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# Homes sales in Oconee are on a roll

## Sixty-one houses sold in July are best recorded since 99 sales posted in July 2007

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SENECA — The Oconee County real estate market is showing signs of life after posting positive home sales in July for the fourth consecutive month.

Seneca-based real estate agent Shane Clardy welcomed the trend and hopes it signals an end of the recession that has wreaked havoc on the market.

The 61 homes sold in July was a 15 percent increase from the 53 closings recorded in at the same time last year. Still, the number was off 38 percent from the 99 homes sold in July 2007.

Just the same, Chuck Kormelink of Lake & Land Realty embraced the numbers.

"We had our best month in July in 24 months," Kormelink said.

Although Oconee's numbers were up in July, the Western Upstate MLS that includes Anderson and Pickens was down almost 4 percent from a year ago, according to South Carolina Association of Realtors latest market report.

The Western Upstate notched 254 home sales in July compared to 264 last year, the report shows.

Year-to-date, 1,449 homes have sold in the Western Upstate, a decrease of 18.6 percent from a year ago. That's an improvement over statewide figures, which show July home sales down by 21.3 percent from last year.

Oconee County's increase in home sales began in April when 44 real estate deals closed. Subsequently, 51 homes sold in May, 54 in June and 61 last month.

Clardy thinks one of the reasons the local real estate market is improving is that home prices have remained relatively steady compared with other markets in the state, the region and the nation.

The median price of homes in July was $129,000 in the Western Upstate, or 3.7 percent less than the $134,000 median price at the same time last year. Year-to-date, the median price stands at $120,000 or 1.6 percent less than the $122,000 median price a year ago.