

The Neighborhood Paper

Inspired Living - All Things Home

Christmas 2021

Be Inspired by Humanity

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FROM THE EDITOR

A BIT OF CONNECTION FROM OUR **HOME** TO YOURS

Christmas symbolizes for me the closing of a year and I try to be very intentional about laying one last blanket over the year that is full of joy and delight and celebration. This year has been full of change from the beginning. I don't like change! I do like my anchor to stay steady, neatly tethered in known waters but this year has been anything but familiar harbors and I suspect that is true for most people! But this is not about COVID, rather It's about a journey of "firsts" that have cracked open doors to more unknowns than knowns, and wrestled me into understanding the most essential thing about life. Let me explain.

Some of my "firsts" for the year have included learning how to drive a tractor and grade land on our daughter's ranch in Washington, negotiating real estate transactions in two other states, playing 18 holes of golf for the first time in 17 years since my back injury, learning how to take up root balls for aspens and pines from their forest beds for transplanting, making new friends despite COVID, and bringing conclusion of the past into the present with the passing of my mom.

Each month brought new chapters and facilitated these 'firsts': In January our daughter and her husband bought a home in Washington and moved; a couple months later, our youngest son followed suit and moved to Washington, and a couple months after that our oldest son and his wife bought a home in South Carolina and moved. Life looks as it never has!

All of these have been about moving forward into new territories; constant motion although at times there was some backing up, circling around, and sitting still waiting to see the clearing. And in a culture that tends to value finish lines and endings, my life has been more about journeying than prized conclusions. What I have learned is that moving forward is the most essential part of life. It's in the moving that life itself vibrates with life. This Christmas will look completely different for John and I, but I am pushing into "different" with intentionality to create something new and also lovely, a willingness to let the journey change and to be on a journey, and a bit of gumption to move my feet. And so, we have put a few new ideas in this edition for some new Christmas joy. What does 2022 hold? I have no idea and I am not trying to make a box for it. I have today, and many more I hope, but what I know for sure is that I have the day I am in and I will aim to "rejoice in it and be glad" as the song goes.

As always, we try to make the newsletter brim with fun, inspiring and informative bits that you'll find worthy of your reading time. And while our kids are sailing away and creating new journeys for John and I, our main harbor is still here doing what we love - helping you and friends and family with real estate! Give us a call if we can help you in any way - we would consider it our privilege to do so, as well as helping your family and friends.

-Tammy

ALL THINGS FAMILY

IDEAS FOR BUILDING THE FAMILY STORY INSIDE HOME

Making Christmas Magic In A Smaller Space

One Tiny Bit of Christmas Can Spin Magic

Sometimes the enormity of decorating a whole house for Christmas can be overwhelming. Instead, consider concentrating on one main room, like where the Christmas tree stands and making Christmas magic full scall in this smaller space. It could be like stepping into a one-room set of a Christmas movie...a room to just soak up Christmas and fill up with holiday cheer. This way it can be much easier to put the decorations away when the season is over.



A Twist On A Christmas Tradition

This year we are not together to be able to decorate gingerbread houses together, but in a new sort of "together-ness" we will still decorate

What if gingerbread houses weren't a 'one-n-done' affair? Why not create a fun activity the kids could look forward to a little each day? Set up a location in the home where the gingerbread house station can stay available. Assemble the gingerbread house ahead of time, and then have royal icing, bags, and candies organized and in the ready for using. Each day after school let your children have a time of decorating. It might be the perfect de-stressor, re-set button after school rather than screens! This year with our daughter in Washington, we will each have our own gingerbread house in our respective homes, and share pictures/videos of the bits we each add

A Yearly Treasured and Read Christmas Novel

Every year, this novel comes down off the bookshelf for its yearly read as a treasured favorite and inspiration! Below is the author's own note of how this book came to be, and his hope for every reader.

The Christmas List By Richard Paul Evans

When I was in seventh grade, my English teacher, Mrs. Johnson, gave our class the intriguing (if somewhat macabre) assignment of writing our own obituaries. Oddly, I don't remember much of what I wrote about my life, but I do remember how I died: in first place on the final lap of the Daytona 500. At the time, I hadn't considered writing as an occupation, a field with a remarkably low on-the-job casualty rate.

What intrigues me most about Mrs. Johnson's as-

| For Inspiration |

STORIES FOR INSPIRING LIFE INSIDE OUR HOMES

'Tis better to give

I knew I was not supposed to be quite so excited. I was too old for that. At age eleven, the oldest and my mom's "grown up" girl, I had to keep my cool. I was in middle school after all. But every chance I got, when I was alone, I checked each present under the tree. I read every tag and felt every package, guessing at the contents within. I had examined each gift so often that I could tell which present went to which person without even looking at the tags. It had been a tough year for my family. Whenever my mom looked over at the tree and scattered presents, she would sigh and warn us, "There won't be as much for Christmas this year. Try not to be disappointed." Christmas had traditionally been a time for my parents to spoil us. In years past, the presents would pile up and spill out from under the tree, taking over the living room. I had heard the phrase "giving is better than receiving," but thought that whoever had said that must have been out of their mind. Getting presents was the whole point! It was the reason I couldn't get to sleep on Christmas Eve.

