



"Call me today for a complimentary Design Audit!"

Mark Bouquet

Owner, *Creative Carpet, Inc.*

530-799-3338

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Attention Wanda Romano!

You are this month's Mystery Winner!
We have a \$10.00 gift certificate to Blockbuster reserved just for you! Come by our store to claim your prize!

Creative Carpet, Inc.
19420 S. LaGrange Road
Mokena, IL 60448

Phone (708)479-8600

CREATIVE CARPET, INC.

Home Advisor

Reliable news for healthy living, saving money, and having fun! January 2009

Dear Friends,

I trust that you had a terrific Christmas and have had a great start to the New Year.

I don't know about you, but time just seems to fly by any more. The pace at which we live our lives seems to get quicker each year. My wife Tammy and I are amazed that one of our five boys was just recently married. It seems like just yesterday that we were watching his little league games – or wait, was that one of the other four!☺ You get the picture. Life is hectic and life is short. When it gets right down to it, your family, friends, and health are what is most important. I lost both my father and my brother within three months of each other, this past year. We are not guaranteed a single minute, so make each minute count. In 2009 I hope you are able to take the time to pause and reflect on the things that are most important to you and get the most enjoyment out of them.

For me in 2009, one of my goals is to deliver to you, through this newsletter, encouragement, entertainment, good news and trusted advice that you can enjoy and profit from. Each time I write The Home Advisor I work hard at putting myself in your shoes and ask myself, "What can I say and write to you that will make a difference in some way in your life?" It means a lot to me to get your continued comments, letters and cards telling me I am doing a good job of it. Your continued referrals and repeat business means so much to me as well. We are in the "people" business. The products are really secondary. Sure, they are the reasons to connect, or re-connect, but the trust you place in Creative Carpet is so appreciated. So, here is a big 'Thank You' to all of you.

With that said, let's dig into this month's issue... We're smack dab in the middle of winter, so check out the article on Winter Home Maintenance Tips. Also, with the recent election and the economic news, our troops have taken a bit of a back seat in the media. It's important that we remember them as they fight for our country, our freedom and our safety. After all, they've truly "got our back." I've included an article on staying in touch with our troops and giving them our much needed support.

This month Creative Carpet is hosting a testimonial contest! The grand prize is a beautiful new area rug! Check out the insert for details!

And as always, if you or someone in your sphere of influence needs a trusted advisor in selecting new flooring or area rugs, I'm committed to being your Floor Covering Consultant For Life! Call me and schedule a complimentary Design Audit! Or pass this newsletter along to someone in your sphere of influence who you think could use my help. My team and I will bend over backwards, turn handstands, and walk over hot coals to give your referral World Class Service...and make you look like a knight in shining armor for referring us!

I hope you enjoy this issue! There is more good stuff inside so enjoy and I will speak with you soon.

Your Friend,

Mark Bouquet

Did You Know...

Creative Carpet now has a new Layaway Plan!

Most young people today have never even heard of "the layaway plan", but we think it would do us all some good to bring back the time-payment plan that our parents and grandparents used to use. What's old is new again!

Before the days of credit cards, many folks purchased clothing, furniture and all different kinds of household items on layaway. It's simple. Make a down-payment, lock in your price and whatever sale or special we are running at the time, and then make your monthly payments. Imagine the satisfaction of having your new flooring completely paid for by the time it's installed, rather than being ready for a change by the time you get it paid off.

Of course, we still offer a Zero Down, Zero Payments and Zero Interest for 12 Months for those who prefer, but we wanted to add another option for those folks who are not comfortable with extra debt.

Call me or stop by our showroom right away and we'll get started on your home's brand new look! 708-479-8600

-Mark B.

Mega Trivia Contest!

Who Wants To Win Dinner for 2 at T.G.I. Fridays or Olive Garden? Take our Trivia Challenge and you could win too!

Every person who e-mails in the correct answer by the end of the month will be entered into a drawing to win a \$40 gift-certificate to T.G.I. Fridays or Olive Garden!

This month's MegaTrivia question....

What singer referred to his group of Hollywood friends as the "Rat Pack?"

A) Perry Como, B) Frank Sinatra, C) Bing Crosby, D) Tony Bennett.

Take your best guess, then e-mail your answer to MarkJr@CreativeCarpetInc.com. Or call Mark Jr. at (708) 479-8600. Remember, your chances of winning are better than you think!

The lighter side for the New Year.....

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other.

—Anonymous

Youth is when you're allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve.

