



John and Thelma Jarvis
Sales Representatives

MAKING THE JOURNEY AS REWARDING AS THE DESTINATION

How Green is Your Gym?

A Health and Exercise Remedy Made for Muskoka

Recently, research has proven what we have all known intuitively for years- that time spent with nature increases your energy, improves your mood, and renews your soul. There is scientific data to back up the ancient practises of using nature to restore our bodies and minds. In Japan, where a lot of brain research is conducted, they use the practise of “forest bathing”, which is a 40 minute walk in the woods to lower cortisol levels, improve sleep and reduce symptoms of stress and depression.

Literally, taking in the lush scents of a natural surrounding- lake, air, flowers, fresh dirt, foliage- jumpstarts your body’s limbic system, which is the brain’s key emotional centre. It regulates the fight or flight response and is involved in the expression of emotions, memory formation and retrieval. When you breathe the air close to nature, you’re also more likely to inhale phytoncides. These are essential oils released from plants and trees, such as oak and pine, that promote the function of natural killer cells in the body, which are key to the immune system, and are being studied as a cancer treatment.

Japanese researchers found that increased killer cell activity lasted for up to seven days after a day trip to a forested area. The potential of this is vast. It’s not far-fetched to prescribe a nature getaway as part of a regular course of treatment for disease.

This information makes doing your workout outside like “exercise squared”. Exercising outdoors increases the benefits significantly. It is also shown that people who exercise in nature find more willingness to stick to their programs, and a study comparing treadmill and outdoor runners, found that outdoor exercisers were less fatigued and more invigorated than in their indoor counterparts.

Landscape architect, Shawn Gallagher (416) 427-7342) promotes the use of natural and landscaped features for use in exercise routines and specializes in designing landscapes that facilitate working out. His work for professional athletes in Muskoka got him started on finding ways to conduct a workout suited to the person’s individual needs, right on the cottage property, rather than spending time in a basement gym or garage, exercising in an artificial environment.

This month’s **Muskoka Life** magazine has an article about exercising in the outdoors at our cottage. John and I are featured, using our TRX bands for push-ups, flies and other resistance training and stretching exercises, suspended from our entry pergola. If you have not seen this article, email us, and I will attach a copy for you. Thelma@royallepage.ca



John and Thelma's Helpful Tips

Reusable Container Gardening

Consider using hostas in container gardens for your deck and dock. You can combine varieties that are more yellow, white and green, soft green or deep blue, for a gorgeous contrast. We plant ours in molded peat pots with many layers of newspaper in the bottom, to retain moisture. They are lush all season and they handle the winds off the lake very well.

The best thing is that, come fall, we simply move them all to a low lying section of our property and cover them in leaves for the winter. This gives them the protection they require from the freeze thaw cycle. In the spring, we just uncover them, and put them back in place, and before long, they are a gorgeous profusion of lush foliage again. Our current hostas have been in their pots for three years. I like the more natural colours creating a calm environment on the lakeside of our property, and I also like not having to purchase annuals every year.



While you are In Muskoka for Holidays

I know you do not need jobs to do while you are here, however this is a good time to be able to pop into the local Municipal offices and make sure the documentation you have for your cottage property is complete.

Check your files to make sure you have:

- your survey
- your septic sketch and inspection documents
- your final inspection and occupancy permit for cottage and boathouse
- documentation about whether you have an SRA or not
- documentation about any Rights of Way - (T/W and S/T, deeded or not)

Voice Exercise

We recently discovered that your voice requires regular exercise, just as your body does. And like your body, it does not stop working without exercise, but it does work better, and ages better, when worked out regularly. Age gradually lessens the volume, the pitch range, and intonation of your voice. Vigorous exercise can maintain or restore it significantly. Practising loud sustained sounds, as well as sustained high notes and low notes gives your voice a workout and keeps your vocal chords tight. They tend to bow out with age, and have more difficulty moving together tightly to form a clear variety of sounds. There is an excellent program called LSVT, which is designed specifically for individuals who require voice therapy. This is a reliable and proven program to assist people who have had a stroke, have Parkinson's, brain injury, cerebral palsy, down syndrome, or other condition affecting their speaking. I would be happy to talk with you about it, if you know someone it could benefit. 705-645-2110

Consider Adding Art to Your Landscape

We get daily enjoyment from our garden sculptures. I think that art is very uplifting, and having it in a natural environment makes it very special. We position our garden sculptures so that they can be seen from a variety of locations around the property, and from the cottage interior. Every time we drive in the driveway, a metal heron in a garden of ferns is the first thing we see. I find myself pausing the car to linger on that view. At the kitchen sink, I find myself leaning on the countertop to gaze at the garden, focusing on the sculpture there. As we look towards the lake, a pair of full-sized metal Canadian geese flying off the top of the boathouse delight us.



