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Healthy Home News

"Secrets For Living A Healthy, Wealthy & Happy Life..."

April 

The April rain, the April rain,
comes slanting down
in fitful showers,
Then from the furrow
shoots the grain,
and banks are fledged
with nestling flowers.
Mathilde Blind

Big Belly Danger: Doctors at Harvard Medical School are paying more attention to belly size than to body-mass index. They say health risks begin to mount at a measurement of 31 inches for women and 37 inches for men, especially if fat is around the abdominal organs. A waist size of 35 for women and 40 for men puts them in the danger range.

Abdominal fat is a strong risk factor for heart attacks, strokes and diabetes.

If your waist size is creeping up, the doctors say you should eat less and avoid foods that are high in fat and sugar. Eat more fruits, vegetables and whole grains, which are filling but not fattening.

You also need to exercise. If you don't have time to do much, build physical activity into your daily life. Walk up the stairs and walk to the store. Get out for a walk or a jog a few mornings a week.



Arbor Day: April 25th

Arbor Day was established by J. Sterling Morton of Nebraska City, Nebraska in 1872. He and his wife moved from Detroit, Michigan to the Nebraska Territory in 1854, where he was the editor of Nebraska's first newspaper. His influence as a journalist led to his involvement in politics, and he became a promoter of the settlement of Nebraska. The lack of trees, however, was an obstacle.

The Great Plains had been described as the "Great American Desert." The tallgrass prairie that covered much of Nebraska at that time could provide rich farmland, but without wood for building houses or for fuel to heat homes, few found it convenient to settle there. Even the allotment of free land by the Homestead Act failed to entice sufficient numbers of families to relocate to Nebraska.

Morton first proposed Arbor Day as a tree-planting holiday in 1872 at a meeting of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture. On the first Arbor Day, April 10 1874, prizes were offered to counties and to individuals for properly planting the largest number of trees. It was claimed that more than 1 million trees were planted in Nebraska on that day.

Protecting Trees Makes Sense

Where the streets are tree-lined shoppers spend an average of 12 percent more time shopping. A 1995 study even showed that city apartment buildings that were surrounded by vegetation were safer and the residents more civil.

Trees save energy with their cooling shade in summer and their windbreaks in winter. Homes with trees are more desirable. Cities including New York and Los Angeles are adding millions of trees to their streets. Others have given blanket protection to all trees.

Whether or not trees are protected in your neighborhood, you can protect them on your own property. Here's some advice from Ainsley Caldwell, Atlanta's arboriculture manager:

- Avoid "hat-racking." Lopping off major branches to reduce overall size damages the structure of the tree.
- Don't top a tree. Cutting the main upright stem of a tree to prevent it from growing taller will kill most trees.
- Flush cutting is dangerous to tree health. Trimming one limb too close to the main trunk leaves it susceptible to insects and disease. It will survive a single flush cut, but several cuts can lead to its demise.
- Tipping, or trimming the tips of branches to shape a tree is discouraged. The tree will survive but won't be as healthy.

Get Free Cleaning Tips And Specials At Our Website www.magicmist.info !

Outstanding Client of the Month!

Nancy Rice
of
Johnstown, Pa

Every month I choose a very special Client of the Month. It's my way of acknowledging good friends and saying "thanks" to those who support me and my business with referrals, word of mouth and repeat business... YOU might be my next Client of the Month! Watch for your name here in an upcoming issue!

No good movie is too long and no bad movie is short enough.
Roger Ebert

The opposite of love is not hate,
It's indifference.

The opposite of art is not ugliness,
It's indifference.

The opposite of faith is not heresy,
It's indifference.

And the opposite of life is not death,
It's indifference.
Elie Wiesel

Build a man a fire and he will be warm for a day; set him on fire and he will be warm for the rest of his life.
John Calvin

Age is just a number. It's totally irrelevant unless, of course, you happen to be a bottle of wine.
Joan Collins

See Insert This Issue:



Now You Can
Face This
Allergy Season
With A Smile!

April Fool's Day: Some Well-known Hoaxes

- **Alabama Changes the Value of Pi:** The April 1998 newsletter of New Mexicans for Science and Reason contained an article written by physicist Mark Boslough claiming that the Alabama Legislature had voted to change the value of the mathematical constant pi to the "Biblical value" of 3.0.
- **Spaghetti trees:** The BBC television program Panorama ran a famous hoax in 1957, showing the Swiss harvesting spaghetti from trees. They had claimed that the despised pest, the spaghetti weevil, had been eradicated. A large number of people contacted the BBC wanting to know how to cultivate their own spaghetti trees.
- **Left Handed Whoppers:** In 1998, Burger King ran an ad in USA Today, saying that people could get a Whopper for left-handed people whose condiments were designed to drip out of the right side. Not only did customers order the new burgers, but some specifically requested the "old", right-handed burger.
- **Taco Liberty Bell:** In 1996, Taco Bell took out a full-page advertisement in The New York Times announcing that they had purchased the Liberty Bell to "reduce the country's debt" and renamed it the "Taco Liberty Bell." When asked about the sale, White House press secretary Mike McCurry replied tongue-in-cheek that the Lincoln Memorial had also been sold and would henceforth be known as the Ford Lincoln Mercury Memorial.

The Master Gardener Program

When April dances on the scene, many hands are immersed in black dirt as gardeners return to the soil.

A few of those men and women will opt for specialized training allowing them to work toward the title of "Master Gardener." To begin this program, they need only have a love of gardening, diligence, and a willingness to give back their knowledge and time to the community.

