# Home & Lifestyle



REAL ESTATE, HOME DECOR, HOME IMPROVEMENT, HEALTHY LIVING Saturday/Sunday, January 4/5, 2025



# FUN AND INNOVATIVE MODERN KITCHEN FEATURES

Kitchens are the hub of many homes. Perhaps due to their popularity as gathering spaces, kitchens are popular rooms to renovate to ensure they remain functional and attractive through the years.

nline resources such as Houzz and Fixr indicate kitchens are consistently ranked among the most popular rooms to renovate. In 2022, 42 percent of homeowners were motivated to remodel their kitchens, according to data from Statista. Homeowners looking to enhance the functionality and look of their kitchens can consider these fun and innovative features as they plan their renovations.

#### **CONCEALED COUNTERTOP APPLIANCES**

The latest small appliances and gadgets can make easy work of preparing food, but these devices can add to kitchen clutter. A roll-down door "appliance garage" will conceal appliances

#### **CLEVERLY PLACED STORAGE**

Additional storage also can give kitchens a cleaner look. Narrow, pull-out drawers can be nestled in between cabinets or appliances to make the most of tight spaces. These spots are perfect for utensils or spice containers.

### **MIXER LIFT**

Baking enthusiasts will cheer if they don't have to lift a heavy stand mixer when preparing foods. A mixer lift is an innovative feature that enables homeowners to raise and lower the mixer from a dedicated cabinet any time it's needed.

#### **MICROWAVE DRAWER**

A microwave drawer maximizes space and boasts a sleek design. Instead of installing a microwave above a stove, homeowners can enjoy a beautiful range hood.

#### **WINE REFRIGERATOR**

Available in a variety of sizes, wine refrigerators offer stylish storage for any wine lover's collection. A refrigerator can be installed into an island or lower cabinet and integrated into the rest of the kitchen.

#### **DOUBLE OVENS**

Double ovens are built directly into cabinetry and offer convenience and a sleek, modern look. Two ovens can make entertaining crowds easier, and separating the ovens from the burners lets homeowners install a cooktop elsewhere in the kitchen, which can expand floorplan options.

A special faucet near the cooktop makes it much easier to fill heavy pasta pots. A pot filler can be quite handy for those who cook a lot and do not want to lug heavy pots from the sink to

Outfitting a modern kitchen during a renovation can involve some innovative features to enhance the space.



## Real Estate Trends

#### 2025: Here We Come!

We still have December's sales to tally, but statistics are in for year-to-date comparisons to 2023's numbers. New home sales are up 21.72% in 2024 over 2023, according to Data Data Inc., a local real estate statistics firm. Existing home sales were less impressive, up just 3.36% over the previous year. Residential refinances were up nearly 50%! Over 1500 HELOC (Home Equity Line of Credit) or other, second-position loans, were taken out in the last 13 months.

Interest rates have played a huge role in shaping all of the above numbers. Keep reading below about how so-so interest rates drive new construction more than existing home sales. What's predicted for 2025? Mortgage rates are expected to drop from the current average above 7% into the range of 6.2% to 6.6%. None of the predictions I've seen foresee rates dropping below 6%.

As the calendar page flips into a new year, there's a lot of uncertainty beyond interest rates: will tariffs and mass deportation happen, and what effect will they have on local housing supply/demand and the national economy? A feature of the housing market has been homeowners who would have expected to move up or downsize have instead stayed put because of the so-so interest rates cited above. These homeowners don't want to lose their interest rate they locked in when rates were lower. New home construction has been and will continue to fill that gap; for many first-time homebuyers, too few homes on the market have pushed them to look at new houses.

The other trend in real estate both locally and nationally is commissions. While some appeals have been filed to contest the national agreement that threw away the "sellers' agent pays buyers' agent" tradition, and others hope that the new President's Justice Department might see things differently, it looks like the big changes resulting from a settlement of a class-action lawsuit will continue an evolution of the custom that used to protect buyers from having to pay their real estate agent out-of-pocket. If you're a buyer, make sure you understand the Buyer's Brokerage Agreement you sign when you begin working with an agent—it's different than before.

