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Better Home Living

The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!

How to clean hardwood floors, keep them beautiful

Now that you have a beautiful hardwood floor, what can you do to protect it and keep it beautiful? Tips from the World Floor Covering Association:

- * Floor mats at entry ways will catch particles like dirt and keep them from scratching the wood. Use a mat by the sink to catch splashes.
- * Buy a high quality broom, sweep the floor regularly, and use a vacuum cleaner without a beater bar to get between boards.
- * An 8x14 inch terry cloth mop with a rotating head can be helpful.
- * Get a professional cleaning product that will remove tough stains, scuffs and heel marks without dulling the finish.
- * Don't wax a wood floor with a urethane finish. Don't wet mop or use excessive water to clean the floor.
- * Avoid ammonia cleaners and oil soaps to clean a wood floor. They dull the finish and affect your ability to recoat the floor at a later date.
- * Use cleaners that won't leave a film or residue. Clean sticky spots with a damp towel or sponge.
- * Protect your floors from sun damage. Shade floors from the sun's harsh rays. Rotate area rugs and furniture regularly to allow wood floors to age evenly.
- * To prevent scratching, cover furniture and table legs with flannel protectors. Always be careful when moving heavy objects across the floor in order to prevent scuffing and scratching.
- * Take precautions against every-day scratches. Stiletto heels can dent and scratch hardwood floors. If you have one or more dogs in your home, use runners to protect the floors in their regular walking and running paths.

Taking leisure is a learned skill

*You can't get away from it all close to home ...
or at home*

Each year, Americans leave billions of vacation days unused.

They don't want to leave work because of everything that's on the table, thinking maybe they'll take a vacation later. Not only does all work and no play make you dull, it causes a buildup of stress, which is a notorious health hazard.

You might think a long weekend will help, but even a week off doesn't give much relief, since it takes time to decompress from work. On the first two days of a week's vacation, your body and mind begin to unwind. The last two days are spent gearing up for work, so only three days are spent relaxing. That is, unless you are texting and taking calls from the office.

The key to actual relaxing is finding time to "get away from it all." Even a break of an hour or two from daily routine can relieve stress. You could do crossword puzzles, run (alone), paint, take up needlepoint or work in the garden, weather permitting. Note that competitive sports are not entirely relaxing. You're still out there competing and urging yourself on.

Whatever the activity, it must make the world go away. Sometimes, you'll have to practice doing it, because taking leisure is a learned skill.



November



We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

Mari & Staff

Early settlers, explorers celebrated Thanksgiving

At the University of Florida, historians argue that the earliest attested thanksgiving celebration, in what became the U.S., was celebrated by the Spanish on Sept. 8, 1565 in what is now St. Augustine, Fla.

Some historians say the first celebration in the U.S. was in Virginia. Thanksgiving services were held there as early as 1607.

A day of thanksgiving was codified in the founding charter of Berkeley Hundred Plantation in Charles City County, Virginia in 1619. Others say the first Thanksgiving was on Berkeley Plantation on the James River in 1609.

According to the History Network, the first celebration in the New World may have been at San Elizario, near the present-day city of El Paso. In 1598, it was celebrated by a weary group of Spanish explorers, led by Juan de Onate, who had just completed a long trek across the Mexican desert to the banks of the Rio Grande River.

The traditional story of Thanksgiving focuses on the Pilgrims at Plymouth in their first small harvest in the autumn of 1621. Their numbers diminished by half, 53 Pilgrims celebrated their modest harvest with a company of 90 Indians. Both Pilgrims and Indians had suffered mightily during the previous winter of disease and starvation.



Do You Know...

... Someone that could use our services? Perhaps a friend, family member, co-worker, or someone from church?

When a new client signs up for regular cleaning services at your recommendation; you will receive \$50 off your cleaning after their 3rd cleaning!

If you would think of 3 or 4 people that could use our services, then don't hesitate to call them and give them our name and phone number. Be sure to have them mention your name when they call so we can send your Bonus!

Thanks a Bunch!

"We have been using Mari's Cleaning services for 4 properties in the Scottsdale area for over 5 years. Mari and her cleaning staff are reliable and do an excellent job at a reasonable price. If I ever have any special requests, Mari always caters to them and takes great care of her customers."

-Patrick Sheehan
Scottsdale, Arizona

A special thanks to our most recent referrals!

Asking 'why' is usually counterproductive

As people try to work through difficult situations in their lives, they sometimes focus on "Why."

They ask: Why was there a tornado; why did I get laid off; why was there a car accident? Why me?

Modern psychologists say they are asking the wrong questions. "Whys" keep them in the victim state and focusing on placing blame.

They should begin to focus on how to get on with their lives by asking "What" and "How." These questions focus on solving problems, and the answers keep you moving forward:

"What should I do now?"

"How can I make my situation better?"

"What can I do to get through this and come out a stronger person?"

