

Don's Home News

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Nature Nurtures: The Power of the Great Outdoors

Everyone knows what research now proves: nature is good for you. Be they gardeners, dog walkers, or wilderness wanderers, people simply feel healthier in the great outdoors. But why?

In a recent column, gardening expert Mark Cullen tells us it's all about trees. He writes, "We know we feel better when we spend time in the natural environment of a conservation area or urban park, or in our backyard. ..." Referring to a University of Chicago study, Cullen adds, "In fact, 10 additional trees per city block increased ... subjects' health perception by as much as \$10,000 in extra income (like winning a small lottery!)."

In a recent article in *Ecologist*, Richard J. Dolesh explains why: "New research reported in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* now provides scientific proof that walking in nature and spending time under leafy shade trees causes electrochemical changes in the brain that can lead people to enter a highly beneficial state of 'effortless attention.'"

Psychology professors Rachel and Stephen Kaplan have been researching what they call "the restorative benefits" of nature for decades. In a cover story for the American Psychological Association, writer Rebecca A. Clay summarizes their findings: "People don't have to head for the woods to enjoy nature's restorative effects, the Kaplans emphasize. Even a glimpse of nature from a window helps. In one well-known study, for instance, Rachel Kaplan found that office workers with a view of nature liked their jobs more, enjoyed better health, and reported greater life satisfaction."

So get out there! It's good for you.

Do you want a better way to search listings while driving neighborhoods?

Are you tired of looking up a property in Zillow from your smart phone only to learn, when you call your agent to schedule a tour of the property, that it has been under contract for a week? **Now you can search the MLS from any web connected mobile device.**

You no longer have to waste time with the aggregator site apps. I can set you up with direct access point to the MLS for all of your mobile devices? Search by address, map, zip, etc in real time on the MLS like agents do. No more stale and out of date data like you are getting now. The data renders perfectly on all mobile devices regardless of the OS - Apple, Android, or Windows. The photos and virtual tours render beautifully, too!

[Email](#) me today with the message, "set me up with a Mobile Access Point." It works just like an app, only better. It is FREE and takes me only minutes to set it up for you.

Fridge Kaput? Chill Out with a Home Warranty

Dealing with a conked-out refrigerator, a malfunctioning dishwasher, a nonworking air-conditioning system, or a flooded bathroom can be a royal pain.

Appliance insurance helps homeowners deal with the hassle and manage the cost of unexpected home repairs. An appliance warranty, also known as a home warranty, is a type of service contract that covers repair or replacement of certain home appliances and systems when they fail due to normal wear and tear.

A basic plan that covers essential home systems and appliances typically costs from \$350 to \$500 per year. In addition, homeowners pay a flat service fee (in the range of \$60 to \$75) for each service call.

One obvious benefit of an appliance warranty is peace of mind. If a covered appliance or system breaks down, the homeowner can rest easy knowing the problem will be taken care of with a single call or email to the warranty company. Another important benefit is that major issues such as system breakdowns, for which a repair or replacement can cost thousands of dollars, won't break the budget.

Preexisting conditions, like poorly maintained systems or broken fixtures, are not covered under a home warranty, so it's important to schedule regular maintenance for all systems and appliances and document when and how they were serviced.

A home warranty is a great incentive for home buyers, and it has become increasingly common for sellers to include a home warranty as part of the sale of the home to encourage confidence and attract buyers. Consumeraffairs.com recently published a list of home warranty companies. Check: <http://tinyurl.com/warranty-companies>

Minimize Digital Clutter So You Can Focus on the Real Thing

We spend a lot of time in front of our screens, and that means we end up accumulating an insane amount of digital clutter. Just like we have to clean our homes, we have to make cleaning up our digital spaces a priority too.

If you have dozens or even hundreds of unread messages in your email inbox, it's time to come up with a system so new messages don't keep getting lost. One helpful tip is to create folders where you can store the emails you've already read. If you do this, your unanswered emails will be front and center in your inbox, just waiting for your attention.

Another quick fix deals with a reality we know all too well: you lovingly make the adorable photo of your pet your desktop background, only to have it disappear under dozens of icons.

To clean up your desktop, remember to keep only the icons for programs you frequently use. You could also start a new folder for all your documents so you don't have loose PDFs cluttering your desktop.

If you're having a hard time remembering all your passwords, you might want to consider using the app 1Password, which takes care of that problem for you. Or you can keep all your passwords in one password-protected spreadsheet (just don't forget the password to that!).

Finally, if you're finding your digital space getting too messy and time-consuming, consider taking a break to clean up the real clutter you've been avoiding by worrying about your digital mess.

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

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

What mineral deposits grow down from the ceiling in a cave?

Thanks for All Your Referrals!

