

Between FRIENDS

● ● ● Staying in touch with news you can use!

Buying or selling a home on your own can be a bit overwhelming. Contact me to see how my knowledge and experience can guide you through your next transaction.

OPEN HOUSE

Are you in the market for a new home? The time is right to make the move! Prices have stabilized and interest rates are attractive. Of course, investing in a home is more than a financial decision—the pride that comes with homeownership is truly invaluable.

Experience the security and peace of mind that comes with an **Old Republic Home Warranty Plan**. A home warranty will help protect your budget from unexpected repair or replacement costs caused by the breakdown of your home's heating, plumbing, electrical systems, and most built-in appliances. Optional coverage choices are available to custom-fit the warranty to the unique needs of your new home.

Call me today to learn how you can get added peace of mind with an Old Republic Home Warranty Plan, or visit www.ORHP.com for more information.

Is someone you know thinking about buying or selling a home? Send them my way! I can offer advice for staging a home, securing financing, negotiating contracts, and more.



Health + Safety

De-stress Yourself

Eighty years ago, while experimenting on the endocrine system of rats, Dr. Hans Selye made a serendipitous discovery. The very act of injecting his control group with an otherwise harmless saline solution greatly compromised their immune systems. Today, it might seem obvious that inserting a two inch syringe into a living creature's belly might have some adverse effect, but this was a revelation in 1932. Dr. Selye was the first to document the connection between mental anguish and physical health, and he named this phenomenon "stress."

If you're feeling like a stressed-out lab rat in your cubicle these days, the following tips can help you stay calm and healthy.



Progressive muscle relaxation: Condition your body to make relaxation a reflex. A quick internet search will reveal a wide range of techniques that involve tensing one muscle group at a time for 5-10 seconds, then letting go.

Switch to herbal tea: Your body creates its own natural de-stressor—a neurotransmitter called GABA. Caffeine works by inhibiting its production. Think of coffee as the ANTI-anti-anxiety drug.

Music is the opiate of the anxious: Studies have found that 30 minutes of music has the same calming effect as 10 mg of Valium. Of course, we're talking Mozart here, not Metallica.

Helpful Hints

Social Media Tips for Job Hunters

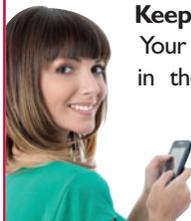
Where would we be without the internet? Infinitely more productive, perhaps, but the web has more to offer than "LOL Cats" and dancing Chihuahua videos. Social media is a powerful tool for job seekers.

LinkedIn: Stay connected with past and present colleagues. Write positive recommendations for those you respect—many will return the favor.

Tweet away: The Twitter community is all about connecting strangers, so follow company tweets, connect with potential employers, and share relevant information with everyone.

Keep your Facebook private: Your friends may love your "back in the day" photos of you in your Mohawk phase, but prospective employers? Not so much.

Work every connection: Whether you're a Google+ user, a Facebook fanatic... or you've been frozen in a block of ice since 2002 and never deleted your MySpace account—you can use all your social media contacts to remind everyone you're looking for work.



Savor Flavor

Grilled Chicken Salad with Strawberries

1	1 lb.	chicken breast	1	tsp.	ground mustard
1/2	cup	pecans	1	tsp.	salt
1/3	cup	red wine vinegar	1/4	tsp.	ground white pepper
1/2	cup	white sugar	2	heads	Bibb lettuce
1	cup	vegetable oil	1	cup	strawberries, sliced
1/2		onion, minced			

1. Grill chicken 8 minutes on each side. Cool and slice.
2. Cook pecans over med-high heat until fragrant, stirring frequently.
3. Blend red wine vinegar, sugar, vegetable oil, onion, mustard, salt, and pepper until smooth.
4. Arrange lettuce on serving plates. Top with grilled chicken slices, strawberries, and pecans. Drizzle with dressing.

Household Helpers

Chicken Safety

Jessica Simpson once confused the tuna she was eating with chicken when she misread the label as “Chicken by the Sea.” Make no mistake about it; we’re concerned with fowl, not fish! Follow these tips from the USDA to stay healthy while enjoying one of the tastiest, most versatile meats on earth.

Microwave thawing: If you thaw chicken in the microwave, cook it immediately afterwards because certain parts of the meat will begin to cook. Cooking chicken piecemeal is *never* safe.

Avoid pre-stuffing: Stuff your chicken right before you cook it. Avoid purchasing pre-stuffed chicken in the store because the contents are perishable and may go bad faster than the chicken.

Marinating: Marinate chicken no more than two days in the refrigerator before cooking.



Temperature: The only reliable way to know if your bird is safe to eat is to use a meat thermometer—chicken should reach an internal temperature of 165° F at the thickest parts of the thigh and breast. Also, make sure the thermometer doesn’t touch bone while you take the temperature or you might get a false read.

Real Estate Today



Hiring a Professional Inspector

Years ago, buyers commonly purchased a home without an inspection. Fortunately for today’s buyers, most purchase contracts guarantee the right to conduct at least one professional inspection before closing.

A trusted real estate professional is always a good place to start when shopping for an inspector, but the National Association of REALTORS® recommends that buyers do their own due diligence before hiring anyone. Ask prospective inspectors about their years of experience, the scope of their inspection (e.g., whether they inspect appliances, roofs, pools, etc.), and ask for copies of sample reports. Also, be sure to ask for references—any decent inspector who has been in business for some time will have satisfied clients.

Finally, make sure the company has a policy that accounts for human error. Many inspectors carry Errors & Omissions insurance. Be sure to determine the extent of the company’s liability should the inspector overlook a major problem.