



April 2016

Volume 7, Issue 4

November

Better Home Living™

The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!

Renovations that can add value to a home ... and those that can reduce it

Whether you're thinking of selling your home or just want to improve its comfort value, there are inexpensive steps you can take to achieve either goal.

They include adding ceiling fans; updating appliances to attractive, energy-saving units, applying a fresh coat of paint and replacing old-style light fixtures.

Here are some renovations that will decrease the value of your home, according to Scott McGillivray, author of *How to Add Value to Your Home*.

- * Breaking down the wall between two small bedrooms to create a master suite. Buyers prefer three-bedrooms.
- * Converting an attached garage to living space. Sounds like a good idea, but many buyers won't even look at a home that doesn't have a garage.
- * Adding artistic touches to the home, like large wall paintings. They can be painted over, but most buyers prefer uncluttered walls, a blank space for them to fill in, not an example of the previous owner's tastes.
- * Painting walls dark colors tends to make home buyers think the rooms are small and unwelcoming. Light-colored walls make the rooms feel larger and friendlier, which is what home buyers want, even if they will paint the walls themselves.
- * Doing it yourself: Quoted in *Bottom Line Personal*, McGillivray says that unless you are a professional remodeler, skip do-it-yourself updates. When buyers, and the home inspectors they hire, see such work, they wonder what else you have done, such as working on the electricity and plumbing. Buyers are more confident when they feel a home has been professionally maintained.
- * Adding a chain-link fence in the front yard looks cheap and unwelcoming. And it give buyers a low first impression of the property.

Staying Well: Cleaner Towels & Better Sleep

Ever noticed that your bathroom towel has a musty smell? Steve Boorstein host of the Web site clothingdoctor.com, says it's from mildew spores developing there. His recommendations:

1. Cleaner Towels
 - * Wash towels often. Traces of dirt and perspiration help mildew spores grow.
 - * Don't crowd them in the washer. Towels need plenty of room to agitate,
 - * Use the hottest washer cycle.
 - * Add a booster such as 20 Mule Team Borax to boost the cleaning power.
 - * Move towels from the washer to the dryer immediately.
 - * Add bleach to a load of whites to kill germs and mildew in the washer.
2. Avoid sleep apnea. Doctors reporting in *Duke Medicine* have found that simple lifestyle changes can reduce the incidence of sleep apnea. The goals are to help you breath normally while you sleep and to ease snoring.
3. Weight loss, sleeping on your side to keep your throat open, and avoiding alcohol, smoking (and medicines that make you drowsy) in order to keep your throat open. If that doesn't work, a mask can be prescribed that gives continuous airway pressure to keep the throat open.
4. Pap could be replaced. - The Pap test has reduced U.S. cervical cancer deaths in women by 70 percent over the last six decades. A new test could be even better. It detects the presence of human papilloma virus (HPV), which causes almost all cases of cervical cancer. It screens for 13 cancer-causing HPV types. HPV infection usually clears on its own, but women who are persistently infected with it are at risk for cervical cancer.

Though the new test detects 94 percent of pre-cancers as opposed to 53 percent detected by the Pap smear, the American Cancer Society recommends that both tests be taken annually by women over age 29.

Free Cleaning Tips and Specials at www.s-mqs.com



I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

*Gene Rhodes
ServiceMaster Quality Services*

Morning routines create days of success

Has this ever happened to you? There's plenty that should be done, but you can't think of what to do first.

Why not have an automatic get-started routine? It could be as easy as: Let the dog in, take a shower, get dressed, eat, lock the door and go. There's comfort in having a consistent way to start the day.

A get-started, get-motivated routine is basic if you work at a desk. It could be: Clean up, organize your desk, and get rid of the clutter. External clutter can lead to mental clutter.

Advisors at *Inc.com* say a minimalist approach to your work area will give you fresh perspectives.

According to *Inc.com*, successful people tend to set up morning routines that include both exercise and planning.

