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The Green Pages

Serving Northern Virginia & Points South Since 1969

September 2009

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Come On!!! Let's Go GREEN



Going green is an important way to help our environment and your pocket book. But you don't have to do a complete overhaul to make your home a little more environmentally friendly. Here are a few simple ways to "greenify" your home on a budget.

1. Assess the lighting in your home. Use natural light whenever possible by opening window coverings during the day to let the sunshine in. Replace regular light bulbs with CFLs (Compact Fluorescent bulbs) as much as possible. These bulbs not only use less energy, but they last much longer!
2. Purchase a window film that can be placed directly on the window to block heat transfer. An added bonus is that these films can also be slightly tinted to protect furniture and fabrics from fading in the sun.
3. When purchasing furnishings for your home, look first at your local consignment or antique shop or furniture showroom. Buying furniture that has been slightly used or on display in a showroom means it has had time to "off gas", meaning harmful chemicals in the materials of the furniture have already been absorbed into the atmosphere and won't be released in your home. And because you are shopping these stores locally, the furniture is not being shipped across the country to get to you.
4. Look for natural fibers, like a sofa upholstered in a cotton, bamboo-linen pillows, or a 100% wool rug. These materials are biodegradable and better for the environment. You can reupholster your dining chair using a recycled denim cushion instead of regular upholstery foam and cover it in recycled polyester-blend fabric. You can find paints that are low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) to revamp your rooms. These release fewer harmful chemicals than your typical can of paint and often have less odor as well.
5. Everyone knows you can replace your appliances with newer, energy saving models to lower your energy bills. But many older models may have adjustable settings that will use less if you cannot afford to replace them. For example, adjust your refrigerator temperature to a setting that is enough that it still keeps food fresh without being too cold. Turn down the temperature on the water heater. Adjust the dishwasher settings to eliminate the air dry option so and hand dry your dishes.



Going Green Helps
Save Green \$\$\$\$

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September 2009 Calendar of Events Northern Virginia & Points South

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 First Thursday in Del Ray—Mt Vernon Ave in Alexandria 6-9 p.m.	4 Mr. & Mrs. Christensen Anniversary 	5 Wiintergreen Wine Festival
6	7 Labor Day	8	9 Borders Woodbridge. Acrylic and other media by West Wind Produc- tions 9 a.m.	10	11 Patriot Day 	12 Wine Festival at the Plains Great Meadow Eques- trian Center
13 Grandparents Day 	14 Happy Bday Margaret Christensen 	15	16 Stepfamily Day! 	17	18	19 Jewish Rosh Hashanah Feast of Trumpets
20	21 Birthday Patti Green 	22 Birthday Donna Avallone First Day of Autumn 	23 Story Time @ Potomac Library 10:30 a.m. Bday Alison Resch	24 Poetry Group for Literature Borders 7 p.m.	25	26 Kids Fishing Tournament Lee- sylvania State Park Occoquan Craft Fair
27 Sundown Yom Kippur	28	29	30 Story Time @ Potomac Library 10:30 a.m.			

The Green Pages are produced by Jennifer Brooks. If you would like to contribute please contact me at: mfjabrooks@verizon.net

ASHLEY'S ACTION PAGE

Being Italian, pasta is a food that frequents our dinner table often. I absolutely love it! Pasta may also be the most fabulously cheap and simple meal, but it's also the most misunderstood. So here are some ways to never again find ourselves with a plate of soggy spaghetti and lifeless, loser tomato sauce.

