

News You Can Use

Brought to You By **Robin McInnis**
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Cambie Favourites that Never Disappoint

As a busy family, one of our favourite things to do on a weekend morning is to reconnect over brunch. Here's a reminder of some established local favourites and one new cafe that we're hoping will become a staple!

Beans Coffee and Tea House— with a hand-drawn menu and scrumptious home-baked goods, it's easy to forget you're in the big city. Friendly service and local artwork give it a hip, happening feel.

Dutch Wooden Shoe Café — it doesn't get any more established than this. The Wooden Shoe has been on Cambie for as far back as anyone can remember. It serves the best waffle outside of Europe, bar none.

Las Tortas — it took a long time to open its doors but it was definitely worth the wait. If you haven't tried one of their Gourmet Mexican sandwiches yet, you're way overdue. Beef and Oaxaca cheese — Delish!

Pronto Caffe — the new kid on the block and though we've only been a few times, we are hooked. Be sure to try the Porchetta Sandwich (slow roasted, herbed pork) at least once. It's enough to convince you to go back again.

Trixi's — my son starts asking on Tuesday if we are going to Trixi's on Saturday for breakfast. Have any one of the many sweet or savoury crepes and you won't be disappointed!

Want to Sell Your Home Quickly? Get My Free Guide



In a competitive real estate market, it pays to do as much as you can to help your house sell.

Discover how to make your home attractive to buyers by requesting my free guide, **"50 Essential Tips to Prepare Your Home for a Speedy, Top-Price Sale."**

Call me at **(604) 808-9661** or email robinmcinnis@shaw.ca and I'll send it right out to you.

Five Solid Ways to Improve Your Home's Curb Appeal

A nice front yard can up your home's curb appeal without costing a fortune.

If you're planning to sell - or even if you're not - it's a good idea to keep the outside of your home spruced up.

Following are five ways to up your yard's sexiness quotient:

- 1.** Think like a drive-by viewer. Your home may tell a very different story when seen from across the street. Is there an attractive transition from road to front porch? Does it feel welcoming?
- 2.** You don't have to splurge on a landscape designer to create a new look for your front yard. While you're viewing your property from across the street, look at it as a whole. Consider the "hardscapes" like your porch, front door and walkway and the "softscapes" like plants, hedges and trees. Create a focus by painting your front door a different colour and keep the rest simple.
- 3.** Peeling paint and cracked sidewalks say something about the way you maintain the house as a whole. Some elbow grease and a bit of paint can do wonders for your home's curb appeal. Keep hedges clipped, leaves raked, lawns mowed and the kids' toys stored out of sight.
- 4.** Curved flowerbeds are more welcoming than a straight display. Choose plants and foliage that complement your exterior paint scheme and support the mood you're going for. Bright colours like yellow, orange and red are attention getters. White is vibrant at night and pale colours convey a calm mood.
- 5.** Don't forget about lighting. Make it easy for visitors to navigate your walkway and find your front door at night.

How Going with the 'Flow' Can Bring You More Joy

Some describe it as "being at one with yourself and your environment." Mihály Csíkszentmihályi calls it "flow." Whatever you call it, this single-minded, passionate attachment to an activity heightens focus, spurs creativity and actually produces moments of pure spontaneous joy.

It may be as close to happiness as humans can get ... a wonderful thing. Now how do we catch the wave or get with the flow?

Csíkszentmihályi, a professor of psychology at Claremont Graduate University near Los Angeles, is the originator of the "flow" concept. His research work with artists, who he says "create meaning," has generated a solid body of well-regarded work.

Csíkszentmihályi's artists describe a

mental state in which they are one with the object of their creation yet somehow feel outside it. They define this feeling as the "ecstasy" - which, incidentally, is derived from the Latin term "side by side."

Those of us who are neither artists nor psychologists can be "in flow" too.

"Flow" is defined in Wikipedia as the mental state of operation in which a person in an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus. It doesn't matter what the activity is; it's how we feel about it. Like an athlete who describes as ecstasy the act of breaking through "the wall" or a traveler experiencing the pure joy of Paris in the spring, humans are all capable of "flow." Look for the "flow"-worthy activity that works for you.

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Email robinmcinnis@shaw.ca or call (604) 808-9661 for the answer.

Who is the only U.S. president ever to be granted a patent?

Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbour, friend or co-worker.

And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give me a call or send me an email!

Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

How has the price of your home changed in today's market? How much are other homes in your neighbourhood selling for?

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, I'll be able to help.

Just give me a call for a no-fuss, professional evaluation.

I'll give you the most current market data about your home and its value.

Maybe I'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live!

Call me today at (604) 808-9661 to arrange an appointment.