Local real estate has remained resilient in 2024 through all of the turmoil of elections, interest rate and commission changes. That is a statement, in my opinion, about the enduring appeal of living and working in Clark County. People enjoy what our area has to offer: world-class scenery, moderate weather, our transportation network including an excellent international airport, and proximity to a larger, metropolitan area.

Through it all, the title company's role remains unchanged: a neutral, third party to help all parties get what they bargained for, and accomplish their goal of buying, selling, or refinancing. Everyone benefits from the care, knowledge and expertise we bring to your important transaction. We are grateful to play a leading role in support of local real estate.

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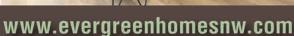
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Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)

A CENTURY AGO ...: What happened in 1925

#### by S.N.

- ACROSS 1 Good buddies
- 5 Map out
- 9 Thin coin 13 Ill-suited
- 18 Feeling sorry for
- 20 100 cents in Spain
- 21 Rocks from mines 22 Nary a soul
- 23 ...she won a Pulitzer for So Big
- 25 ...its Phantom luxury auto was first sold
- 27 Makeshift Frisbee 28 Weather map region
- 30 Trattoria courses
- 31 Inauguration ceremony 32 Fishing vessels
- 33 Late afternoon hour 34 Entices
- 37 Narrow ravine
- 38 Soft hugs
- 42 Rabbit relatives
- 43 ...a science teacher was convicted in what newspapers called this
- 45 Incoming plane stat.
- 46 Part of 77-Across: Abbr. 47 Salmon shade
- 48 Countrywide: Abbr.
- 49 Patriotic symbol
- 50 Color of the US 49-Across 51 ...this film with Chaplin as a
- prospector premiered 55 Director/screenwriter Coppola
- 56 Troop groups
- 58 Adolescent, for instance

- 60 Divers into lakes
- 61 Stirs to action

62 Central idea

- 63 Pay tribute to
- 65 Parisian waterway
- 66 Blend together 69 Novels' essences
- 70 ...this Gershwin orchestral work premiered
- 72 \_ out (get dressed)
- 73 Successful legislation
- 74 Diva's solo 75 Not doing anything
- 76 Life story. for short 77 Doc bloc: Abbr.
- 78 ...this countrywide
- grade-schoolers' contest was first held
- 82 Smashing, in show biz 83 Busy stores in December
- 85 Complained, as cattle 86 Feeds, as a fire
- 87 Stir to action
- 88 Passover feast
- 89 Give a grade to
- 90 Charlotte \_\_, VI
- 93 Goblet, for instance
- 94 Test of strength
- 98 ...this Odd Couple star was born
- 100 ...this Mexican began to paint
- 102 Disney's Little Mermaid
- 103 Yuletide trio
- 104 "\_\_ Lang Syne"
- 105 "Old Macdonald" ender
- 106 "I Am Woman" singer
- 107 Any tech sch.
- 108 Hinge (on)
- 109 Package of copy paper
- DOWN
- 1 Map out, for short 2 Car from Bavaria

