

# MAY

NEWSLETTER



Celia Manley  
Realtor ® Broker Associate

ERA Real Estate Professionals  
(601)214-3307/(601)956-2222  
celia@celiamanley.com  
<http://www.celiamanley.com/>



*We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.*

- Maya Angelou

## ***4 Fun and Patriotic Ways to Honor Memorial Day***



Many Americans think of Memorial Day as the gateway to summer and a long weekend filled with fireworks and backyard barbecues. However, the true importance of Memorial Day is to honor the countless members of the American military who have lost their lives in various wars. Therefore, this holiday is an excellent time to reflect on the sacrifices of our country's heroes and find some fun, patriotic activities for your family to enjoy. Here are a few ideas:

- Create a care package to send to soldiers. There are numerous American military personnel currently serving around the world. One way to express gratitude is to assemble a care package containing a handwritten note and basic supplies or comfort items and send it through an organization like Operation Gratitude (<https://www.operationgratitude.com>). This is also an engaging activity that will help kids learn about the true meaning of Memorial Day.
- Visit a local veteran's hospital or Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post. Consider bringing cookies or another small offering for the veterans, or donating books or movies to the institution's library. Alternatively, have your kids practice a patriotic song to sing, like The Star-Spangled Banner.
- Teach your kids how to properly fly and care for the American flag. Traditionally, the flag is flown at half-mast from sunrise until noon on Memorial Day to honor fallen soldiers. After noon, it is raised to the top of the staff until sunset. If you have a flag at home, you can demonstrate this procedure for your kids and explain proper care of this important patriotic symbol. Older children may be taught how to properly fold the flag.
- Add a splash of Americana to your Memorial Day festivities with patriotic-themed crafts or desserts. For example, have your kids help you make a wreath using red, white, and blue tulle or desserts that incorporate aptly hued ingredients. One easy and delicious option is to create a parfait by layering strawberries, blueberries, and whipped cream.

Source: [Parents.com](https://www.parents.com)

***Watermelon Salad with Feta and Mint***



#### Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon Tabasco
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- One 8-pound seedless watermelon, scooped into balls with a melon baller or cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks (10 cups), chilled
- 1/2 pound feta cheese, crumbled (2 cups)
- 1 1/4 cups pitted kalamata olives, coarsely chopped (optional)
- 1 small sweet onion, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 1 cup coarsely chopped mint leaves

#### Directions:

In a large bowl, whisk the oil, lemon juice, salt, Tabasco and pepper. Add the watermelon, feta, olives and onion and toss gently. Garnish with the mint and serve.

Source: [FoodandWine.com](http://FoodandWine.com)

## ***How to Reduce Expenses for a Budget-Friendly Move***

From selling your current home to settling into a new one, moving is a stressful, time-consuming, and costly process. Many people try to save money on their moves by invoking the help of friends and family, or simply trying to handle the packing and relocation of their belongings by themselves. However, regardless of your chosen moving method, the following tips will help you cut your moving costs so you can arrive at your new home with your budget and, hopefully, all of your possessions intact:

- Carefully consider your options for hiring a moving company. Don't assume that renting a truck and moving yourself will necessarily be less expensive than hiring professional movers. Instead, procure quotes from at least three

companies and determine whether you can negotiate their prices. Many moving companies are more flexible with their rates during the middle of the week or month, as well as during slower seasons like fall and winter. However, be sure to ask the companies about any hidden fees, such as those for fuel.

- If you decide to use a moving company, pack your belongings and disassemble furniture yourself. Most movers charge extra for these steps.
- Consider using portable storage units. This option offers the convenience of having professionals safely transport your possessions at a rate that is typically far less than that of traditional moving companies. However, you are responsible for packing the unit before it is picked up by the company and unpacking it upon arrival at the destination.
- If you choose to rent a truck and move yourself, seek out additional opportunities for savings. For example, ask your realtor if their agency has any arrangements with truck rental services that would offer you a discount. Some agencies even have their own vehicles that clients may use at no charge for short-distance moves. Alternatively, if you will need to put some of your belongings in storage, ask the storage company if it offers discounted moving truck rental as part of a package deal.
- Avoid buying boxes. As you pack your belongings, remember that there are numerous sources for free boxes. Ask friends and family if they have any to spare, bring some home from your workplace, or visit a liquor store to see if they are willing to share their extra boxes. Some services also allow you to rent boxes or moving crates and return them after you settle into your new home offering a more environmentally friendly option.
- Use blankets, towels, and other items you already have on hand to pack fragile belongings. Coffee filters, which are soft and inexpensive, also make great packing materials for breakable items. Using these materials will help you save money on pricey bubble wrap. However, be careful when unpacking so that you do not hastily unravel a towel or sheet containing something fragile.
- Pare down your belongings before your move. Some companies base their prices on the weight of the load being transported, so eliminating things you no longer need will help you to lower moving expenses. Even if you are transporting your items by yourself, you will save time and effort by having less. Additionally, selling your unwanted belongings or donating them and claiming a charitable tax deduction could yield an infusion of cash as you move

to your new home.

Sources: [Twocents.com](http://Twocents.com) & [Updater.com](http://Updater.com)



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