



The Home Review®

News to Help You Save Time and Money

October 2010

Dreams Do Come True

Do you have a dream but think you lack the skills to achieve it?

A lack of skills doesn't mean you can't reach for – and achieve – your dream. Look at songwriter Irving Berlin.

Born in 1888 as the youngest of eight children, Berlin's family emigrated from Russia to New York in 1893. His father died when Berlin was eight, and as a young boy Berlin sold newspapers on the street to help support his struggling family. He left home at 14 and began singing in New York saloons for spare change, then went on to work as a singing waiter in Chinatown. With just two years of school and no formal music education, Berlin managed to get work as a lyricist on New York's Tin Pan Alley, the center of the American music publishing industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Berlin had difficulty writing English and had to pick out his melodies on the piano with one finger, so after he composed a song he'd either sing or play it for an assistant who would transcribe it into musical notation. His own system of creating served him well: Seventeen complete musical scores for

Broadway shows, musical scores for 18 Hollywood movies, and a total of more than 1,200 songs, 25 of which reached #1 on the popular music charts. In fact, if you've sung *God Bless America* or *White Christmas*, you've sung an Irving Berlin song.

When Berlin died at age 101, his fellow songwriter Jerome Kern said, "Irving Berlin has no *place* in American music. He *is* American music."

Not bad for someone who "lacked the skills" of reading and writing music!

Say That Again?

Tourists, apparently, ask some truly oddball questions. Here's a selected sample of wacky queries compiled by the travel industry association:

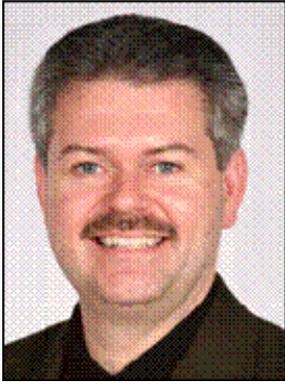
- ** How come all the war battles were fought in national parks?
- ** Is that the same moon we see in Vermont?
- ** Are the Amish in season?
- ** If it rains will the fireworks be held inside?
- ** When do the caribou turn into moose?

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Market Trend Specialist

Essential Heating System Maintenance

Getting your home’s heating system professionally serviced every year will keep it running smoothly and help keep heating costs under control.

“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” is usually a good rule—except when it comes to your heating system. Even if it’s humming along just fine, having a technician take it apart once a year to clean the lines and filters and give it a thorough inspection is absolutely essential. Regular servicing reduces the risk of breakdowns and prolongs the unit’s life. Plus, it saves you money: For every year of maintenance you skip, energy bills jump 5% to 10% because of reduced efficiency. Here’s the lowdown on heating system maintenance.

Market Update

Who does the job?

The simplest way to get the work done is to hire your fuel company to do it. Oil companies and gas utilities usually provide this service, or you can hire the contractor who installed the equipment. Also, some plumbers handle heating systems.

What is involved?

The technician will clean soot and corrosion out of the combustion chamber where the fuel is burned, and check it for leaks or damage. He’ll inspect the flue pipe for open seams, clogs, or corrosion that could cause carbon monoxide to back draft into the house. He’ll replace the filters on oil and forced-air systems. Finally, he’ll test the exhaust from your cleaned machine and use the information to adjust the burner for maximum efficiency.

How much will it cost?

You’ll pay between \$100 and \$180 for the service, depending largely on whether you have a gas system, which is easier to maintain, or oil, which requires a fair amount of soot removal. Usually the cost is covered by an annual maintenance contract that also provides 24-hour emergency service. While the technician is there, he should also service your water heater, assuming it has a separate oil or gas burner.

When is the best time to do the work?

Ideally, have your system tuned up in the fall so it’s in top shape for the start of the heating season. Of course, that’s when technicians are the busiest, so if you can’t do it when you want, do it when you can—as long as your system is serviced once a year. And don’t expect your provider to call to remind you that it’s time. Even if you subscribe to an annual service plan, you still need to call to make an appointment. Call in the spring or summer to be sure of getting on the schedule in the fall.

