

# Your Favorite News

...where order prevails over chaos!

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Your Favorite Organizer  
646.912.2308  
www.yourfavoriteorganizer.com  
info@yourfavoriteorganizer.com

## Welcome!

By Cheryl Roden

Welcome to my Premier Issue of Your Favorite News! I am so excited to launch my new company - **Your Favorite Organizer**. I provide professional organization services to individuals and businesses in the New York area.

### My Philosophy

Being organized saves you time and money. How much time do you spend looking for important papers? Are you constantly late? Do you dread the thought of cleaning because you wouldn't even know where to start?

Organizing is the first step to getting in a mental state to be your best you! Organizing isn't about getting rid of all the "things" in your life, it's about living your best life, and not letting your things get in the way of that.

I can help you get your life in order from top to bottom. From the cotton balls in your medicine cabinet to tackling an entire home or office, I have a talent for walking into chaos and seeing the order that is possible.

I have an extensive background with both residential and commercial services. I can assure you that I am incredibly discreet, and your private information will remain private.

## What is Professional Organizing?

Professional organizers help individuals and businesses take control of their surroundings, their time, their paper, and their systems for life. ★



## Clutter – It Should Be A 4-Letter Word

As the hype of the New Year subsides, many of us have lost that “hyper-energy” that caused us to run out to the mega stores to get the trunkful of storage bins, wicker baskets, and other symbols of now-forgotten best intentions.

### Clutter Just a Symptom of a Larger Issue

Clutter is usually a reflection of its owner's inner well-being. If you can't find anything in your house, chances are you are constantly forgetting things too.

Depression, anxiety, ADD/ADHD – these devastating conditions often keep people from being able to get control of the situation.

These days Americans are busier than ever, and recognizing a serious condition like those listed above may not be as simple as you think. In our society today, keeping up with the Jones' has taken on a whole new meaning. It is no longer just the holiday displays, now it's getting your college degree in record time, having children and a career perfectly and

simultaneously, obtaining a beautiful home at a steal of a price, add the cars, the vacations, the after-school activities – and it’s no wonder psychological conditions like ADD are increasing at alarming rates.

**Hoarding: The Extreme**

Compulsive hoarding is a problem that has recently been thrust into the national spotlight through many television shows, offering home makeovers for the lucky few.

This could stem from a number of issues. Many survivors of the Depression era became hoarders. They learned young to save and be frugal. This is common to others who grew up poor. It is an inability to accurately define value, as everything is valued as having the highest importance. It is born innocently and wisely enough, but sometimes can lead to an inability to purge unnecessary items,

resulting in overcrowding of livable space.

This is an example of hoarding as a response to an environmental situation. Hoarding often passes from one generation to the next.

Other examples of hoarding causes include a general lack of knowledge of items’ shelf life. Some people keep condiments in their fridge for decades, and makeup and underwear for years.

Many people don’t really know how long to hold on to items. These guidelines will help:

**General Guidelines for When to Toss It**

- Lipstick - Toss after 1-2 years, whether opened or not.
- Mascara – If opened, toss after 3 months, if unopened, after 2 years.

- Canned vegetables - Toss after a year.
- Salad dressing - Should be tossed after being opened for 9 months.
- Diet & regular soda - Should be tossed after about 3 months.
- Batteries - Dispose of (properly) after 7 to 10 years.
- Bleach – Toss after 3 to 6 months.
- Dish detergents - Whether liquid or powdered, should be dumped after a year.
- Windex - Should be replaced after 2 years.
- Body lotions - Toss after 3 years.
- Hair gel & hairspray – These have a pretty long shelf life at 2 to 3 years.
- Tooth-whitening strips - Generally should be tossed after a year.
- Shampoo & conditioner - Both last 2 to 3 years.
- Paystubs - Save until you receive your W-2 – if it matches, toss paystubs.
- Tax documents – the IRS can audit your return for 3 years after it has been filed – 4 years after the income has been earned. Keep in mind though, that some experts recommend saving tax documents for 7 years, since the IRS can revisit your filing if it believes there’s been fraud, or that income has been substantially underreported
- Personal papers – Marriage certificates, birth & death records, social security cards, and other personal documentation should never be discarded, and should be kept in a safe place.

