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REMEMBER ME ... when you are thinking about buying, selling, or building.

www.DennisMyRealtor.com

During the dog days of summer, heat and humidity can leave us panting for relief. While you might feel like lazing around, now is a great time to get into that new house, especially if you have school-age children.



Some people don't realize the benefits of a Home Protection Plan. However, as an experienced Real Estate Professional, I would like to explain how a quality Home Protection Plan can benefit you, whether you are selling or buying a home. A good Home Protection Plan ensures the repair or replacement of major covered home systems and appliances that fail due to normal use. For Sellers, this provides added value to your home when it is on the market. For Buyers, this means peace of mind and confidence in the purchase of your home. I advise all my clients to include a Home Protection Plan with their transaction, and the company I trust to provide the best service and coverage is Old Republic Home Protection. Call me today for more information about how this valuable service can be put to work for you.

As your local Real Estate Professional, I can help determine where to buy; offer tips to ready a home for sale; provide a current market analysis; aid with financing, and answer questions about desired neighborhoods. If you know someone interested in buying or selling real estate, please refer me to them!



If you are working with another Real Estate Professional, please disregard this notice.

Health & Safety

Hand Hygiene To Maintain Good Health

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), keeping hands clean is key to avoiding getting sick and spreading germs to others. With the common cold accounting for nearly 22 million school days lost annually, the back-to-school season is a critical time to review proper hand hygiene.



Effective hand hygiene practices include washing hands frequently with soap and water, and when soap and water are not available, using an alcohol-based instant hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol.

Proper hand washing procedure, according to CDC instructions:

- Wet hands with clean, warm water and apply soap.
- Rub hands together to create lather and scrub all surfaces (including between fingers and under nails).
- Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds (about the time it takes to sing Happy Birthday).
- Rinse hands under running water.
- Dry hands thoroughly.

Proper use of hand sanitizers:

- Apply alcohol-based hand sanitizer to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together — so that product covers all surfaces of hands and fingers — until hands are dry.
- Then: remind, remind, remind. Encourage your children to wash their hands frequently throughout the day, particularly before eating, and after using the bathroom and playing outside.

Helpful Hints

Making Allowances Work

One of the most contentious issues regarding allowance is whether to ask kids to do chores in return. On the "yes" side are parents who want to get some elbow grease for the money. In the "no" camp are parents who think that kids should do chores free because they're part of the family.



Here are a couple of workable alternatives. Give them a basic allowance that isn't just a handout, but is tied to certain spending responsibilities (financial "jobs" your kids take over from you). For example, they pay for their own video games and mall excursions. To teach them the value of working for pay, let them earn extra cash for raking leaves or washing the car.

To avoid having your children "expect" your hard-earned funds without making any contribution, have them do some basic chores for free...such as cleaning their rooms. And if they ask how much you'll give them in return, tell them they'll earn your undying love and affection!

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Savor the Flavor

Mango, Jicama & Cucumber Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 ripe mangos
- 1 medium jicama
- 1 medium English cucumber
- Fresh cilantro to taste, if desired
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- Zest from 1 lime
- 2 Tbls honey
- 1 cup canola oil
- Salt to taste

Peel the mango, jicama, and cucumber. Cut them into bite-size pieces and place in a large bowl. Add chopped cilantro, if desired.

Combine the lime juice, zest, and honey in a blender. Run the blender at low speed and slowly drizzle in the canola oil until the dressing is slightly thickened, then add salt to taste.

Pour the dressing over the mango mixture and toss to coat. Serves 8.

Household Tips

Cheap Thrills – Host a Successful Yard Sale

After ensuring that there are no restrictions in your neighborhood or city on having yard sales, set a date and advertise on community bulletin boards, in the local newspaper, and on the Web.

Months before the sale, start accumulating items in boxes. If you don't have time to price everything individually, signs are helpful, such as "all books .25 each" or "any piece of clothing \$1.00".

On the day of the sale, display some of your more interesting items at the end of your driveway to lure people in, and set up one table with "man-things" (jars full of screws and nails, electronic parts, tools, etc.).

Have coins and small bills available to make change, and keep your money on your person! Have an electrical outlet or a long extension cord available for testing electrical appliances.

Invite a neighbor or friend to join you in your yard sale. You can split the cost of the newspaper ad, and the more stuff you have available to sell, the better!

Now have fun, and enjoy all of your newfound space in your home, closets and garage!



Real Estate Today

A Home Inspection Is a Wise Investment



If you are planning to sell your home, one important element that should not be overlooked is the value of a pre-listing home inspection.

Pre-listing inspections are a true win-win for sellers and buyers alike. A professional home inspector will review the major visible and accessible components of the home, and provide a detailed written report rating each element. This procedure creates an atmosphere of openness and trust by showing prospective buyers the big picture from the beginning.

A pre-listing inspection makes the home stand out from others on the market, and allows a seller to get the most from the home in the shortest possible time. It also reduces the risk of having to re-negotiate the deal based on surprises found later in the process by a buyer's inspection.

For more information regarding qualified home inspectors in your area or to obtain a copy of the ASHI Standards of Practice, log on to www.ASHI.org.