

Don's Home News

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As the Song Goes, “Everything Old Is New Again”

In the world of home décor, everything old is new again. From repurposed furniture to scraped hardwood floors and over-dyed rugs, there's a new vibe in our homes. And it comes from the past.

Why? As futurist Richard Watson noted in a www.Refinery29.com article on nostalgia, it's about the uncertainty of life in the future: “The yearning for the past is deeply connected to uncertainty surrounding the future,” he says. “We are looking for something that's less complex, warmer, and more certain . . . It's primarily caused by too much change – largely technological, but also geopolitical, along with a breakdown in trust (in institutions) and the fact that work and families are less stable.”

Key to this is the craft movement, as exemplified by Etsy and other websites that bring together what style maven Debbie Travis calls “passionate artisans” and “an increasingly broad audience.”

Cross-stitched hangings, reclaimed wood furniture, and yes, even macramé – that throwback to the sixties – thrive in these environments. Those who can't do, buy. And their homes reflect the love and care that went into these new/old pieces. As Travis suggests: “We consumers show off these unique, crafted pieces that have a story behind them.”

It's ironic that the massive shift to a tech society, as noted by Richard Watson, is actually responsible for the spread of the nostalgia movement in home décor.

Where previously, handcrafted items were relegated to makers' markets and craft fairs, the Internet provides a global marketplace. One click, and you too can catch the new vibe.

Are You a First-Time Buyer? Get My Free Guide

Buying your first home is a big step and one that is likely to impact your financial future for years to come.

Make it easier by requesting my free guide, “How First-Timers Can Make a Wise Buy.”

Just email me at donzahnle@gmail.com and I'll send it right out to you.

Redecorating on a Dime? Work With What You've Got

The price of redecorating can be out-of-this-world, but it doesn't need to be. With creativity, DIY perseverance, and craftiness, you can decorate on a dime . . . or very close to it. How do you do it? Easy – just use the suggestions below. As you might guess, it's all about working with what you've got.

Find out what you have to work with: Get reacquainted with your own possessions. What do you want to do with the old stuff in your new space-to-be? Keep? Relocate to another room? Store? The inventory process spurs creativity and stimulates planning, and helps you to decide what's missing and what you will need to invest in.

Repurpose: Determine how you can repurpose items you already have to create what you want. Maybe you'd like a new entertainment center. But wait; you have a nice old sideboard, so you can remove drawers to create space underneath, add a lick of paint, and . . . there's your entertainment center. Cost: paint and some manual labor.

Swap items room-to-room: Just rearranging furniture can change a room's look dramatically. From furniture, to what you have on the walls, to décor items, re-arrange or swap things between rooms.

Slipcover: Maybe you have a couch or some slipper chairs you'd like to change up. Check online for slipcovers. These days, it's not about your grandmother's slipcovers; there are some attractive and affordable options available now, and they can totally transform your space.

Relax and Relish: Relax and relish your new space. You deserve it.

Is Politeness “So Last Century?” 9 Million Google Hits Say “No”

Despite the cynics who claim the world is getting more discourteous every day, politeness is still very much in style. And it isn't just old fogies who are conscious of manners. Business is paying attention, too. In high-tech, banking and service industries, etiquette workshops are running strong. WikiHow has an online guide on how to be polite – with 14 steps to follow. One of the tips: In a new situation, watch how others behave to get a sense of what is expected of you. Basically, it all boils down to being considerate, creating a positive image, and enhancing person-to-person contacts.

It appears manners are on everyone's mind. In a recent online post, Bloomberg Businessweek reported that etiquette schools are thriving. Talk show host Marilyn Denis routinely chats with Charles MacPherson, aka

“Charles, the Butler,” to share the skinny on manners with her audience. And Jacqueline Whitmore, who self-identifies as “a leading international etiquette expert and founder of The Protocol School of Palm Beach”, is a frequent guest on CNN, FOX Business, and HLN. Google lists 8,990,000 results for etiquette training.

Because good manners make good sense professionally, politeness itself has become big business. The Protocol School of Washington claims their training “prepares professionals with the critical behaviors necessary to build lasting business relationships.”

Patricia Fitzpatrick is another etiquette expert and author who teaches people how to be polite. She notes: “Treat everyone with politeness, even those who are rude to you – not because they are nice, but because you are.”

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

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

What was the first breakfast cereal to be commercially made?

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!

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

9 Things You Should Know Before Going Gluten-Free

By Sarah Klein
The Huffington Post

It's trendy to give up gluten these days, but there are things you should know before you do. One is that only a very small percentage of the population actually has a reason to go gluten-free. And you may not be one of them. Even worse: Scientific evidence doesn't support the fact that gluten-free equals a healthier you. **More:** <http://tinyurl.com/Aug-Must-Reads-1>

What Worrying Does to Your Health

By Rosalind Ryan
MailOnline

Don't worry, but stress could be negatively impacting your body, your brain, and your mental health. Overloading those worry circuits derails our primitive “fight or flight” response and over time this damages us ... more proof of a mind/ body connection. **More:** <http://tinyurl.com/Aug-Must-Reads-2>

The Health-Care Myths We Live by

By Charles Krauthammer
The Washington Post

Remember why you had your tonsils out? Because your doctor (and everyone else) thought the surgery was needed. Well, chances are it wasn't. And the billions of dollars we spend on vitamins and supplements each year? Pretty unnecessary. Krauthammer quotes reputable sources, such as the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, to support his thesis that many core health-related beliefs are myths. **More:** <http://tinyurl.com/Aug-Must-Reads-3>

What Factors Make a Great Location Great?

