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Better Home Living™

The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!

Considerations for a Home Pressure Washer

You can walk into a home improvement store and buy one, but that doesn't mean that a pressure washer is harmless. Think of it in the same category as chain saws, brush cutters and other commercial equipment. Here are some of the psi ratings sold:

*1,200-1,500 psi: An electric unit that's good for household and automotive cleaning jobs.

*1,500-2,000 psi: A moderate strength unit used for jobs like deck cleaning. It comes in gas or electric.

*2,200 to 3,500 psi. A high-pressure unit for jobs like cleaning concrete and siding, usually gas powered.

Higher ratings, up to 50,000 psi, are for industrial uses. The higher it is, the more quickly a job can be done.

Safety recommendations:

* Always read the manufacturer's instructions before using the machine.

* Wear protective clothing: goggles, boots, coveralls and ear plugs for high psi units. Never wear a bathing suit.

* If you will be using chemicals, wear a mask so you don't inhale them.

* Before starting a job, check every part of the pressure washer to make sure everything is in working order. Check the oil level and the electric cord.

* Keep electrical connections out of the water.

* Make sure nozzles, wands and spray tips are free of clogs. High pressure can propel clogs, resulting in injuries or property damage.

* Start the job at low pressure and increase it gradually.

* Never point the nozzle at anyone.

* Have someone working with you if you will be working on a ladder. Or use a telescoping wand.

Clean the equipment after use. Run clear water through the system if you used chemicals.



I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

*Susie Duncan
Home Cleaning Plus*

Nature's Annual Spectacle: Where to See the Leaves

Fall officially started in September but according to the Travel Channel, October is the prime time to see the best of America's fall foliage.

Early leaf watchers will want to start in the Northeast region to capture the first colorings of fall. Fodor's recommends the Green Mountain Byway in the state of Vermont to discover one of the most iconic displays of the area. The drive moves from Waterbury, the home base for Ben & Jerry's ice cream, to Stowe, which is known for its ski resort. Take advantage of the mountains in the area and stay in a place with a good view. Enjoy the view from afar or while experiencing one of the many hiking trails.

In the Pacific Northwest, Yahoo recommends the Willamette Valley in northwest Oregon. The area has many scenic routes connecting major cities in the state that were intended to show off the area's forests and rock lava formations. To keep eyes on the trees instead of the road, Oregon's Travel Department highlights the network of scenic train rides available across the best leafing country. There are also special stops to enjoy local crafters and photography destinations.

In the south, the Great Smoky Mountains region of North Carolina and Tennessee is a great place to visit until early November and, according to Fodor's, there are over 100 different varieties of trees on display. The National Park Service recommends seeking out less congested viewing spots, like the Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail to avoid the crowds and move at a leisurely pace. Historic mills, breathtaking waterfalls, and hiking opportunities abound in this area.



Gluten-free Lifestyle May Not Boost Heart Health

If you don't have celiac disease, your heart won't get a boost from going gluten free, according to a new study.

The gluten-free lifestyle is crucial for people with celiac disease. For them eating wheat, barley, and rye triggers the body to attack the small intestine, causing inflammation and leading to malnutrition and gastrointestinal distress. The inflammation then increases heart disease risk. Eliminating gluten stops the attack on the small intestine and reduces inflammation.

What the May study in The BMJ asked is whether people without celiac disease would benefit from going gluten free.

The Harvard research team did not find much of a difference in risk of heart attacks between people who ate the most gluten and those who ate the least.

On the other hand, people who avoided nutritional whole grains had an increased risk of heart disease.

The lesson: If you don't have celiac disease, don't cut whole grains out of your diet and don't worry about going gluten free, according to the Harvard Health Letter.

You can give without loving but you cannot love without giving.

~~Victor Hugo

Do You Know...

... someone that could use our services?
Perhaps a friend, family member, co-worker, or someone from church?

When a new client signs up for regular cleaning services at your recommendation; you receive a special gift from me and our new client will receive a \$25.00 additional cleaning service for free!

If you think someone could use our services, then don't hesitate to call them and give them our name and phone number. Be sure to have them mention your name when they call so we can send your gift!



Thanks in advance for your help!



Don't forget

BOGO Gift Card Promotion

Buy one gift card at \$160.00, and get one **FREE** worth \$160.00. This offer is good until the end of 2017.

These gift cards make awesome holiday gifts! Call today and get a jump start on your holiday shopping.

For a beautiful start in spring: You can store your tropical bulbs

The growing season might be over, but you don't have to say goodbye to your tropical plants. With a little effort, you can have twice as many next spring, and you won't have to spend a lot of money to do it. You can store the bulbs.

For those who have a special liking for elephant ears, cannas, gladioli, dahlias, begonias, caladium, and other exotics, here's how to save bulbs from the winter cold.

After foliage has dried back from the first light frost, trim the top growth, then gently dig up each bulb and brush off excess soil. Discard any that are dried out or rotted.

Spray each bulb with a protective fungicide such as Concern Copper Soap and allow to dry. Keep bulbs in a warm, dry area for a week to ease them into dormancy.

