

good will house hunting

BY CAROL SANTOS-LAICO

House hunting became our weekend past-time for several months until we found one house in Walnut County in the City of Concord. We moved here during the last week of June (this explains why we were not able to have a celebration on Timmy's 1st birthday last June 26). Our house was built in the mid-70's and it has 4 bedrooms, a study room and a 3-car garage.

We looked at so many houses that Jason and Leslie got bored most of the time and they would say, "Another one? Is this the last one? You promised!!!" On Timmy's part, he did not care at all -- if he was sleeping we would let him sleep in the car and Popoy and I took turns looking at the houses. I do not think the realtor liked the idea because he had to give each tour twice.

It was difficult looking for that perfect house because we had a budget, and we were looking for good schools, neighbors with young families, and a house near my place of work. On top of it all, it was a very hot real estate market. It was not uncommon to encounter multiple eager buyers. We made offers on quite a few houses only to be turned down because the sellers got better offers, sometimes more than the asking price. But it was the right time for us to move -- interest rates were low, we wanted good schools for the children, and we had a buyer whose purchase of our old house was contingent on our buying a replacement house.

We like our new house -- the children take the school bus to school which is about 2 miles from our house. Our Nana brings and picks up Jason and Leslie to and from the bus stop. This summer both of them took swimming lessons at the community pool which is a very short walk from the house. They also enjoy walking and biking in the nearby parks. It is also nice that most of the children in the neighborhood go to the same school. They also now go to Sunday school at St. Bonaventure Church. Jason is preparing for his first confession. He just memorized the Act of Contrition a few nights ago.

Timmy is enjoying the house as well. He likes the spacious family room where he can roam around. But he recently discovered putting his little fingers inside the VCR and the tape rewinder, and we had to rescue him on several occasions.



As for Popoy, his list of "To Do" items is very long and I am not sure he has the time to do all of the house repairs and improvements. He went back to school recently at UC Berkeley where he is taking computer classes three times a week.

As for me, I like the convenience of being able to go home from time to time during my lunch hour, to be with Leslie and Timmy, to take the children to doctors' appointments and go back to work, and of course, to have leftover home-cooked lunch, which nothing can beat.

Finally, after all the hustle and bustle of moving, it is time to settle in. We do not look forward to dealing with the boxes that are still waiting to be unpacked, but we look forward to the new experiences that await us in this house that we now call HOME.

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