Exercise gets your body and mind moving. Doing it in the morning not only releases feel-good chemicals, but it is probably easier to start and finish. According to a study by the University of Nottingham and Singapore's National Institute of Education, everyone has more self-control and motivation in the morning. As the day wears on, psychological and physical fatigue sets in.

Do one thing that motivates you: Meditate, read something inspirational, recite your life goal.

Review your plan for the day. Check your to-do list first. Do the hardest thing first and the rest of the day will be smooth sailing.



Do You Know...

... someone that could use our services? Perhaps a colleague, friend, family member, or networking buddy?

When a new client signs up for residential services at your recommendation, you will receive \$10!

If you would think of 3 or 4 people that could use our services, then don't 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 \$10.00 Bonus!

Thanks in advance for your help and we look forward to sending cash your way!

Thanks a Bunch!

"Very satisfied with the work and the Technician" –Ms. Cantrelle

"Very professional, helpful and knowledgeable. Love you guys" –Ms. Lisa Soileau

Aging gracefully Is there such a thing?

Your fingers could fly over the adding machine keyboard. But now no one uses them. You had the most beautiful complexion, but now? Well, still pretty good but not like a 20-year-old.

One study concludes that with aging there is an inevitable loss of self-esteem, starting at age 60, according to livescience.com.

But is there a way to age gracefully and contentedly since, after all, aging begins at birth and continues throughout life.

According to the New Atlantis, some character traits make aging more graceful.

Courage: The ability to keep fear in check, even as there are more things to be fearful about.

Simplicity: Traveling light through the journey.

Wisdom: Avoiding excessive nostalgia and remorse.

Wit: Since the restrictions of children, appearances, professions are removed, humor can and often does rise up as we age. Might as well laugh.

Caring and understanding: Understanding people at different points in the aging journey.



"I remember a time when he used to hug me like that."

Earth Day thoughts for 2016

Almost everyone today shows some concern about what the inhabitants of Earth can do to keep the planet clean and livable.

Because each of us is only one person, there are no large-scale projects we can do, but if we all do something that may seem small, our combined efforts will help to keep our planet viable.

A few things we can do:

Plant a tree. Over time, a single tree can improve the environment in a large area around it. So planting a tree makes a lot of sense today.

Learn about recycling. It's all about disposing of waste materials in a productive way. It's one of the best ideas for making the earth green forever.

The impact of a landfill can harm the Earth as it continues to grow, so take recycling seriously.

Develop a better cleaning strategy. Most people don't have one. Your own cleaning plans might involve using natural products like vinegar for cleaning at home. Your home will be a nice place when it's free of dust and odors.

Check froschusa.com for a wide selection of cleaning products that can be used in various ways. They use ingredients like lemon, lavender and baking soda.

Outdoors, chemicals can seep into the air and the ground, which could damage the environment.

For about 35 years, The Green Team at Gardener's Supply (gardeners.com) has been a trusted resource for earth-friendly products. They help people garden in harmony with nature.

The Green Team has earth-friendly products that help people recycle waste into compost, build better soil, control pests organically, conserve water, protect biodiversity and grow their own food.



Trivia Teaser – Street Smart

1. Whose first words on "Sesame Street" were "Don't bang on my can! Go away!"? a-Big Bird, b-Ernie, c-Mr. Hooper, d-Oscar.

2. What fictional lawyer was assisted by a secretary named Della Street? a-Perry Mason, b-Owen Marshall, c-Horace Rumpole, d-Ben Matlock.

3. On what London street did demon barber Sweeney Todd ply his trade? a-Carnaby Street, b-Fleet Street, c-Wall Street, d-Harley Street.

4. In what musical did Freddy Eynsford-Hill sing "On the Street Where You Live"? a-"On a Clear Day You Can See Forever," b-"My Fair Lady," c-"Carousel," d-"Gigi."