What constitutes a “good location,” and why are some areas particularly attractive to buyers and/or investors?

Inherent in the concept of a “good location” is the idea of a place where people want to live. This is probably close to shopping, top schools, recreational facilities, cultural amenities, restaurants, and transportation. In addition, it’s likely safe and will have well-run public services. But while good locations may be more convenient or more attractive than others, this isn’t always the case. They’re not always newer (or older) either. Following are some factors that contribute to the value of homes in a particular area. Some may surprise you.

- **Public image:** Properties located in popular, prestigious, or

historic locales are often valued highly because of their perceived status or reputation, or simply because there is a narrative about the area.

- **Starbucks:** Buyers are usually willing to pay more for homes that have a good “walk score.” That means they are within walking distance of shops, recreational venues, cafés and restaurants. People are choosy about what they want to walk to, however. Many buyers identify a nearby Starbucks (by name) as one reason to purchase a home in a particular neighborhood. The other top pick: parks.
- **Proximity to transit:** Today’s home buyers don’t want to spend hours commuting to and from

work. Gen X and Gen Y buyers, in particular, will often forgo a 3500-square-foot home in the suburbs for an 1800-square-foot property located downtown. These groups place their priorities in the ability to live closer to work, and social and cultural attractions.

- **Schools:** Buyers with children prefer a location close to schools, but, interestingly, the home’s value may decline if it is located too close to one.

Buyers can be a fickle lot, and today’s top neighborhoods may be tomorrow’s also-rans. But that said, it will still always be about “location.”

“Write On”: Pencils Fight the Good Fight

When the early boomers were at school, chances are the most innovative technology they had was a pencil, likely made by Faber-Castell. The family-owned German company has been making wooden pencils (and a wide variety of other writing implements) since 1761, and hanging in, even in today’s high-tech world.

Faber-Castell works to make its products relevant, thanks to its ability to shift with the times. In the late 1990s, for example, it produced easy-to-hold triangular-shaped pencils with raised dots to enhance “holdability.” A water-based coating keeps pencils environmentally friendly, and non-toxic ink ensures markers are child-friendly.

Despite the focus on innovation, some see our digital environment as increasingly hostile to pencils (and pens, as well). The signs are there: Cursive writing is no longer taught in many schools across North America, despite advocates who say that learning cursive increases children’s motor skills and encourages retention of information and creativity. Sadly, these are traits our children will need to succeed in our competitive environment in the future.

But, hey, there’s still a Faber-Castell pencil for that.

This Month’s Smile: Medical Miscommunication

They say laughter is the best medicine, and sometimes that comes from innocent medical miscommunication. Take, for instance, the elderly woman whose allergies were printed on her medical wristband. Later that day, the woman’s son called and complained that his mother had been labelled “bananas.”

Nurses face another sort of communication problem: Excuses from

patients and colleagues.

The most common excuse for missing a long-postponed appointment is a grandmother’s death. As one nurse confided, “This was (the patient’s) sixth grandmother to die within two months.” Interestingly, they also hear an equal number of excuses from doctors, who are usually stuck “on a boat” in the middle of nowhere and therefore can’t make rounds.

Ask the Agent: This Month’s Question

How do I find the right home in a new city?

Moving to a new city can be scary for many reasons, but house-hunting doesn’t have to be one of them. Here are the six Rs of house-hunting in a strange city:

Rent or buy – is your move to test the waters or make a permanent change? Know what the future holds before deciding.

Research – look to your network first; someone may know someone who lives in your future locale. If not, there’s lots of information available online.

Real estate agent – a good local agent will know the neighborhoods, schools, and prices. Again, ask your network for recommendations.

Realistic – don’t expect to find a clone of your current home.

Roadtrip – make at least one in-person visit before you buy. Walk the neighborhoods you’re interested in.

Relax – the house to call *home* is out there; you just need to know where to look.

5	1	3		8			7	
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	9		7				4	5
				7				3
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	5			6		9	1	7

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: Fresh Berry & Ginger Granita

This sorbet-like dessert is refreshing on a hot August day.

Serves 4

½ cup sugar

¾ cup water

1 inch fresh ginger root, peeled and sliced

3 cups fresh strawberries, hulled and diced

1 cup fresh raspberries, chopped

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Directions:

Place the sugar and water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil until sugar dissolves. Remove pot from heat, add ginger root, and set aside for 30 minutes. Strain the syrup into a blender and add the berries and lemon juice. Blend on high until smooth.

Pour the mixture into a large shallow baking dish and cover with foil. Place in the freezer and scrape the mixture in the baking dish with a fork about every hour for at least five hours to get a more even mixture.

To serve, let the mixture sit at room temperature for 10 to 15 minutes then scrape into chilled bowls.

