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Donald Puryear

Service For Life![®]

“Insider Tips For Healthy, Wealthy & Happy Living...”

Going on Vacation? Here's How To Protect Yourself and Your Home

Each year, thousands of vacationers experience the inconvenience, expense and frightful effects of crime. You might think I'm talking about physical assault, but statistics indicate there's a much more common crime: personal theft while on vacation.

Although summer and holidays are the most popular time for vacations, anytime you travel for business or pleasure, you can become a target for burglars and thieves. Many of them are watching and waiting for just the right opportunity to strike.

Here are a few tips to dramatically reduce your chances of becoming a victim:

Protecting Your Home:

- ✓ When leaving your home, double check all doors and window locks, and purchase slide-lock protection for sliding doors – a frequent point of entry for burglars. The locks cost less than a dollar and simply screw onto your window frame. Garage windows and doors, also a frequent point of entry, should be secured.
- ✓ Ask a friend to stop by your home at different times while you are away, or to be a house sitter. Ask them to turn on lights at night, or consider buying a light timer set for every evening. Setting up multiple timers in alternating rooms works best. Radio timers are also a good idea.
- ✓ Temporarily cancel newspaper subscriptions and postpone mail delivery, unless you've made arrangements for someone to pick up these items on a daily basis.
- ✓ Engrave your name or an identifiable number (your own “secret code”) on large valuables. It makes them less attractive to burglars, and makes them easier to identify and recover if they are stolen.
- ✓ Consider installing an alarm system, which can serve not only as protection, but may qualify you for a discount on your homeowner's insurance.
- ✓ If you have more than one car, park your second vehicle in your driveway while you're away. If you will be away for more than a week, ask a friend to change the position of the car a few times during your absence.
- ✓ Move expensive electronic equipment away from the windows where they might be visible.
- ✓ Don't give your home a “closed-down” look by completely shutting drapes and blinds.

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Word For The Month...

Experts say a strong vocabulary is a sign of higher intellect and advanced culture. Here's this month's word, so you can impress your friends and colleagues...

Moribund \mohr-eh-behnd\ (adj.)

Meaning: Inactive or becoming outmoded. Obsolete.

Example Sentence: Mr. Keebles refuses to part with his **moribund** IBM cardpunch machine and mainframe computer in his computer technology class at the high school.

Consumer Corner...

Here are a few neat tricks you can use around your home.

- ♦ **Nutritious Soft Drinks:** Does your family drink too many soft drinks? A healthy substitute is to add a little club soda, ginger ale or lemon lime soft drink to your favorite juices.
- ♦ **Iron Maintenance:** Does your iron pull and drag on fabric because of brown spots on the sole plate? Rub it with a mixture of heated vinegar and salt to remove the mineral deposits. The inside of the iron may need cleaning, too. Fill the water reservoir with white vinegar water and let the iron heat and steam for a few minutes. Pour out the vinegar water and rinse with clean water. Before using on clothes, steam iron on an old rag until the steam runs clear.
- ♦ **Handy Bags:** Throw a couple plastic grocery bags into your car's glove compartment. They will come in handy on outings to hold little treasures like wet bathing suits, fast-food trash, or anything you need to seal quickly and easily.
- ♦ **Garbage disposal odors:** Pour a cup of vinegar into an ice tray and fill the rest with water. (Add food coloring to identify the tray.) Once a week, drop a few of the ice cubes into the garbage disposal. The vinegar will clean it, and the ice will keep the blades sharp. Orange or lemon peels will also give the disposal a pleasant smell.
- ♦ **Cleaning windows:** Newspaper is still the best material to clean glass. Use two tablespoons of vinegar mixed with a quart of warm tap water.

- ✓ Make sure your homeowner's policy is paid and the policy suits your current needs.
- ✓ Arrange for lawn and landscaping services if your trip will be longer than a week.
- ✓ Never leave spare keys "hidden" under doormats or anywhere outside your home.
- ✓ If you're departing from a local airport, don't write your personal address on your luggage tags. Use a business address instead.

While On Vacation:

- ✓ Use a hotel safe to store valuable items instead of leaving them in your hotel room.
- ✓ Keep the entry and balcony doors locked and use deadbolts and chains wherever possible.
- ✓ Don't open the door to anyone. Even if a hotel repairman shows up, call the front desk to verify that a repairman has been sent.
- ✓ Don't leave keys lying around when you're at the beach or pool.
- ✓ Always lock your car, even if you will be gone for just a few minutes.
- ✓ At night, park in a lighted, visible place. If someone seems to be following you to your car, walk past it and find help.

