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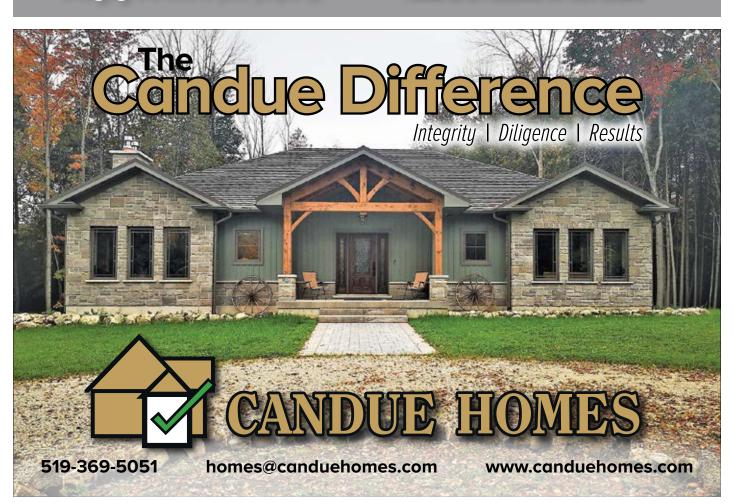
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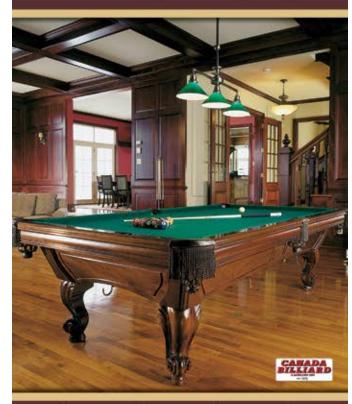
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As 2021 slowly comes to a close, I look forward to spending the holidays with my children, their

partners and one cutie patootie grandchild. I will put up a tree, fill it with lights, glass balls, tinsel and candy canes, bake shortbread cookies (both savoury and sweet), put flannel sheets on the beds with extra blankets, fill vases with pine boughs and white amaryllis, light candles as soon as darkness falls and wrap gifts.

Just writing this puts me in a holiday mood and reminds me that there is as much to look forward to at the end of the year as there is at the beginning of a new year.

As you are getting ready to enjoy the holidays, take a tea break, grab a cookie and relax while reading this issue. Our holiday feature (page 72) will inspire you. A beautiful farmhouse (page 38) will have you dreaming of a toasty fire as you glance out the window at the falling snow. Our Home & Designer feature (page 108) will have you planning a large family gathering and a movie night with popcorn and cosy faux fur throws.

If you're planning a move in the new year, People & Places presents local realtors happy to find you the perfect home. Perhaps you're considering a kitchen reno in 2022. OUR HOMES is the best resource for finding companies and trades to offer expertise, build you that beautiful new kitchen and increase the value of your home.

Have a wonderful holiday season, happy new year and goodbye 2021!

Sona Montin

Sara Martin, Managing Editor sara.martin@ourhomes.ca

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Markdale. Story, page 38.

Photography by Sandy MacKay.



building BIOLOGY

Designer **Tamarisk McNalty Stephens** explores the principles of Building Biology.

The discipline of Building Biology focuses on the relationship between the natural and built environments with the goal of creating greater harmony between the two. With nature as the guiding principle, building biologists integrate a holistic approach to the design, build and/or renovation of residential dwellings to provide as little disruption to the surrounding environment as possible — while creating healthy homes.

OFFICE OU/EVOLVE BUILDERS GROUP INC:
Contemporary straw bale home

The principles of Building Biology can be grouped into five main topics:

SITE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

The site and the placement of the dwelling should be free of health hazards (naturally occurring or human-made) and ensure occupants are not disturbed by pollution from air, soil, water, noise and electrical. The goal is to position dwellings in communities and developments that provide ample access to nature, sunshine and fresh air for families and individuals of all ages.

ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION HEALTH



This is a topic that
we've heard more and
more about since the
widespread introduction
of wireless technologies.

Many sources of electromagnetic radiation (EMR) exist, some human-made and others naturally occurring. Examples of sources include: electrical service, power lines, appliances, cell phone technology,



synthetic carpeting, drapery and textiles, components in building materials, steel in furnishings and currents in the earth. Building Biology attempts to integrate

strategies to minimize exposure generated from inside or outside a building.

