yet dynamic environment,” says Mona Reeder, a Sonoma County based Accredited Staging Professional. “Removing distractions allows buyers to envision the possibilities of the property.”

Interest in real estate staging has been steadily growing over the last decade. Staging is a simple, effective system of home presentation, created by Barb Schwarz, founder of Staged Homes.com in the 1970s. Personal touches are removed, and existing furniture is arranged to create a ‘model home’ feel.

Even in a seller’s market, there are certain properties that lack interest. Dirty or cluttered homes quickly gain a reputation among Realtors. Buyers remember a home for the current owner’s belongings, rather than the fabulous view or unique floor plan.

Realtor Pat Miller of Prudential California Realty in Rohnert Park says “after following staging instructions provided in the consultation report done by Amazing Staging, my undesirable listing sold in just one day with three over listed price offers. Staging works!”

“When you have a vacant home, staging is critical,” said Bob Marks, a Realtor with Frank Howard Allen Realty in Marin County. After consulting with the homeowners, Amazing Staging staged his vacant listing. Four days after entering the market, the home received multiple offers, at up to \$30,000 over the asking price. Marks explained, “Staging brought the house to life. Adding minimal furniture and classy accents made all the difference. My clients were thrilled.”

Reeder, the founding president of the Sonoma County Regional Chapter of the International Association of Home Staging Professionals and owner of Amazing Staging offers the following advice to homeowners who are considering working with a staging professional.

“Anyone can call themselves a ‘stager.’ Hire an Accredited Staging Professional, or ASP™. An ASP™ has passed an in-depth course taught by Barb Schwarz, the creator of the staging concept, and is committed to a high level of service and integrity.”

Reeder adds, “Staging is not interior design. Interior designers create a customized environment designed for your lifestyle and home. Staging strives to make a home attractive to a wide cross section of buyers.”

Stagers work with homeowners and their real estate agents to pinpoint specific improvements that enable a home to sell faster, and for more money. Reeder explains: “A quick, profitable sale is our goal. The way you live in your home and the way we market and sell your house are two different things.”

Staging is often considered a luxury service, only suitable for expensive homes. “Not so,” says Reeder. “A young family in a starter home can greatly increase their odds of selling for top dollar when they take the time to stage their home. Staging can take a small home and make it feel spacious. The details are important. The difference is amazing.”

For information, contact Mona Reeder of Amazing Staging at 829-8037 or [www.amazing-staging.com](http://www.amazing-staging.com) or visit [www.sonomacounty@iahsp.com](mailto:www.sonomacounty@iahsp.com).