

Life Stuff

News To Help You Save Time And Money

February 2025

The Science of Hugging

As Valentine's Day approaches, it's an ideal time to recognize the science-backed benefits of hugging. Regular embraces can enhance both physical and mental health.

Physically, hugging can help lower blood pressure, strengthen the immune system, and reduce pain by releasing endorphins. Mentally, hugging decreases cortisol levels—alleviating stress, boosting serotonin and dopamine, improving mood, and combating depression. Emotionally, hugging fosters trust and deepens connections, enhancing relationship satisfaction.

Incorporating more hugs into daily life can lead to these numerous benefits. This February, embrace the power of a hug and share its warmth with those around you.

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PlanYourArizonaMove.com

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Beyond individual well-being, hugging plays a vital role in strengthening social bonds. Regular embracing can enhance trust and communication among friends and family, fostering a supportive community. By sharing hugs, we not only improve our health, but we also contribute to a more connected and compassionate society.

So go ahead—share the love, one hug at a time!

Happy Valentine's Day! Dan



Simple Acts of Love for Self and Others

February is often associated with grand romantic gestures, but true love is found in the small, meaningful actions we take for ourselves and the people around us. Here are some simple ways to spread warmth and care this month.

For Yourself:

Start a Gratitude Journal: Write down one thing you're thankful for each day. This practice can boost your mood and help you focus on the positive.

Treat Yourself to Something Special: Whether it's your favorite dessert, a relaxing bath, or a solo movie night, take time to indulge in small pleasures.

Unplug for an Hour: Disconnect from devices and enjoy a quiet moment with a book, some music, or simply your thoughts.

For Others:

Handwritten Notes: Write a thoughtful note to a friend, family member, or partner. In today's digital world, a handwritten message feels especially personal.

Unexpected Kindness: Pay for someone's coffee, leave a positive review for a local business, or call a friend you haven't spoken to in a while.

Small Tokens of Appreciation: Surprise someone with a baked treat, a bouquet of flowers, or even a heartfelt compliment—it can make their day.

For Your Community:

Volunteer: Spend an hour at a local shelter or community center or donate to a cause that matters to you.

Support Local Businesses: Shop small or recommend your favorite spots to friends.

Be a Good Neighbor: Offer to bring in packages or share a warm meal with someone nearby.

Love doesn't need to be extravagant; it lives in the thoughtful, everyday moments that connect us to others and remind us to care for ourselves. This February, embrace these simple acts of love and see how they can brighten the world around you.

January Quiz Answer

Q: *What was the first product ever to be scanned with a barcode?*

A: *A 10-pack of Wrigley's Juice Fruit chewing gum.*

Congratulations to Corri Miller.

Her name was drawn out of all of the correct quiz entrees, and she won two free Harkins movie tickets!



Up Close and Personal

*** Disclaimer...take your time when reading this.*** Do you feel like your life is going a million miles per hour? How would you like to slow down to the speed of joy? I just read a book about that very topic. The author states that the enemy to our joy is being too busy. He says busy doesn't make us important, it makes us unloving, ineffective, overwhelmed, distracted, exhausted, anxious, resentful, unfulfilled, inflexible, reactive, unhealthy, short-tempered, arrogant, and disconnected. He also points out we are not striving for the opposite of busy, but something altogether different. And that slowing down isn't just about removing things from our to-do lists. It's about establishing and maintaining an internal disposition of calm joy. And the speed of joy is never an excuse to be lazy. We have to make room in our schedules for the unexpected. We need to create more time by reducing busyness which will allow us to slow down to the speed of joy. He talks about leisure time and sitting quietly. He translates a quote from Blaise Pascal down to a personal level, in which the quote becomes, "All of your problems stem from your inability to sit quietly in a room." (quietly; no TV, cell phone, social media, music, etc.). He goes on to talk about the importance of bringing leisure time back to Sundays. There are 24 hours in a day. We don't need more time; we need to rearrange our priorities. The problem is user error. I have only given you a glimpse and a few ideas from the book. Once you read it, you'll see the big picture and how it all ties together. If you are interested, the book is called, *Slowing Down to the Speed of Joy* by Matthew Kelly.

Have a joyful month! *Dan*

It's About Time

Just a quick note to let you know how I can help you or anyone you might refer to me.

