



THE PERAL PRESS

Brought to you by Brettany & Brian Peralez

ThePeralGroup.com | (626) 272-0816



DECEMBER 2012

SANTA'S REPLY LETTERS--NORTH POLE POSTMARK

The Christmas season is a magical time of year for children. To add to the excitement and magic consider a letter from Santa Clause postmarked from the North Pole for your kids, grandkids, nieces and nephews. After all, a letter from Santa is a huge deal! Help your child write a letter to Santa and include their Christmas wish list, questions or thoughts they may have. Then you write a response letter from Santa that includes the specifics your child addressed in their letter. This way your child will know Santa read their letter. Also tell them good they were this year (kids love that!) and if your child did something good in particular during the year, mention it as it shows that Santa really is watching.

Mention the North Pole in your response letter from Santa. Talk about how Santa and the Elves are preparing for Christmas Eve night, the weather, the reindeer, Santa's favorite cookies and other North Pole

activities. Also thank your child for writing their letter to Santa.

After writing Santa's response letter, place it in a stamped envelope addressed to the intended recipient (your child's name, your mailing address), if possible use a Christmas themed stamp. "Santa, North Pole, Alaska" should be included as the return address at the upper left corner of the envelope. This envelope should then be placed into a larger, properly stamped First-Class Mail or Priority Mail envelope with your correct return address and mailed to:

North Pole Christmas Cancellation
Postmaster
5400 Mail Trail
Fairbanks AK 99709-9998

Please mail your request by Dec. 10.
North Pole postmark requests must arrive in Fairbanks, AK, before Dec. 15.

WONDERING HOW MUCH YOUR HOME IS WORTH?

How has the price of your home changed in today's market? How much are other homes in your neighborhood selling for? If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, we'll be able to help. Just give our office a call for a no-fuss, professional evaluation. We won't try to push you into listing with us or waste your time.

We'll just give you the honest facts about your home and its value. And maybe we'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live!

Just give our office a call at: (626) 272-0816 to arrange an appointment. Alternatively, stop by at the office. The address is on the last page of this newsletter.

DECEMBER'S PERAL PICKS

1428 Santa Margarita Dr.

Arcadia 91006-\$1,998,000

600 Sierra Meadows Dr

Sierra Madre 91024-\$1,250,000

1320 Pepper Way

Arcadia 91006-\$660,000

1043 Atchison St

Pasadena 91104-\$1,049,900

If you are interested in viewing any properties call us at 626.272.0816.

ASK THE AGENT: THIS MONTH'S QUESTION

BUYING VS RENOVATING: WHAT'S THE RIGHT DECISION?

Deciding whether to buy a new home or renovate your existing one is no easy task. There are pros and cons to both options. However, it boils down to one simple question: What do you want out of it?

If space is the problem and you love your neighborhood, an addition might well be the answer. A floor plan that no longer works for your family, or outdated kitchens and bathrooms, may point to a renovation. On the other hand, if you are looking for a better neighborhood, want to be closer to family, and are looking for more amenities, then buying could fit the bill.

For the most part, empty-nesters looking to downsize to a senior-friendly home with like-minded neighbors are buyers, not

renovators.

The issue of timing is of utmost importance in making your decision.

An addition, rebuild or major renovation will almost always take more time and be more disruptive than a move.

You can move from the nightmare on 42nd Street to your dream house in less than two months, while a major renovation could take up to a year.

Moving is also generally less costly.

The decision is a wrenching one. Don't expect an easy answer.

Just make sure you're getting what you want and your decision will have been the right one.

HOLIDAY FITNESS FUN FACTS:

Getting your high-intensity workout done in the morning, before the festivities begin will keep your metabolism going and the calories burning. Also, don't starve yourself the day of a big meal, eat regularly and drink water to keep your body flushed and flowing. Be healthy. Be happy.

QUICK QUIZ

Each month we'll give you a new question for a new prize.

The winner will be picked from a pool of correct answers.

December's winner will receive a two complimentary passes to the Turf Club at Santa Anita Park!

WHO TRIED TO STEAL CHRISTMAS FROM THE "WHOS OF WHOVILLE"?

Just email us at sales@theperalgroup.com or call 626-272-0816 to submit the answer.



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RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT: MAKE YOUR HOME REALLY STAND OUT

All-season rooms – whether they’re heated, fully insulated sunrooms or enclosed patios with an independent heating source – provide the perfect bridge between indoor and outdoor living spaces. But many homeowners aren’t quite sure what to do with this sunny space.

If you’ve got an all-season room, take advantage of its potential. Determine your best use for the room and then think outside the glass box – perhaps you need a home office or a transition area from outside to inside to leave muddy clogs and jackets.

All-season rooms make great party spaces, family hangouts ... even mud rooms.

Greenhouse. A glass-enclosed sunroom provides lots of natural light for plants all year long. Use tile flooring for easy cleanup. A sink or easy access to a hose will make watering a breeze, and don’t forget a small storage unit to hold fertilizer, pots and other plant paraphernalia. Add a comfy wicker chair and table so you can sit and enjoy the greenery.

Home office. With the addition of bookshelves and a desk, an insulated sunroom can be perfect for working at home. While the idea of a home office filled with light appeals, blinds or curtains are essential for making it work for work. Choose light furniture and sunny paint colors.

Mud room. An enclosed patio is perfect for storing shoes, jackets and seasonal items. Pick easy-to-clean, scratch-resistant flooring. Add mats for muddy boots, stand-up coat storage or pegs and a bench for removing your shoes.

