



# Rob Paton Landscaping, Inc.

## *Around The House*

DECEMBER, 2006

HONEST QUOTES & OLD FASHIONED WORKMANSHIP

### How To Give To Your Child This Season



Toys and gifts are being advertised everywhere. Sometimes kids think they have a right to everything, and that's what they want: Everything.

Parenting expert Nancy Samalin says when we give so many toys, each one is less meaningful. A child who opens a pile of gifts may then walk around in a disappointed way and ask, "Is that all?"

Kids from preschool to teens ask for many things. This is the time to teach them how to wait, have patience, and defer pleasure. Tell the one who wants three or four DVDs that you will buy only one.

#### *Our Services Include*

- *Snow Plowing*



Having a child make out a wish list ranked in the order of importance promotes a sense of value. Tell her she won't get everything on the list, and may not get her first choice. Tell a younger child that Santa's sleigh isn't big enough to carry everything, but he'll get some things he wants.

Samalin, author of *Loving Without Spoiling* and *100 Other Timeless Tips for Raising Terrific Kids* (McGraw-Hill) suggests that if a toy is overpriced, tell the child you don't think it's worth it. If he has to have it, he'll have to give up other things.

Children benefit from your saying no. They learn that they will not always be saved from unhappiness. They will learn how to cope with disappointment.

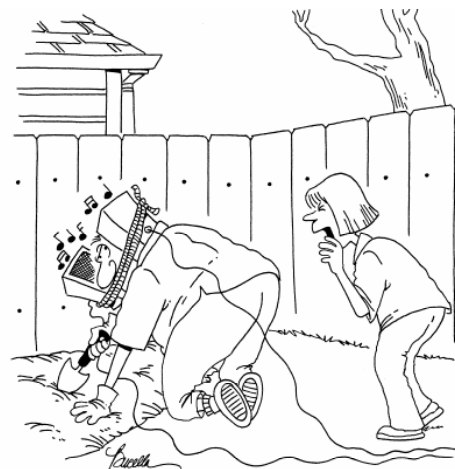
Involve them in activities that focus on the meaning of the holidays. Have children concentrate on helping others in the family.

One couple tells their children that besides giving each other presents for Hanukkah, they are going to do fun things for each other. The kids get excited about it and learn that sharing a loved one's time and attention has value.

### Inside This Issue:

- **Holiday Check List For Safety!**
- **Increase Your Home's Resale Value**
- **What To Do In A Household Emergency!**

*Plus much, much more!!!*



"I said, how would you like an iPod for Christmas?"

## Holiday Safety Check!

Each year, we hear of home fires occurring during the holiday season. Sometimes lives are lost. Sometimes an entire home is lost to flames. And visions of little ones whose presents are gone can generate a longing to help.

Holiday fires are not inevitable. Use this advice to keep them from happening.

\* Have a working smoke detector (test it) just outside the kitchen, near bedrooms, and on every level of your home.

\* Place a chemical fire extinguisher near the kitchen range and make sure everyone knows how to operate it.

\* Degrease the top of the stove, the oven, broiler, and range hood. Grease can ignite and cause a fire. \* When preparing a big dinner, make sure only one high-wattage appliance is plugged into an outlet or a circuit. If you have the microwave, coffee pot, electric fry pan, and toaster running at the same time, you could be in danger.

\* If it's very cold and you decide to use an electric heater, be sure it is not positioned near anything flammable including curtains and decorations. Unplug it when you go to bed.

\* Don't overload circuits with lighted decorations.

Plug decorations into a power strip that will shut off if overloaded and has a surge protector.

\* When opening gifts, handle wrappings with care. Never allow combustible wrappings to pile up near a heat source. Make sure no one is smoking near such flammables.

\* Be smart with candles. Put them out when you will not be nearby. Don't place a candle inside a bookshelf.

\* Never burn gift wrappings or a natural Christmas tree in your fireplace. It could cause a flash fire or a chimney fire.



