

October, 2017

You've Got the Time

Time is the raw material for getting anything done in life.

Time is more valuable than money. Time is the only element in the world that is irretrievable when it's lost. Lose money and you can make more. Lose a job and you can find another. But lose time and it's gone forever.

There are 168 hours every week. Of that, estimates are that you have an average of 40 hours or 2,400 minutes to yourself each week to choose what you want to do. Those are minutes where someone else is not demanding your time, and you're not sleeping.

That is a lot of time. Where and how are you spending all those minutes? Are you productive? Are you getting a lot done? Are you managing that time well? Yikes! It's enough pressure to make you want to burn your day planner. If you had one, that is. If the push to be more productive has you feeling stressed, here are three ideas that might help.

1. This is a simple idea for not only getting more done, but also having more free time to relax and enjoy life. Try compressing your routine tasks into half the time you normally take. Doing the dishes in 20 minutes? Take 10. Writing a weekly report in 45 minutes? Give yourself 22 minutes.
2. Here's another simple idea. Break larger tasks into smaller ones, then challenge yourself to get those smaller tasks done in half the time. Set a timer to help keep you focused on getting the job done before the timer goes off. After the timer sounds, take a break and reward yourself before going on to the next task.
3. And here's one final idea. Take ownership of the quality of each minute. As you are doing any particular task, ask yourself if this is a good use of your time. If not, can you assign the task to someone else, or speed up the task, or eliminate the task altogether?

Kind Regards

Lisa

Lisa Flashenburg, Your Real Estate Consultant For Life

P.S. I've got time for you and the people you care about. If you want to touch base, just reach out to me at lisaf@LegalEdgeRE.com or 781-975-0803.

Happy Pumpkin Carving!



Lisa's Local Ledger

News To Help You Save Time And Money

October 2017

An Entrepreneurial Halloween Story

After being a public servant for 30 years with the Department of Water and Power, Tony Dighera retired and bought a small organic farm, which he named Cinagro farms. Cinagro is organic spelled backwards, perhaps a hint that this is an innovative organic farm.

Soon after starting his farm, Dighera read a story about square watermelons coming out of Japan. Intrigued, he devoted a small plot of land to experimenting with shaping produce. He succeeded in growing perfectly square, and then heart-shaped, watermelons. Then he did something truly amazing.



Dighera was turning his attention from watermelons to pumpkins, and gradually an idea took shape. Since he understood the basics of shaping produce, he wanted to take the concept much further. Four years and \$400,000 later, he finally perfected a way to grow molded (not moldy) pumpkins. The result? These crazy Frankenstein-shaped pumpkins, which he calls pumpkinsteins.

“People never believe it’s real the first time they see it; they all want to touch it to make sure,” Dighera told the LA Times in 2014. “The point was to make something that would get attention.”

Fall is a great time to start getting ready to down size for the coming year. Call me for tips and ideas.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- An Entrepreneurial Halloween Story
- October Quiz Question
- Why Do Dogs Tilt Their Heads?
- Those Password Tips Since 2003? Never Mind
- Save a Life with the “Dutch Reach”
- Easy Breakfast that Makes Everyone Happy
- Usain Bolt Stops Running
- Too Much Sleep Causes Nightmares
- Wanted: Planetary Protection Officer
- Minecraft Goes Corporate

During his first full year, he harvested roughly 5,500 pumpkinsteins and sold them at a wholesale price of \$75 each. Retailers charged \$100. Reaction was quick; they were selling, competitors were jealous, and Dighera even had trespassers come in the dark of the night.

In subsequent years, Dighera devoted much of his land to the monstrously profitable pumkinsteins, harvesting 30K – 40K of them at a time. “It’s easier than watermelons,” he says, “because no one cares how they taste.” *Lisa*

October Quiz Question

Q: *What is the sub-title to the book Frankenstein?*

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

Wagamama

September Question

Q: *September comes from the Latin root for what number?*

A: *From Latin septem, "seven".*

Tripping Over Old Bones

In July this past summer, a 10-year-old boy discovered a million-year-old fossil of a prehistoric creature when he literally fell on it while hiking with his parents in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Jude Sparks says he was running when he tripped on part of a tusk belonging to the Stegomastodon, which is from the Pleistocene era and believed to be an ancestor to the modern-day elephant.

The creature is not a dinosaur. The T-Rex, Triceratops and Velociraptors lived in the Mesozoic era, which ended 66 million years before.

Jude's parents contacted Peter Houde, a professor at New Mexico State University. However, it took several months to commence excavations, as the fossil was found on private land and permission was required from the landowner.

The exact site of the discovery has remained confidential.

The bones were "deceptively delicate", so chemical hardeners were applied to keep them intact during the excavation process.