Here are some simple and easy things you can do at home to lower exposure: Use a landline and minimize cell phone usage; turn off WiFi when not in use and keep electrical devices away from your bed. Some people put their bedrooms on circuits that can easily be turned off at night.

INDOOR AIR AND WATER QUALITY

A ventilation strategy is especially important in new construction. Although airtight homes are prized for their energy efficiency, the circulation of fresh air is crucial for a healthy indoor climate. This is achieved through the design and placement of windows and doors for ample natural ventilation as well as by installing a properly sized mechanical ventilation system.

The Building Biology process also aims to ensure moisture content remains low in dwellings. Building Biology strongly recommends a historically derived mass-wall



EVOLVE BUILDERS GROUP INC / HARVEST HOMES: Straw bale home construction

construction method such as earth, clay or straw for their natural ability to allow the flow of vapour molecules through the wall assembly. These natural materials have the innate ability to buffer large amounts

of moisture, and the flow-through process is very slow, so accumulation from condensation is insignificant and does not deteriorate the building envelope. Known as "breathable walls," they can provide stable temperature and humidity levels, producing a comfortable living environment. The walls themselves, finished directly with plaster or with wood over furring strips, provide insulation and eliminate the need for many synthetic materials, which can reduce exposure to volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

OCCUPANT WELL-BEING

To improve indoor air quality, consider selecting low-toxin natural materials and finishes. Providing stable and welcoming air and surfaces can be accomplished through radiant heating methods such as passive solar techniques and the use of thermal mass (such as stone surrounding a fireplace that holds heat long after the fire has burned out). Ergonomics of the human body are also important when considering furniture selections, natural light, a colour palette inspired by the surrounding natural environment and acoustics to mitigate unwanted noise.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The final tenet of Building Biology is the selection of materials and construction methods that promote health and well-being from the beginning of the process to the end. Care is taken to avoid materials that deplete natural resources or permit unsustainable harvesting practices along with life cycle costs of materials from an environmental and energy perspective. Buildings are designed in an energy-efficient manner to minimize energy consumption, provide water-saving features and power with renewable energy sources when viable. OH



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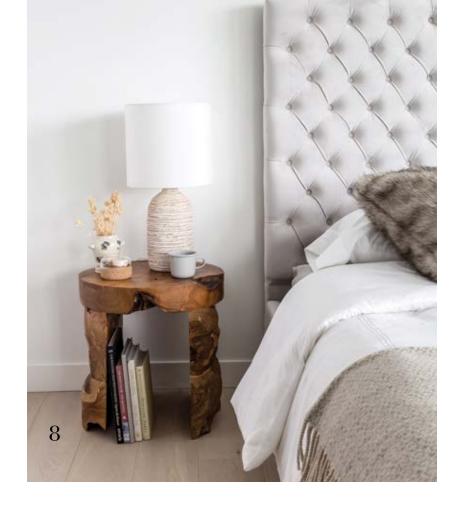




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style picks







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EQUIPMENT ONTARIO

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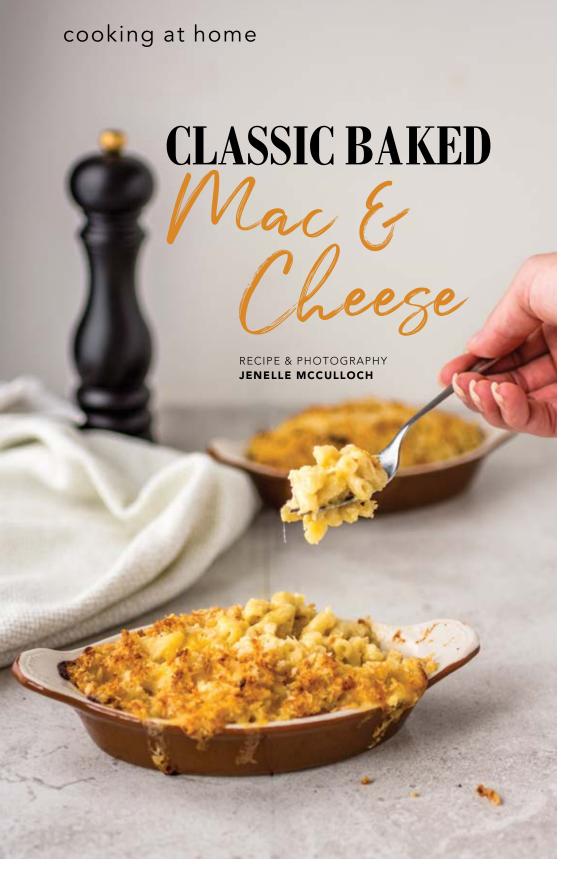
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This is a true classic recipe you can take to your next potluck. Prepare it ahead of time, freeze and bake when needed. Ingredients

MACARONI

454 g elbow macaroni noodles

3 Tbsp butter

1/4 cup all-purpose flour

2 cups milk

1 cup heavy cream

2 cups shredded cheese (a mix of cheddar and Gruyère is recommended)

Salt and pepper, to taste

PANKO TOPPING

1 cup panko breadcrumbs

2 Tbsp melted butter

¼ cup parmesan cheese, finely shredded

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large pot of boiling water, cook macaroni noodles according to package directions.

