2010 home sales tad better than last year

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SENECA — In reviewing the local real estate market in 2010, agent Julie Allen grabbed on to something positive as she looks ahead to the New Year.

Despite the rocky road that she and other real estate professionals have traveled since the economy nosedived late in 2007, Allen sees better days ahead.

"My thoughts are that 2010 was better than last year," Allen said in her assessment. "These are the facts, our business is up.

Allen, who started Golden Corner Realty & Development in 2000, said that those real estate pros who "stuck it out" are getting most of the business.

November was not a good month for trying to sell a home, the latest South Carolina Association of Realtors housing market report reveals.

In the Western Upstate area that encompasses the counties of Anderson, Oconee and Pickens, home sales plummeted 20.2 percent compared to November 2009.

The 186 homes that did sell in the area were on the market an average 158 days, up more than 9 percent from a year ago.



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Local real estate professionals take solace that home sales year-to-date are up in 2010 over a year ago.

However, when looking at the big picture, Allen is right. This year was better than last according to year-to-date comparisons. The 2,557 homes sold through November of this year is up 3.2 percent from a year ago.

Allen said that despite the hard times, the South Carolina housing market was not rocked as badly as in other parts of the nation. Now she sees some positive signs that could translate to better business in 2011.

Allen said she started seeing retirees getting back in the market after being absent for the most part over the past two years.

"We've gotten a couple of retirees from Florida and a couple from New York," she said.

The market is particularly tricky for sellers because of the glut of repossessed homes in the market that sell for 25 to 30 percent less.

"That hurts folks trying to sell at a decent price," Allen said.

Still, Allen also is seeing first-time homebuyers in the market, which also is a good sign that the economy is picking up.

"My hope is we keep going in the right direction," she said.

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