

# Matt's Home News

News To Help You Save Time And Money

March 2015

## Where There's A Will, There's A Way

An old man lived alone in a village. He wanted to prepare his potato garden, but it was hard work. His only son, who would have helped him, was in prison.

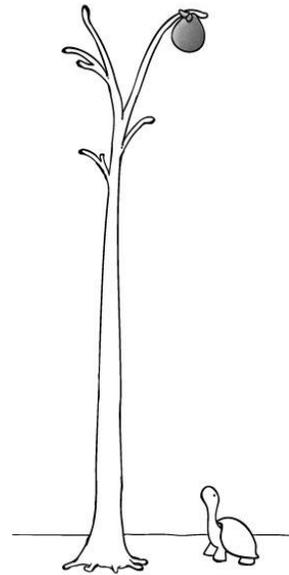
The old man wrote a letter to his son and mentioned his situation:

*Dear Son,*

*I am feeling pretty bad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my potato garden this year. I hate to miss doing the garden, because your mother always loved planting time. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. If you were here, all my troubles would be over. I know you would dig the plot for me, if you weren't in prison.*

*Love, Dad*

Shortly, the old man received a telegram back from his son: *"For Heaven's sake, Dad, don't dig up the garden! That's where I buried the GUNS!"*



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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Where There's A Will, There's A Way
- Holi, Festival Of Colors
- March Quiz Question
- Windows That Generate Solar Power
- 7 Job Survival Skills
- Why Honey Doesn't Spoil
- Save Costs With Chicken
- Why Do Couples Start To Look Alike?
- 4 Ways To Avoid Answering A Question
- The Rise Of Remote-Controlled Cockroaches
- One Good Kick Deserves Another
- Drinking Can Damage Your Teeth

At 6:00 the next morning, a dozen agents and local police officers showed up and dug up the entire garden without finding any guns.

Confused, the old man wrote another note to his son telling him what happened, and asked him what to do next.

His son's reply was: "Go ahead and plant your potatoes, Dad. It's the best I could do for you from here."

*No matter what your circumstances in the world, if you have the will to help someone, you can find a way.*

~ Matt Haviland

# Holi, Festival Of Colors

Holi, the “festival of colors,” is celebrated mainly in India at the time of the full moon – March 6 this year.

Steeped in tradition and ancient legend, the core focus of Holi is to celebrate the triumph of good over evil, and to welcome spring and banish winter.

Holi is gradually finding its way into other countries and cultures, and you might find a Holi celebration near you this year.

The festival kicks off on Holi eve, when bonfires are lit to symbolize the banishment of evil. Then at dawn, Holi Day breaks with raucous crowds intent on painting the world in a vibrant rainbow—smearing and splattering each other with paints and dyes known as gulal.

Traditionally, natural powders and paints were used, but the bulk of the colors on today’s modern palette are chemical compositions that are often toxic, resulting in caustic skin reactions or worse. Many citizens coat their skin with oil on Holi day to help protect against absorption of toxins. Gulal is either mixed with water to form a paint, or strewn in its powder form directly from small bags purchased from street vendors.

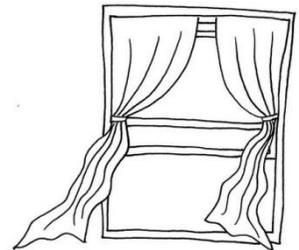
Anyone who ventures outside on Holi day can expect to be splattered head to foot in color. When the festival ends, the landscape (as well as the revelers) remains a riot of color—on buildings, vehicles, streets, and sidewalks—as many of the dyes leave stains that cannot be removed by washing. Instead they fade with time.

# Windows That Generate Solar Power

It seems sort of obvious, when you think about it: Why don't windows double as solar panels?

A company is working on it. Pythagoras Solar has developed a window laced with solar cells capable of shielding offices from the sun’s glare, reducing air conditioning costs while generating power for office buildings.

The company won a \$100,000 award from the GE Ecomagination Challenge, and some of the panels are already being used in the Willis Tower (formerly known as the Sears Tower) in Chicago. Pythagoras CEO Gonen Fink says the panels could save enough money to pay for themselves in three to five years.