By: Oliver Marks

A former carpenter and newspaper reporter, Oliver Marks has been writing about home improvements for 16 years. He’s currently restoring his second fixer-upper with a mix of big hired projects and small do-it-himself jobs.

Read more: <http://www.houselogic.com/articles/essential-heating-system-maintenance/#ixzz10wNR4pCk>

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Commonly Confused Contractions

Don't let the misuse of contractions detract from your writing. Here are some commonly confused possessive pronouns and contractions:

Whose: a possessive pronoun. Do you know whose book is missing?

Who's: the contraction of "who is." Who's coming to visit?

Your: a possessive pronoun. This is your life.

You're: the contraction of "you are." You're just in time for dinner.

Its: a possessive pronoun. Put the book on its side.

It's: the contraction of "it is." It's a little confusing.

Their: a possessive pronoun. They took their time.

They're: the contraction of "they are." They're my best students.

How To "Go Green" When You Clean

Are you spending money on household cleaners when you may be able to do the job with items you already have at home and/or are less expensive than what you're currently using?

Using just a few of these ideas can help you save money on cleaning products – and be kinder to the environment, as well. A note of caution: Before using a homemade cleaning formula, test it in a small, hidden area if possible. Also, always keep your homemade formulas well-labeled and out of the reach of children.

Carpet stains: Mix equal parts white vinegar and water in a spray bottle, spray directly on the stain, let sit for several minutes, and clean with a brush or sponge using warm soapy water.

Food containers: To remove odors from plastic food containers, put a crumpled piece of newspaper in the container, seal, and let it sit overnight.

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.

Windows: Combine 1/4 cup white vinegar and one quart warm water, pour into a spray bottle or apply with a sponge, and wipe dry with crumpled newspaper.

Kitchen smells: To get kitchen smells like fish and onion off cutting boards and utensils, wipe them with white vinegar and wash in soapy water.

Kitchen surfaces: Apply baking soda directly with a damp sponge to stove exterior, refrigerator, and similar surfaces.

Marks on walls and painted surfaces: Many ink spots, pencil, crayon or marker spots can be cleaned from painted surfaces using baking soda applied to a damp sponge; rub gently, then wipe and rinse.

Silver: Wash items, then place them on aluminum foil in the bottom of a pot; combine one teaspoon of baking soda, one teaspoon of salt and one quart of hot water, then pour over items and let sit for a few seconds.

Toilet: Mix 1/4 cup baking soda and one cup white

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vinegar, pour into basin and let it sit for a few minutes; scrub with a brush and rinse.

If “homemade” isn’t your thing, check out the growing number of commercial non-toxic household items – from bathroom cleaners to laundry soap to pest control products – that can help you “go green,” as well.

Put Your “Best Fork” Forward

With the amount of business that’s done during a lunch or dinner, it’s important to send the right professional image. Here are some table etiquette guidelines:

1. Stay away from alcohol, at least until the business part of your meeting is over. It also depends on your company’s policy on drinking, so check prior to your meeting.
2. Order last. Always let your guests order their meals first.
3. Hold off on business talk. Wait to bring up business and bring out the paperwork until after the entrée plates have been cleared.
4. Turn off the cell phone. If you’re expecting an urgent call, let your guests know. Otherwise turn it off and put it away.
5. Ask for the check. Let your guests know that the meal is a treat from your company, and when the waiter brings your check, reach for it.

Take A Gander At This

A sure sign of Fall is the sight and sound of skeins of Canada geese, honking and flying in “V” formations. While one subspecies – the Giant Canada Goose – is relatively non-migratory, others fly south for the winter though they don’t venture as far as Central America. Much of the Canada goose population leaves Canada for the relative warmth of states like Illinois, Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York, and Pennsylvania where they can generally find leftover grain in farm fields and unfrozen bodies of water.

