



November 2011

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Inside This Issue...

Holiday Dangers for Children...Pg 1

Exotic Vacations...Pg 2

Internet Webs Family Together...Pg 3

Newest Consumer Watchdog...Pg 3

Win a \$50 Gift Card to Boston
Market...Pg 4

How Can I Make My Home Appear
Larger?...Pg 4



Don Puryear's...



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"Insider Tips For Healthy, Wealthy & Happy Living..."

Holiday Dangers for Children

With families gathering, special occasions and all the delicious treats, the holiday season creates precious memories that can last an entire lifetime. Unfortunately, the emergency rooms become part of the tradition for too many kids. Watch out for these dangers:

- ❖ **Poisonous plants** like mistletoe, poinsettias and holly are commonly used for holiday décor, but they should be kept out of the reach of kids. Plant poisoning symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, and skin rashes. If you have any suspicion of plant poisoning, call your doctor or the National Poison Center: (800) 222-1222. And, yes, that's a real phone number!
- ❖ **Alcohol poisoning** of children is common during the holiday season. Parents often host parties where alcohol is served and the kids imitate the adults. Small amounts of an adult beverage can make a kid "drunk" and in danger of injuring themselves. Remove all empty and partially finished cups as soon as possible to keep them away from small hands.
- ❖ **Food poisoning** can also pose a potential threat to children. Practice food safety by washing hands, dishes, cutting boards and utensils with particular care toward items that come in contact with raw meat or poultry. Refrigerate leftover food quickly to avoid contamination.
- ❖ **Choking and swallowing hazards** are everywhere during the holidays. Tree ornaments, icicles, tinsel and small toys can be partially swallowed and end up blocking the child's airway. If it is small enough to get inside a small child's mouth, it is too small to leave out and accessible.
- ❖ **Cuts, skin irritation, or eye damage** can be caused by the needles of holiday trees, angel hair (made from spun glass) and ornament hangers.

No one wants to remember a trip to the emergency room over the holidays. Being aware of fire hazards, increased accidents during busy shopping times, and watching for the dangers listed above should help you and your family have a safe and happy holiday season.



Joker's Corner

Why do turkeys always go,
"Gobble, gobble?"

*Because they never learned
good table manners!*

Why didn't the turkey eat
dessert?

He was already stuffed!

Expensive Art Attack

Artwork from the Old Masters is still in great demand. In a Sotheby's auction that totaled more than \$76.5 million in sales, more than half was paid for a single painting: Francesco Guardi's "Venice." It was estimated to sell at only \$2 million. This significant work went for a whopping \$42 million plus.

Smart Phone; Dumb People

We all are aware of the stupidity of texting while driving. Yet thousands are injured or killed because people think they are too busy to wait until they reach a safe place to send or respond to a text. If you feel strongly about not texting while driving, take the pledge at www.txtresponsibly.org

Can They Hear You Now?

If you are trying to communicate with someone who has trouble hearing, make sure you eliminate all other background noise such as television and radio.

Notable Quotables...

*Keep your fears to yourself, but share
your inspiration with others.*

—Robert Lewis Stevenson

*Not everything that counts can be
counted; and not everything that can be
counted counts.*

—Albert Einstein

*When we do the best that we can, we
never know what miracle is wrought in
our life, or in the life of another.*

—Helen Keller

Exotic Vacation - Just Like Home

Do you dream of vacationing next summer on the beaches of Hawaii?

Can you imagine yourself climbing the mountains in Alaska or swinging to the tunes in New Orleans?

Or, would you love to go to Europe if you could only afford it?

The Internet has caused an explosion of "vacation exchange" networks where you can leverage your own home for the vacation of a lifetime without paying more than your current cost of living. Here's how it works:

You can stay in a beautiful property on the ocean, in the mountains or even in a foreign country by **swapping a stay in your home for a stay in someone else's home** and save thousands on lodging costs.

Websites like www.homeexchange.com have international listings in more than 140 countries around the world. You can do some limited searches to find potential homes or pay a small monthly fee to access all the homes in the exchange network. They guarantee you will find a home exchange partner in the first year or the second year is free.

Other services offer help finding **vacation or second home** where someone doesn't have to swap homes with you at the same time. This can increase your chances of finding what you want. If that sounds like a fit for your family, look at the program at this website: www.thevacationexchange.com.

If you want to enjoy a **longer stay or sabbatical**, the site www.4homex.com has that search feature. They also allow you to look for luxury homes, family homes, seniors and singles.

Where have you always wanted to travel but thought it was beyond your budget? Maybe this idea is the perfect solution to combine the adventure and excitement of travel with all the conveniences of staying in a home.

Body by Beth: Make Simple Switches this Thanksgiving

To get a better body, there's one simple rule: Nutrition/Diet is 85% of the solution...or problem in this society of oversized portions. This Thanksgiving, don't get carried away with the potatoes and meat; put more veggies on your plate. If you're the chef, make some simple substitutions that most won't miss.

Instead of:

Butter or Margarine for Baking

Eggs

Meat as Main Ingredient

Iceberg Lettuce

White Rice/Pasta

Try:

Applesauce for half the called-for butter

2 egg whites or ¼ cup of egg substitute per 1 egg

3 times as many veggies in casseroles or stews

Raw Spinach, Arugula, Mustard Greens, Kale

Brown/Wild Rice, Whole Wheat or Gluten Free Pasta

Brain Teaser...

Which is heavier: a pound of gold or a pound of feathers?

(See page 4 for the answer.)

Fire Risk Traveling Abroad

When in foreign countries, including Europe, fire codes are not as stringent for hotels as you will find in the US.