## March Quiz Question

**Q:** Which word in the dictionary is always incorrect?

## February Question

**Q:** If you were running a race and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now?

**A:** 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

# 7 Job Survival Skills

1. You can't avoid office politics. It doesn't matter if you are a janitor or a CEO of your own business; there are always office politics. Either land on the winning side, or try to minimize your role in the games.
2. You'll never have a job which you "can't quit." If you are being mistreated, exploited or under-appreciated, you can leave. But first, read the next point.
3. Always be looking for other job possibilities. Why wait until you need a new job, before looking for one?
4. You learn by listening, not talking. Instead of leaping to let your boss and co-workers know how much you know, ask them about their ideas before sharing yours. If you can implement their ideas, you'll get farther ahead than by arguing for your perspective.
5. You will never get ahead by gossiping or putting other workers down. You will get ahead by building people up and being supportive. Supportive doesn't mean submissive.
6. It's difficult to call in sick. But if you are genuinely sick, do call. Keep it short. "Boss, I'm sorry, but I'm too sick to come into work. I'll either see you tomorrow or will call again."
7. You will always end up working with someone you don't like. It may be your boss or a co-worker. If you like your job and want to keep it, read about how to communicate with difficult people. If it's not resolvable, there's always number two above.

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## Why Honey Doesn't Spoil

Honey is almost unique among organic compounds in that it constitutes a "perfect storm" of attributes against spoilage:

Most of the honey is a supersaturated solution of sugar. Sugar is hygroscopic, which means it attracts water. Bacteria and other microorganisms that come in contact with this solution are desiccated (water is drawn from them into the solution). The same happens to yeast and other fungal spores, leaving almost no organisms in the honey that can spoil it. This supersaturation of sugar also inhibits the growth of yeast and other fungal spores.



Furthermore, bees process honey by means of an enzyme called glucose oxidase. You might know glucose oxidase from something else...it used to be called "Penicillin A," which destroys bacteria.

Never leave a jar of honey standing open. The supersaturated sugar solution will absorb moisture from the air and gradually become weaker, losing its anti-bacterial properties.

# Save Costs With Chicken

Chicken can be your best friend when it comes to healthy eating on a budget. Here are some tips for getting more out of chicken:



- Consider buying whole chickens. If the price is low enough (usually half the price by weight of boneless/skinless chicken), then whole chickens give you more for less.
- Plan multiple meals. You can sometimes get two or three meals from a single chicken. Rather than serving whole chicken thighs and breasts, think in terms of cut or shredded chicken in soup, sandwiches, fajitas, salads, etc. Freeze shredded chicken for quick meals later.
- Crock pot your chicken meal. Chicken holds up well in the crock pot and you can make it go far as the base of chili, stew, soups, etc.
- Buy in bulk and freeze. You can usually keep frozen chicken in its original packaging for up to three months. For longer periods, remove the packaging and wrap the chicken in foil, freezer paper, or plastic bags.

## It's Time To Buy Now...Isn't It?

Interest rates are still at historic lows, and consumers are getting comfortable with those low rates. However, rates will not stay low forever, and when they begin to rise, buyers will likely rush to buy a home before rates rise further. This will have the effect of driving prices up, at least in the short term. Buyers who are late to the party will find themselves facing higher home prices plus higher interest rates. For this reason, I recommend that buyers who are on the fence act soon. Home prices are stable right now, and rates still low, possibly making this the best time to buy for the next several years.

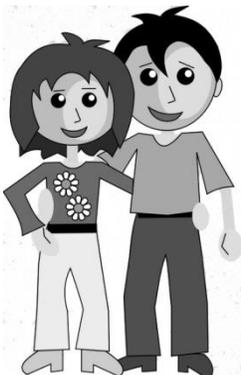
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*Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others. ~ Jack Welch*

# Why Do Couples Start To Look Alike?

You may be familiar with the saying, "opposites attract." But in reality, what the heart wants is not an opposite, but someone who is similar. That similarity increases the longer two people stay together.



University of Michigan psychologist Robert Zajonc conducted an experiment to test this phenomenon. He analyzed photographs of couples taken when they were newlyweds and photographs of the same couples taken 25 years later.

The results showed that the couples had grown to look more like each other over time. And the happier that the couple said they were, the more likely they were to have increased in their physical similarity.

