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# Glenn's News You can Use



Representing Buyers & Sellers since 1988



My business continues to grow because of clients like you.

The referral of your family, friends, neighbours, and co-workers is important to me and I appreciate it.

Thank You for your trust and continued support.

Glenn

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## The RIGHT HOUSE

If you've decided to look for a new house, 'thinking ahead' is one of the **musts** when shopping for a home.

Before embarking on the search for your perfect home, take an hour or so and make a two-pronged priority list. A '**must-have**' column and a '**like-to-have**' column. Once you've established your 'needs' (musts) and 'wants' (like-to-have) your realtor can better assist you with finding that perfect house!

### Your 'MUST-HAVE' list ...

should include those features of top priority to you and your family; home type; single-family, condo, townhouse etc., schools & parks, proximity to transportation routes and your workplace, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, privacy, large backyard, granny or in-law suite etc.

### Your 'LIKE-TO-HAVE' list...

will include features like; fireplace, neutral decor, main floor rec. room, low maintenance exterior, eat-in kitchen, a particular architectural style, mature trees and/or landscaping, main floor laundry, swimming pool, fenced backyard, 2-car garage etc.

Once you have your lists, give some thought to what items you're willing, and able to compromise on. Give serious consideration to those items

on your 'must-have' list.

Performing this process will help you really focus in on those features that top your '**must have**' list!

Having priority lists is well and good, but, a house must also resonate on an emotional level. For instance, if you're the outdoorsy type, a huge backyard and a two-tiered deck will carry more weight than a formal dining room. On the other hand, if you love entertaining, that formal dining room may tip the scales in a house's favour.

This emotional connection - what some may call 'intuition' about a house - is actually quite a rational process. On a sub-conscious level, you're sizing up all the meaningful features of a house to see if they add up to a yes or a no.

Keep in mind that it is important to separate your emotional response to a house from your response to its 'packaging'. Ensure that you are attracted to the 'house' not the seller's furniture or decorating style.

**Buying a home you can live with, and in, happily ever after (or at least for a good many years) requires input from both your heart and your head.**

**If you heed the call of passion, listen to the voice of reason - as well as doing the math - you'll end up with a home you can love and afford!**

### Greetings!

I'm sending you this Newsletter with hopes that you find it interesting and informative

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## Need advice?

Whether you need help with finding that perfect home, or perhaps you need some advice about getting your house ready to sell...talk with your Realtor who is an expert and can provide you with professional advice, explanation, and assistance.

# Around THE HOUSE

## Locate a stud

When you can't find (or don't have) your stud finder - start at a corner where there is always a stud or remove the cover plate of an electrical outlet and find out on which side it is mounted to the stud. Since studs are normally placed at 16" intervals, you can easily measure from there in either direction to find a stud.



## Clean up a big paint spill on carpet

This only works with latex paint. Cut 2 pieces of cardboard and use the edges to form a scoop and lift the paint into a bucket until you have cleared as much as you can. Using clean water, saturate the carpet and with a fat spoon, scrape up as much as you can again. Replenish the water as you go and work as fast as you can. Keep the area wet and rent a carpet cleaner to finish up (keep the carpet wet until you use the carpet cleaner).

## Renovating - what works and why...

**Decks** - decks can visually extend the interior of your home - particularly when they are linked to the indoors with patio or garden doors. If materials and colours used outdoors reflect what is used inside, the bond becomes stronger. An example would be a deck stained the same shade as the adjoining room's flooring.

**Windows** - windows give ventilation, light and view. They don't have to give all three, nor do they have to be large to be a focal point. View windows are intended to link one space with one or more spaces - looking from the inside to the outside. Remember that when looking through windows of two equal-sized panes (like a typical patio door), the eye is drawn to the crossbar, not the view. With three panes, the eye is drawn to the centre one and hence the view. With unequal-sized panes, the eye gravitates towards the largest one and the view, not to the crossbars. For maximum light, place a window as close as possible to a corner. This allows the light to wash against a wall and ceiling - reflecting off those surfaces into the room.