### Health Tip: Salt That Lowers Health Risk!

A new report published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition shows that replacing regular salt with a potassium-fortified salt could help to lower the risk of death from heart disease.

The salt alternative that is half sodium chloride (salt) and half potassium chloride enabled men to lower salt intake while increasing potassium levels. A 30-month study in Taiwan veterans' retirement homes showed that test subjects were 40 percent less likely to die from cardiovascular disease.

Morton salt company and others make the half-salt, half-potassium table salt. If you have kidney problems or take ACE inhibitors, be careful not to overdose on potassium, caution doctors at Tufts University.

## Investment Fraud Targets People Over 50!

Why people are over age 50 often are the targets of fraud? Christopher Cox, chairman of the Securities and Exchange

Commission gives this answer, "That's where the money is!" The 79 million baby boomers have about \$8.5 trillion in assets.

The scams and pitches are constantly evolving. Today, they have a frightening level of sophistication. Some of the come-ons include:

\* Free lunch seminars.

The invitation says a financial expert will show you how to protect your nest egg. What he wants is a way to steal it.

\* Community group fraud. Scammers join your church or club and say you both have the same interests, so why not invest money together.

\* Fake contests. A caller says you have won a huge amount of money. All you have to do to collect is pay the high legal fee, taxes in advance, and other costs.

There is no such contest.

Words of warning that indicate this could be a scam: "Your profit is guaranteed;" "it has an amazingly high rate of return;" "there is no risk;" "you can get in on the ground floor;" "you would be a fool to pass this by;" "the offer is only available today;" "just make the check out to me."

**Toilet Tips**

If your toilet is stopped up and if the water level is low, there is an alternative if a plunger doesn't work.

- ❖ Fill a bucket or plastic wastebasket with warm water and pour it into the bowl from waist level or higher.
- ❖ Repeat if necessary after the water level is once again low.

**Around The House Tip of The Month:  
“How to Increase Your Home’s Resale Value”**

Although some people put money into a back yard pool and don't regret a cent of it, many don't want the responsibility. In fact, if they were in the market for buying, a pool would turn them right off a house.

This is a perfect example of a negative value investment in home improvement. In other words, a pool can actually lose you money when you come to sell. Hot tubs fall in the same category.

From a resale point of view, you'd be much better off investing the

money in a snazzy new kitchen or bathroom. These two top the list of value-added renovations, typically increasing resale value by 70 to 90% - or even more - of the cost of the work, and leading to easier, faster sales. Other value-wise renovations include the addition of windows or doors, and landscaping hardware such as a deck. Keep in mind, by the way, that quality of work can greatly impact resale value. It's worth having it done right!

Large-scale renovations aren't the only way to

build your home's value. A quality paint job just before your home goes on the market will usually pay for itself many times over. General house repairs and yard maintenance will similarly boost your home's appeal.

Few people want to move into a house that clearly needs work, so make sure gutters are in good shape, doors open smoothly, taps turn on and off efficiently and all electrics are in perfect working order. Finally, don't forget to pull those weeds!

1	5	4	7	8	6	3	9	2
3	8	9	2	1	4	6	5	7
6	2	7	9	3	5	4	1	8
4	1	8	5	2	9	7	6	3
9	3	2	6	7	8	5	4	1
7	6	5	3	4	1	8	2	9
8	9	3	4	5	2	1	7	6
5	7	6	1	9	3	2	8	4
2	4	1	8	6	7	9	3	5



**Quickie Tip of the Month  
“2 Simple Ways to Reduce  
Harmful Bathroom Mold!”**

**Most folks aren't aware of this, but bathroom mold can cause a host of sinus and respiratory illnesses.**

**To help prevent mold from forming, you'll want to leave your shower door/curtain open when it is not in use. Also, you'll want to run the exhaust fan while showering and for 15 minutes after showering is over.**

**For added protection, you can squeegee excess water from the tub and walls.**

"One" Time Sudoku

Sudoku is gaining popularity all across Europe. Only logic and patience is required. No math is involved. Simply make sure that each 3x3 square region has a number 1 through 9 and that the number only occurs once. Each column and row of the large grid must have only one instance of the numbers 1 through 9.

