



From the Broker's Desk

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Don't allow your summer fun to be interrupted by home accidents. Even if you

don't have small children or elderly family members living with you, a quick safety check of your home is a great preventive action. We often become complacent and forget to check for safety hazards when anticipating guests. If there will be small children or pets in the house, remember that they will be spending time playing on the floor so be sure that any dropped items like a pill or small object that would fit in a mouth are found and removed. If you have furniture or a fireplace hearth with sharp edges then some attention to child proofing may be required. Children learning to walk will use a stationary object to stand so be sure that there is nothing that they could pull down or turn over on themselves. Likewise, kittens and puppies like to play with dangling items which could result in a rush trip to your vet. No matter our age, we are all susceptible to tripping so keep extension cords, loose throw rugs and objects out of the walk areas. This applies outdoors too, so keep the apron around the pool clear of objects and walkways clear of children's toys. Since picnics and barbecues are frequent summer activities, don't forget to check for insect nests and keep a fully stocked first aid kit nearby for burns, scrapes and stings. Always use appropriate sunscreen and stay hydrated when performing outdoor activities. If you are using a discharge mower instead of a mulching mower, it would be best that no one be in the yard while it is being mowed as loose items can be discharged and injure someone. Check any hanging flower arrangements occasionally to be sure that they are still secure as movement from wind currents can loosen the attachments and you don't want them falling on a person or pet. Our plants thrive with the warmer weather but many, whether indoor or outdoor, are toxic to both humans and pets. Most would have to be ingested for poisoning to occur but some can poison through the skin so always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after working with your plants. If you have plants or have pets who might be tempted to eat a leaf, I would recommend that you research the plants that you have and their toxicity. We all know to keep guns, prescription drugs and toxic chemicals out of sight and preferably locked up, to be sure that all extension cords and electrical outlets are working properly to prevent a shock or fire and to have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in our homes. Summer is our time to relax and enjoy all the activities associated with the season so don't let an accident rob you of these pleasures. If you are contemplating a house purchase this summer, before the interest rates increase more, the experienced Agents of WILLOW Realty are available to assist.

FIREWORK SAFETY TIPS

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- *Obey all local laws regarding the use of fireworks.
 - *Know your fireworks; read the cautionary labels and performance descriptions before igniting.
 - *A responsible adult SHOULD supervise all firework activities. Never give fireworks to children.
 - *Alcohol and fireworks do not mix. Save your alcohol for after the show.
 - *Wear safety glasses when shooting fireworks.
 - *Light one firework at a time and then quickly move away.
 - *Use fireworks OUTDOORS in a clear area; away from buildings and vehicles.
 - *Never relight a "dud" firework. Wait 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water.
 - *Always have a bucket of water and charged water hose nearby.
 - *Never carry fireworks in your POCKET or shoot them into METAL or GLASS containers.
 - *Do not experiment with homemade fireworks.
 - *Dispose of spent fireworks by wetting them down and place in a metal trash can away from any building or combustible materials until the next day.
 - *FAA regulations PROHIBIT the possession and transportation of fireworks in your checked baggage or carry-on luggage.
 - *Report illegal explosives, like M-80s and quarter sticks, to the fire or police department.
- AND don't forget to take care of your pets.**
- *Keep your pets indoors during fireworks displays. A quiet, sheltered "den-like" retreat is best. Close windows and curtains and turn on the TV or radio to help drown out some of the noise. Some animals can become destructive when frightened, so be sure to remove any items that your pet could destroy or that would be harmful if chewed.
 - *Make sure your pets are wearing current identification and tags so that if they do become lost, they can be returned to you promptly.



Quick Southern-Style Baked Beans

© Pam Anderson/thepioneerwoman.com

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| 8 slices bacon, halved | 3 large cans (28 oz each) pork and beans | 1/4 distilled or cider vinegar |
| 1 medium onion, cut into small dice | | 2 tsp dry mustard or 2 tablespoons Dijon |
| 1/2 medium green pepper, cut into small dice | 3/4 barbecue sauce | |
| | 1/2 c brown sugar | |



Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Fry bacon in large, deep sauté pan skillet until bacon has partially cooked and released about 1/4 cup drippings. Remove bacon from pan and drain on paper towels. Add onions and peppers to drippings in pan and sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Add beans and remaining ingredients bring to a simmer. (If skillet is not large enough, add beans and heat to a simmer then transfer to a large bowl and stir in remaining ingredients). Pour flavored beans into a greased 13-by 9-inch (or similar size) ovenproof pan. Top with bacon, then bake until beans are bubbly and sauce is the consistency of pancake syrup, about 2 hours. Let stand to thicken slightly and serve.

Nothing is more difficult, and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide.
~Napoleon Bonaparte