

Joe Streno



Howdy ...

Have never been one for the "Christmas Letter thang" but there's a lot that's gone on since I left NJ for the "Midwest". As you may or may not know, I bought a house in Independence, Missouri. Yes. New Jersey boy leaves NJ—again & is very happy!

It was a pretty tumultuous year. My mom passed away January 8th. With her passing we sold her Lanoka Harbor, NJ home. I realized I could not afford to live in New Jersey any longer. With the money from the house sale I started looking around the country for homes I could afford & an area I could make a home for myself & 3 fur balls. For better or worse, IndeMO is now OUR home.



Don't get me wrong. I LOVE my new house as do the kitties. And being a 20 minute drive to downtown Kansas City is pretty awesome! Kansas



City also reminds me of Seattle. So it adds a "comfort level" that certainly helped with the choice, especially when I pre-visited in March. Plus I live in the Englewood neighborhood which is the arts district of Independence. Though I have yet to explore much of my surroundings. I've been working so hard on projects in the yard & the house, I've had time for little else—even socializing. Though I have met most of my neighbors. They all seem nice enough.

It will be very strange not to be with my mom for Christmas, or even near my family. It's me and the kitties. But we're doing okay!

Since closing on my new home mid-May, I've been working my butt off making improvements. And though my body may have complained my heart was soaring. This is my home!

Whether it was having others come in and do things like replacing the termite eaten main floor beam, new gutters, weatherproofing, sealing, insulating the walls and roof crawl space, plumbing installs for my new washer dryer, or my new furnace humidifier—my home was being improved!

The projects I took on were creating an 8 ft deep border garden, that runs the depth & back of my property. From clearing the grass/weeds to dirt, planting flowers, grasses, and all; then covering the entire rear with mulch. Oh ... and lets not forget the pressure treated wood edging I built and installed to keep all the mulch retained. Awesome!

Tools? Lots of new tools. My "inner contractor" is VERY happy! From basics like shovels, rakes, to electric lawnmower, electric auger for digging all those holes for all those plants. I may be old; but I'm not stupid!

For my mom I've planted lots of mums around the place. And for my grandmother, Rose, I planted lilacs all across the back of the property. Over the years they will grow to be 12 feet tall & wide! Naturally beautiful & fragrant fencing! I can't wait!

My 112 year old house & my life are coming along. Rose, Rocco, and Rudie & I are settling in fine & trying to enjoy every moment. I still walk into my newly installed front doors & sometimes still can't believe this is my home—our home!

So from my home to yours me & the kitties wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a very happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year! Love ... US!

