



Don Puryear's...



# Service For Life!®

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

Don't forget to protest your property assessment! The deadline is May 31<sup>st</sup>!

If you need the form, email me at [DonPuryear@REMAX.net](mailto:DonPuryear@REMAX.net)

April/May 2010

Broker Associate, ABR, CRS, CLHMS  
Accredited Luxury Home Specialist  
Certified Distressed Property Expert  
NAR's Green Designation  
Licensed Attorney  
Owner-Happy Tails Dog Spa

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[www.glasbergen.com](http://www.glasbergen.com)

"If the seller is willing to replace the roof, add a deck, put in a fireplace and an indoor pool, extend the livingroom by 15 feet and move the whole place to the other side of town, then were *definitely* interested!"



## Learn Almost Anything Online For **FREE**



You don't have to *pay* for a college degree program to learn over the internet. Whether you want to fix a leaky faucet, speak Chinese, or listen to a lecture on world history, there's plenty of educational material available for *free*. Here are some good places to start (and some you might not have thought of):

- **YouTube.** Funny videos aside, YouTube also has an education channel. Select from categories ranging from Business to Social Science from universities and other institutions at [www.youtube.com/edu](http://www.youtube.com/edu).
- **The History Channel.** On their site at [www.history.com](http://www.history.com) you'll find videos on subjects from the Civil War to Space Exploration.
- **DiscoveryEducation.com.** Go here for videos on math, science, social studies and more that you can use to help your kids with their homework.
- **University of California-Berkeley.** Go to [webcast.berkeley.edu](http://webcast.berkeley.edu) to download hundreds of video or audio courses and on-campus lectures.
- **The BBC.** Visit [www.bbc.co.uk/languages](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages) to study everything from Italian to Chinese. Taking a trip? Learn essential phrases in 36 languages.
- **AcademicEarth.org.** Watch lectures on subjects from Computer Science to Mathematics and Law given by professors from universities such as Harvard, MIT and UCLA.
- **OpenCulture.com.** This site is a guide to thousands of hours of the latest educational content on the web. Readers will be especially interested in the section on free e-books you can read on your computer.

Houston has an incredible zoo, and now is a great time to get out and see the animals! Ticket prices range from \$6-\$11 depending on age. For information about membership pricing and privileges, visit [www.houstonzoo.org](http://www.houstonzoo.org), and click on **Zoo Memberships**.



**PROTEST DEADLINE:** With few exceptions, the deadline for protesting Harris County Appraisal District's assessment of your property value is May 31<sup>st</sup>. You can file your protest yourself online at [www.HCAD.org](http://www.HCAD.org) or engage a professional to assist you. Laura Mullen handles my protests, and she can be reached at **713-526-5978** or by email at [LMullen@MullenConsultingLLC.com](mailto:LMullen@MullenConsultingLLC.com).



MEMORIAL DAY - MAY 31, 2010

Originally known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day is a time of remembrance and commemoration for those who gave their lives fighting to provide us the freedoms we enjoy in America. Remember our Veterans!

Get Free money-saving home tips at my web site: [www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com](http://www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com)

## Joker's Corner



What did the grape do when it got stepped on?

It let out a little wine!

## facebook

Are you proud of your neighborhood, or do you want to promote a local event? Use our Fan Page on Facebook, [NoPlaceLikeHouston.com](http://NoPlaceLikeHouston.com)! This page is centered on what makes Houston great – its residents. So bring it all: events, neighborhood information or great local dives. Let us hear from you!

## Household Alert!

You may be showering yourself with germs. Researchers who examined shower heads in 9 cities found a third of them had bacteria that can cause respiratory disease. When cleaning your bathroom, don't forget the showerhead!



## WANTED: Skilled Hackers?

Did you know that today's hacker may be tomorrow's cyber security specialist? The nation's top hackers recently competed in the U.S. Cyber Challenge in Washington D.C. The purpose was to find and develop 10,000 potential specialists who can use their unique skills for the nation's good rather than for illegal purposes.



## Words of Wisdom

The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it. ~Chinese proverb

Some cause happiness wherever they go. Others, WHENEVER they go. ~Oscar Wilde

## Give your landscape a facelift!



Try our friend, Jeff Mobley with **Brave Landscapes**  
713-502-0202  
He's reliable and friendly!



