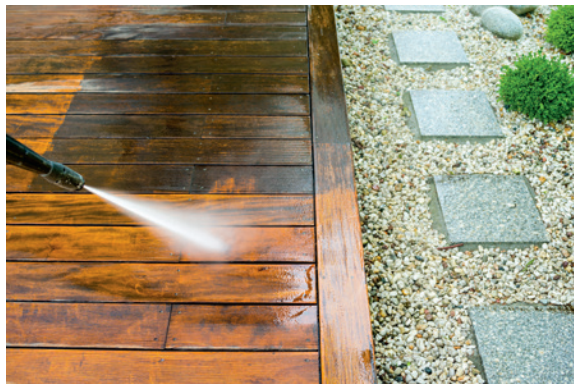




Clean up to maximize the value of your home. A clean house translates into dollars. Buyers touch everything.



Think curb appeal: Mow the lawn, clean the front porch, front door, windows. Nobody enjoys walking through spider webs before entering a house.

Downsizing tips and maximizing the value of your home



Matt Del Vecchio
Seniors and Aging

As the population ages, there has been an enormous trend in downsizing to smaller homes, condos or retirement residences. This winter has been particularly tough and as a result we are seeing many people deciding that enough is enough.

It's not always easy to move out of the family home where so many memories were created. It's only human nature to want to stay as long as possible. However, being in the senior transition world, the most popular phrase I regularly hear is "I should have done this a couple of years ago." Many factors — such as mobility challenges, loneliness, cognitive concerns, loneliness, safety, security, caregiver stress or simply the burden of home ownership — can come into play. For those considering making this transition, here are a few tips to help you along the way:

Downsizing tips

Start early: It is never too soon to start getting rid of the unnecessary. We should go through our closets and cupboards twice a year to eradicate accumulation.

One room at a time: Start with the basement or guest room. Proceeding one room at a time will prevent chaos.

The six-month rule: What you haven't used in six months is

probably not a necessity. Think about extra bedding, cutlery and dishes.

Quality over quantity: Establish the amount of space in your new living quarters and stick to the quality items that mean the most. If you're not sure what to keep, ask for an objective opinion from someone close to you.

Where can it all go? Sell what can be sold. Give heirlooms to family and friends and donate to charities. The last step is to simply throw it out.

Maximizing the value of your home

Clean: A clean house translates into dollars. Buyers touch everything.

Neutralize: Neutral colours are very appealing to buyers. Depersonalising your home allows buyers to visualise their belongings in your house. Turn your home back into a house. Less is More.

Repair, don't renovate: There is no need to renovate your house to sell it. However, good maintenance is crucial. A leaking roof is problematic and needs to be repaired. A foundation crack needs to be addressed. This is to prevent deterioration and a lower selling price. Yet, a new kitchen will not guarantee a higher selling price.

Curb appeal: Mow the lawn, clean the front porch, front door, windows. Nobody enjoys walking through spider webs before entering a house.

The five senses: Appeal to the five senses of potential buyers:

- **Smell:** Open the windows a few

minutes prior to a showing. Let the fresh air in.

- **Sight:** Open the blinds and curtains, wash the windows, turn on the lights. We all love a bright home.

- **Touch:** Clean all surfaces. Pay extra attention to counter tops, faucets, door handles, light switches.

- **Hearing:** You may want to play soft music during the showing. Regrettably, the hockey game on TV is not recommended.

- **Taste:** Finally, your broker may bring some drinks and bites for potential buyers on

Open houses: This adds to the "Welcome to your new Home" experience.

Downsizing can be a challenging and emotional time. Yes, it can be daunting at times but try to embrace the process as you venture into this new life transition. Speak to friends and loved ones that have already done it. You would be amazed at how many people have a smile on their face when they talk about their new home.

Matt Del Vecchio is a Certified Professional Consultant on Aging (CPCA). He is the founder and president of Lianas, a company specializing in retirement residence search and senior transition support, and co-host of the Life Unrehearsed radio show on CJAD 800 every Sunday at 4 p.m. Matt also writes a regular blog at TheSuburban.com and can be reached at mdelvecchio@lianas-services.com

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Choeur des enfants de Montréal EARTH HOUR CONCERT: Saturday, March 24, 8:15 – 9:30 p.m., Christ Church Cathedral, 635 St. Catherine, Montreal. 120 teen choristers on stage. Free-will offering at the door.

Shaare Zion Congregation Sunday Schmooze for Seniors: March 26th, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm Shaare Zion Congregation, 5575 Côte Saint Luc Rd. Come for free food, live music and great company! This program is supported by Federation CJA. Free admission. No registration necessary, but for more information, contact Noam Blauer at noam.blauer@shaarezion.org or 514-481-7727 x 226.

The 2nd Annual PIANO DAY: hosted by Piano Vertu (5193 Decarie, Montreal) will take place on Thursday March 29 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. From jazz to classical to minimalist to improvisatory, listeners will be treated to a full array of musical genres. Free admission for all. For information or to perform piano-

daymtl@gmail.com. www.pianoday.org

EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS

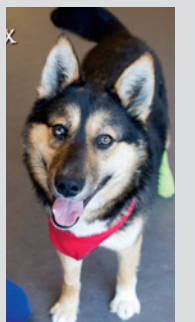
The Lachine Good Friday Walk: March 30 beginning at 9 a.m. at St. Stephen's Anglican Church, 25 – 12th Avenue, Lachine and at Summerlead United Church, 225 – 50th Ave., Lachine. From there the walks will stop at Eglise Saints-Ange (St. Joseph corner 15th Ave.) in the east and Mission de l'Annunziata (Broadway St. corner 44th Ave., Lachine) in the west. Both will meet at Resurrection of Our Lord Parish (corner St. Joseph Blvd and 34th Ave. Lachine) for an ecumenical service at 10:15 am.

HEALTH AND SUPPORT GROUPS

"MARY'S RECOVERY": Weekly meetings in English and French at YMCA Westmount. Non-profit organization. Self-help groups for people seeking help in dealing with fear, anger, stress, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, phobias, insomnia. Call (514) 485-2194.

PET OF THE WEEK

Max is a stunner of a Northern dog with thick black fur like a bear. He seems to be mostly German Shepherd, but his husky side is revealed in a spot of blue in one of his brown eyes and his tendency to "talk" to his fosters around suppertime about his rumbling tummy. Sadly Max was hit by a ski doo a while back and it broke bones in his foot. But lucky for him, he was flown down to Rosie's from up north to get better and find his family. The cast is removed and it will be a gradual return to normal activity for him, hopefully with his new family. He won't be ready for free play time for a little while, but leash walks and gentle activity will be the order instead as his foot gets stronger and fully heals. Once healed, he'll be a normal, strong, happy-go-lucky guy. A sweet one-year-old dog, he loves people, cuddles, belly rubs, ear scratches and toys. Best suited for a home with kids 12 plus. He loves other dogs and wants to play with them so much that he calls out to them on walks. Please fill out an application form: www.rosieanimaladoption.ca



The Joy of Easter

Lenten Services are held every Thursday in March at 12:30 p.m.

Palm Sunday, March 25
Worship Service at 11 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, March 29
Service of Tenebrae with Communion at 6 p.m.

Good Friday Morning, March 30
Readings, music and meditation on the Passion at 11 a.m.

Good Friday Evening, March 30
Mass in B Minor – J.S. Bach
Pre-event talk at 6:45 p.m., Organ prelude at 7:10 p.m.
Choral Service at 7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 1
SONrise Service at 8 a.m.
Led by the Youth Group and Church School
Holy Communion, with choir, brass, and organ at 11 a.m.



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