You could consider ordering a sculpture now, as a thoughtful Christmas gift. In July, the Artful Garden display, near Bracebridge, (July 21 to August 12 –daily 705-645-8618)) provides a wide variety of garden art for you to select from. There are also a number of excellent artists in Muskoka who will make custom pieces for you, and Northern Iron, (705-487-7373)located on Hwy 11 just north of Barrie, has beautiful and well-priced metal artwork.



Refresh Your Linens

It is amazing how sumptuous linens can make even a small older Bunkie look so romantic and inviting. White cotton can be bleached, and so will always be fresh and white. Leaving sheets out to dry in the sun, as they did in the old days, also whitens them. At one turn of the century Lake Joseph cottage, the owners said Grandmother used to lay the sheets outside to dry on herbs, like lavender and basil, to give them a delicate scent

Let the Sun Power Your Evening

I have a friend who used her solar lights inside at night when the power goes off during a storm. She sticks them in a jar or bottle, and they give off plenty of ‘free light’. She puts at least one in each room during the time the power is off. They are safe to use and cheaper than batteries. Solar lights are available inexpensively at Dollar stores, Zellers, Canadian Tire, Independent, and Home Hardware. Keep a few somewhere outside, so they are powered and available when you need them.

Could You Use an Inexpensive Kitchen or Bathroom Makeover?

Kitchens and bathrooms can make a big difference in both the appeal of a cottage and in how well the cottage functions for your daily use.

Just recently, we brainstormed with some friends and found very inexpensive ways to make big differences in their kitchen and bathrooms, involving more paint and elbow grease, than dollars.

One part of the plan was to put the toilet on an angle, using a toilet we found at Home Depot that has a triangular back, which fits into a corner, thus allowing room for a much larger shower, without having to steal any space from another room. This plan did not require any plumbing to be moved to a new spot, and so was very inexpensive to implement.

Their kitchen was getting the “tuxedo treatment”, by having the cabinetry all painted black, adding some new nickel hardware, and crown molding to the cabinet, and keeping the existing counter tops. Who doesn’t own a little black dress, and the concept is no different for a kitchen. Black paint makes even aging cabinetry look good. In their kitchen, the black cabinetry will be striking with the aged pine on the floors and walls.

All other bathrooms are just getting an updated look with the wood cabinetry being painted, mirrors being framed with painted 1x4’s, the walls being freshened with creamy paint, and the drywall ceilings getting a treatment with applied batons, for added texture and the look of traditional board and baton.

“Fixtures” in Port Carling may be a source of inspiration as they have a showroom that is filled with decorative hardware, high quality fixtures, and bathroom accessories. Sometimes all you need is one high end piece, to kick your design up a notch.



The Best Tomatoes

My friend Emila, made the most delicious roasted tomato dish, which her guests devoured in record time. Here is her recipe from the Barefoot Contessa . It will be a hit at any dinner party.

Roasted Tomato Caprese Salad - 2008 Barefoot Contessa Back to Basics

Ingredients

12 plum tomatoes, halved lengthwise, seeds (not cores) removed
1/4 cup good olive oil, plus more for drizzling
1 1/2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 large garlic cloves, minced
2 teaspoons sugar
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
16 ounces fresh salted mozzarella
12 fresh basil leaves, julienned

Directions

Preheat the oven to 275 degrees F. Arrange the tomatoes on a sheet pan, cut sides up, in a single layer. Drizzle with 1/4 cup of olive oil and the balsamic vinegar. Sprinkle with the garlic, sugar, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Roast for 2 hours until the tomatoes are concentrated and begin to caramelize. Allow the tomatoes to cool to room temperature.

Cut the mozzarella into slices slightly less than 1/2-inch thick. If the slices of mozzarella are larger than the tomatoes, cut the mozzarella slices in half.

Layer the tomatoes alternately with the mozzarella on a platter and scatter the basil on top.

Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper and drizzle lightly with olive oil.

Serve at room temperature.



New Restaurant on the Water

There is a brand new restaurant called "Muskoka Memories" at Patterson Kaye Lodge. It is located on the water of the Muskoka River. Try a luncheon or an evening meal there. I like to sit outside overlooking the water. Patterson Kaye Resort and Spa (705-646-4169) has mostly retained the charming ambience of an old fashioned Muskoka Lodge, and will bring back fond memories from your past in Muskoka.



Here is what our references say...

*Thelma is honest, professional, thorough, kind, very responsive, and a great negotiator. We recommend her highly.
Olga and Peter*

*I have no reservations about highly recommending Thelma Jarvis's real estate services. She always went the extra mile professionally and graciously. Her involvement in the sale of our property was extremely positive and made the entire process pleasant and ultimately successful.
Cheryl*

We are ready to work for you.
Call us for all your real estate needs.

Thelma and John Jarvis

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We make it our business to know the Muskoka Real Estate market, thoroughly.

*We are never too busy to receive your referrals.
Count on us to work hard for your family & friends.*

