

# The McJunkin Messenger

News To Help You Save Time And Money

February 2011

## “The Power Of Dreams”

She was born in 1940 to a poor family in rural Tennessee, the 20<sup>th</sup> of 22 children. She was premature and frail, weighing just 4½ pounds at birth, and went on to suffer a series of illnesses: scarlet fever, pneumonia, and then polio, which left her in leg braces.

The little girl’s mother told her that despite the braces, she could do whatever she wanted to do with her life. As a grown woman she’d recall, “My doctors told me I would never walk again. My mother told me I would. I believed my mother.” At age nine the little girl took off the leg braces, and with great effort, by age 12 was walking normally. She became a basketball star in high school, and began sprinting with a team from Tennessee State University. She won a spot on the USA relay team in the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia, and earned a bronze medal.



Four years later at the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, Wilma Rudolph earned three gold medals, for the woman’s 100- and 200-meter races, and anchoring the 4 x 100 relay team. She was the first female runner to win three gold medals at one Olympic Games.

Wilma Rudolph’s triumphs at the 1960 Olympics brought her the James E. Sullivan Award as top amateur athlete; later induction into the Black Athletes Hall of Fame; and in 1974 inclusion in the National Track and Field Hall of Fame. Later in life the little girl whom doctors told would never walk said, “Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion. The potential for greatness lives within each of us.”

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**Wilma also said, “Believe me, the reward is not so great without the struggle.”  
What an inspiration!**

*Keith*

## ***February Scramble Trivia***

I will give you clues to 2 words. You must figure out the first word, then subtract a "T" from that word and re-arrange the rest of the letters to get the second word. The words must be given in the correct order.

**El Paso's state - T = graphing lines**

Everyone who faxes, emails or calls in the correct answer by the last day of this month will be entered into a drawing for a Lowe's \$30 gift card.

Call 281.597.7300 and leave a message or email me at  
keith@mcjunkinhomes.com

Good Luck!

## **When To Start Helping Your Parents**

Taking care of your parents when their health starts to decline is a big responsibility. And deciding when to offer help isn't always easy. As we age, many of us don't want to admit that we can't take care of ourselves adequately. Here are some signs to watch for when deciding whether an elderly relative or acquaintance is having problems that need to be addressed:

**Weight loss.** If the relative isn't actively trying to lose weight, unexplained weight loss could indicate difficulty cooking (holding utensils, reading recipes), loss of smell or taste, or underlying problems like malnutrition or dementia.



**Overall appearance.** Take a good look at your aged relatives' daily hygiene. Are their clothes clean? Do they bathe regularly, brush their teeth, groom themselves? If not, they could be suffering from depression, dementia, or other health problems.

**Mobility.** Muscle weakness and joint problems that grow more pronounced with age can limit an elderly person's mobility and endanger his or her safety. Do they have trouble walking moderate distances, or seem unsteady on their feet? A fall can be serious, but a cane or a walker can minimize the danger.

**Lifestyle.** Pay attention to any loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy. Do they still participate in hobbies, listen to music, exercise, and socialize with friends? Physical and mental limitations can be compounded if the person becomes isolated at home.

**Emotional balance.** Pay attention to moods. Increased anxiety, sudden mood swings, or lack of interest in activities can be signs of depression or other health concerns.

## What Is A Customer?

A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us; we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work; he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business; he is a part of it. We are not doing him a favor by serving him; he is doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so. –

*Mahatma Gandhi*

## When Dogs Bite Kids

Stories about children being bitten by the family's pet dog are chilling – and all too common. What would prompt a beloved pet to turn on a family member?

Dogs that bite children frequently have distinctive behavioral patterns, a study has found. Often dogs that bite children have not bitten kids before, though they have displayed certain behaviors or had medical problems, says the study, published in the journal of *Injury Prevention*.

The study looked at 111 cases of dog bites over a four-year period. One in five dogs in the study had never bitten before, and two-thirds had never bitten a child. The study did not pinpoint any breeds but did point out distinctive patterns of behavior:

- Young children were likely to be bitten when dogs felt their food or other resources were under threat.
- Older children often were bitten because of dogs' territorial behavior.
- Children with whom the dog was familiar were more likely to be bitten in relation to food guarding.
- Children with whom the dog was not familiar were more likely to be bitten in relation to territory guarding.
- Around 75 percent of the dogs in the study also exhibited anxiety when left by their owners or when exposed to noise such as thunderstorms or fireworks.
- Dogs with medical problems, especially dogs experiencing pain, also had a higher tendency to bite.

