

The McJunkin Messenger

News To Help You Save Time And Money

July 2011

Quality Service Is Not Expensive, *It's Priceless.*

On average, families move about every five years and we are always looking for repair and service people we can trust. Most of us rely on wise neighbors for referrals to reliable plumbers, painters and auto mechanics. Still, it takes time to develop your own personal relationships with them.

Here are some ways that may help give you more confidence in your choices until you and your service people have bonded.

Ask around for shops and services *before* you need them. Don't put off your search for a reputable mechanic until your car is on the back of a tow truck.

Are the technicians certified? If you ask to see their certification, they should show it to you and give you the number for their licensing office without hesitating.

Don't shop on price alone. If someone's price is much lower than their competitors' it might not only be because they're using cheaper parts. An inexperienced service

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Getting Quality Service
- Gorgeous Grandma Day
- Let It Out
- Cut Your Utility Bills
- Beach Facts
- Shots and Painkillers
- Sun Safety
- Keith's Thought of the Month

technician may be the reason for the lower price. Ask who's doing the work and what qualifications they have.

Do you have a new neighbor who might need some introductions? Imagine if someone had given you the names of trustworthy service people when you moved in.

Keith

*If you think you are too small to be effective,
then you must never have tried to sleep
in a room with a mosquito.*

July 23rd is Gorgeous Grandma Day!

The constant emphasis on youth and being young can sometimes tempt women of a certain age to feel under-appreciated. Well, there's a day to mark on your calendar and a website that celebrates grandmothers who are "thriving, not just surviving."
www.gorgeousgrandma.com is a unique website especially devoted to everyone's Gorgeous Grandmas. On this website you can find interesting information, a chat group, fun and useful things you can order, and a calendar of events.

Let It Out!

Men, it turns out that slamming the door or screaming at the top of your lungs when you're mad could actually be good for your heart.

For 15 years, data was collected on over 23,000 men, aged 25 to 74 years, on how often they outwardly showed their anger. The results of the study, in *Psychosomatic Medicine*, said that men who expressed anger "sometimes" or "more often than not" were almost 50% less likely to have a heart attack and 58% less likely to have a stroke than men who "never" or "most often do not" express their anger.

Other things that predict a high increase in a man's risk of heart attack were the traits of being very cynical and of being very distrustful.



Cut Your Utility Bills Down to Size!

If your utility bills could stand a trim, these little strategies could make a big difference at bill-paying time.

Get an adjustment for cable outages.

If your cable service is interrupted for an extended time, call the cable company and ask them to adjust your bill. To figure out how much to request, divide your monthly cost by the number of days in the month. Multiply that figure by the number of days of missed service. For example, if your cable service costs \$120 a month and it went out for 5 days in June, which is a 30-day month, you would be eligible for a \$20 adjustment to that month's cable bill, because $\$120 \div 30 \text{ days} = \4 per day ; and $\$4 \times 5 \text{ days} = \20 .

Get a separate water meter for your exterior hose bib or irrigation system. In most towns, your sewer bill is tied to your water usage and is based on readings from your water meter. As the weather gets hotter, a higher percentage of the water measured by your meter is actually going into your lawn and garden - not into your house and down through the sewer system.

Why pay for water in the summer that isn't going through the sewer? A lot of water companies will let you have two meters, one for your house and one for your irrigation or hose bib, and they will read the meter going into your house to calculate your sewer bill.



Of course, you could also change your yard to a xeriscape, which practically eliminates the need for watering and is environmentally friendly.

Plant trees in strategic locations around your house.

This is a long-term solution, but deciduous trees can keep your house *much* cooler in the summer, give you color in the spring and fall, and let the sun through in the winter. Planting trees helps offset our high-carbon lifestyles, gives birds a place to live, and can even give you fruit in the summer.

Don't let your computer sit idly by. Even when your computer, TV, DVD, game system, cable modem, et cetera, are turned off they draw power so they can

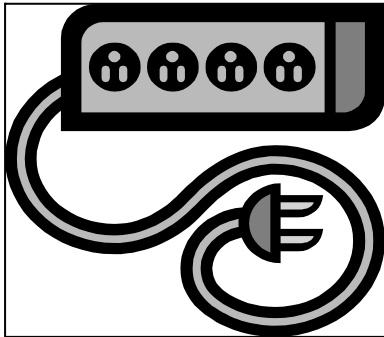
See An Interesting Home?

No need to wonder about the price. No need to call a high-pressure sales agent who will just make you feel obligated. My computers can send you the information quickly and easily, for any house, listed or sold, anywhere in town.

Just ask me! It's all part of my free, no-obligation HomeFinder Service.

Leave the address on my voicemail, anytime, 24 hours a day, and I'll fax, mail or e-mail all the information to you on that listing within 24 hours.

spring to life when you want them. You can save that power by putting your entertainment and home- office equipment on a surge protector and then plugging the surge protector into a timer. Program the timer to only allow power to the surge protector when you are home. Also program the timer to turn off overnight while you sleep, so that your electronics will only idle for the 6 or 8 hours each day when they might actually be used. You can save 5-10% off your electric bill by doing this one thing, even if all you're putting on the surge protector is your computer.



June Word Scramble Answer

Answer:

Check moisture around your foundation

Congratulations to Ryan Pellegrin

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

Watch for your name in a coming month!

