



Brian Walike Presents...

Service for Life!®

“Insider Tips for Healthy, Wealthy & Happy Living...”

Save \$\$\$ With These Last-Minute Travel Deals

Hotels, cruise ships, and airlines need to stay at maximum capacity to run efficiently so they frequently offer rock-bottom prices at the last minute to get rooms and seats filled. Try these resources for savings:

- ◆ **Grab last-minute package deals.** Package options combine airfare, hotel, and car reservations. These websites have package deals organized by interest or destination: www.expedia.com, www.lastminute.com, and www.groupon.com.
- ◆ **Check social media sites.** Airlines and hotels post last-minute deals on their Twitter feeds, such as @JetBlueCheeps, @VirginAmerica and @AllegiantAir. Also, you can “like” the following Facebook pages for last-minute deals and travel tips: [Facebook.com/Flightz](https://www.facebook.com/Flightz) and [Facebook.com/LastMinuteTravel](https://www.facebook.com/LastMinuteTravel).
- ◆ **Go where the deals take you.** Plan where you go based on who has the best deal. Websites for cruises leaving within 90 days are www.vacationstogo.com or www.lastminutecruises.com. You may get as much as 60 percent off. If you want a beach vacation but can’t afford Hawaii, keep Florida, Mexico, or California in mind.
- ◆ **Get the best airfare.** If you’re flexible and can act fast, go to www.farecompare.com and click on “Deals.” You also can sign up for “Airfare Alerts” and track fares to your favorite cities. Another excellent fare comparison site is www.kayak.com.
- ◆ **Find a hotel for tonight.** Use the mobile app **Hotel Tonight** (iTunes store or Google Play) to find a great deal. It’s good for 55 U.S. cities, six in Canada, plus cities in Europe and Mexico.

With Prices Up Over 20% Last Year, Is It Time To Sell?

Finally home prices have increased and the short sales and foreclosures seem to be mostly a thing of the past. With lower home inventories, is it time to sell that home of yours? Please contact me and I can do an evaluation for you and give you a realistic home value.

If you're thinking about selling your home soon, request my Free Consumer Guide, "7 Insider Tips To Net More Money Selling Your Own Home." Call me right now at 916-837-1990 for details...

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Word of the Month...

Studies have shown your income and wealth are directly related to the size and depth of your vocabulary. Here is this month's word, so you can impress your friends (and maybe even fatten your wallet!)...

Picayune (pik-ee-YOON) adj.

Meaning: of little value; petty

Sample Sentence: Bill slowed down the meeting with his picayune criticisms of the project.

Fascinating Fact...

Have you ever been surprised when you hear your voice on a recording? It probably sounds higher than you think. That's because vibrations from your vocal cords resonate in your throat and mouth and get conducted by bones in your neck and head. Because your bones enhance deeper vibrations, you hear your voice with more of a bass quality. Must be hard for singers!

Have A Laugh...

Tom, Dick, and Harry went to a party. After the party, they returned to the hotel, which was 600 stories high.

Unfortunately, the elevator wasn't working so they made a plan. For the first 200 stories, Tom would crack jokes. The second 200 stories Dick would tell a happy story and lastly Harry would tell a sad story. They then started up the steps.

After 2 hours, it was Harry's turn. He turned to the other two and said "Ok guys, here's my sad story. I forgot the keys downstairs."

Quotes To Live By...

If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.

—Milton Berle

The most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart.

—Helen Keller

It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get up.

—Vince Lombardi

5 Shockingly Salty Foods...

You do need some sodium from salt to function, but each person consumes an average of **3,400 milligrams** a day, compared to the recommended limit of **2,300 mg (1,500** for those with heart disease risk). Excess sodium causes high blood pressure, which can lead to heart failure.