In a medium-size pot over medium-high heat, melt butter, then whisk in flour. Cook for 1 minute, whisking constantly.

Slowly add milk and cream while continuing to whisk. You'll want to add the liquid gradually so it doesn't begin to clump. Continue to whisk until mixture begins to thicken.

Remove from heat and add shredded cheese. Stir until cheese is melted.

Prepare the panko crumble topping by mixing all ingredients together.

In a 9 by 11-inch oven-safe dish (or several smaller dishes), combine the sauce with the noodles.

Cover with panko crumble and bake for 15-20 minutes until golden and bubbly. **o**H



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KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

GIFTS HOME COOKS REALLY WANT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

From crisp tea towels to fancy Dutch ovens in the latest must-have colour, kitchen gifts have always been popular during the holidays. This year though, that trend has gone into overdrive.

Thanks to the pandemic and all those hours we are still spending rustling up meals at home, kitchen retailers are seeing demand continue to explode. And beyond sheer numbers, they're also seeing other fascinating shifts.

Alison Fletcher, owner of Toronto-based Cookery says that pre-COVID, a typical holiday kitchen gift was often "really pretty, something that is perhaps high on aesthetic value and lower on function." This year, she says weary home cooks also want pieces that last and offer practical solutions. "Things that save me time, that deliver me better results and that help me deliver that many-times-a-day cooking experience."

We talked to Alison and also to Jenny Otsuka, owner of Zest Kitchen Shop in Picton, to get some guidance on gifting for this holiday season. Here are some key considerations they shared:



LONG-LASTING **QUALITY**

The pandemic has put our kitchen tools to the test. And we're finding our cheaper knives aren't cutting it and our bargain non-stick pans are decidedly sticky. As Alison says, "If it used to fall apart within two years, now it's falling apart within six months and people are really dissatisfied with those things. And so what we call heirloom-quality cookware is really where we're seeing a massive amount of growth."

Jenny sees a similar trend: "We are seeing people reinvesting in their kitchens." Specifically she sees demand for "good-quality knives, and buying that French or Dutch oven that people have been sort of holding out for all this time."

COSY COMFORT

With gifts, cosy comfort is a great mantra this year. Alison says, "The reason French ovens were so important last year and continue to be so important this year is because it brings your family together and it gives you that warmth and comfort when there's so much fear and illness and so much uncertainty outside of the home." Among the lovely gift ideas here are pieces like pasta pots, French and Dutch ovens and large sauté pans.



SIZE MATTERS

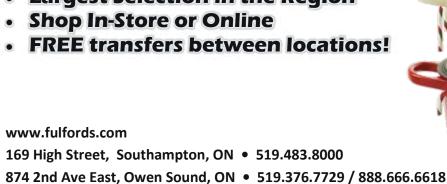
If you are considering gifting a Dutch or French oven this year, Alison says the current trend is to go big, especially if you're shopping for a busy home cook. "We're definitely seeing bigger sizes in everything - sauté pans, stock pots, frying pans - with higher capacity and bigger sizes. Because then maybe you can cook for two nights or you can cook for tonight and then lunches."

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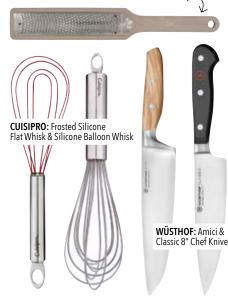
BETTER TOOLS

From chef's knives to tea towels, quality kitchen tools of all kinds are a great gift option right now. Jenny says, "Updating a few of those things just makes life so much better."

As for those chef's knives that are on many wishlists, Jenny recommends taking time to consider what the recipient already has and talking to a retailer. Often, she says, "I like to recommend starting off with a nice forged eight-inch chef's knife, and then which brand would depend on what you think would be suitable for the person."

