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Sunshine & Simple Joys

Dear Friend,

As July arrives, summer hits its full stride. The long days, warm evenings, and slower pace invite us to savor the season and enjoy the simple pleasures that make this time of year so special. It is a wonderful opportunity to relax, recharge, and make lasting memories with the people who matter most.

Each article is designed to offer something useful, whether it is a helpful home improvement tip, a seasonal safety reminder, or simply a fun story to brighten your day. July has a way of reminding us to slow down, soak up the sunshine, and appreciate the little things that make summer memorable.

If someone you care about is considering buying or selling, midsummer is often an ideal time to make a move. Whether you are just starting to explore options or ready to take the next step, I am always here to answer questions and provide clear, straightforward guidance.

Jim Urban

The Heart Of A Summer Garden

By July, the garden has found its rhythm. The early planting and patient waiting of spring give way to full color, warm sunshine, and the simple pleasure of watching flowers return year after year.

Perennials are the quiet heroes of summer gardens. Once established, they come back each season stronger and fuller, bringing dependable beauty with every passing year.

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Dianthus, often called “pinks,” are a classic favorite. Their soft fragrance and delicate blooms make them perfect for cottage-style gardens and small summer bouquets. They are a reminder that sometimes the smallest flowers bring the most charm.

Daylilies are another July standout. Blooming in shades of yellow, peach, red, and orange, they thrive in the summer heat. Each flower lasts only a day, but the plant produces so many that the garden always feels full of life and color.

For bold summer energy, Blanket Flower brings fiery shades of red and gold that attract butterflies and other pollinators. It thrives in sunny gardens and keeps blooming through the warmest days of the season.

Phlox adds height, fragrance, and soft clusters of color that draw birds and butterflies alike. On warm evenings, its gentle scent is one of the simple pleasures of midsummer.

A perennial garden is more than a collection of plants. It reflects patience, care, and the belief that something beautiful will return if given the chance to grow. Year after year, these flowers remind us that the best things in life often come back stronger and brighter with every season

Beach Bag Basics For Summer Days



July is prime time for beach, lake, and pool outings. A well-packed beach bag helps the whole family stay comfortable, protected from the sun, and ready to enjoy a full day by the water.

Start with a durable beach bag, storage bin, or folding wagon that can handle sand, water, and plenty of gear. Then pack the essentials: swimsuits and cover-ups, sandals or water shoes, sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, beach towels, water bottles, and snacks. A waterproof phone pouch and a change of clothes are also helpful additions.

With a few smart essentials packed ahead of time, everyone can spend less time looking for things and more time relaxing, swimming, and enjoying summer.

If you are looking for straightforward advice on how to sell a home in the current market, or if you want to know how Jim can negotiate like a "Pit Bull" on your behalf when you find your dream home, please visit:

MyHomeValueNow.com

Once there simply click on either "I'm looking For My Next Home" or "What is My Current Home Worth?"



— Staying Safe In Extreme Heat —

Very hot weather can do more than make people uncomfortable. Studies show that when temperatures rise above 90°F, injuries increase because heat can affect concentration, energy levels, and the body's ability to cope with stress.

Drink plenty of fluids. Stay hydrated throughout the day, especially during physical activity or time outdoors. Water is usually best, and sports drinks can help replace fluids and minerals lost through heavy sweating.

Dress for the heat. Choose lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing that allows air to circulate. A wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses can provide additional protection from direct sunlight.

Use sunscreen. Apply sunscreen before going outdoors and reapply during the day. Sunburn damages the skin and makes it harder for the body to regulate its temperature.

Pace yourself. When working, exercising, or playing sports outside, start slowly and take regular breaks. Avoid the hottest part of the afternoon when possible.

Take breaks in the shade. Resting in shaded areas allows the body time to cool down and recover, especially during long periods outside.

Watch for warning signs. Symptoms like dizziness, weakness, confusion, nausea, or heavy sweating may signal heat exhaustion. If they occur, stop activity and move to a cooler place right away.

Look out for others. Check on family members, neighbors, children, and pets during very hot days. Some people are more sensitive to extreme heat. A quick check-in can make a big difference during extreme temperatures.

Taking a few simple precautions can help everyone stay safer and more comfortable during the hottest days of summer. Planning ahead, staying hydrated, and paying attention to how you feel can make outdoor activities much safer. With a little awareness, you can still enjoy warm summer days while protecting your health and well-being.



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WHEN PARROTS PICK UP



Parrots are highly intelligent and social animals that thrive on interaction. According to *National Public Radio*, their need for communication is one reason they often form strong bonds with people.

Researchers recently explored whether video calls could help parrots socialize with each other. In a study with 18 parrots, owners trained their birds to ring a bell when they wanted to start a video call. The birds then chose another parrot from photos displayed on a tablet or phone.

The results surprised researchers. Instead of reacting aggressively, many parrots eagerly connected with their new companions. According to *The New York Times*, some birds even developed favorite friends and regularly asked for calls, singing, dancing, and mirroring each other's movements during the chats.

Scientists say more research is needed to understand the long-term effects, but even after the study ended, some parrots still continue to call their feathered friends.

Fitness Trackers: Helpful Coach Or Just A Reminder?

Fitness trackers can be great motivators. They count steps, track activity, monitor heart rate, and celebrate when you reach a goal. For many people, that small nudge helps encourage healthier routines and keeps daily habits on track. Seeing progress throughout the day can make it easier to stay active and build consistent habits.

Many devices also provide insights into sleep patterns and activity levels, giving users a better picture of their overall wellness. These reminders can be helpful prompts to stand, stretch, or take a short walk during busy days.

