

Under The Hood With Tom

is a free monthly newsletter from your friends at

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What's Inside?

- Funniest Newspaper Headlines Of 2004-
- St. Patrick's Day Celebrations-
- Pros & Cons Of Shopping At Warehouse Retailers-
- 10 Ways To Tell A Redneck Has Been Working On Your Computer (Humor)-
- March Events -
- Money Saving Offers -
- & Much More!



What's The Answer?

- **When Should You Plant Early Spring Vegetables?**
- **What Precautions Should Students Take Before Traveling To Mexico For Spring Break?**
- **Why Is Eating In Front Of The Television A Bad Idea?**
 - **What Are The Benefits Of Shopping At Warehouse Retailers?**
- **How Often Should You Wash Your Shower Curtain?**



The Answers To These And Many Other Questions Are Inside.



The New and Improved Tom's Master Mechanics Newsletter

Spring Break Cautions

If your student is bound for spring break in Mexico, the State Department recommends reminding them of laws in such party destinations as the Bahamas and Mexico. In many places conduct that might not result in an arrest in the U.S. constitutes a violation of local law.

In Cancun, disturbing the peace, littering, drinking on public transportation, or making obscene or insulting remarks are considered criminal activities. More than 100,000 American teenagers and young adults travel to Cancun during spring break each year. Alcohol is involved in the vast majority of tourist crime and accidents.

Safety issues are also a concern. Young travelers have died in car crashes, falls from balconies, and water sports mishaps. For more tips, visit travel.state.gov.

"Winners have simply formed the habit of doing things losers don't like to do."

Get On The Green Bandwagon

Retailers are beginning to love St. Patrick's Day. They're selling more than green beer and bagels. You could get a St. Pat's T shirt, a green hat, green socks (for the more conservative), a CD of Irish music, or a cookbook of traditional Irish meals.

Driving the interest is the large number of non-Irish celebrating the holiday. About 110 million consumers will mark St. Patrick's Day this year by doing such things as wearing the green at work or dining at an Irish pub.

Kansas City, Mo.-based Hallmark Cards has offered St. Patrick's Day cards for many years. This year there will be more than 100 varieties. It ranks St. Patrick's Day as its ninth-most popular day. Valentine's Day and Mother's Day rank first and second. Hallmark sales are best in Boston with its large concentration of Irish Americans. It's where one of the first American celebrations was held in 1737.

One reason it has become so popular: St. Patrick's Day gives people a chance to have a good time at parades, at work, and at evening celebrations. Remember that old saying, "Everybody's Irish on St. Patrick's Day!"

Do You Have A Question About Car Maintenance That You Want Answered?

We love to hear from all of our good friends and clients who enjoy reading our monthly newsletter. If you have a question about anything related to your vehicle, feel free to give us a call at 858-450-9494 or email us at service@tomsmm.com.

Best Newspaper Headlines Of 2004

- "Something Went Wrong In Jet Crash, Expert Says"
 - "Police Begin Campaign To Run Down Jaywalkers"
 - "Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over"
 - "Miners Refuse To Work After Death"
 - "Juvenile Court To Try Shooting Defendant"
 - "War Dims Hope For Peace"
 - "If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last A While"
 - "Cold Wave Linked To Temperatures"
 - "Enfield (London) Couple Slain; Police Suspect Homicide"
 - "Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges"
 - "Man Struck By Lightning Faces Battery Charge"
 - "New Study Of Obesity Looks For Larger Test Group"
 - "Astronaut Takes Blame For Gas In Spacecraft"
 - "Kids Make Nutritious Snacks"
 - "Local High School Dropouts Cut In Half"
 - "Hospitals Are Sued By Seven Foot Doctors"
- And The Winner Is....
- "Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead"

(Can you believe it?)

March Events

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| March 1-31 | Red Cross Month |
| March 10 | 125 th Anniversary of the Salvation Army |
| March 17 | St. Patrick's Day |
| March 20 | Daylight Savings (<i>set clocks ahead 1 hour</i>) |
| March 20-26 | Spring Cleaning Week |
| March 27 | Easter Sunday |
| March 30 | Doctor's Day (<i>Red carnations-official flower</i>) |

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

CUSTOMER REFERRAL CARD

I would like to introduce you to _____
who is interested in talking to you about some
automotive needs that they have. I'm sure that my
friend will experience the same friendly, personal
service that has always set Tom's Master Mechanics
apart.

Referred by _____

Phone _____

Entitles new customer to 10% discount on their first visit (Max. \$50).
Referring customer will receive \$5—\$25 in Tom's Master Bucks.

**FEEL FREE TO COPY AND HAND OUT THE ABOVE
TO YOUR FRIENDS OR COME IN AND PICK UP
SOME CARDS TO HAND OUT**

Maintaining Shower Curtains

A recent study by Norman Pace, professor of molecular biology at the University of Colorado, revealed that the soap scum on shower curtains contains billions of disease-causing microbes. Pace said that healthy individuals are not likely to become ill from shower curtain bacteria, but those with open wounds or weak immune systems could be at risk. He recommends washing shower curtains weekly; most can be tossed in the washing machine and dryer.