Once the fossil was removed, it was coated in plaster and transported to its current home, the New Mexico State University's Vertebrate Museum, where Jude will be able to visit whenever he likes.

Why Do Dogs Tilt Their Heads?

Apparently, no one knows exactly why dogs tilt their heads in response to new sounds or sights. That may be why tilting occurs more in puppies than older, wiser dogs who've heard it all before.

According to one survey from *Psychology Today*, it could have to do with vision. When dogs hear something novel, they try to see it from a different angle. According to the survey, shorter muzzled dogs tilt less than longer muzzled dogs.

More often, tilting is attributed to hearing. A dog tilts its head to reposition the ears to hear better.

Whatever the reason, it's so cute that some dogs probably do it just for the attention!



Password Tips That Work Today

In 2003 Bill Burr, a manager at the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), wrote an 8-page password guide that advised people to invent awkward words full of characters, capitals and numbers—and to change them often.

That became the go-to guide for agencies, universities and large companies around the world looking for password-setting rules to follow.

The problem is, according to Mr. Burr, now 72, the advice of the past decade and a half is incorrect.

In June this year, NIST Special Publication 800-63 was re-written with new password guidelines. Drop the password-expiration advice and the requirement for special characters. Use long, easy-to-remember phrases over crazy characters, and change passwords only if there is a sign of compromise.

Academics who have studied passwords say using a series of four words can be harder for hackers to crack than a shorter mix of strange characters—since having a large number of letters makes things harder than a smaller number of letters, characters, and numbers.

In a popular piece, cartoonist Randall Munroe calculated it would take 550 years to crack the password “correct horse battery staple,” all written as one word. The password Tr0ub4dor&3— a typical example of password using Mr. Burr’s old rules—could be cracked in three days, according to Munroe’s calculations, which have been verified by computer specialists.

~ Adapted from *The Wall Street Journal*

Save a Life with the “Dutch Reach”

If you park on a road with bicycle commuters, you might live in fear of hitting one with a car door. But there is an easy way to make sure this tragedy never befalls either you or one of your neighborhood bike enthusiasts.

It’s called the “**Dutch Reach.**”

All you have to do to execute it is open your car door with your hand that is farthest from the door. This motion forces you to twist your body towards the street, letting you see if there are any oncoming cyclists. It’s a trick that takes no extra time at all, and could literally save a life.

WELCOME NEW CLIENTS

Here are some of the new clients who became members of our “Real Estate Family” this past month. I’d like to welcome you!

Farid Khalifa

Jone Mone [a returning client]

We love recognizing our wonderful new friends and existing clients who are kind enough to introduce their friends, family and neighbors to us.



Easy Breakfast that Makes Everyone Happy

Want to make your family Oh-So-Happy in the morning? Make them pancakes! Don't worry, you don't have to stand there flipping flapjacks while watching the clock. Instead you can make pancakes into muffins.

They're a perfect breakfast food...they taste like pancakes, but are done all at the same time, they're portable, and no waiting, flipping, or pouring!

- There's just one secret: You take your favorite usual pancake mix and add an extra egg or two, depending on how fluffy you want them. That's it!
- Spray a muffin pan with nonstick spray, or use liners. Fill 2/3 to the top. Just before putting them in the oven, add extras: chocolate chips, dried fruit, chopped nuts, cinnamon and sugar, or fresh fruit mixed into the batter (you'll want to test this).
- Pop them in the oven at 350 and they're ready in 15 minutes. Test them with a toothpick. Serve as-is, or with butter and syrup.

*"You gotta have style. It helps you get down the stairs. It helps you get up in the morning. It's a way of life. Without it, you're nobody. I'm not talking about lots of clothes."
~ Diana Vreeland, former editor-in-chief at Vogue Magazine*

Usain Bolt Stops Running

Usain Bolt, the fastest man in the world, has run his last official race. Retiring in August of this year, Bolt was distinct, not only for his speed, but also for the quality of his character.

Of the 30 fastest men's 100m sprint times ever, only nine have been run by an athlete not banned for drugs. All nine of those times were run by Jamaica's Usain Bolt. He holds the record for the three fastest 100m sprints in history.

The 30-year-old Bolt will pull in \$34.2 million this year, according to Forbes, making him the 23rd-highest-paid athlete in the world. His latest ranking puts him ahead of any baseball player, and just behind golfer Jordan Spieth and basketball player Derrick Rose.

There is no other track star in the top 100, and there is not likely to be another. Track stars seldom break into big money, and much of Bolt's stardom seems to come as much from his strong personality as his amazing success.



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Too Much Sleep Causes Nightmares

Apparently, sleeping for more than 9 hours a night can increase your chances of having nightmares, according to a study conducted by the University of Oxford.