Middle age is when you're forced to.

—Bill Vaughn

An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.

—Bill Vaughn

If in the last few years you haven't discarded a major opinion or acquired a new one, check your pulse. You may be dead.

—Frank Gelett Burgess

Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life trying to save.

—Will Rogers

What some people mistake for the high cost of living is really the cost of high living.

—Doug Larson

About Staying Well

10 ways to relieve stress

These days who doesn't need a little stress relief? We all seem to be hurrying some place important most of the time. Here are 10 stress-busting tips from the University of Minnesota's Center for Spirituality & Healing:

- Be completely present for whatever you are doing.
- Include something you consider beautiful in your life on a daily basis, for example, fresh flowers, etc.
- As often as possible, participate in activities you enjoy.
- Keep your pace relaxed—that includes when walking, working and eating.
- Take a break after meals to relax.
- Take notice of the tension in your body during the day. Breathe deeply and gently stretch any area that feels tense.
- When you catch your mind racing and worrying, breathe deeply and gently shift your focus to something in the moment.

Work Tips

Have patience with yourself

Managers are often told to be patient with their charges, and that's usually sound advice. But managers are not often told to have patience with themselves.

People in charge can be hard on themselves, seeing their own flaws at everything. But finding a flaw in yourself should be viewed as an opportunity to right something that is wrong, rather than a sentencing to a lifetime of "Flaw-Dom."

"St. Francis de Sales once said, "Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them—every day begin the tasks anew."

Local Business of the Month



Accessories, Detailing & Electronics
Everything for your Car, Truck & SUV!

This month's spotlight is on Tom Nemecek the Owner/Operator of CarSmart!.....

The Nemecek family has been a leader in the automotive aftermarket industry since 1964 when Tom's father, John Nemecek, launched Ziebart Rustproofing in Chicago. CarSmart was created in the early 1990's with the intention of going far beyond the physical protection of your vehicle by assembling a team of experts, using Best of Class Products & Extensive Warranties with a comprehensive offering including: Vehicle Audio/Video, Alarms/Remote Start, All Vehicle Electronic Accessories, Truck & Car Accessories, Rhino Bed Liners, Glass Repair, Window Tinting along with their foundation of Undercoating and Rust Protection. CarSmart also offers our area the most comprehensive Detailing experience with "Nook & Cranny" Cleaning, Polishing, Paintless Dent Repair, Interior and Paint Repair. If you are thinking of your vehicle and wondering, "I wonder who does" just assume CarSmart can help.

Happy New Year from CarSmart!
It's still cold enough for a Remote Start!

For a \$25 discount on any Remote Start just say "Creative Sent Us!"

Showroom:
20260 S. LaGrange Rd, Frankfort
Phone: 815.464.6600
Service Center: 9700 W. 197th St.,
Mokena
Or Visit us online at
www.becarsmart.com

Just for Fun!

Here are some state laws that are allegedly still on the books:

- ✓ In Minnesota, it is illegal to cross state lines with a duck on your head.
- ✓ It is illegal to walk down a street in Maine with your shoelaces untied.
- ✓ In Los Angeles, it is unlawful to hunt for moths under a street light.
- ✓ In Pennsylvania, it is illegal for a man to purchase alcohol without written consent from his wife.
- ✓ In Alaska, it is illegal to look at a moose from the window of an aircraft or another flying vehicle. It is also illegal to push a live moose out of a moving aircraft.
- ✓ In Idaho, a citizen is forbidden by law to give another citizen a box of candy that weighs more than 50 lbs.
- ✓ In Texas it is illegal to take more than three sips of beer at a time while standing.
- ✓ In Ohio, women are prohibited from wearing patent leather shoes in public.
- ✓ In North Dakota, it is illegal to lie down and fall asleep with your shoes on.
- ✓ By law, everybody in Vermont must take at least one bath a week.

January/February Special

Are you putting off getting your new flooring because you don't want the hassle of removing the old carpet and lugging it out to the garbage? How about the thought of moving all that heavy furniture? Well, for this month's special, we will move your furniture, take up your old carpet, and haul it away. What is our special price for that??? It is absolutely **FREE**. I absolutely *hate* the small print, so here's my only exception in regular print – I can only make this offer for *regular carpet take up* and I can't include pool tables or pianos (certain items require professional movers). If you don't need your furniture moved or your old flooring taken up, you can trade that offer if for a free upgrade on your pad. Your choice!!!

