

# Janet's Journal

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## Transition Month

Dear [FirstName],

We have a fun, spooky one for you this month! It's October—time to break out everything orange and celebrate Halloween! In this month's newsletter, you'll find a great Halloween punch that is sure to spook all of your friends, some helpful tips to keep the kids safe, and a funny ghost story.

As the season transitions, you or someone you know might be in a transition, too. If you know anyone who would like to buy or sell a home, my most-genuine wish is that you think of me. I'd love to help!

Best,

Janet Browning

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### Positive Thinking

Three men set out on a journey. Each one carried two sacks - one around their necks and one on their back. The first man was asked what was in his sacks. "In this one on my back," he said, "I carry all the kind deeds of my friends. By doing so, they are out of sight and out of mind, and I don't have to do anything about them. They're soon forgotten. This sack in front carries all the unkind things people do to me. I pause in my journey every day and take these out to study. It slows me down, but nobody gets away with anything."

The second man said he keeps his own good deeds in his front sack. "I constantly keep them before me," he said. "It gives me pleasure to see them."

"The sack on your back seems heavy," someone remarked to the second traveler. "What is in it?"

"That's where I carry my mistakes," said the second man. "I always keep them on my back."

The third man was asked what he keeps in his sacks. "I carry my friends' kind deeds in this front sack," he said.

"It looks full. It must be heavy," said an observer.

"No," said the third man, "it is big but not heavy. Far from being a burden, it is like the sails of a ship. It helps me move ahead."

The observer added, "I notice that the sack behind you has a hole in the bottom. It seems empty and of very little use."

The third man replied, "That's where I put all the evil I hear from others. It just falls out and is lost, so I have no weight to impede me."

## October Question

**Q: What country produces the most coffee in the world?**

## September Question

**Q: Which planet is the hottest in the solar system?**

**A: Venus**

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## The History of the Cookie

Who doesn't like a cookie every now and then? Cookies have a long history, but the first ones didn't taste much like the treats we enjoy today. According to some sources, the first cookies were made in Rome around the third century B.C. They were thin, hard, bland, twice-baked wafers, and the Romans ate them by dipping them in wine.

Modern cookies might have originated in Persia during the seventh century, when sugar became more common in that region. They became popular across Europe in the 14th century, enjoyed by royalty and common people. One reason for their appeal was that they traveled well in tins and boxes, making them a reliable source of food on trips.

The word "cookie" comes from the Dutch word "koekje," meaning "little cake." Cookies arrived in America in the 17th century, in the form of macaroons, gingerbread cookies, and the "jumble," - a hard cookie that combined nuts, sweeteners, and water. The cookies we're most familiar with, made by creaming butter and sugar, became common in the 18th century .



## October Round-Up

**World Teachers' Day, Oct. 5.** This day aims to focus on "appreciating, assessing, and improving the educators of the world."

**World Smile Day, Oct. 7.** World Smile Day celebrates the ever popular yellow smiley face. It also offers us an opportunity to do an act of kindness.

**Columbus Day, Oct. 10.** This day commemorates the landing of Christopher Columbus in the Americas in 1492.

**Indigenous Peoples' Day, Oct. 10.** A holiday that celebrates and honors Native Americans and commemorates their history and culture.

**Halloween, Oct. 31.** Trick or treat!

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## Too Many Vitamins?

"Take your vitamins!" Your parents probably told you this, and although mother knows best, doctors also know a few things about what your body needs. Their research indicates that too much of a good thing can have negative effects on your health. Check with your physician if you take any of these common vitamin supplements:

- **Vitamin A.** In the proper amounts, vitamin A is essential to reproductive health, good bones, immune functions, and can be beneficial to people suffering from such conditions as celiac disease, pancreatic disorders, and Crohn's disease. Vitamin A deficiencies, usually caused by malnutrition, can lead to problems in vision, skin disorders, and infections such as the measles, and other health issues. But such deficiencies are rare in the U.S. and other developed countries, so there's probably no need to overdo it.
- **Vitamin C.** In its natural form, vitamin C has been known to boost immune functions, but despite its popularity, no evidence firmly links it to prevention of such ailments like the common cold. It is important to the growth and repair of bodily tissues, and it contains antioxidants that might help fight cancer. Because it's water-soluble, your body will eliminate any excess vitamin C it doesn't need, but too much of it can cause stomach cramps, nausea, and heartburn. Excessive doses could produce kidney stones.
- **Vitamin E.** This essential nutrient is frequently recommended because of its antioxidant qualities, but except in rare cases of vitamin E deficiency, evidence is slim of any clear medical benefits of a supplementary dose. In one study of the effect of this vitamin in fighting prostate cancer, results showed a 17% increase in the rate of cancer among subjects taking higher doses. Your best bet is to focus on naturally occurring sources of vitamin E in cereals, fruits, and green leafy vegetables - such as spinach - meat, and nuts.

## Spooky Halloween Treats!

Here's a fun, creepy recipe from *CountryLiving.com*, guaranteed to spook people at your Halloween gathering!  
Ingredients:

4 (1 liter bottles) cold lemon-lime seltzer  
3 tubs lime sherbet  
Black food color spray (optional)

Stir 2 liters seltzer and half of the sherbet in a punch bowl until blended. Float scoops of the remaining sherbet on top of punch. Pour remaining seltzer over scoops. (It will create a foamy top.) Lightly spray foam with black food color, if desired.

