



April 2021

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# Better Home Living™

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

## Inspect your ladder before spring use

Before starting spring cleanup and chores, be sure to inspect your ladder. Look for:

- \* Tight bolts.
- \* A wobble in the ladder.
- \* Missing steps or tread.
- \* Loose or broken steps.

A ladder with any of these problems may need to be replaced.

Be sure the ladder is right for the job and that you are using it properly. Never step on the top rung of a ladder. This makes the ladder unstable and prone to tipping.

Before you set up your ladder, make sure it isn't close to power lines; and if the ladder tips, make sure that it won't collide with power lines on the way down.

Ladder injuries account for more than 500,000 injuries and 300 deaths in the U.S. annually, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Make family reunions memorable

Have you noticed that at family reunions, close families often sit together and talk to each other? At reunions with three or more generations attending, some people have no idea who most of those at the reunion are or how they are related to them. Here are a few ideas on how to get people mingling and talking to each other.

\* Color-coded T-shirts or name tags. Imprinted shirts that designate you as part of "Joe's clan" or "Mark's kid" are nice, but cost money. Nametags that are color-coded for various branches of the family can serve the purpose.

\* Photo projects. Encourage people to bring historic photos of family members, churches, cemeteries, and old family homes. The photos should have a name and date on the front and the owner's name on the back.

The photos should be arranged on cork boards for all to see. Family photo albums can be placed on a table.

\* Story hour. Designate a time for people to share stories from family history. Mention on the invitation or at the sign-in table that there will be a time to share stories.

\* Quiz project, prize. Print out a quiz about family members in history. Ask things like great-grandmother Jones' first name, where aunts and uncles were married, which aunt had twins, and in what state Uncle Joe was born? Set a time limit and give a prize for the most correct answers.

\* Take a tour. If the reunion is in a town that is important to family history, arrange a tour of homes, churches, and courthouses where people bought marriage licenses, or the park.



*I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!*

*Christopher Dunlap  
Mops & Buckets, LLC*

## April 30 is National Arbor Day - Beautify your world: Plant a tree

Founded by J. Sterling Morton of Nebraska in 1872, Arbor Day is a secular day of observance to encourage individuals and groups to plant trees.

Trees are an energy-saving home improvement. They can be as important to energy conservation as insulation or weather-tight windows and doors. They save energy by cooling with shade in the summer and by providing a windbreak in winter. Three strategically placed shade trees can reduce air conditioning costs by 30 percent.

Deciduous trees shed their leaves during the winter. They provide shade and block heat during hotter months. By dropping their leaves in the fall, they admit sunlight in the colder months. Place these trees on the south and west sides of buildings. Shade hard surfaces, such as driveways, to minimize heat load.

Evergreens retain their leaves or needles throughout the year. As windbreaks, they can help conserve a significant amount of energy that would otherwise go toward home heating. Place them on the north side of your home. Evergreens also provide shade in the summer.



*Free Cleaning Tips at [www.mopsnbuckets.com](http://www.mopsnbuckets.com)*

## 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!

## Thanks a Bunch!

*A special thanks to all our customers who referred us!*

## Blow a bigger bubble gum bubble

Who can forget the simple childhood pleasure of softening up a few pieces of gum until they're just right, then slowly puffing air into the bubble until it blocks your vision?

In case you're wondering, the record for largest bubble gum bubble ever blown has stood for 17 years. Chad Fell of the United States blew a bubble gum bubble with a 20-inch diameter back in 2004, crediting three pieces of Dubble Bubble gum as the secret of his success. Fell has a place of honor in The Guinness Book of World Records for his accomplishment. That was the unassisted record, meaning Fell didn't use his hands.

In July 1994, Susan Montgomery Williams of Fresno, Calif., blew a bubble gum bubble with a diameter of 23 inches to claim the top spot in the category of Largest Bubble Gum Bubble Blown (Assisted).

So how can you improve your skills at home? A few tips:

\* Chew a few pieces of gum until the flavor is gone, really softening it up. Some online suggestions recommend sugar-free gum, which they say is stronger.

\* Flatten it out a little, like when using Silly Putty. Some do this on the roof of their mouth, some do gymnastics in their mouth to spin the gum around and shape it.

\* Stick your tongue into the gum to poke a little hole and start the bubble.

\* Gently blow air into the bubble with soft, even puffs. Breathe in through your nose for more air.

\* Keep going! It takes a ton of practice to wow your friends and family with your bubble gum bubble skills. But it's worth it.



## Easy cream scones and lemon curd

Enjoy the sunny, sharp flavor of lemon curd on a warm scone, fresh from the oven. From start to finish, these scones are ready to eat in less than an hour, and the lemon curd takes about 15 minutes, plus time to chill in the refrigerator (overnight is best). Meyer lemons, with their lower acidity and sweet, floral flavor are perfect for this curd, but regular lemons are also delicious. If you like more than just plain scones, jazz them up with dried fruits, nuts, or chocolate chips.

