



May 2020

Volume 11, Issue 5

Better Home Living™

The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!

Deciding which home repairs should come first

When you're ready to do some repairs, home inspectors quoted in CNN Money say you have decisions to make. They recommended these priorities:

1. Electrical system. Wiring problems can cause fires or electrocution. Call an electrician to open your main panel box, tighten loose connections and look for trouble spots. He can also check switches, outlets and light fixtures.

To lengthen the life of circuit breakers, flip everyone off and back on once a year to prevent corrosion.

2. Basement. Have a home inspector check the building foundation, especially if beams have bowed or posts are rotting.

Structural damage downstairs means shifting and wall cracking upstairs, so have the foundation checked as well.

Water causes most problems. Keep the basement dry by making the landscape slope away from the house.

3. Roof. A water stained ceiling means roof problems, as do missing or broken shingles, smooth spots where granules have worn away from shingles or green algae growth on the roof.

To prolong the life of the roof, prune tree limbs so they are at least 10 feet from the roof to keep squirrels away and let moisture evaporate after rain.

4. Gutters. When it's raining, check for clogs and overflows. Get gutters cleaned one to three times a year, depending on how many trees you have. Always clear deep snow from gutters.

Dandelions: Spring's earliest feast

That spring carpet of yellow that stubbornly appears year after year might be considered a weed to some, but to bees and health experts, dandelions are food.

Both bees and butterfly larvae feast on dandelions in April and May. They are an important source of early pollen and nectar.

Dandelions have been an important food source for people since the dawn of humanity. The flowers, leaves and root are all edible. They are loaded with vitamins, fiber, and antioxidants. Plus, some studies say that dandelions reduce inflammation.

Dandelions are often the source of wine, jelly, and gravies. Check out the recipes at dandelionfestival.com.



I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

*Christopher Dunlap
Mops & Buckets, LLC*

Honoring mothers

The world has turned many times since 1907. That was the year Anna Jarvis asked her Philadelphia church to hold services in memory of all mothers on the anniversary of her mother's death.

It was a time before the marvels of electricity and indoor plumbing. Mothers had a life of hard physical work.

Today, more than 113 years later, the role of mothers is somewhat different. Although we may not think so on laundry day, much of the drudgery of housekeeping is gone. Today moms have homes, kids, and careers.

To our own mothers, we say, "Thank you!" and truly mean it. Without them, our lives would be difficult indeed. Their skills and their dedication are appreciated.

On Mother's Day, let us hope all mothers may rear their children in peaceful times. We remember mothers who lost loved ones on the battlefield.

We hope for strength for single mothers.

We honor mothers who are no longer with us and ask God's blessing for mothers who are terminally ill.

We pray for future mothers that they may have high character and fortitude in this changing world.



Want to Receive a FREE cleaning?

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 \$100 after their 4th cleaning!

If you would think of 3 or 4 people that could use our services, then do not 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 \$100 Bonus!

Thanks in advance for your help and we look forward to sending cash your way!

Tell a Friend!

A special thanks to all our customers who referred us!

Traffic accidents down dramatically as people stay at home

It might not be safe to hug a stranger but driving on freeways is safer than ever.

All over major U.S. cities traffic is down, pollution is down, accidents are down.

According to a study by the University of California, Davis, California traffic accidents have fallen by 50 percent since March 19, when the populace was ordered to stay at home.

Typically, there are 1,000 collisions and 400 accidents that result in injuries or fatalities every day on the congested freeways of California.

Now the numbers are 500 collisions and 200 injury/fatality accidents.

The study measured these highways: I-5, both north of Los Angeles and toward Oceanside, U.S. Route 101, U.S. Route 99, state road 152 toward Los Banos and I-280 toward Daly City.

Pollution is also down worldwide. A Stanford scientist studied satellite imagery and found a dramatic decline in air pollution. Marshall Burke, assistant professor in the Stanford department of Earth System Science, predicted that quarantine might save 77,000 lives in China.

In Los Angeles, as April began, residents were enjoying their fourth week of smog-free air.

In fact, the air is clearer from Los Angeles to India, which has 21 of the world's 30 most polluted cities. In fact, in major cities in India, something new is in the sky: blue. Living with such badly polluted air makes dwellers in such cities uniquely at risk for viruses like Covid-19.



"I just read on the internet that I shouldn't believe everything I read on the internet."

The lowly cauliflower has gained respect, devotees

Though cauliflower is native to Asian countries, it made its way to North America in the late 1600s. Two hundred years later, Mark Twain called it "a cabbage with a college education!"

Cauliflower is so smart it can grow by the light of the full moon almost as well as during the day. It's sometimes called the "moon crop."

People who eat cauliflower are smart too. At the Foundation for Preventive Oncology in New York, they say it is one of the best healing foods you can buy, especially when it's eaten raw.

