



Better Home Living

The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!

Small jobs prevent big, expensive jobs later

If you knew what things you could do to increase your home's efficiency and save money, you would take them on, especially if they would only take a few minutes to do. For example:

* Take a leaf blower to your air conditioner's condenser, which is the large box outside or the out-facing end of a window unit. If you blow out the muck and debris, you could save up to 15 percent on cooling costs.

* Slide your clothes dryer forward, pull off the vent hose, and vacuum out the built-up lint. That can save clothes-drying costs of about 25 percent, say plumbers writing in CNNMoney.com.

* If your heating system uses radiators, buy a key at the hardware store and use it to bleed the air out of the system. See Familyhandyman.com for instructions.

* Check your wooden window sills for any cracks and chipped paint. Fill the cracks with caulk and paint them to prevent wood rot.

* Cut shrubs back so they are a foot away from the house to delay having to get a full exterior paint job.

* Keep your garage door tracks, casement gearboxes and badly working doorknobs lubricated. Just spray them with WD-40, which lubricates and cleans.

* Put your mechanical equipment through its paces now and then. Run the garbage disposal if you don't use it often. Do the same with Jacuzzi pumps and the plumbing fixtures in a rarely used bathroom.

* Check the emergency shutoffs for your water supply lines. The valves are under the sinks, behind the showers and on the mains in the basement.

Making sure they work now will save time and frustration if you and your plumber have to use them later.

Studies show:

E-cigs are not likely to help smokers quit

Researchers at the University of California, San Diego, find that (contrary to e-cig advertising), smokers of regular cigarettes are not more likely to quit or smoke less than if they used electronic cigarettes.

Their one-year study of smokers shows that those who used e-cigs were 59 percent less likely to quit smoking, and 49 percent less likely to cut down on smoking.

Statistics have not been compiled, but researchers say the overall effect of e-cigs on quitting rates is negative.

The American College of Physicians calls for banning advertising, banning the flavorings that attract children and teenagers to smoking, and taxing of devices and cartridges.

The CDC reports that in 2014, 13 percent of high school students used e-cigs, three times as many as in 2013.



We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

Mari & Staff

Halloween fun at home

Halloween is now one of the biggest consumer holidays in America. According to the National Retail Federation's 2014 Halloween Consumer Spending Survey, celebrants spent an average of \$77 each on their costumes, candy, party decorations and greeting cards.

But more parents have safety concerns about their children out in the dark, knocking on the doors of strangers, or dashing across the street. Children are more likely to be killed in a pedestrian/car accident on Halloween than on any other night.

You can make a great Halloween scene safe at home with some easy tricks.

Get glow make up you can find at Halloween stores and smear it all over a jack-o-lantern. In the dark, it glows scary green.

Glow sticks make an especially frightening balloon. Break the stick to make it glow, put it in a balloon, blow the balloon up. Then draw a face and turn out the lights. Eerie!

Other tricks with a pumpkin to thrill the kids: Carve your pumpkin, making sure to cut out the top hat. Put a glass inside the pumpkin and fill the glass with ordinary dish soap. Add some dry ice to the soap. Boom! The pumpkin man spews enough gross, but completely safe, soapy bubbles to delight any 8-year-old.

For treats, make the usual themed cupcakes. Put out the spicy queso surrounded by black and orange tortilla chips. Fill plastic pumpkins with candy corn, apples, mini-candy bars and gummy worms. And fill a cauldron with Dracula's blood punch (add berry vodka for adult version).

Then, fire up great movies for the season: Monsters, Inc., Casper and The Adventures of Ichabod and Mr. Toad (G rated). Halloween; Hocus Pocus; Scooby Doo; Raiders of the Lost Ark, Batman: Mask of the Phantasm and Beetlejuice (PG rated for the not-so-squeamish)



... 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!

Mari's Cleaning Service is an absolute pleasure to work with! We own a vacation rental so the cleaning needs are a little different and I have never been disappointed. She is also extremely accommodating if I have an unexpected booking. Her girls are very thorough and my home is sparkling every time they leave! As you may know, reliable cleaning is imperative in the rental business and I couldn't be more pleased with the service and care Mari's company provides, consistently!!

-Nir

Is home tech just too much tech?

Today, smart-home systems can control the lighting, entertainment systems, the garage door, the front door and even control the temperature in the swimming pool.