In this category, other popular gift ideas include quality salt and pepper mills, splatter-proof aprons and quality linen tea towels that can stand the test of time.

MICROPLANE: EcoGrate Series Zester Grater in Grey



RESTAURANT-AT-HOME EXPERIENCES

As we're still having so many meals at home, gifts that make those experiences special are also wonderful. "We're seeing people improve the quality of their wine glasses because they're having wine at home more than at restaurants," says Alison. Other options include specialty cocktail glasses, shakers and beautiful coffee and tea pieces. Think Le Creuset teapots and mug sets and good-quality moka pots.



COLOURS

Before you buy, it's always good to get a sense of colour trends. For this holiday season, the most popular colours for kitchenware continue to be warm and earthy shades, says Alison - navy blues, deep golds, burgundies, browns and olive green. "So we're not seeing jewel tones, we're seeing warmth."



SHOP SMART

Finally, a little extra planning is recommended this year as pandemic-related supply issues will be a factor. "So if you see something that you think might be suitable for somebody, I would recommend picking it up," says Jenny.

LE CREUSET: Grand Teapot

& Classic Mug in Meringue

And because home cooks have such practical needs this year, trying to get some hints is a great strategy. As Jenny says, "If you can check out the person's kitchen that would be ideal - scope it out and see what they could use. And I think if the person is able to give you a hint, that would be great!" on

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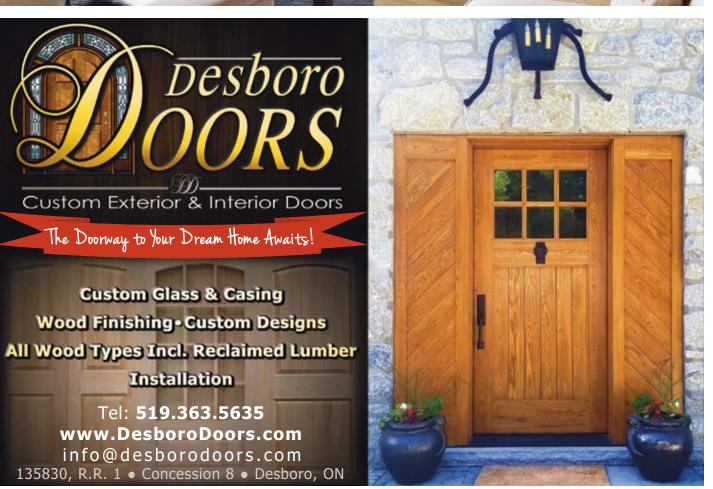
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STORY SIGNE LANGFORD PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY MACKAY

For homeowners Karen and John Fullerton, it wasn't the quaint little village of Markdale that drew them away from their urban lives in west end Toronto; it wasn't even the stunning house. Rather, it was the seemingly endless acres of farmland that beckoned.

Continued on page 41

Snow blankets the land around the farmhouse and split-rail fencing borders the fields. Benjamin Moore's Louisiana Hot Sauce adds a dash of colour to the front door.





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Nestled in the rolling hills of the West Grey in the heart of Ontario cattle country and right smack between Georgian Bay and Lake Huron, pastures and meadows as far as the eye can see are the simple yet beautiful backdrop for this 1890s farmhouse.

"We wanted a house with land," says Karen. "One that didn't need structural work, and was on the water. Those were the three boxes we wanted to tick." Seems simple enough – three little boxes – but for the Fullertons, the search took longer than expected.

"We looked at at least 20 houses," recalls Karen.

"Including this one. In fact, this one was the very first home we looked at in 2014, but it was out of our budget then, so we continued to look and it seemed we were going to have to compromise on one of the three things we wanted – some land, waterfront and a sound structure. When this house was taken off the market we became discouraged."

The couple stopped actively viewing houses, but of course, scrolling through realtor.ca listings became something of a hobby. Continued on page 43

TOP RIGHT: The kitchen enjoys a large arched opening to the birdwatching room. The original flooring has been refinished, which retains the character of this homestead. BOTTOM LEFT: The passageway leads to the basement stairwell and beyond to the living room. A milking stool painted bright blue sits under posters from Spain. BELOW RIGHT: A prep sink by the stove is a handy addition. The Fullertons enjoy meals at home, eating what they grow and what their neighbours raise.











LEFT: The tin ceiling extends from the living room into the formal dining room. Mid-century modern upholstered dining chairs are a comfortable addition to the antique harvest table. **TOP RIGHT:** The photo over the buffet is by John Wellner taken in Tofino, B.C. An old factory time clock is a favourite collectable. **BELOW:** A collection of porcelain glove moulds sit on top of the upright piano. Trim throughout the home is painted Benjamin Moore Chantilly Lace.

