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Community Connections

May / June 2010

May 2010

National Home Improvement Month

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June 2010

National Safety Month

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**HONOR those who lose their life
so that you may live yours...**

~Kymberli Peters

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HOME IMPROVEMENT.... something that enhances the home. It can be something as simple as a new couch cover and throw pillows, fresh paint or de-cluttering - to a bathroom or kitchen remodel.

Whether you rent or own, you want the place you call "home" to be comfortable and inviting. Of course being an owner gives you more options, but there are many things renters can do to improve their home and make it (temporarily) their own. Be sure to get approval before starting anything that will become permanent. Most landlords are happy when their tenants want to make improvements. Some will even help with the cost.

If you are among the millions that watch the home improvement shows on HGTV you have already found a great place for inspiration and ideas. Keep in mind most of these shows are working with a budget of \$500-\$2,000 for materials only. This doesn't include the crew of professional designers, artists, painters, carpenters, contractors, electricians, plumbers, landscapers and helpers. Don't let this discourage you, just be realistic.

We asked a group of our loyal readers what they have done (or plan to do) to improve their homes. Here is what they told us:

- Clean out the junk (clutter)
- Work on the garden
- Add accessories to the patio
- Have all the windows cleaned
- Paint the kitchen
- Buy new house numbers
- Build a BBQ deck



Before getting started ask yourself a few questions:

1. **What is my budget**

Of course your budget will determine how extensive the improvements will be

2. **Will I need a permit**

Call your city or county building department to find out if a permit is required

3. **Why am I making home improvements**

- To increase property values
- To make better use of space
- Spruce things up for summer
- Add or change color
- Add living space
- etc.

4. **Have I ever done a project like this before**

If you answered NO don't let that stop you from doing it now. Everyone starts with a "first time." The TV and internet are full of DIY programs, instruction and helpful tips and many of the local community colleges offer woodworking classes, etc. You don't want any surprises later, so learn as much as you can BEFORE starting the project.

5. **Are the tools I will need available**

If you only need a tool for a day or two it might make more sense to rent instead of buying it. Be sure to get proper instruction. You don't want to end up paying for a broken tool, or worse- get injured using it!

6. **What is the cost of materials**

Stick to your budget

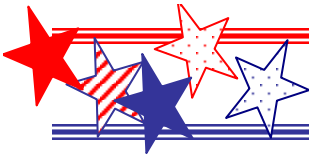
7. **How much time will be involved**

Make sure you allow yourself enough time to complete the project

8. **How much will it cost to bring in a professional later, if needed**

If you are doing a big project, such as a remodel, you should be realistic. Know your capabilities BEFORE you get started. If you have any doubts call a professional.





May - National Home Improvement Month June - National Safety Month



Do It Yourself Projects



In today's economy more homeowners are trying to cut costs by doing home repairs and improvements themselves. Some go even further by attempting (DIY) major renovations. In an attempt to save time and money, they will often find themselves spending more of both. A report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found nail-gun injuries jumped from about 4,200 a year to nearly 15,000 in a 14 year period, a 200% increase. Those numbers represent injuries to the average consumer, not construction workers. Emergency Room Physicians are also reporting an increase in injuries from do-it-yourself projects.

With this in mind I took note of a few things I came across while visiting a construction site recently:

- Clutter- keep areas free of clutter or **anything** that is not needed for the job you are working on.
- Cords- extension cords are usually needed on a job site so you will more than likely have to work around them. Do your best to keep them out of the way. Watch your step!
- Equipment- keep your hands away from moving parts, keep your eyes open at all times, if you need to look away for a minute turn the tool off first!
- Ladders- make sure you use a **ladder** for climbing and make sure it is stable. Do not use tables or chairs.
- Don't make rash decisions, think things out, do it right the first time. **Work smarter, not harder!**
- Sunglasses don't stop sawdust. Use safety glasses or goggles.
- Breaks- allow a short break in the morning and afternoon, and be sure to take a longer break for lunch. Your body needs hydration, nutrition and rest to be at your best.

Improving your Outdoor Space - Tips for This Year's garden

William Frinchaboy
WF Horticulture Service

Well the first thing to think about are pests that will eat your garden. It is like a line up at the local jail...rats, squirrels, gophers, and crows are the leading criminals in our area. Invest in netting, small firearms, traps, dry ice, chewing gum, etc., whatever works. There are many good poisons out there that don't harm canines or felines.

