

JimsJournal.net - Your Home News

News To Help You Save Time And Money

May 2018

Hello May

Dear [FirstName],

May is the gateway to summer. It's on the cusp of vacation season and that means there are a flurry of plans to be made ahead of your coming adventures. As your May heats up and life get busier, I hope you'll take a breather to enjoy this month's newsletter.

We start off with a story reminding us how powerful a simple smile can be. That leads to a wide variety of fun information, including: learn how to make perfect caramelized onions, a delicious garnish for homemade pizza, or your first barbecued burgers of the season; a method for tracking the balances on your gift cards; and see, scientifically, why some colors just make sense together!

The pre-summer buying and selling season is also upon us. If buying or selling a home is part of your plans this year, please know that I'm here to help you.

Thanks, and give me a call with any questions. If I can't help you, I'll refer you to someone who can.

Kind regards, Jim Urban

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A Mask Of Happiness

There once lived a man who was disliked by everyone in his village. He was surly and bad tempered. Passersby avoided him on the street. He had no friends and lived alone. One day the man visited the village elder to complain about how people treated him.

"I have a solution for all your problems," the elder said, and he went to a shelf and pulled out a common germ mask to cover the mouth. On the mask was printed a smiling face. "This mask may look silly, but it will have a magic effect on

people who see it and it will transform your life." The man sneered, but the elder continued. "All you need to do is wear the mask for one week. Nothing else."

The man grudgingly agreed. He put on the mask and began the walk back to his home. Along the way, people smiled at him. Some greeted him with a friendly nod. Occasionally someone inquired about his day. At first, he just grunted at them. Then he started to say hello back. At his house, he had a pleasant exchange with his neighbor.

As days passed, the man was astonished by the effect the mask had on others. Because of the mask, the man began to initiate greetings. The neighbor invited him to dinner. For the first time ever, he was making friends.

He returned to the elder to give back the mask. "I have been invited to my neighbor's house for dinner and I'm worried. I will not have my mask and he will see my real face."

"Tell me, what happens to your real face under the mask when people say hello, and wave, and stop to speak with you?"

The man thought and said, "I smile."

"How do you feel when you smile?"

"I feel great!"

"Remember this when you have dinner with your new friend, and all will be well."

May Quiz Question

Q: *What is special about this series of numbers: 8591730?*

April Question

Q: *Which character is the first to speak in the original "Star Wars" movie?*

A: C3P0

Be Wary Of Travel Scams

If you're planning your summer vacation, here's some advice about how to avoid travel scams that will waste your money and ruin your holiday:

- 1. Beware of offers that are too good to be true.** Be leery of "free" trips or ridiculously cheap prices. If offered a "two-for-one" deal, a "free stay," or such, make sure to find out what the deal really involves.
- 2. Ask, and ask again.** Get as many details as you can about each travel offer. Be sure you fully understand all the terms before agreeing to buy. Ask for specific names of airlines, hotels, restaurants, tour providers, or any other vendor mentioned as part of the package. Ask whether there's a cancellation policy.
- 3. Get all promises in writing.** Consider trip insurance for additional protection, too.
- 4. If you're asked to pay in advance, ask to pay a deposit instead.** Using a credit card is safest because of your right to dispute the charges if the services were misrepresented or never delivered.

DNA—A New Fad?



The number of people who have had their DNA analyzed with direct-to-consumer genetic

genealogy tests more than doubled during 2017 and now exceeds 12 million, according to industry estimates.

Genealogy services use DNA to tell people what continents their ancestors are from and to locate family members, including distant cousins.

Recently, the genealogy company Ancestry.com, which is based in Utah, announced that it has tested more than seven million people. The company's customer rolls exceed those of all competitors combined. The second-largest player, 23andMe, has tested more than three million, followed by FamilyTreeDNA and MyHeritage.

Most of those tested are in the US, suggesting that around 1 in 25 American adults now have access to personal genetic data—a figure that could spur a range of new genetic analysis services, as DNA becomes a commodity.

For example, the sheer number of people who possess their own genetic data could spur growth in websites that offer to reanalyze it. Companies like Habit and Promethease will use the files to provide a breakdown of people's diet or health risks—frequently with little oversight from regulators. There's even a Harvard University lab scheme to link consumers' genomes to a new cryptocurrency.

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Perfect Caramelized Onions

Ah, ever-elusive perfect caramelized onions. Just last year, editors at Food52.com set out to investigate the mythic beast. As they said, it's not that caramelized onions are hard to come by, it's just that making the perfect ones at home can prove challenging.

But to see how long caramelizing really takes—and what they look like along the way—the editors caramelized three onions (in 1 tablespoon of butter and stainless steel pans) for 15, 30, and 60 minutes over medium-high heat. Whenever the fond (those caramelized sugars that stick to the bottom) started to build up, they deglazed with a tablespoon of water, scraped up all of the flavorful bits, and started the whole process again.

As they cooked, the onion volume reduced dramatically (after 60 minutes, three onions had turned into about 1/2 cup of deeply caramelized onion goo) ; the color changed from yellowish orange to a deep auburn; and what was once-astringent and watery turned candy-sweet and butter-soft. With this method, there was no defying time (and no outsmarting patience). But then again, some cooks might consider the 30-minute pan to be caramelized to perfection.

Energy From Temperature

A team at MIT has created a device that produces energy by exploiting temperature swings between day and night.

Known as a thermal resonator, it uses a hybrid of materials that produce both high heat conduction and capacity. Effectively, one side of the device is always capturing heat while the other is storing it—you just have to harvest that energy with conventional techniques.

The initial device is tiny, and only produces 1.3 milliwatts of power. That's enough for basic sensors. The device can also be changed to produce energy from other temperature cycles, like those in a refrigerator or a factory.