One of the best-known birds in North America, Canada (not “Canadian”) geese are found in every contiguous U.S. state and Canadian province at one time of the year or another. Their average life span in the wild is 10 to 25 years, and they mate for life and raise their offspring together. As young birds, geese learn the migration routes from their parents and older birds. They fly in V formations to reduce wind drag, and their hollow bones make them light and capable of soaring at great heights.

Is There A Word For That?

Have you ever turned your car into the last empty space in a full parking lot only to discover a motorcycle in that space? And is there a word for that?

Yes – but the word is a *singlet*; that is, it’s not a *real* word found in the dictionary, but perhaps it should

October Quiz Question

What edible comes in hedgehog, pom pom, oyster and wood ear varieties??

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

Starbucks gift certificate

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be. You'll find it in the list below, along with some other fun sniglets:

Anticiparcellate (an ti si par' sel ate) – waiting until the mailman is several houses down the street before picking up the mail, so as not to appear too anxious.

Facon (fa' kon) – the fake bacon bits served at cheap salad bars.

Kawashock (kah wah shahk') – pulling into the last remaining parking spot only to discover a motorcycle there.

Mittsquinter (mitt' skwint er) – a ballplayer who looks into his glove after missing the ball, as if, somehow, the cause of the error lies there.

Phonesia (fo nee' zhuh) – the affliction of dialing a phone number and forgetting whom you were calling just as they answer.

Shoefly (shew' fliy) – the aeronautical terminology for a football player who misses the punt and launches his shoe instead.

For You – Or Someone You Love

Have you stopped feeling like yourself lately? Maybe you feel sad, empty and hopeless but don't know why you can't shake off the feelings. Or you've been feeling anxious, panicked or distressed by troubling thoughts and behaviors, and it's affecting your daily life and others around you. Or you're experiencing changes in sleep or appetite, decreased energy, difficulty concentrating, and no longer enjoying activities you used to take pleasure in. Or perhaps you're worried about someone you love who's experiencing some of this?

These symptoms may be a sign of clinical depression or an anxiety disorder, real conditions that touch *at least one in every five people*.

October 7 is National Depression Screening Day in the U.S. and Canada, a great opportunity to learn about the many support options available including anonymous in-person and online screening. Here are two Web sites to get started: www.mentalhealthscreening.org and www.heretohelp.bc.ca.

September Quiz Answer

Question: What is the medical term for the rumbling, growling sounds emanating from your midsection?

Answer: Borborygmi.

Source: medterms.com

Congratulations
to Jennifer Walden

Your name was selected at random from all of the correct quiz entries and you'll receive A Starbucks gift card.

Watch for your name
in a coming month!

Entrepreneurial Exigencies

If you dream of owning your own business, you're not alone. The idea of being your own boss, calling all the shots, and taking control of your destiny is attractive to many people, but desire alone isn't enough. Before you make your first move, be sure you're cut out for the entrepreneurial life. Ask yourself these questions:

Do you have the energy? Running your own business isn't a 9-to-5 job. You need to be in good health, with lots of stamina, to maintain the pace of building a company from the ground up, especially during the early years.

Are you comfortable with risk? Don't invest your life savings unless you're sure you can live with the possibility of losing your nest egg. All entrepreneurs worry about money, but some can be paralyzed by that fear.

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Are you passionate about your business? A business that doesn't excite you from the start won't sustain your energy when demands are great and payoffs uncertain. Pick a business that you truly believe in, one you'd be happy to work in regardless of whether you ever get rich.

Is your family on board? Running a business calls for all your concentration, and if your family feels short-changed, the added stress can do you in. Include them in any decision you make so you don't have to worry about problems at home.

Halloween Do's And Don'ts

Halloween is an exciting time of year for kids, and to help ensure they also have a safe time, here are some Halloween dos and don'ts from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):

Do plan costumes that are bright and reflective. Make sure that shoes fit well and costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement or contact with flame.

Do consider adding reflective tape or striping to costumes and trick-or-treat bags for greater visibility.

Do remove from the porch and front yard anything a child could trip over such as garden hoses, toys, bikes and lawn decorations.