How do you halt the salt? Cut back on the primary source of salt in your diet: pre-packaged, processed, and restaurant food. Read labels and menus and watch your intake of these five shockingly salty foods:

- **Bagels.** One plain bagel can contain 460 mg of sodium (19 percent of what you should get daily). That's without the cream cheese (100 mg for two tbsp). Try Ezekiel low-sodium whole grain bread.
- **Bottled salad dressing.** It's convenient but you'll get up to 300 mg of sodium per two tablespoons. Plus, sugar-free and fat-free versions often contain *more* sodium to boost flavor. Control the amount of sodium by making simple dressings at home with olive oil and herbs like rosemary, thyme, and oregano.
- **"Reduced-sodium" foods.** This term means that a food has only 25 percent less sodium than the original product. You're better off looking for a label that says "low sodium" (140 mg or less per serving) or "very low sodium (35 mg or less).
- **Fast-food salads.** Fast food is loaded with sodium (a Quarter-Pounder with cheese: 1190 mg), but a salad may not be much better. A MacDonald's Bacon Ranch Salad with Grilled Chicken contains 1000 mg. Best bet: Use the salad bar but go easy on the dressing.
- **Chicken breasts.** Raw chicken is often injected with a high-sodium flavoring solution. Look for the words "non-enhanced" on the label or make sure you buy an organic product.

Have You Looked At My New Website? www.brianwalike.com*

The website has great new search capabilities for homes and provides quite a bit of real estate information.

- Look at the testimonial page and see what my clients say.
- You can access past newsletters.
- Follow prices in specific neighborhoods with the "Price Trends" section.
- Read my blog
- Design you personalized home search.

*Best viewed on Firefox or Google Chrome web browsers.

Brain Teaser...

I have streets but no pavement,
I have cities but no buildings,
I have forests but no trees,
I have rivers yet no water.
What am I?

(See page 4 for the answer.)

Real Estate Question?

Maybe you want to know how much your home is worth. Or maybe you just need a recommendation for a handyman, carpet cleaner or plumber...

Either way, I love hearing from all of my good friends and clients. And I'm always looking to answer questions you might have about anything relating to real estate or home-ownership.

If you have a question, tip or idea, call me at **916-837-1990**. I'm here to help!

Familiar Computer Terms...

- **Microsecond:** The time it takes for your new computer to become obsolete.
- **Keyboard:** The standard way to create computer errors.
- **Mouse:** An advanced input device designed to make computer errors easier to generate.
- **Disk Crash:** A computer's response to any critical deadline.
- **State-of-the-Art:** Any computer you can't afford.

The Great Outdoors!

Looking for a summer camp for your kids? Check out www.camppage.com. Search by camp type (like adventure), activity (like computers), and state/province in the U.S. and Canada and see what's available.

Websites to Bring Your Photos To Life

- www.animoto.com – Turn your photos into a video with music and effects.
- www.kizoa.com – Lets you make a video, slide show, or collage to share with your friends.
- www.capzles.com – Tell your story through a time “capzle” and post on social media.

3 Ways to ‘Wow’ On the Job

How do you get noticed for a raise or promotion at your job? Besides delivering consistent results, here are three ways to impress:

1. **Show your expertise in the field.** Start a blog or write an article and post it on LinkedIn. If you can, get quoted in a newspaper or online article about your particular area of expertise.
2. **Become the “go-to” person.** Volunteer for extra projects but don't overdo it. Give credit when credit is due and celebrate the successes of your team members. Also, build a reputation for reliability by taking responsibility (as appropriate) when things don't go as well as they should.
3. **Demonstrate mutual interests.** Get involved in your company's charitable programs or join a professional organization in the industry.

Here's A Free, Valuable Resource...

Now you can search the home market, follow prices in different communities, and receive important information for buyers and sellers at www.brianwalike.com.

Home Problems to Fix Now

If you address a few home problems now, you may avoid major damage and repairs later. Here are three areas to check:

Electrical problems. Circuit breakers tripping frequently, outlets becoming hot, or flickering lights are indications that you should call an electrician. A home or appliance warranty could cover some of the costs. Fixing these problems may prevent a fire later.

