

# BETTER HOME LIVING

*The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!*



## How to Improve Air Quality in Your Home

More often in summer than winter, homes seem to acquire a stagnant odor. You may begin to think, "This place smells like dirt." Fortunately, boosting air quality can be easy and inexpensive. Here's how to do it:

Begin by cleaning away dust in often-missed places such as ceiling fans, baseboards, and moldings.

Then clean the duct work of your heating and air-conditioning system. Though a professional will do a better job, just placing the vacuum cleaner hose into various ducts can draw out a great deal of dust.

Use furnace vent filters. Lift up your vents and put the filters in place. The air goes through the filter before it comes out. It traps the dust.

For a more serious problem, consider an in-line air-purification system. The unit will pay off in the form of clean air for years to come.

## Planning an Inverse Vacation

When people plan a vacation, they probably have a particular destination, like Disney World, in mind from the beginning. From that point, they will try to find the best deal available for that location, but they will always be limited to deals surrounding that choice. Enter Inverse Vacation Planning.

Trent Hamm at The Simple Dollar explains that for people who want to vacation on a budget they should be looking at things backward. Find the deal, then consider going there.

This approach is sort of like browsing the clearance racks at a department store. People are not usually looking for something specific there, but often, a great deal will suddenly appear. Clearance shopping is a very gratifying experience for many because they receive a great deal and the unexpected thrill of surprise.

Get started by keeping your eyes open for deals. Trent explains that deals will often fall into people's lap if they are simply on the lookout for opportunities. Visiting family across the country, taking advantage of a friend's unused cabin or stumbling upon a program that offers free tickets and discounts to students of a certain age are all ways in which he was able to turn something that looked uninspiring on the surface into a meaningful family vacation that everyone could enjoy.

Travel is often the largest expense for far-away destinations and searching for flights well in advance can reveal incredible discounts if a person does not already have an endpoint in mind. If a family was not even considering an international trip for their holiday, discovering insanely cheap tickets to the UK might spark a new feeling of possibility and interest.

Don't forget to check last minute cruises. Cruise ships want to be full. If you are flexible, you can get the last rooms at a great price. Watch for sales and try the adventure of not really knowing where you'll end up.



We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

Mari & Staff

## Mom's Greeting Card is Unreadable to Young People

A plaintive email posted on Yahoo Answers: A questioner says her mother gave her a beautiful Valentine's Day card with a lovely written message.

She couldn't read a word. It was written in cursive, a foreign language to young people, who were never taught the script used for a thousand years in their language, the script of their parents and grandparents. Was she missing something not learning cursive?

The answers from kids pointed out they were faced with cursive writing in letters and in school and they couldn't read it either.

Cursive writing was taken out of school curriculum in 2010, a dying, unnecessary art to be replaced by keyboarding.

Problem is people still use cursive. They send handwritten letters and cards to their children and grandchildren. Do they know their sentiments are in language foreign to the recipient?

Despite studies that show handwriting improves fine motor skills and enhanced the composition of ideas, schools have all but made cursive obsolete. In June 2016, however, and Louisiana had passed a law requiring public and charter schools to teach cursive writing to children from the 3rd to the 12th grade. It joined 10 other states including Virginia, California and Texas where the teaching of cursive script is a state education requirement.

According to Abigail Walthausen, in her article, "Learning Cursive is a Basic Right", "running hand" is tied to being able to sign one's name and "the signature, the ability to sign one's own name," she says, "has long been an essential marker of society." Walthausen says students understand the pedigree that it represents, "has become a status marker."

After typewriters, handwriting became a choice, but now it is a choice older people can't afford to make when communicating with the young.

... 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!

Professional Caring and Competent! The staff from Mari's Cleaning Services provides detailed, professional, well organized, and competent cleaning services. This is certainly one of the better and more consistent cleaning services in the valley. They are an asset to this company and a blessing to us. Highly recommend! May God continue to bless this business!

-Tony

### New Car Prices on the Rise

Interest rates, production costs, and regulations have made new cars cost more.

According to Experian, the average consumer pays \$495 for a new car loan. That is more than the \$447 they paid in 2008. The average interest rate in the third quarter of 2016 was 4.69 percent, compared to the higher rate of 6.14 percent in 2008.

Consumers were financing more car in 2016 than in 2008 -- up to an average of \$30,022 compared to \$24,600 for 2008.

The cost of cars is also higher. In fact, according to Autotrader, about 3 million new cars should have been sold last year, just looking at population growth.

Part of the problem, says Heritage.org, is that new regulations push car prices up, just as new technology actually pushes prices down.

The price of a new vehicle is more than \$7,000 higher than 2008, Heritage says. It points to new, costly fuel economy standards that are driving prices up.

Prices are also under pressure at the dealer level. According to Automotive News, franchised new-car dealers in the U.S. spent a combined \$3.2 billion in 2012 to meet 61 new federal regulations. Those costs are passed along to consumers.



