



Your **Healthy & Happy Home News**™

From the Desk of Roy & Pam Wood

July 2017

A Cheeky Way to Spoil That Perfect Summer Beach Read

If you love to read, a beach holiday is the perfect time and place for indulging in a good book.

Whether it's a plot-driven page-turner, a touching memoir, or a tale of romance and intrigue that entices you, according to Jenni Avins in *Quartz*, "Vacation not only primes us for the pleasure of reading, it can also make the experience more beneficial."

On a sunny day at the water's edge, book in hand, you can shut out the clamor and stress of everyday life and lose yourself in the words on the page. If relaxation is your goal, a book and a beach offer the ideal mix.

Matthew Kassel disagrees, in a tongue-in-cheek sort of way. In an article in the *Observer*, he contends that reading is an overly strenuous beach activity, what with the sun in your eyes and the breeze blowing the pages and all that. And then there are those distracting waves breaking the silence and relentlessly lapping at the shore. It's all too much for the serious reader, he suggests.

In fact, in reality, serious readers think of a beach as the ultimate escape and believe a good book can add to it immeasurably.

So forget Kassel. Plant your umbrella, choose a restful position on the sand or cushioned cot, and immerse yourself in a lovely read. Then, says Avins, "Layer on the calming monotony of crashing waves, and you've got literary magic." It's perfectly soothing to the mind, body, and spirit. Unless, of course, you don't like sand between the pages.

It's a Strange Old World: Bizarre News You Might Have Missed

Ranch owner Adrienne Ivey recently posted a video of a beaver herding 150 cattle across a farm in Saskatchewan. As it turns out, the cattle were "curious, just like teenagers" and couldn't stop following the beaver.

Philadelphia police will probably get their man this time. Surveillance video showed a thief doing stretches in a Dunkin' Donuts parking lot before robbing it.

A robot working security for a robotics

store may now know what it's like to be human. The droid, dubbed K5, was recently tackled in the store's parking lot.

One New Yorker recently came home from an extended work trip to find a pigeon happily nesting in her pasta strainer. It had snuck through a window opening and was enjoying premium living conditions as it lay on its yet-to-be-hatched egg.

The Good, the Bad, the Ugly: The 411 on Vacation Rental Sites

An increasing number of travelers are opting out of hotels and choosing short-term rentals through sites like Airbnb, FlipKey, and HomeAway.

While this can be a great way to save dollars, as is often the case, there are both pros and cons to these services.

At the top of the pros list is the price tag. It can be significantly cheaper to stay in a home rented through these services; plus, many rental spots will have kitchens, so you can save even more money by cooking at home instead of eating out.

Many also have wonderful hosts who go above and beyond to make your stay pleasant, and you have the opportunity to stay in a home with character rather than a faceless hotel room.

And if you can read between the lines, the reviews of hosts and accommodations from previous guests may be very useful.

On the flip side, property descriptions may turn out to be misleading (that chic little cottage on the beach is actually a shack). And just as you can find wonderful hosts, some are not so great.

Additionally, it'll likely take time to find the right short-term rental for you, and you'll probably have to wade through pages of listings to find a place you like that just happens to be available on the dates you need—often not an easy task.

So choose your accommodations carefully. And ensure you research your top choices carefully before you book. Then you can really relax and enjoy the experience!



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Thanks!

For All The Kind Words

Great service, great price, great job guys

*Blake E.
Lethbridge, AB*

Great job done quickly and efficiently.

*Linda L
Lethbridge, AB*

Worth Quoting

This month, some famous quotes on the topic of summer:

Summer means happy times and good sunshine. It means going to the beach, going to Disneyland, having fun.

Brian Wilson

Aaah, summer—that long-anticipated stretch of lazy, lingering days, free of responsibility and rife with possibility. It’s a time to hunt for insects, master handstands, practice swimming strokes, conquer trees, explore nooks and crannies, and make new friends.

Darrell Hammond



Take Me Out to the Ballgame: Summer’s Fave Game Is Back

How did a stick, a ball, and a diamond capture the hearts of millions? For those who line the bleachers in big and small towns across North America, baseball’s not just a game; it’s everyone’s summer lifestyle.