Here's a tip for playing. We'll call the 3x3 squares "regions." With a highlighter, color in all the rows in the large grid and all the columns in the larger grid that have a 1 in them. We chose 1 because there are several of them in the puzzle. Finished?

Now observe. In the middle left region, what is the only possible location for the 1?

This technique is called "scanning" and you usually do it with your eyes and not a marker. The difficulty rating on this puzzle is medium.

1					6	3	9	
3	8						5	7
			9				1	
			5					
9			6	7	8			1
					1			
	9				2			
5	7						8	4
	4	1	8					5



*Clean and condition twice yearly using leather cleaner followed by a leather balm to replenish*

**Answer Key on Page 3**

**Caring For Leather Furniture**

Last year, leather accounted for 26 percent of all furniture upholstery in the U.S. But owning leather furniture requires regular care to maintain its beauty. Here's what to do.

- \* Don't place it in direct sunlight or too close to a heat source. Excess heat can dry and discolor it.
- \* Clean and condition twice yearly using leather cleaner followed by a leather balm to replenish moisture.
- \* For minor scratches, use a chamois or clean finger and gently buff. For deeper marks, apply a conditioner. Never use a

pen or shoe dye.

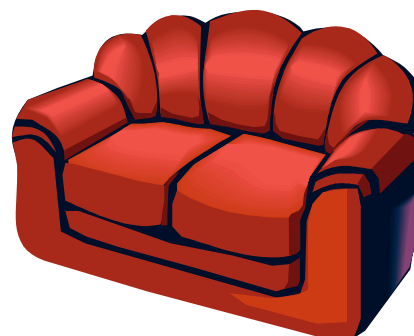
- \* For minor spills, wipe up liquid immediately and use a lightly moistened cloth with lukewarm water. Let it air dry.
- \* For grease stains, wipe with a dry cloth. Leave them alone and they may blend into the leather.
- \* Do not use cleaning solvents, furniture polish, oils, varnish, abrasive cleaners, detergents, or ammonia.

**Caring for wicker furniture**

True wicker is made of rattan, reed, willow, and bamboo. It should be kept

away from direct sunlight and excessive heat. Both will dry it out, making it become brittle and cracked. Too much dampness can cause mildew.

To clean wicker, vacuum it thoroughly and use a brush attachment to remove dirt and dust. Then scrub with a soft-bristle brush dampened with mild soap and water. Work carefully to get between crevices to remove collected dirt. Following a good cleaning, let the furniture dry completely.



## 'Dry Mouth' Can Cause Big Problems

If your mouth feels dry when you wake up in the morning, usually a glass of water and brushing your teeth will make it feel good again.

For a large number of people, this is not the case. They may have chronic dry mouth, which can cause the tongue to feel hot, sore throat, and difficulty swallowing dry foods.

Saliva is an important part of the immune system. It contains antibodies, enzymes, and minerals. Saliva works to eliminate oral bacteria, start the digestion of food, and helps you taste food. It protects the teeth from mouth acids and makes it possible for teeth to remineralize, which is essential to dental health.

Doctors at Johns Hopkins Medical Centers say many medications can cause the dry-mouth feeling. Common drugs that can cause it include antidepressants, antihypertensives, diuretics, decongestants such as Sudafed, sedatives, and anti-Parkinson drugs.

If you think a medication is causing your mouth to feel dry, ask your doctor for a different medicine.

- ❖ Be sure to take steps to protect your teeth. Get frequent dental checkups and fluoride treatments.
- ❖ Follow a low-sugar diet and include plenty of fruits, soups, and other foods high in water content. Avoid dry snacks.
- ❖ Try chewing sugarless gum to stimulate saliva production, and don't smoke or drink much alcohol.
- ❖ Use a dehumidifier at home, sip water frequently, and have a bottle of water by your bed.
- ❖ Brush your teeth with fluoride toothpaste and floss frequently.

