

WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

*JK & Scott Watson - Watson's Realty*

# "Wat's New?"

*From Watson's Realty*

December 2009

## Sniffing Out Trouble

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas -- and I really like it! This time of year is just fun for me, and this year I'm having more fun shopping for the grandkids than ever before. I think it's because they're old enough to appreciate gifts more, and they really appreciate Santa Claus. It's a good thing too because I believe in Santa.

As I mentioned in a previous newsletter, Scott and I both belong to the Fremont Elks Lodge. As a volunteer, I coordinate events for members as well as non-members.

I recently helped with an event for the Fremont Police Association, an organization who recently lost a long time officer to a heart attack. The Sergeant in charge of the Police Association asked if the Lodge could host the memorial luncheon for the family of the officer who had passed away.

I, and all the Elks, were honored to help with the luncheon. I did a lot of planning and running around but it was all very new and exciting, as there were things I had never seen or experienced before.

First off, the police sent over a bomb sniffing dog, courtesy of BART. His name is Sandro and he's a 6 ½-year-old year old German Shepherd who dotes on his master/partner. We were so enamored with Sandro, we didn't think to get the name of the officer who came with him!

The officer was kind enough to answer all of our questions and show us just how Sandro worked. In order to get Sandro to know that it was time to start his job, the officer showed him his very, very favorite chew toy. Then he led Sandro around the Lodge so he could do his sniffing. Sandro seemed to really enjoy himself as he went from place to place putting his well trained nose to work.

There were several of us there watching with great interest as he made his way around. Someone asked if Sandro could also sniff out drugs, but the answer was no. It's a different smell and the drug sniffing dogs are trained to paw anything that triggers a drug odor. The officer explained that they definitely don't want "anyone" touching or pawing at something that might be a bomb. Sandro is trained to sit as soon as he finds something.

He also explained that Sandro only got his reward if he detected something. I have to admit we all thought that was kind of unfair being that Sandro worked so hard. The reason is that is how he was trained and if he got rewarded for not finding something, he would not truly understand his job.

But, not to worry. The officer says that now and then he will "plant" something for Sandro to find to keep him in shape and give him his reward if he hasn't gotten one in a while.

He was nice enough to "plant" something for Sandro to find so we could watch. Sure enough, he sniffed out the decoy and then sat down right next to it and looked directly at his master.

When the reward came and he was one happy

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dog! Chew, chew, chew, chew, chomp, chomp chomp on his favorite toy. "Life is good! I did a good job!" is what I am positive Sandro was thinking.

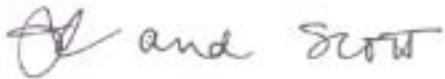
Later in the day, as we were waiting for the arrival of the family and guests, I was talking to the officer in charge and I heard a low rumble in the background. The Sergeant said, "That's the motorcade coming. They're almost here."

I couldn't believe that we could hear the motorcycles as they were still about 2 blocks away. I ran outside so I could see them pull into the driveway. It was a very impressive sight as 12 motorcycles surrounded the limousine carrying the family. It was all so regal and proud. It brought tears to my eyes.

Then, as nearly 350 guests started arriving at the Lodge, I realized that 90% of them were police officers. They were, of course, dressed in their best uniforms all polished and pressed with shoes so shiny you could see your reflection in them. That was another impressive sight to see -- all those policemen and policewomen there to honor their one of their own. It was a beautiful event and one I will not soon forget.

My heart goes out to the family.

At this time of year, I wish everyone good wishes, happy times, loving family and a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. See you in 2010!



JK & Scott  
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## Are You Bringing Up Financially Savvy Kids?

Kids under age 18 today are learning financial lessons early. With credit card offers flowing in as they go off to college and financial pressures of all types growing for young people, it seems most parents are doing their part to help their children make good financial decisions while they're still at home. Here are the responses from a Visa Inc. survey of parents who have children under age 18:

**85%** say they talk to their children regularly about money management.

**34%** talk to their kids daily on the subject.

**31%** talk to them once a week.

**14%** speak about once a month.

**6%** report that they talk about money issues with their children only a few times a year. Sixteen percent of the respondents, however, admit they never talk to their kids about the wise use of their funds.

