



Michael's Home News

News To Help You Save Time And Money

January 2013

A Little Learning

Lumbering is a dangerous occupation, and one instructor became famous for training novices to bring down the tallest pines with the fewest injuries.

One day a group of instructors arrived to learn his methods. He was willing to demonstrate and had everyone follow him to where the tall trees were being cut. The instructor sent some novices high into the pines to trim branches before felling the trees. However, as soon as they all were high in the treetops, he surprised the observers by going to sleep while the "class" worked above him.



It was only when the rookies had worked their way down about 20 feet above ground that he awoke. He began to watch them very carefully and warn them to watch their footing, test their weight before venturing onto a branch, and so on. One of the observers asked him why he'd waited so long to stress safety.

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The instructor said, "When the novices are high up, their fear makes them learn to watch every step. But when they've learned a little, accomplished a little, and descended to what they think is a safe height, they tend to get careless—and that's when they need extra warnings about caution."

He taught the observers what experienced leaders also know—remember to anticipate the dangers of expertise and overconfidence as much as ignorance and fear.

~ Adapted from *Leadership...with a Human Touch*, www.leadership-mag.com

Michael Cowling

The Invention Of January

Happy January, the traditional first month of the year! But how did January get to be the first month of the year? Consider that until the 1700s, calendars were not always as we see them today.



January 1 became the first day of the new year when Julius Caesar reorganized the Roman calendar and made it solar rather than lunar. In the year 45 B.C.E. he moved the beginning of the year to January 1.

When the Gregorian calendar—which most of the world uses today—was introduced in 1582, January 1 continued to be recognized as the first day of the year in most places. However, in England and the American colonies the first of the year was March 25, intended to represent the spring equinox. Under this system, March 24, 1700, was followed by March 25, 1701. In 1752, the British government changed the beginning of the year to January 1.

January is named for Janus, considered the Roman god of the doorway or the gatekeeper, appropriate as January is the doorway of the year.

“By recording your dreams and goals on paper, you set in motion the process of becoming the person you most want to be. Put your future in good hands — your own”.
~Mark Victor Hansen

Jammin’ January Observances

Aside from New Year’s Day, here are more interesting and notable January remembrances and celebrations:

- ◆ 1913 Patent #1,049,667 was granted to William Burton for the manufacture of gasoline.
- ◆ 1930 Mickey Mouse cartoon first appeared in newspapers throughout the U.S.
- ◆ 1880 Patent #223,898 was granted to Thomas A. Edison, for "an electric lamp for giving light by incandescence".



January Quiz Question

Q: *Where are the lakes that are referred to in the "Los Angeles Lakers?"*

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 \$25 Gift Certificate to Starbucks.

December Quiz Question

Q: *What can you keep when you give it to someone?*

A: *Your word.*

Congratulations to:
Jimmy Chiu
for winning a \$25 Gift
Certificate to Starbucks.

Weird Words

English is an amazing language, filled with unusual and obscure words. Here are a few to drop into the conversation when you want to show off.

Erinaceous (adj.) Of, pertaining to, or resembling a hedgehog. “He told me I looked stunningly erinaceous, but I’m not sure it was a compliment.”

Kakorrhaphiophobia (n.) Abnormal fear of failure. “Bernard loved pie, but his kakorrhaphiophobia prevented him from entering the pie-eating contest.”

Macrosmatic (adj.) Having a good sense of smell. “Vernon’s macrosomatic powers enabled him to trail the suspect by following the scent of anchovies on her breath from a pizza she’d eaten yesterday.”

Xertz (v.) To gulp a beverage enthusiastically, heartily and quickly. “Thirsty, Max proceeded to xertz his beer and then belched the first eight bars of ‘Old McDonald Had a Farm.’ ”

Zoanthropy (n.) A mental disorder in which one believes oneself to be an animal. “Bruce had to sleep upside down because in his extreme zoanthropy he believed he was a bat, an affliction which eventually led to his becoming a caped vigilante.”

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*When you are courting a nice girl an hour seems like a second.
When you sit on a red-hot cinder a second seems like an hour.
That's relativity. ~ Albert Einstein*

Cheapest Tablet On The Market

The cheapest new tablet computer (for now) comes from India. The Aakash (“Sky” in Hindi) is a joint project between IIT Rajasthan, one of India’s elite Institutes of Technology, and manufacturer DataWind. Cost: approximately \$49.

The mobile Internet device uses Android technology and is only 7 inches long. It’s assembled in India, though its components come from South Korea, China, and the United States (as well as India). Right now, only about 100,000 Aakashes are in the manufacturing pipeline, and those will be sent to colleges for use by disadvantaged students free of charge. You can’t actually buy it. At least not yet.



Lead With Positive Attitude

The success of any team (not to mention your own family!) depends on the positive attitudes of the members and the leader. Demonstrate—and reinforce—these important personal guidelines:

- **Ego control.** Remember, be committed to the goals of the team, not your own ambitions. Can you and the rest of your team put the group's priorities first?
- **Admitting mistakes.** Be willing to honestly concede errors so the team can move on.
- **Constructive disagreement.** Hiding your expertise just to avoid conflict won't help the team achieve their goals. Everyone has to be willing to stand up for their ideas and to listen respectfully to other points of view.



- **Positive spin.** Instead of saying, "You're being stubborn," say "I notice you're very determined right now." You'll have better results trying to get things done.
- **Accept responsibility.** Sometimes the situation is your fault. If you notice the same problems coming up repeatedly, ask yourself if there's something about *you* that's getting in the way here.

Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful or happy. ~Norman Vincent Peale

Sometimes A Hug Trumps A Fight

The next time your small child throws a temper tantrum, try giving a hug instead of a lecture. You might be surprised at how effective a hug can be in quieting a child in the midst of a meltdown.

Hugs can defuse a child's hurt or anger, making it easier for him or her to listen to what you have to say.

Once calm, your child can take part in a larger discussion about the problem and his or her behavior. Children do better when they feel secure and loved, no matter what.



Prices hold firm as home buyers and sellers conclude 2012 from the sidelines

The Greater Vancouver housing market experienced below average home sale totals, typical home listing activity and declines in home prices in 2012.

The Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV) reports that total sales of detached, attached and apartment properties in 2012 reached 25,032, a 22.7 per cent decline from the 32,387 sales recorded in 2011, and an 18.2 per cent decrease from the 30,595 residential sales in 2010. Last year's home sale total was 25.7 per cent below the ten-year average for annual Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) sales in the region.

The number of residential properties listed for sale on the MLS® in Greater Vancouver declined 2 per cent in 2012 to 58,379 compared to the 59,539 properties listed in 2011. Looking back further, last year's total represents a 0.6 per cent increase compared to the 58,009 residential properties listed in 2010. Last year's listing total was 6.1 per cent above the ten-year average for annual MLS® property listings in the region.

For much of 2012 we saw a collective hesitation on the part of buyers and sellers in the Greater Vancouver housing market. This behavior was reflected in lower than average home sale activity and declines in home prices.

Residential property sales in Greater Vancouver totalled 1,142 in December 2012, a decrease of 31.1 per cent from the 1,658 sales recorded in December 2011 and a 32.3 per cent decline compared to November 2012 when 1,686 home sales occurred.

December sales were 38.4 per cent below the 10-year December sales average of 1,855.

We saw home prices come down during the latter half of the year. During the same period, we saw fewer home sales and listings.

*(Continued online at www.michaelcowling.com/blog)
(Source REBGV)*

Our usual complete statistics package is available this month online at <http://www.michaelcowling.com/richmond-statistics/> or just follow the links on our website. We will have it back in print next month.

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Effects Of Peaceful Video Games

Playing action-packed video games may make people more violent, but do calm, peaceful games bring on a mood of relaxed serenity?

Maybe so, according to experiments conducted by researchers at Ohio State University.

First, they had to find a relaxing video game. They settled on Endless Ocean, which simulates scuba diving and gentle underwater exploration. Then they took a group of 150 college students and randomly assigned them to play either a violent game like Resident Evil 4, a “neutral” game like Mario Galaxy, or Endless Ocean.

After the games, the students were asked to participate in a test of reaction times against another player (who didn’t actually exist). The stakes: Winners would receive a small amount of money for pressing a button faster than their competitor; losers got blasted with a loud noise through headphones. The amount of money and noise were up to the students.

Those who had played the violent game tended to be more aggressive in the test, inflicting louder and longer blasts on their nonexistent opponents. Players of the peaceful game granted their adversaries more money for beating them than their violent counterparts.

It is not the horse that draws the cart, but the oats. ~Anonymous

Caffeine Withdrawal

Planning on giving up coffee for the health benefits?

If you’re pregnant, prone to anxiety attacks, or worried about being addicted to caffeine, giving it up may be a good idea. Just watch for the symptoms of withdrawal, which can include headache, fatigue, drowsiness, and difficulty concentrating.

The symptoms can arise quickly. Medical experts say they generally begin 12–24 hours after your last cup of coffee (or whatever form you regularly take your caffeine in), and can last up to two weeks. So be prepared (and warn those around you as well).



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Good Medicine

I don't know what it is, doc," the young man said. "I just don't feel good."

The doctor examined him and ran some tests. Then she talked to her nurse and came into the examination room with three bottles of different-colored pills.

"OK," the doctor said. "I want you to take one blue pill with a large glass of water every two hours. I want you to take a green pill with a large glass of water every three hours. And then take one of the yellow pills, with a large glass of water, every four hours."

"Geez, that's a lot of pills," the patient said. "What's the matter with me?"

"You're not drinking enough water."

Thinking About Making a Move?

No need to call a high-pressure salesperson who will make you feel obligated. I'm happy to talk with you and answer your questions.

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A person without a sense of humor is like a wagon without springs. It's jolted by every pebble on the road. ~ Henry Ward Beecher

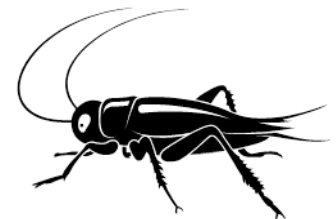
'Chivalry' In Insects?

They may not hold doors open, or spread cloaks on mud puddles, but male insects are a little more gentlemanly than one might think, according to research conducted by scientists at the University of Exeter.

The team studied wild field crickets in Spain over two full breeding cycles, from "first date" to parenthood. They observed that male crickets made no effort to isolate their mates to prevent them from breeding with competitors, as had been believed. They also showed a willingness to risk their lives to protect their mates from predators—for example, waiting for the female to escape into a burrow before running from hungry birds.

The researchers noted that males were killed by predators much more often than females were, and that females usually survived such attacks.

"Rather than being bullied by their mates," one scientist said, "it seems that females are in fact being protected. We could even describe males as 'chivalrous.'"





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