I succeed when people like you refer me to your friends, neighbors and loved ones. It's the best kind of feedback I can receive.

So thanks for continuing to pass this newsletter on to people you care about.

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? ? Stop looking at Zestimates and find out what your home is *really* worth.

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

Email me for [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.

Email me at donzahnle@gmail.com with "send me a Home Value Analysis" in the Subject line. I also need the property address. I'll get the report out to you in 24 hours.

Worth Reading

Doing a TED Talk: The Full Story

By Tim Urban

Wait But Why

The cartoons and charts in this article may help you conquer humanity's greatest fear: public speaking. Here, Tim Urban details how he prepared his TED Talk at the annual TED Conference, and provides useful advice on everything from keynote addresses to impromptu dinner toasts. **More:** <http://tinyurl.com/Fear-conquered>

Curiosity Depends on What You Already Know

By Zach St. George

Nautilus

Hunger, thirst, the need for shelter, or curiosity, motivates action. But while it's easy to understand why someone gets hungry and how that desire is satisfied, explaining curiosity remains ... curious. Let this article help you. Zach St. George describes the history of research into curiosity. His point: curiosity thrives when you know something about a topic, but not too much. Cue the adage "A little learning is a dangerous thing."

More:

<http://tinyurl.com/Curiosity-resolved>

The New Mind Control

By Robert Epstein

aeon.co

The fastest way to find this article may be a Google search. After reading it, you may regret that. In the buildup to the 2016 US election, much has been said, and will be said, about the candidates' use of social media and other digital platforms to campaign. But this piece by psychologist and author Robert Epstein shows how search engines can influence elections worldwide. **More:** <http://tinyurl.com/Read-for-June-2016>

Gardening Can Be a Bed of Roses: Try These Tips

Dreaming of a bed of roses or rows of tasty tomato plants is easy; the reality may feel like a nightmare, particularly to first-timers.

If you're planning on seeing whether your thumb is green this summer, note that gardeners are just as varied as gardens, and even those who grew up surrounded by high-rise buildings can nurture something from a plot of earth.

You don't even need your own backyard; thanks to locavores, the local food movement is spawning community gardens galore.

Before you take that first step, read gardening blogs and books. Talk to gardeners. Learn from them. Then check out these DIY tips:

Know your space. Gardens can occupy most of a backyard or a square-foot box. Consider where you'll plant. Walk around your yard at different times of day so you can see what areas get the most shade, and when.

Make sure you have the necessary materials. Have water buckets and/or a hose that's long enough. Invest in good tools and the space to store them.

A word about water. Many areas in North America are suffering from serious drought conditions, while others have the opposite problem: too much water. Both issues shape the way individuals on this continent garden today.

Know your soil. Different plants grow better in different soil types. It's important to know the pH level of your soil. You can purchase a home test, or you can submit soil samples to a lab and have experts look at it.

Know your strengths. Gardening takes time. For some, weeding, watering, pruning, and keeping your plants safe from insects and animals is part of the joy of gardening. If all that seems like drudge work, you may have to accept that gardening isn't for you.

Know your plan. Successful gardeners plan ahead. During June, for example, you need to plant fast-growing summer annuals and heat-tolerant vegetables that can endure hot summers.

Why Emojis Are Taking Over Our Lives

Recently, Facebook introduced five emojis to replace the thumbs-up icon. But would they catch on? At the time, Jessica Guynn wrote in *USA Today*, "Acknowledging that 'like' isn't the right sentiment for every occasion, the giant social network is offering new options. Reactions, five emoting emojis, [are now] rolling out to Facebook's nearly 1.6 billion users around the globe ..."

Around the same time, a *USA Today* headline used emojis, and as writer Esme Cribb noted in the *Content Strategist*: "Yes, emojis have now officially graced the pages of print newspapers ..."

The emoji platform, which tracks online sentiment and builds strategies through the use of emojis, found in a study that some 60% of respondents use emojis weekly, and many more frequently.

And, as Andrea Ayers wrote in the Crew blog: "Over a five-month period ... emojis were used over 1.7 billion times on Twitter." Ayers asks: "What exactly is driving our use of emoticons?" And responds: "The answer is quite simple, they make us feel good." A lot of Facebook fans might well agree.

Just How Neurotic Are You? Check These Out:

BuzzFeed may have the corner on frivolous quizzes (What caffeinated beverage or board game do you most resemble?), but some online tests may help you better understand your personality or your career options.

In "Test Color," you rank colors beginning with the ones you like and moving to the ones you dislike; then do it the other way around. Results may give you insight into your leadership IQ.

<http://tinyurl.com/color-your-world>

In "Who Am I?" you pick pictures that reveal your preferences and habits. How do you fare in this analysis of main personality traits?