Doctors at Psychiatric Associates in Indianapolis say asking how and what questions helps you focus on the future instead of the past. You begin to realize that you have the power to make changes.

They recommend honestly admitting to yourself what your thoughts and feeling are. Allow yourself to experience the crisis. Ask yourself the right questions and develop a plan of action.

Don't let clutter rule your life

The Boxes of papers. Shelves full of dusty salt and pepper shakers. Mountains of clothing. Bathtubs full of unsent gifts. Guest rooms where no bed can be found under tons of "stuff."

Turn on cable television and you're bound to run across one of the new anti-clutter programs wherein a team of cleaning experts confronts exceptionally cluttered families.

The shows, hugely successful on cable, let the viewer gawk at the excesses of everyday people whose interests (and disinterests) have led to household chaos. In each version of the anti-clutter programing, householders learn they must let go of their junk and, in return, the clean teams come in, clean up, and redecorate.

Organizing expert Hellen Buttigieg, host and guru of Neat TV's modestly lower-cased program "neat", weekly trudges through a snowy Canadian neighborhood to meet a homeowner whose home is owned by junk. Buttigieg and her anonymous crew do a three-day sort, purge, clean, and decorate with the help of the tearful homeowner. In the end, Buttigieg has led her client down the noble path to neatness, presenting to them their new rooms, which she pronounces are now 'more zen.'

On the Style Network, flamboyant actress and sensible anti-clutter queen Niecy Nash leads a hip trio of Clean House helpers who sort, purge, and garage sale the junk, leaving the homeowner with comfortable, redecorated rooms full of new furniture and a stern Niecy warning to keep it that way.

On TLC channel, Actress Tava Smiley hosts Clean Sweep with the largest cast of high profile fixers, cleaners and purgers. Unlike Buttigieg's desire for zen quiet, and Nash's common sense solutions, the designers on Clean Sweep give their untidy clients daring rooms full of color and dash. All this has spawned a new philosophy of neat.

The commandments:

- Just because it was a gift, does not mean you have to keep it.
 - Don't keep things because you think you might use them someday.
 - Don't let your home be a dumping ground for someone else's junk.
 - Let go of mementoes of the past so you have room for the future.
 - Don't keep things that don't work, don't fit, or are no longer relevant.
 - It's wasteful if you leave it on your floor or packed forever in a box.
- Give it away, sell it, or throw it away.



The state of titans and waltzing

Across

1. “_ will be done”
4. Receded
9. Nay’s opposite
10. Hard up
11. Sought office
12. Flip out
13. Scottish archipelago
15. NE state
16. Closes a falcon’s eyes
18. Word in a simile
20. Ridiculous
23. Twist
25. Vast expanse
26. Top scout
27. Lyndon Johnson dog
28. Neuters
29. Mamie’s man

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8
9				10				
11				12				
13			14				15	
		16				17		
18	19		20				21	22
23		24				25		
26						27		
28						29		

Down

1. Beginner
2. Try, as a case
3. Jerks
4. Makes weak
5. Aquamarines
6. Worker in a garden
7. Dutch cheese
8. Actor Dick Van __

14. Almost

17. Bar offering
18. Seemingly forever
19. Photo or bean
21. Stink
22. Challenge

24. Palindromic title

The title is a clue to the word in the shaded diagonal.

T	H	Y		E	B	B	E	D
Y	E	A		N	E	E	D	Y
R	A	N		F	R	E	A	K
O	R	K		N	E	Y		M
			S	E	E	L	S	
A	S		A	B	S	U	R	D
G	N	A	R	L		S	E	A
E	A	G	L	E		H	E	R
S	P	A	Y	S		I	K	E

Long work hours make companies encourage napping

About 20 percent of people in offices suffer from sleepiness during the day, according to studies by Stanford University. For workers, like computer programmers, who may work 12 to 16 hours in one day, the percentage is much higher.

At Stanford, studies show that short periods of sleep improve alertness, memory, motor skills, decision-making and mood. And they reduce stress. Some companies are providing nap areas in an attempt to reduce lost productivity caused by drowsy people.

Quiet rooms or resting rooms may include a sofa or the new SleepPods, recliner-type chairs equipped with ergonomic support and a music system with headphones to eliminate background noise. According to Bloomberg BusinessWeek, Google, Proctor & Gamble and Cisco Systems have them. Some are installed in common areas.

Scientists at the National Institute for Occupational Safety say a nap gets people back to top performance but doesn't interfere with night sleep. It's very helpful for a person who lost an hour of sleep the previous night, but a short nap won't help anyone who was up all night.

Sleep scientists say the best nap is 20 to 30 minutes long. A parked car is a good location. Avoid caffeine, nicotine, diet pills, alcohol and antidepressants for a few hours before napping.

1. What is the name of Rocky Balboa's wife in the Sylvester Stallone "Rocky" movie series? a-Julia, b-Adrian, c-Cynthia, d-Peggy.