Take these precautions to stay safe:

- Choose a modern hotel that caters to travelers.
- Ask for a room no higher than the eighth floor where fire departments can reach you in an emergency.
- Count the number of doors between your room and the exit stairs.

Job Opportunity Over 50

An increasing number of companies are noticing the value of their mature employees. You can learn which companies are hiring team members over 50 by visiting www.aarp.org (Then search for "Best Employers").

Financial Planning For Special Needs Kids

The needs of disabled children often outlive the parents. Many financial firms assist with financial planning and provide information about various government services.

With sound professional advice, parents can draft letters of intent for future caregivers. Costs will vary for these services. Find a few resources at: www.metlife.com and www.copaa.org

Think About It

Of course the chicken came first. God would look really silly sitting on an egg!

Why are the people who snore always the first ones to fall asleep?

Did You Know You Can Get An IRS Audit After You Die?

This is one more good reason to keep complete and accurate records. The IRS can audit you for up to 3 years after your death and hold your surviving spouse liable for income and deductions you took while you were living.

Internet Webs Family Together

If relatives live far away or children are grown, it is hard to keep in touch with the extended family that means so much to us. There are now dozens of great sharing tools online that can help you stay connected with your loved ones. Try a few of these family-linking tools:

- ◆ **History** is easily shared with www.myheritage.com, www.geni.com, or even Facebook with applications like www.familybuilder.com. To research family history, try: www.ancestry.com or www.familysearch.com.
- ◆ **Photos** no longer need to be handed around the kitchen table to recall the good times you have shared. Leading the pack is www.flickr.com where you can share memories captured in pictures. Other sites to explore are: www.snapfish.com, www.keepandshare.com and www.photobucket.com.
- ◆ **Reunions** are made easier with sites like www.family-reunion.com. Find tips for planning the perfect family event at www.reunionsmag.com, www.familyreuniontips.com and www.familyreunion.com.
- ◆ **Multifunction** sites like www.myfamily.com, www.familycrossings.com and www.familydetails.com allow you to stay connected with event calendars, a family blog, a family address book, photo and video sharing, settings for privacy, social media integration, mobile apps to access anywhere, and extensive archive ability to keep your family memories safe.



The Newest Consumer Watchdog

This year, the US Congress established the **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)** to protect consumers. Charged with protecting the public against scams and rip-offs related to credit products, this bureau gives consumers a method for reporting deceptive programs and learning where to get help. Their new website offers a list of useful resources:

1. Submit a complaint against a credit card company at: www.consumerfinance.gov
2. Get educated about consumer financial products on this page: www.consumerfinance.gov/get-help-now
3. If you're having trouble paying your mortgage, go to: www.consumerfinance.gov/mortgagehelp

You can also get connected to a HUD-approved housing counselor through this website. At no cost to you, they can work with your mortgage company to help you avoid a foreclosure. Call me if you have any questions, and I'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

For real estate information and home tips, visit www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com

Thanks for Thinking of Me!

Did you know I can help you or any of your friends or family save time and money when buying or selling a home **anywhere in the world?**

RE/MAX sells more real estate than any other company, and we have over **100,000** agents worldwide – resources and experience we can make available to YOU! Thanks for keeping me in mind with your referrals...and spreading the word!

Brain Teaser Answer:

The feathers are heavier because they are measured in 16 ounce Avoirdupois pounds. Gold is measured in 12 ounce Troy pounds.

Funny Misprints

- Hot listing just pooped up (popped)
- Has god bones (good)
- Ice warm fireplace (nice)
- Home feces south (faces)
- Great guy at \$298/foot (buy)

Pets Show You How To Heal

Your pets are great role models about health and healing. Take these three tips from the way they approach health.

Pets instinctively know how to survive. All pet owners can testify that their four-legged companions will ask for what they need.

Naps are an important part of your pet's life. When they are tired, they find a comfortable spot to rest.

Notice how much you give attention to your pets, and care for yourself showing that much attention.

THANK YOU for reading my **Service For Life!** newsletter. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome. And whether you're thinking of buying, selling or leasing, or just simply want to say "Hi," I'd love to hear from you!



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Who Wants to Win a \$50 Gift Card to Boston Market?

Congratulations to Shane Yelverton for answering last month's trivia question correctly. Enjoy your prize! Here's the question, if you missed it!

What animal has the most taste buds?

- a) Shark b) Elephant c) Catfish d) Giraffe

The answer is c) Catfish. They have taste buds both inside their mouth and on the outside of their body. Combined, catfish actually have more than 20 times the number of taste buds as humans. So, let's move on to *this* month's trivia question.

How many feathers does a mature turkey have?

- a) 2500 b) 5500 c) 3500 d) 6500

Email me at DonPuryear@remax.net, and you could be one of my next winners!

Real Estate Corner...

Q. How can I make my home appear larger without remodeling?

A. There are many tricks to fool the eye and make each room in your home to appear larger than its actual dimensions. Try a few of these tips:

Use mirrors to reflect the focal point of your room. The mirror will give the space depth, echo the beauty of your focal point and reflect light to make the room much brighter.

Lighting will expand the look of the space, too. If you don't have ample sunlight, add some lighting fixtures along the outside perimeter of the room to add color and focus attention in the distance.

Coordinate the color of furniture to blend with the soft, light hues of your wall surfaces. The monochromatic color scheme avoids the choppy look of contrasting colors and opens up the space.

Clear the clutter from the room. Having fewer things that could distract the eye makes the room seem more spacious. Narrow your décor items to only the things you love. Without the excess clutter, you will have a relaxed, open area that appears inviting and roomy.

If you have any questions or need capable and trustworthy representation, please call me at 713-302-6543.

For real estate information and home tips, visit www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com