But the technology is young. One owner of a smart-home system told the Wall Street Journal, he has a regular electric switch, to override his hard-wired smarty pants home. He has problems about five times a year with the system.

Some system owners complain the systems actually complicate things. They break. They don't talk to each other. One new gadget makes another gadget irrelevant. No wonder people are selective about what they install.

At the California Institute for Energy and Environment, experts conclude that the key to smart-home success is reducing the number of steps it takes to get something done.

But smart systems also have to talk to each other. If you like the iPhone then you might install Apple's new HomeKit. Google's Nest system works with other Nest things. The company is also developing a project called Brillo to offer a way for tech gizmos to work with each other.

According to Gartner, a research firm, some smart devices will go the way of Betamax when a system standard finds public acceptance. Then all devices will work to that standard.



"Alright ... last selfie, Mrs. Briggs!"

Researchers link sugar intake to diseases

It's no surprise that a diet high in added sugar will make you gain weight and could lead to type 2 diabetes.

But we do need a certain amount of sugar in our diets, our cells would die without it.



The required level, however, is easily reached with fruit and with foods and drinks that don't even taste sweet, like dairy products.

Researchers now have to focus on sugar because we are eating so much more of it than in the past. This overconsumption can play a part in cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, high cholesterol, gum disease, fatty liver disease and others.

To control sugar in your diet, it helps to know how much is in various foods; 100 grams of cold breakfast cereal isn't very high in sugar content, but the sweetened versions are much higher.

Take regular Cheerios with 1.1 teaspoons of sugar. Honey Nut Cheerios are tasty, but have way more sugar.

Regular corn flakes have 2.5 teaspoons, but sweetened versions are much higher. Shredded Wheat has just 1 teaspoon of sugar. Fruit Loops cereal has 10.6 (a teaspoon contains about 4 grams of sugar).

Check the labels on products before you buy. There's a big difference in cookies, for example. Larger peanut butter cookies have 10 teaspoons each.

Sweetened soda has a bad rep, but deserves it. A can of Coca Cola, or most other sodas, has 7 teaspoons of sugar.

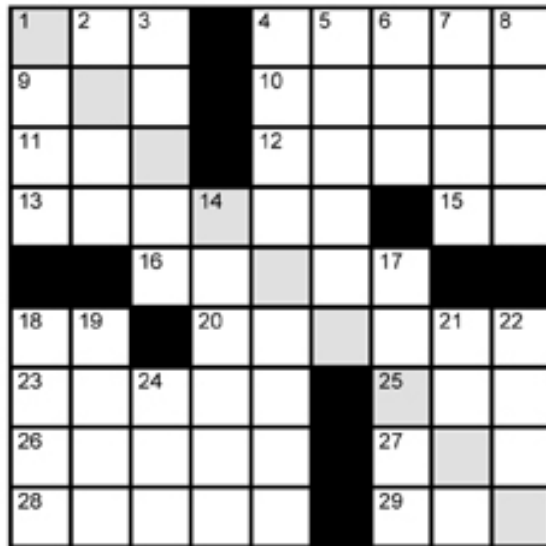
Though estimates vary, UC Berkeley researchers estimate that Americans consume an average of at least 75 pounds of added sugar annually.

New Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend a limit of about 12 teaspoons (50 grams) per day for someone consuming 2,000 calories a day.

Investor's delight

Across

1. Netflix rental
4. More artful
9. "Rocky ___"
10. Minor
11. Gun, as an engine
12. It's debatable
13. Mark and Shania
15. Exists
16. Bumps
18. Atop
20. Imagined
23. Arm bones
25. "___ what?"
26. Backgammon piece
27. Old name for Tokyo
28. ___ and aahed
29. ___ publica



Down

1. Gossip
2. Penthouse feature
3. Couch
4. Like clothes in a washer
5. Rent payer
6. "___ alive!"
7. Needle case
8. Bakery selections
14. First-aid item
17. More rational
18. Approximately
19. Alliance acronym
21. Fashion
22. Deuces
24. Play-___

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



Get fit now for an enjoyable retirement

You can see yourself taking a swim in the pool of a fancy Hawaiian resort, riding a bike through Central Park in New York or hiking in a beautiful national park. The vision makes you feel wonderful and your retirement time is not so far away.

But will you be strong enough and fit enough to do these things?