The researchers didn't single out any specific breed because those kinds of statistics

are often misleading and create a false sense of safety for the public. In other words, saying “More children were bitten by XYZ breed” could make us think that other breeds are safer; but, given the right circumstances, *any* dog may bite a child.

Here are some additional statistics:

- Of all dog bite victims, almost half are younger than 12 years old.
- More than 50 percent of dog bites occur on the dog owner’s property.
- The majority (77 percent) of biting dogs belong to the victim’s family or a friend.
- Male unneutered dogs are involved in 70 to 76 percent of reported dog bite incidents.
- The current annual number of fatal dog attacks has doubled from the 1980s and 1990s.

So who’s responsible here? The adults in the household, of course. Never leave young children alone with a dog, and give all family members and visitors to your home some ground rules: Treat dogs with respect; refrain from teasing them; avoid direct eye contact which dogs can find threatening; don’t run or scream in the dog’s presence; do not disturb a dog while it’s eating, sleeping or caring for puppies; and don’t approach an unfamiliar dog.

## February Is...

**Heart Month:** To increase public knowledge of cardiovascular diseases, raise funds for research, and prevent heart disease by encouraging heart-healthy habits. Learn more at [americanheart.org](http://americanheart.org) and [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca).

**Black History Month:** To celebrate and honor the achievements and contributions of African Americans and African Canadians. Learn more at [blackhistorycanada.ca](http://blackhistorycanada.ca) and [www.biography.com/blackhistory](http://www.biography.com/blackhistory).

**February 7-13 – JELL-O® Week:** To recognize the variety of flavors and uses of this versatile product that’s been gracing our tables since 1897. Dig in at brands. [kraftfoods.com/jello](http://kraftfoods.com/jello).

**February 14-20 – Random Acts Of Kindness Week:** To inspire people to practice kindness, “pass it on” to others, and discover how acts of kindness make you feel good. Get started at [www.actsofkindness.org](http://www.actsofkindness.org).

**February 2 – Groundhog Day:** To observe whether Punxsutawney Phil and his groundhog pals emerge from their burrows and see their shadows, signaling six more weeks of winter. Get your groundhog questions answered at [groundhog-day.123holiday.net](http://groundhog-day.123holiday.net).

**February 14 – Valentine’s Day:** To celebrate and appreciate all the loves in your life. Find some fun ideas at [www.theholidayspot.com/valentine](http://www.theholidayspot.com/valentine).

## January Quiz Answer

**Answer:** Buy More Real Estate

**Congratulations** to Abe Goren. Your name was selected at random from all of the correct quiz entries and you'll receive Lowe's \$30 gift card.

**Watch for your name  
in a coming month!**

## Your Ring Finger

It was once believed that a vein of blood ran directly from the third finger on the left hand to the heart. The vein was called *vena amori*, or the *vein of love*. Early writings on matrimonial procedure suggested that it would be appropriate for one's wedding ring to be worn on that special finger

## Overhead Overload

A flight attendant watched as a passenger who was overloaded with bags tried to jam his belongings in the overhead bin of the plane. Finally, she informed him that he would have to check the over-sized luggage.

"When I fly other airlines," he said irritably, "I don't have this problem."

The flight attendant smiled sweetly and said, "When you fly other airlines, I don't have this problem, either."

## Eggs-actly!

Hard boiled, scrambled or baked into a soufflé, eggs are a regular part of our meals. Here's some egg trivia for you to digest:

- Hens require 24 to 26 hours to produce an egg. After 30 minutes, the process starts again.
- An egg shell has as many as 17,000 pores over its surface.
- Eggs age more in one day at room temperature than they do in a refrigerator in a week.
- To tell whether an egg is hard cooked or raw, spin it on a flat surface. If it spins with no problems, then it's hard cooked. If it wobbles, it's raw.
- Yolk color depends on the diet of the hen. Marigold petals as food additives for hens can make the yolks darker yellow.
- Occasionally, a hen will produce double-yolked eggs throughout her egg-laying career.