Baseball in North America traces its roots back to the late 18th century, when the first reference to the game was made in a Massachusetts law about playing it too close to the town meetinghouse. Since those early days, baseball has seen many changes that shaped it into the sport we love today.

It hailed from two similar British sports: rounders and cricket, which eventually found their way across the pond and were played in schoolyards and college campuses in the 1800s. In the fall of 1845, the New York Knickerbockers Baseball Club was born. Knicks player Alexander

Cartwright established the rules that form the basis for today’s game, including the use of a diamond-shaped field and the three-strike rule. Cartwright has been established as baseball’s true father, overturning a widely held, but deemed untrue, legend that a man named Abner Doubleday founded it.

Once the game was standardized by the Knickerbockers, other clubs were established. Baseball’s popularity continued to grow, and eventually leagues formed. The baseball itself also underwent standardization, eventually morphing into the five-ounce, nine-inch sphere with 108 red stitches that we see in pitchers’ hands today.

The sport continues to enthrall us. And best of all, nearly everyone is able to sing along when they hear, “Take me out to the ball game...”

This Month’s Sudoku

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

Three Ways to Make Family Camping Fun—Not Stressful

Camping should be a great way to see new places, meet new friends, and bond as a family. But some may find time bonding with the kids stressful ... and maybe a bit overwhelming. Take those concerns out of the equation with the suggestions below. And enjoy this inexpensive way to celebrate nature and each other—without technology taking over.

These three tips can make family bonding a pleasure:

Do Research

Find the perfect spot for your family online. If you're camping newbies, the best campground should be one with amenities that's also close to a town. As

Scott Adler, editorial director of BabyCenter.com says in an article in *Real Simple*, "That way ... if there's a pizza place, someone can pick up a pie and make dinner a lot easier on Mom and Dad. You'll also be less stressed when (almost inevitably) you realize you've forgotten something."

Consider the types of activities you plan to do. A biking family, for example, may choose a campground near paved roads.

Generate excitement

Engage the kids by getting them involved in planning the trip. Get feedback about what they want to do and foods they want to eat, and let them pack their own bags. At the campsite, encourage older children to pick the spot to pitch the tent, and then put it up together.

Go high-Tech

It can be a culture shock to go from staring at your screen to staring at the night sky. Instead of forcing your kids to do without their devices, let them bring some technology, but also include favorite books and games. As Jen Aist suggests in *Real Simple*, use their facility with technology to help the kids engage with the outdoors, for example, by locating stars with a GPS.

Best of all, let them play. As Aist notes, "Something magical happens when you are outside that doesn't happen in other places."

"Dandelion" Is Out; "YInMn" Blue Is In

Yup, the "Dandelion" crayon, "that soft-yellow hue with light hints of orange ... perfect for coloring in bright shining suns," according to strategist.com, has been discontinued by Crayola. Reaction to the company's announcement was not positive; columnists and Facebook users at large lamented the loss of Dandelion.

The popular color was introduced in 1990, and Crayola announced its demise at the end of March, along with a teaser that its replacement in the iconic 24-crayon box will be a shade of blue.

As a section of *New York* magazine devoted to shopping with profit in mind, Strategist advises hoarding Dandelion crayons while supplies last, comparing its future potential value with that of the long-gone Monopoly thimble piece. Sadly, by the time you read this, it may be too late. The crayon manufacturer recently revealed its replacement—a new blue pigment discovered in 2009 by chemists at Oregon State University. Initially named "YInMn" blue for its chemical makeup, the company has announced a contest to give it a more user-friendly name, with a winner to be named this summer. The newest crayon is expected to be on shelves in time for the Christmas shopping season.

Sadly, Wearables Can't Lose Weight for You

A recent clinical trial, focused on the impact of wearable tech on weight loss, returned some results that may not go over well with fans of the devices.

The IDEA study took place at the University of Pittsburgh between 2010 and 2012, and involved 470 participants between the ages of 18 and 35. All followed a low-calorie eating plan, were encouraged to boost their physical activity, and received counseling and encouragement. Six months in, half of the group were given

wearable tech devices that measured their activity.

