

For what it's worth...



By: Elicha Insko

Fire safety very important this season

With winter and the holidays approaching I thought I might share some home fire safety tips with everyone this week.

The weather man says snow and sleet is in our future and that means the temperature's going way down.

When you go to use your furnaces they should be professionally inspected and sometimes cleaned if necessary.

There should be nothing around space heaters and there should be a glass or metal screen in front of a lit fireplace.

You should not heat your home with your oven. This can be hazardous and can be a source of toxic fumes.

It's that time of year and we are all getting excited about Christmas. We're starting to decorate our homes with trees and lights.

As you are out choosing that perfect Christmas tree, choose one that is as fresh as possible and keep it away from drying heat sources.

Keep the tree in water at all times. You should check all lights before hanging them. Check all wires, check for bare spots, gaps in the insulation and excessive kinking or wear.

Make sure all lights strands connect to extension cords and no more than three strands of lights linking together.

We all like the smell of candles but we need to make sure that they are in stable holders and do not leave your home with a candle burning.

Turn off all decorations and tree lights before going to bed or leaving your home. These have just been a few reminders.

With the holidays here we tend to get wrapped up in cooking and shopping and forget to check for those things that can cause our families harm.

The United States Fire Administration estimates about 50 percent of all fires occur in the home.

So my final two cents... I have listed safety tips for us all to follow and have a safe and happy winter. There is just one last tip that should be done year around. You need to equip every level of your home with smoke alarms. You should test and maintain these alarms monthly.

RECALLS



'Counting flowers on the wall'

Having gone almost two months without reading a major daily newspaper, I cannot say that I feel all that deprived or out of touch.

I've heard more than I ever wanted to hear about the vote count in Florida, enough to firmly convince me that that future ballot should include "None of the Above" and that we should simply start over with the 2000 election process.

TV news coverage skims the peaks of the actual news, then uses up the remaining time on speculations, insinuation, and titillation, and the recent weeks have been overly rich with gossip, lawsuits, and public relations campaigns from both major political parties.

Capped teeth and costumes, plus clever concocted reunions amongst the anchors and the weatherperson, seem to be more important to TV "news" coverage than do facts and substance.

Of course, two whole months at home could change a lady's outlook toward just about everything, and once I got past the total invalid stage I found lots of stuff to do.

As the Stalter Brothers said, way before the current hit record, "Counting flowers on the wall, that don't bother me at all," so "Don't tell me, I've nothing to do."

There's television. Direct TV, out here, means 300 or 400 channels that run the same material over and over 24 hours a day. The movie

Head of the Holler



Garry Barker  
Guest Columnist

channels are the prime offenders, drawing on a pool of about 12 old movies that run a dozen time a day on each channel.

Sports channels are almost as bad, running highlights over and over, brooking every now and then to air a

basketball game played 20 years ago.

"There's a channel specializing in just about everything else there is that I'm not interested in.

Radio, the National Public Radio variety, offers more diversity, about four hours per day of interesting discussion and news.

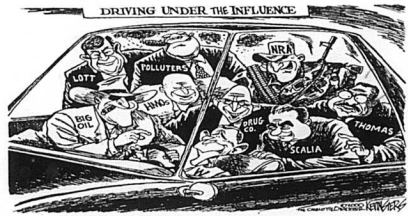
Commercial radio is even more commercial than ever, and the so-called "country" stations play soft rock, the bland stuff that passes, these days, for country music.

Old fashioned books still offer the best return for the hours spent resting and recuperating, and maybe the highlight of the assortment I've read so far is Sharyn

McCrumb's "The PMS Outlaws", a rollicking romp that actually lives up to its tempting title. And, as always, I've turned to the Civil War, adding biographies of William Tecumseh Sherman and Nathan Bedford Forrest, plus bios of Ernest Hemingway and Tom Wolfe, two very different characters from the war heroes.

Leannor, for a while, use my favorite Will Rogers quote - "All I know is what I read in the newspapers," so for now I don't reckon I know anything at all.

But give me a few more weeks, and I'll be able to give you the accurate flower count on every wallpapered wall in the house.



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The Glass Lens Council at www.opticalcouncil.com.  
The National Committee for Quality Assurance at www.ncaa.org.  
Valvoline Instant Oil Change at www.valvoline.com.  
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