## The Happiness Test

The test of all happiness is gratitude. Children are grateful when Santa Claus puts in their stockings gifts of toys or sweets. Could I not be grateful to Santa Claus when he puts in my stockings the gift of two miraculous legs? – G.K. Chesterton

# How To Make Your Blog Stand Out

So you want to join the hundreds of thousands of bloggers on the Internet? Don't be intimidated, just realistic. Your chances of building a following increase if you take the right approach:

**Post consistently.** This is common advice, but still true. If you don't post often, people won't come back to your site often. You don't have to be brilliant or witty every day, but you should have something new posted two or three days every week.

**Listen.** Don't just shout into the Internet. Read blogs related to your subject to see what people respond to. Pay attention to your readers – when they ask questions or make comments, respond to them promptly. This encourages everyone to check back for updates and fresh articles.

**Be willing to make mistakes.** Nobody expects perfection. Try to get your facts right, but don't obsess over them or you'll never get anything posted. It's more important to get content out on your blog for people to see. Correct it if necessary, and then move on.

## The "Perfect" Insult?

The next time you have the overwhelming desire to insult someone, think about this: The word *insult* is derived from the Latin *insulto*, which means to "leap or spring upon" a thing or a person. For instance, a predator might spring upon its prey ready to tear it apart, or a soldier might leap upon his enemy in order to take his life. But apparently our ancient ancestors also realized that a person could be torn apart, figuratively, by abusive words or scorn. And so arose the meaning of our modern insult.

# Yes, You Are Creative

If you want to create something, it means you want to bring something new into existence. Sadly, though, when many people hear the word "creative," they think "Who me? I'm not creative." But that's just not true. Most people think creatively and just don't recognize it. Anyone who has ever improvised in a situation – say, using something other than a doorstop as a doorstop – has exhibited creative thinking.

But how do you get your creativity to flow? The first step is to ask yourself why you think you're not creative. If it's because you can't paint portraits or sing an opera, that's no indicator. The opportunities to be creative are everywhere. Make a list and write down *every* creative thing you've ever wanted to do, and don't hold back. The more you write, the more opportunities you'll create to be creative.

Second, give yourself time. Don't put yourself under any kind of deadline – this usually freezes up the brain. You've heard the stories of people coming up with their best ideas while they're in the shower or drifting off to sleep. That's because they're relaxed, and not trying too hard. When you relax, ideas begin to boil and come to the surface.

## Nothing "Sour" About This!

An old Pennsylvania Dutch tradition is eating sauerkraut on New Year's Day, a practice that's said to bring good luck. It may also bring better digestion and help the body resist infection, according to the International Food Information Council. Sauerkraut is made by fermenting cabbage, and the bacteria that result, called *probiotics*, have a beneficial effect on your digestive tract, breaking down food and making it easier to absorb nutrients.

Due to budgetary constraints, the light at the end of the tunnel will be turned off until further notice. - anon

I'm not a fatalist, but even if I were, what could I do about it? - Emo Philips

If your boat doesn't come in, swim out to it. - Jonathan Winter

Moses dragged the Jews through the desert for forty years to bring us to the one place in the Middle East where there is no oil. - Golda Meir

## Observations on Growing Older

Everything old is new again, but if you wore it before, you're too old to wear it the 2nd time around.

Your kids are becoming you -- and you don't like them, but your grandchildren are perfect!

Going out is good; coming home is better!

When people say you look "Great", they add, "for your age"!

You ask your husband or friend how your outfit looks, and they tell you the truth.

The five pounds you wanted to lose is now 15, and you have a better chance of losing your keys than the 15 pounds.

Your husband is counting on you to remember things you don't remember.

Your husband sleeps better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than he does in bed. It's called his "pre-sleep".

Remember when your mother said "Wear clean underwear in case you GET in an accident"? Now you bring clean underwear in case you HAVE an accident.

You used to say, "I hope my kids GET married; now it's, "I hope they STAY married!"

The best place to have a conversation with your husband is in the bathroom -- you have his full attention.

Who wants to wear 3" heels anyway?

You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch.

When GOOGLE, ipod, email, modem were unheard of and a mouse was something that made you climb on a table.

You use more 4 letter words -- "what?"..."when?"

Your husband has a night out with the guys but he's home by 9:00 P.M.; next week it will be 8:30 P.M.

What used to be freckles are now liver spots.

Everybody whispers.

Now that your husband has retired, you'd give anything if he'd find a job.

## Our Great Great Lakes

Can you name our five Great Lakes?

