



# December 2007

## Mamie's Sugar Cookies



62-95-2  
Mamie Doud Eisenhower  
May 23, 1956

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 Tbs. cream
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 1/2 cup flour

- ☪ Mix and sift flour, baking powder and salt. Cream butter, add sugar slowly and cream until fluffy.
- ☪ Stir in well-beaten egg yolks and vanilla extract.
- ☪ Add sifted dry ingredients alternately with the cream.
- ☪ Chill for one hour, roll and cut in any desired shape.
- ☪ Sprinkle with sugar before baking.
- ☪ Bake in a moderate oven (350 or 375 degrees) for 10 to 12 minutes.

-Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library & Museum



The tradition of a placing a decorated tree in the White House began in 1889 on Christmas morning during the Presidency of Benjamin Harrison. The President's grandchildren, young Benjamin and Mary McKee, led the Harrison household into the second floor Oval Room to take a look at the first White House Christmas tree, which was lit with candles. Filled stockings hung from the mantel, and presents, candy and nuts were distributed to family and staff. President Harrison gave turkeys and gloves to his employees, and he received a silver-dollar-shaped picture holder from his daughter, Mame Harrison McKee.

What began as a family gathering has become a national tradition. Over the years, the White House Christmas tree has reflected both the times and the tastes of the First Family. First Lady Frances Cleveland created a "technology savvy" tree in 1895 when she hung electric lights on the White House tree. First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy began the tradition of Christmas Tree themes when she decorated the 1961 Christmas tree in toy trimmings from the Nutcracker Suite ballet by Tchaikovsky.

Today, the First Lady selects a theme and taps the talents of American artisans, who give life to the idea. Laura Bush chose "Home for the Holidays" for the 2001 theme, which features replicas of the family homes of the nation's Presidents.

-The White House U.S. Department of Labor

## Real Estate Corner

RISMEDIA, 2007-Many homeowners and buyers have their eyes peeled on the housing market. While groups like the National Association of Realtors continue to manage consumer expectations and provide reassurance that the housing market will steadily improve by 2008, hopes can fall hard for homeowners who are preparing their home for yet another month on the market. In this buyer's market, the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) reminds homeowners that a pre-listing inspection or a general maintenance inspection can be a great tool for selling and maintaining your home.

"Pre-listing inspections (conducted on behalf of the seller) and general maintenance inspections are valuable investments for homeowners eager to sell their home," said Frank Lesh, 2007 ASHI president. "Buyers today have the option to be choosy. A pre-listing or general maintenance inspection will help homeowners catch repairs before they become bargaining chips." In addition to the transaction going more smoothly, ASHI says that a pre-listing inspection ensures that sellers can enter negotiations with confidence regarding the quality of their home. That confidence often equates to more dollars in the sellers' pocket.

### Maintenance Checklist

**Below are the top ten items to check-off your maintenance list this fall:**

1. Check the chimney for deteriorated chimney caps or loose and missing mortar.
2. Check vents, louvers (a frame with horizontal and vertical slats on a building that is angled to admit light and air, but keep out rain and sunshine) and chimneys for birds' nests, squirrels and insects
3. Check flashing around roof stacks, vents, skylights and chimneys which can be sources of leakage
4. Check the roof for damaged, loose or missing shingles
5. Check for leaking, misaligned or damaged gutters, downspouts, gutter guards and strainers
6. Evaluate your landscape and cut back tree limbs that may be growing too close to the roof. Also consider cutting back and trimming shrubs away from exterior walls
7. Check caulking for decay around doors, windows, corner boards, and joints. Recaulk as needed
8. Check glazing putty around windows as well as weather stripping
9. Check your faucets, hose bibs and valves for leakage
10. Keep your garage doors closed to conserve energy and insulate exposed water lines in cold climates

### Toy Safety Shopping Tips

READ THE LABEL...

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission requires toy manufacturers to meet stringent safety standards and to label certain toys that could be a hazard for younger children. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide. Labels on toys that state "not recommended for children under three ... contains small parts," are labeled that way because they may pose a choking hazard to children under three. Toys should be developmentally appropriate to suit the skills, abilities and interests of the child.

Shopping for toys during the holidays can be exciting and fun, but it can also be frustrating. There can be thousands of toys to choose from in one store, and it's important to choose the right toy for the right age child. Toys that are meant for older children can be dangerous for younger children. Last year, an estimated 140,700 children were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms after toy-related incidents and 13 children died.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and Kmart are teaming up to provide you with some tips to keep the kids you're buying for safe, and to make your holiday shopping a little easier.

[Sources: Canada Safety Council; the Washington Post; Spybusters.com](#)



If you are currently working with another Broker please do not consider this a solicitation.

