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# *The Home Advisor*

News To Help You Save Time And Money

December 2007

*The Home Advisor* is now available online at [www.SCVHomeAdvisor.com](http://www.SCVHomeAdvisor.com)

## What Can't You Live Without?

Can you imagine your life without a computer? According to a recent Pew Research Center Survey, 51% of the adult public now considers a home computer a necessity, not a luxury.

And, say Pew researchers, the list of what we consider necessary is growing. Some of the items on the list have been around for quite a while, but are now deemed necessities by much larger segments of the population. For instance, in 1996 just 32% of adults considered a microwave oven a necessity. In 2006, that percentage was 68. Air conditioning followed the same trend, considered a necessity by only 51% in 1996, but now considered a necessity by 70% of us. Another product that moved up from luxury to necessity by a much larger number was the clothes dryer: In 1996, only 62% felt a clothes dryer was a necessity, but today that number is 83%.

Here are some of the other study findings:

- Ninety-one percent say a car is a necessity.
- Ninety percent say a clothes washer is a necessity.
- Sixty-four percent think a television is a necessity.
- Fifty-nine percent think car air conditioning is a necessity.
- Forty-nine percent now consider a cell phone a necessity.
- Thirty-five percent consider a dishwasher a necessity.
- Thirty-three percent consider cable or satellite TV a necessity.
- Twenty-nine percent consider high-speed Internet a necessity.
- Five percent consider a flat-screen TV a necessity.
- Three percent consider an iPod a necessity. 1

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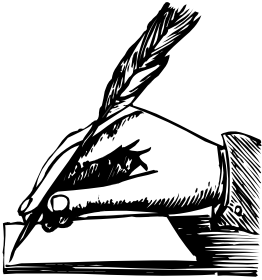
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## *A Letter From Larry.....*

*Dear Friends,*



If you're looking for great gift ideas...

**THE GIFT OF LISTENING:** But, you must *really* listen. No interrupting, no day-dreaming, no planning your response. Just listen.

**THE GIFT OF AFFECTION:** Be generous with appropriate hugs, kisses, pats on the back and handholds. Let these small actions demonstrate the love you have for family and friends.

**THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER:** Clip cartoons. Share articles and funny stories. Your gift will say, "I love to laugh with you."

**THE GIFT OF A WRITTEN NOTE:** It can be a simple "Thanks for the help" note or a full sonnet. A brief, handwritten note may be remembered for a lifetime, and may even change a life.

**THE GIFT OF A COMPLIMENT:** A simple and sincere "You look great in red," "You did a super job" or, "That was a wonderful meal" can make someone's day.

**THE GIFT OF A FAVOR:** Every day, go out of your way to do something kind.

**THE GIFT OF SOLITUDE:** There are times when we want nothing more than to be left alone. Be sensitive to those times and give the gift of solitude to others.

**THE GIFT OF A CHEERFUL DISPOSITION:** The easiest way to feel good is to extend a kind word to someone. It's not that hard to smile and say "Hello" or "Thank You."

**This holiday season, may you give and receive these gifts and more.**

*Larry Gasinski*

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*A Little Humor...*

## **Committee Etiquette**

Having served on various committees, I have drawn up a list of rules: Never arrive on time; this stamps you as a beginner. Don't say anything until the meeting is half over; this stamps you as being wise. Be as vague as possible; this avoids irritating the others. When in doubt, suggest that a sub-committee be appointed. Be the first to move for adjournment; this will make you popular, as it's what everyone is waiting for. – *Harry Chapman*

## Tips For The Holiday Office Gift Swap

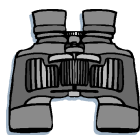
Gift swaps can be a fun holiday office experience, but it's not unusual for people to receive gifts that leave them scratching their heads. It often depends on the kind of swap that's been decided on, but if you're participating in a gift swap of any kind, you'll want to think about what you buy. Here are a few tips:

**Be thoughtful.** Unless you're specifically asked to bring a gag gift, it's safer to buy something you think the recipient will enjoy. Embarrassing a co-worker might not be the best option.

**Follow the spending guidelines.** You could make others uncomfortable if you go over the spending limit.

**If you're buying for a specific person in a name-drawing swap, find out something about that person and try to buy something he or she will appreciate.** If you know the person is a big movie buff, a gift card to a theater might be just the ticket! If you're participating in an anonymous gift exchange, you'll be safer buying a gift card to a type of store that is universally enjoyed, rather than a specialty store.

**If you receive something terrible or embarrassing, laugh and shake it off.** This is a small thing, after all. Don't hold a grudge if you receive something you don't want. Thank the person and move on. We've all made mistakes when it comes to this kind of thing.



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## Did You Know?

### How To Make Mom's (Holi)Day

If you're wondering what to give Mom this holiday season, how about – a day off?

According to a salary.com survey done earlier this year, stay-at-home moms work an average of 92 hours a week. Moms who work full-time outside the home put in 40 hours on the job, and another 40 hours plus nine hours of overtime at home.

And the dollar value placed on all those hours? For stay-at-home moms, an annual salary of \$138,095. For moms who work full-time outside the home, the "at-home" dollar value is \$85,939.

If you can't write Mom a check for one of those amounts, consider creating a certificate that entitles her to a day free of housework, grocery shopping, meal preparation, laundry and other chores. Then, step up to the plate and – make it happen!

## Home Care Tip

To keep your **Electrical System** running efficiently:

- To prevent electrical outages, be sure there are not too many appliances plugged into one circuit.

Check next month for more home care tips.

***Finding your next home is as easy as 1, 2, 3...***

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***Larry Gasinski***



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