

# Chit Chat

News for Home and Living

DECEMBER 2010

## The Most Beautiful Thing

The sides of the path were covered with rugs of white snow. Above the path, the long arms of an ancient tree reached to the sky. It swayed and moaned as strong winds grasped its branches and bent them toward the earth. Nearby, a haughty laugh sounded, and a handsome young fir tree stretched and preened its thick green branches. In a smug voice, the fir tree said, "I should think that you would try a little harder to stand still. Goodness knows you're ugly enough with the leaves you've already lost. If you move around anymore, you'll soon be quite bare if you don't try to hang onto those three small leaves you still have."

Just then a cold wind blew past and a tiny bird fell to the ground at the foot of the old tree and lay there shivering, too cold to lift its wings. The old tree took pity and quickly let go of his last three leaves, which fluttered down and settled softly over the shivering bird, which lay there quietly under their warmth.

"Now you've done it!" shrieked the fir. "You've given away every single leaf and now your path will be the ugliest sight in the whole city!" The old tree stretched out his branches to gather what snowflakes he could that they might not fall on the bird. The young fir turned away in anger, and noticed a painter sitting a few feet from the path. The fir turned back to the old tree and said in a haughty voice, "At least keep those bare branches as far away from me as possible as I'm being painted and your hideousness will mar the background." It was almost dark when the painter picked up his easel and went home.

The next morning as the young fir proudly shook away the snow from his lovely green branches, he was amazed to see a huge crowd of people surrounding the old tree as they stood back and gazed upward. The wind carried a newspaper by the fir and he gasped in amazement, for there on the front page was a picture of the painter holding his painting of a great tree whose leafless branches, laden with snow, stretched upward. While down below lay a tiny bird almost covered by three golden leaves. Beneath the photo were the words, "The Most Beautiful Thing is That Which Hath Given All."

*The holidays are here! Take care not to over-do, over-promise, over-eat, or over-stress! Take time to truly enjoy this month of December. We've got more holiday cheer in this issue than you can shake a sprig of pine at, so enjoy... and have a very happy holiday season!*

*—Tara and April*



### Inside Chit Chat

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**Real Estate Page**



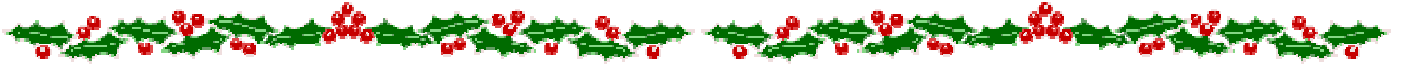
*Happy Holidays*  
*from*  
*"The Sister Team"*

*Wishing each and every one of you  
a happy holiday season  
and the best wishes ever for the new year!*

*Warmest regards,*

*Tara and April Glatzel*





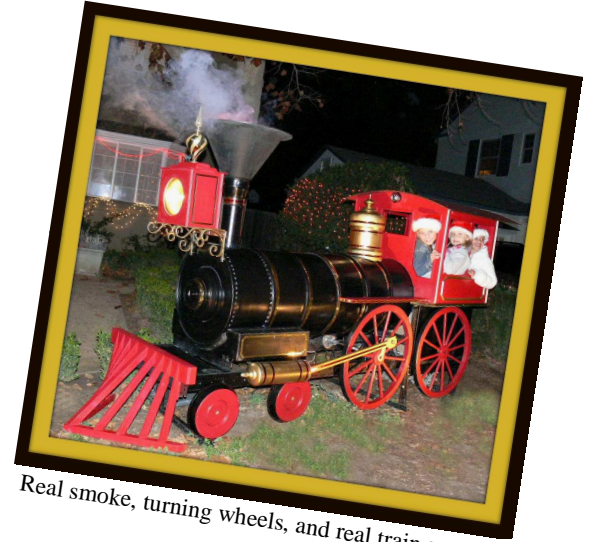
2nd Annual

## *“Cookies with Santa”*

Come visit with Santa!  
He will be making a special appearance  
at 3943 Chapman Place  
(the house with the train)  
Sunday, December 12th  
4:00 to 6:00 p.m.



If you don't have a camera, we'll take a photo for you!



Real smoke, turning wheels, and real train sounds!

Santa's helpers will be serving  
hot chocolate and cookies.

