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Your best advocate when buying or selling a home

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The weather is improving and it's time to think about the use and enjoyment of your yard. If you want a change of landscape, I'll help you find a home with a larger or smaller yard, or maybe no yard at all - call me today!



Some people don't realize the many benefits of a Home Protection Plan. However, as an experienced Real Estate Professional, I would like to point out how a quality Home Protection Plan can benefit you, whether you are buying or selling a home. A good Plan ensures the repair or replacement of covered home systems and appliances that fail due to normal use. For Sellers, this provides added value to your home when it is on the market. For Buyers, this means peace of mind and confidence in the purchase of your new home. I recommend to all my clients that a Home Protection Plan be included in their home transaction, and the company I trust to provide the best service and coverage is Old Republic Home Protection. Call me today for more information about how this valuable service can be put to work for you.

As your local Real Estate Professional, I can help determine where to buy; offer tips to ready a home for sale; provide a current market analysis; aid with financing, and answer questions about desired neighborhoods. If you know someone interested in buying or selling real estate, please refer me to them!



If you are working with another Real Estate Professional, please disregard this notice.

Health & Safety

Follow the 60/60 Rule for Years of Good Ears

Safe use of music devices like iPods and digital MP3 players will help listeners – especially young ones – avoid permanent hearing loss. When using earbud-type headsets, audiologists recommend plugging into music for no more than 60 minutes at 60 percent volume to keep from damaging the delicate hair cells and mechanisms of the inner ear.

The statistics for hearing loss have been escalating since the 1980s when personal listening devices, like the Walkman and portable CD players, entered the market. Hearing loss in younger people continues to increase rapidly, and audiologists report that this high level of loss is more typically seen in aging adults.

Professionals say that earbud use is the primary cause. Earbuds are lodged very close to the eardrum, deliver a very crisp sound, and make it easy to listen to music for longer periods of time at an excessive volume. Some manufacturers even print warnings on their packaging. You can prevent hearing loss by following these three suggestions:

- Listen to music with earbuds for no more than one hour per day.
- Do not turn the volume louder than 60 percent of the maximum.
- Use muff-type headphones instead of earbuds.



Helpful Hints

Income Tax Submission Tips

To ensure that your IRS tax return is processed quickly, review it thoroughly for accuracy and completion. See Tax Topic 303, for a complete "Checklist of Common Errors When Preparing Your Tax Return," available at www.IRS.gov, or by calling the TeleTax number, 1-800-829-4477. Here are a few suggestions for preventing the most common errors:

- Use the peel-off label provided with your tax forms. Make corrections directly on the label.
- Select only one filing status, plus the appropriate exemption.
- Use the correct Tax Table column for your tax amount.
- Double-check all figures.
- All parties must sign and date the return.
- Attach all Forms W-2, Wage and Tax Statements, and other forms that indicate tax withheld.
- If you owe tax, be sure to enclose a check or money order payable to the "United States Treasury."

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Savor the Flavor

Sweet Potato Cake with Tennessee Whiskey Sauce

- 3 c. all-purpose flour
- 2 c. sugar
- 1 t. baking soda
- 1/4 t. salt
- 2 t. baking powder
- 2 t. cinnamon
- 1 c. vegetable oil
- 1 15 oz. can crushed pineapple, undrained
- 2 t. vanilla
- 3 eggs
- 2 c. shredded raw sweet potatoes
- 1 c. chopped and toasted pecans

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour 10-inch tube pan. Stir dry ingredients together. With electric mixer, combine dry ingredients, oil, vanilla and pineapple. Add eggs one at a time beating well after each addition. Fold in sweet potatoes, and nuts. Pour into pan. Bake 1 hour 15 minutes. Cake is done when the sides pull away from the pan or when a wooden pick or cake tester inserted in center comes out clean. Cool cake in pan on rack 10 to 15 minutes before loosening the edge and turning it out onto a wired rack to cool. When cool, drizzle with Tennessee Whiskey Sauce.

Tennessee Whiskey Sauce

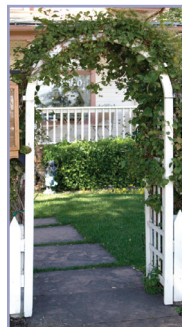
- 1/2 c. firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 t. nutmeg
- 1-1/4 c. water
- 1/4 c. Tennessee whiskey (e.g., Jack Daniel's or George Dickel)
- 1-1/2 T. cornstarch
- 2 T. real butter

Combine sugar, nutmeg, and water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil. Combine whiskey and cornstarch; stir into sugar mixture. Cook until thickened. Blend in butter until melted.

Household Tips

Add an Arbor for Yard Charm

Landscaping increases the enjoyment of your property and adds to the resale value. Creating 'outdoor rooms' is the latest trend in home improvements. A great way to define spaces and create flow from one area to another is through the use of an arbor or trellis. People naturally gravitate to spaces with a sense of coziness where they can curl up with a book, be alone with their thoughts, or simply enjoy the view of the garden. Combined with vines and climbers, arbors and trellises add a third dimension to the landscape. Besides relieving the monotony of ground-hugging plantings, vertical accents increase privacy and create instant focal points even before their plant buddies mature. Take care to match the architectural style with your home so that the arbor or trellis blends naturally into the landscape.



Brain Teasers

Cartoon Characters

1. Who was Yosemite Sam's enemy?
 - A. Sylvester
 - B. Daffy Duck
 - C. Bugs Bunny
 - D. Tweety Bird



2. Pepé Le Pew was a:
 - A. Cat
 - B. Skunk
 - C. Chipmunk
 - D. Gopher
3. What was first full length cartoon created by Disney?
 - A. Beauty and the Beast
 - B. Fantasia
 - C. Cinderella
 - D. Sleeping Beauty
4. The original name for Mickey Mouse was:
 - A. Squeaky
 - B. Maxwell
 - C. Myron
 - D. Mortimer
5. Which studio created the Road Runner?
 - A. Loony Tunes
 - B. Hanna Barbara
 - C. Universal Studios
 - D. Warner Brothers