



MICHELLE RIOS

KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY

3930 E JONES BRIDGE RD STE 100

NORCROSS, GA 30092-2133

michellerios@kw.com

Tel: (678) 775-6565

Mobile: (404) 428-2026



Between FRIENDS

Taking you from just thought to ... just bought!

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Spring ahead! At this time of year, the real estate market is very active – making it the perfect time to buy a home! Please call me for assistance, and you will be my #1 priority!



Some people don't realize the many benefits of a Home Protection Plan. However, as an experienced Real Estate Professional, I would like to point out how a quality Home Protection Plan can benefit you, whether you are buying or selling a home. A good Plan ensures the repair or replacement of covered home systems and appliances that fail due to normal use. For Sellers, this provides added value to your home when it is on the market. For Buyers, this means peace of mind and confidence in the purchase of your new home. I advise all my clients to include a Home Protection Plan with their transaction, and the company I trust to provide the *best service* and *coverage* is **Old Republic Home Protection**. Call me today for more information about how this valuable service can be put to work for you.

I give my best to my clients because I want their home purchase experience to be as smooth and stress-free as possible. If you have real estate needs, or know someone who does, call me today.



If you are working with another Real Estate Professional, please disregard this notice.

Health & Safety

Make your own non-toxic cleaners

Hazardous Household Waste is defined as "items containing ingredients that could be harmful to humans, pets or the environment," which includes many commonly used cleaning products. To get a home that is truly clean, rather than covered in toxic chemicals, try making your own non-toxic cleaners at home. It's easy! Basic ingredients found in your kitchen can be used to make cleaners for different needs.

All-Purpose Cleaner: Mix 1/2 cup vinegar and 1/4 cup baking soda into 1/2 gallon water. Use for removal of water deposit stains in shower stalls, on chrome bathroom fixtures, windows, bathroom mirrors, etc.

Air Freshener: Commercial air fresheners mask smells and coat nasal passages to diminish the sense of smell. Baking soda or vinegar with lemon juice in small dishes absorbs odors around the house without dulling your sense of smell.

Disinfectant: Mix 1/4 cup borax into 1/2 gallon hot water. Use for wiping surfaces.

Bathroom Mold: Mold in bathroom tile grout is a common problem and can be a health concern. Mix one part hydrogen peroxide (3%) with two parts water in a spray bottle and spray on areas with mold. Wait at least one hour before rinsing or using the shower.



Carpet Cleaner: Mix equal parts white vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Spray directly on stain, let sit for several minutes, and clean with a brush or sponge, using warm soapy water.

Helpful Hints

Reduce Pain at the Pump

Unfortunately, the days of cheap gas are now in the rear view mirror! That being said, here are some things you can do to help minimize the effect of higher gasoline prices on your bank account and allow you to do your part to help save the environment.

Minimize the amount of time you sit in idle. It takes about ten seconds worth of idling to use as much gasoline as it would to restart your car. If you're going to be sitting much longer than that, shut off the engine.

Drive with the windows up, the sunroof closed and without extemporaneous items (car top carrier, sports team flags, etc.) on the vehicle to maximize aerodynamics.

Keep your car's tires properly inflated. Under-inflated tires will reduce your car's gas mileage by 2 to 3 percent.

Get all of the useless and needless items out of your car. As a general rule of thumb, for every extra 100 pounds you carry around in your car, you reduce its gas mileage by one to two percent.



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Tel: (678) 775-6565

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Fax: (678) 775-6575

www.michelleriosonline.com

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Savor the Flavor

Ingredients:

3 - 4 pounds lean ground beef

1/2 c onion, finely chopped

1 bell pepper, chopped

Small bottle of zesty

A-1 Steak Sauce®

8 oz can tomato sauce

1 c ketchup

2 eggs

1/3 c evaporated milk

1 1/2 sleeves of saltine
crackers, crumbled

Glaze:

1/3 c dark corn syrup

1/2 c ketchup

1/4 c brown sugar

Zesty Glazed Meatloaf

In large bowl, combine ground beef, chopped onion and bell pepper. Pour in bottle of A-1 Steak Sauce®, ketchup, and tomato sauce. Beat 2 eggs in cereal bowl and add evaporated milk to fill bowl. Pour into meatloaf mixture and thoroughly mix with hands. Add enough cracker crumbs to make the mixture stick together.

Mold meat into a loaf in a roaster or deep-dish pan. Bake at 350-375 degrees for about 1-1/2 hours, or until it appears to be done. Drain some of the juice off of the loaf before you top with glaze, but not too much or the meatloaf will be dry.

Mix glaze ingredients and cover meatloaf. Bake uncovered until coating is cooked. Slice and serve.

Recipe makes 2 large loaves, so you can split and freeze half of the mixture.

Real Estate Today

It's a Good Time to Buy!

There are three common misconceptions consumers have about the real estate market right now: (1) people can't get a loan, (2) affordability is out of reach, and (3) consumers should wait for rates to go lower. The truth of the matter, however, is that money is available for those who meet basic requirements, affordability today is better than it has been in almost three years, interest rates are now at 40-year historic lows, and inventory is plentiful.

Sellers controlled the market for the past few years, but this is now a buyer's market – a great opportunity for buyers to negotiate a favorable price. It's a good time to find the property of your dreams and put a stake in the home-ownership ground.

Helpful Hints

The Cat's Out of the Bag!

As Earth Day (April 22nd) approaches, we're reminded that individual consumers can help alleviate America's mounting trash problem by making environmentally aware decisions. Like the story that says cats have nine lives, so do many of the items we use every day. The environmental message is a simple one . . .

Reduce: Waste reduction is the process and the policy of reducing the amount of waste produced and ultimately disposed -- simply reducing waste at its source.

Reuse: An item can be reused for the same function, or for an entirely different purpose. Today's pressing environmental concerns are changing consumer attitudes about what the convenience of a "disposable society" is really costing us.

Recycle: Recycling is the processing of making used items into new raw material, thereby conserving natural resources and energy. Nearly anything is recyclable, including paper, aluminum, glass, road surfaces, scrap metals, and plastics. Even food and lawn waste can be recycled.

React: The "Three R's" above outline what you can do to help preserve natural resources and protect the environment. **REACT**, obviously, is the fourth step. With "climate change" and "going green" in the news daily, the list of things each of us can do to help our planet is continually growing. As Conscientious Earth Citizens, let's start practicing the "Four R's" today!