There are more than a few potential uses, especially if researchers can increase the power output. MIT has envisioned planetary rovers that can keep running for years. Thermal resonators could serve as backups for existing renewable energy: if a solar panel goes down, the grid could still have enough power to broadcast a request for help. It wouldn't be an infinite source of power by any means, but it would be trustworthy enough that you could leave a device alone knowing that it always has at least some kind of electricity on tap.

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"One of the most important universal truths is that to speed up effectively you must learn to slow down." ~Michael Gelb

Keep Track Of Gift Cards

Gift cards have become the choice of many gift givers. They're nice to get, but they can be hard to track. How much money have you spent? How long do you have to use it? Try keeping a gift card log, advises Sound Money Matters website. It can be as simple as a sheet of paper with four columns, listing the store, the amount originally on the card, the amount remaining after one purchase, and the expiration date (if any). For example:

Store	Full amount	After purchase	Expiration
Joe's Coffee Shoppe	\$10	\$5.25	12/10
Jane's Books	\$25	\$17.58	Never

Each time you use a card, cross it out and start a new entry in your log until it's finished. Now you've got an easy way to keep track of which cards are still good and how much you can still buy with them.

“Can’t Get No Respect”

According to Erika Andersen, contributor to Forbes.com, if you want people to respect you, **don’t do these things**:

- **Make it all about you:** Some people seem to think that if they try to make the conversation revolve around them, others will see them as important and worthy of respect. This is not true and it actually has the opposite effect.
- **Make it *not* about you at all:** On the other hand, being overly self-effacing doesn’t help, either. Avoid saying things like, “This probably won’t work, but...” or “We might not want to try this, but...” Instead, say “How about if we try...”, or “I wonder if it would be good to...” These sentence starters signal positive willingness, rather than uninspiring pessimism.
- **Dismiss other people’s ideas:** By focusing only on the limits of someone else’s ideas—or how you can improve on their ideas, you’ll drive them away. They’ll avoid asking your opinion or respecting your decisions. No one wants to be constantly critiqued... even if the flaws are glaring or the improvements obvious.
- **Point out your invisible mistakes:** Calling attention to your own flaws because you’re nervous that they stand out only makes them stand out. You can certainly grimace internally, but keep a calm straight face on the outside.
- **Expect respect without striving for it.** Avoid hiding out because of your own insecurities. As hard as it may be, if you back yourself into a corner, no one will invite you out again. You have to participate (while finding the balance between being too much and too little “you” centric) and contribute to gain respect.



“To avoid criticism, say nothing, do nothing, be nothing.” – Aristotle



Confirmed: Mess Causes Stress

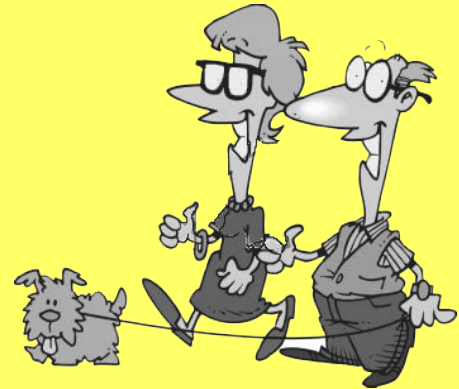
A study carried out at the University of California measured stress hormone levels in 30 couples. Women who described their home environment as chaotic or messy had higher levels of cortisol, when measured at various points throughout the day.

Interestingly, men seemed less affected by a messy, cluttered home.

70 Is the New 30

As people age into their sixties and seventies, there is an impression that they should have "made it by now." Yet there is ample evidence that people may not achieve their life goals until well into their upper years. For instance, "Colonel" Harlan Sanders was 65 when he began trying to license his chicken recipe, launching Kentucky Fried Chicken.

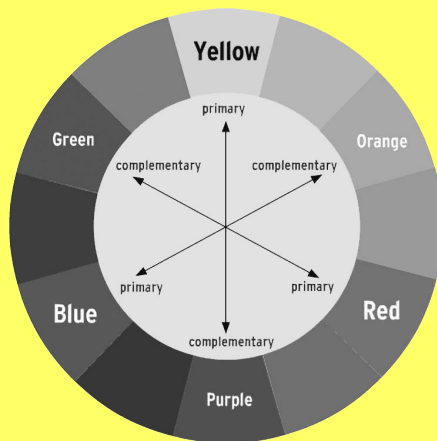
These days, seniors often think less in terms of retirement and more in terms of "what else can I do?" They're starting businesses, writing first novels, and building empires—acting much more like tricenarians than septuagenarians.



"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself."
—George Bernard Shaw

Some Colors Make Sense Together

Both science and conventional color wisdom say that colors on opposite sides of a color wheel—complementary colors—look good together in your home decor.



The most common sets of complementary colors are red and green, yellow and purple, and orange and blue, derived from the Red-Yellow-Blue color model. If you use a different color model, you'll have different sets of complementary colors. For instance, in the additive color model, the complements are green and magenta, red and cyan, and blue and yellow (IKEA, anyone?).

Complementary colors work because different types of cones (photoreceptor cells in your eye) perceive different colors of light. If you stare at a block of color and then quickly look at a white wall, you'll see a light afterimage in the complementary color. For instance, if you stare at a blue square, after a while the cells in your eye that

process blue light will become fatigued, making the signal they send to your brain weaker. Since that part of the visual spectrum is suppressed, when you look at a white wall after staring at the blue square, you'll see a faint orange afterimage—the complimentary color.

So what does this mean for your decor? It means that combinations of primary and complementary colors are dynamic together. Choose a color model to start with, then pick one of the complementary pairs to decorate with.

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