At 104 years old, Betty's mom made the move from her condo (where she lived alone) to an assisted living care home. She did amazingly well living alone. She would sweep the sidewalk out in front of her place, as well as some of her neighbors' sidewalks. As time went by, it was time for her to move where she could get some additional care. When Dan talked with Betty and her husband, Gene, they were pleasantly surprised at the price Dan told them they could get if they sold the condo. Dan proceeded to get her mom's condo on the market, and shortly thereafter, had an offer that Betty and Gene were thrilled about. Not only were they surprised at how quickly it sold, but Dan also arranged for the sale to be complete a week early. They are happy that things went so smooth, and now Gene has to remember not to go down to check on the condo each morning.

If you know someone who could use some help selling their home in a quick and efficient manner, have them call me at 480-390-5380. I would be happy to help them just like I helped Betty and Gene.

Home Sanctuary Makeover on a Budget

Your home should be a place of comfort, and you don't need a big budget to make it feel like a personal retreat. Here are some affordable ways to refresh your space:

Layer Cozy Textiles—Few things are as inviting as soft, layered textures. Add throw blankets to your sofa or bed, and layer rugs for warmth and comfort. Check thrift stores for affordable finds or repurpose blankets or scarves you already have.

Upgrade Lighting—Lighting can easily transform a space. Swap harsh overhead lights for lamps with warm-toned bulbs, string lights, or candles. These small changes create a softer, more relaxing glow that's perfect for cozy evenings.

Rearrange and Declutter—Sometimes a fresh perspective is all you need. Rearrange furniture to improve flow and clear out items that don't spark joy. A tidier, open space can feel instantly calming and more inviting.

Bring Nature Indoors—Incorporate greenery with plants, flowers, or natural elements like twigs and pine cones. Even simple arrangements can make a room feel more alive. Propagating plants or foraging outside keeps costs low while adding personality.

DIY Personalized Decor—Turn your walls into a gallery of memories and creativity. Frame favorite photos, sketch minimalist art, or repurpose old materials like scarves or fabric scraps for one-of-a-kind pieces. These touches make your home uniquely yours.

Add Soothing Scents—Scents can change a space's mood. Use essential oil diffusers, candles, or stovetop potpourri with cinnamon sticks and citrus peels for an inexpensive way to make your home smell like a spa.

How to Beat the Winter Blues

Winter can be a challenging time for many, with shorter days, colder weather, and the post-holiday lull. But you don't have to let the winter blues take over! Here are a few simple strategies to keep your energy up and your spirits high.

Get Moving—Exercise is a powerful mood booster. Even a short walk outside can increase endorphins and help you feel more positive.

Soak Up Natural Light—Lack of sunlight can affect your mood. Keep your home bright by opening blinds and curtains during the day.

Connect with Others—Staying connected to friends and family is key to fighting feelings of isolation. Schedule a coffee date, host a game night, or even hop on a quick video call to brighten your day.

The Dog Scoop

I only dropped Buckley's food container on his head once, and years later he still waits for me to put it away before he'll eat.

Old Age Is Great for Creativity

We sometimes think creativity is for young people. Children are endlessly imaginative, but the elderly are set in their ways. After all, we think, “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks,” right? Consider this list of creative accomplishments by people who may have seemed to be past their prime:

- **Goethe.** The famous German poet finished part two of his masterpiece *Faust* shortly before his death in 1832, when he was 83.
- **Arthur Rubenstein.** This concert pianist performed at Carnegie Hall at age 90.
- **Grandma Moses.** Artist Anna Mary Robertson, better known as “Grandma Moses,” had her first solo exhibition of paintings in 1940, when she was 80 years old.
- **George Bernard Shaw.** The Irish-born playwright remained active until his death in 1950 at age 94, when he published his final play. He was working on another unfinished play when he died.
- **Pablo Casals.** The cellist and conductor, born in 1876, continued to perform on concert tours into his eighties.

Winter Air Travel Tips

Delayed flights, bad weather, clogged airports—and once you make it through the winter travel obstacle course, you might have to sit next to someone with a nasty cold. Save yourself some time and energy, and cut back on your stress with these tips.

- **Pick a morning flight.** If your flight is canceled because of bad weather, then you’re more likely to find another flight the same day.
- **Try to find a non-stop flight.** If that isn’t an option, then look for connecting flights out of airports that aren’t experiencing severe weather. In other words, skip that layover in Buffalo.
- **Charge your electronic devices and have your cables handy.** You might not be able to find replacements at the airport, and if you do, they’re often wildly overpriced.
- **Book a window seat.** People in middle or aisle seats are more likely to catch colds from other passengers and the flight crew.
- **Don’t forget hand sanitizer.** Keep your hands clean and away from your face to reduce your risk of illness.
- **Have a Plan B.** You can’t control the weather, or the FAA.

See An Interesting Home?