"My parents don't punish me anymore. The last time they did, I hid all the remotes."

### Steak Salad Makes Transition from Winter to Spring

The old saying to the contrary, it never seems to matter how March begins, it will be unpleasant most of the time anyway.

This delightful steak salad gives you a taste of summer with a hearty serving of beef. It's the perfect transitional meal for cold days in March.



This recipe is taken from the British book *How to Lose Weight Well* by Dr. Xand Van Tulleken. The recipe is by Georgina Davies.

We've modified it slightly here, leaving out the honey in the dressing and using spinach leaves for the greens.

Here is what you'll need for this transitional steak salad:

- 2 Portobello mushrooms sliced
- 8 ounces of cherry tomatoes.
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 large steak, about 10 ounces
- 3 ounces (or more if you like) spinach leaves

Dressing

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar.
- 1 teaspoon horseradish sauce
- drizzle of runny honey (leave this out if you are watching sugar intake)

You can grill or bake the mushrooms and tomatoes with olive oil and salt and pepper. If roasting, set the temperature at about 300 degrees for 25 minutes.

Grill meat lightly or to taste.

Whisk together olive oil, vinegar, horseradish and honey for the dressing.

Plate the greens first then add the other ingredients. Dress just before serving.



## Trivia Teaser – Salt and Pepper

1. Which actress starred as a CIA agent suspected of being a mole in the 2010 movie "Salt"? a-Jennifer Lawrence, b-Angelina Jolie, c-Scarlet Johansson, d-Winona Ryder.

2. Who starred as Pepper Anderson, the title character on the 1970s TV drama "Police Woman"? a-Florence Henderson, b-Kate Jackson, c-Angie Dickinson, d-Teresa Graves.

3. According to the Book of Genesis, whose wife was turned into a pillar of salt she turned back to look at the destruction of the city of Sodom? a-Jacob, b-Lot, c-Laban, d-Abraham.

4. Which song was the first cut on the Beatles album "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"? a-"Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," b-"For the Benefit of Mr. Kite," c-"Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," d-"When I'm 64."

5. Which actress plays Pepper Potts in the "Iron Man" movie series? a-Megan Fox, b-Lindsay Lohan, c-Cameron Diaz, d-Gwyneth Paltrow.

6. Who challenged the British-imposed salt tax by leading the 250-mile Dandi Salt March in 1930? a-Henry Stanley, b-Benito Mussolini, c-Mahatma Gandhi, d-Thomas Hardy.

7. What is the active ingredient in pepper spray? a-Daraprim, b-Capsaicin, c-Psilocybin, d-Diphenhydramine.

8. Which song was the biggest hit on the Billboard Hot 100 chart for the hip hop trio Salt-N-Pepa? a-"Push It," b-"Whatta Man," c-"Let's Talk About Sex," d-"Do You Want Me."

9. Defensive end Julius Peppers accumulated 81 sacks between 2002 and 2008 as a member of which NFL team? a-Pittsburgh Steelers, b-Chicago Bears, c-Green Bay Packers, d-Carolina Panthers.

10. Built completely with salt blocks, the Palacio de Sal hotel is located at the edge of Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt flat, in which South American country? a-Bolivia, b-Venezuela, c-Chile, d-Colombia.

11. Alto saxophonist and clarinetist Art Pepper was a longtime member of which band leader's big band? a-Count Basie, b-Stan Kenton, c-Woody Herman, d-Glenn Miller.

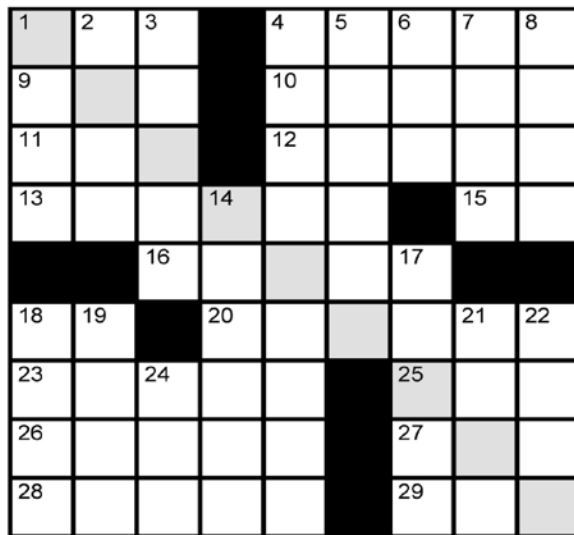
1-b. Angelina Jolie  
2-c. Angie Dickinson  
3-b. Lot  
4-a. "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely  
Hearts Club Band  
5-d. Gwyneth Paltrow  
6-c. Mahatma Gandhi  
7-b. Capsaicin  
8-b. "Whatta Man"  
9-d. Carolina Panthers  
10-a. Bolivia  
11-b. Stan Kenton

Answers to 'Salt and Pepper'

