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Out and About



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Home is Where Your Story Begins..

Happy Valentines Day

I hope that as this year's Valentines Day approaches that you do something silly, sweet or romantic with someone special in your life.

This year, I will be spending my Valentine's Day in an airport, returning from Mexico. I can't tell you how much I am looking forward to listening to the roar of the surf and sunny skies.

Has this been a winter or what! Even with this crazy weather, real estate is back on the move again. If you get a chance, take a look at my website and see some of my new listings.

With interest rates at an all time low, this may be the right time to move into a new home.
Happy Valentine's Day!

Recipe of the Month:

Chocolate Dipped Pretzels

- 1 Jar of Snyder's Old Fashioned Pretzel Sticks (Costco's)
- 1 bag of milk chocolate, white chocolate or semi sweet chocolate chips
- 1 Bottle of Sprinkles

Empty bag of chocolate chips in a glass measuring cup. Microwave for 30 seconds on high. Mix until smooth. If you need to, microwave for an additional 30 seconds.

Dip pretzels 3/4 from the top. Shake off excess and sprinkle with colored sprinkles. Place on either wax paper or parchment paper till chocolate hardens. Enjoy.
PS There is no chicken broth used in this recipe...

OOPS!

Please accept my deepest apology for last month's newsletter. I inadvertently left out the liquid in my recipe for Low Fat Chicken Soup. It should have read 32 oz of low fat chicken broth.

Thank you to Shirley Springborn who was the first to notify me and was rewarded with a gift wrapped box of low fat chicken broth and a bag filled with chocolate covered pretzels for dessert.

What would I do without my faithful readers who not only read these newsletters, but try out and critique my recipe's.

Again, my apologies and thanks again Shirley.....

“Will You Be My Valentine?”

Top Valentine Gifts for Men & Women

As I was surfing the web, I admit I was surprised to see mobile phones listed as one of the top five gifts for valentines day for both men and women. I remember a friend telling me that she received a new vacuum from her husband one valentines day, note to all you men, she is now divorced. My idea of a well thought out gift, is to come home to a clean house, my favorite meal, some pretty spring flowers (any kind) and my husband saying for "tonight, the remote belongs to you." Okay, that may not be very romantic but things have been pretty busy the past few months. I think most of us just want to be appreciated. What does that special person do in our everyday lives that makes us thankful for them?

How do we let them know how much the day to day stuff they do really matters? Because it is the little things that really count. When was the last time you sat without the background noise of the TV and talked? How long has it been since you gave a back rub? When was the last time you had a game night? Don't wait until a Hallmark Holiday to let your favorite person know how you feel. It means way more to find a love note in your car visor on a Monday morning, than receiving a \$75.00 flower arrangement on Valentines day. Of course, I am going to be flying home from Mexico, so who am I to give advice. :)

Quick Money Saving Tips

1. **Install a programmable Thermostat:** Such thermostats can be set to increase and reduce temperature, depending on when you'll be home. If you can make simple electrical connections, you can do the installation yourself. You can buy them for as little as \$35.00 and even a 2 degree drop in temperature can save you some big bucks.
2. **Weatherproof your windows.** Insulate your windows by using self adhesive foam, caulking or vinyl to stop cold air from coming in. Doors lose twice as much energy as windows because of frequent openings and harder to seal thresholds. Your local hardware store will carry a variety of rubber or metal sweeps and threshold locks to seal those bottom openings.
3. **Maintain your Garage Door.** The garage door presents the largest heat loss problem and one of the easiest problems to solve. You can replace the rubber weather stripping on the bottom to make sure there is no gap between the floor and garage door.
4. **Insulate your attic and crawl spaces.** Check to see the condition of your insulation. Good insulation can save you as much as 30% of your heating bill.
5. **Replace your incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent bulbs.** They use less energy, last longer and give off less heat.
6. **Install low flow shower heads.**
7. **Turn the temperature down on your water heater.** Anything above 125 degrees is typically not needed and wasteful.
8. **Call Caryn** when you see a mistake and perhaps you'll get a free box of Chicken Broth....