5. What rock singer is backed by the E Street Band? a-Elvis Costello, b-David Bowie, c-Bruce Springsteen, d-Bob Dylan.

6. What actor won a Best Supporting Actor Oscar for reprising his Broadway role in "A Streetcar Named Desire"? a-Kirk Douglas, b-Karl Malden, c-Burt Lancaster, d-James Franciscus.

7. Lombard Street is famous for a steep, one-block section with eight hairpin turns in what city? a-Boston, b-San Francisco, c-Seattle, d-Washington, D.C.

8. "Dancing in the Street" was a 1964 Motown hit for what girl group? a-The Marvelettes, b-The Supremes, c-Martha and the Vandellas, d-Ruby and the Romantics.

9. Whose 1984 debut novel was "The House on Mango Street"? a-Sandra Cisneros, b-Toni Morrison, c-John Berger, d-Donna Tartt.

10. What movie was promoted with the tagline "On every street in every city, there's a nobody who dreams of being a somebody"? a-"Forrest Gump," b-"Rocky," c-"Taxi Driver," d-"Midnight Cowboy."

1-d, Oscar
2-a, Perry Mason
3-b, Fleet Street
4-b, "My Fair Lady"
5-c, Bruce Springsteen
6-b, Karl Malden
7-b, San Francisco
8-c, Martha and the Vandellas
9-a, Sandra Cisneros
10-c, "Taxi Driver"

Answers to 'Street Smart'

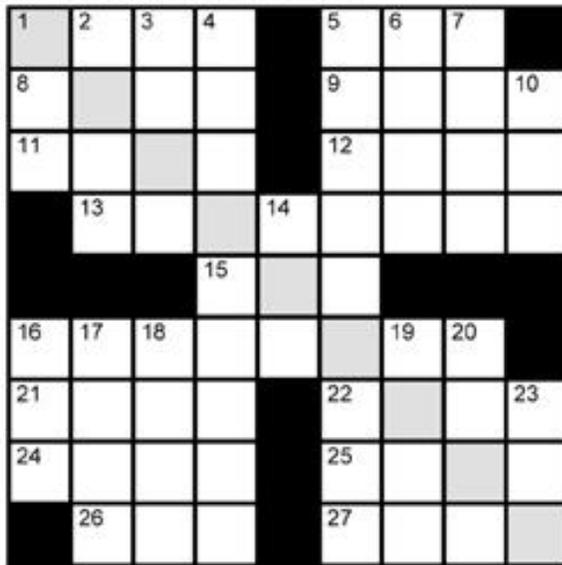
Space Station dweller

Across

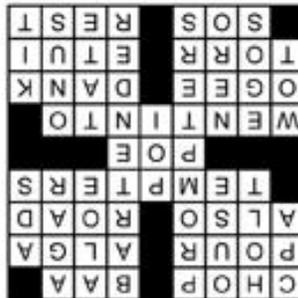
1. Hack
5. Bleat
8. Come down hard
9. Pond dweller
11. ___-ran
12. Highway
13. Sirens, e.g.
15. "The Bells" poet
16. Pursued, as a career
21. Arch type
22. Dungeonlike
24. Unit of pressure
25. Needle case
26. "Help!"
27. Medical advice, often

Down

1. Number cruncher, for short
2. Author Victoria
3. Yorkshire river
4. Round Dance Cuers
5. Mixologist
6. ___ vera
7. Biology lab supply
10. Commercials
14. Hawaiian dish



16. Knows, in poetry
17. Freudian topics
18. "I, Claudius" role
19. London art gallery
20. Burden
23. Do-it-yourselfer's purchase
The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.



Scientists recognize the healing power of touch

Human touch can be a deeper form of communication than words. Researchers say it comes from the gut.

According to the Mayo Clinic health letter, healthcare providers sense that a compassionate touch can help alleviate pain and discomfort in their patients. A hand on the arm may provide motivation toward recovery.

More formal approaches to incorporating touch into medicine are complimentary therapies. Some focus on manipulating soft tissue. Most help you relax.