Don't allow young children to go trick-or-treating without a parent or responsible adult.

Don't go to a home if the porch light isn't on, and never go into a home or car for a treat.

Don't let children sample their treats until you've inspected them and thrown away any spoiled, unwrapped or suspicious items.

A Sweet Story

The Halloween treat candy corn was invented in the 1880s by George Renninger, an employee of the Wunderle Candy Co. of Philadelphia. Making the candy was labor-intensive, as each color of the mixture had to be poured separately into kernel-shaped molds, but the unusual confection was a big hit. The Goelitz Confectionery Co. began making candy corn in 1898 and today, as the Jelly Belly Candy Co., is still using the same recipe to do so. In the early 1900s when so many Americans were farming, the corn-shaped candy was especially popular – so much so that confectioners tried making candy in other vegetable shapes, including turnips. Candy manufacturers sell more than 35 million pounds of candy corn (about 9 billion kernels!) a year, with Halloween accounting for 75 percent of annual sales.

Quote:

“Education is when you read the fine print. Experience is what you get if you don't.”
– Pete Seeger, Musician

WELCOME NEW CLIENTS

Here are some of the new clients who became members of our “**Real Estate Family**” this past month. I'd like to welcome you and wish you all the best!

*Bob Gilkerson found us on the Web.
&
Dan McDonald is a previous client.*

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.

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Terrific Two Story in Benson Place Parkfield

MLS #1679096
\$220,000 ext 71

Popular 2 Story Floor Plan with 4 Bedrooms, 2 1/2 Baths and a Triple Garage. Inside is a Fireplace in the Living Room, Formal Dining Room, Eat-in Kitchen with Huge Pantry. Master Suite includes Walk-in Closet, Double Vanity, Whirlpool Tub. Retractable Awning over Deck. Whole House Electronically Wired.



Reverse, 1 1/2 Story In Genesis Village at Green Hills

MLS#1695888
\$200,000 ext 75

3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths and Double Attached Garage. This 3 Year Old home has a Fireplace in the Living Room, Kitchen with Hardwood Floor and Walk-in Pantry. Master Bedroom has Walk-in Closet . Outdoor Patio and In-ground Sprinklers. HOA Includes Community Pool and Walking Trails. Home Warranty included.



Ranch Home In Northaven, Gladstone

MLS #1660653
\$136,000 ext 69

Cared for, Updated 3 Bedroom, 2 Bath, Double Garage. On a Corner Lot with Mature Trees. Newly Painted Interior. Wired for Home Theatre and Networked Computers. Refinished Hardwood Floors. Finished Basement. Large Deck & Fenced Backyard.



Starter 1 1/2 Story Home In Plattsburg, MO

MLS#1680772
\$75,000 ext 74

Attractive First Home for a Family. 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths and Single Attached Garage. All Appliances stay. Newer Roof, Vinyl Siding and Double Paned Windows. Updated Bathroom along with a Kitchen having a Walk-in Pantry. Seller offering a Home Warranty



Starter Ranch Home M J Turner Place, Independence

MLS #1679514
\$45,000 ext 72

Cute Starter Home with Updated Kitchen and Bathroom. Very Comfortable Living Room and Bedroom. Great Location Just Off of E 23rd Street.



Attractive Atrium Split in Oaks of North Brook

MLS #1649472
\$192,000 ext 59

Former Model Home With All The Extras Inside - Ceramic Tile, Hardwoods, Vaulted Ceilings, Master Bedroom Suite, Walk-In Closet, Whirlpool Tub, Pantry, Cooking Island. Outside a Deck, Patio, Fenced Yard. HOA includes Pool and Play Area.

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Paul's Home Review

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- Five Deadly Mistakes Home Sellers Make
- Making the Move Easy On the Kids
- How Sellers Price Their Homes
- How to Stop Wasting Money on Rent
- How to Sell Your House For the Most Money In the Shortest Possible Time
- The 10 Dumbest Mistakes Smart People Make When Buying or Selling a Home

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