

Dear Friends and Clients,

Today is the 232nd birthday of our country. Our founding fathers hardly could have imagined the lifestyle that most of us enjoy today. Despite economic woes and global turmoil, we have a great deal to thank them for – and we do.

Laily and I have always thought that the 4th of July is absolutely the best time of the year on Amelia Island and particularly on Amelia Island Plantation where we live. It is probably the busiest time, with guests coming from near and far to celebrate the birth of our nation in a special way. Amelia Island Plantation, in particular, is rife with fun and events for families-young and old alike. The golf cart parade is unique, the afternoon air show wonderful and the evening fireworks display is spectacular – all enjoyable from A glorious oceanfront venue. It reminds us that we live in a one-of-a-kind place and we are fortunate to be able to share it with friends, family and newcomers.

It also tells us that the real estate downturn that we have experienced locally cannot last forever. In fact, increasingly we see signs that buyers are returning to the local market and are able and willing to purchase property here. Activity is still nowhere close to what it was a few years ago but the signs that the flow of buyers is beginning is unmistakable. We believe that will continue and that demographics, immigration, job growth and climate will fuel the housing market in Northeast Florida and Amelia Island. Among our many desirable attributes locally is our year round moderate climate and associated low heating and cooling costs. With the costs of energy skyrocketing that is just another important reason that makes Amelia island a great place to live.

A just released study by the Joint **Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University** Concludes that “Looking ahead, household growth should return to the path set by the changing age composition of the population, the strength of ongoing immigration and social trends. Even if immigration were to drop by about 30 %, household growth should still exceed its 1995-2000 average annual level”

As the national housing market improves- and it will, we are confident that the uniquely wonderful environment we all have come to love and appreciate locally, will increasingly attract the best buyers from all over the world. In the meantime we will just appreciate and be thankful for the fact that we are already here.

Have a wonderful 4th of July.

David & Laily Schlegel