



## From the Broker's Desk Nancy C. Rowe

Summer has arrived, school is out and vacations are being planned. Along with making those vacation plans also consider instigating safeguards for the security of your home while you are away. Burglars love to cruise neighborhoods looking for accumulating mail or newspapers, overgrown yards or darkened houses that reflect the absence of the occupant. While high end security systems certainly are deterrents to crime, there are many less expensive ways to provide security for your property. Advise a neighbor the dates that you will be gone, identify anyone that might stop by and provide your contact information for emergency purposes. Should suspicious activity occur, the neighbor would know to contact you or the police. Call for a hold on mail and newspaper deliveries, schedule lawn service and install some timers to turn lights on at night in different rooms. Another option would be to have someone stop by daily to collect mail, take garbage to the road on collection day and take care of your animals. Sometimes a burglar may determine that a house is vacant simply because the barking dog is missing or the air conditioner isn't running on a hot day so keep the property looking as normal as possible. Your home security should be a priority year round so it might be time to conduct an inspection of your home. Dead bolt locks can be picked so consider installing a special lock on the thumb tumbler, reinforce door jambs with heavy duty strike plates and extra-long screws, be sure that the hinges on all outside doors are to the inside and doors fit snugly to prevent prying, secure patio doors with special track locks, add inexpensive wireless door and window alarms, install motion detector lighting via hard wiring or wireless, install home security cameras that can be monitored from your iphone or computer, don't hide keys outside but secure in an exterior lockbox and consider reinforcing the garage passage door as burglars frequently use this access. If you don't have a safety deposit box, consider a home safe secured to a wall or floor and since mail theft is a growing problem install a keyed access mailbox to prevent the theft of personal information. If your vehicle is parked outside, don't leave your garage remote in the car or if your garage door has windows be sure that your garage door rope release isn't accessible should a window be broken out. Burglars are attracted to garages because most contain lots of tools so don't encourage them by leaving your garage door open and displaying the contents. Always verify that doors and windows are locked, keep windows covered especially at night when lights are on in a room and consider the addition of security film for your glass panes to make breaking more difficult. If you have a solid front door consider the addition of a peep hole so you know who is at your door before opening. Burglars may approach the occupant about some unsolicited repair project but they are actually assessing the house for a burglary or if working in pairs, one may work to distract the occupant while the other progresses thru the house in a quick burglary. You can't always prevent a burglary but you can make the task more difficult by implementing some of these suggestions. Remember that the experienced Agents of WILLOW Realty are knowledgeable on many subjects so don't hesitate to contact them with questions or for assistance.

### Here a few ideas to consider to enjoy time-off on a budget.

- Explore locally. People tend to ignore the fun and interesting experiences in their own back yard. Take a little time to research the activities and destinations that draw tourists to your town and/or region and then go enjoy them yourself. Local national parks or other public nature spots in your area can be especially relaxing to explore.
- Book last minute. Most travel-related entities (cruises, sight-seeing tours and even flights) will offer great discounts and/or added perks in the countdown to departure time. They are eager to fill any empty cabins/seats since once the trip starts they are still out the same expense.
- Go against the flow. Don't travel at the popular times and pick less trendy locations. Instead of summer, travel in spring or winter. Thinking of Mexico, go to Guatemala instead or choose Budapest over Paris. A trip off the beaten path can still offer a great experience with a smaller price tag.



## Cheese Potato Packet © TasteofHome.com

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|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 medium potatoes, sliced    | 4 ounces process cheese, cubed |
| 3 tablespoons water          | 3 tablespoons butter, cubed    |
| 2 bacon strips, diced        |                                |
| 1 small onion, thinly sliced |                                |



Place potatoes and water in a microwave-safe bowl. Cover and microwave on high for 2-3 minutes or until almost tender. Meanwhile, in a small skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until partially cooked but not crisp. Remove to paper towels to drain. Drain potatoes. On a double thickness of greased heavy-duty foil (about 18 in. square), layer half of the potatoes, bacon, onion, cheese and butter. Repeat layers. Fold foil around potato mixture and seal tightly. Grill, covered, over medium heat for 12-14 minutes or until potatoes are tender and cheese is melted. Carefully remove foil to allow steam to escape.

**A truly rich man is one whose children run into his arms when his hands are empty. ~Author Unknown**



**HAPPY FATHER'S DAY - Sunday, June 18th**

## Ways To Organize Your Garage

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- \* Use a slat wall to hang and organize smaller accessories and Add as many hooks and baskets as you need. Or try a pegboard wall instead.
- \* Have a spare chest of drawers hanging around? Turn 'em into a workbench.
- \* Conserve space with a fold-up worktable. This is a great option for people with small spaces \*or\* those who don't plan to use their garage as a workshop very frequently.
- \* Hang up a magnetic strip to hold screwdrivers, wrenches, scissors or paintbrushes--anything with some metal. Keep every tool in its proper place with outlines.
- \* Create extra space and store bikes vertically or hang them from the ceiling. Just make sure the hooks are secure!
- \* Store screws and nails in old gum containers.
- \* Use slices of PVC pipe attached to a wall to hold your gardening tools.
- \* Put a pallet on edge to work as sports equipment storage.
- \* Hang your fishing rods from a ceiling rack to keep them out of the way.
- \* Of course the easiest way to organize scrap wood is to dump it in a bucket.
- \* Utilize the space above your garage door with mounted shelving. This would be a good place to store holiday decorations and other things you don't need all that frequently.
- \* Painting a concrete floor makes it easier to clean and helps protects your garage from mildew. If you stain it, you can paint it again! It's pretty darn easy.
- \* Consolidate leftover paint into jars. You'll have so much more space!
- \* Store your spray paint in a shoe organizer.
- \* Turn a corner of your garage into a mudroom. Have a "no shoes allowed in the house" policy? Maximize floor space and store them on a rack instead of the ground or use a stack of vintage crates. An old bottle holder is great for storing scarves, hats, and mittens. Install a set of old school lockers and assign one to each member of your family.
- \* Create designated parking spaces for your children's vehicles using tape. If you really want to house your children's driving toys in style, make them their own mini garage. This way they're protected from the elements but not taking up space in your \*actual\* garage.