The Great Lakes cover more than 94,000 square miles and contain six *quadrillion* gallons of fresh water, one-fifth of the world's fresh surface water. The lakes are so big, they have small tides, especially Lakes Superior and Erie. And when the wind pushes down on one part of a lake, the water surface rises in another part, creating waves. It's rare, but the lakes can freeze over, although not solidly.

Hundreds of lighthouses are situated around the Great Lakes; Lake Michigan boasts the most, many of which are still operational. Even so, experts estimate that the lakes hold as many as 5,000 shipwrecks.

The five Great Lakes are Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario. Lake Erie was named for the Indian tribe, the Eries; Lake Huron for the Huron Indians. An Indian name for Lake Michigan was "michi gami," meaning "the great water." Lake Ontario got its name from the Iroquois; their word for "beautiful" was "ontara," and "ontario" meant "beautiful lake." Superior was named by the French and it means "Upper Lake," referring to its position above Lake Huron.



### Do You Know The Watsons?

If you see Scott or JK at an Open House, on the street, in a store, or anywhere, just say "hi!"

We like meeting people and we're not shy about giving away gift certificates. Just tell us you "know" us somehow, whether you recognize us, you read our newsletter, or we look like our pictures - or even better in person (wink, wink) Just say something and enjoy eating out at Saki's Spin-A-Yarn.

You might have to tell us who you are - just in case we don't have a gift certificate with us, we want to know where to mail it!



Not redeemable for cash.

# An Exercise For Everyone

Here is a miracle exercise recommended by a doctor. You can do this standing or sitting down. Do it in front of a mirror, or better still, with someone. Here's how:

1. Raise the corners of your mouth an inch, take a deep breath and hold it for 10 seconds.
2. You are now smiling. If people are watching you, they'll probably start smiling, too.
3. Now release your breath in short exhalations. You are now laughing. Unless those with you are curmudgeons, they'll undoubtedly start laughing, too.

This simple muscular action of inhaling, raising the corners of the mouth, then exhaling in rhythmic, short bursts causes the diaphragm to bounce up and down, pats the liver on the back, and pleasantly vibrates the stomach. The heart, which rests above the diaphragm, begins to pump at a slightly faster rate, sending blood coursing throughout the body.

The effect is a general feeling of well-being. More important than this, however, is the effect on others who observe you going through this exercise. They feel better, too. This triggers happy emotions within you, and sets the stage for any number of pleasant personal and business relationships.

# Top Five New Year's Resolutions For Dogs

5. I will not suddenly stand straight up when I'm lying under the coffee table.
4. I will no longer be beholden to the sound of the can opener.
3. I resolve to get a bite in on that guy who gives me a shot every year.
2. I will break into the pantry and decide for *myself* how much food is "too" much.

And the #1 New Year's resolution made by dogs...

1. I will not chase the stick until I see it leave the hand!



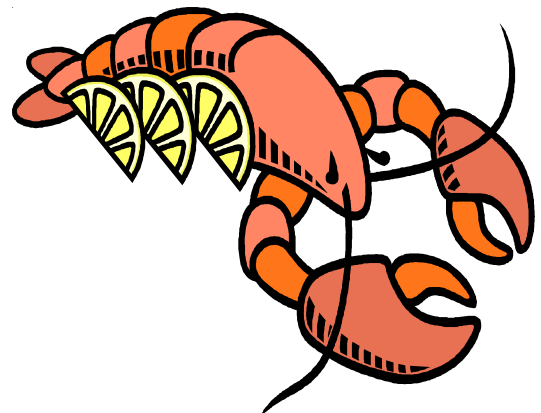
# A Short History Of The Lobster

Mmmmm – lobster. That pricey crustacean that's coupled with expensive wines and for many of us means good eating and celebrating. But it hasn't always been so.

In fact, up until sometime in the 1800s, lobster was eaten only by the lowest of the lower classes – the poor and the institutionalized. Even in the puritanical and penal environment of colonial America, there were laws against feeding lobster to inmates more than once a week. It was considered cruel.

One reason that lobsters were not a highly prized food was because of the almost unbelievable abundance that could be found on the East Coast. There are tales of Plymouth pilgrims wading into the water and capturing more lobsters by hand than they could use. After great storms on the East Coast, so much lobster washed ashore that it was ground up and used as fertilizer.