## Keeping Your Credit Cards In Check

Some new rules protecting credit card holders went into effect on Feb. 22, 2010. Make sure you are holding them accountable. Now, your credit card company has to tell you:

- 💰 **When they increase your rate or other fees. Additionally, they must give you 45 days' notice.** Also, they can't raise the interest rate on an existing balance unless you're more than 60 days late with a payment.
- 💰 **How long it will take to pay off your balance.** It will say on your bill how long it will take if you only make minimum payments, and how much you'd need to pay each month to pay off your balance in three years.



Make sure you don't just hold the companies accountable. Be sure to hold YOURSELF accountable. Here are a few tips to keep yourself in check:

- 💰 **Pay on time.** Companies are required to mail or deliver your bill at least 21 days (instead of 14) before your payment is due. Plan accordingly.
- 💰 **Stay below your credit limit.** You will, however, be given the choice to "opt-in" to over-the-limit transactions. If you opt-in and go over your limit, your credit card company can impose only one fee per billing cycle.
- 💰 **Try to make more than the minimum payment.** You'll pay less interest in the long run.
- 💰 **Shop for the best deal.** Don't forget to check out local banks or credit unions when you're looking for a card with the best rate.
- 💰 **Read your mail.** They may give you 45 days notice on a rate change, but you won't know if you don't open the envelope if it looks like junk mail.

## Is Stress Taking Control?

Stress can lead to heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, weight gain, immunity problems and psychological illnesses. We all need to take a step back and actively remove stress from our overworked and thinly spread lives. Here are some tips that can add minor relief to your stress-filled day:

**Drink Tea** to lower Cortisol levels in your body which is considered the "stress hormone."

**Eat healthy foods at regular intervals.** Don't skip meals and don't rely on junk food when you're short on time. With careful planning, you'll always have great options for balanced meals and healthy snacks.

**Take a walk** in some fresh air. Sunlight and nature help revive the senses.

**Read a good book or see a movie.** Sometimes a short mental escape can make all the difference in the world.

**Laugh!** Log on to Youtube or Google to find a great comedian or bloopers. A good belly laugh has great psychological and physiological benefits. When you find a great one, be sure to share it with friends and family!

**Socialize.** Spend time with people you enjoy being around.



## Brain Teaser

I move very slowly, at an imperceptible rate.  
 Although I take my time,  
 I am never late.  
 I accompany life, and I survive  
 past demise.  
 I am viewed with esteem in  
 many women's eyes.  
*What am I?*  
 (Answer on Page 4)

### National Hamburger Month!

May is National Hamburger Month! Celebrate by grilling some hamburgers for Memorial Day, but give them a new kick!

Ever heard of a German Burger, Sate Burger or Carpetbagger Burger? Neither did I until visiting [www.hamburger-recipes.com](http://www.hamburger-recipes.com)! There are some yummy ideas!



### Exercise for Your Mouth

Try tackling this tongue twister. Say it three times fast...or maybe even once!



*"The sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick."*

### Interpretation Says it All!

A man's son sat down in the driver's seat in anticipation of his driving lesson.



"The first thing you should do is make adjustments so you feel ready to drive," the father said.  
 "So what's the first thing you think you should do?" he asked.  
 "Change the radio station," his son said.

*It is never too late to be what you might have been.*








~George Eliot






## Save Green Using Green Products!

There are some household products that we all buy regularly, which are fairly inexpensive and are far less harsh on the planet than some of the other cleaning products on the market.

Vinegar is a great Universal Elixirs:

-  Clean your iron by filling its reservoir with vinegar and then steam a soft cloth. Repeat process with water to finish.
-  Clean your dishwasher by pouring a cup of vinegar where the detergent should be; then, run the cycle. Repeat once-a-month.
-  Chrome, Stainless Steel and mirrors can be de-spotted and shined by wiping with full-strength vinegar.
-  Remove furniture rings with equal parts of vinegar and olive oil, and rub with the grain.
-  Clothes will rinse better if a cup of vinegar is added to the final rinse.

Hydrogen Peroxide is not just for disinfecting or cleaning cuts:

-  Disinfect countertops and cutting boards. Put a little on a dish rag and rub down to kill any bacteria and keep your kitchen smelling fresh.
-  Mix 50% Hydrogen Peroxide and 50% Water to clean bathtubs, sinks and Toilets.
-  Pour a little over your toothbrush after every use.
-  Mix 1 oz in 1 quart of water and water your plants. It adds oxygen to the soil and helps roots grow.
-  Some people lightly comb their hair with Hydrogen Peroxide for some sun-kissed highlights.