The first master gardener program started in the State of Washington in 1973. The idea was for County Extension agents to train volunteers in the many aspects of horticulture. The Masters then helped local gardeners with city beautification either personally or through workshops and demonstrations. The program has since spread throughout the United States and Canada.

Land grant colleges also train the volunteers. Programs vary, but students may learn such subjects as garden design, plant taxonomy, plant pathology, wildlife control, and pest management.

Master Gardeners also teach the protection of water quality and the reduction of invasive species. Their healthy living through gardening training also brings the Masters in contact with seniors and children to help them build community gardens.

For a map of Master Gardener Web sites, visit the American Horticultural Society at www.ahs.org.

Handy New Passport Card

The new passport card is about to be issued. It's a wallet-sized alternative to a traditional passport. It costs less and is good for the same period of time. The passport card is valid for 10 years for adults. Adults will pay \$45 for it rather than the normal passport cost of \$97. Passport cards for kids cost \$35 instead of the \$82 cost for a traditional passport.

Medical Myths Exploded by Researchers

Don't believe everything you hear. Researchers from Indiana University School of Medicine say these common beliefs are false.

Untrue Medical Myths

- *Turkey makes you sleepy.* It does contain tryptophan, an amino acid involved in sleep, but so does beef, and chicken. A ham and cheese sandwich has more. Sitting around after a big dinner is what makes you sleepy.
- *You have to drink eight glasses of water a day.* You can get much of that required fluid from fruits, vegetables, coffee or tea.
- *We only use 10 percent of our brains.* The researchers say no area of the brain is completely inactive.
- *Hair and fingernails grow after death.* No, they may appear to grow because the skin around them is shriveling and pulling away.
- *Reading in dim lights ruins your eyes.* Untrue. It may cause eyestrain but reading in dim light doesn't cause permanent damage.
- *Shaving your hair makes it grow back faster and thicker.* No. Hair is no thicker after it has been shaved, and its growth rate doesn't change. Uncut hair appears to be lighter or finer because it tapers more at the ends and isn't bleached out by the sun or chemicals.

Vinyl LP Records Are Hot Again

They are gaining popularity in dorm rooms, at sleepovers and in living rooms. Flashy new vinyl records with a wonderful sound have come back, to the delight of music executives.

Many in the iPod generation are buying new turntables specifically for LPs. The new fans like the warm sound, but they also appreciate the elaborate album covers and liner notes that come with albums. They especially like sharing their music with friends as opposed to listening alone through ear buds.



Young people often rediscover LPs when they look through their parents' collections and listen to one or two, only to discover music they may not have heard before.

Baby boomers are coming back to vinyl records as well. They're not only rediscovering the sound but also capturing nostalgia for their youth.

Thank You!

Thanks to YOU the word is spreading! Thanks to all of my wonderful clients and friends who graciously referred me to their friends and neighbors last month!

My business runs on the positive comments and referrals from people just like you! I couldn't do it without you!

A special thanks to all these fine folks who referred me...

Gift Cards: Use Them or Lose Them

Not using a gift card is almost the same as burning money. \$8 billion in gift cards bought in 2007 have not yet been redeemed (this estimate was made by the Tower Group of Needham, Mass.)

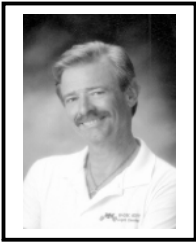
In a few cases (very few) gift-card money is returned to the purchaser after one year, less some significant service charges. What happens to the rest depends on individual states. About half of all states say all or at least part of the unspent balances should go to them under unclaimed-property laws. New York claimed \$19 million in the past three years.

Other states let the unclaimed money ultimately go back to the stores. States that allow that have a number of conditions that stores must meet. Retailers would rather have the card recipients spend the face value of the card as soon as possible. They can't claim the revenue from selling it until the customer uses it.

Not using a gift card shows disrespect for the giver. Not using it or letting the card expire is a mistake financial analysts say is "not valuing all money equally." Would you pick up a \$20 bill from the sidewalk?

The winner of our big contest of
December

Brenda McKenzie
of Frostburg, Maryland



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Your New Issue Has Arrived!

Look Inside For Some
Amazing Money-Saving
Tips and More!

Beans: Heart Healthy

If you don't know beans about beans, here's a start. They're good for your heart. They fight cholesterol even among people at risk for heart disease.

One study of pinto beans, the most common kind of bean, by the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center shows that regularly eating just a small amount three times a week leads to cholesterol reduction. That means you don't have to cook a whole pot of beans to get that benefit along with other vitamins including vitamin B6.

Pinto beans are a common filling for burritos. They can also be eaten whole, in broth, mashed or refried.

The Lighter Side

Psychiatry students were attending their first seminar. It was on emotional extremes. The professor wanted to establish some parameters, so he asked what they would say was the opposite of joy.

"Sadness," replied Mr. Nichols.

Ms. Biggs defined the opposite of depression as elation.

"And Mr. Martin, what is the opposite of woe?"

Bubba replied, "I believe that would be giddy up!"

Who Wants To Win Movie Tickets?

Take my Trivia Challenge
and you could win too!

This is one of my favorite parts of the newsletter! Each month I'll give you a new trivia question. The first ## people who call my office with the correct answer wins two FREE movie tickets. Enjoy a night out on me with someone special in your life! Take your best guess, and then call me at ppp! Remember, your chances of winning are better than you think!

This month's Mega Trivia Question:

What year did the first Arbor Day
take place in the US?

A) 1874 B) 1894 C) 1912 D) 1931

Common sense is in spite of,
not as the result of education.

Victor Hugo