Be sure to use a clear punch bowl to reveal the ghoulish beverage.

## Free Reports!

- How Sellers Price Their Homes
- Making the Move Easy On the Kids
- Five Big Mistakes Home Sellers Make
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**See Page 7**

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## Safe Halloween Tips

Halloween is a holiday that children and their parents enjoy together. But keeping your costumed trick-or-treaters safe while they go door-to-door is paramount. Follow these tips to ensure that your kids will have a Halloween they remember for all the right reasons:

- **Choose costumes in light or bright colors.** Whether you buy a costume or make one, be sure it will be visible after dark. Put some reflective tape on goodie bags to help them show up when your kids walk down the street.
- **Eat before going out.** Serve dinner or a good healthy snack before your kids hit the neighborhood. They'll be less likely to gorge on the candy they collect if they're already full.
- **Plan your route.** Determine a clear and safe path through your neighborhood ahead of time. You should accompany small children, of course, and discuss safety with older kids going out as a group. Always carry a flashlight and cell phone.
- **Inspect candy before eating.** Check through treat bags when children return home, and separate out any candy that looks suspicious. Don't let kids consume too much at one time—ration it out they don't get sick and unable to have yummy treats for days to come.



## Spark Your Imagination

Creative ideas don't come from nowhere. You need to actively seek them out; don't wait for some muse to strike you with inspiration. Here are a few tips for sparking your imagination when you need to solve a problem or develop something new:

- **Think when you're tired.** When you're tired, your inhibitions and inner censor aren't as powerful, and you might generate something unexpected. Instead of tackling problems first thing in the morning when you're fresh, let your mind roam later in the day when you're feeling fatigued.
- **Exercise.** In addition to contributing to your physical well-being, exercise can stimulate your creativity by helping your mental health. In experiments, participants who work out to exercise videos tend to come up with more ideas and solutions to problems than counterparts who merely watch the same videos.
- **Have a little noise.** While silence is best for detail-oriented tasks, ambient noise, such as music or the bustling of a coffee shop, has been shown to enhance creative thought. Don't play loud heavy metal music or work next to a construction site, but set up an environment where some quiet activity around you will spark your mental muscles.

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## Create Great Ideas

Seth Godin is an expert on innovation and creativity. *INTHEBLACK*, an Australian based website, shares his tips for unleashing your inner creative force:

- **Don't wait for motivation.** Hoping for a great idea to strike wastes time. Show up every day ready to work.
- **Build relationships.** Know your customers and clients inside and out so you can generate remarkable solutions to their problems.
- **Start at the beginning.** When launching a project, go through all the elements and potential issues up front so you can get early buy-in from your customer or boss.
- **Don't be a perfectionist.** Do the best you can, but don't obsess about getting every detail absolutely right.
- **Focus on people skills.** Although technical expertise is good, human skills like empathy, connection, trust, and integrity are more important and will take you further.

## Get Out of Your Rut

Sometimes you might feel as if you're in a rut. The symptoms are many: procrastination, lack of control, confusion, burnout, perfectionism—the list goes on and on. To pull yourself free, follow this advice from the *BusinessMatters.com* website:

- **Create a plan of action.** Decide what you need to do and how you're going to do it. You wouldn't start your car without knowing where you want to go, would you? Take the time to plan your route so you have a firm idea of what you want to accomplish.
- **Make a list.** Write down the most important thing you can do today to further your goals, and then add one or two more things. Doing this helps you focus on priorities and continually move forward. If you achieve your first goal, then move on to the next one. Start each day with a list of things to accomplish so you don't run out of things to work on.
- **Manage your time.** You might think you have no time to do something. Is it true? Keep track of what you're working on, so you have a good idea of how long tasks take. Doing this helps you budget your time and energy more efficiently so you don't fall into the trap of having too much time or too little time to get things done.

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### A Ghostly Ride

On a dark and stormy night, a man named Sid was hitchhiking on a quiet road. The wind blew loud moans across the countryside, and the trees rustled menacingly in the darkness. Sid was getting nervous, and he breathed a sigh of relief as a car from nowhere came to a gliding stop by the side of the road. Sid jumped into the back seat and started to offer thanks, but he realized that the front seat was empty. Then, to his amazement, the vehicle began to move!

Slowly it crept down the road. Sid's eyes bulged as it came to a curve, and a floating hand seemed to reach through the window to turn the wheel. For a moment, Sid was paralyzed with terror, convinced that something mysterious and terrible was happening. Finally he gathered his nerve, threw the door open, and jumped from the car. In his fright, he ran without stopping until he made it to the next town.

He found a restaurant and staggered inside for a drink to quench his thirst. About 15 minutes later, two men, wet and cold, entered the establishment. As they were ordering food and drinks, they looked over and saw Sid.

"Hey," said one of the men to his friend, "isn't that the idiot who got in your car while we were pushing it?"

*Happy Halloween!*



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