

Newsletter At Home with Dawn



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Dawn's Favorites and Recommendations

Restaurants

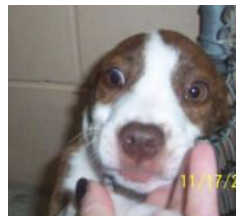
Heirlooms in Mandarin & St. Johns County- Wonderful place for lunch (Mandarin location only) and supper dinner choice (St. Johns Cty location).

Charity

Jacksonville School for Children with Autism (JSCA)

Michelle Dunham, JSCA Executive Director, 997-0027
jaxschoolchildrenautism@comcast.net or mail a Contribution to P. O. Box 10915-109 Baymeadows Rd. PBM #53, Jacksonville, Fl. 32256.

Safe Animal Shelter, P.O. Box 65597 Orange Park, Fl., 32065 - phone 904-276-7233- This is "Gizmo" and he is a wonderful little puppy looking for a loving home.



November is here and 2007 will soon be over!!

Those of us in Real Estate will be glad to see a new year. Our Real Estate market is one we have not seen in many years, even though this is the time to buy, our homes are staying on the market longer and the days of "top dollar" are few and far between.

Buying!! Yes it is now the time to buy. If you need a second home or want a long term investment property then now is the time. "Flipping" has faded but the long term investor will be smart to invest in Real Estate now and increase his portfolio. There are over 11,000 homes on the MLS at this time.



So grab that cup of coffee....

Recipe *Mississippi Sin*

This is a recipe from my sister. Having been in Mississippi at Christmas I got to enjoy this.

Slice off top of bread (Hawaiian round bread) or any other bread. Hollow out inside. Mix 1 ½ cups sour cream, 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, 8 oz. Cream cheese, 1/3 cup chopped green onion, ½ cup chopped ham, 1/3 cup chopped green chilies (optional). Mix and pour inside of bread. Put top on bread, wrap in foil and bake at 350% for 1 hour. Use pieces of bread for dippers.

Yummy!!

Places Near: Avondale



You do not have to travel far for this one! Avondale is a wonderful part of Jacksonville. With it's quaint little street of boutiques, antique shops, bistros, restaurants, gift shops and beautiful historical homes this is a place you will truly enjoy spending a day or afternoon.

I always plan my trip to the Avondale area around lunch so I can eat at my favorite place which is *Biscotti's*. Located on St. Johns Ave. in the heart of Avondale, Biscotti's has a Lobster Ruben special for lunch on Wednesday. So I try to make Wednesday the day for Avondale.

There are a number of really good lunch and dinner places in Avondale. The Brick Restaurant is another good place to eat as well as Sterling's. If you are looking for really casual try The Fox Restaurant which has been around for almost 60 years. All of these are on St. Johns Ave. I do not think you can get a bad meal at any of them.

Next door to Biscotti's is Peterbrook Chocolate so if you pass up dessert at Biscotti's, walk into Peterbrook and

have chocolate covered popcorn (another favorite of mine).

If you enjoy boutique shopping you will love all the little shops on St. Johns Ave. "Woodward's Antiques and Gifts" always has neat items for your home. "Got to Have It" has the latest in gifts for kids, Croatia Boutique has every type of iron design for the home and yard and Avondale Gift Boutique has great wedding gifts, Christmas ornaments, and seasonal gifts. There is also a wonderful art gallery, "Roberts Art Gallery", take a stroll thru their gallery to see who is the latest artist on display.

Cross the street from Biscotti's and Woodward's is "Cowford Traders", they have just about everything for everybody from purses to cards. One of my favorites is "Design Additions". The vases on my mantle were purchased here. The last time I was in there I bought several little Christmas items for friends at \$7.00 each. (I will not say what they are as my friends read my newsletter). There is the nicest lady that works in there and she always has a great selection of slides for necklaces.

You cannot leave Avondale without visiting Anita's Garden Shop. Anita's is located across the street from Avondale Boutique. This garden shop is unique and has beautiful wreaths for any time of the year. Their ivy is the best in town if you like live plants.

So put on your walking shoes, go with an appetite and enjoy this little bit of Jacksonville!



Places Far: Greece

I started my travels in Greece by flying into Athens. We left Athens for a tour of Ancient Greece including Sparta, Olympia, Delphi and Meteora. We then returned to Athens for several days before taking a seven day cruise to the islands and Turkey.