Party room. A sunroom can be party central. Wicker furniture and light-colored cushions keep the look airy and light, and bright flowers in small glass vases add punches of color. Use a bar cart to store tableware and glassware. Portable speakers or an iPod dock add music without taking up too much space, and they can be tucked away when not in use.



CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH HILLSIDES

Help Fulfill Vulnerable Children’s Wishes this Holiday Season and Bring Joyful Smiles!

During the holidays, the vulnerable children, youth and families we serve will be turning to HillSides for help. We need your support this holiday season to bring healing to our children and strength to our families in crisis.

You can help by making donations online, purchasing holiday gifts from the wish lists posted online, or by supporting our Adopt-a-Family program.

Please contact Laura Kelso at 323.254.2274, ext. 251 or email lkeslo@hillsides.org to get more information about holiday giving, holiday wish lists and adopt-a-family.

To learn more about our children’s charity, visit us online at www.Hillsides.org.

FACTS:

- More than 34,000 children are receiving child welfare services in Los Angeles County
- We serve 7,000 children and their families annually
- HillSides serves many families in Los Angeles who live 200% below poverty level
- Volunteers, mentors, and tutors make a difference in the lives of children in foster care and youth at risk



940 Avenue 64, Pasadena, CA 91105 Phone: (323) 254-2274 Fax: (323) 255-0962
www.Hillsides.org www.HillsidesEducationCenter.org

HOW YOUR BEDROOM CAN HELP SELL YOUR HOME

A great master bedroom will help sell your home. But you don’t have to spend a lot of money, time and effort trying to impress buyers. Following are 11 easy ways to spruce up your master for little money:

- De-clutter and de-personalize. Buyers want to see themselves in the master bedroom. Don’t surround them with the trappings of your life.
- Clean, clean and clean some more.
- Make necessary repairs.
- Paint. You don’t have to go for beige (or gray, which is the new beige), but emphasize the room’s spaciousness with lighter colors. Don’t forget the ceiling.
- Move some of the furniture out to add to an airy, uncluttered feel.
- Heavy drapes might be nice at night, but during the day they can feel confining. Take them down and buy inexpensive sheers. Add blinds for light control.
- Speaking of light, add more task and ambient lighting, and leave lights on to minimize shadows and illuminate dark corners.
- Buy a new duvet cover.
- Hang inexpensive artwork or a mirror and lose the family photos.
- Don’t cover hardwood floors with carpeting or put furniture in front of a window with a view.
- Clean out the closets so buyers can see the space and decide if their clothes will fit.



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FOR TODAY'S HOMEBUYER SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

No longer is the sprawling luxury home the pinnacle of real estate in the North American market.

As baby boomers look to downsize and homeowners trade luxury for function, there is renewed interest in smaller homes.

Eighty percent of 1,300-plus real estate agents surveyed in 2011 said that baby-boomer clients aged 54 to 64 are interested in smaller homes. Saving money and living more simply were among the reasons for the interest.

A recent study by the U.S. National Association of Home Builders showed that the economic downturn has altered the landscape of housing.

The study predicted that by 2015, homes will be 10% smaller than the average single-family home in 2010.

While homebuyers may be looking for smaller residences, they're not interested in sacrificing functionality.

Instead, they're trading luxury amenities for practicality.

According to architects surveyed by the American Insti-

tute of Architects, buyers are losing interest in spaces such as home theaters and exercise and game rooms and are embracing spaces like home offices and mud rooms.

Aging baby boomers will also be looking for features to make their lives safer and more comfortable. Baby boomers, more than any generation to date, are looking for homes that have been adapted to their needs instead of making the move to retirement homes.

The two- or three-story single-family home may also be on its

way out, as boomer homebuyers launch their search for an entirely different type of housing, offering a maintenance-free lifestyle.

This important demographic is looking closely at options such as condominium apartments or bungalow communities. Many are also considering rental units. Boomers aren't alone in pursuing smaller homes. Young people and immigrants will also continue to drive demand in the future.

WHY NOT PASS US TO A FRIEND?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbor, friend or co-worker. And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give us a call or send us an email!

sales@theperalgroup.com

1	3		2			7	4	
	2	5		1				
4	8			6			5	
			7	8		2	1	
5				9		3	7	
9				3				5
	4				6	8	9	
	5	3			1	4		
6								

Sudoku instructions: Complete the 9x9 grid so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact us for the solution!

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DELICIOUS HOLIDAY RECIPES!

Soft Holiday Sugar Cookies

Serves 4 dozen cookies

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 8 minutes

Ingredients

4 cups all-purpose flour
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1 cup butter, softened
 1 1/2 cups white sugar
 1 egg
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1/2 cup sour cream

Directions

- Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and nutmeg; set aside. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in the egg, vanilla and sour cream until well blended. Stir in the sifted ingredients. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and chill overnight.
- Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough out to 1/4 inch in thickness.

Cut into desired shapes with cookie cutters. Place cookies 1 1/2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheets.

3. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven. Allow cookies to cool on baking sheet for 5 minutes before removing to a wire rack to cool completely.

Sugar Cookie Frosting

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 48

Ingredients

4 cups confectioners' sugar
 1/2 cup shortening
 5 tablespoons milk
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 food coloring of your choice

Directions

- In a large bowl, cream together the confectioners' sugar and shortening until smooth. Gradually mix in the milk and vanilla with an electric mixer until smooth and stiff, about 5 minutes. Color with food coloring if desired.

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