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**Spring/Summer 2015  
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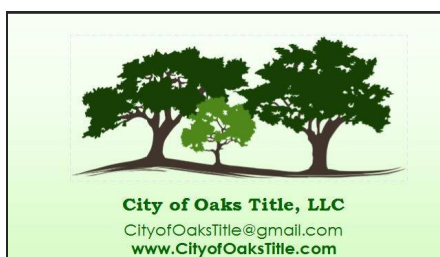


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## Index rises for all four major regions

by Trey Garrison  
May 28, 2015

Pending home sales rose in April for the fourth straight month and reached their highest level in nine years, according to the National Association of Realtors.

Led by the Northeast and Midwest, all four major regions saw increases in April.

The index has now increased year-over-year for eight consecutive months and is at its highest level since May 2006 (112.5).

"The only time since then that we've come close to this level of home contracts written was in April 2010 when the new home tax credit expired (part of the stimulus program)," says Jonathan Smoke, chief economist for realtor.com.

"Sales would be even higher if inventory was growing as quickly as demand, but instead we've had 32 straight months of the supply of existing homes on the market under 6 months," he said. "That's why we're seeing higher levels of price appreciation this year. That higher level of

price appreciation is encouraging more people to consider buying and/or selling and levels of reported foot traffic by Realtors reinforce that. All this bodes well for continued momentum into May and June."

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says the steady gains in contract activity each month this year highlight the fact that buyer demand is strong.

"Realtors are saying foot traffic remains elevated this spring despite limited — and in some cases severe — inventory shortages in many metro areas," he said. "Homeowners looking to sell this spring appear to be in the driver's seat, as there are more buyers competing for a limited number of homes available for sale."

Yun predicts the likelihood of meaningful gains will depend on a much-needed boost in inventory and evidence of moderating price growth now that interest rates have started to rise.

Read more: [http://www.housingwire.com/articles/34021-pending-home-sales-rise-to-highest-in-nine-years-in-april?utm\\_source=twitterfeed&utm\\_medium=linkedin+company+page](http://www.housingwire.com/articles/34021-pending-home-sales-rise-to-highest-in-nine-years-in-april?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=linkedin+company+page)



**Tessa's award-worthy-summer-salsa recipe is super-simple:**

Chop tomatoes, red onion, cilantro, jalapenos. Add fresh lime juice, garlic powder, salt and pepper, then Toss and refrigerate

**Mason Jar Banana Pudding**

- 1 (3.5 oz.) box instant vanilla pudding
- 2 cups milk
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 5-6 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 bags Pepperidge Farm Chessmen cookies, coarsely crushed
- 4-6 bananas, sliced



1. In a medium bowl, whisk together the pudding and milk.
2. In a separate bowl, beat the cream cheese and sweetened condensed milk with an electric mixer until smooth.
3. Stir the pudding mixture into the cream cheese mixture and mix well.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat the cream, sugar and vanilla until soft peaks form.
5. Fold 1 cup of the whipped cream into the pudding mixture.
6. In a glass jar, layer about 1/8 cup of cookie crumbs, 6 slices of banana, 1/3 cup of pudding mixture and 1/4 cup whipped cream. Repeat once.
7. Sprinkle additional cookie crumbs on top of the last layer of whipped cream. Refrigerate until serving.
8. If desired, garnish with fresh banana slices just before serving.



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Truly yours,  
*Becki and Tessa*

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