

I'm not a robot   
reCAPTCHA

Continue

Hello neighbor achievement guide

Gracia Lam for Reader's DigestFor 25 years, I've lived on this dead-end road where bluff fell into the Santa Ana River flood zone, where the garage was turned into an apartment or mother-in-law apartment for recent immigrants. A few of my neighbors have been here longer, but we lost three of them during the Great Depression that people think is over now. Diane (all names have been changed to protect people's privacy) lost her job at a heating and air conditioning company and later lost her home; Anthony's wife left it to someone else, and then Anthony lost his home; and Rick takes his family to Central California because he loses the business he runs in his garage, making tire pressure gauges. Lemons are 69 cents each at the grocery store, and my daughter needs ten of them for a recipe, but we put them back. All 10. We pass by Sandra's house, where her Meyer lemon tree is loaded with the sweetest thin fruit skin, better than the store, anyway. Sandra's husband decided to leave her and their a autism son to pursue his new love, who is 30 years old. (He is 68.) Sandra's home is underwater, a term no one has ever heard of until this new Dust Bowl of mortgage fraud. Sandra's husband went for one of the active home loans from a company that is being sued by the federal government. But the lawsuit won't help Sandra. When we hear news about settlements that occur many years after someone has lost a house, we often talk about people getting money now that the lawn has turned to straw, roses to potpourri on their trunks. Sandra is a tailor, so I asked her to fix the hem on my favorite outfit, which I bought 12 years ago. We picked up a bag of lemons, and then, while we talked at the curb, my daughter took the fruit inside our house. A truck pulled up, it was our neighbor Julia, from down the street. She was fired from her last job, then hired as a waiter at a new restaurant that would open for two months. Two months is a long time with no income, especially when her owner asks her to buy a uniform with her own money. The discussion of the economy at the highest levels is all about cliffs, ceilings, sequesters, and bargaining chips. At the curb and neighbors and fences level, it's about chicken noodle soup and beef ravioli, which I know are being sold for less than a dollar per can. On my porch are eight of the best umbilical orange bags in my city here in Southern California, just picked up by Mr. Gordon from his own tree a few blocks away. His son was my student at the local college 24 years ago, and for two decades he brought us oranges. The smell filled the air near my front door. I divide them every year family and friends – that's why he brings them. I gave Julia a bag through the truck window, and she went home with her son and father. It's January, and there's snow on the ground in many other places, but my house is full of bonuses. This is why my mother's family moved to the area from Switzerland, and Parents from Canada: the promise of fruit on trees even if the mountains are covered with white dust, the sun is not punishing, as it is in August, but gentle and nourishing. In my kitchen are giant avocados chosen by Karla, who lives nearby. Her daughter carries me a bag every week. Since her third husband left, Karla has barely paid the rent. She is a surgical technician, hired part-time by hospitals when they need her; she is also a substitute mother who, for the third time, is pregnant for a wealthy couple, and that work exceeds full-time. I bring her a bag of oranges, and eggs from my chickens, and I always buy whatever her sons and daughters are selling to their school fundraisers: candles and candy and lottery tickets. (She has five children and three grandchildren.) I got tangeries from my best friend, who lived a few blocks away. She is a widow and, like me, has three children. We met when her husband had cancer and my husband had a mid-life crisis and moved out, and I started cooking dinner for both of us. And then my ex-husband stopped by for his orange bag, but he also dropped off a box of tea and a carton of half and a half he got at the 99-cent store. I was wearing a cashmere sweater that was circulated by the mother of my daughter's best friend-she gave me four sweaters in the fall. This is how it works when times are hard and even better times, if we're lucky. Our women stood on the pavement and rested our backs against the fence and leaned into open car windows to see who needed what. In my 25 years living on this block, there has been recession before, but this has lasted the longest. So all week my daughter and I ate avocados that sliced like butter and scrambled eggs from our chickens, three of which my ex-husband rescued from the backyard of someone who had lost her home. We're not in the water. It's a false metaphor. We're treading water while those above us– corporations and even federal and state officials–seem to be heaving papers at us or tossing down invective food stamps (some people on the block had to resort to them briefly, secretly, and were relieved to stop) and health benefits (Sandra's son suffered from self-syndrome support for dental work, glasses, and home care has been cut). We have tea and oranges and tangeries, which we can only hope is enough for now. We have each other, that's what people had in the 1930s and in other recessions. I have a nice grey cashmere sweater on my shoulders. Lemon in the old juice machine on the counter. I've saved a lot throughout my life on this street. Today, I figure, Sandra saves me at least \$15, with my lemon and hem dress. At dusk, I go to Found and received ten boxes of chicken noodle soup, ten boxes of beef ravioli, and five frozen pizzas, all sold because that's what a down-block boy likes to eat. And then I sit on my own front porch, waiting for the wolf to come up from the river much later and pandas and possums that nose around for sweet, dimpled citrus peel coins on the pavement. iStock/lovro77M a lot of people leave a spare key with a neighbor in case someone in the family is locked. If you have become a safe haven for your neighbors, you may feel good knowing they consider you to be trustworthy and the kind of knowledgeable person they want to call in an awkward emergency. This is why this man always keeps his keys in his ignition. iStock / vitranc While no one expects you to be a silent little mouse all the time, your neighbors will appreciate a little peace and quiet while they are in bed. If you join the outdoor party inside by 11am or avoid mowing your lawn during the wee hours of the morning, everyone around will be resting better and more fun. iStock / gradyreese Can you be respectfully quiet but have to deal with the party neighbors at the wee hour of the morning. If the noise has become intolerable, they will appreciate hearing quiet time reminders from you rather than from the police if you go straight to dial 911, especially if it's a rare occurrence. iStock/Elenathewise An overgrown lawns or clutter may not fault the owners, but a neighbor may see them as an eyesore. Keeping your lawn as clean as possible (within reason) means you can be happier yourself, and your neighbors will enjoy an overall welcoming neighborhood. Start by avoiding mistakes that make your yard look cluttered. iStock/ArtMarie As much as you admire your little angel, not everyone loves children, and you may not realize that your screaming kids bother your neighbors. But if your neighbors support your little entrepreneurs' lemonade stand or give baby keeper, you can tell your kids are just as lovely as you hoped. iStock/betyarlaca Dogs often get restless and loud when they're lonely, so your neighbors will be grateful if they don't have to listen to howls and yelps all day. Keep your child happy to cut down on barking, and try not to leave your pet alone for more than four hours. Keep your lawn clear of the common backyard dog hazards. iStock/spxChrome With the owners gone, any house can end up with an overgrown lawn or a large pile of unread newspapers. Your neighbors will surely appreciate an offer to take care of those tasks while they are away, and they will probably return the favor to you the next time you go out of town. Don't make travel mistakes before your next trip. iStock/cmart7327 In the while you have the legal right to park street cars as your neighbors do, your neighbors may have the points they consider theirs. Staying outside those locations allows them to park in front of their homes instead of half a block to their front door. If your family's car is taking over the available street parking lot, see if you can rearrange it. If you use your garage primarily for storage, it may be time to do a purge so that your car will fit. These are items you should never keep in your garage. iStock/NONGAMT No matter how close you are to your family Door, your neighbors can enjoy your fence or yard separation fence. Even if it is technical on your property, ask their thoughts before removing it. They may resent the new in privacy detected if you don't warn them. Source: time.com, Houston.citymomsblog.com first published: September 8, 2016 Th originally published on Reader's Digest Digest