### Lemon curd:

- 3 large eggs
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup fresh-squeezed lemon juice (Meyer lemons if available)
- Zest from 1 to 2 lemons, depending on size and preferred flavor intensity
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, diced

Place eggs, sugar, salt, juice, and zest in a medium saucepan, away from heat. Whisk the ingredients together until smooth and incorporated. Place over low heat and stir constantly with a wooden spoon or silicone spatula until the mixture thickens, around five minutes. Turn the heat all the way to low when the mixture thickens and add the butter. Stir until smooth. Remove from heat and pour into a jar or other storage container, then chill. Makes around two cups and keeps for about a week in the refrigerator.

### Cream scones:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1/4 cup granulated sugar                                | 1/2 cup (1 stick) chilled unsalted butter, diced |
| 2 teaspoons baking powder                               | 1 large egg, beaten to blend                     |
| 1/2 teaspoon baking soda                                | 1-1/4 cups heavy cream, plus more for brushing   |
| 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt                                | Coarse sugar for sprinkling                      |
| 3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting surface |  |

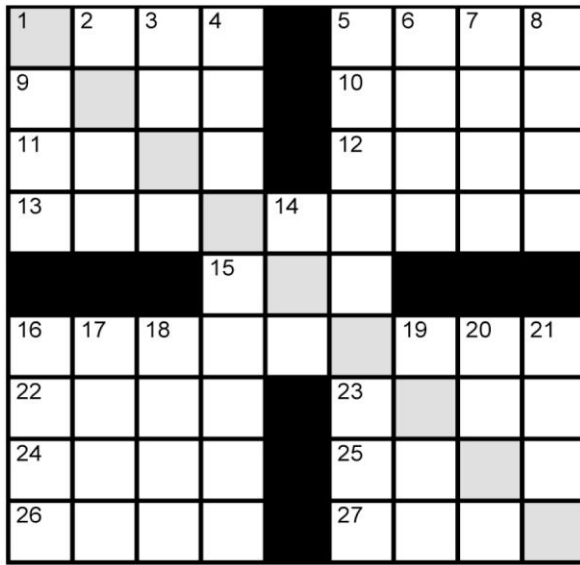
Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Combine granulated sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and flour, stir to combine. Alternatively, you can combine in the bowl of a large food processor and quickly pulse to mix dry ingredients. Add butter and toss to coat. Using your fingers or a pastry blender, or quick pulses if using a food processor, work butter into the flour until pea sized. If using a food processor, dump flour mixture into a bowl now. Make a well in the center of your flour/butter mixture and add the egg and cream, mixing with a fork while incorporating dry ingredients a little at a time until a shaggy, dry dough forms. Don't overwork the dough -- it's okay if it looks a little bit dry. Once the wet ingredients are incorporated, use your hands to gently knead the dough until it just comes together. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and pat into a 1-inch-thick round. Cut into wedges and places wedges onto a parchment-lined baking sheet, giving each wedge room to expand. Brush the dough wedges with cream and sprinkle with your coarse sugar. Bake 25-30 minutes, or until golden brown. Scones can be made ahead of time and stored in a covered container.



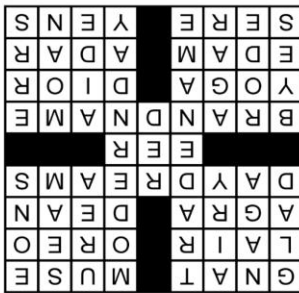
## Glamorous Kin of Coffee

### Across

1. Pesky insect
5. Artist's inspiration
9. Lion's den
10. Snack often twisted apart
11. Site of the Taj Mahal
12. Campus V.I.P.
13. Flights of fancy
15. Always, in verse
16. Coke or Pepsi
22. Lotus position discipline
23. Last name in fashion
24. Wax-coated cheese
25. Sixth Jewish month
26. Bone-dry
27. Cravings



6. Fertilizer chemical
7. Tailor's line
8. A long, long time
14. Danger color
16. Tournament passes
17. Went on horseback
18. Biology lab supply
19. Assistant
20. Complain
21. Commits a faux pas