During the study, 846 participants answered questions about the frequency and severity of their nightmares (which yielded a score on the 'nightmare severity scale'). They also disclosed how much sleep they got.

The results will terrify you.

There was an increase in the occurrence of nightmares for people who slept more than 9 hours.

Stephanie Rek of Oxford University has a simple explanation. She says that sleeping for longer periods increases the amount of rapid eye movement sleep, which is when nightmares are most likely to occur.

Lisa's Legends

Who do you know that has a project that is making an impact on the world, or has received a promotion or an award and deserves some recognition?

Congratulations to:

Deborah Pasculano for another successful year fundraising for the Making Strides Cancer Walk

Judi Burten for completing a bike riding fundraiser for Three Squares New England

Bill Greene for receiving his 50 year membership pin from the Masonic Grand Lodge of MA

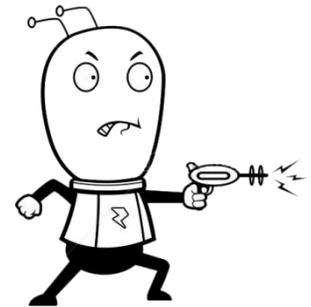
Wanted: Planetary Protection Officer

If you've ever dreamed of protecting Earth from aliens, you may have just missed your chance. A few short weeks ago, NASA was taking applications for the role of Planetary Protection Officer.

According to the job advertisement, the successful candidate would help stop Earth from being contaminated by extraterrestrial materials (such as from samples collected on missions), as well as prevent contamination from Earth on planets and moons explored by us Earthlings.

As part of the duties the advertisement said that "frequent travel may be required", but there were no details as to where.

It sounded great, but there were some minimum requirements, including "broad engineering expertise", and an "advanced knowledge of planetary protection." The role's duration was listed for an initial 3 years, with the possibility of a 2-year extension, and paid \$124,406 to \$187,000 per year.



There are only two of these full-time positions in the world, with the current officer, Dr. Catharine Conley appointed in 2006. Dr. Conley said she wanted to keep Mars from being contaminated by anything from Earth.

Applications closed on 14 August, so we'll have to wait a bit to see who gets the job.

Minecraft Goes Corporate

Minecraft, in case you haven't heard, is a video game that was originally developed by Markus Persson of Sweden. It offers players the chance to build a 3-D world out of "blocks." Since its release in 2009, Minecraft has sold more than 121 million copies, making it the best-selling game of all time after another blocky favorite, Tetris.

Kids love this game, which allows them to construct digital castles, power plants, amusement parks, and homes, as well as to chop down trees for wood, feed animals, fight dragons, and most important, band together with other players to create huge open-ended worlds, like an infinite Lego set of electronic blocks.

It's no wonder that progressive teachers grabbed hold of the game and started using it in the classroom to teach all sorts of concepts, such as building a 3D model of an archeological dig, retelling stories, and testing bridge designs. The best part is that teachers can set up servers, which are single versions of the game that players can join from home and add to using "mods."



That ability to band together made it possible for kids to work from home to collaborate on school projects, while having fun together. But that may be coming to an end.

Microsoft purchased Minecraft in 2014, and in 2017 created an offshoot called Minecraft: Education Edition. While Microsoft is doing great things with the platform to help teachers integrate it into the classroom, including adding testing modules, progressive teachers have two big problems: one is

the fee structure, and the other is a loss of collaboration.

Microsoft will be charging a license fee of \$5 per pupil, and students won't own their accounts outside of the school's computers. The fee creates pressure on teachers and schools that can't afford it, but worse, it removes one of the greatest features of the game: the ability of kids to collaborate at home, turning it into just another teaching tool.

However, many other teachers feel that Microsoft's classroom enhancements are worth the loss of freedom and flexibility, because they provide so many positive enhancements. These teachers also feel that Microsoft has taken great pains to keep the game fun while making it more accessible to less technologically savvy teachers. Things change, so maybe this change will be worthwhile once it goes mainstream.

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LISA'S LOCAL LEDGER

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What's the Right Amount to Tip These Days?

Waiters and other service staff members depend on tips, so how are they doing? A Harris Poll survey of 2,000 adults conducted for Michelin found that the average of those surveyed claimed to tip 18 percent for good service. Getting more specific, 70 percent said they usually left a tip of 15-20 percent when service was good, and about 1 in 10 tipped 20 percent or more. Only about 1 percent confessed to leaving nothing.



Age is a factor in how much people tip, too. Thirty percent of survey participants aged 18-24 admitted they frequently tipped less than 15 percent even when the service was good, but only 16 percent of adults 35 and older said the same.

Confusion also plays a role. Many people said they thought the tip was already included in their bill, while others thought there was a required threshold before they had to tip a higher percentage.

Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. —Steve Jobs

One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half. —Winston Churchill

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