Weed control is an ongoing project. Mulching is not an option. Don't mulch with oak leaves as they perfectly camouflage rattlers. The brave and fearless among us can check around piles of rocks and wood to get them while they are slow and can't react to your swift blow with that designer shovel.

For Winter weeds, I say buy a large "potato hoe" and a good pointed flat shovel, affectionately called a "Fresno Hoe," and remove the weeds that you don't weed eat. (That's a verb for landscapers and gardeners. We don't really eat them unless the Balsamic Vinegar is imported!) There are transplants and then there are TRANSPLANTS. Sue Lin at the Vista Farmers Market has had ethnic favorites for many years. Find them Saturday mornings at the parking lot of the County Jailhouse. She has Italian, Asian, South American and U.S. of A. transplants at great prices. A few years ago I ordered Momotari tomatoes from Japan and she grew me four flats of them in about a month.

This time of year is a good time to "manure your fields" as the old saying goes. (Although there is a potential liability due to animal pathogens.) I am more concerned about spreading a new type of weed into my gardens, like Nut grass, or Johnson grass or the new wonder weed, Fiddleneck. I figure if the Pennsylvania Dutch manured their soils for 200 years without fear then we can put on a few bags of steer manure each season. Make sure it says composted or weed free. I don't recommend horse manure. It can carry Tetanus and many weed seeds if not composted thoroughly.

Now is the time to finally trim off all of the frost damage on shrubs. Also, cut back any hedges, shrubs, vines or trees that you want to reshape to a different style. You will find re-growth faster with warmer nights and longer days.

Your irrigation is only as good as the worst sprinkler head. If that head is flooding, you will have weeds. If that head is plugged or turned toward the house or driveway, then you will wonder why that spot is dead even though you have doubled the run-time on that area and your gardener is praying on Sundays that he won't be fired. Make sure to read up on watering frequency and run times. Another idea is to upgrade the irrigation timer. Oh, and don't forget to water on days allotted by the county.

You can call me at 760.390.1097 with any questions.

William Frinchaboy WF Horticulture (in collaboration with Garden Gate Landscape 760.749.1953)

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-- Lee Greenwood

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SAVE THE DATE!

**Palomar Mountain Volunteer Fire Department
Annual BBQ Fundraiser
September 4th**

Fun for the whole family - Raffle, Silent Auction, Chinese Auction, BBQ, Beer & Wine Garden, Crafts, Public Education & Firefighter Demonstrations, and the **3rd Annual Best of the Best Firefighter Competition.**

If you live in southern California you know the devastation wildfires cause. Countless homes and families have been saved because of the brave firefighters who risk their lives to save ours.

This is our chance to give back. **VOLUNTEERS** and **DONATIONS** are needed for this **FUN FILLED** day. If you are a **BUSINESS** owner this is a great way to get your **NAME** out!
If you would like to make a donation contact
Tricia Lucia at: Ladibug309@aol.com



A Country Connection
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June 12th Valley Center Yard Sale at Bates Nut Farm, Valley Center, CA
June 12th Calico Ridge at Lake Wohlford Café, Escondido, CA
June 12th Ann's School of Dance presents "Dancing Around the World" Valley Center, CA
June 19th Grandma's Marathon, Duluth, MN
June 20th Father's Day Brunch w/Cowboy Jack performing, Julian, CA
June 25th REINS of Life Golf Tournament Live Auction and Entertainment, Pala Mesa Golf Resort, Fallbrook, CA
July 16-18 & 23-25 VC Community Theatre presents Disney's Beauty & the Beast, Valley Center, CA

Mark your calendars for September 4th – Palomar Mountain Volunteer Fire Department's Annual BBQ –Raffle, Silent Auction, Chinese Auction, BBQ, Beer & Wine Garden, Crafts, Public Education & Firefighter Demonstrations, and the 3rd Annual Best of the Best Firefighter Competition. **DONATIONS** for the **RAFFLE** and **AUCTION** are needed.

FOR DETAILS ON THESE EVENTS and more visit: www.ACountryConnection.com – Newsletter Features



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