How to stay in touch with a loved one stationed in the Middle East

Families of military personnel stationed in the Middle East cope with the separation in different ways. Most say they feel better about it when they are doing something.

Sandy Doell, author of *Mom's Field Guide: What You Need to Know to Make It Through Your Loved One's Deployment* (Warrior Angel Press or download at momsfieldguide.com), says, "You can bury your head in the sand or you can become involved."

Although it's the author's son who is deployed, your loved one could be a brother or other relative, a boyfriend, or even a neighbor you would like to remember.

Some tips for supporting the troops:

- * Letters are the item most requested, so write often. A stick of gum tucked into a letter is a nice touch.
- * Allow plenty of time for packages to arrive before birthdays or holidays. Usually it takes about two weeks for a priority box.
- * Food is a welcome gift. Tuna, salsa, and cheese are popular supplements, along with the traditional candy and cookies. Kool-Aid is appreciated in areas where water quality is poor.
- * Help to break up periods of boredom with books, crosswords, board games, and Frisbees.
- * Keep a list of discussion topics near the phone. When you get a 4 a.m. phone call, you'll be ready.
- * The Red Cross can help make arrangements for your loved one to come home in an emergency.

Negativity breeds negativity

A study has found that negative opinions exert especially strong influence on others in a group, and those who had positive opinions were more susceptible to influence than those who held negative opinions. In the Indiana University study, consumers were given information about a product and allowed to form their own opinions. Researchers found that those who had negative opinions were likely to become even more negative if they were asked to participate in a group discussion. "Consumer attitudes toward products and services are frequently influenced by others around them. Social networks, such as those found on MySpace and Facebook suggest that these influences will continue to be drivers of individual consumer attitudes as society becomes more interconnected," the researchers say. Given the strong influence of negative information, marketers may need to expend extra resources to counteract the effects of negative word of mouth in online chatrooms, blogs and offline media."

Winter Maintenance Tips For Your Home

- Remove screens from your windows and install storm windows
- Insulate the pipes around your home including crawl spaces, attics, and outside.
- Make sure all members of your family are familiar with the gas main valve, water main valve, and other appliance valves
- Clean the exhaust duct for your clothes dryer, and the space underneath the dryer
- Test all the ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets inside and outside your home.
- Clean your gutters and downspouts
- Inspect the water hoses for your washer, refrigerator, ice machine, and dishwasher for cracks or bubbles.
- Check your attic for proper ventilation
- In the kitchen, clean the exhaust hood and air filter for your stove.
- Keep firewood stacked at least 30 feet away from your house

Bank charges: You might be surprised

A lot of people never request a fee schedule from their bank, thinking they know what the deal is because they know what the monthly service fee or insufficient funds charges are. But, as many banks seems to be slipping in every conceivable charge without fully informing customers, it's probably a good idea to look at what your bank does and does not charge you for. Here's a list of things to look out for:

- Are you sure your online bill pay service is free? Many banks offer deals where only the first two months are free—followed by a monthly charge thereafter.
- Use of ATMs in foreign countries can often top \$5 per transaction at banks.
- Check enclosure fees. This is for return of canceled checks, images, debits or substitute checks.
- Copies of deposit slips or checks. Banks often charge \$2 and more per copy.
- Insufficient funds and returned items fees. On the first day, many banks charge an “occurrence” fee, which can be in the range of \$20 to \$35, and on subsequent days when your account is not balanced, an often higher fee for each item is charged. So on the first day, you might be charged \$20, and on the second and following days you would incur \$35 per item.
- If you have overdraft protection, it might save money if you find yourself in hot water, but often banks charge fees for the transfer, for instance \$10 for moving funds between linked accounts.
- Some banks charge “research” fee. For instance, one major U.S. bank lists its research charges at \$20 per hour with a \$20 minimum. “Statement balancing” is listed under research.
- Automated telephone inquiry charges. Some banks allow a set number of queries per month, and charge per call thereafter.

WARNING

Don't visit any flooring dealer until you call for a FREE consumer guide.

You will learn...

- 4 predatory sales tactics
- 7 costly misconceptions about flooring
- 5 questions to ask a dealer before buying

Call (708) 479-8600

New Friends And Clients! *Meet our new clients...*

Billy Beechy
Lynna Dahlgren
Kim Dykstra
Debbie Lesiak
Scott McCarthy
Stephen O'Leary
Ray Peters
Gene and Kathy Sullivan
Louise Weislo
Greg Langosh
Carl Oleson
Alisa Clancy
Leslie Cosich
Mark Nicks
Jay and Esther Peters
Mark Rienbold
Rudy and Aida Wolfer

Welcome back to our returning clients...