## Help! What To Do In A Household Emergency

When emergencies occur, it's hard to think straight. Here are the basics:

**Fire while cooking** – If the fire's in a pot, cover with a lid and switch off the stove. In an oven? Shut the oven door and switch off the heat. If flames spread, get out and call for emergency help.

**Gas smell** – Open all windows and doors, call your gas provider and leave the house. Don't use lighters or matches, don't smoke and don't turn on any appliances.

**Burst pipe** – If it's still flowing, switch water off at the mains. If water is gathering, wear rubber boots and switch off the electrical supply. Call a plumber fast. Consider renting a wet vacuum to soak up the water.

**Flooded basement** – Treat as for burst pipe, but call your city emergency drains service. The cause may be on city property, saving you money.

**Toilet flooding** – If water's still running, turn the cut-off tap clockwise to stop the flow. Bale out half the water and try using your plunger. If this doesn't work, insert a plumber's snake (toilet auger) into the bowl and push it into the outflow passage until you hit the clog. Turn handle and lift out. If this fails, call your plumber.

### STRANGE FACTS!

Did you know that it is impossible to catch a common cold at the North Pole? That's right! You can't catch a cold or the flu while outdoors at the North Pole in winter. That's because winter temperatures there are so low, no known disease-causing microorganism can survive in the frigid weather!



## Healthy Home Tip: Watch The Air You Breathe!

Did you know that some of the worst air pollution you breathe is usually under your own roof? Multiple studies have shown that air pollution in your home may be as much as two-five times more polluted than the air that is outside... scary!

Why is this so? Well, a lot of building materials outgas potentially toxic chemicals, especially in newer airtight construction. Other sources of in-home air pollution are various molds and fungi that release gases, dust mite droppings, and chlorination by products from your

water that are turned into gas vapor. Also adding to the pollution are your dishwasher and your washing machine.

These in-home chemicals coupled with outdoor air pollution that drifts into your home can make for some bad air.

Here's a few pollution fighting strategies you can use:

- ❖ Install carbon filters on your faucets and showerheads.
- ❖ When you're cooking and washing dishes,

keep a kitchen window cracked and turn on your kitchen fan.

- ❖ After your dishwasher has run through its cycle, wait at least one hour before opening the dishwasher door.
- ❖ When possible, wash your clothes in cold water, as the hot water will release chlorination by products in the form of gas.
- ❖ Avoid using toilet deodorizers and moth cakes. Both contain harmful chemicals.



## Repairing Damaged Spots On Your Flooring

Getting a nick, cut, or gash in vinyl flooring is all too common. For some strange reason, it always seems to happen in a spot where you'd least like it!

The best way to make this repair is to cut out the damaged area and replace it with a new piece. Here's how to make it work...

1. Tools Required For This Job: Sharp utility knife, straightedge, and vinyl/linoleum-flooring adhesive. These tools can be purchased at your local home improvement store.

2. Get a scrap piece of flooring that is slightly larger than the area you want to cut out. (If you don't have any extra scraps,

you can cut out a piece of flooring that is in a hidden area, such as under the refrigerator.

3. If you're floor has a pattern, use a scrap piece that most resembles the pattern. If the pattern has lines, you'll want to cut along the lines.

4. Line the scrap piece over the damaged part, so that the patterns align, and tape it down with masking tape.

5. Cut through both pieces together, using a sharp utility knife. Keep the utility knife blade as vertical as you can. (A carpenter's square or any metal straightedge will help you to get the cut right.) By cutting through both

pieces at once, you will cut out the damaged piece and make a matching patch at the same time.

6. After cutting the flooring, you can remove the damaged piece by carefully inserting a putty knife under a corner and pulling it up.

7. Before you glue down your patch, test fit the patch you cut and if it doesn't fit, you can trim the piece until it fits perfectly. After the patch is ready, you can glue the repair patch in place. Press the repair patch firmly to get glue distributed evenly. You can use a folded towel to put pressure on the patch to keep it down.