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

### Down

1. Happy
2. Serpent of Hindu myth
3. Breezy
4. Product identifier
5. Characteristic of the present

## Trivia Teaser – Groups of Four

1. In his Four Freedoms speech, which U.S. president proposed four fundamental freedoms that people "everywhere in the world" ought to enjoy? a-Franklin D. Roosevelt, b-Harry Truman, c-Woodrow Wilson, d-Abraham Lincoln.
2. The Gang of Four was a political faction of government officials charged with treason in which country? a-Brazil, b-Turkey, c-North Korea, d-China.
3. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are named as punishments from God in which book of the Bible? a-Revelation, b-Daniel, c-Exodus, d-Genesis.
4. Who is the leader of the Marvel Comics superhero group the Fantastic Four? a-Black Bolt, b-Barry Allen, c-Carol Danvers, d-Reed Richards.
5. Which is the collective name of the kids' TV characters Fleegle, Bingo, Drooper and Snorky? a-Ghost Busters, b-Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, c-The Banana Splits, d-The A-Team.
6. The "Fearsome Foursome" was the dominating defensive front line of which NFL in the 1960s and 1970s? a-Detroit Lions, b-Minnesota Vikings, c-Los Angeles Rams, d-Pittsburgh Steelers.
7. The Four Noble Truths are among the most important teachings in which religion? a-Zoroastrianism, b-Buddhism, c-Sikhism, d-Rastafarianism.
8. Who was the composer of a group of four violin concertos called "The Four Seasons"? a-Franz Schubert, b-Ludwig van Beethoven, c-Antonio Vivaldi, d-Niccolo Paganini.
9. "The Four Freedoms" is a series of four 1943 oil paintings by which American artist? a-Edward Hopper, b-Norman Rockwell, c-Grandma Moses, d-Andrew Wyeth.
10. Which 1966 song was a number one hit on Billboard's Hot 100 for the Four Tops? a-"Rescue Me," b-"That Kind of Woman," c-"Reach Out I'll Be There," d-"Dancing Machine."

- 1-a, Franklin D. Roosevelt  
 2-d, China  
 3-a, Revelation  
 4-d, Reed Richards  
 5-c, The Banana Splits  
 6-c, Los Angeles Rams  
 7-b, Buddhism  
 8-c, Antonio Vivaldi  
 9-b, Norman Rockwell  
 10-c, "Reach Out I'll Be There"

Answers to 'Groups of Four'

## How to treat sudden lower back pain

Lower back pain can be caused by a number of conditions, some serious, but if it occurs suddenly or after activity, then it could be a muscle strain.

Strains are caused by activity and impact, according to Spine Health.

- \* Heavy lifting. Lifting improperly can cause back and muscle strains.
- \* Sudden impact. Jarring motions from sports, a fall, or a car accident.
- \* Repetitive motions. Common in sports such as rowing, golf, or baseball.
- \* Poor posture and weak abdominal and back muscles. Slouching puts added strain on lower back muscles.

Tight hamstring muscles can also add strain to the back over time.

- \* New activities can put new, sudden strains on muscle groups.

Anti-inflammatory medicines, available over the counter, such as ibuprofen, aspirin or naproxen can reduce inflammation. Acetaminophen can minimize pain by interfering the pain signals to the brain. Doctors might prescribe a muscle relaxant to reduce muscle spasms.

Lie flat to sleep or rest so you can reduce strain on the back.

At home, limit strenuous activity and stop heavy lifting for one or two days. Then get back to regular activity so muscles don't become stiff and weak.

Ice packs can help right after the strain. Apply for 10 to 20 minutes at intervals throughout the day.

After two days, apply a heating pad for 10 minutes before getting out of bed or before painful movement.

Massage therapy can increase circulation and relax muscles. Short walks of three to five minutes can also help.



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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.

## Keep batteries from kids, pets

Little batteries look harmless enough. If a toddler puts one in his mouth; however, it could lead to choking or serious burns if the battery chemical has leaked out.

Remember that dogs could think discarded batteries are toys. If they bite batteries, their mouths, tongues, and gastrointestinal tracts could be burned.

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

*You measure the size of the accomplishment by the obstacles you had to overcome to reach your goals.*

~ Booker T. Washington

## Tips for quieting a barking dog

The Humane Society of Denver says a barking dog can cause neighborhood disputes and violations of animal control ordinances. If your dog's barking has created neighborhood tension, it's a good idea to discuss the problem with your neighbors and tell them you are taking steps to eliminate it.

Determine when and for how long your dog barks, and what's causing him to bark. Is he left alone for long periods of time? Is his environment barren, without playmates or toys? Is he a young dog with few outlets for his energy? Is he a herding or sporting dog who needs a "job" to be happy?

Recommendations:

- \* Walk your dog daily.

- \* Teach him to fetch a ball or Frisbee.

- \* Teach commands for five to 10 minutes a day.

- \* Take an obedience class with your dog.

- \* Provide interesting toys to keep him busy when you're not there.

Rotating the toys makes them interesting.

- \* When you are away, don't take away toys as punishment for barking. The dog won't know why the toy is gone. Instead, he will be bored and restless, and probably barking.

- \* When you have to leave for extended periods, take him to a "doggie day care" or have someone walk with him.

- \* Teach him a "quiet" command. When he barks at someone, allow two or three barks, then say "quiet." Interrupt his barking by shaking a can filled with pennies or squirting water at his mouth with a spray bottle. This startles him into being quiet so you can reward him. While he's quiet, say "good quiet" and pop a tasty treat into his mouth.

- \* If he barks when you're home, call him to you and have him obey a command such as "sit." Praise him and give him a treat.

## FREE Refrigerator Cleaning with Whole House Deep Cleaning

\$150 minimum purchase

Schedule your appointment by May 31<sup>st</sup>

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