**Hints & Tips**

- Wrap rubber bands around the ends of your hangers to keep straps from slipping
- Use a folded-over sticky-note to label cords/cables
- Binder clips hold up boots and keep them looking new
- Keep your trash bags in the bottom your trash can for quick replacing (for a fresh scent, throw a few dryer sheets in too)
- Toss your smoothie ingredients into a blender and store in the refrigerator overnight. In the morning, just set it on the base and your ready for an instant & healthy breakfast.
- Peanut, peanut butter, jelly! Don’t underestimate the nutrients and timesaving factors of this vitamin packed meal.
- Freeze lemon or lime juice in ice trays – one cube = 1 tablespoon
- Toss a notepad into all your purses, desks, etc.

- **Investment records** – Items like stock certificates can be turned over to your broker for safe keeping, but you should save your brokerage statements trade slips and similar documents until stock is sold, then follow the same guidelines as tax papers.
- **Receipts** – Save those for major purchases until warranties expire. Save records of improvements to your home until it is sold, to document the size of the gain that may be taxable.
- **Banking papers** – There is little need to hold on to statements or most cancelled checks once they've been reconciled. Save mortgage and loan documents until they're repaid. ★

## February 11<sup>th</sup> is Clean Out Your Computer Day

One often-overlooked, but oh-so-important task is the purging of our computers.

First, always, always, back-up your computer before any maintenance project.

One helpful step in speeding up your computer's sluggish system is running Disk Defragmenter.

Close all programs, then in Windows, left-click on Start, then All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Disk Defragmenter.

Click Analyze to see if your system is in need of a defrag or not. Be patient, this may take a few minutes (or more, depending on how long since this was done). If needed, run, and enjoy! ★

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is Professional Organizing?

*Professional organizers help individuals and businesses take control of their surroundings, their time, their paper, and their systems for life.*

### What's the difference between cleaning & organizing?

*Cleaning is removing dirt, but organizing is putting things together in a logical order to save time and money.*

### How long does it take to get organized?

*Obviously every situation is different, but generally speaking, the average room in a home takes about 1-2 days (8 hours/day), and the average one-person office usually takes about 2-3 days. Additional factors are relevant, such as whether or not you will assist your professional organizer.*

### How much do you charge?

*You determine your budget. I start with a free consultation, where I come to the "scene of the crime", and we can work together to determine your goals. If you'd like to handle the situation yourself, I can make recommendations for you. If you need a hand, I'm ready to jump in! For smaller jobs my rates are \$55 per hour, and for the bigger jobs I will put together a plan customized for you, whether you need a few days or a few weeks of services.*

### Why do I need an organizer?

*Professional organizers assist the organizationally-challenged and, just as a personal trainer keeps your body in shape, they keep you on track with getting your home and/or office "in shape". They bring together products and techniques to assist people in regaining control of their time, space and paper.*

### How do I know I can trust you?

*I am a proud member of the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO), and am also a highlighted Organizer with Online Organizing. Feel free to check out their websites at [www.napo.com](http://www.napo.com) or [www.onlineorganizing.com](http://www.onlineorganizing.com) ★*

## February's Events

February

*Archive Your Files Month*

February 11, 2008

*Clean Out Your Computer Day*

February 17 – 23, 2008

*Pay Your Bills Week*

February 29

*Repetitive Strain Injuries Day*



# Motivation

*In my youth I stressed freedom,  
and in my old age I stress order. I  
have made the great discovery that  
liberty is a product of order.*  
- Will Durant

*You may delay, but time will not.*  
- Benjamin Franklin

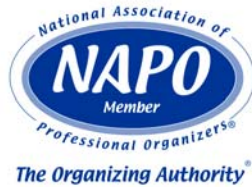
*There is nothing so fatal to  
character as half finished tasks.*  
- David Lloyd George

*Procrastination is the thief of time.*  
- Edward Young

*Learn from yesterday, live for  
today, hope for tomorrow.*  
- Anonymous

## Clutter Cam

*Before & After*



**Your Favorite Organizer**  
New York, NY

Cheryl Roden

**(646) 912-2308**

info@yourfavoriteorganizer.com  
www.yourfavoriteorganizer.com

Your Favorite Organizer  
446 East 87<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10128



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