Worth Quoting

"Skiing combines outdoor fun with knocking down trees with your face."

-Dave Barry

"Airplanes should have separate seating sections just based on whether or not you'll be eating Corn Nuts."

-Seth MacFarlane

I sure buy a lot of alcohol. Hope I'm not a shopaholic.

-Tim Seidell

"When I get overly proud of America, I simply remember that in 1999 we made Mambo No. 5 a number one hit."

-Damien Fahey

"Apparently, you don't think I already thought of that."

-Steve Martin

"Just found out how much wood a woodchuck would chuck: Two pounds. Consider it settled."

-Stephen Colbert

Enjoy the Best of Health with These 'Secret' Superfoods

Superfoods are hugely popular, but for those searching for the biggest bang for their buck, they simply can't do much better than these delicious yet healthy selections. Although less well known, the following provide enough essential vitamins, minerals and other nutrients to enhance your daily intake for a fraction of the cost.

Chia Seeds: Rich in calcium, iron and protein, Chia seeds are also one of the few non-fish sources of omega fatty acids, making them the perfect solution for vegetarians or those allergic to fish.

Maca Powder: Used to enhance libido and aid in healing, maca powder has long been used in South America. Modern scientists confirm the presence of four alkaloids that directly affect the endocrine system and boost metabolism.

Hemp Seeds: A distant relative of marijuana, hemp has been cultivated for thousands of years. Packed full of protein, essential fatty acids, magnesium, iron, zinc, potassium and dietary fiber, hemp provides a powerhouse of nutrition when sprinkled into drinks or other foods.

Flaxseeds: An oldie but a goodie, flaxseeds have been all but forgotten; a big mistake, considering that flax is so high in lignans, fiber and essential amino acids. Originally cultivated by the ancient Egyptians, flaxseeds enhance the body's ability to digest and absorb vitamins and minerals.

Camu Camu Powder: Containing more vitamin C than any other food product in the world, the camu camu plant is also an excellent source of beta-carotene, potassium, thiamine, leucine and valine.

Smile...and Get Free Ice Cream!

A food maker has teamed up with a technology company to make a vending machine that rewards happy smiles with ice cream.

The machine works by recognizing faces. When someone approaches the machine, it takes a picture to determine the sex and age of the person...and - most important - whether they are smiling!

If the smile is big enough, the machine rewards the person with a choice of free ice cream.

Happy consumers can then upload their smiling pictures to Facebook.

Of course, the machine is a great publicity grabber for Unilever, the maker of the ice cream.

You can expect to see vending machines like this pop up at various locations.

This Month in History

1900 - Elizabeth Angela Marguerite Bowes-Lyon, AKA Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother was born.

1921 - The 1st radio broadcast of a tennis match, in Pittsburgh, PA.

1944 - Anne Frank and her family were captured by the Nazis. Her diary was overlooked and remains in print today.

1954 - The uranium rush began in Saskatchewan, Canada.

1956 - William Herz became the first person to race a motorcycle over 200 miles per hour. He was clocked at 210 mph.

1958 - Billboard Magazine introduced its "Hot 100" chart, the first #1 song was Ricky Nelson's "Poor Little Fool."

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

What is the difference between an agent and a broker?

Real estate **agents** must be licensed by the province in which they plan to operate. To be licensed, candidates must complete three phases of a program called "Real Estate as a Professional Career" within an 18-month period, followed by a two-year articling phase. The program covers land structures and real estate trading as well as advanced instruction in either residential or commercial real estate.

A **broker** is a business owner who is licensed to operate a brokerage. To get this license, a broker must pass the Brokers' Licensing Course and must be able to prove prior experience as a licensed agent in the same province. The broker is responsible for the management of and accounting for all monies related to the transaction and for paying the agent's commission. It is a misconception that a broker is a better agent than salesperson, and few brokers conduct sales personally - their task is managing the business of the brokerage.

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Sudoku instructions: Complete the 9x9 grid so that each row, each column and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact me for the solution!

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Recipe: Herbed Shrimp Skewers

Serves 4

- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup white wine
- 1 ½ tablespoons fresh thyme and oregano leaves, roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 large lemons, sliced 1/8 inch thick
- 18 large shrimp, shelled, tailed and deveined (about 1 pound)

In a large bowl whisk together the olive oil, white wine, thyme, oregano, salt and pepper.

Add the lemon slices and shrimp to bowl and toss to coat.

Cover and refrigerate for 45 minutes, tossing occasionally.

To cook, thread the shrimp and lemon slices onto skewers and place on grill or under broiler for about 8-10 minutes or until shrimp are cooked through basting with the marinade and turning occasionally.

Serve over rice or a green salad.

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