

# In Step with Alice Steppe

Vol. 7 Issue 2

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Everything turns to hearts in the month of February, but having a healthy heart is a year-round mission! Heart disease is the number one cause of death for Americans. We need to be educated about how lifestyle is the number one contributor to poor heart health AND something we can control.

I hope to encourage each reader to be proactive in choosing a lifestyle that encourages a long and healthy life.

The Real Estate Market has not let up with winter time, but most people assume it is slow. The inventory is down and homes are selling fairly quickly, if well prepared for the market. I have been very busy with my listings inventory selling well. It is a busy time getting ready for the 'BUSY TIME' of the Spring/Summer market.

I hope some of the information you find enclosed will help you in thinking about your own home. Caring for a home, maintaining it, watching your landscaping and keeping curb appeal current...the list can continue on and on! I am happy to help you make that TO DO list for preparing your house for market, even if you are on the 3-5 year plan or the one year plan. Prioritizing the work to be done can help you create a budget and develop a plan of attack! De-cluttering quickly becomes a most dreaded word and activity! But by sorting into the throw away, store/pack and donate labels, you will be surprised how quickly you can make your way through attics, basements, closets and drawers! One friend shared that she asked her children to sort and organize two big closets for her as a Christmas present. She was surprised by the gifts of new linens when her children saw the condition of her sheets and towels. A very thoughtful gift and a great way for adult children to assist parents!

So keep up the good work! Spring will find us soon and you can be ready to work outside and freshen your house from the long winter. Picking up litter has become even more of a passion for me. The winter thaw shows just how much trash is on our highways, byways, sidewalks, and roadsides. Help our city to look better by picking up the litter!

Happy houses turned into happy homes!

In This Issue:

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**Last Newsletter's Winner**

**Wisdom**

**What Not to Do as a New Homeowner**

**Window Cleaning Tip**



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## FEBRUARY IS HEART HEALTHY MONTH

### **SPOT A STROKE F.A.S.T.**

F.A.S.T is an easy way to remember the sudden signs and symptoms of a stroke. When you spot the signs, call 9-1-1 immediately. The sooner a stroke victim gets to the hospital, the sooner they'll get treatment. And that can make a remarkable difference in their recovery.

**Face Drooping** Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile.

**Arm Weakness** Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

**Speech Difficulty** Is speech slurred, are they unable to speak, or are they hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence like, "The sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?

**Time to call 911** If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get them to the hospital immediately.

*Brought to you by:*



**BE THE FIRST TO  
TELL ME WHAT  
YOU DO TO STAY  
HEART HEALTHY  
AND RECEIVE  
A \$20  
GIFT CARD  
TO THE PLACE  
OF YOUR CHOICE**

### **CONGRATULATIONS**

*Julia Day*  
Won a \$20  
Gift Card to  
The place of  
Her choice!



**FOR BEING THE FIRST TO  
GUESS THE CLOSEST AMOUNT  
OF SNOW WE GOT BY  
DECEMBER 31st**

### **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROLONGS YOUR OPTIMAL HEALTH**

Your body needs regular physical activity for strength, stamina and to function well. For each hour of regular exercise you get, research indicates you'll gain about two additional hours of life expectancy, even if you don't start until middle age. Moderate exercise, such as brisk walking for as little as 30 minutes a day, gives you these benefits:

- Improves blood circulation, which reduces the risk of heart disease
- Keeps weight under control
- Helps in the battle to quit smoking
- Improves blood cholesterol levels
- Prevents and manages high blood pressure
- Prevents bone loss
- Boosts energy level
- Helps manage stress
- Releases tension
- Counters anxiety and depression
- Helps you fall asleep faster and sleep more soundly
- Improves self-image
- Increases muscle strength, increasing the ability to do other physical activities
- Reduces coronary heart disease in women by 30-40 percent
- Reduces risk of stroke by 20 percent in moderately active people and by 27 percent in highly active ones

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A friend shared this with me and I thought it had some statements worth pondering!

## WISDOM

- I've learned that either you control your attitude or it controls you
- I've learned that my best friend and I can do anything or nothing and have the best time
- I've learned that sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down will be the ones to help you get back up
- I've learned that sometimes when I'm angry, I have the right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel
- I've learned that just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to, doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have
- I've learned that we don't have to change friends if we understand that friends change
- I've learned that two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different
- I've learned that maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you've had and less to do with how many birthdays you've celebrated
- I've learned that no matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you every once in awhile and you must forgive them for that
- I've learned that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others, sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself
- I've learned that no matter how bad your heart is broken, the world doesn't stop for your grief
- I've learned that our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become
- I've learned that no matter how you try to protect your children, they will eventually get hurt and you will get hurt in the process
- I've learned that credentials on the wall do not make you a decent human being
- I've learned that heroes are the people that do what has to be done, regardless of the consequences
- I've learned that you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret. It could change your life forever
- I've learned that money is a lousy way of keeping score
- I've learned that the people you care about most in life are taken from you too soon

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## What Not to do as a New Homeowner

If you're new to homeownership, you'll definitely want to avoid these boneheaded but easy to prevent mistakes that could cost you big time.

### **1. Not knowing where the main water shut off valve is**

Water from a burst or broken plumbing pipe can spew dozens of gallons into your home's interior in a matter of minutes, soaking everything in sight—including drywall, flooring and valuables. In fact, water damage is one of the most common of all household insurance claims..

### **2. Not calling 811 before digging a hole**

Ah Spring! You're so ready to dig into your new yard and plant bushes and build that fence. But don't - not until you have dialed 811, the national dig safely hotline. The hotline will contact all your local utilities, who will then come to your property - often within a day - to mark the location of underground pipes, cables and wires. This free service keeps you safe and helps avoid costly repairs. In many states, calling 811 is the law, so you'll also avoid fines.

### **3. Not checking the slope of foundation soil**

The ground around your foundation should slope away from your house at least 6 inches over 10 feet. This will make sure that water from rain and melting snow doesn't soak the soil around your foundation walls, building up pressure that can cause leaks and crack your foundation, leading to mega-expensive repairs.

### **4. Not knowing the depth of attic insulation**

This goes hand-in-hand with not knowing where your attic access is located. Find the ceiling hatch, typically a square area framed with molding in a hallway or closet ceiling. Push the hatch cover straight up. Get a ladder and check out the depth of insulation. If you can see the tops of joists, you definitely don't have enough.

### **5. Carelessly drilling into walls**

Hanging shelves, closet systems and artwork means drilling into your walls, but do you know what's back there? Hidden inside your walls are plumbing pipes, ductwork, wires, and cables.

### **6. Cutting down a tree**

The risk isn't worth it. Even small trees can fall awkwardly, damaging your house, property, or your neighbor's property. In some locales, you have to obtain a permit first. Cutting down a tree is an art that best left to a professional tree service. Plus trees help preserve property values and provide shade that cuts energy bills.\

Brought to you by:



### ***Here's a Little Window Cleaning Tip from Sally Peglow***

Mix one heaping tablespoon of cornstarch with a quart of warm water. Wipe windows then wipe with a dry cloth until there's no white streaks.

You'll love your crystal clear windows!



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