Store the bulbs in a cardboard box. Cover the bottom with newspaper and place the bulbs so they don't touch each other. Cover with peat moss, then make another layer.

Most bulbs prefer a 45 to 55-degree temperature range. Begonias, gladioli, and cannas prefer 50 to 60 degrees.



North America Treat Mystifies Europeans

October through December are prime months for pumpkin pies -- a uniquely North American treat that mainly puzzles Europeans.

In fact, expats routinely complain that finding cans of pumpkin in October and November is nearly impossible on the continent. According to The Guardian, Brits never really understood a vegetable-based pudding and pumpkin

has never caught on. In fact, in Europe, most expats end up substituting butternut squash or sweet potatoes for pumpkin.

Nonetheless, North Americans love their pumpkins and it does more than satisfy the taste buds. It wins big time for its nutritional values. A slice of pumpkin pie has up to three times the recommended daily value of beta-carotene plus the phytonutrients lutein and zeaxanthin.

The carotenoids in pumpkin neutralize harmful free radical molecules, while lutein and zeaxanthin are potent free radical scavengers, according to Rutgers University in Brunswick, N.J. A diet that includes these antioxidants can help prevent many of the diseases associated with aging, including heart disease and cancer.

Lutein and zeaxanthin are naturally found in the lenses of the eyes. Studies suggest that eating foods high in these compounds help block formation of cataracts and decrease the risk of macular degeneration.

Canned pumpkin has virtually the same nutritional value as fresh, and it's far less work to prepare.

You can make a nutritious pumpkin pie from a can of pumpkin pie mix or two pies from a 16-ounce can of pumpkin (just add your own eggs, sugar, and spices. The recipe is on the can.)

Some tips about pie made from canned pumpkin: If you find your pie cracks in the center or doesn't hold together well enough, your eggs are probably too small. Use three eggs instead of two.

To reduce the fat content of your pie, (pumpkin itself has no fat) use fat-free canned milk.

If you will use whipped cream as a topping, select fat-free whipped cream at the supermarket for a flavor that's still very good.

For more intense flavor from pumpkin pie mix, add a bit of extra spice and a tablespoon of brown sugar.

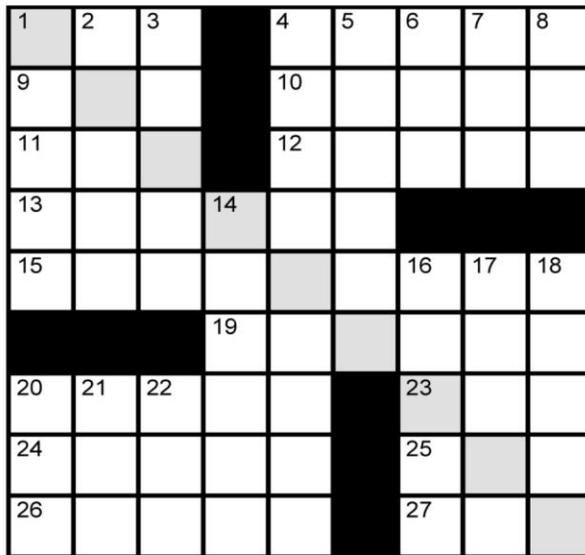
For more daring pie, put in three tablespoons of rum.



French soldier of sword and gun

Across

1. Wharton deg.
4. Spicy cuisine
9. "Days of ___ Lives"
10. Astound
11. "___ De-Lovely"
12. Set
13. All fired up
15. Monopoly avenue
19. Painter or sculptor
20. Early spring bloomers
23. Biblical verb ending
24. Pigskin carriers
25. "Fancy that!"
26. Twinge
27. Slip up



Down

1. Damp
2. Montana city
3. Possible fire cause
4. Advancement at any cost
5. During
6. Bender
7. Action film staple
8. Homer's neighbor

14. Special talents
16. Prolonged attack
17. Aromatic compound
18. Early anesthetic
20. "60 Minutes" network
21. Hip-hop
22. Wood sorrel



The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

Never use a Roth IRA as an Emergency Fund

Roth IRAs are unique retirement tools in that they allow the owner of the account to withdraw their original deposits from the account at any time without penalty. Because the accounts are funded with after-tax money, Uncle Sam doesn't have to worry about getting a cut as money moves in and out of the IRA. This feature could lead some people to use their Roth IRA as a sort of emergency fund if they have no other savings to draw from.

According to The Simple Dollar, however, it is not a good idea to use the account in this way because most of the gains will be lost with a withdrawal and only so much can be contributed over a lifetime. Say that a 25-year-old deposited the \$5,000 yearly limit and wanted to see how much this would turn into when they retire in 40 years. At 7 percent interest compounded annually, there will be \$74,872 when they turn 65. Taking that \$5,000 back out when they are 30 to cover an emergency will result in only \$21,489 over the same time frame. Taking money out early might sound good in the short term, but it will be disastrous for long-term financial security.

Trivia Teaser – Not Thinking Straight

1. Which duo had a hit in the 1960s with "Deadman's Curve"? a-Chad and Jeremy, b-Jan and Dean, c-Simon and Garfunkel, d-The Everly Brothers.