No need to wonder about the price or call a high-pressure sales agent who will make you feel obligated. I 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.

Email me or leave the address on my voicemail, anytime, 24 hours a day, and I’ll mail or email all the information on that listing within 24 hours.

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According to data from the National Association of Realtors®, only 24% of homebuyers in 2024 were first-time purchasers, marking the lowest proportion since the inception of the dataset in 1981. Consequently, a substantial number of potential first-time buyers opted to remain in the rental sector, influenced by a market environment where national rental rates have experienced a consecutive 16-month decline, while residential property prices have maintained their elevated post-pandemic levels.

Characteristics of Home Buyers in 2024:

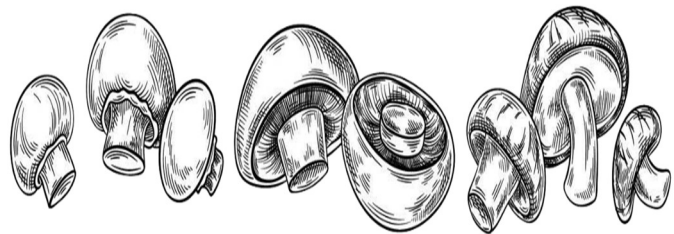
- The median first-time buyer age increased to 38 years old in 2024 from 35 years old in 2023, while the typical repeat buyer age also increased to 61 years old in 2024 from 58 in 2023.
- 62% of recent buyers were married couples, 20% were single females, 8% were single males, and 6% were unmarried couples.
- 73% of recent buyers did not have a child under the age of 18 in their home. This is the highest share recorded.
- 17% of home buyers purchased a multigenerational home, for cost savings (36%), to take care of aging parents (25%), because of children or relatives over the age of 18 moving back home (21%), and children over the age of 18 who never left home (20%).
- 83% of buyers were Caucasian, 7% were African-American, 6% were Hispanic/Latino, 4% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3% identified as some other race.
- 16% of recent home buyers were Veterans and 2% were active-duty service members.
- At 22%, the primary reason for purchasing a home was the desire to own a home of their own. For first-time buyers, this number jumps to 64%.

Creamy Mushroom and Wild Rice Soup

Warm, hearty and comforting, this one-pot recipe is perfect for chilly winter evenings. Packed with earthy mushrooms, nutty wild rice, and a creamy base, it's a bowl of cozy goodness.

Ingredients:

2 tbsp olive oil or butter
1 medium yellow onion, diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 celery stalks, diced
1 lb. mixed mushrooms (button, cremini, or shiitake, sliced)
1 cup wild rice, rinsed
6 cups vegetable or chicken broth
1 cup unsweetened coconut milk
1 tsp dried thyme
1 bay leaf
Salt and pepper to taste
Fresh parsley for garnish



Instructions:

Sauté the Aromatics. Heat the olive oil or butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, carrots, and celery. Cook until the vegetables are softened, about five minutes.

Cook the Mushrooms. Add the mushrooms and cook for another five-seven minutes, stirring occasionally, until they release moisture and begin to brown.

Simmer the Soup. Stir in the wild rice, broth, thyme, bay leaf, and a generous pinch of salt and pepper. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and let it simmer for 40–45 minutes or until the rice is tender.

Add Creaminess. Once the rice is cooked, stir in coconut milk or cream. Let the soup simmer for an additional five minutes to meld the flavors.

Season and Serve. Taste and adjust the seasoning with more salt and pepper if needed. Remove the bay leaf before serving. Ladle the soup into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley.

Finding the Right Agent

Remember that Dan can help find a trustworthy real estate agent anywhere in the country, and even the world. If you know someone wanting to buy or sell a home who does not have a connection to a real estate agent, Dan is happy to find someone that can help or even to just provide another opinion. Dan has connected people all over the country (and out of the country) who have successfully helped people find a home to buy, sell a home or vacant land, and even purchase a McDonald's franchise. Call Dan at 480-390-5380 or danazhomes4sale@hotmail.com

Phil and Cathy say...

"After we retired, we contacted Dan to help us relocate to the Valley from the Midwest. He was a pleasure to work with, very knowledgeable about all aspects with a willingness to explain the area and the local real estate practices. He is very punctual, always answered calls and emails and kept in contact at every step in the process. Overall, it was like working with an old friend which removed the stress involved in relocating."

See over 100 more rave reviews from actual clients at www.PlanYourArizonaMove.com. Just click the "True Stories" link at the top of the page. You can call Dan directly at 480-390-5380 or email at danahomes4sale@hotmail.com

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