

July 13, 2008

Save on admission to science center, win money

If you read the magazine *O*, you've probably seen Oprah's monthly "O List" of things she thinks are great. Well, here's the latest installment of my "C List" of "a few things Ms. Cheap thinks are great."

- First, **Adventure Science Center and Sudekum Planetarium have instituted what I hope is a trend-setting new membership level** to ensure that **low-income families** can enjoy the facilities. Qualifying families receive a yearlong membership for \$20, which is less than a one-time visit for a family of four. Science Center members not only get unlimited admissions to that museum but only have to pay \$4 instead of \$6 to get in the new Sudekum Planetarium.

The new membership level is called Family Access. To be eligible, the family must provide a photo ID plus one of the following: TN Benefit Security card, Medicaid card or WIC card. Family Access memberships are available only at the science center's visitor services desk or by mail. Go to www.adventuresciencecenter.org. I think it would be great if other area attractions would try adding a membership level like this.

- **This time of year, a soaker hose surely comes in handy for home gardeners.** I've read that you use probably **30-50 percent less water** than with regular sprinkling. You don't need to water as often, and you're watering the roots and encouraging the root growth to go in the right direction — down. The experts say to start by running your soaker hose about 30 minutes twice a week. (Annuals and vegetables may need to be watered every other day.) After a watering day, check your soil to see if the moisture has penetrated several inches, then adjust accordingly.

- You know **I'm a sucker for a free lunch**, and the CityLiving team at Village Real Estate company's lunchtime tours are a great way to see what's happening with downtown living and enjoy a nice free box lunch (wrap, chips and bottled water) from Past Perfect restaurant.

There are two of these coming up and the real estate folks say you don't even have to be seriously in the market for a condo to be invited. On July 18, you can tour the District Lofts, at Third Avenue North and Harrison Street downtown, where there are flats for under \$200,000. On July 25, they will be touring a handful of downtown lofts/condos — two resales at the Viridian, one new loft at Art Avenue Lofts on Fifth Avenue North and possibly a loft at the Kress, also on Fifth.

To RSVP for the tour you can either send an e-mail to CityLivingTeam@villagerealestate.com or call 279-7299 and ask to RSVP for a CityLiving Lunch Tour.

- I'm not much of a lottery person, but I love the **lottery "second chance" deal**, where you save your losing tickets and get a second chance to win. It's called Play it Again. You just register your non-winning instant tickets at www.tnlottery.com and then just throw the ticket away. There are periodic drawings, and you might win as much as \$500,000! So far they have given away more than \$921,00 and will be scheduling another drawing soon. 254-4946 is the player hotline number.

- And I love having my new home page at www.tennessean.com/Mscheap. I hope you're liking it, too. Not only does it have past columns and my list of frequently asked questions — such as where to get a free meal on your birthday, where to get free rocks, where to shop for consignment clothes and furniture — but it also has a link to my blog, my list of 100 free things to do this summer and my 47 ways to save at the grocery. If you have suggestions for the page, please let me know. Check it out!

Stay cheap!
