

Advertising Alley

Somerfield News

News that matters.

May 2011



Neighborhood Real Estate

Homes that are on the market in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:

Address	Bedrooms	Model	Bath	Price
1473 Schafer Ave.	3	Newberry	2.1	\$237,900
1526 Schafer Ave.	3+	Lakewood	2.1	PC-\$209,900
1513 Schoenherr Ave.	3	Brentwood	2.1	NEW-\$249,900
★748 Dalton Ln.	4	Monticello	3.1	PC - \$339,210
1468 Schoenherr Ave.	4	Savannah	2.1	BOM-\$229,000
1474 Glenside Dr.	3	Brentwood	2.1	PC-\$229,999
1430 Glenside Dr.	4	Sutton	2.2	PC - \$275,000
1533 Glenside Dr.	4	Hanover	2.1	\$289,900
1455 Glenside Dr.	4	Durham	2.1	NEW-\$259,900
★1574 Glenside Dr.	4	Hanover	2.1	NEW-\$284,529

Homes that are currently under contract in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:

★1482 Glenside Dr.	4	Durham	2.1	SS-\$229,900
807 Sapphire Dr.	4	Sutton	2.1	PC- \$235,000

★ = My Listing ~ = My Sales

PC = Price Change BOM = Back on Market NEW = New listing on Market F = Foreclosure
 SS = Short Sale BO = Bank Owned TEMP = Off the Market Temporally
 Source Multiple Listing Service of Northern Illinois- May 3rd, 2011

Presented By:

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What's best bathroom floor: tile, vinyl or wood?

Q: In a recent column, a reader's peel-and-stick bathroom flooring was coming up and you recommended putting down tile in the bathroom. My experience with tile has been that it gets very slick when wet, which would certainly be problematic in a bathroom. Is there a type of tile one can use in a bathroom and/or kitchen that would allow you to have the beauty of tile but not the "ice rink" effect when it gets wet?

A: We've had the same experience with tile floors. Step out of the shower and va-va-voom -- on your tail you go.

Often, bathroom tile is glazed, shiny and smooth. A simple solution is to use rubber-backed bath rugs over the tile to keep your footing. But we understand that covering most of a tile floor with a rug is not very practical. So here are a couple of alternatives.

First, if you choose a tile floor, avoid glazed tile or marble. Instead, pick a material that's either textured or has a matte finish. They provide more traction and a better chance to keep you upright.

Kevin recently visited a friend in San Mateo, Calif. She had just completed a total remodel of her home. She installed textured ceramic tile in both the master and guest baths. She was very aware of the slip-and-fall factor, thus the textured finish. Kevin test-drove the shower in the master bath and found that a rug was necessary when stepping out of the shower, but when the rug soaked up the water from his feet, the textured finish performed fine.

Another tile alternative is Saltillo. This is a porous terra-cotta tile from Mexico that

requires regular sealing with a quality acrylic sealer. The plus is that it's got a skid-resistant surface. The minuses are the maintenance factor and the tile's irregular shape. If you're looking for uniformity, this option is not for you. But if you're after a rustic look, this may be the ticket.

Now, don't fall over in a dead faint, but another alternative you might consider is an engineered wood floor. It's not for everyone, but it might work for you. The negative, of course, is that this type of floor doesn't withstand large amounts of water well. If this is the only bathroom and there are kids, wood is not an alternative. But if the bathroom is adults only, the beauty of wood is a definite alternative.

Engineered wood consists of a top layer of hardwood -- bamboo, for example -- that is pressure-glued to alternating layers of plywood. The cross-grain construction gives the flooring good stability, unlike its solid wood counterpart. Also, the factory-applied finish is water-resistant. Notice, we did not say waterproof. Because Kevin's wife, Heidi, is absolutely against a tile floor (she says if he lays it, she'll take a hammer to it), engineered wood is starting to look like an alternative. We suggest you go with a "floating floor" to mitigate the moisture changes in the air and allow the floor to move a little with changing humidity.

A wood floor will provide more traction than smooth tile, but will still require a rubber-backed bath rug for entering and exiting the tub or shower and to reduce the amount of water on the floor.

Source: <http://lowes.inman.com/inmaninf/lowes/news/135831>

If your property is currently listed with another Real Estate Agent, please disregard this notice.

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Why owning a Home Rocks!

Homeownership has been part of the American Dream for centuries, and it's no wonder why. It rocks. First, owning a home is an investment. No, it's not a sure-fire way to get rich-quick. It is a long-term investment. Over the course of many years, even through times of economic upheaval, you can build wealth over time. An average appreciation rate during normal times is around 6.5 percent a year. That means if you buy a home for \$100,000, in just ten years you will have a home that could feasibly sell for around \$174,000.

During that time you build equity, as well. Equity is the value of your property minus what you owe. So even if you still owe \$60,000 on your home after 10 years, you will now have \$114,000 in equity. Many homeowners use this equity to take out loans to use for home improvement projects, such as adding on new additions. Owning a home also comes with less tangible benefits. Studies have shown that it creates a sense of community, motivating community involvement. And family stability is manifested through higher graduation rates and lower crime rates.

When you own a home, you take control of the creation of your surroundings. You can paint, make updates, and style the home to your liking -- all things not possible with most rentals.

You have even further stability when you have a fixed-rate mortgage. A fixed-rate means your rate will never increase. This means you will know the cost of your mortgage for the life of the loan. There won't be any surprises, which is what caught many homeowners off guard during the sub-prime mess. And there aren't any worries about the cost of rent going up each year. You can budget for life!