The results? The wearables' users lost less weight than those who didn't use the technology.

So while wearable tech might be a fun way to track your health, it turns out it can't do the heavy lifting for you—at least not yet.

Summer Berry Pavlova

Serves 8

Whites of 4 large eggs
½ teaspoon white vinegar
¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup heavy cream
2 cups mixed berries

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine egg whites, salt, and vinegar, and beat on high speed until stiff peaks form. Combine ¾ cup of sugar and the cornstarch, and gradually beat into egg whites. Add vanilla, and beat again until firm and glossy.

Spoon the meringue in 8 big dollops onto a lined baking sheet. Spread each into a circle, creating a little indent in the middle.

Bake for 10 minutes, lower heat to 200 degrees, and bake for another hour with the oven door slightly open.

Remove from oven and cool. Whip cream and remaining sugar together, and then fold in the berries. Spoon whipped cream into each meringue, and top with more berries or mint leaves.

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Worth Reading

I Gave Up TV, Then Qualified for Olympic Marathon Trials and Got My PhD

By Teal Burrell
The Washington Post

Science suggests that TV may be making us miserable. And though many people want to give it up, few do. Burrell did, and she realized important personal goals. Now she's back watching, but in "small doses," and with purpose.

<https://tinyurl.com/Hacks-that-work1>

30 Cleaning Hacks That Will Clean Your Car Better (and Faster) Than You Ever Have

By Staff
actively.com

Just returned from the family summer road trip? Chances are your car looks like it—it's grungy. But don't head to the nearest detailer; if you can clean your home (and yourself), you can clean your car, using the same products. Two examples: foam paintbrushes are great for cleaning hard-to-reach places, such as vents, and toothpaste cuts headlight grime.

<https://tinyurl.com/Hacks-that-work2>

You Can Train Yourself to Be Frugal—and It's Pretty Painless

By Kristin Wong
lifehacker.com

Redesign your lifestyle to meet your financial goals. Here are some hacks to reduce spending on hot-button areas. Wong, for example, spends too much money meeting friends in restaurants. Instead, consider hosting your friends for potlucks at home or start a walking group rather than getting together for coffee. "You have to do what works for you, based on your own lifestyle and savings goals."

<https://tinyurl.com/Hacks-that-work3>

Cities or Suburbia—Who's Winning the Population Race?

Common wisdom holds that there's an urban revival in America's cities, but the census shows otherwise: Americans are moving to the suburbs in record numbers.

As economist Jed Kolko points out in *FiveThirtyEight.com*, "That revival is real, but it has mostly been for rich, educated people in particular hyperurban neighborhoods rather than a broad-based return to city living."

Is it the fresh air? The rolling green lawns? The bigger-square-foot bang for your buck? Nobody seems to know exactly why the swing to the suburbs is on the rise, especially when better-paying jobs are in the city. But the trend is gathering steam.

Perhaps the wish to improve life balance is influencing the trend. Then, too, it's possible that retiring boomers seek calm

after their years of working in the eye of the storm.

But that doesn't account for all of it.

Ask young parents, and they'll tell you that while moving to the suburbs means giving up the kinetic energy of city life, raising kids in the city creates all kinds of stresses they'd happily avoid. Add to that the appeal of better schools, more space, and better air, and, even without great restaurants, the scales begin to tip.

Indeed, it looks like a number of millennials may soon be joining their elders—after they pay off their student loans.

As an article in *Fortune* notes, "Survey data shows that more millennials would like to be living in the suburbs than actually are." Could we soon be talking about the myth of urban revival?

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This month's *eTrivia* question is...

What color shirt does James Taylor wear on his Sweet Baby James album cover?

a) Red b) Yellow c) Blue

General Knowledge Quiz. Answers below.

In the *Peanuts* comic, what color is Woodstock?

The cause of what "fever" was discovered in 1900?

What color are the arches in McDonald's logo?

What color were the covers of Victor Gollancz's crime novels when they were first published?

(Answers: yellow, yellow, golden, yellow)