



Michael's Home News

News To Help You Save Time And Money

July 2013

The Businessman And The Sea

A businessman was standing at the pier of a small coastal Mexican village when a small boat with a fisherman docked. Inside the small boat were several large yellowfin tuna. The visiting tourist complimented the fisherman on the quality of his fish.

"How long did it take you to catch them?" the businessman asked. "Only a little while" the fisherman replied. "Why don't you stay out longer and catch more fish?" the businessman then asked. "I have enough to support my family's immediate needs" the fisherman said.

"But" the businessman then asked, "What do you do with the rest of your time?"

The fisherman said: "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, take a siesta with my wife, stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play guitar with my amigos."



The businessman scoffed: "I've started many companies and could help you. You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds buy a bigger boat and, with the proceeds from the bigger boat, buy several boats. Eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats. You could leave this village and move to the city, where you would run your business."

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The man asked, "But, how long will this take?" The businessman replied, "15-20 years."

"But what then, señor?"

The businessman laughed and said: "That's the best part. Eventually, you would sell your company and become very rich. You would make millions."

"Millions, señor? Then what?"

The businessman said slowly: "Then you would retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take a siesta with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos..."

Michael Cowling

Jazzy July

Canada Day, July 1 Celebrating the date in 1867 the nation was officially born when the Constitution Act joined three provinces into one country: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Canada province, which then split into Ontario and Quebec.

Independence Day, July 4. The date on which the British colonies of North America declared their independence from Great Britain.

World Zoonosis Day, July 6. Zoonosis refers to any disease that can be transmitted from animals to humans, including mad cow and rabies. A reminder to have your pets vaccinated.

Bastille Day, July 14. In 1790, the French prison was stormed, a symbolic event in the French Revolution.

Nelson Mandela Day, July 18. The birthday of South African leader Nelson Mandela (1918).

Louis Pasteur, in July 1873 received a patent for the manufacture of beer and treatment of yeast.

July Quiz Question

Q: In this US city, clocks are not allowed in certain buildings, though over 37 million people visit them every year. What city is it?

Everyone who texts, 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.

June Quiz Question

Q: How is the moon similar to a dollar?

A: They both have four quarters.

Congratulations:

Joy Chen

for winning a \$25 Gift Certificate to Starbucks.

Freedom and justice cannot be parceled out in pieces to suit political convenience. I don't believe you can stand for freedom for one group of people and deny it to others. ~ Coretta Scott King

With Lots Of X's And O's

If you've ever seen a note signed XOXO, you probably know it means kisses and hugs. But where did this practice come from?

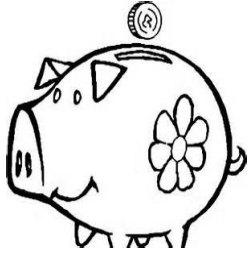


The custom of placing X's on envelopes and letters to stand for kisses dates back to the Middle Ages, when a Christian cross was drawn on documents or letters to mean sincerity, faith, and honesty. A kiss was then placed upon the cross, by the signer as a display of their sworn oath. Since most of the common people could not read or write, the 'X' was placed on documents, and a kiss placed upon it as a show of their sincerity.

The 'O' is of North American descent; no one really seems to know how it was started. Perhaps it is because the 'O' being rounded represents arms encircling another, as in an embrace.

Why Piggy Banks?

Dogs bury bones. Squirrels gather nuts. Camels store food and water so they can travel many days across deserts. But do pigs save anything? No! Pigs save nothing. They bury nothing. They store nothing.



So why do we save our coins in a piggy bank? Because someone made a mistake. During The Middle Ages, in about the fifteenth century, metal was expensive and seldom used for household wares. Instead, dishes and pots were made of "pygg," a cheap type of clay used for making

household objects. People often saved money in kitchen jars made of pygg, called "pygg jars." Whenever housewives could save an extra coin, they dropped it into one of their clay jars. They called this their pygg bank.

Over the next two hundred to three hundred years, people forgot that "pygg" referred to the earthenware material. Gradually the word was perverted to "piggy." In the nineteenth century when English potters received requests for piggy banks, they produced banks shaped like a pig. Of course, the pigs appealed to the customers and delighted the children.

*When I was young I thought that money was the most important thing in life;
now that I am old I know that it is. ~ Oscar Wilde*

The Problem With Minimum Payments

Want to be your credit card company's favorite customer? Just max out your card, agree to pay interest at a rate of 18% to 25%, and make only the minimum payment each month. The minimum monthly payment is set by each card issuer, but it's typically about 2% of the outstanding balance. Card companies want you to pay only the minimum, so that most of your payment is interest, not principal.