2. What is the highest peak in the Rocky Mountains? a-Mount Whitney, b-Mount Shasta, c-Mount Elbert, d-Mount McKinley.

3. What actor played gangster Rocky Sullivan, condemned to the electric chair, in the 1938 movie "Angels with Dirty Faces"? a-Ronald Reagan, b-Eddie Albert, c-Humphrey Bogart, d-James Cagney.

4. What tiny creature is a vector for Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Lyme disease? a-Tick, b-Mosquito, c-Flea, d-Bedbug.

5. Rocky and Bullwinkle are not only the best of friends, but also share what middle initial? a-J, b-K, c-T, d-A.

6. Who provided the voice of Rocky the Rooster in the animated film "Chicken Run"? a-Glen Campbell, b-Wayne Newton, c-Mel Gibson, d-Will Ferrell.

7. What boxing champion retired in 1951 after taking a beating from Rocky Marciano? a-Archie Moore, b-Ezzard Charles, c-Joe Louis, d-Sugar Ray Robinson.

8. According to the lyrics of the classic country song, in what state is "Rocky Top"? a-Kentucky, b-Alabama, c-Tennessee, d-Louisiana.

9. On what TV drama series does Rocky Carroll play Director Leon Vance? a-"Bones," b-"NCIS," c-"The Agency," d-"24."

10. Who shot Rocky Raccoon according to the Beatles song? a-Dan, b-Bobby, c-Ray, d-Johnny.

11. What TV private eye called his father "Rocky"? a-Joe Mannix, b-Jim Rockford, c-Thomas Magnum, d-Richie Brockelman.

- 1-b, Adrian
2-c, Mount Elbert
3-d, James Cagney
4-a, Tick
5-a, J
6-c, Mel Gibson
7-c, Joe Louis
8-c, Tennessee
9-b, "NCIS"
10-a, Dan
11-b, Jim Rockford

Info on the big four pain relievers



Pasta Fagioli crock pot version... just like Olive Garden

Ingredients:

- ✓ 2 lbs ground beef or (1 lb. ground beef & 1 lb. ground turkey)
- ✓ 1 onion, chopped
- ✓ 3 carrots, chopped
- ✓ 4 stalks celery, chopped
- ✓ 2 (28 ounce) cans diced tomatoes, undrained
- ✓ 1 (16 ounce) can red kidney beans, drained
- ✓ 1 (16 ounce) can white kidney beans, drained
- ✓ 3 (10 ounce) cans beef stock
- ✓ 3 teaspoons oregano
- ✓ 2 teaspoons pepper
- ✓ 5 teaspoons parsley
- ✓ 1 teaspoon Tabasco sauce (optional)
- ✓ 1 (20 ounce) jar spaghetti sauce
- ✓ 8 ounces pasta

Directions:

1. Brown beef in a skillet.
2. Drain fat from beef and add to crock pot with everything except pasta.
3. Cook on low 7-8 hours or high 4-5 hours.
4. During last 30 min on high or 1 hour on low, add pasta.

If that old ankle injury bothers you after a day's work, you might take a couple of ibuprofen tablets. Or maybe your back starts to ache during the day, so you take a couple of naproxens.

Modern over-the-counter pain medications work well and are safe to use as long as you follow instructions. Here's a rundown by the Mayo Clinic on what kind of pain each one treats best, along with their cautions.

* Acetaminophen (Tylenol, others): The safest choice when taken at or below recommended doses. Taking two 500 mg pills a day is safe for most people. The risk of liver damage may increase if you already have a liver problem, if you exceed the maximum dosage, or if you have more than three alcoholic drinks a day while taking it.

Many prescriptions and cold and flu drugs contain acetaminophen. Account for "hidden" doses when adding up daily intake.

* Aspirin: Provides pain relief, and low doses can prevent blood clots that cause a heart attack or stroke. But even the 81 mg low dose can increase the risk of stomach bleeding.

If you take low-dose aspirin, avoid ibuprofen and naproxen to keep stomach risk as low as possible. Avoid aspirin if you are taking other medications to prevent blood clots, such as warfarin (Coumadin). Taking both increases the risk of stomach bleeding.

* Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB) and Naproxen sodium (Aleve): In addition to providing pain relief, these drugs help to reduce inflammation. But they can increase the risk of stomach bleeding and could also carry a low risk of worsening high blood pressure and kidney problems.

An increased heart attack risk is possibly associated with higher doses. Avoid ibuprofen and naproxen if you've had a heart attack. Also avoid them if you take a medication like Coumadin or aspirin to prevent blood clots.

God has blessed us with such wonderful customers and we would like to thank you for your business!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Take the Trivia Challenge!

Sleep scientists say the best nap is . . .

- A – 5-10 min. B – 10-20 min.
C – 20-30 min. D – 30-40 min.

HINT: The answer is hidden somewhere in this newsletter.

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever."

-Psalm 107:1