- 1. DO Read the Instructions:** Spaghetti packaging recommends certain cooking times for a reason. Follow their advice! This is not an area where creativity is encouraged. Pay attention to the clock and don't overcook pasta—it's one of the most committed pasta faux-pas.
- 2. DON'T Add Too Much Water:** The ratios of water-to-pasta are important. You want about 1 to 1.5 gallons of water for every one-pound box of dry pasta.
- 3. DO Salt the Water:** Add about one teaspoon of salt per quart of water before sticking the dry spaghetti into the boiling water. The salt and water should almost reach a broth-like consistency. The saline content in the water is important.
- 4. DON'T Parcook Pasta:** Parcooking, or partially cooking foods early so they take less time to cook when you're preparing to serve them, is definitely not recommended with pasta. But if you must, as in an emergency dinner party situation, put the pasta on a large tray (but don't stack it), let it cool, and drizzle olive oil on top.
- 5. DON'T Try the Toss-Against-the-Wall Trick:** Throwing food against a wall should be avoided. This is an old wife's tale. I recommend letting it cool for a second, then sticking it in your mouth. It should be firm, but not difficult to eat in any way.
- 6. DO Gussy Up Packaged Sauces:** There's no shame in cheating a tad with store-bought sauces. They provide a great base, but you should add your own flair. Try sautéing a couple cups of cherry tomato halves with salt, crushed red peppers, garlic, and extra-virgin olive oil. Add this to the pre-made sauce. The cherry tomatoes will release fresh flavors and create a nice balance with the tastes from the prepared sauce. Plus, you can easily throw this together during the pasta-boiling time frame.
- 7. DO Toss Pasta with Sauce:** Once the pasta is two minutes shy from being done, drain the pasta and add it to your tomato sauce creation. This will allow the noodles to finish cooking while soaking up the good tomato flavors. Plus, a fun chemical reaction will happen where the pasta releases starch to thicken the sauce.
- 8. DO Finish the Dish with Fresh Toppings:** Fresh basil takes the flavor to the next level, or try the garbage-pail sauce approach with nuts, raisins, and capers or kale and white beans.

So off to the kitchen you go!! Make the best pasta of your life and see how your family reacts and thanks you.

My Featured Listing of the Month:

3608 Elmwood Dr. Alexandria, VA 22303

Price: \$1549.00 per month

Located in Alexandria this rental in great & quiet neighborhood. 2 bedrooms & 1 full bath. EVERYTHING IS BRAND NEW! Brand new kitchen with under cabinet lighting, new appliances, new carpet and paint, new bathroom, new washer & dryer. Large backyard. Car port with storage room and shed in back yard. Lots of windows. Very close to 495, downtown Alexandria, Crystal City, Pentagon, or Fort Belvoir. Huntington Metro 2-3 miles away. Metro bus comes down Elmwood.

This is a must see!!



This page was produced by Ashley Spencer.. If you have any interesting facts that you would like to share or would like additional information about what's published on this page contact me at 703-986-5813/703-598-9385 or email me at Ashley.Spencer@LNF.com

FOR SALE



**7112 Token Valley Road
Manassas, VA 20112
\$900,000**

11.5 Acres in central Prince William county off Hoadly Road. Acres are divided by Hoadly Road. To the north we have 4 acres and to the south 7.5 acres. Potential for rezoning to multiple lots. Currently zoned A-1 surrounding lots SRR. Water available at road.



**8853 Screech Owl Court
Gainesville, VA 20155
\$2,400 month**

Check out this wonderful Courtyard Single Family Home with 4 bedrooms and 3.5 bath. Gourmet kitchen, stainless steel appliances, granite countertops hardwoods floors. Huge master suite with 2 closets and luxury bath. 2 car garage and lots of storage space! Close to I-66 and schools.

FOR RENT



**10703 Heavenwood Court
Spotsylvania, VA 22553
\$1,400month**

Very cute 1 level living home in the heart of Spotsylvania. This 3 bedrooms, 2 and a half baths has a new deck, new roof, new kitchen appliances, and counter tops! You will find beautiful hardwood floors throughout home. Also a fully fenced rear yard and paved driveway on an almost half acre lot in a very quiet serene location.



**3608 Elmwood Dr.
Alexandria, VA 22303
\$1549.00 month**

Come see this 2 bedrooms & 1 full bath. EVERYTHING IS BRAND NEW! Brand new kitchen with under cabinet lighting, new appliances, new carpet and paint, new bathroom, new washer & dryer. Large backyard. Car port with storage room and shed in back yard. Lots of windows. Near I-95



**12701 Lotte Drive #301
Woodbridge, VA 22192
\$1,000 month**

Great 1 bedroom condo has upgraded bathroom and newer appliances. Located on the top level, this corner unit is a perfect match for you! Laundry is located on bottom level of building. It is just a moments walk from Historic Occoquan with great shopping and waterfront dining.