Loose railings. A loose handrail is dangerous if someone puts too much pressure on it. You can remove the screws and reattach new and longer screws. If it's attached to concrete, you'll need to install anchors in the concrete and then place steel bolts in the anchor.

Washing machine hoses. These hoses can burst or leak at the connection site, possibly resulting in mold or damage to your floors and walls. Make sure your hoses are connected securely, and verify that you have at least 4 inches of space between the wall and the back of the machine so the hose doesn't bend. If you're going to replace hoses, purchase those made of braided stainless steel.

Thanks For Thinking of Me!

Did you know I can help you or any of your friends or family save time and money when buying or selling a home? Thanks for keeping me in mind with your referrals...and spreading the word about my services.

Brain Teaser Answer:

A map!

Want A New Workout?

Try hula hooping! You use a heavier hoop than the one you used as a kid but that's why it's so effective. You can take a local class from a certified instructor or buy a starter kit with DVD and do it at home. Check it out at www.hoopnotica.com.

Did You Know? You Can Use Coffee Grounds As A...

- ◆ **Cleaning abrasive.** Use them to cut grease and baked-on foods.
- ◆ **Air freshener.** A jar of grounds absorbs odors from your car or refrigerator.
- ◆ **Secret food ingredient.** They make a great tenderizing rub on meat.
- ◆ **Skin exfoliator.** Combine them with olive oil and your favorite oil essence to make an affordable facial.

THANK YOU for reading my Service For Life[®] personal newsletter. I wanted to produce a newsletter that has great content and is fun and valuable to you. Your constructive feedback is always welcome.

AND...whether you're thinking of buying, selling or financing real estate, or just want to stop by and say "Hi," I'd love to hear from you...

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this letter is intended for informational purposes. It should not substitute as legal, accounting, investment, medical or other professional services advice. Always seek a competent professional for answers to your specific questions. This letter is not intended to solicit real estate properties currently for sale.

Last week's trivia question was...

Which weekly television series on NBC was the first to air entirely in color in 1959?

a)Dennis the Menace b)The Twilight Zone c)Hawaiian Eye d)Bonanza.

The answer is d) Bonanza.

I'm pleased to announce the lucky winner of last month's quiz is Cathy Broyles. Enjoy the movie tickets Cathy.

Are Good Neighbor Fences Really Good Neighbor Fences?

We have all encountered this. Part of the fencing is leaning or falling down.

The fence is old and needs to be replaced. Who is legally responsible for paying for that fence? As it turns out the cost of repairing or replacing that fence is legally shared between the affected owners. What I was unaware of was that written notice describing the needed repairs, cost of repairs and description of repairs needs to be given to the adjoining landowner. And 30 days notice is required. If the next door neighbor is a renter the legal owner needs to be found and repairs agreed upon. For more information on the legalities of this issue go to <http://law.onecle.com/california/civil/841.html>. Gary Mezaros provided the idea for helpful discussion.

Real Estate Corner...

Q. What's the purpose of a home inspection?

A. A home inspection is performed after the buyer and seller have entered into a written contract. It's a review of the home's condition, including the heating system, attic, foundation, and a mold review. The point is to identify any area of the home that needs replacement or repair. You'll use the report to set the final price of your purchase.

You may choose to buy the house and make the repairs, or you may walk away from the property if the costs would be too high for your budget and the sellers refuse to lower the price or make the repairs. You can get your earnest money back provided your contract has a "sale contingent on inspection" clause.

You'll also need to get an appraisal, which serves to assess a value to the property. You need to know that the property you've selected will appraise at or above the amount you've contracted to pay for it.

Want to learn more? Ask for my Free Consumer Report called "**Top 10 First-Time Homebuyer Mistakes To Avoid.**" I'll send a copy right over to you.

Do you have a real estate question you want answered? Feel free to call me at 916-837-1990. Perhaps I'll feature it in my next issue!