While you might be tempted to make only the minimum payment, that could be the most expensive decision you ever make. Let's see how it can affect the total cost, assuming the card has a balance of \$5,000 and no further purchases are made:

- \$5,000 at 18% interest paid off at \$250/mo will take two years and cost \$5,986.
- \$5,000 at 18% interest paid off at an average minimum of \$25/mo will take 30 years and cost \$17,328.

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Office Yoga

It's three o'clock in the afternoon, and you find yourself nodding off at your desk. You make your way to the break room for a cup of coffee and "something sweet." But wait!

Practice these techniques, and replace caffeine and acetaminophen with good old oxygen.

- For low energy and fatigue: Sit near the edge of your chair, holding onto the sides of your seat. Gently stretch your chest forward and up. Tilt your head back, and breathe deeply in and out through your nose. Relax into the stretch.
- While standing, raise both arms above your head and grab your left wrist with your right hand. Gently stretch to the right while breathing through your nose. Switch sides and repeat.
- For headaches and eye strain: Place your index fingers directly above the middle of your eyebrows. Press with your fingers and hold. Close your eyes and breathe deeply through your nose.
- If you're working at the computer, refocus your eyes every ten minutes by looking out the window. Once an hour, close your eyes and allow your face to soften. Slowly roll your eyes in a circle. Take a few breaths and return to action.

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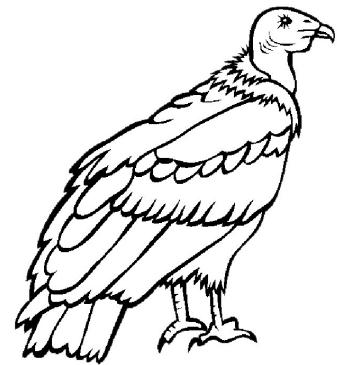
**We welcome your input to
our growing Service
Community.**

All In Good Taste

A hiker was brought before a judge and charged with killing a condor on the Endangered Species list. When he pleaded guilty, the judge asked for an explanation.

"Your Honor, I was hiking in the mountains and I got lost," the hiker said. "I wandered around for days, and I ran out of food. I was starving, so when I spotted the condor swooping down on a rabbit I ran as fast as I could and caught it before it could fly away. I built a fire and cooked it. I would have died if I hadn't eaten that bird, Your Honor. I would never dream of destroying an endangered species if I had a choice."

He seemed sincere, so the judge gave him a fine and set him free. But before he left, the judge asked, "Just out of curiosity, how did the condor taste?"



"Not bad," the hiker replied. "Sort of a cross between a bald eagle and a spotted owl."

Better understand trends in our market

The media looks to the Greater Vancouver Real Estate Board each month to tell the story of what's happening in the real estate market.

While sales figure and pricing information tell much of the story, it doesn't give the wider context. Who's buying in our market? Where do they come from? How are sales being financed?

To better understand our market, each month, we send a buyer demographic survey to Real Estate Board members who have registered a sale in the preceding 30-day period.

This feedback helps our spokespeople provide better insight and analysis. You can regularly review the results of this survey from my webpage.

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

REBGV Member Market Poll (# of respondents)	Jan '13 199	Feb '13 206	Mar '13 275	Apr '13 285	May '13 215
1. HOW WOULD YOU BEST DESCRIBE YOUR MOST RECENT BUYER(S)?					
First time buyers	40.7%	34.0%	38.2%	42.8%	34.0%
Moving from one property to a similar property	23.6%	21.4%	19.6%	18.2%	23.7%
Moving from a condo to a townhouse	4.0%	2.9%	6.9%	3.5%	3.3%
Moving from a condo OR townhouse to a detached	9.0%	8.3%	8.7%	7.0%	9.3%
Moving from a townhouse OR detached house to a condo	3.5%	2.4%	3.3%	2.1%	2.8%
Moving from a detached house to a townhouse	2.0%	6.8%	4.0%	6.3%	4.7%
Moving from a detached house to a condo	3.5%	6.8%	6.5%	6.7%	5.1%
Moving into a retirement home	1.0%	1.5%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Local/Domestic investor	10.1%	13.1%	8.7%	9.5%	14.0%
Foreign investor	2.5%	2.9%	2.5%	3.9%	3.3%
2. HOW DID THE BUYER(S) FINANCE THE PURCHASE?					
All cash	20.1%	17.5%	17.5%	17.2%	22.3%
Conventional mortgage (25% or more down payment)	56.3%	58.7%	59.6%	63.9%	59.1%
High ratio mortgage (less than 25% down payment)	23.6%	23.8%	22.9%	18.9%	18.6%
3. DESCRIBE THE BUYER(S):					
Single male	10.1%	14.1%	14.5%	14.7%	13.0%
Single female	15.6%	15.0%	15.3%	16.8%	13.5%
Young couple with no children	20.6%	16.5%	17.5%	12.6%	19.1%
Family with children	34.7%	32.5%	32.0%	34.7%	31.6%
Empty nesters	6.0%	8.3%	8.4%	7.7%	9.3%
Retired	6.5%	9.2%	7.6%	5.6%	4.7%
Other	6.5%	4.4%	4.7%	7.7%	8.8%