Don't forget about those great tax breaks, such as deducting your mortgage interest, and tax credits, such as money back for making energy efficient upgrades!

And of course, just think of all the fun times you can have with your family and friends. Memories will be made that will last a lifetime!

source: http://realtytimes.com/rtpages/20110329_owning.htm

Culinary Corner

Buttermilk Pecan Pancakes

Ingredients

- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon table salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted and cooled, plus more for frying
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- Chopped pecans, to distribute over pancakes
- Mamma Callies Syrup, for serving, recipe follows

Directions

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees F.

Whisk the flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, and baking soda together in a large bowl.

Add the buttermilk, eggs, and cooled melted butter to a second bowl and whisk to combine.

Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the wet mixture. Stir with a rubber spatula until just combined. Do not overmix or you will end up with tough and chewy pancakes.

Heat a large electric griddle or nonstick frying pan over medium heat. Add a few drops of vegetable oil and a pat of butter. Once butter melts, wipe skillet with a paper towel. Ladle about 1/4 cup of batter onto the griddle for each pancake. Evenly distribute chopped pecans on top of the pancakes. Cook the pancakes until the bubbles begin to burst on the surface, about 3 minutes, flip and continue cooking until the second side is a nice golden brown, about 2 more minutes. Repeat with remaining pancakes.

Put the finished pancakes onto a sheet tray and let sit in the oven to stay warm as you finish.

Arrange the pancakes on individual plates and serve with syrup.

source:

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/patrick-and-gina-neely/buttermilk-pecan-pancakes/index.html>

Summer concert season is here: tips to keep you rocking out

From local concerts in the park to multi-city touring music festivals like Lilith, the summer is full of outdoor, day-long concerts and events. But before you head out the door to begin your fun in the sun, there are a few things to consider to make sure you're prepared for a good time.

Summer concert season means the chance to sit out under the sun or stars, enjoying friends and your favorite music. But if you're excited about the event, that means others are too, so be ready for crowds. And because it's outside, that means it will likely be hot. Not to worry, though. There are easy tips to keep you rocking out:

- * If you're in it for the long haul, bring along picnic blankets or folding chairs. Many outdoor concerts aren't in a stadium, so you'll want a comfortable place to sit, at least while you wait to get on your feet to enjoy the music.
- * Remember to drink plenty of water, especially if you're being active. This is especially important since you'll be out in the heat. To enjoy drinking the water you need, try adding flavor to your water with Crystal Light drink mix.
- * Don't forget to wear sunscreen to protect your skin, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are the strongest. And remember, you can burn even when it's cloudy outside.
- * Outdoor events - especially some of the larger ones like Lilith, which features 'Lilith Village' full of sponsors and activities - cover lots of ground. Don't be surprised if you find yourself doing a lot of walking. To keep your feet blister-free, wear comfortable shoes and make sure to 'break in' new shoes you plan to wear.
- * Make sure you have good sunglasses. They'll protect your eyes and help you better see your favorite artist. Consider adding a hat as well if you're going to be under the sun all day.

Now that you're prepared and ready to jump in your car and go, remember to have fun. Laugh with friends, sing and dance to the music, and enjoy the experience.

Source: <http://helloelizabethtownftknox.com/tls/?action=article&itemId=3804>

Inexpensive ways to lose weight and stay fit

Trying to lose weight could cost you a lot of money - gym memberships, special diet foods, exercise equipment for your home or even hiring a personal trainer.

But there are ways you can lose weight without spending a lot of money. You will still need dedication, time and a willingness to make changes in your life to achieve your goal. Here are some inexpensive ways to lose weight and stay fit:

- * Start a neighborhood walking club. Invite neighbors who have dogs to come along. Or join a local pick-up game of dodgeball, basketball or racquetball. At the most, you'll need the equipment for the game. Set a weekly time for games and a daily time for the walks. Having other people involved will help encourage you to continue moving and exercising.
- * Add healthy ingredients that benefit your body to your daily menu. For example, relaxing with a cup of natural tea can help you reduce body fat and increase your metabolism rate. Oolong tea contains rich amino acids and cellulose, which can help lower your cholesterol levels. Green tea leaves contain vitamins C and E and a good amount of fiber. If you prefer black tea, its benefits include help with digestion.

Drinking a cup of tea (without the sugar or cream calories added) after each meal will help you slowly dissolve fat in your body. Premium tea leaves give you the best quality and best taste. Teawan (www.Teawan.com) has both quality tea and teaware products from Taiwan. You can choose tea bags or loose leaf options, depending on your preference.

* Do your own home workout. Grab a full jug of laundry detergent and use it for some lifting. If you're looking for something lighter, fill a plastic bottle with water to use as a weight. Start dancing around your house and in no time you'll break a sweat. This is great for cardiovascular exercise, and enjoyable if you can crank up your favorite tunes.

* Borrow a fitness video from the library and tone your body with the experts. Repeat the video several times and then switch it for a new one from the library. If you have cable or satellite television, tune into some of the fitness channels for different programs. You'll find styles ranging from yoga workouts to belly dancing to step aerobics. Set specific times each week to run through a 30-minute workout.

* Clean the house. Pushing a vacuum at a rapid pace is good exercise. So is scrubbing floors or bathtubs. These activities also are good for toning muscles.

Don't let money keep you from accomplishing your goal of losing weight and getting fit. If one exercise or activity gets boring, switch to another to keep your workout fresh and to target different muscles. And organize a plan with a friend or family member so you can help keep each other on task to accomplishing both of your goals.

Source: <http://helloelizabethtownftknox.com/tls/?action=article&itemId=3736>