One of the most interesting parts of Greece was Meteora “suspended in air”) (see picture) This area is where the Monks live. If you visit here the women must wear a skirt or dress. You are not allowed inside with pants or shorts and there is a small admission charge.

I loved Athens. I found it to be a great walking city. It also has one of the cleanest underground train systems I have seen. Even at night walking from Plaka to our hotel we always felt safe. Our hotel, Royal Olympic, had a great location. We were across from the Temple of Zeus, within walking distance from the Acropolis and Plaka (Old Town) which is the central shopping district and many, many restaurants.

We left Athens for a 7 day cruise of the islands and Turkey. I bought a wonderful wool shawl in Makinos. I took a picture (right) of the lady that made the shawl at her loom.

While visiting the islands we saw wonderful prayer beads for your home. All Greeks have them in their homes, so I bought them for my home.



Prayer Beads



Wool Shawl from the lady in picture



My sister and I in Greece.

Below is one of the clifftop monasteries of Meteora. The Monks still use baskets they sit in and go by rope from one side of the rock to another. It is quite a sight to see. Today only six monasteries survive as museums. They are sparsely occupied by a few monks and nuns but they offer a rare glimpse of Orthodox monastic life.



H o t e l

One of the Greek Hotels we stayed in (not the one in Athens)

Hotel in Athens: Royal Olympic Hotel, 8-34 Ath. Diakou Str., 1117 43 Athens, Greece. www.royalolympic.com

Real Estate Trends

Real Estate in Jacksonville 2007!

Real Estate is not what it was in previous years. But now **is the time to buy a home**. We are now in a "Buyer's Market".

Interest rates continue to be good-somewhere around 6.5%. If you are interested in that "second home", condo at the beach, or maybe you would like to retire and scale down, then now is the time!



I have been busy this year earning new certifications. As the "baby boomers" age the retired couples are increasing so I am now a **SRES (Senior Real Estate Specialist)**. This does not mean I am a Senior! If you have a parent needing to scale down or if you or someone you know is 55 or older, we now have a number of communities that are catering to the 55 and older group. Reverse Mortgages are also something worth looking into if you have a parent with a home that is paid for and they would like to stay in their home as long as possible.

I have also just completed my certification for the Professional level of **Interior Redesign and Real Estate Staging**. "Statistics tell the story," per Becky Harmon, ASID designer and president of

Transformations. "A staged home can sell in half the time and as much as 10 percent can be added to the selling price".

As many of you know I have always tried to keep on the "cutting edge" of all things to do with Real Estate and in the marketing of my homes. I am always ready to go the "extra mile" to get the right buyer for the right home. Just as home inspection has become a standard practice in recent years, Home Staging services is in high demand. Staging is the process of preparing any home for sale regardless of price or location. Most buyers make up their minds within the first **ten seconds** of entering a home and spend the rest of their visit reaffirming their decision. An investment in home staging is always less than the first price reduction a seller may have to take if the home is not presented at it's best. Home Staging makes the home look cozy, colorful and inviting.

All the rules of redesign apply to staging except with staging the focus is on streamlining and depersonalizing. If you have been in your home 10 years or longer you need to be "redesigned" per the experts. Redesigning is focusing on your hobbies or maybe a theme. It is working with what you have "your style" whether it be traditional, contemporary or eclectic. Staging and Redesign are addressing traffic patterns, proper furniture spacing, working with floor plans, choosing and understanding color, choosing and hanging art, clutter control, rules of composition with accessories and finally lighting.

"**Home Staging and Redesign Solutions**" and "**Home Staging and Design Unlimited**" are "**Two Companies With One Goal**" so if you find yourself, your friends or family in need of selling a home,

please call me and I will be happy to stage your home. If you would like to have us work with you on redesigning or updating your home please call us. We will also be your personal shoppers for any and all accessories and furniture.

My priorities have not changed! My number one priority will always be Real Estate. This is just another avenue I can offer to each and every one of you. So I hope you will call when you need me for Real Estate or Redesign.

As always, please remember, I live by your referrals. The finest compliment I can ever receive is a referral from my friends and customers. If you enjoyed this newsletter please pass it on to your friends and relatives! If you would like past issues please email me and I will get them to you.



Mandarin Brick Pool Home-

3 bedroom 2 bath, screen pool overlooking lake- \$349,900



Waterleaf

4 bedroom plus bonus room on lake- 3086sq.\$359,900