2. Who introduced the model of the atom that showed electrons circling the nucleus in defined orbits? a-Niels Bohr, b-Albert Einstein, c-Enrico Fermi, d-Werner Heisenberg.

3. Which star of the 1991 movie "Curly Sue" was a champion on "The Voice" in 2016? a-Danielle Brisebois, b-Stephanie Mills, c-Andrea McArdle, d-Alisan Porter.

4. Which U.S. President had a White House inner circle called the "Ohio gang"? a-William Howard Taft, b-Andrew Jackson, c-Warren G. Harding, d-Herbert Hoover.

5. "Tara Road" and "Circle of Friends" are among the best-selling novels of which Irish writer? a-Edna O'Brien, b-Deirdre Purcell, c-Danielle Steel, d-Maeve Binchy.

6. Which medical term refers to the lack of symmetry in the curve of the cornea in the eye? a-Strabismus, b-Ectasia, c-Astigmatism, d-Nystagmus.

7. Who played the daughter of Clint Eastwood in the 2012 movie "Trouble with the Curve"? a-Amy Adams, b-Melanie Griffith, c-Kate Hudson, d-Kim Dickens.

8. "Bad Boys" performed by the reggae group Inner Circle is the theme song for which TV reality series? a-"Cops," b-"Road Rules," c-"Survivor," d-"The Contender."

9. Which singer hit the top 10 in the 1980s with the songs "I Get Weak," "Mad About You," and "Circle in the Sand"? a-Debbie Gibson, b-Bonnie Tyler, c-Belinda Carlisle, d-Cyndi Lauper.

10. Which Greek word for a curve in a liquid surface is also used for the cartilage in a human joint? a-Patella, b-Meniscus, c-Olecranon, d-Scapula.

- 1-b, Jan and Dean
2-a, Alisan Porter
3-d, Alisan Porter
4-c, Warren G. Harding
5-d, Maeve Binchy
6-c, Astigmatism
7-a, Amy Adams
8-a, "Cops"
9-c, Belinda Carlisle
10-b, Meniscus

Answers to 'Not Thinking Straight'



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Stained Coffee Mugs

If your ceramic mugs have stubborn tea and coffee stains, try a baking soda paste.

Mix a little water into several teaspoons of baking soda; just enough to make the mixture pasty. Now rub the paste over the offending coffee stains with a soft cloth or sponge. Clean off with a wet sponge and dry.

The mixture also has other uses: Scuff marks on the floor, chrome on golf clubs or stainless steel in the kitchen, according to hunker.com

Be a Good Neighbor on Halloween

Many people enjoy handing out candy to their little visitors on Halloween. To make sure your visiting trick-or-treaters stay safe in your yard:

* Clear away lawn equipment and any clutter from the yard, walkways, and steps so kids don't trip over them.

* If you have lighted jack-o'-lanterns, position them far enough away from where kids will stand so their costumes won't catch on fire. Better yet, use glow sticks instead of candles.

* Make sure paper or fabric decorations can't blow into the flame of a jack-o'-lantern.

* Keep all of your outside lights on during the evening.

* If you are driving during trick-or-treat time, watch for kids.

Before sending your children on their rounds, make sure they eat so they won't be tempted to dig into their goodie bags before you can examine them.

Check to make sure no parts of their costumes drag on the ground. Kids could step on them, trip, and fall.

If they are wearing masks, be sure they have a good field of vision. Face paint is better.

Tell them to walk, not run, stay on sidewalks, and cross streets only at intersections, not between parked cars.

Advise kids to approach only those houses with outside lights burning. Never go inside a house. They should wait at the door for their treat.

Young children should be accompanied by an adult. Older kids should travel with a group of friends.

Operation Care Package

Two Ladies & A Bucket is gearing up for the upcoming holiday season. We are collecting items to send to our active troops. Below is a list of items that we could use. Any contribution is welcome. No donation is too small. Many of our service men and women are young parents. One of the biggest item(s) that we are wanting are hand drawn pictures and cards from your children addressed to 'My Hero'.

Summer Sausages and Slim Jims	Crackers	Puzzle Books
Pads of Paper	Greeting Cards	Long Envelopes
Dental Floss	Lip Balm	Toothpaste
Deodorant (Mens & Women)	Shaving Cream	Foot Powder
Odor Eaters	Sunblock	Mosquito Repellent
Wet Wipes	Anti Bacterial Soap	Travel Size Hand Sanitizer
Shampoo	Conditioner	Tooth Brush
Protein Bars	Batteries Of All Sizes	Jerky type dried meats
Canned Fruit	Dried Fruit	Seeds and Nuts of all kinds
Phone Cards	Canned meats	Canned Soup
Cookies	Crackers	Microwave Popcorn
Multi Vitamins	Tylenol	Ibuprophen
Hot Chocolate	Hot Cider mixes	Coffee Singles or 2lb bags or cans
Canned Chili, Stew, Ravioli	Sweat Pants and Blankets	Granola Bars

Keep your fears to yourself but share your courage with others.

~~Robert Louis Stevenson