On Christmas morning, we eagerly waited in the hallway until Dad told us everything was ready. We rushed into the living room and let the wrapping paper fly. We made weak attempts to wait and watch while other family members opened their presents, but as the time

passed we lost our self-control.

"Here's another one for you," said Mom as she handed me a package. I looked at it, confused. Having spent so much time examining the presents before Christmas, I recognized this one. But it had not been mine. It was

my mom's. A new label had been put on it, with my name written in my mother's handwriting. "Mom, I can't..."

I was stopped by my mother's eager, joyful look—a look I could not really understand. "Let's see what it is, honey. Hurry and open it." It was a blow dryer. Though this may seem but a simple gift, to me it was so much more. Being an eleven-year-old girl, I was stunned. In my world, where receiving outweighed giving by light years, my mom's act of selflessness was incomprehensible. It was a huge act. Tears filled my eyes and I thought in disbelief about how much my mom must love me to give up her Christmas so I could have

a few more presents.

I have always remembered that Christmas fondly. It had such an impact on me. As an adult with children in my life whom I adore, I can now understand my mom's actions. I see how she was not "giving up her Christmas" as I had thought, but was finding an even greater joy in her Christmas because giving truly is better than receiving. My mom's simple act meant the world to me.

- Jennifer Yardley Barney



| NEWS IN REAL ESTATE |

WHAT IS THE MARKET DOING AND WHERE IS IT HEADED

There is speculation that the housing market has to 'adjust' perhaps mostly arising out of a desire that it be so, and a wondering of how can it keep going on its current trajectory. I am not seeing a large adjustment in the near future. Please don't misunderstand me - I am not saying that the housing market never adjusts, we all know that not to be true, but if you follow housing costs beginning in the 1970's to the present, the line is a diagonal one of increase, with dips here and there but never a permanent reset to housing prices of years earlier. Being on the front lines of real estate and in the mix with buyers

in our current market place, there is not an indication of a 'cooling off' period as some media lines have promoted. The dramatic increase in prices may taper a bit, but not halt all together. Couple that with interest rates which are still affordable, and buyers who are still wanting to buy with unequally yoked supply, and we still have an active market. There are definitely specific strategies for today's market in order to be successful in it, and if you are interested in understanding them, I would be happy to sit down and have a conversation with you.

When it comes to selecting a realtor, Tammy and I know there are many choices out there, and we are thankful for so many of you who have remained our clients over the years, allowing us to assist you with your housing sales and purchases, and now that of your young adult children. We are always here to illuminate and aim to capture for people the opportunities in real estate. We truly love what we do, and consider it a privilege to be trusted with your HOME.



- John

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CURIOUS INFORMATION

BRINGING HOME SLIVERS OF REMARKABLE INFORMATION

What is the Waffle House Index?

The best way to avoid termites is to store your firewood away from walls and off the ground. Not only does this ensure airflow, but it also serves as a serious deterrent for termites. Termites don't actually live in wood. Instead, they nest, live, and reproduce in the ground, and simply use your firewood as a food source (or, more accurately, the cellulose in your wood). Keeping your firewood at least a few inches off the ground and away from walls makes it harder for termites to get to it. Besides keeping it away from walls and the ground, it's also wise to keep your firewood piles away from live trees. Termites can move from trees into your firewood just



as easily as they can from the ground to your wood.

Covering Firewood

Another way to prevent termites is to cover your firewood. This keeps it dry, making it unattractive to termites since they prefer wet or damp wood.

There are several different ways to store firewood: you can store it inside a building (like a shed) or outside using log racks, pallets, or posts. The exception to this is your home: never store firewood

inside your home. Even in the basement or garage, insects or rodents can find and **make a home in your**

<https://www.timbergadgets.com/how-to-store-firewood-to-avoid-termites/>

INFO BYTES

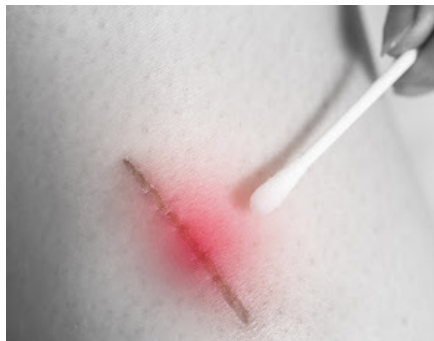
Penicillin Production

Alexander Fleming's original mold could not produce penicillin fast enough for mass production; it wasn't until 15 years later that "Mouldy" Mary Hunt discovered the strain that is used to produce all penicillin today.