**9454 Scarlet Oak Drive #7
Manassas, VA 20110
\$1,100 month**

Check out this 2 bedroom, 2 full bath rental. Carpet to be replaced and ready to be moved into! Walking distance to VRE. Perfect location to Old Town Manassas with shops and dining.



How to Prepare Your Garden For Next Year



You've had all spring and summer to enjoy your flower and vegetable garden. Hopefully, you've had an abundance of beautiful blooms and fresh, delicious food. As fall approaches and we're faced with the prospect of a long, cold winter, it's important to begin to prepare for next year's garden. Here are some steps you should take this fall to prepare your garden for next spring.

Weed

Once you've picked the last berry or dug the last vegetable, it's time to give your garden a thorough weeding. Clear out every weed, all the dead vines and any spoiled or discarded fruits and vegetables that remain behind. Don't allow these materials to remain in your garden through the fall and into the winter. They'll become home to bugs or rodents, and the seeds from any weeds will undoubtedly get a head start on you next spring, causing you extra work when you prepare the garden for planting.

You might want to consider covering your garden with burlap as a way to keep down hearty weeds that might try to grow in the fall before the first frost, or in the earliest warmth of spring.

Till

Softer ground will be far easier to work with once you start work on your garden next spring, so tilling in the fall can give you a head start. This shouldn't be a deep, complete turnover of the soil. You want to avoid bringing dormant weed seeds up to the surface where they can germinate before the first frost of the fall or once winter is over. Use a garden rake or a small hand tiller to prepare the soil by loosening up just the top three to four inches of dirt.

Mulch

Use a garden chipper or a mulching lawn mower to chop up pine needles and leaves as finely as possible. Then, mix this mulch into the three to four inches of garden soil that you have already tilled. This will give the nutrients all fall and winter to work their way into the soil, and prepare the ground to be the best possible environment in which to plant next year.

In colder climates, you could consider putting down a layer of hay over the garden as a mulch. Be sure to check with your local garden center for a good, clean mulching hay. You aren't planting this stuff, after all. Check the hay for seed heads, and lay it on top of your garden late in the fall, after the first frost, when the ground is very cold.

Plant

Fall is a great time to prepare your flower garden by planting many of the bulbs that will bloom in spring. Your local nursery or garden center likely has fall bulbs for sale right now. Small bulbs for the earliest bloomers - like crocus or grape hyacinth - can go into the ground in the fall as early as September. Larger bulbs - like tulips or daffodils - should be planted later in the fall, perhaps in the middle of October.

When you plant these bulbs, be sure you do so with pointy tip of the bulb heading up towards the sky. If the bulb doesn't have a pointed end, lay it in the ground sideways. Be sure to leave enough room between bulbs to allow them adequate room to grow.

Cited: http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/2045297/prepare_your_garden_for_fall_pg2.html?
August 27, 2009



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203 K Rehab Loans

It seems like all that is reported about the housing industry lately is rise in foreclosures and negativity. Yes there are more foreclosures and homeowners struggling to hold on to their homes. The economy has been hit hard especially with job losses and property values declining. The government is trying hard to implement programs to assist homeowners keep their homes. They have also improving programs for new home buyers to purchase homes.

FHA (Federal Housing Administration) is back doing Rehab loans. Rehab loans are for homes that need repair or refinancing of existing primary residences to rehab the property. This loan is excellent for financing foreclosed homes which need work. This is a standard FHA loan with a minimum of 3.5% down on sales price plus the cost of repairs. This is an excellent program to finance those homes that are not in great shape currently.