"THEY
UPDATED IT
BUT MADE
EVERY EFFORT
TO KEEP
THE FEELING
AND LOOK
OF AN OLD
FARMHOUSE."



And then it happened.

"In those days," says Karen. "There weren't a lot of properties on the market, so we decided we would wait until spring to start really looking again, but when this house came back up on realtor.ca we jumped on it. We made the owners an offer and they accepted within two weeks in January 2015, and by May we had closed. It all happened very quickly."

And now, with a structurally-sound home on 73 rural acres on the shores of the Rocky Saugeen River, they've ticked all three boxes and then some.

But this isn't a story of a couple swooping in from the big city to rescue an old country house in disrepair. The previous owners had done most of the heavy lifting: the structural work and the restorations. "They had done a lovely job of restoring it," says Karen. "They updated it but made every effort to keep the feeling and look of an old farmhouse. It was beautiful as it was, we've really just put our own mark on the place."

And without hiring a designer, they've put a lovely mark on the place indeed – inside and out.

"We lived in it as it was," says Karen. "But when the pandemic hit we decided to do a total makeover." Continued on page 45





LEFT: A healthy stack of dry firewood waits by the woodstove for a cold winter's night. BOTTOM RIGHT: The door leads to a secluded deck. The family cats enjoy the warmth of the sun on the outside window sill. Friend Jeff Smith of Hammersmith Metal Works made the weathervane on the pergola. BOTTOM LEFT: Coat hooks hang on what was the original exterior boards of the home. Gooseneck barn lights add to the rustic charm.



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Karen, a retired elementary school teacher, dove in with an eye for colour and curation, and a collection of new and old treasures and family heirlooms, while John tackled the basement with roller and brush and Karen's palette of **Benjamin Moore** neutrals, painting his way up to the top floor. "He really did a great job," says Karen. "He painted every inch of the place, from top to bottom."

In tones of barely-there blue, soft grey, delicate cream - Iced Cube Silver and Chantilly Lace – the walls are a blank canvas for the couple's enchanting collection of art, crafts and antiques. Here and there, they went bold with Jet Blue, Hunter Green and

Louisiana Hot Sauce on the front door, for a warm welcome.

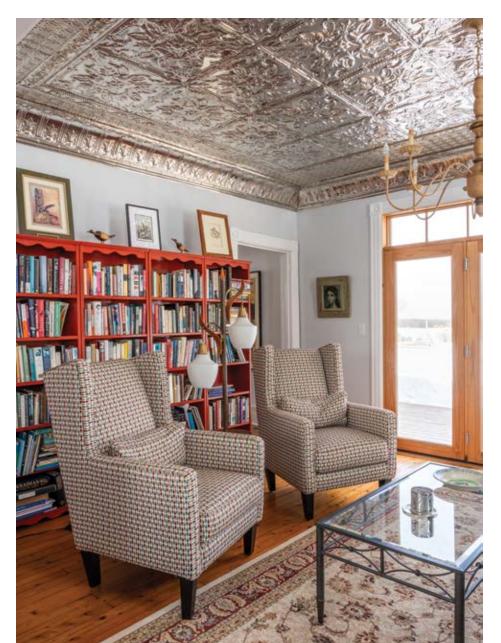
Old farmhouses can be dark, with many nooks and hallways, but this gem is flooded with natural light, which makes the gorgeous old wood glow and the tin ceiling in the living room sparkle. "The tin ceiling isn't original," explains Karen. "It's gorgeous, isn't it? The previous owners installed it and we love it."

Cuneo Interiors supplied the bold floral wallpaper and complementary paint in both the guest and master bedrooms and cushions and fabrics from Home Accents Emporium supply all the colour pops. Continued on page 46

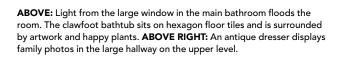
BELOW: Venus on the sink in the main-floor powder room came from John's parents and the moose on the wall is from Paris. The style of the sink is in keeping with the age of the home. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Tongue-and-groove boards line the ceiling on the second floor. The mirror over the stairs reflects artwork on the opposite wall. **BOTTOM LEFT:** French doors in the living room lead to a deck and beyond to the four kilometres of trails John built on the property. The bookcases are filled with favourite novels.















