



## WHAT MAKES A HOUSE A HOME?

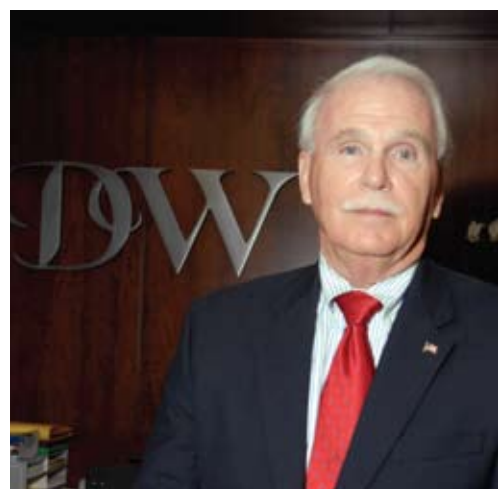
A few years ago when I was 55, I told my wife that we should sell our 5,200-square-foot home with the 1.0-acre lot and move to a zero lot line PUD. My rationale was that we were getting older and caring for a large house and big yard was becoming more difficult. Our youngest son was entering high school and, with his extracurricular sports, he couldn't help out as much as he once did. With less house maintenance and yard work we could do more things that we enjoyed, i.e. going to our lake house and traveling. The housing market was in its "heyday" and we should have received top dollar for our magnificent home! I had it all figured out.

Well, two years and three realtors later, and after reducing our list price by almost 10 percent, we finally received an offer...\$6,000 less than the listing price plus three pages of "need to repair" items. Also, we had only a two-day weekend in January to move out. The buyers did not care how closings and granting of

possession were typically handled in the South. It was their way or no deal.

With no other offers through 200 showings over two years, we accepted the offer. After filling a storage facility, listening to a 'stager' who packed away my wife's vintage Santa Claus collection, we managed to move and downsize. We made it through the ordeal and have managed to stay married three and a half years later.

We finally cleared out the storage facility, Goodwill being the primary benefactor, and my wife has her beloved Santas back on display. With our youngest son entering college this fall, we have been talking about moving back to a neighborhood that has yards, trees, and young people, especially kids. Sure, the yard work and the home maintenance have been less involved since we moved. Yet, we miss a "real" neighborhood. So what we have learned by living in a zero-lot-lined, sterile PUD is it takes more than a 'house' to make a 'home!'.



*Howard Lasley, 61, is Vice President, Manager of Financial Services Group with Duncan Williams, Inc. Also, a CPA, he has 40+ years in the Industry and has been with Duncan Williams for six years. Duncan Williams, Inc., a Top 100 Brokerage Firm based in Memphis is a full-service brokerage and investment banking firm. For more info go to [www.duncanw.com](http://www.duncanw.com).*