



A worthy cause for a brave young woman



I have often talked about my philanthropic philosophy and that giving back to the community is a core value for my business and The Dan Cooper Team. We feel strongly that to “give where you live” is not just a slogan, but a call to action.

Since many of the organizations we support are focused on the youth in our community, there are always stories that touch me personally. I attended one such fundraiser recently. It is a story that is both tragic and inspiring.

Brooklyn Mills is a 17-year-old girl who was a happy and extremely active student at Oakville Trafalgar High School in 2009. She was one of the school's cheerleaders, performing back handsprings and flips. One day that fall, she woke up to severe back pain. Following that morning she saw countless doctors and specialists, was in and out of hospital and was finally diagnosed with a rare genetic connective tissue disorder called Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS).

Only 1 in 5,000 Canadians are afflicted by the disorder, which makes it difficult to find health-care professionals who specialize and can treat the condition. The person suffers chronic pain, with acute dislocations or advanced osteoarthritis, which can be physically and psychologically disabling.

It was heart wrenching to see this young, vibrant girl's health rapidly deteriorate to the point that she was confined to a wheelchair and forced to spend most of the day in bed. She was refused admission to all pain management programs due to the severity of her disorder and the fact that she was not an adult.

Thankfully, the family found help at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, where Brooklyn spent more than five weeks in an intensive program and in January began walking for the first time in seven months. She plans to return to school this year.

I met Brooklyn at a fundraiser at Philthy McNasty's on Speers Road on February 27th. Mike Holmes was the special guest and I was glad to provide support and a donation toward the cost of Brooklyn's treatments.

While it was heart warming and inspirational to see this charming young woman bravely and successfully battle this rare and debilitating disorder, the family has been saddled with a large medical bill. Brooklyn's medical expenses not covered by OHIP exceeded \$50,000. I was proud to be part of this very worthwhile fundraiser to help a wonderful young woman in our community.

We wish you all the best Brooklyn and look forward to you returning to school, completing your education and fulfilling your dreams.

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Blame the decline in home sales on the harmonized sales tax

As predicted, the pace of home sales slowed in July as consumers adjusted to the new harmonized sales tax. Coupled with the fact that interest rates were rising, the rush to buy homes prior to the HST coming into effect on July 1 resulted in an overheated market in May and June. But this current slowdown in the market is expected to be short lived.

Earlier this month Jeff Mahannah, President of the Oakville, Milton and District Real Estate Board, said, “Sales transactions are down for July, but overall for the year-to-date we are on par or are observing a slight increase in transactions when compared to 2009. What I anticipate, once the public has time to adjust to the HST and realize that interest rates are still affordable, is an increase in activity in sales transactions in September.” This is what he is talking about. Last month residential sales for Oakville were down by 48 percent compared to July 2009 and the average sale price - \$505,999 – decreased by 0.2 percent. However, year-to-date sales were still up by 5 percent and the average sale price was up by 13 percent.

In Burlington, the story is quite similar. “July was certainly a quiet month for sales,” said Joe Ferrante, President of the Realtors Association of Hamilton-Burlington, “but it was not at all unexpected. Despite the slower sales in July, our year-to-date sales are still up 10.7 per cent over this time last year.” The average price of freehold residential properties sold in Hamilton-Burlington in July was \$329,317, an increase of 5.5 per cent over July last year. In the condominium market the average price of condominiums in July was \$237,304, an increase of 1.6 per cent over July 2009. “We have a good inventory of listings,” Ferrante explains, “which makes Hamilton, Burlington and our outlying areas such a great place to buy real estate right now.”

Whether it is a slow market or an overheated market, each brings particular challenges of their own and the key to making the best deal possible is to work with a broker who has a proven track record and is a consistent top performer – someone who you are confident will be able to sell your home quickly and for top dollar. Innovative marketing and investment, knowledge about the marketplace, commitment and exemplary service differentiate the Dan Cooper Real Estate Team. The result is that we are achieving accomplishments that illustrate the Dan Cooper difference. We are the Number 1 team in Canada for Royal LePage, which is a testament to our ability to sell homes fast in the Oakville and Burlington areas. In fact, we have been the Number 1 team for seven of the past ten years. We were also named Best Real Estate Agent and Best Real Estate Team in North Oakville Today's annual Readers' Choice Awards. The Readers' Choice Awards are as grassroots as you can get, and being named Number 1 for both agent and team are proof that we are having a significant impact right here in our own community.

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