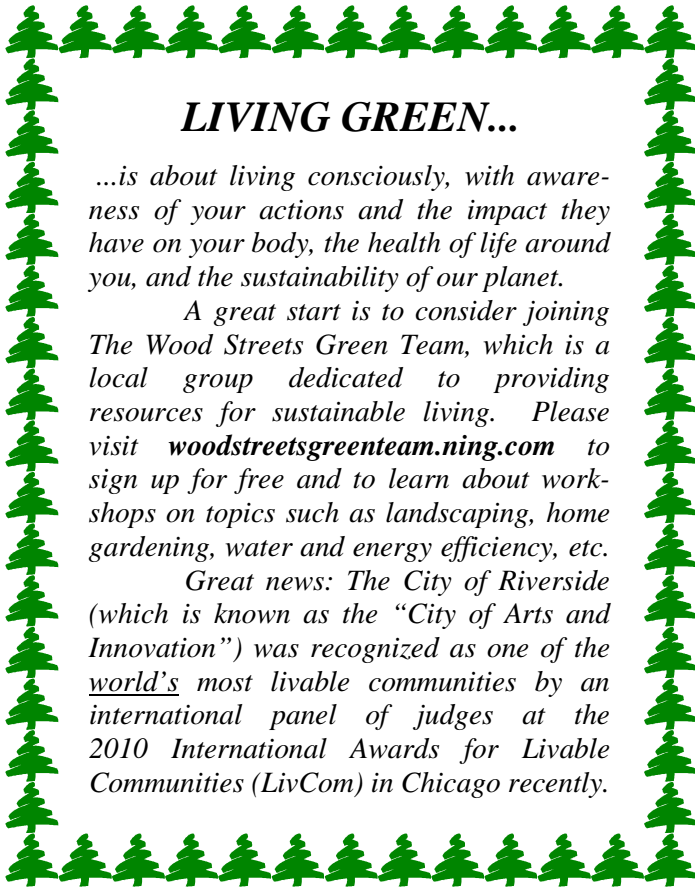
Don't forget your camera!



Santa will be handing out candy canes too!

# *Merry Christmas!*





## LIVING GREEN...

*...is about living consciously, with awareness of your actions and the impact they have on your body, the health of life around you, and the sustainability of our planet.*

A great start is to consider joining The Wood Streets Green Team, which is a local group dedicated to providing resources for sustainable living. Please visit [woodstreetsgreenteam.ning.com](http://woodstreetsgreenteam.ning.com) to sign up for free and to learn about workshops on topics such as landscaping, home gardening, water and energy efficiency, etc.

Great news: The City of Riverside (which is known as the "City of Arts and Innovation") was recognized as one of the world's most livable communities by an international panel of judges at the 2010 International Awards for Livable Communities (LivCom) in Chicago recently.

**Absolutely NO ONE  
sells more homes in  
*The Wood Streets*  
neighborhood than  
"The Sister Team"!!**

we **LIVE** in the neighborhood,  
we **WORK** in the neighborhood,  
we **KNOW** the neighborhood,  
we **SELL** the neighborhood!!!

[www.TheSisterTeam.com](http://www.TheSisterTeam.com)

## December Quiz Question

**What modern vehicle was invented to circumvent trench warfare?**

*Everyone (any age) responding by calling or e-mailing us with the correct answer will be entered into a drawing for:*

**a \$25 VISA  
gift card to use  
wherever you  
like, just like  
cash!**

*Drawing to be  
held on 12/30/2010*



## November Quiz Answer

**Question:** What is the day after Thanksgiving known as?

**Answer:** "Black Friday" is traditionally the beginning of the Christmas shopping season, and the name refers to retailers turning a profit, or being "in the black".

**Congratulations to  
Art Fontaine and Claudia Turner**

Your name was selected at random from all of the correct quiz entries and you'll receive a \$25 VISA gift card!



## Ideas for Exchanging Holiday Gifts

It's a fact that it is woefully easy to get overwhelmed by the prospect of purchasing — or making — holiday gifts, but don't let that prevent you from enjoying the holidays. Here's how:

- ♦ Go in on a gift with (and for) your family. In lieu of presents, maybe rent a ski cabin for the weekend or go on a beach escape together.
- ♦ Eliminate the guesswork. Ask gift recipients to send a wish list that you can buy from. It saves time, effort and returns, yet still preserves an element of surprise.
- ♦ Tell friends and colleagues early, and be direct. Say, "I'm paring down this year; why don't we just go out to lunch?" You may find that they're actually relieved.
- ♦ Swap toys with Santa. Along with cookies and milk, leave gently used old toys under the tree on Christmas Eve for Santa to "take back to the North Pole" — then donate them to an organization like Toys for Tots or Goodwill.
- ♦ Buy recurring gifts. You'll know what to give and the recipient will look forward to getting an annual shipment of California citrus fruit or Vermont cheeses, a magazine subscription, a museum membership, or even a desk calendar. For the past 20+ years, Tara and I have given our father an annual appointment book and given our mother another cat ornament!
- ♦ Do a Yankee Swap/White Elephant exchange. "Stealing" from other participants provides an element of unpredictability. Invite everyone to contribute a wrapped gift (new item if Yankee Swap; used item if White Elephant). Choose a gift theme and/or monetary value. Draw numbers to see who gets to pick first. Player 1 chooses and unwraps a gift and shows it to everyone. Player 2 then either "steals" that gift or picks and unwraps another. Player 3 can steal either gift, or choose another, and so on. Any player whose gift is stolen gets to pick again. Tara and I played Yankee Swap at a friend's house a few years ago. What a great time!