Its sulforaphane helps prevent cancer by increasing production of enzymes that sweep toxins out of the body before they can damage cells and make them cancerous.

The carotenoids in cauliflower make it a powerful defender against cataracts.

Its sulforaphane helps prevent cancer by increasing production of enzymes that sweep toxins out of the body before they can damage cells and make them cancerous.

Its other cancer-fighter, I3C, works as an anti-estrogen. It reduces harmful estrogen levels that can cause tumor growth in the colon, breast, and prostate.

But cauliflower does more than fight cancer and protect the eyes. It's rich in vitamin C and folate, nutrients that keep the immune system working well. Just three florets of uncooked cauliflower can supply two-thirds of your daily value for vitamin C.

Cauliflower gratin with ham

Divide a 2-pound cauliflower into florets. Cook in salt water 5 or 6 minutes. Drain it and run cold water over it.

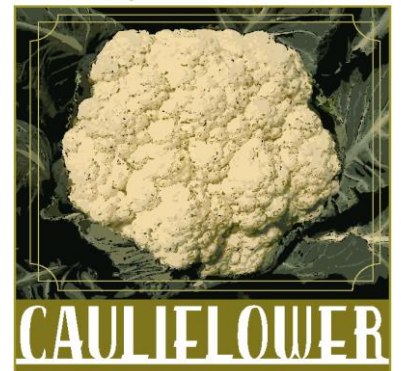
Carefully brown 3 tablespoons of breadcrumbs in 1/2 tablespoon butter and set aside.

In a small pan, melt 2 tablespoons butter. Add 2 tablespoons flour, blend. Cook 1 minute, then add 3/4 cup milk, 3/4 cup chicken broth, a bay leaf, and a clove of garlic. Stir and simmer 8 to 10 minutes. Remove bay leaf, garlic.

Cut florets to similar sizes. Put in a buttered baking dish, salt and pepper. Pour sauce on florets. Tear 1-ounce thin ham slices apart and scatter on top.

Finally, top with a cup of shredded cheddar. Bake 30 minutes at 400 degrees. Let stand 30 minutes before serving.

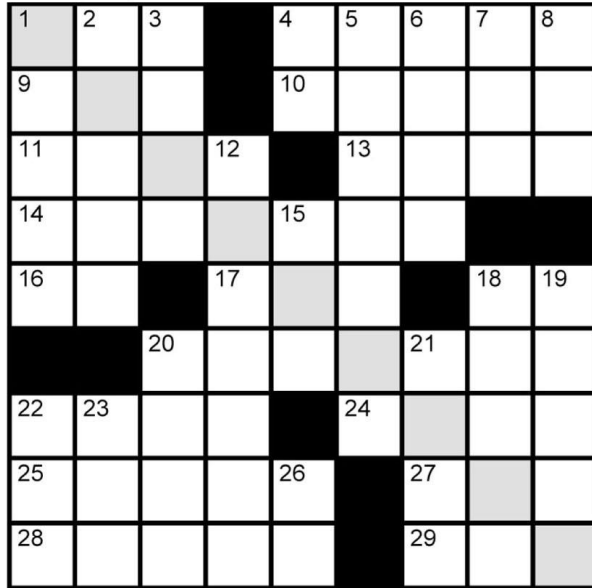
Delicious, nutritious



Pesky spring blooms

Across

1. Genetic stuff
4. Auspices
9. Sprinted
10. Serpent
11. Sea eagle
13. Kind of charge card
14. Military school
16. Perform
17. "Fancy that!"
18. Kipling poem
20. Hamlet's cousin
22. Bank holding
24. Window part
25. Poem of lament
27. ___ juice (milk)
28. Bit of statuary
29. Trinity component



Down

1. Be reluctant
2. DEA agent
3. The "I" of "The King and I"
4. Symbol for arsenic
5. Glossy paints
6. Like some meat
7. White House nickname
8. Census datum

12. Decorative borders
15. Sushi offering
18. Arctic abode
19. Criminal
20. Turn
21. Goals
22. Tennis call
23. U.N. workers' grp.
26. Rocky's greeting



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

Home repairs and ladder falls

The Academy of Emergency Medicine reports a study showing that half of those injured in falls from ladders were hurt at home.

They were working on projects such as painting or cleaning gutters and doing minor roof repairs.

Broken bones were the most common injury, followed by sprains, bruises and cuts.

Almost half of those injured said they fell because the ladder wasn't positioned correctly. It was on uneven or slippery ground, it wasn't securely resting against the house, or it was too upright.

Reaching too far accounted for a third of the falls, followed by slipping down the rungs.

The Academy recommends:

- * Make sure the ladder is on level ground.
- * Place it an appropriate distance from the house.
- * Have someone hold the ladder while you are climbing up or down.
- * Don't reach too far to the left or right.
- * Always stay away from power lines.