However, it is easy to start focusing too much on the numbers. Sport psychology expert Michele Kerulis of Northwestern University notes that becoming overly focused on health metrics can sometimes cause people to ignore the natural signals their bodies are sending.



This summer, remember to enjoy your walks, bike rides, and time outdoors. Your fitness tracker can offer helpful reminders, but how you feel and the joy of moving matter most.



GIVE YOUR LAWN A HELPING HAND THIS SUMMER

The heat of July and August can be tough on lawns and gardens. Long sunny days and high temperatures often dry out soil and stress grass and plants. With a little planning and routine care, however, you can help your yard stay greener and healthier through the hottest part of the season.

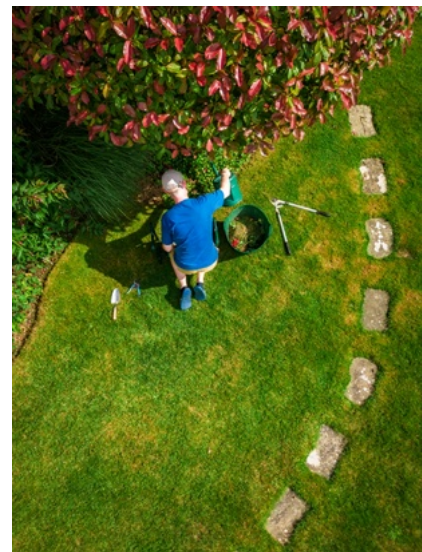
Feed your lawn when needed. Using a fertilizer designed for summer conditions can help support steady growth. If your lawn was fertilized in the spring, allow several weeks before applying another treatment so the grass is not overfed.

Mow carefully. Regular mowing keeps your lawn looking neat, but cutting grass too short can make it more vulnerable to heat. Allowing the grass to grow slightly taller helps shade the soil, hold moisture longer, and discourage weeds.

Water deeply and at the right time. Lawns typically do best with deeper watering once or twice a week rather than frequent light watering. Early morning or evening watering helps reduce evaporation and allows moisture to reach the roots.

Watch for pet damage. If pets frequently use certain areas of the lawn, rinse those spots with water and clean up waste regularly. This helps prevent patches from forming and keeps grass healthier.

Help plants handle the heat. Using light-colored mulch can help keep soil cooler and reduce moisture loss. Taller plants or shrubs can also provide natural shade for smaller plants during the hottest hours of the day.



With a little attention and care, your lawn and garden can stay strong, vibrant, and ready to enjoy throughout the peak of summer.

A Few Words Go A Long Way

Traveling to a new country is exciting, but language differences can sometimes be a challenge. Learning a few simple phrases before you arrive can make travel easier and often leads to friendlier interactions.

You do not need to learn full conversations. Just a few helpful words can go a long way.

Everyday basics: Hello / Good morning / Please / Thank you / Excuse me

Getting around: Where is the restroom? / Where is the train station? / Is it far?

Safety and health: Help / I am allergic to... / I need a doctor / Hospital / Police





PICKING THE RIGHT PRIVACY FENCE

A privacy fence can completely change how a yard feels. It can create a quiet space to relax, give pets and kids room to play, and add a sense of comfort and separation from nearby homes. When choosing one, the biggest question usually comes down to this: do you want to spend less now, or spend less time maintaining it later?

Wood fencing is a longtime favorite and often the most affordable way to add privacy. It has a warm, natural look that fits beautifully with many homes and gardens. The tradeoff is maintenance. Over time, wood can weather, fade, or warp, so it usually needs staining or painting and occasional repairs to keep it looking its best. With regular care, however, a wood fence can last for many years. Many homeowners also appreciate that wood can be easily customized with different stains, paints, and styles.

Composite fencing is another option that combines wood fibers with recycled materials to create a strong, durable fence. It offers the look of wood but requires far less maintenance since it does not rot or splinter the same way natural wood can. Composite fencing can be more expensive upfront, but many people like it because it keeps its appearance for years with very little upkeep.

Vinyl fencing has become popular for people who prefer a low maintenance option. It typically costs more upfront, but once it is installed there is very little work required. Vinyl does not rot, warp, or attract insects, and a quick rinse with the hose every so often usually keeps it looking clean. The only downside is that if a section is damaged, repairs can sometimes be a little more complicated.

Aluminum fencing is another option, although it is more commonly seen in decorative or picket style designs rather than full privacy fences. It is strong, lightweight, and naturally resistant to rust, which makes it a good choice in coastal or humid areas. Aluminum fencing comes in a variety of colors and styles, but installation is usually best handled by professionals and it may not always work as well on uneven ground.

At the end of the day, the best fence is the one that fits both your lifestyle and your yard. Thinking about how much time you want to spend on upkeep in the future can help make the choice a little easier.

If you are looking for a business that provides exceptional service, Jim offers access to his 5-Star Referral Center. To see the businesses Jim refers to his own family, friends, and clients, please visit:

[Denver5StarReferralCenter.com](https://denver5starreferralcenter.com)

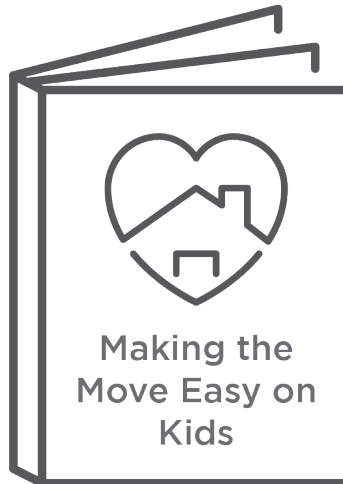
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