## Most-Needed Donated Food

While grocery shopping for your festive holiday dinner, why not pick up a few extra items and donate them to your local food bank. Check with the food bank to determine which products are most needed at the time. Food should be non-perishable (with the exception of the story below) and packaged in ways that prevent damage, like spaghetti sauce in plastic jars instead of glass.

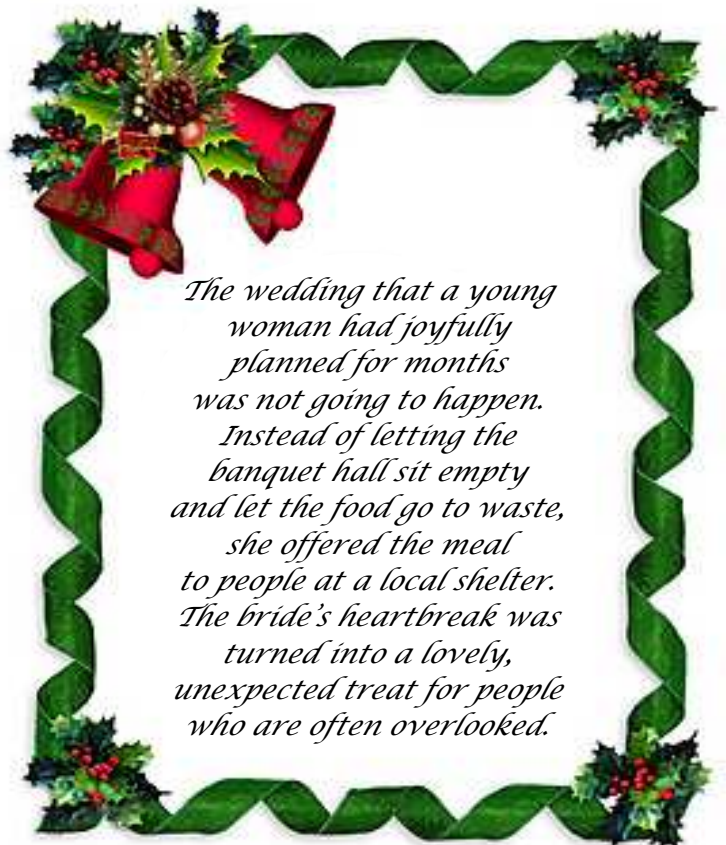
**Proteins** like peanut butter and canned meat such as tuna or chicken are usually too expensive for food banks to buy in large quantities.

**100% fruit juice** is usually in short supply and high demand.

**Rice and pasta** are good staples and a great source of fiber and complex carbohydrates.

**Canned or dried beans/peas** along with canned fruit and vegetables, including tomato sauce.

**Shelf-stable milk**, which includes dehydrated milk, canned evaporated milk and instant breakfasts.



*The wedding that a young woman had joyfully planned for months was not going to happen. Instead of letting the banquet hall sit empty and let the food go to waste, she offered the meal to people at a local shelter. The bride's heartbreak was turned into a lovely, unexpected treat for people who are often overlooked.*

## ATTENTION WOOD STREETS RESIDENTS

A small group of 'Wood Streets' residents visualized the opportunity to form a neighborhood association to unite the people of this wonderful neighborhood, and have actually succeeded in hosting three meetings thus far.

The mission of the newly formed Neighbors of the Wood Streets (NOWS) origination is to reach out to each other, utilizing various resources to achieve positive change in our community. We have joined together as an origination to ensure that our neighborhood continues to be a safe, thriving, attractive and united community for all who live, work and play here. Our vision of the future of the neighborhood is to preserve its character while improving the supporting infrastructure.