Five Pantry Items To Keep On Hand

Here are a few items that store well that you might want to keep stocked for those occasions when you forget to buy something special for dinner.

- Dried Penne Pasta - This is a fantastic replacement for elbow macaroni in mac and cheese. It can also serve as a starch component in any casserole. If you've got cooked penne in the fridge, you can add it to leftover veggies, toss the mixture with a little Italian dressing, and serve it as pasta salad.
- Canned Beans - Beans are great for chili, stews, and soups, and they make a nice addition to salad. They also make a quick appetizer. A can of cannellini beans (drained) mixed with olive oil, garlic, chopped tomato, and any fresh or dried herbs you have on hand makes a great topping for grilled bread.



- Canned Tuna (packed in olive oil) - Tuna is the key ingredient of a Salad Nicoise or an authentic Italian tuna panini. Canned tuna can also be used in a great pasta sauce: Toss the tuna into warm pasta, with capers, cherry tomatoes, parsley, and olive oil.
- Canned Chicken Stock - Having stock on hand allows you to whip up a quick gravy for any meat dish. It's also a great base for many soups. Simply simmer one pound of vegetables, like carrots or cauliflower, in 4 to 6 cups of stock for 10 minutes. Process or blend until smooth, season with salt and pepper, and finish with a touch of cream.
- Canned "San Marzano" Tomatoes (chopped and whole) - Imported from San Marzano, Italy, these are two of the best canned products on the market. Unless you have tomatoes growing in your backyard, you can't do much better, especially when it comes to making a great marinara sauce. They also make a fantastic tomato soup.

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.

Just ask me! It's part of my free, no-obligation service.

Leave your request on my email or voicemail anytime, and I'll call or email all the information you need within 24 hours or sooner if requested.

Remember The Spelling Rule

I before E...except when you want to pull off a feisty heist on a weird beige foreign neighbor named Keith.

Make your Kid's Car Last

As kids head off to college soon, many will be driving an old family car they've been given. For them, and for future generations of kids who are waiting for their chance at your car, here are some tips for making your car last longer:

Battery: Keeping your car battery at full charge will extend its lifetime. Avoid using the radio, headlights, interior lights or other accessories when the engine is off. A new battery can cost your teen \$50 to \$100, and you don't want to leave them stranded with a dead battery.

Gas Tank: Keep your tank as full as possible at all times. Most gas tanks are made of metal. A partially empty tank could rust, causing rust particles to flake off and clog fuel lines and filters. This could take years to happen, but if you want to make your car last, do everything to save your kids from a costly fuel system repair down the road.

Tires: Underinflated tires not only hurt gas mileage but also cause your tires to wear out 25% to 50% faster than correctly inflated tires.

Oil: Oil captures contaminants that can contribute to your car's wear and tear, and the less often you change your oil the more these contaminants build up, causing deposits that reduce engine function over time. Make sure you change your oil at the recommended time.

Heed These Warnings

Check out some of these warning labels collected by the Michigan Law Suit Abuse Watch Web site:

- "Remove child before folding." (On a baby stroller)
- "Harmful if swallowed." (On a brass fishing lure with a three-pronged hook on the end)
- "This product moves when used." (On a popular scooter for kids)
- "Do not use this product as a toy, pillow, or flotation device." (On a bag of air used as packing material)
- "Do not use for personal hygiene." (On a flushable toilet brush)
- "Never iron clothes while they are being worn." (On an iron)
- "Never use hair dryer while sleeping." (On a hair dryer)





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