## The toilet is overflowing!!

A toilet works by gravity. There is just enough water in the tank to replace the water in the bowl. When you flush, the float drops, a valve opens, the tank water pushes the waste through the drain then, the water in the bowl and the tank are replaced at the same time. The valve closes when the float rises to a certain point. If the tank water can't leave the bowl fast enough then that refill water will spill over. Take the tank cover off, pull the float up until the valve closes then reach below the bowl and turn off the water or, you could simply hold the float up and wait to see

if the bowl drains itself. If it does, try letting the float down so bowl and tank will refill normally. If not, turn off the water and get out the plunger.



## Repair a hammer mark on trim

If the mark is on a finished surface, poke the area numerous times with a needle. Then put a few drops of water on it. Cover with a damp rag and iron it on the 'cotton' setting. The evaporating water will expand the crushed wood cells. To focus the heat on just a small area, use an upside down bottle cap to put the iron on.



# Drains

*Don't make the mistake of thinking that a slow drain or several slow drains indicates the sewer is beginning to plug or the septic tank needs pumping.*

*Slow drains mean only that the drains are slow and each one needs to be cleaned.*

*Use the following 'all natural ingredient' formula to clean the drains in your home on a regular basis.*

## All Natural (non-caustic) Drain Cleaner

*Pour 250 mL of baking soda, followed by; 250 mL of salt and 125 mL of white vinegar down the drain.*

*Let stand for 15 minutes then pour a kettle full of boiling water down the drain.*

*Repeat if necessary.*

- Let plenty of water run down the drain by keeping the faucet open for up to half a minute each day. Sink lines commonly plug because not enough water is flushed through them.
- Never pour hot grease or oil down the sink. It is liquid when warm but as soon as it hits the cold water in the trap it congeals and turns into a solid.
- Once a month fill your sinks to the top with very hot water. Remove the plug - as the clean, hot water swirls down through the sink lines, it takes much of the grease and other buildup with it.
- Use a lint catcher on your laundry tub. Some catchers are put on the discharge pipe, some go over the drainage outlet. You can also use catchers on some shower stall and bathtub drains to catch hair.



# Emotions are contagious!

Has it every happened that you meet someone who's in a bad mood and the next thing you know, you're feeling gloomy too?

'Catching' another persons feelings can actually happen!

In a recent study, volunteers were shown pictures of angry or happy faces for 30 milliseconds, followed by photos of neutral faces. The volunteers responded by mimicking the facial expressions they were shown, and that in turn triggered the actual feeling in the brain.

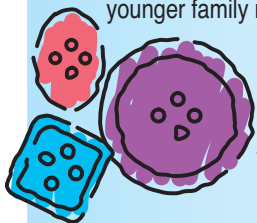
Researchers say that people who tend to have strong emotional reactions but appear relatively calm on the outside are the most susceptible to 'catching' another person's feelings.

- Smiling is infectious... you can catch it like the flu.
- When someone smiled at me today I started smiling too.
- I walked around a corner and someone saw my grin - when she smiled I realized, I had passed it on to her!
- I thought about that smile. Then I realized it's worth. A single smile, just like mine could travel round the earth.
- So if you feel a smile begin, don't leave it undetected - quick, let's start an epidemic and get the world infected!!

# TIP Talk

## Kids...good ideas

- Toss the too-small laundry hamper, and replace it with something that won't overflow in a day or two. Corral dirties in a hamper large enough for a week's worth of clothing, and line it with a drawstring bag that's easy to tote to the laundry room.
- Keep their hard-earned trophies and well-loved artwork - just not scattered around the room. Display them on a shelf mounted on little-used wall space (over a window or dresser).
- Purge outgrown toys and clothes, but give your child a say in what stays, lest you throw away a shirt he or she still adores. Encourage children to participate by explaining how their donations of clothes/toys/books etc. can help those in need or a younger family member or friend.



## Spare Buttons

If you're always misplacing one earring or its back, take a moment to pair them through the holes of an old button. They'll look cute! - and be easier to find in your jewellery box.

## Do you know how to use a Fire Extinguisher?

Most home fire extinguishers have a very short active lifetime, on average, about 10 seconds. Know in advance how your extinguisher works.

Remember the acronym **PASS**.

**PULL** the pin.

**AIM** the nozzle (be sure it is pointed in the right direction) at the base of the fire.

**SQUEEZE** the trigger. **SWEEP** from side to side.

Store the extinguisher near an exit so you can spray and back out at the same time. Don't assume the fire is out, call 911 and wait for the fire department to give you the all clear.