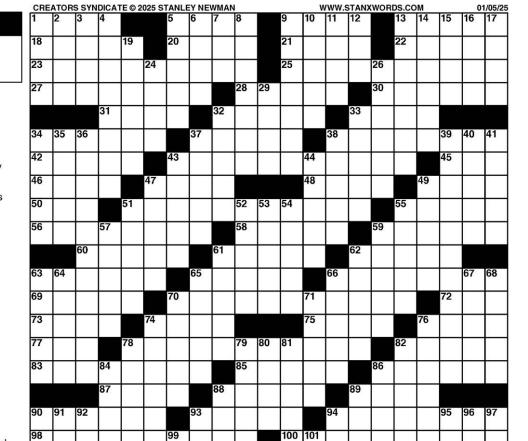
- The Newsday Crossword
  - 3 Row of a poem
  - 4 Access, as some purses 5 Western Australian city
  - 6 Oil change, informally 7 Consist of
  - 8 City on Chesapeake Bay
  - 9 Toto's owner
  - 10 Smooths, as shirtsleeves 11 Defrost
  - 12 Subj. for immigrants 13 Solve, as a mystery
  - 14 Lariat loops 15 Auto racing great A.J.
  - 16 Ancient Andes dweller 17 Golf bag supplies
  - 19 Black piano keys 24 Wears away
  - 29 Sprint or dash 32 Con game
  - 33 Trust in a person 34 Choreographer Twyla

26 Corkscrew shape

- 35 Three-legged stand 36 ...this Virginia Woolf novel
- was published 37 Cymbals' relatives
- 38 Computer malfunction 39 ...this photo accessory was
- first used (really!) 40 Web commerce
- 41 Katey of Married...With Children
- 43 Demeanors
- 44 Types of bolt fasteners 47 What a texter types on 49 Gift getter's question
- 51 Trumpet sounds 52 Song's words
- 53 Lorna of literature 54 More impolite

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- 55 Ledge for knickknacks
- 57 Speaks highly of
- 59 Macbeth title 61 Of punishment
- 62 Sheer linen fabric 63 Snowball fight sound
- 64 San Antonio shrine 65 Potting mixtures

Me"

66 Needing deciphering 67 Sam who sang "You Send

68 Toaster waffle brand

70 Pancake kin

103

107

- 71 Rome's river
- 74 Orbital high point 76 Publishers' trade show
  - 78 In a harsh-sounding manner

104

108

- 79 "You better believe me!"
- 80 Indicates agreement
- 81 Prospers
- 82 Putt, for instance 84 Was mopey
- 86 Lengthy tale 88 Tough travels
- 89 Caked with wet dirt 90 Not quite shut

109

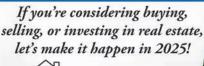
- 91 Colt's mother
- 92 Etching liquid
- 93 FBI guy 94 Cash drawer
- 95 "What fun!" 96 Et \_\_ (and others: Lat.)
- 97 Enough space
- 99 Start of this century
- 101 French thoroughfare
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102

106

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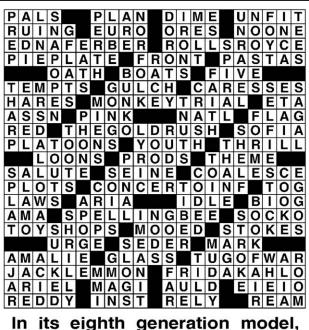
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**ROYCE Phantom** the ROLLS (25-Across) is still being sold SOFIA today. Coppola (55-Across) received Academy Award for her "Lost screenplay in Translation." which she also directed. As reported by the BBC, a 1925 photo shows a British man taking a picture of himself and his wife while holding a long (SELFIE) STICK (39-Down) pointed at the camera.

> You can contact crossword puzzle Stanley Newman editor www.StanXwords.com.

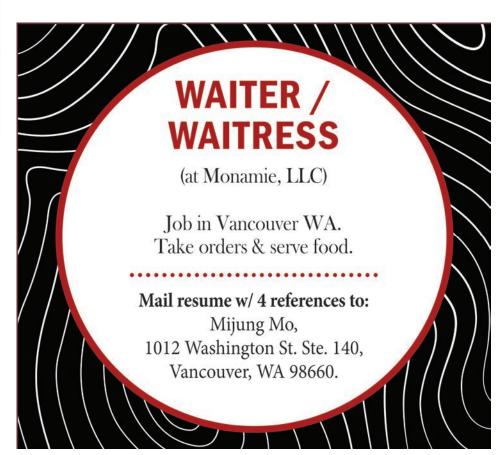
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