

Don's Home News

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Your Next Metaphor Is Just a Stone's Throw Away

Metaphors are not just tricks of language or literary lures that belong in a writer's toolbox; they're all around us. In fact, metaphors are powerful tools with important life and business applications.

James Geary, the bestselling author and business expert, quotes Aristotle on metaphors as, "the process of giving a thing a name that belongs to something else."

Effectively, when we want to convey an abstract concept to someone unfamiliar with it, we seek ways to make it concrete and therefore help the other person visualize and identify with it. It's like a code we all share. It's what Shakespeare did when he wrote, "Juliet is the sun."

In a TED talk video that has garnered almost half-a-million hits, Geary notes that metaphors are key to the creation of successful ads and brands. And they're essential to how we understand ourselves, each other, and the world; apparently, metaphorical thinking may be critical to creativity of any kind.

Why do we care? We care because metaphors shape perceptions and create expectations, which mean they influence decision-making. When somebody is described as "hot," we imagine a person with sex appeal. When we hear a movie is "dynamite," we expect to be entertained. When the Dow Jones Industrial Average is "climbing," we envision a brighter future.

In the final analysis, metaphors add a visual or conceptual dimension to something that's ordinary and, the stronger the metaphor, the more memorable the thought and, the more vivid the metaphor, the more powerful the

Are you missing the hot deals in your online searches for listings?

Most Buyers don't realize that even the top public sites take up to five days to publish new listings, and most of those sites never report when a property goes under contract. In today's hot real estate market, serious Buyer's must have listing information immediately in order to have a chance at the hottest new listings.

If you are serious about your home search, I can help save you time and frustration. Email me today at donzahnle@gmail.com with "Help me with my home search" in the subject line and I will set you up with the tools to access the multiple listing service in real time just like I do. I can also notify you of hot new listings within minutes of them being entered in the multiple listing services. Stop wasting time. Contact me today at donzahnle@gmail.com.

Pick a Paint Color for Your Spring Spruce-up

Spring's on its way, meaning spring cleaning and updating. One of the least expensive, most effective ways to update your décor is to paint. But what color? Paint colors, like fashion trends, fall in and out of favor. And most of us want to be in style.

Why not consider what's new in interior design, furniture, and fashion? Watch the runways in Paris, Milan, and New York for hints about upcoming color trends. And look back at the January issues of design magazines – many included features on color trends.

For manufacturers and marketers, color is all about business. However, it's a not-for-profit group of color design professionals that has been instrumental in shaping new color palettes since it was founded in 1962.

Based on considerable (and expensive) research, Color Management Group (CMG) decides what's new in color and design. When CMG speaks, manufacturers of just about every product you can think of – including paint – listen. The result is new colors, not just for your walls, but for your toaster, your bathroom towels, and even your car.

So, what about your spring spruce-up? Once again, bold colors are in. Last year, despite a concerted ad campaign, consumers showed resistance to painting entire rooms in bright colors. Now, many paint companies have toned down their palettes and encourage the color-wary to use "big" color for accent walls.

Luckily for the rest of us, warmer neutrals remain popular. One thought: Stick with a color that makes you feel comfortable and happy. It'll make your spruce-up worthwhile.

Happy Valentine's Day: Your Sweetie Is a Socialbot

According to Techopedia, "A socialbot is a type of bot that controls a social media account. Like all bots, a socialbot is automated software."

Socialbots pass themselves off as real people, tweeting, emailing, and greeting us in chat rooms, online storefronts and dating sites. It's hard enough to know if flesh-and-blood friends are upfront. Now, it's hard to know if they're even flesh and blood.

Bots aren't particularly novel; spam folders are full of them. But this is a new twist – and it's seriously unsettling. Just as real people can make you happy or sad, so can socialbot.

New York Times writer Ian Urbina reports, "this new breed of bots is being designed not just with greater sophistication but also with grander goals: to sway elections, to influence the stock market, to attack governments,

even to flirt with people and one another."

Even well informed people can be misled. Writer Andrea Peterson notes in the *Washington Post* that "Robert Epstein, a Harvard psychologist who co-edited a book on artificial intelligence, fell for bots imitating live women on dating sites, not once, but twice."

Socialmouths, an online social media resource, reports that Facebook has 83 million fake accounts. And that's not all – a big chunk of everyone's Twitter followers are fake. Peterson suggests that, on average, only 35 percent of our Twitter followers are real.

The sad fact is that bots are a big disappointment for romantics everywhere, because, even in today's binary world, nobody wants to pair up with spam.

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Just email me at donzahnle@gmail.com for the answer.

Who first invented mass-produced instant coffee?

Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbor, friend or co-worker.

And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give me a call or send me an email!

Are You Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

Do you want to know how the price of your home has changed in today's market? Do you want to know for how much other homes in your neighborhood are selling?

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, I can help.

Either call 404-939-1309 or [email](mailto:donzahnle@gmail.com) me for a no-obligation, professional evaluation.

I won't pressure you into listing with me or waste your time. [Read about how I feel about pressure!](#) I'll just give you the honest facts about your home and its value.

I'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live!

Call me at 404-939-1309 or email me at donzahnle@gmail.com and we will arrange a time to get together.

Worth Reading

What Life Will Be Like in the Cities of the Future?

Dan Macsai
Time.Com (Ideas)

The days of scouring streets looking for available parking spots may be over; vacant street parking will signal you via sensors. It's all part of making cities "smarter." The article highlights information coming out of a Chicago Ideas Week session.