Trivia Teaser – One for the Ladies

1. Which breed of dog was Lady in the 1955 Disney animated classic "Lady and the Tramp"? a-Spanish Water Dog, b-Pointer, c-Spitz, d-Cocker Spaniel.

2. "The Gray Lady" is a nickname for which venerable daily newspaper? a-The New York Times, b-Washington Post, c-Daily Telegraph, d-Boston Globe.

3. Lady Gaga wore a dress made of which unusual material to the 2010 MTV Video Music Awards? a-Credit cards, b-Lego blocks, c-Raw meat, d-Peacock feathers.

4. Played by Elizabeth McGovern on "Downton Abbey," what is the first name of Lady Grantham? a-Lucy, b-Samantha, c-Cora, d-Natasha.

5. The story of Lady Godiva was updated for a 1966 hit song by which duo? a-Chad and Jeremy, b-Sonny and Cher, c-Peter and Gordon, d-Bonnie and Delaney.

6. What was the real first name of former First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson? a-Claudia, b-Cynthia, c-Carrie, d-Clarissa.

7. Which person makes and sells ladies' hats? a-Atelier, b-Milliner, c-Draper, d-Chatelaine.

8. Amelia Sedley and Becky Sharp attended Miss Pinkerton's academy for young ladies in which novel by William Makepeace Thackeray? a-"Jane Eyre," b-"Vanity Fair," c-"Anne of Green Gables," d-"The Scarlet Letter."

9. "The Ladies Who Lunch" was the signature song of Elaine Stritch in which Broadway musical by Stephen Sondheim? a-"Into the Woods," b-"Company," c-"A Little Night Music," d-Sweeney Todd."

10. The Gray Ladies were volunteers during World War II from which organization? a-The Salvation Army, b-YWCA, c-Daughters of the American Revolution, d-The Red Cross.

- 1-d, Cocker Spaniel
2-a, The New York Times
3-c, Raw meat
4-c, Cora
5-c, Peter and Gordon
6-a, Claudia
7-b, Milliner
8-b, "Vanity Fair"
9-b, "Company"
10-d, The Red Cross

Answers to 'One for the Ladies'



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About Our Company

Mops & Buckets is a full-service residential cleaning company that operates in both Miami Dade and Broward Counties.

Services include general cleaning, deep cleaning, carpet cleaning, construction cleaning, move-in/out cleaning, and window washing.

Owner Christopher Dunlap has been in the cleaning industry for 10 years and feels it is important to provide cleaning services that place the utmost importance on the health and safety of his clients and employees. For that reason, Mops & Buckets is an active participant in the industry association ISSA (International Sanitary Supply Association). They also use Green Sealed Certified products to minimize toxins being released both in the environment and your home.

Deferred mortgage payments

Mortgage financiers Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in March unveiled a new payment deferral program that allows borrowers facing hardship to defer two months of their mortgage payments. The deferred payments would not be due until the end of the mortgage, according to housingwire.com.

The hardship does not have to be related to the coronavirus crisis.

The program is aimed at people who are experiencing short-term hardship and have the ability to restart their payments in full without modifying their loan.

The borrower becomes current and no additional interest is charged.

If the virus crisis has affected you, talk to your lender.

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Click on the link below or copy it into your web browser to get started!

<https://msd.reviewability.com/f-57728>

It doesn't matter which side of the fence you get off on sometimes. What matters most is getting off. You cannot make progress without making decisions.

~Jim Rohn

Parental self-care in the days of quarantine

The Calgon commercials of years past - the harried Mom imagining a warm tub filled with bubbles, pleading, "Calgon, take me away!" - were an effective marketing tool. But were they real life? Maybe not so much.

Today the popular term is "self-care," with a definition that varies widely. Its goal is to find time for oneself in an increasingly hectic world. This can be challenging enough, but when that world suddenly includes quarantines, social distancing, and closed schools, what's a parent to do? Some tips from around the web include:

* Limit your news and social media intake. There's a balance between being informed and becoming oversaturated. Too much news about things you can't control becomes a negative for your mental health.

* Stretch. Too much time at home often means too much time spent sitting, so get up and move around, and make sure to stretch. Your hips and joints will thank you.

* Maintain a routine. This doesn't mean you schedule your day with military precision, but a routine helps us feel a sense of control. Make your bed and get dressed, even if it's into sweatpants. The routine and the change of clothes works wonders for your mindset and your family's mindset.

* Get outside. Whether it's a long-distance run or a short walk up the street, fresh air and sunshine are key.

* Consider getting up before the rest of your family. Though it can be tough, an hour to yourself can make all the difference in how the rest of your day goes. For some, this might work better on the flip side - staying up a bit later just for the alone/quiet time.

* Negotiate your time and space. This one's tough for the folks with toddlers. But it can be helpful to establish agreed-upon times when you can escape to the office or have control of the remote.

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