## Winter is almost here...

- Have you had your furnace or heating system serviced yet? What about the woodstove or wood-burning insert?...If you burn wood or wood pellets, it is also important to have your chimney checked and cleaned of creosote.
- If you haven't already, check, clean or replace your furnace filters. If you replace furnace filters - check your inventory, do you have enough on hand to change them once a month throughout the winter?
- If you have electric baseboard heaters - vacuum to remove dust. Remove the grilles on forced-air systems and vacuum inside the ducts.
- Check and clean the humidifier (this should be done 2 or 3 times every winter).
- Check and clean out all eavestroughs and gutters (once all the leaves are down). And, while you've got the ladder out you may want to consider putting up your Christmas lights!
- Check all outdoor electrical outlets to ensure they are clear of debris and operational. Check and clean all outdoor light fixtures.
- Remember...its time to reverse the direction on all ceiling fans.



## If you're thinking of buying a Home... do you Buy first - or Sell first?

If you've decided that your current home is no longer meeting your needs and it's time to move to a different house, you need to decide what to do first: *buy the new house or sell your current home.*

There are pros and cons to each approach. When it's a buyer's market (lots of homes for sale and few buyers), most people opt to sell first. This is a safe route to ensure you do not end up owning a new house and unable to sell your current home. The downside to selling first is finding just the right house you want during the time allowed. You may have to opt for a home that doesn't quite meet your expectations. If you buy first in a buyer's market, you may get a good price for your new house but you will face lots of financial pressure to sell as quickly as possible.

It's a good idea to consult your realtor to help make the decision - knowing market conditions in both the neighbourhood in which you are buying, and the community in which you are selling, is very important. Many other factors must also be considered such as interest rates and the time of year.

# WINTER Ahead!

## Be prepared for a Winter Power Outage

▶ Ensure your home has; flashlights, a battery-operated radio, spare batteries, candles, candle holders & matches/lighter.

▶ You can install a non-electric, standby heating unit that is not dependent on a motor, fan, or any other electrical device. Be sure to vent this type of unit with the type of chimney flue specified for it.

▶ Keep - and post - a list of emergency and other important phone numbers and/or contact info.

▶ If someone in your home relies on electrically powered life-sustaining equipment, register with your electric supply authority and your community emergency program.

▶ Check your home owner insurance policy. Ensure you have adequate coverage for the risks presented to your home.

## If the power does go out...

▶ Turn the thermostat(s) down to a minimum and turn off all appliances, electronic equipment and tools to prevent

injury or damage to the equipment.

Power can also be restored more easily when the system is not overloaded.

▶ **Don't** use charcoal or gas barbecues, camping heating equipment, or home generators indoors.

**Home generators are handy for backup electricity in case of an outage, but there are hazards to be aware of.**

**To operate a generator safely, follow the manufacturer's instructions, and always:**

- ▶ ensure that the generator operates outdoors in well-ventilated conditions.
- ▶ connect lights and appliances directly to the generator. If extension cords must be used, ensure they are properly rated cords. (approved by the CSA - Canadian Standards Association)
- ▶ direct installation of a generator to an existing electrical system should only be done by a qualified technician/electrician.



# Words OF WISDOM

*Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.*

*Life isn't fair, but it's still good.*

*Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.*

*When in doubt, just take the next small step.*

*Over prepare, then go with the flow.*

*No one is in charge of your happiness but you.*

*Frame every so-called disaster with these words... 'in five years, will this matter?'*

# Tis the Season

Shopping, decorating, gift wrapping, baking, school concerts, making lists, entertaining and get-togethers... it's no wonder we often feel overwhelmed in the month of December - the entire month can feel like one long and endless to-do list!

That's even more reason to carve out time for yourself - every week. We get worn out if we are constantly 'on task'. If you don't give yourself time to let your mind calm down, you're more likely to be tired, irritable, get run down and sick, and life just won't be as enjoyable.

Give yourself four hours every week, in one solid block of time, to do something just for yourself. That can mean anything from doing a favourite hobby you've let fall by the wayside, enjoying an afternoon of reading, walking, or watching a movie, having a manicure/pedicure, or getting together with a friend or two for a quiet lunch.