SALES TACTICS

A shopkeeper was dismayed when a brand-new business much like his own opened up next door and erected a huge sign that read, "**BEST DEALS.**"

He was horrified when another competitor opened up on his right, and announced its arrival with an even larger sign that read, "**LOWEST PRICES.**"

The shopkeeper panicked, until he got an idea. He put the biggest sign of all over his own shop. It read: "**MAIN ENTRANCE.**"

The road to a friend's house is never long.
-- Danish proverb

The scientific theory I like best is that the rings of Saturn are composed entirely of lost airline luggage.
- Mark Russell

The really happy person is the one who can enjoy the scenery when on a detour.
--Unknown

It's a sure sign of summer if the chair gets up when you do.
-- Walter Winchell

Ever Sit On the Beach and Wonder?

- When you're sitting on the sand looking at the horizon, it's about 3 miles (4.8 km) away.
- The world's oceans contain nearly 20 million tons (18.1 mt) of gold.
- The High Seas -- areas of the ocean beyond national jurisdiction -- cover almost 50 per cent of the earth's surface.
- An average beach pail, roughly a quart, holds about 3.5 million grains of sand.
- High waves pull sand out into the ocean; small waves bring sand onto the beach and deposit it.
- The little black specks that stick to your skin on some beaches are grains of the mineral magnetite, which is magnetic. Animals have more magnetite in their bodies than humans do, which helps them feel when an earthquake is coming.

Painkillers May Weaken Immunizations

Do you reach for a painkiller, for yourself or your family, when you get a shot? That may not be such a good idea, according to researchers at the University of Rochester. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) — such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen sodium — can react with your body's immune system and weaken the effect of flu shots and other vaccinations.

Scientists suggest it might be better to tough it out and stay away from NSAIDs a day or so before and after getting vaccinated.

July's Word Scramble

Unscramble all five words, then assemble words into the correct order to create a phrase

dignur iecittsvai ncnuesers awre rdotouo

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 Lowes \$30 gift card.

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

Sun Safety Guidelines For Children

In the summer everyone wants to have fun in the sun, but you really want to protect your children's tender skin from sunburns. Follow these sun safety recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

For babies under six months:

- It's best to avoid sun exposure by making sure your baby is in full shade, like from a dense tree or an umbrella.
- Even when baby is in the shade, the sun's rays reflect off sand and water, so dress him in lightweight clothes that cover his arms and legs and a hat with a brim that keeps the sun off his face.
- Apply a little SPF-15 sunscreen to small areas like his face and the backs of his hands if you notice he's changing color.

For young children:

- Dress her in protective clothing and use sunscreen with at least SPF-30.
- Don't forget to reapply the sunscreen after swimming, sweating, or after 2 hours have passed – after 1 hour if you're in the tropics. Reapplication is essential to keep her protected.
- Avoid staying too long in the sun between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., the hours when the rays are the strongest.

For older children:

- When they are not in the water, do your best to keep kids in the shade or covered in cotton clothing with a tight weave. Bring hats with large brims or a baseball hat with the bill facing forward.
- Look for sunglasses that block 99% to 100% of UVA and UVB rays.
- Use sunscreen with SPF-15 or greater.
- A handful of sunscreen per application is enough for a young adult.

If you are vacationing in the tropics, remember that sunscreen and bug repellent are harmful to fish and coral. It's best not to wear either in sensitive environments. And remember that UV rays can make it through clouds and fog.

Thank You!

Coleman and Kim Conkling

Who are already part of our Real Estate Family. I appreciate your business.

Welcome New Clients!

*Rosa and Louis Vacek
(referred by Sharon Strickland)*

We love giving recognition to our new friends and our wonderful existing clients who are kind enough to introduce their friends and relatives to us.

Thought Of the Month

Houston Is Back At Pre-Recession Levels

According to the an article in the Houston Business Journal dated June 14, 2011 by Christine Hall;

Bill Gilmer, a senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, El Paso Branch, said Houston has created 325,000 jobs between 2003 and 2008, outpacing the country.

According to him, in Houston, we hit bottom in August of 2008, right before Hurricane Ike came along in September of that year.

The article goes on to say that our city has been able to recover to pre-recession levels. In fact, no other area in Texas has gotten back to their pre-recession levels.

There are a few reasons we have not done better. For example the end of NASA's role in manned space flight, health care reform, (There is currently no construction planned at the Texas Medical Center), and the deepwater drilling moratorium.

While our housing market is still weak in some areas, Mr. Gilmer predicted a turnaround in Houston real estate b the end of this year.

It was also pointed out that for the first time since 1995, there are more rigs looking for oil than natural gas.

The Houston Chronicle reports that Houston is #1 in retail job growth according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics with more than 4,100 retail jobs created since 2008. Only 8 of the nation's 100 major markets have higher retail employment than they did in 2008. Los Angeles for example lost 53,700 retail jobs in the last three years which is 10% of their retail job market.

We have a lot to be thankful for in Houston, among other things, our unemployment rate in May was only 8.2% compared to the May national unemployment average of 9.1%.

I hope you had a "grateful" 4th of July.

Keith

As always, please consider referring my construction and real estate brokerage services if you have, a family member, friend or business associate that is planning on purchasing, building, or selling a home.

The McJunkin Messenger

Keith McJunkin
14780 Memorial Dr. #204
Houston, Texas 77079
www.mcjunkinhomes.com

**Go Green:
Recycle This
Newsletter!**

After you've enjoyed my
newsletter, please recycle it by
passing it along to a family
member, friend, neighbor or
coworker.

This newsletter is intended for entertainment purposes only. Credit is given to the authors of various articles that are reprinted when the original author is known. Any omission of credit to an author is purely unintentional and should not be construed as plagiarism or literary theft.

Copyright 2011 Keith McJunkin. This information is solely advisory, and should not be substituted for medical, legal, financial or tax advice. Any and all decisions and actions must be done through the advice and counsel of a qualified physician, attorney, financial advisor and/or CPA. We cannot be held responsible for actions you may take without proper medical, financial, legal or tax advice.