Jim and Sis Abraham
Mary Brown
Jean Fugo
Ron and Mary Bogdan
Doreen Kieffer
John and Diane Liptak
Kenneth Mulheran
Bob Judge

A gigantic THANK YOU to all who referred us last month...

Wade Beechy
Tim and Tracy Cook
Emy Giertych
Jerry Sullivan
Pam Bengston
Patti Vandenberg

Get A Night Out At The Movies For 2 With My Referral Rewards Program

As you probably know, advertising is very expensive. Instead of paying the newspaper or other place to advertise, I'd rather reward you. So I've assembled my **Referral Rewards Program**. Every time you refer someone who becomes a client, I will send you a gift certificate for two passes to the Marcus Theater. And Hey! What's a movie without popcorn? The gift certificate will also cover a big box of hot, buttered popcorn and sodas!

Information About Us

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*Enter the CREATIVE CARPET Testimonial Sweepstakes
and..*

**Win A 5x7 Kathy Ireland Area Rug,
Or Dinner For 2 At T.G.I. Fridays or
Olive Garden!!**

...And That's Just The Beginning!!!

Dear Friends and Clients,

It has been a real pleasure working with all of you, providing floor covering service for you, your friends and loved ones, and being a part of making your house a "home".

I just love it when I hear one of you tell me how pleased you are with your floor covering. It makes my day when I hear stories about how your new family room carpet is so plush and comfortable that you like to lay down on it to watch TV; or how the new laminate floor in your kitchen has made it bright and warm; or how your guests rave about your beautiful new area rug; or how your new carpeting makes your house finally feel like a home.

Your stories are my inspiration. And now...

I Want To Tell Your Story To The Whole World!

We want you to help us spread the word about the good things that Creative Carpet has been able to do for you. You'll have the chance to tell us your story, and have fun doing it! So we have put together the...

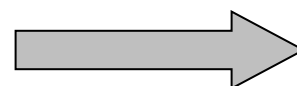
CREATIVE CARPET Testimonial Sweepstakes!

How To Enter:

To enter, just provide a **written** testimonial. You have the option of providing **voice** testimonial, but only if you want to.

Instructions For written testimonial

1. Write or type your testimonial. It can be long or short, funny or serious...this is your story.
2. Each entry must have the following: Name, address, phone number, occupation.
3. Mail or hand deliver your testimonial to Creative Carpet at 19420 S. LaGrange Road, Mokena, IL 60448.



Here are some ideas to get you started on your testimonial...

- **How your new flooring beautified your home; made your house feel like a “home,” etc.**
- **What your friends and relatives said when they saw your new flooring.**
- **Installation professionalism** (were you impressed with the appearance of your installer, his professionalism, job cleanup, attention to detail, etc.?)
- **Client Service** (Did we go the extra mile for you? How? Was our staff courteous? Were you made to feel welcome when you visited our showroom?)
- **Your worst experience with floor covering** (How did Creative Carpet do better?)
- **Do-it-yourself/big box stores** (How did working with Creative Carpet compare with a previous do-it-yourself job? Or with working with a big box store?)
- **Education** (How our client education helped you make the right selection. Did you like the free “Design Audit”? Was your salesperson attentive to your needs?)

Our Grand Prize Winner Will Receive:

- **A luxurious, brand-spanking-new 5 X 7 area rug!** (Come by the store to see it in person!)
- **\$25 gift certificate for Creative Carpet!**
- **\$10 Starbucks gift certificate!**
- **Photo taken for feature story in upcoming newsletter!**

First-Runner Up Winner Will Receive:

- **Dinner for 2 at your choice of T.G.I. Fridays or Olive Garden!**
- **\$25.00 gift certificate for Creative Carpet!**
- **\$10 Starbucks gift certificate!**
- **Photo taken for story in upcoming newsletter!**

2nd through 15th Runner Ups Will Receive:

- **\$5 gift certificate to Starbucks!**
- **Photo taken for story in upcoming newsletter!**

Remember! Your deadline to enter is *January 31, 2009*. We must have your **written testimonial** no later than that date.

Sincerely,

Mark Bouquet

P.S. Win the Grand prize of a luxurious 5 X 7 area rug! Hurry And Enter Today! You may choose any area rug that we have in stock.

P.P.S. 16 Winners In All!!