# What A Difference A Millennium Makes!

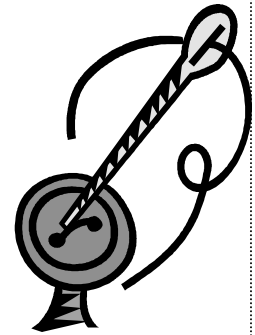
A thousand years ago, most of the Anglo-Saxon world didn't have knowledge of geography beyond nearby villages and the nearest market town. That world also had quite a wait for things we take for granted today:

**Sugar:** This staple wouldn't make it to the British Isles for several hundred more years. Although they had honey, it was so precious, it was used to pay taxes.

**Potatoes and tomatoes:** These weren't available until exploration of the Americas in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

**Forks:** People didn't use forks until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. And you brought your own knife to a feast.

**Buttons:** Clothing was fastened with clasps and thongs. Wide-spread use of functional buttons and buttonholes waited for the 13<sup>th</sup> century.



**Last names:** The same names were often passed down inside families, but there was no need for last names.

**Zeroes:** People still worked with Roman numerals. In fact, one scholar at the time said that 9,000 was the limit beyond which figuring was impossible.

## Thought Of the Month

### **Don't mistake a low price for the best value when purchasing your home**

This past month I had the opportunity to consult with 3 different clients about the option of buying a lower priced home in Houston Independent School District versus a higher priced home of equal age, square footage and style in Spring Branch School District.

One home in question was an updated 2,846 SF, 4 bedroom, 3.5 bath 2 car detached garage built in 1969 on a 10020 SF lot priced for sale at \$324,000 and located in Walnut Bend Subdivision. Walnut Bend is located in HISD on either side of Briar Forest just west of the Sam Houston Toll Road.

I compared the Walnut Bend home to a home located in Wilchester West, a SBISD neighborhood located on either side of Memorial Drive west of the Sam Houston Toll Road. The Wilchester West home was an updated 2,754 SF, 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath 2 car detached garage built in 1966 on an 8,400 SF lot that sold for \$530,000 in July of 2010.

By purchasing the Walnut Bend home, you could save \$3,900 in net property tax expenses as well as about \$5,768 in after tax interest on the additional \$206,000 in loan amount needed to purchase the Wilchester West property. Therefore the total savings would be \$9,668 per year which sounds great.

However, based on the last 10 years of average SF price based on Crawford Realty Advisors published values, Wilchester West appreciated at almost 8% per year over the last 10 years while Walnut Bend appreciated at 5% per year.

Therefore the Wilchester home valued at \$530,000 would appreciate \$15,900 per year more than the Walnut Bend home. This \$15,900 minus the \$9,668 saved on the home in Walnut Bend results in a net \$6,320 per year benefit to purchasing in Wilchester versus Walnut Bend.

You may wonder why similar homes located so close together would be valued at \$530,000 in SBISD and only \$324,000 in HISD.

The reason lies in the desirability of the schools zoned to a specific neighborhood.

For example, Wilchester West is zoned to Wilchester Elementary School while Walnut Bend is zoned to Walnut Bend Elementary School. See the chart below from the HAR.com website school report.

Wilchester Elementary School;

Total Students	607
Economically Disadvantaged	15

Walnut Bend Elementary School

Total Students	621
Economically Disadvantaged	457

The lower rate of economically disadvantaged students generally translates to more parental involvement and more outside funds that are available to the school to enhance the experience for the students.

It is more likely that parents choosing to purchase a home in Walnut Bend will send their kids to private schools as opposed to public schools if they can afford to.

Please do not misunderstand my point in this article. I am not speaking to the right for those who are economically disadvantaged to have their kids get a good education in a good school. In fact, Walnut Bend Elementary has recently re-built its campus and I support good schools for all our kids. My point is to show how home values over time are affected by the perceived quality of the schools districted to those homes.

Please let me know if we can help you understand the real estate market and figure out the best location for your home based on your needs.

I hope you and your loved ones have a Happy Valentines Day.

*Keith*

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member, friend, neighbor or  
coworker.

# The McJunkin Messenger

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