- ◆ We value representative decision making
- ◆ We value each individual regardless of race, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sex or sexual orientation
- ◆ We value religion, length of residency, disability or homeowner status without boundaries
- ◆ We value integrity in every dimension of this organization's conduct
- ◆ We value a safe, healthy and aesthetic environment for the Wood Streets neighborhood

We are hoping to encourage more neighbors to participate in this open forum and come to the next meeting on January 20, 2011 at 5264 Magnolia Avenue (the big yellow house) at 6:30 p.m. There will be no meeting in December because of the busy holiday season. NOWS meetings will be held on the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. so mark your calendar.

Please email Corliss D'Agostino (Secretary and Co-Chair) at [babeletf@charter.net](mailto:babeletf@charter.net) if you have any questions or would like to be added to the email list to join us at future meetings. If you would like copies of minutes from previous meetings, please also contact Corliss. If you don't have email, please feel free to contact April Glatzel at (951) 205-4429.

We are looking forward to an exciting 2011.



We can all make environmentally-friendly choices this holiday season. No matter what holiday you celebrate, using wrapping paper once, tearing it up and throwing it in the garbage bin is a tradition that can easily be done more environmentally. Use the recycle bin, or if you're frugal then consider saving paper that's in good condition for next year. Maybe sew some cloth drawstring-style gift bags that will last year in and year out, plus it makes wrapping that much faster!

We no longer attach multitudes of small wax candles to our Christmas trees, so why continue to use incandescent lights? LED bulbs use 90% less energy which will also do wonders for your wallet.

At first glance, it may seem like chopping down a tree so that you can stand it up in your living room for three or four weeks isn't environmentally friendly, but Christmas tree farms do act as a carbon dioxide sink and they replant trees as they are harvested. However, the best option is a living tree either in a pot or root ball. At the end of the holiday season, either store the potted tree outside and bring it in again next year, or plant it on acreage, farm or wilderness and buy another potted tree the following year. A cut tree seems to have a lower environmental impact.

If you're like many people who have an artificial tree that will soon be "retired from active duty", how would you recycle or repurpose it? Unfortunately they are not recyclable, so there is a significant impact on the environment, but at least there are some ideas for repurposing.

- ◆ salvage branches and refashion into napkin rings, candle rings, wreaths, swags or other decorations
- ◆ use the top and turn it into a mini-Christmas tree
- ◆ give it to a school, homeless shelter or theatre group

If you have any great 'green' ideas for the holidays, please share them with us and we'll post in next year's holiday issue of Chit Chat.



**\$235,000 — 3569 Elmwood Dr., Riverside**



**\$225,000 — 5758 Brockton Ave., Riverside**



**\$379,900 — 4477 6th St., Riverside**

We have a few extra magnet calendars and even some large wall calendars. If you or anyone you know needs another 2011 calendar, just give us a call and we'll deliver them immediately.

Don't forget that past issues of our Chit Chat newsletter (in color) can be accessed on our website.



### TESTIMONIAL:

We found you to be dedicated and reliable, always striving to go the extra mile to make everything come together. Your continued support through the selling process was another plus, and it will be with great pleasure that we recommend "The Sister Team".

— Richard and Barbara Gemende



**\$495,000 — 4371 Redwood Dr., Riverside**

### A SON'S LETTER HOME

Dear Dad,

Merry Chri\$tma\$! \$chool i\$ really great. I am making lot\$ of friend\$ and \$tudying hard. With all my \$tuff, I \$imply can't think of anything I need, \$o if you like, you can ju\$t \$end me a card, a\$ I would love to hear from you.

Love, Your \$on

*A week later — a letter from home*

Dear Son,

I kNOw that astroNOmy, ecoNOMics and oceaNOgraphy are eNOugh to keep even an hoNOr student busy. Do NOt forget that the pursuit of kNOwledge is a NOble task and you can never study eNOugh.

Love, Your Dad





Happy  
Holidays!



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Place  
Stamp  
Here

Chit Chat

## Happy 8th Birthday, Chit Chat!

This 8-page Chit Chat newsletter, that we have been personally writing and distributing door-to-door to almost 2,000 homes every issue, is celebrating its 8th birthday!!

For those of you who have not been in the neighborhood as long as us, you'll be surprised to know that we were delivering real estate tips, sales stats, American flags, and lots of goodies (candy, note pads, calendars, etc.) for 5 years *before* the inception of the Chit Chat!



No other Realtors come close to our success in this neighborhood! Absolutely no one lists and sells more homes in the Wood Streets than "The Sister Team". This is due to our full-time and long-term commitment to the real estate industry (almost 25 years), our knowledge of the southern California real estate market, and our personal involvement with every single transaction.

Not only do we live here and work here, but we ride our bikes, take walks, and have had our fingers on the pulse of this amazing and wonderful neighborhood for the past 13 years!

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