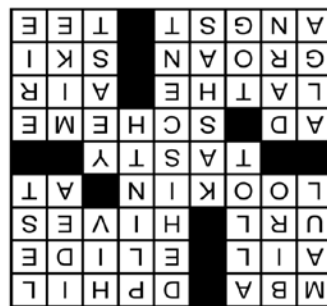
## Ice Cream Drink

Across

1. Wharton degree
  4. Oxford doctorate, briefly
  9. Be sick
  10. Slur over
  11. Web browser entry
  12. Busy places
  13. Visit briefly
  15. @
  16. "Yum!"
  18. Commercial
  20. Plot
  23. Carpenter's machine
  25. Put on TV
  26. Response to a weak joke
  27. Hit the slopes
  28. Anxiety
  29. In Phil's bag
- Down
1. Handle roughly
  2. Ballpoint pen inventor
  3. Apportion
  4. Bursting, in botany
  5. Pedestal part
  6. Target of vaccine
  7. Notion
  8. For fear that
  14. Buckwheat grains
  17. Bakery supply
  18. Pond organism
  19. Mend socks
  21. Boxer Tyson
  22. Buffalo's lake
  24. Dress (up)



research



The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

## Managing Type 2 Diabetes Through Lifestyle Changes

Changes in lifestyle can help manage type 2 diabetes, while lifting overall health and energy.

Type 2 diabetes is a progressive condition; the body becomes less and less resistant to insulin as time goes on.

Not managing diabetes properly can result in a range of complications such as cardiovascular disease, blindness, and kidney disease. However, it is possible to slow the progress of diabetes through a healthy diet and regular activity.

A healthy diet. Improving the quality, and in some instances, reducing the quantity, of food will help control blood sugar levels and can decrease body weight. The American Diabetes Association broadly recommends focusing on eating more non-starchy vegetables and less starchy foods and meat.

The Harvard School of Public Health recommends whole grains over highly processed carbohydrates; avoiding sugary drinks; choosing healthy fats (such as olive oil); and limiting red meat consumption.

Increase physical activity. Physical activity keeps the body in general good health, so no wonder it helps manage diabetes. Exercise removes sugars from the blood, by using them to power movement. Diabetes Australia recommends 30 minutes of moderate activity five days a week, which is in line with international recommendations.

Regular blood glucose monitoring. Regularly monitoring blood glucose is an important step to understand how effectively diabetes is being managed. Monitoring is usually done daily at home with a finger prick.

For those with type 2 diabetes, making simple yet effective lifestyle changes can have a huge impact on longevity. Managing body weight, regular exercise and healthy eating can help reduce the effect of type 2 diabetes on your health.

## When It's Time: How to End a Friendship

Many of us, say relationship experts, hold on to relationships long past the expiration date.

If a friendship hurts, says Lillian Skye Noble, writing for hercampus.com, it's time to end it. Friendships can be scarred by envy or jealousy, or burdened by neediness.

Most people just stop answering calls from that poisonous friend. But this method, while it often works in the long-term, has its drawbacks. In the short term, it can be painful and confusing and leave them without closure.

"It is really important to have an open and honest discussion about the relationship," says Dr. Suzanne Degges-White, writing for Psychology Today. Dr. Degges-White, who advocates for friendships having similar standards to romantic relationships, says that a frank discussion provides an opportunity for you to own your feelings and even acknowledge the good that has come from the friendship.

Recognizing that it is natural to grow out of friendships can help with any indecision or guilt you might feel about drifting away from a friend, says Oprah blogger, Barbara Graham. Citing changes in circumstances like your marital status or a shift in your career goals, as the most common reasons for compromised friendships.

Graham says it is important to acknowledge conflict is the real culprit. All meaningful relationships are likely to be at the source of challenging emotions at some point. Talking it out doesn't always fix the problem, says Graham. One way to minimize the danger of a defensive response, says Dr. Degges-White, is to follow the rules of classic couples' communication strategies. When you speak to your friend, make use of "I statements," she says, "and avoid laying blame."

## Wellness Retreats

A spa and infrared sauna in Bali? Tai-chi, meditation and yoga in Portugal? Whatever takes your fancy, in 2017, there is probably a wellness retreat that suits the way you like to relax and unwind.

According to Tom Marchant, the co-founder of a travel company called Black Tomato, in an interview with CNN journalist, Nora Zelevansky, there has been an increase in retreats focusing on mindfulness and emotional well-being.

Many wellness holiday packages focus on good nutrition, gentle sport and beauty treatments like daily massage and skin rejuvenation. Not just a way to escape the stresses of work and family life, they also support the lifestyles and goals of those for whom health and fitness is always a priority.

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. —  
Psalm 143:8



Irish Potato Bites  
*home made interest.*



**Ingredients** Gluten free

**Meat** - 1/2 cup Corned beef

**Produce** -20 Red potatoes

**Baking & Spices** - 1 Salt

**Dairy** - 1 tbsp Butter , 1/4 cup Cheddar cheese , 1 Sour cream

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