Dr. James Hill, executive director of the Anschutz Health and Wellness Center at the University of Colorado, says most people can make a list of their fitness goals and achieve many of them in a few months.

At the university, Dr. Hill knows they are seeing more and more retirees and pre-retirees who want to be able to hike, bike, swim and engage with other physically fit retirees.

Walking is still the most popular exercise because it's convenient, can be done almost anywhere and doesn't require special equipment. Many pre-retirees take exercise classes such as Zumba. Yoga is popular. And others want to continue playing tennis or even soccer or hockey.

Many of Dr. Hill's clients are very interested in healthy eating and cooking, which is a popular activity for couples.

The biggest mistake is trying to do too much too soon, especially among those who don't want to be overweight anymore.

Trivia Teaser – It Happened in October

1. On October 27, 1873, Illinois farmer Joseph Glidden submitted his patent for what invention that changed the face of the Old West? a-Horseshoe, b-Wind pump, c-Bank vault, d-Barbed wire.

2. In October 1992, the Toronto Blue Jays became the first non-U.S. baseball team to win the World Series by defeating what other team?

a-Atlanta Braves, b-Boston Red Sox, c-New York Yankees, d-New York Mets.

3. What country was invaded by Italy on October 3, 1935? a-Canada, b-France, c-Pakistan, d-Ethiopia.

4. In which country did the October Revolution take place in 1917?

a-Russia, b-Germany, c-Mexico, d-Greece?

5. What country was invaded shortly after it was seized by a Marxist military council on October 19, 1983? a-Cyprus, b-Grenada, c-Uganda, d-Lebanon?

6. The movies "Open Season" and "The Guardian" opened on the same October weekend in 2006. What actor had a role in both films? a-Jack Palance, b-Bruce Willis, c-Ashton Kutcher, d-Tim Allen.

7. In which African country did an "October Revolution" take place in 1964? a-Tanganyika, b-Zambia, c-Sudan, d-Malawi.

8. In October 2011, Helle Thorning-Schmidt became the first female Prime Minister of which European country? a-Denmark, b-Switzerland, c-Finland, d-Slovakia?

9. What Buick model was introduced on October 4, 1962 with a price of \$4,333, and in 1965 added the Gran Sport option package? a-LaSalle, b-Skylark, c-Riviera, d-LeSabre.

10. October is the most common birth month for U.S. Presidents. How many Presidents were born in October? a-4, b-6, c-9, d-17.

- 1-d, Barbed wire
2-a, Atlanta Braves
3-d, Ethiopia
4-a, Russia
5-b, Grenada
6-c, Ashton Kutcher
7-c, Sudan
8-a, Denmark
9-c, Riviera
10-b, 6

Answers to 'It Happened in October'

Travelers think the new luggage is the best invention since the wheelie

Your phone is smart, but how much can it help if your bags are lost?

Soon it will play a pivotal role. Luggage manufacturers are beginning to release high-tech bags that can be controlled via smartphone apps.

Fortune has surveyed the products and provides this information:

Bluesmart is selling bags equipped with a Bluetooth-enabled lock, GPS tracking, a built-in scale and a USB port for charging a device.

Samsonite has a new line of GenTrakR suitcases with built-in LugLoc technology, which allows owners to track their bags.

Andiamo will soon introduce a smart carry-on bag with a Wi-Fi hotspot, battery charger and built-in scale.

Trunkster is selling bags with a tracking system, scale and two USB ports.

Delsey will introduce its Pluggage line of smart suitcases next year.

Rimowa, a German luggage maker, is developing a smart suitcase line with permanently embedded electronic bag tags.

All of this means that if you're any kind of techie, your bags will never be lost for long.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month – Oct. 1-31

"My Disability Is One Part of Who I Am." This is the 2015 Theme Announced for National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), Oct. 1-31.

"This year's theme brings the important message that people with disabilities are just that — people," said Jennifer Sheehy, acting assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy. "And like all people, we are the sum of many parts, including our work experiences. Disability is an important perspective we bring to the table, but, of course, it's not the only one."

NDEAM is a nationwide campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the contributions of America's workers with disabilities, past and present activities.

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! — Psalm 32:1-2



Hocus Pocus HALLOWEEN PUNCH

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Produce

6 oz Izze peach

8 oz V8 peach mango

Frozen

1 scoop Mango sorbet any brand