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## KDVR

### Realtor's flag give-away draws mixed reviews

by Charlie Brennan

Reporter

July 3, 2009

LAFAYETTE

About 750 Lafayette homeowners looked out their windows on the eve of the nation's birthday, to find that they'd received a surprise seasonal gift - an American flag, planted at the foot of their driveways.

"I didn't know where they came from, but i really liked it," said Carol Heiden, who lives in the Beacon Hill subdivision, one of two where the mystery flags sprang up.

"I thought one of my roommates had placed it there," said Dennis Smith, "and then I noticed there's one on all the different houses on the block."

And the next block. And the next one.

Unnoticed by many, was that on the 18-inch stick to which each flag was affixed, was a small sticker bearing the name, and phone number, of a Boulder-based realtor.

As patriotic a display as it first appeared, the flags - all 750 of them - were advertisements. Not all who received them - appreciated the marketing strategy.

"I think that's a little tacky, I really do," said homeowner Jacqueline Birmingham. "It's a lot different than just putting these flags out in the neighborhood, to say 'Happy Fourth of July, let's get in the spirit of things.

"Even a company logo on there would have been fine. But for a name and a phone number...it's, I don't know, maybe un-American."

"I feel that everybody should have the choice to hang the flag or not, and it shouldn't be used as an advertising gimmick," said Smith. "I just think it should be a personal choice to fly the flag or not to fly the flag to show your patriotism, and it shouldn't be mixed in with advertising."

But many seemed to welcome the gift of the Stars and Stripes, and most were content to leave them right where they found them.

"Times are tough, and I'd do it if I needed to get some business," said homeowner Jeff Meyer. "If it takes, you know, putting out flags for a little business, I think it's a good thing."

Also welcoming the red, white and blue - regardless of where it came from, or from whom - was homeowner Barb Amador.

"It just made me smile," she said. "I like seeing the flag, out. I didn't know who put them there, but I kind of liked seeing them, as I came down the street. I don't really care who put them there. I just think it's a great thing, that somebody cares enough to put the flags out."

Amador added, "I'm going to put my own flag out, as well."

The man behind the flag campaign is Brad Klein, a broker with Boulder-based Real Estate of the Rockies.

He said his motive was to "beautify the neighborhood, rally behind the flag," as well, he admitted, as to "get my name out there."

Thursday evening, Klein and some "kids" he'd hired were going to be in the Rock Creek neighborhood, distributing another 3,000 flags.

He said he has done such a distribution a number of years running, but that this was the first time he had done the give-away in Lafayette.

"I've been getting a lot of nice calls, a lot of thank-yous," he said.