

## **For The Record**

Roger Cayce and I were both born and raised in West Seattle. We attended Fauntleroy Grade School, David T. Denny Jr. High and Chief Sealth High School. We opened our real estate business on California Avenue in January of 1980. This was considered one of the worst times in real estate. The national and local economy was horrible. Interest rates were 13 to 21%. The annual inflation was 28% plus. Most close to the industry felt we'd go broke within the first 6 months. We worked very hard and made it.

Well, it's all history now. We became the #1 real estate company in West Seattle by 1986. From 1986 to 2002, when we sold our real estate sales, mortgage and escrow companies, we consistently sold more real estate than any other real estate company in the south end of Seattle. We eventually became the #1 real estate company from West Seattle to Federal Way. We employed as many as 400 people, many who lived and worked in West Seattle. We were known as "the local professionals" and were well respected by many local home buyers and sellers, the business community and our peers. We were and are very proud of our accomplishments.

I have been a licensed real estate agent since 1977 and a licensed real estate broker since 1980. I have also been a certified real estate instructor by the Washington State Department of Licensing, certified to teach almost every accredited real estate subject.

I was elected to the board of directors for the Southwest Multiple Listing, the Puget Sound Multiple Listing Service and the Northwest Multiple Listing Service. I served as an officer for many years and was elected as the President and Chairman of the Board of each association. I was also elected as the President of the Independent Brokers Association. I was elected as the chairman of the regionalization Task Force by Tacoma Pierce County Multiple Listing Association and the Puget Sound Multiple Listing Association. I was an appointed board member for the Washington Information Network. I was appointed as the local representative for the National Association's Realtor Information Network. These were all positions voted on by peers in the real estate industry. I was elected and appointed because of my reputation for honesty and ethics.

Beginning in 1980 through 2002 we were very actively involved in our business and the community. In the early 80's we would meet every Friday morning to bag and deliver groceries for the food bank. We worked very hard and contributed numerous hours and donations to the Senior Center of West Seattle. Unfortunately many of the seniors we worked with are no longer with us, but the Senior Center appears to be doing quite well. I was one of the original Advisory Board of Directors for the West Seattle Help Line. During these years we were considered to be very generous donors to many charities and gave a lot of time, energy, effort and money to the community.


We have never been “two boys in a bubble” who don’t listen or care about the community.

We would not have been as successful as we were or built our business on repeat and referrals with the highest retention of sales people of any of our local competitors if we were “a couple of shady cons”.

We don’t appreciate having our integrity questioned.

We take offense to people who have moved here recently from Bainbridge Island, Texas and California who question our intentions, motives, or concern and care for a community we have been a part of our entire lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Gain", written in a cursive style.

Mike Gain

## MY WEST SEATTLE STORY

I'm a third generation West Seattleite. My grandfather built his family home on the 5900 block of California Avenue in the 1940's. For me, growing up in the 50's in West Seattle was a great experience. Watching old reruns of "Leave It To Beaver" remind me of what it was like here at that time. We would walk or ride our bikes to the West Seattle Junction or many of the little neighborhood grocery stores. Many of the business owners and their employees knew us by name or familiarity. We had everything we needed in our little community. The West Seattle Junction had a large J.C. Penney, West Seattle Sporting Goods, Kress's (what we use to call a "dime store" that had everything), West Seattle Feed & Seed, Carile's Furniture Store, La Grace Clothing Store, Shepards Drug Store, Mortons (with the little restaurant and ice creamery in the back), the Levi Store, Vann Brothers Restaurant, the Menu, the Granada Movie Theater, Jefferson Grade School, shoe stores, jewelry stores, card shops, the meat and fish market, the paint store, etc. etc. Oh, I almost forgot Pennies's Dog House and Zesto's. There was Husky Deli and thank God it is still here. There were no Metropolitan Markets, QFC's, PCC's, Starbucks, Jefferson Squares or condominiums. There were no shopping malls. Southcenter and the area to the south were farm and agricultural land. Just about anything we wanted or needed was right here in West Seattle.

We use to build camps and play in the many undeveloped areas in West Seattle that are now homes and commercial buildings. We played football and baseball in the street in front of our house and used the manhole covers and street drains for bases. We use to ice skate on the swamp that would freeze over in the winter on the property that use to be agricultural growing land in the 50's and is now Westwood Village. We rode our bikes with a group of neighborhood kids to Angle Lake to swim for the day. Our family would pack up the Ford station wagon to take a Sunday drive, to what was then considered the country, to have a picnic and swim at Lake Wilderness, Maple Valley's Cedar River, or take the big outing to lakes by Marysville. Even Bellevue was considered country to us, similar to a small West Seattle type of community and a long way away. There was not a 520 Bridge and the single Floating I-90 Bridge was adequate to handle the traffic. Issaquah and Lake Sammamish were really getting out in the country. A summer vacation was packing up the station wagon for a week of camping at Hood Canal.

It seems a lot of people would like to stop time and place. Wouldn't it be nice to go back to what we once had here? It was a simple time and life. My grandmother talked of her days at Luna Park, the Mosquito Fleet and the Alki summer vacation cabins that lined Alki Avenue. The trolley cars were a major source of their transportation in and around West Seattle. Wouldn't it be nice to have our parents and grandparents back in our lives?

I know its okay for you to be here, just no one else. Now that you are here and have what you want and need, lets stop here. No more change. No more growth.....  
NOT IN MY BACK YARD. I'm here now.

Well, back to reality. Things don't stay the same and stand still. I'm not sure if any of us would really want them to. Our country has always been a society of progress. Time marches on and things change. People, styles and fads come and go. I was always taught by my parents and the West Seattle schools I attended to work hard, excel, always do my best, improve things and to do my part to make this world and my community a better place.

In the 70's and early 80's West Seattle was dying on the vine and the local economy was not very good. Many of the commercial stores on California Avenue were out of business, rundown and vacant. West Seattle had become an eye sore. I'm happy to see our local economy so strong and hearing Seattle for the first time talked about as the best real estate market in the country. A healthy city and community must grow and change with the times and demands. I think it is great to see West Seattle alive, active and vibrant. I'd like to see West Seattle continue to grow and improve. I like seeing all the younger people moving in. The variety of restaurants, many are so busy that you have to wait to be seated. I think growth is healthy as long as it is controlled and well thought out. I don't want to see our growth out of control. Nobody who cares does.

I would not like to see our community become stagnant or go back to the old vacant run down store fronts. I like seeing the new businesses coming to our area. I would like to return to a time that I do not have to leave West Seattle to shop or go to dinner. West Seattle has come a long way. I think it is great and getting better. I would like to see the positive changes continue. I want to be a part of the continued growth and positive changes taking place in West Seattle. Let's keep it going.

The best kept secret is out. Like it or not, Seattle and West Seattle have been discovered. You can't expect a community 10 minutes from downtown, 20 minutes from the Seattle Tacoma Airport, and 20 minutes to Bellevue to stay the same. It is time we embrace change and update our community plans in West Seattle. Our current community plans in my opinion are very outdated and were discussed and written for another place and time.

Respectfully,

Mike Gain