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Current Rates

Program	Conforming
30-Year Fixed	High 5's
15-Year Fixed	Low 5's
7-Year Fixed*	Low 6's
5-Year Fixed*	Low 6's
3-Year Fixed*	High 5's
Cash Flow ARM	Low 6's

(Index Value: 5.320)

(All programs above at 80% LTV)

FHA 30-Year Fixed (97% LTV)	High 5's
USDA 30-Year Fixed (100% LTV)	High 5's

The interest rates represented here are at one point.

*Amortized over a 30-year period. Following its fixed rate term, it converts to a 1-year LIBOR adjustable rate mortgage for the remaining term of the 30-year loan.

Many other programs available - please call for details.

Melanie Thompson
Registered Mortgage Advisor

(434) 258-5626 • Melanie@MortgeEquityTeam.com

Melanie Thompson, RMA
4100 Fort Avenue
Lynchburg, Virginia 24502



PLANTING

new seeds

Innovative Mortgage and Home Equity Solutions from the Mortgage Equity Team

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Issue 7 • March 2008

Spring Home Maintenance Tips

As a homeowner, there's a never ending supply of chores to do to keep your home in good condition. Spring provides the perfect opportunity to take care of any of the outstanding projects you set aside before winter set in.

First, and foremost, you should check the house for any necessary repairs or improvements. This would include items such as loose siding or shingles, loose hand rails, full gutters or clogged downspouts, cracks in the foundation that may need immediate attention, and so on. Serious foundation cracks should be repaired with hydraulic cement, or consult an expert.

A thorough check of your air conditioning system is also a good idea, since the hot weather will likely be here within a few months. It's better to resolve any issues early on, before finding out there's a problem when the temperatures are unbearable. A/C technicians are also extremely busy when the hot weather hits, so save yourself some time, and maybe even some money, and check everything now.

Once you've taken care of the necessary repairs you can proceed to the cosmetics and landscaping. This would include painting (although the temperatures may still be a little cool for painting), trimming unruly hedges and shrubs, planting flowers, spreading new mulch, and — everybody's favorite — maintaining the lawn. If you haven't done so already, this is the perfect time of the year to spread fertilizer and seed the lawn.

With these tips in mind, your home can be ready for the spring and summer months — all in time to host those cookouts, family gatherings, and backyard croquet parties!

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DID YOU KNOW

ON THE TREAD MILL - Only 30% of Americans between the ages of 45 to 64 exercise on a regular basis

(Source: AARP).





The Key to College Planning

Provided by The Mortgage Equity Team
Melanie Thompson, Registered Mortgage Advisor
Barry Doyle, Production Coordinator



In today's world, a college education is more important than ever. Many of the jobs that do not require a college degree have been outsourced to workers in other countries, or replaced by a computer or machine.

In addition, according to Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke, the income disparity between college grads and non-grads is growing every year. In 1979, college grads earned 38% more than those with only a high school diploma. But today, college grads earn 75% more than those without degrees!

The Cost of Higher Education

Let's face it: college is expensive. And with the cost inflating approximately 5% annually, the cost will only rise.

The type of college your child attends can also have a big effect on the cost too. For example, just one year of tuition, room and board at an average private college runs just over \$30,000. On the other hand, a public out-of-state college runs around \$19,000 per year. Finally, even a public in-state college is close to \$13,000 annually.

So as a parent who wants your child to have the chance to attend college, what can you do? The answer: plan early!

A Tale of Two Families

Let's look at a tale of two parents to illustrate how important it is to get started right away.

The preschool open house was in full swing, and two parents were chatting over the punchbowl, remarking on how they knew time would fly, and before you know it, their kids would be off to college.

Taylor's parents are prepared. They recently sat down with a mortgage professional and learned that completely funding Taylor's four-year education at the local college would cost either \$300 per month in savings or—by using the equity in their home—**only \$133 per month after tax**. "What a relief to know it's all taken care of!" they commented to Max's parents. But Max's parents replied, "Hey, what's the rush? Look, the kids are only knee-high right now...we'll worry about this later."

Seven years later, the kids are in 5th grade, and the parents meet up again at a birthday party. College comes up in the conversation, as Max's parents just learned that for him to attend the very same college as Taylor, it would now require them to save \$835 per month to be ready on time, which is not something they are prepared to do. Taylor's parents recommend that they meet their trusted mortgage professional, who advises them that by using the mortgage wisely, it will only cost them \$260 per month after tax. Much easier to swallow—but it's twice as much per month as Taylor's parents, who planned ahead and started earlier.

The Moral of the Story?

If you want to save for your child's college expenses, start the investment early. The money you put away today will have more time to gain interest and multiply over time—which means you won't have to struggle to save as much. Don't be discouraged by the amount you think you can put away. I have a full array of financial tools at my disposal. Together, we can sit down and calculate a variety of scenarios that fit your budget and will help ensure that your child's college costs are taken care of.

You should also encourage your children to invest and save too, with a portion of funds from their allowance or a side job like mowing the neighbors' lawn or babysitting. They will see how the value of their savings grows over time, and more importantly, will begin to understand importance of planning for the future.

Finally, as the college years approach, explore scholarships, financial aid, or federal direct aid, which is money that does not have to be repaid. Of course, when your children are young, you just don't know if they will be star athletes or straight "A" students—so it's always better to plan ahead. If scholarship money does become available, then you'll have more than enough money in savings, due to your good planning.

If you want to discuss options and strategies on saving for your child's college education, contact me. I'll make sure the entire process is convenient and, more importantly, that we design a plan that fits your specific goals.

Call me today to make your child's education a reality.

FREE CREDIT CHECKUP

and Home Equity Analysis

Now, more than ever, your credit can affect your ability to finance real estate, buy a car, or obtain any type of credit. Give me a call today, and I can help you understand the impact your credit may have on you, and together we can increase your score.



MELANIE THOMPSON • RMA

434.846.3268 Office • 434.258.5626 Cell

email: Melanie@MortgageEquityTeam.com

Refer a Friend or Family Member!

If you know someone who is interested in purchasing or refinancing, please pass this same valuable offer to them.