Please call or email for specific details. Kramey@GMMLLC.Com (703) 216-2866



FHA 203K Loan - How the Program Can Be Used:

This program can be used to accomplish rehabilitation and/or improvement of an existing one-to-four unit dwelling in one of three ways:

- To purchase a dwelling and the land on which the dwelling is located and rehabilitate it.
- To purchase a dwelling on another site, move it onto a new foundation on the mortgaged property and rehabilitate it.
- To refinance existing indebtedness and rehabilitate a dwelling;

To purchase a dwelling and the land on which the dwelling is located and rehabilitate it, and to refinance existing indebtedness and rehabilitate such a dwelling, the mortgage must be a first lien on the property and the loan proceeds (other than rehabilitation funds) must be available before the rehabilitation begins.

To purchase a dwelling on another site, move it onto a new foundation and rehabilitate it, the mortgage must be a first lien on the property; however, loan proceeds for the moving of the house cannot be made available until the unit is attached to the new foundation.

Below Portion of page taken from <http://www.hud.gov>

Preferred Professionals

Mortgage Company	
George Mason/Kim Ramey	703-216-2866
George Mason Mortgage/Timur Tunador	703-934-4108
Virginia Heritage Mortgage/ Tony Denk	703-766-6406
Tree Service	
Tree Bark/Vinny Resch	703-690-6064
Home Improvement	
First Class Contracting/Craig Avallone	703-615-9319
Peterson Chimney Sweeps & Home Repairs	
Eric Peterson	703-351-6611
Masonry Construction/Painting & General Home Repairs	
Martin Alvarenja	703-675-0068
Cleaning Services	
Guadalupe Quinteros	571-722-9608
Rosa Villalpando	571-723-5935
Maria's Cleaning Service	703-605-5218
Title Company	
RGS	703-491--9600
Faux, Murals Interior & Exterior Painting & Wallpapering	
Michaela Langford	703-680-1483
Trent Butcher	703-597-2233
Pleasures of Paradise Spa & Wellness Center	
Michelle D. Talbot, LMT	703-763-3106
Michelle Talbot	703-670-0877
Heating & Cooling Repair	
Weather Chasers	703-393-8444
Printing Service	
Ken's Speed Print	703-494-4545
Carpet & Flooring	
Carpet & Floor Outlet (Nadar)	703-497-4747
Web Design	
VASI (Sherri Arnaiz)	703-330-8268
Family Portraits	
Rob Riebe (specializing in children's portraits)	540-288-3828
Tastefully Simple	
Meagan Ross	703-303-9867
Tastefullysimple.com/web/mross	
Home Computer Help	
John O'Meara	703-221-8112
Paper Craft, Fine Stationery	
Langdon Gibson	703-978-6500
American Cabinet Refacers	
Keith Ferencz	703-503-6600
Victory Glass	
Joe Wilson	703- 910-7202
Property Management	
Selling Virginia	703-217-3278

INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN REAL ESTATE

Free Career Counseling If you are considering a new career in real estate or are transferring from another company, Patti Green & Company is looking for sales associates to join our team. Give us a call and we will tell you more. Prospective Sales Associates are given all the information they need to decide if a career as a Real Estate Associate at Long & Foster's Patti Green & Company is right for them. No time for a full time career in real estate contact our office regarding becoming a referral agent. **Call today for more information** 703-217-3278 or email: cherish.green@longandfoster.com



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703-217-3278
www.sellingvirginia.com

Looking to get those summer and maybe last winters photos stored?
Here are just a few of the MANY sites you can find online.



Great Online Photo Albums

Walmart.com - Free for storage and upload. This site allows you to upload photos, edit, send them to friends, and create an album that you can pick up at a store or it can be delivered to your home. Yearly purchase required.

Snapfish.com - Free storage and upload. No storage limit. Yearly purchase required. Pick up at local store.

Shutterfly.com - Picture storage is free and unlimited. Enjoy free personalized websites. Receive 25 free prints OR free shipping. Yearly purchases required.

fotki.com - Free storage and upload. No storage limit. Create family blogs and web pages too! Store and share videos. Also—photo contests available through the site.

Picasaweb.com -Photo storage and editor. Making sharing and viewing very easy. Must have a google account though (can sign up for free)