Some Weight-Gain Culprits

If you are trying to lose weight or are plagued by weight loss attempts that fail, you should consider some of the following information:

- Y Low-carb or carb-free liquor labeling can be misleading. Beer and wine contain sugar and that means calories.
- Y Alcohol consumption can affect weight and liver health. The liver secretes bile and bile breaks down fat molecules. That's why alcohol consumption can add up to abdominal weight gain.
- Y Some forms of birth control can cause weight gain. Depo-Provera includes a high dose of progesterone, and that can increase appetite.
- Y Low-fat food labeling can cause problems. Again, labels can be deceiving, so make sure you check the calorie content. Another problem with low-fat foods is they tend to be less filling and so people eat more—and even then they are not satisfied.
- Y Drinking a smoothie with your meal. Smoothies can contain a high number of calories.
- Y Eating out/pigging out. Portions in restaurants can be out of control. Eat at restaurants that serve smaller portions or put half your order in a to-go container before you start eating.
- Y Settling in for a meal or snack in front of the tube. Research has found that television distracts a person from feeling full, which can lead to overeating.

The Pros & Cons Of Shopping At Warehouse Retailers

Memberships at warehouse retailers such as Costco, Sam's Club, and BJ's have tripled in the past 10 years. But consumer experts say there are both pros and cons to shopping at warehouses:

Pros

- ✓ If you throw one or two parties a year for 20 people or more, you'll likely recoup your membership fee of \$35 to \$50 in savings on deli trays, desserts, beverages, paper products, and flowers.
- ✓ Buying in bulk makes the most sense for non-perishable items, such as canned goods, detergents and toiletries; at many warehouses, you can save 30 to 50 percent on these items.

Cons

- ✓ Many of the best deals at warehouses are on perishable items like dairy products, produce, and meats. But unless you plan to use them right away or freeze them, you may be wasting your money by buying large amounts because you may not be able to use all that you bought before it spoils.
- ✓ Increasingly, warehouses are selling high-end luxury items, such as flat-screen televisions or cashmere sweaters. While these items may be available at big discounts, many shoppers feel pressured to snap them up because of allegedly limited quantities. Thus they can spend huge amounts on non-necessities without taking the time to fully consider the budget implications of these purchases.

My mother said, "You won't amount to anything because you procrastinate."

I said, "Just wait."

Prepare For Spring Gardening

The first day of spring may be too early to plant. But when you see the tips of flowers coming up, you can do this:

- G Uncover roses and remove protective mulch from around perennials, strawberries, and other plants.
- G Clean up flower beds and gardens.
- G Prune grapevines and remove damaged canes from raspberry plants.
- G Clean out birdhouses so they're ready when the birds come back.
- G Pick up sticks from the yard so you're ready to mow in April.
- G Plant early spring vegetables (peas, radishes, lettuce and spinach) by St. Patrick's Day, according to Irish legend. If there's snow on the ground, wait.

Congratulations To Our Client Of The Month!

Every month, we choose a very special client of the month. It's our way of acknowledging our great clients and saying thanks to those that support our business with referrals and repeat business.

This month's Client of the Month is
SERGE BELONGIE

Wrong E-Mail Address

An Illinois man left the snow-filled streets of Chicago for a vacation in Florida. His wife was on a business trip and was planning to meet him there the next day.

When he reached his hotel, he decided to send his wife a quick e-mail. Unable to find her e-mail address, he did his best to type it in from memory.

Unfortunately, he missed one letter, and his note was directed instead to an elderly preacher's wife, whose husband had passed away only the day before.

When the grieving widow checked her e-mail, she let out a piercing scream and fell to the floor in a dead faint. Her family rushed into the room and saw this note on the screen:

"Dearest Wife: Just got checked in. Everything prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Sure is hot down here."

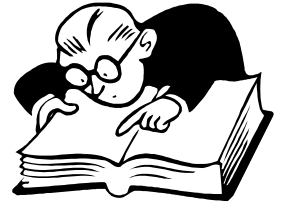
10 Ways To Tell A Redneck Has Been Working On A Computer...

1. The monitor is up on blocks.
2. Outgoing faxes have tobacco stains on them.
3. The six front keys have rotted out.
4. The extra RAM slots have Dodge truck parts installed in them.
5. The numeric keypad only goes up to six.
6. The password is "Bubba."
7. The CPU has a gun rack mount.
8. There is a Skoal can in the CD-ROM drive.
9. The keyboard is camouflaged.
10. The mouse is referred to as a "critter."



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Do You Want To Win A Free 3-day / 2-night Mini-Vacation?

Take the trivia challenge and you just might win!

Each month we'll give you a new trivia question. The first 10 people to call with the correct answer will be eligible to win. At the end of the month we'll draw one lucky name. That winner will receive a certificate good for 3 fun-filled days and 2 exciting nights of deluxe hotel accommodations at one of 18 fantastic locations. Here is this month's trivia question:

"In what U.S. city was one of the first St. Patrick's Day celebrations held?"

(Hint: the answer is somewhere in this newsletter)

- a) Boston
- b) Cincinnati
- c) Cleveland
- d) Syracuse

Call right now with your answer!

The answer to the trivia challenges from February and March will be published in the April issue as well as the winners for both.

Letter from the Editor

Happy March Everyone! Hope you've all been having a good start to the year. Three months in and finally the weather is starting to pick up. Hopefully the sun will stick around for a while. The rain was a killer!

Not much new with me. I took a weekend writing class a couple weeks ago. Had a blast and learned a lot. Now I've gotta get crackin' on finishing up my children's books. One day I WILL be published. So in the meantime, the writing is keeping me busy. And the dogs. . . Zoe is now going to puppy kindergarten, though I think she's mastered all she can in that class. She needs to move on to the basic obedience. Only a couple more puppy kindergarten classes left and on to the next. I've been taking the dogs to the park a lot. They love it there. I love it too because I can tire them out and when we get home, all they want to do is sleep. It's sooo nice! I can get some work done then.

Well I hope you all have a great St. Patrick's Day. Don't forget to wear green. See ya next month!