<https://www.visualdna.com/quizzes/>

Not all tests are created by experts, so don't take it all too seriously. And some may be used to gather personal information, so be careful!

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

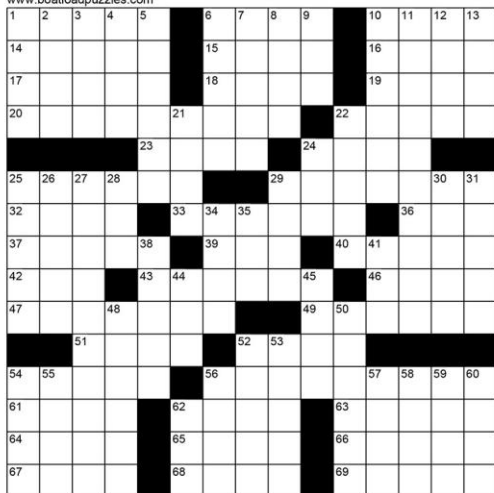
I'm going to be house-hunting this summer. Are there any benefits to looking in the warmer months?

There are several benefits to searching for a new home in the summertime. The biggest upside is fewer competitors; house hunters who began looking in the winter and spring often take the summer off and start again in the fall.

Sellers may also feel fatigued after a spring without selling and might be willing to come down in price in order to make a sale.

Finally, the summer months can shed new light on a neighborhood. People will be out in full force, and you'll get to observe the liveliness of an area, its green space, and the quality and popularity of its amenities. Kids will be out of school, and you'll have a much better idea of how young or mature a neighborhood is. If you have kids of your own, with school out it's easy to get them involved in the search for a new home.

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ACROSS

- 1. Swiftly
- 6. Norse tale
- 10. Circle segments
- 14. Once more
- 15. Give forth
- 16. Achievement
- 17. King, e.g.
- 18. Plunge
- 19. Tibetan priest
- 20. Support for an institution
- 22. Hoarse
- 23. Carson's successor
- 24. Japanese wrestling
- 25. Painters' stands
- 29. Bemoans
- 32. On vacation
- 33. Trinidad and _____
- 36. "We _____ Family"
- 37. Clothing stand
- 39. Anchorman _____ Rather

- 40. Batman's sidekick
- 42. Pitching stat
- 43. Eats away
- 46. Female voice
- 47. Symposium
- 49. Vocation
- 51. Singer _____ Williams
- 52. Implement
- 54. Smooths wood
- 56. Objected
- 61. Ocean current
- 62. Consider
- 63. _____ Island
- 64. Genesis location
- 65. Office acronym
- 66. Tint
- 67. Sassy
- 68. Two together
- 69. Look of contempt

DOWN

- 1. Angel's instrument
- 2. Water (Sp.)
- 3. Popcorn seasoning
- 4. Layer
- 5. Sign up
- 6. Family car
- 7. Friend (Sp.)
- 8. Donate
- 9. Nibbled
- 10. On fire
- 11. Not excessive
- 12. Child's resort
- 13. Stick around
- 21. Bird's home
- 22. Hearsay
- 24. Slump
- 25. Roof edges
- 26. Informed
- 27. Newt, e.g.
- 28. Look over
- 29. Country path
- 30. Corny
- 31. Spanish "mister"
- 34. Smell
- 35. Wicked
- 38. Looks after
- 41. Rowing blade
- 44. Sugar _____ Leonard
- 45. Highlander
- 48. Set in from the margin
- 50. Warns of danger
- 52. Act toward
- 53. Spirited vigor
- 54. Ladder rung
- 55. Helper
- 56. Mexican money
- 57. Leg bone
- 58. Hue
- 59. Border
- 60. Stag
- 62. Speck

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Thanks for reading! If you would like to tell me what you think about this newsletter, or if you're thinking of buying or selling real estate, please get in touch.

Strawberry Pistachio Bruschetta

Serves up to 8 as an appetizer

- 1 baguette, sliced into 1/2 inch slices
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup shelled salted pistachios
- 1 cup goat cheese
- 1 pound strawberries, hulled and sliced
- 1/4 tablespoon balsamic glaze (store bought or homemade)
- Freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 450°. Brush one side of each bread slice with olive oil and arrange on a baking sheet, oiled side down. Place in oven until slightly browned around the edges, about 5 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside to cool. Lower oven temperature to 350° and toast pistachios until fragrant, about 3-5 minutes. Remove from the oven and immediately transfer to a cutting board. Let them cool down before roughly chopping.

Place toasted baguette slices on a platter, oiled side up, and spread a thin, even layer of goat cheese on each slice. Arrange strawberry slices on top, drizzle with balsamic glaze, sprinkle with chopped pistachios, and finish with black pepper.