Imagine that you're pulling out your own personal batteries and recharging them. At the end of those four hours, you'll feel revived, energized and more able to handle the stresses of the season - and life. And, don't make the mistake of telling yourself you'll take the time when you've finished everything else on your list! If you say that, it will never happen. You must find the time and say to yourself... 'Yes, I've got 50 other things to do, but this is important, too.'

## Quick and simple ways to relax, de-stress and regain your calm.

### Perform a Kindness

Whenever you see an opportunity to do something that brings peace or kindness into the world, do it. Hold a door open for someone. Thank a sales clerk. The more you practice this exercise, the more opportunities you'll see.

### Say Thank You

Simply say 'thank you' from the heart whenever the chance arises. You'll be surprised by how differently even total strangers will respond to these words when they are spoken with sincerity.

### See everything as a Gift

Pause during your day and devote a few minutes to seeing everything in your life, right now, as a gift. Once you adopt this perspective, you'll find the positive lesson, outcome or potential in any situation you face.



# Balance

The increasingly fast pace of our work culture makes it all the more important to find balance. Downtime is important because it helps to keep us productive and focused - mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Relaxation is important because it's when our bodies release renewing endorphins.

Here are some simple suggestions to help you with balance in your life:

- ▶ To help to de-stress and better manage your time, make a to-do list every day or at least once a week. Prioritizing this way, then doing purpose-filled tasks, helps you see, as well as organize, what is important in your life.
- ▶ Schedule time for activities that you enjoy and that nurture **You...** body, mind and spirit.
- ▶ At work, try to take a 5-to-10 minute break every 90 minutes. Do some stretches at your desk, walk around the office or up and down a hallway. The idea is to relax your mind and body from the task at hand.
- ▶ Regularly spend time with the people in your life with whom you can relax, have fun, laugh and be yourself.
- ▶ Read a book, take a class or course on stress management.
- ▶ Do take the time to regularly engage in physical activity.



# HOLIDAY SEASON

## Fire Safety



*The holiday season is a very special time of year. For every homeowner along with the decorating, baking and festivities come some unexpected fire hazards and safety concerns. It's an ideal time to consider some common sense fire prevention.*

- Now is the time to check all smoke detectors! It's also a good time to practice your family fire drill and evacuation plan and confirm your meeting place outside.
- If your chimney has not been inspected this year, now is the time to schedule an inspection and cleaning.
- As you travel merrily from room to room decorating, be sure to maintain proper clearances with all heat sources and do not block exits with your tree or holiday displays.
- If you plan to use your fireplace during the holidays, don't place your Christmas tree too close. The heat of a wood fire will dry out a natural tree very quickly, creating a serious fire hazard, and sparks are always a major concern. Avoid draping the mantle, this includes stockings, greeting cards, garlands, and especially natural evergreen boughs.
- Don't use outdoor lights inside and don't use indoor lights outside. Inspect all light strings and replace bulbs before putting them up. Do not staple light strands. Do not use damaged or frayed cords, destroy and discard them. If you are using extension cords, inspect them as well, the same precautions apply.
- Never leave burning candles unattended. Never use candles on, or near, a tree or other evergreens.

*Keep in mind that that beautiful tree with its twinkling lights and glittering decorations presents one of the most serious fire hazards and deserves extra consideration and precaution.*

- Set up the tree away from heat registers or any other heat sources.
- If you choose a real tree, choose a freshly cut one. Store it outside, away from sun and wind, until you're ready to bring it indoors. Just before bringing the tree inside, cut an 1 to 2 inches (2.5 - 5cm) off the bottom of the trunk so the tree can take in water easily. Keep the tree moist, fill the tree stand with enough lukewarm water to cover the cut end of the trunk, and keep it at that level.
- Use only noncombustible and flame-resistant decorations on either real or artificial trees.
- Turn tree lights **OFF** when you leave the house or go to bed. As an extra safety precaution consider using timers for both interior and exterior lights.
- Keep electrical cords away from the tree's water supply.
- Take a few extra minutes on your way to bed, walk around the house; ensure candles have been extinguished and lights are turned off.

**Following sensible safety and precaution guidelines will ensure that you, your family, and home enjoy a safe and happy**

*Holiday Season!*