Massage therapy manipulates the muscles, skin and tendons. Almost everyone feels better after a massage. Studies show that massage can reduce anxiety, pain and fatigue.

Reiki is an energy therapy where the practitioner's hands are placed on the recipient's body. Different hand positions are held about two to five minutes. Recipients describe a feeling of warmth and relaxation after a session. It's also used to treat stress and nausea from chemotherapy.

Everyone can use touch to comfort a person who faces an illness or who has lost a loved one.

Some people avoid touching to guard their own emotions, but a simple touch on the arm or shoulder can bring benefits to both you and the person in grief. So go ahead, touch that grieving person's arm.

Studies show that feeling isolated from others has negative health effects, like depression, cognitive decline and an increased risk of heart disease.



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About Our Company

ServiceMaster Quality Services is a full service commercial and residential cleaning company that operates in the following areas: Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes.

Services include commercial general cleaning, carpet/rug cleaning, upholstery cleaning, all types of hard floor care, window washing, interior vehicle cleaning (mats and seats only) and construction cleaning.

Owners Gene and Sally Rhodes have been in the cleaning industry for [over 25] years, and they feel it's important to provide cleaning services that place the utmost importance on the health and safety of their clients and employees. We also are professionally certified with IICRC (Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration).

House calls over the Internet

Hundreds of employers are contracting through their health insurers with telehealth programs. The programs give workers 24-hour access to doctors and nurse practitioners, and they cut costs.

WellPoint connects patients to doctors via video calls. A patient and doctor can see each other within minutes, says Bloomberg Businessweek.

WellPoint teamed up with Boston based American Well to offer telemed services to 3.5 million of its health-plan subscribers last year.

Telemedicine has increased, in part, because of the Affordable Care Act, which has funneled many patients into a system plagued by physician shortages, and those shortages are increasing.

The use of camera-equipped devices has made remote medical connections easier, and high definition video shows enough detail for diagnoses.

Staff Members Making the News

Join us in welcoming our newest member to our ServiceMaster family, Mrs. Lottie Runions. Lottie is our new Administrative Assistant; she comes to us with years of Administrative Assistant experience.

Welcome to ServiceMaster Lottie!

"Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another." Napoleon Hill, American author

Designers share strategies for guy-style kitchens

Some say kitchens are becoming the new man caves. Men say they do want to cook but would like kitchen features that are more appropriate for their sizes and tastes. Kitchens of Montana, Santa Monica, Calif., says men like ...

* Bold darker colors offset by black or white, a crisp and clean style.

* Beefed up hardware. They are more comfortable with larger handles on drawers and cabinets and they like brass and bronze hardware.

* Colorful appliances and gadgets. Red ranges are a favorite as are small appliances of the same color.

* A second sink. They want simple hardware on it and a spray-faucet attachment worthy of a firehouse, says New York architect James Ramsey.

* Elevated counters, or at least one elevated counter. One recent remodeler raised the central island by 2 inches, making it 38 inches high.

* A wireless sound system and TV that can be controlled with a smartphone. New York designer Bob Schwartz likes the Sonos system for its compactness and great sound.

* Very tough surfaces on counters. Designer Young Huh says Caesarstone and Silestone are big names in this category. Some men like to tenderize meat or saw a large bone in half without damaging the counter.

* Heavy duty power for ranges, exhaust systems and dishwashers. With a powerful stove, choose a hood designed for high BTUs, which will also clear the cooking smoke a guy can create.

* A higher vent hood to avoid head bumps: hang the hood a little higher.

* Space for socializing. The center island should have seats and elbow room so guests can share the space with the cook.

Spring BOGO Special

Buy one Upholstery Cleaning, Get one FREE!

***Free service of equal or lesser value and must be scheduled on same trip as first cleaning.**

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www.s-mqs.com

Take the Trivia Challenge!

Which character trait can help you age gracefully?

A – Courage
B – Caring

C – Wit / Humor
D – All of the Above

HINT: The answer is hidden somewhere in this newsletter.