All it takes is a little common sense and forethought, and you can measurably reduce your chances of becoming a victim of crime.

Word of Mouth – Referrals

When you need services – like a doctor, dentist, hair stylist, lawyer, repair technician or contractor – or when you are looking for a great restaurant, movie or travel destination, what is the best source for recommendations? **Referrals** from friends, family and coworkers....people you trust who can share their experience and help you avoid wasting your time and money!

Did you know that the majority of my clients are referred to me by those who know me and have experienced my professionalism and integrity? Referrals are the cornerstone of my real estate practice.

Please take a moment to think of someone in your life who you believe may be buying, selling or investing in real estate soon. I would truly appreciate your telling that person about me. But I would ask an additional favor: When you speak with your friend, **please ask permission for me to contact them.** If you give me their contact information, you can rest assured I will follow up with them promptly and professionally.

Fast Relief For Weekend Warriors

If you ever get a sprain, headache, or other ailment that needs application of an ice pack, you can make your own easily and cheaply with simple water and rubbing alcohol.

Here's how: Pour $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rubbing alcohol into a zippered storage bag and close. Put the bag into another bag, seal, and freeze. Because the alcohol doesn't freeze, you will end up with a nice, flexible, slushy ice pack. Be sure to label the contents clearly so that no one will try to use it for anything edible. Double or triple the recipe for larger packs.

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Mind Teaser...

What falls but does not break, and what breaks but does not fall?

(answer at bottom of last page)

It's Showtime!!!

SAVE THE DATE: Please mark Thursday, **Nov. 6**, on your calendar, for a fundraising movie night for Scouts Honor Rescue. We're hosting a private screening of a fantastic dog-related movie at the River Oaks Theater. Details to be announced soon!!!

Wacky Bumper Stickers...

Here is a series of strange but true bumper stickers seen around the country...

- ♦ CAUTION! I Drive Like You Do!
- ♦ I'm Back By Popular Demand
- ♦ They're Not Hot Flashes - They're POWER SURGES!
- ♦ The Gene Pool Could Use a Little Chlorine
- ♦ I Still Miss My Ex-Husband, But My Aim Is Improving
- ♦ If You Think Nobody Cares, Try Missing a Couple Payments
- ♦ A Waist is a Terrible Thing to Mind
- ♦ Hang-Up And Drive!
- ♦ PMS: Punish Men Severely
- ♦ Friends help you move. Real friends help you move bodies.
- ♦ Clones are People Two
- ♦ Dyslexics Have More Fnu
- ♦ You had me at "Woof"

Life Lessons...

- ♦ A person who is nice to you, but rude to a waiter, is not a nice person.
- ♦ There is a fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness."
- ♦ The Golden Rule: He who has the gold, makes the rules!

RUSSIAN PROVERB:

Before going to war...pray once.
Before going to sea...pray twice.
Before getting married...pray THREE times!

Canine & Feline Obesity

Prince Chunk, the 44-pound feline rescue from New Jersey that has made headlines recently, is now on a diet. A healthy diet and proper weight mean a longer, happier life for your pet.

www.felinediet.net
www.canineobesity.info

National Dog Day – August 26th

There are two goals of National Dog Day. First, it is a time to honor dogs, to pause and recognize the value and importance of dogs in our lives. Second, it is a commitment to rescue 10,000 dogs a year.

In addition to giving unconditional love and companionship, dogs help us out in countless ways. They are watchdogs for our safety. They lead the blind. Dogs aid in search & rescue, and they seek out bombs and drugs.

Sadly, there are many dogs in need of rescue, and National Dog Day is about saving them from homelessness and abuse. The goal is to rescue 10,000 dogs a year. Every contribution of time, money or resources helps and is appreciated.

As you know, I am 110% committed to animal rescue. As a Realtor, I am thrilled to donate a portion of my commissions from every purchase or sale, and as the owner of Happy Tails Dog Spa, I am delighted to have resources to support animal rescue, raise funds and provide foster services.

On Tuesday, August 26th, Happy Tails Dog Spa will donate the proceeds of baths & grooms, as well as 50% of the price paid for any daycare pass purchased that day, to animal rescue. Please call 713-522-8144 to schedule.