The word "lobster" is thought to be a corruption of the Latin word for "locust" and Old English word for spider (*loppe*). The native mid-coasters' term for lobster actually meant "bugs," probably because lobsters are pretty much a form of giant sea insects. A lobster is a crustacean, and crustaceans are arthropods – part of the category *Arthropoda*, which includes insects, spiders, millipedes and centipedes. What these creatures have in common is a segmented exoskeleton with appendages that are articulated in pairs.



# How To Make Progress, Not Excuses

Is getting more exercise one of your 2010 goals? We all know we should exercise, but many of us have what seem like pretty good reasons to avoid it. Here are some of the most common, along with some common-sense responses:

**“I don’t have any spare time.”** The truth is that we make time for what’s important to us. Schedule exercise into your day like any other appointment.

**“Exercise is boring.”** The key is finding something you like. Look for team sports, group activities, or interesting surroundings to keep your mind as well as your body occupied.

**“I’m too out of shape.”** Just don’t overdo it at first. Check with your doctor for suggestions, and start with low-impact activities such as swimming or bike riding.

**“I’m not fat.”** Good! But exercise is about more than losing weight. You want to maintain your health, and also control cholesterol and prevent heart disease – both benefits of regular exercise.

**“I don’t like going to gyms.”** If the gym scene isn’t for you – or it’s too expensive – look for an exercise routine that doesn’t call for a lot of equipment, like running or lifting a few weights at home. A brisk walk helps, too.

**Our Very Best Wishes  
for a  
Merry Christmas  
and a  
Prosperous, Healthy  
2010!**

**JK & Scott**

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### **We’d Like to Welcome**

**Pat & Christine Smith**  
*friends*

**Know anyone that  
needs our help?**

**Call The Watsons!**

**Thanks for thinking of us!**

# The How And When Of Kids' Allowance

Do you think a preschooler should get an allowance? For many, the question of whether to give very young children money or not is a hot debate. Many feel that giving money to a child is a waste. That philosophy subscribes to the belief that children have no sense of value or marketplace experience.



Others believe that you can never begin to teach your child about money too soon. If you do decide to give your young child money, make sure you give it with an explanation. Use money to teach your child values, such as saving, and skills, such as math.

A good amount, according to experts, is \$1 per year of age per week. You might want to give the allowance in a combination of bills and change, so the child can get used to the feel and look of money. It's also a great way to teach them to count.

Should you tie your child's allowance to chores? Again, there is no clear answer to this question. Most experts agree that giving your child chores to do is a good idea. Whether you decide to connect chores and money is at topic for discussion with others who are raising children and whose opinion you trust.

## Help Your Babysitter Be Responsible

If you hire an in-house babysitter, you'll want to help her (or him) do the best job possible. You want her to be able to protect herself and your children to her utmost. Here are a few tips to help him or her do so:

- Place a paper and pencil by the phone. If there's an emergency and she calls for help, she doesn't have to look for writing supplies if she needs to write something down. Have a separate piece of paper by the phone with your home address, home telephone number, and cell phone number(s) in case she needs to give that information over the phone to the police.
- Show him how to operate door and window locks. Show him, then let him try to do it on his own.
- Always leave at least one outside light on. This will allow her to see if anyone is approaching and also lets possible intruders know someone is home.
- Show her where fire extinguishers, emergency exits, and smoke alarms are located.
- Provide a first-aid kit. Show your babysitter where it's located and what its contents are.
- Remind your babysitter to never open the door for strangers. Also, not to mention that she's the babysitter to anyone who comes to the door.
- Remind your babysitter not to go outside to investigate anything suspicious. She should turn on all outside lights, call the police, and make sure all doors and windows are locked.
- Remind her not to tell a caller she's alone with your children. She should tell the person on the phone that she's visiting and you can't come to the phone. And to hang up if the person gets persistent.



# December Quiz Question

And the results are in for our **November Quiz Question**...the question was: **How many phalanges are in a human hand?** *Answer:* 14

**Congratulations** go to **Colleen Zeidman!** Her name was selected at random from all of the correct quiz answers. She has chosen a \$30 gift certificate from Trader Joe's!

Here's your **December Quiz Question:** **What was a gladiator armed with, in addition to a dagger and spear?**

If your name is chosen from our group of correct answers, you can choose a \$30 gift certificate to your choice of Saki's Spin-A-Yarn Restaurant, Trader Joe's, Macy's, Safeway or Dale Hardware. Good luck!

Send your answers to:

e-mail..... WatsonsRealty@gmail.com  
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