## Why Should You Learn To Text?

Do you think texting is just for kids? Not a chance. Adults find this form of communication very productive in business and in their personal lives.

**It improves your chances of communicating when it counts.** During an emergency, such as a natural disaster, voice networks can get congested and calls may not go through. Texts, which use less bandwidth, have a higher likelihood of being transmitted. Plus, if you're texting, you are freeing up the voice lines for emergency officials to use.


**You may soon be able to receive Presidential alerts on national emergencies, imminent threat alerts on things such as hurricanes or tornadoes, and child abduction alerts.** The government is developing a nationwide system to allow participating wireless-service providers to send these texts to their subscribers. A number of colleges and universities already have systems.



**The new generation is used to communicating this way.** You should know how to speak their language on a basic level, and sometimes it is the only way you'll be able to get a response from them! If you don't know how, look online. There are hundreds of videos and websites to help.

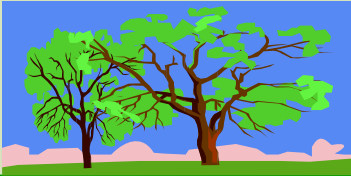
Get Free money-saving home tips at my web site: [www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com](http://www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com)

## We Appreciate Your Referrals

Did you know I can help you or any of your friends, family or acquaintances save time and money when buying or selling a home **ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD?**  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!

### Save a Tree!

Please help us reduce paper consumption! Email us at [Admin@PuryearTeam.com](mailto:Admin@PuryearTeam.com) to be added to our list for electronic delivery of our monthly newsletter!



### Brain Teaser Answer:

Hair

### Records Are Back!

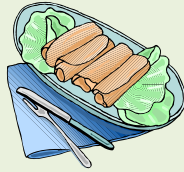
Only now they call them “vinyl.” Buy them new online at Amazon or Borders, or buy them used at sites like [www.gemm.com](http://www.gemm.com). For a turntable, check out a big box store...or go to a thrift store and buy back the one you gave them a few years ago.

**THANK YOU** for reading my Service For Life!® newsletter. Your constructive feedback is always welcome. **AND**...whether you're thinking of buying, selling or leasing real estate, or just want to say “Hi,” I'd love to hear from you...



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## Who Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card to *Chipotle*?

Congratulations to Mary Lyons, Steve Urban and Deborah Vanderhoef, winners of last month's trivia question:

**The First Rodeo in the world was held on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1883.  
Where was that Rodeo?**



a) San Antonio b) Pecos c) Mexico d) Madrid e) Dallas

The answer is **b) Pecos**. Congratulations, Winners! This month's trivia question is:

**What is the nationally recognized flower of Memorial Day?**

a) Carnation b) Red Poppy c) Bluebonnet  
d) Red Rose e) Indian Paintbrush

*Be one of the first four people to email me the correct answer at [DonPuryear@remax.net](mailto:DonPuryear@remax.net), and you could be one of my next winners!*

## Real Estate Corner...

**Q. We are planning to make major home improvements. I am worried about getting our investment back when we decide to sell. How do we know if we are spending wisely?**

A. When remodeling, you must weigh the cost of the remodel versus the value of the finished product. When I say “value,” I am not only talking about resale value, but I am talking about the value of the remodel to you personally. Some important questions to ask are how long you will be staying in your home and what benefits will the remodeling project bring to your daily life.

Regarding resale value, your remodeling project needs to be assessed based on your neighborhood. The best home improvements are cosmetic improvements. Minor updates to the kitchen and bathrooms, or a new roof are always valuable. Aesthetic additions such as new carpeting or paint are another type of remodeling project that returns almost 100 percent of their cost to the value of your home. Some options, like resurfacing kitchen & bathroom counters and tile rather than replacing them, can give a completely updated feel at a fraction of the cost.

For larger projects, the average return within one year after the remodel varies. Major kitchen remodeling gives an average return of 87 percent, a family room addition at 84 percent, a master suite averages 82 percent, and window replacement 68 percent. As you can see from these examples, your remodeling project will always add some degree of value to your home.

When remodeling, it is important to remember that you will be selling your home someday and you need to make wise remodeling decisions. You must weigh the up-front cost of the project versus the usefulness to you and added value to your home.

*Get Free money-saving home tips at my web site: [www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com](http://www.NoPlaceLikeHouston.com)*