Gas-Saving Tip: Clean out your trunk! An extra 100 pounds of weight reduces mileage by as much as 2%, the equivalent of 8 cents per gallon. See www.GivingGrinch.com for other money-saving tips.

Tips for an Exceptional Life! Clear clutter from your home, car, desk, briefcase or purse, and let new energy flow into your life. Drink plenty of water, and eat blueberries, wild Alaskan salmon, broccoli, almonds & walnuts. Call family OFTEN. For a list of all 40 tips, email me at donpuryear@swbell.net.

Do You Have A Home Inventory?

What's the best way to make the most of your insurance dollars and protect your belongings in case of an emergency or disaster? Create a home inventory of everything you own.

According to the Insurance Information Institute, the home inventory will help you to:

- ♦ Purchase enough insurance to replace the items you own.
- ♦ Get insurance claims settled faster.
- ♦ Substantiate losses for income tax purposes.

To make the task easier, the Institute created "Know Your Stuff – Home Inventory Software" available as a free download at www.knowyourstuff.org, which lets you store digital photographs along with your list of possessions. You can burn a copy of the information on a CD or print out a room-by-room document and store either in a safety deposit box or other secure location.

Most importantly, the time to make a home inventory is now, BEFORE an emergency, disaster or theft occurs. There's no time like the present....

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Did You Know...

- ◆ Hershey's kisses are called that because the machine that makes them looks like it's kissing the conveyor belt.
- ◆ The longest recorded flight of a chicken is thirteen seconds.
- ◆ An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.
- ◆ "I am" is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.
- ◆ A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.

Thanks for Thinking of Me!

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? Thanks for keeping me in mind with your referrals...and spreading the word!

WORD PLAY

A three-legged dog walks into a saloon and says to the bartender, "I'm looking for the man that shot my Paw."

Why did the archeologist quit? His career was in ruins.

The Job Interview...

"I see you were last employed by a psychiatrist," said the employer to the applicant. "Well," she replied, "I just couldn't win. If I was late, I was hostile. If I was early, I had an anxiety disorder. If I was on time, I was compulsive."

Answer To Mind Teaser...

Night and Day.

THANK YOU for reading my Service For Life!® personal newsletter. I wanted to produce a newsletter that has great content and is fun and valuable to you. Your constructive feedback is always welcome.

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"Who Wants To Win a \$50 Gift Card?"

Take my Trivia Challenge and you could win too!

Guess Who Won Last Month's Trivia Question? Jillian Green was the first person to correctly answer my quiz....and she received a \$50 gas card!

In the early 1900s, Henry Ford's effective use of mass-production techniques, including assembly lines and a three-shift workday, eventually allowed for the manufacture of a Model T every _____

- a) 3 days b) 45 minutes c) 12 hours d) 24 seconds e) 8 hours

As amazing as it sounds, and a true testament to Ford's efficiency, a Model T rolled off the assembly line every **24 seconds!!!** So let's move on to this month's trivia question, related to the most famous house in the United States.

How Many Bathrooms Are In The White House?

- a) 17 b) 22 c) 42 d) 28 e) 35

Call or text me right now with your answer and you could win too! 713-302-6543

Real Estate Corner...

Q. We would like to sell our home and buy a new home. If possible, we hope to avoid putting our furniture into storage and moving into temporary housing during that process. Do you have any suggestions?

A. Coordinating two transactions can be very challenging, and the process will be dependent not only on the schedule and flexibility of all parties involved, but also on whether you can find your next home in the relevant time frame and whether your lender will even allow you to buy that home before selling your current one.

First and foremost, when you put your home on the market for sale, you need to have an exit strategy. Sometimes the process moves very quickly, so the more thought you've given to your options in advance, the better. (I've represented sellers whose homes sold the first week they were put on the market, and I've been involved in transactions where a buyer needed to close in a matter of a few DAYS.)

The time frame for closing is a negotiated term, and in an ideal situation, parties can work out closing dates that accommodate everyone's interests. It is most common for there to be about 30 days between the time a contract is negotiated and the actual closing. For many people, that is enough time to find their next home, close, and move their furniture. However, if your lender requires that you sell your current home before buying the next one, you may try to negotiate a "seller's temporary lease" in the contract that would allow you to stay in your current home for a week or two after it has closed. That extra time would permit you to close on your new home and move your furniture in.

Finally, if you are in a position to purchase your next home before selling your current home, be sure to consider the risks and costs of having two mortgages until your current home sells.

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