# 4 Ways To Avoid Answering A Question

Whether at work, at a networking event, in an interview, or at a party, there are times when you either don't know an answer or don't want to answer a question. Here are four approaches to not answering:

- **"That's a good question."** This is a time-honored dodge. By making this statement, then saying something like, "It reminds me of..." you can deftly shift away from the question.
- **Tell the truth.** Try saying, "I don't know," or "I'm not sure how to answer that," or even, "I'd prefer not to answer." Then right away ask a question of your own.
- **Ask for more details about the question.** "Could you tell me more about what you have in mind?" Or "Could you explain what you mean?" This places the questioner in the position of providing additional detail, which may help you answer the question.
- **Answer the question with a question.** Similar to asking for more details, but in this case, you can ask any question...even one that's unrelated to their question to you.

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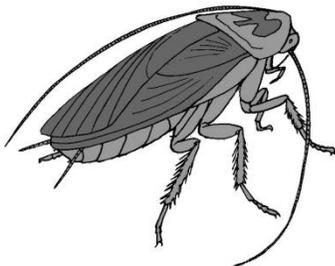
See page 7

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*You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus. ~ Mark Twain*

# The Rise Of Remote-Controlled Cockroaches

It sounds like a bad horror movie scenario, but this may have positive benefits in the future: Scientists have developed a tool for remotely controlling cockroaches.



At North Carolina State University, researchers have installed a tiny embedded chip with a wireless transmitter/receiver in a 0.02-ounce device that's mounted on the back of the Madagascar hissing cockroach. Wires connect the device to the cockroach's sensory organs and antennae, and mild electrical charges to the neural tissue can fool a roach into fleeing as if danger is near, allowing humans to control the little pest's movements.

So, what's the point of having a remote-controlled cockroach? Researchers hope such controlled bugs will be helpful in scouting for survivors in disaster zones and collapsed buildings. Makes sense.

# One Good Kick Deserves Another

A lawyer was hunting birds one day. He fired into a flock, and one bird fell to the ground inside a fence. As he was climbing the fence, a farmer came walking across the field.

"This is my property," the farmer said. "You can't have that bird."

"I shot it fair and square!" the lawyer said. "I'm a lawyer, and I'll sue you for everything you've got!"

The farmer smiled and shook his head. "I tell you what, down here we got a better way of solving our little disputes. It's called the Three-Kick Rule."

"What's that?"

"We take turns kicking each other three times. First one to give up loses. What do you say?"

The lawyer was proud of how hard he worked out every day, and he thought the farmer looked pretty old, so he said, "OK. Take your best shot."

The first kick was harder than the lawyer expected, and after the next two he was in a lot of pain.

Grunting, he straightened up, bit his lip, and looked at the farmer.

"OK," he said. "Now it's my turn."

"Nah," the farmer said. "I changed my mind. You can have the bird."



# Drinking Can Damage Your Teeth

Coffee and cola might be bad for your teeth, but energy and sports drinks aren't much better. The reason? The type of acid they contain. According to the journal *General Dentistry*, bottled lemonades and energy drinks can erode the enamel on your teeth over 10 times more than colas.

If you do consume drinks that might cause enamel damage, you should rinse your mouth with water and wait about 30 minutes before you brush, because if the drink has softened your enamel then even mildly abrasive toothpaste can cause more damage.

# MATT'S HOME NEWS

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# A Different Kind of Spring Cleaning

Dear Friend,

Spring is nearly here, and for many people that means spring cleaning. It means tossing away old clothes, moving the furniture and mopping unseen places, washing hand and nose prints off the windows, scrubbing walls, and perhaps painting or redecorating.

But there's another kind of spring cleaning, a kind that could do more to spruce up our lives and brighten our day than any other kind of cleaning. What if we spring cleaned our relationships, too, this season?

What if we scrubbed the stains off of our marriages, our relationships with our children, our co-workers, bosses, and friends? What if we mopped up the messes we've made and wiped off the dirt we've allowed to build up?

What if we swept away the dust bunnies under our friendships? What if we listened more, spent more quality time, and reached out to those we've ignored? What if we spruced up our promises and intentions, and remembered that our loved ones want us to be there for them emotionally, not just physically?

If you're interested in giving it a try, here's a proactive approach to doing this kind of spring cleaning: First, make a list of people you have relationships with, including your close family, kin, friends, etc. Next, go through each name and ask yourself how you could tidy up that relationship. It may only need a little polish, like a letter to Aunt May who hasn't heard from you since Christmas. It may need deep cleaning, like telling the truth about a big lie or getting vulnerable about your feelings. Or you may simply decide things are just fine the way they are.

Whatever your spring brings you, I hope it is bright and clean and fresh.

Sincerely,



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Your Real Estate Consultant For Life

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