Alcohol Sanitization

Rubbing alcohol makes open wounds sting because it lowers the temperature threshold of heat-detecting VR1 receptors so much that your own body heat triggers a burning sensation.



Gold Ownership

Executive Order 6102, signed by President Franklin Roosevelt, made it illegal for Americans to own gold (except for some jewelry and collectors coins) between 1933 and 1975



FROM ANTIQUITY FOR TODAY

A BIT OF HISTORY FROM LIVES LIVED IN HOMES PAST

The History of Apple Cider

Cider of the Ancients

While it's not clear when the first apple cider was enjoyed, the practice of growing apples dates back thousands of years. The first apple trees have been traced to Ancient Egypt, where they grew on the banks of the River Nile as early as 1300 BCE.

It was the Greeks and Romans, however, who truly perfected the art of creating cider. When the Romans invaded what would become England in 55 BCE, the natives were already drinking an early version of alcoholic cider, and it proved popular with the Romans as well. The drink quickly spread throughout the Roman Empire, and remained popular with many throughout modern-day Europe after the dissipation of the Empire. By the Age of Exploration, cider (as it's) was considered a fundamental drink. While it might seem odd that an alcoholic beverage was considered a daily necessity, cider was safe for many during early recorded history: water could not be trusted in many cases, given that it was riddled with bacteria, and other drinks could be expensive to obtain. Cider, by comparison, had a low-alcohol content that rendered it inhospitable to bacteria, and was relatively cheap to produce. As a result, it enjoyed a status as the main drink of many European cultures.

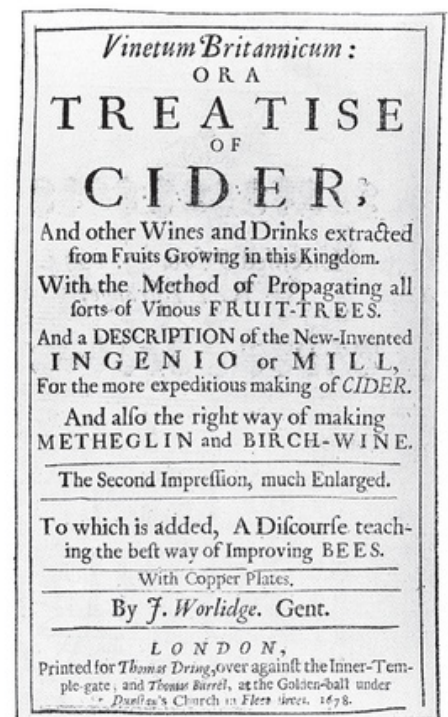
Apples in America

Before cider could become a mainstay of American drink, the New World would need apples. When colonists arrived in what would become the United States, they found that the apples weren't quite like the large, sweet

fruits from back home. Instead, the Americas were first populated with crabapples, a small, bitter variety of apple that wasn't very good for food or drink.

Luckily for the colonists, planted apple trees typically bear fruit within ten years, if not sooner. Not long after the first cuttings were planted in the colonies, sweet apples were ready for harvest. For many English colonists, these first apples were used to create their own version of cider, which had been one of the essential drinks of rural English life.

Before long, it was considered commonplace for colonists to drink cider at breakfast, rather than water. Men and women would drink alcoholic cider before beginning their days, with children drinking a slightly less alcoholic version. Adding to its popularity was that cider was incredibly simple to make, requiring only to ferment the apples in barrels. Today, cider remains a popular drink in both its alcoholic and non-alcoholic forms worldwide.



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The NEIGHBORHOOD Paper

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HELPING YOU BUY AND SELL HOMES

CHRISTMAS 2021

IN THE KITCHEN

Butternut Squash Like You've Never Imagined

A Homerun for squash...if ever it can happen that squash is a 'hit', this one 'hits' it out of the park everytime we serve it. Bon appetite.

Ingredients:

1 Lg bag, pre-cubed butternut squash (Trader Joes)
1/2 bag of dried cranberries
1 Red Onion
1 Tbsp minced garlic
1 Cup pecan halves
1 Wedge of double cream blue cheese (Trader Joes; also double cream is very subtle)

Directions

Toss the butternut cubes with olive oil and spread

them out on a parchment lined baking sheet. Roast at 400 degrees for about 30 minutes or until the cubes are tender (not mushy!) when you poke them with a fork. While the squash is roasting, dice the onion and saute, until carmelized, in a pan on the stove. In the last bit add the minced garlic. There are two ways to finish off this dish: 1) in a glass pyrex casserole dish in the oven,



or , 2) in a large wok on the stove top. Most of the time I choose to finish this casserole off on the stovetop, but if I am taking it to a dinner party then I use method #1. In a wok, place the squash, onions, cranberries and pecans. Salt to taste...you want a bit of a savory flavor when you taste test, and stir over medium heat mixing well. At the last, add ,in chunks ,

the blue cheese, and turn off the heat. Mix one more time before serving. For method #1, place the pyrex dish in the oven at 350 for about 20 minutes without

.8.