More: <http://tinyurl.com/Februarys-Read-1>

10 Simple, Science-backed Ways to be Happier Today

Belle Beth Cooper
Fast Company

Cooper will probably grab you with this statement: "Did you know that the perfect temperature for happiness is 13.9 °C (just over 57 degrees Fahrenheit)? Adjust your thermostat, and then check out these quick tips for maximizing mirth." The scientific rationale is compelling, but the tips? Not so surprising: The exception: You get happier as you get older.

More: <http://tinyurl.com/Februarys-Read-2>

Seven Reasons why Photography Can Boost Your Happiness

Gretchen Rubin
LinkedIn

Prolific poster, Gretchen Rubin, finds that photography can make you happy. Why? Those vacation photos or pictures of Christmas around the tree are reminders of the good times and the good people in our lives – something we may not remember on down days. Luckily, everyone is now taking advantage of the chance to preserve memories through their smartphones. So, budding paparazzi: Be happy!

More: <http://tinyurl.com/Februarys-Read-3>

Hiring a Licensed Appraiser Can Benefit Sellers

The most important step in listing your home is establishing the price. That doesn't necessarily mean what you need or even want for your property; it means a realistic price that reflects its true market value.

An unbiased perspective is vital – as the homeowner, you're proud of the upgrades you've made. But can you be realistic about whether the upgrades are still in good shape and on trend?

Unfortunately, most sellers don't have the time or energy to compare their home to similar properties in the area. Your real estate agent can give you a good estimate of your home's value. However, unless he or she is also a licensed appraiser, your agent can only

provide a broker's estimate of value, established through a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA).

CMAs can be very accurate in estimating your home's value, but your agent may suggest you consider hiring a licensed appraiser to nail down the value, and likely can advise you on good appraisers. Expect to pay a licensed appraiser \$300 to \$400.

Appraisers are unbiased. They use the market value approach and usually do a cost analysis – estimating how much it would cost to build a new house exactly like yours.

This has a side bonus: You'll get a sense of how your older home compares

to new builds.

He or she will look at everything from your neighborhood to the cracks in the home's foundation. It is in probing behind the cosmetics of your home that an appraiser earns his or her stripes.

That's when you'll find whether your upgrades are still assets, or if now is the time to fix that leaky roof.

If it's good news, you may want to share your appraisal with buyers who are close to making an offer, especially if the buyer appears to be talking down the property with a view to submitting a lowball offer.

Finally, a Justification for Craving Sugar

Sweet lovers may finally have a scapegoat for their cravings.

According to several research studies, a craving for sweet treats can be explained physiologically.

- Studies have suggested that cravings for carb-rich foods come from a need to affect one's neurotransmitters, especially in obese individuals or those with eating disorders.
- Certain meals may also create a desire for something sweet. A dinner rich in protein, for example, may have the eater rooting around for something sugary afterwards.
- Sugar is addictive. A Connecticut college professor and students found that Oreo cookies proved as addictive as cocaine to lab rats. The cookies activated more neurons in the rat brains' pleasure centers than exposure to addictive drugs. Meanwhile, other research has shown that "going off" sugar can lead to the same neurological symptoms as those generated by a withdrawal from alcohol, nicotine, or morphine.

Sleep May Clean Our Brains of Toxic "Gunk"

Inadequate sleep has been linked to weight gain and increased stress. And too little shuteye can leave us feeling distracted. Now, research is suggesting that sleep is also essential to "clean brains" – it can help scrub our brains of "gunk" that could cause neurological disorders.

Scientists at the University of Rochester Medical Center previously discovered a network in mice brains that is responsible for cleaning out toxic waste.

They followed the progress of beta-amyloid, a protein that accumulates in people with Alzheimer's disease, and found that it was cleaned out faster in the brains of sleeping mice than their wide-awake counterparts.

Researchers conclude it makes sense that the human brain also benefits from a good night's cleaning and will look for the process in humans.

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

Should I sell my home "as is"?

If you're not in a hurry to sell, or out of money, energy and patience, renovating to sell may not be right for you. So, while it isn't for everyone, selling your home "as is" may be the answer.

Pros

- If you've already bought another home and don't want to carry two mortgages, you'll be more likely to sell quickly by listing your home for sale at a reduced price – as is.
- No need to make cosmetic repairs or live in a construction zone.
- Buyers of as-is properties effectively sign off on problems that may be discovered after closing.

Cons

- Savvy buyers may sense urgency, and low-ball your already reduced price.
- You're limiting the number of interested buyers to those prepared to deal with major repairs

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Sudoku instructions: Complete the 9 × 9 grid so that each row, each column and each of the nine 3 × 3 boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact me for the solution!

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**Recipe: Beijinhos
 (Little Kisses)**

This Brazilian specialty is a light treat just right for Valentine's Day.

Makes about two dozen kisses

Ingredients

- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 4 ounces desiccated coconut, lightly toasted
- About 2 dozen seedless green grapes, washed and dried

Directions

Place the condensed milk and butter in a heavy saucepan. Cook on low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened – about 25 minutes.

Pour the thickened mixture onto a lightly buttered plate, and cool completely. Meanwhile, toast the coconut and set aside.

To assemble, lightly butter your hands. Take about half a tablespoon of the cooled mixture and wrap a grape in it, rolling it between your hands until it becomes a small ball.

Toss the kisses in coconut and place on a plate or in small paper liners.

Keep refrigerated until ready to eat.