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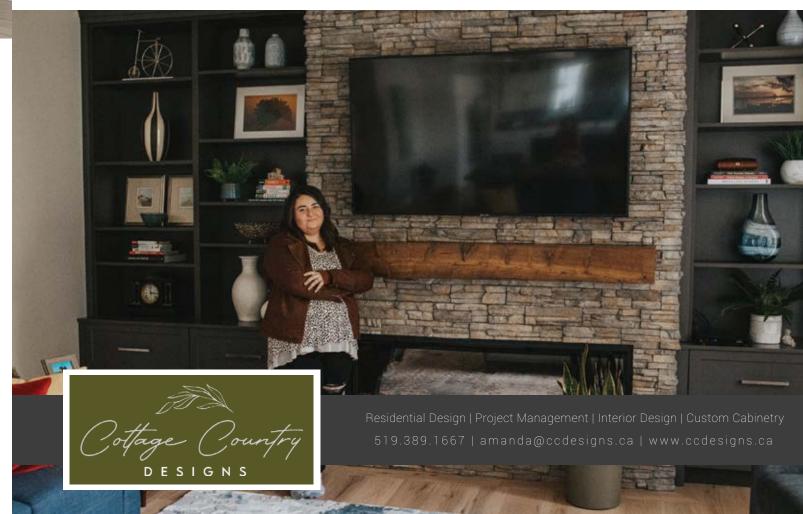
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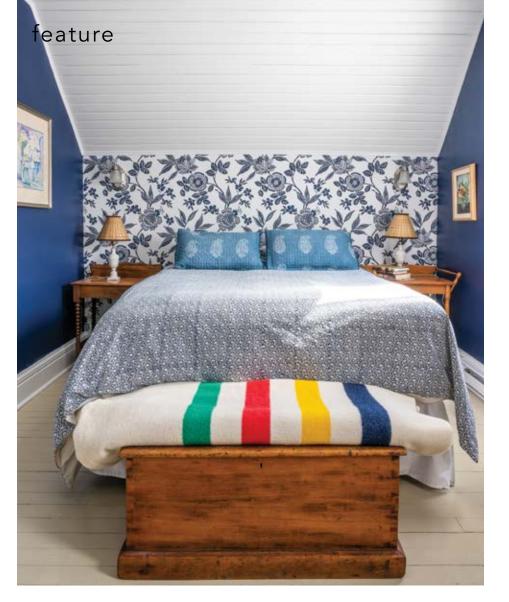
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"The one sort of structural thing we did," says Karen, "was to tear out 10 small windows in the fireroom and replace them with four much bigger panes. It's our birdwatching room and one of our favourite spaces in the house."

Until the pandemic hit, the outdoorsy pair had focused on the land, putting in 10 gardens for the pollinators and for food, as well as planting many native species of fruit and berry trees for wildlife. "All the gardens would not be possible if not for John's work," says Karen. They also spent those first few years exploring

"We couldn't believe what we had until we took possession," recalls Karen. "We were just so happy. We took many walks around the property, trying to familiarize ourselves with the land and the trails." And with 33 acres of bush, 18 acres farmed by a neighbouring organic farmer - the rest pasture - and about four kilometres of trails John cleared and built leading down to the water, that's a lot of exploring. Continued on page 48





LEFT: Mismatched washstands serve as bedside tables in the primary bedroom. The wallpaper was sourced at Cuneo Interiors. The Hudson's Bay wool blanket adds extra warmth when needed. **BELOW RIGHT:** Wallpaper becomes the headboard behind the twin beds. Matching vintage quilts follow the floral theme. BOTTOM: This cosy bed built into the slope of the roof comes with a view of the surrounding farmland. A stool helps little quests



At 2,200 square feet, relocating here wasn't about a couple of empty nesters downsizing.

"Even though it's just the two of us, we love the size of the house; it gives us lots of room to spread out, but most of our lives are lived in the fireroom and kitchen." The fantastic kitchen island came with the home. "We negotiated for that," says Karen. "It's amazing, isn't it?"

Karen is the cook in the family and this spacious and well-planned kitchen was a real selling point for her. And now that the couple grow their own veggies and source almost 100 per cent of their food locally, cooking and life in the kitchen is that much more joyful. "It's really fulfilling," says Karen. "During the pandemic we went a little crazy with the garden – it's a real passion for both of us. We cook at home, we eat what we grow, and what our neighbours raise. It just makes for a much healthier life, working outside and eating what you grow."

Winters can be harsh in Grey County, but the couple embrace the seasons here. "We cross country ski and snowshoe," says Karen. "We both like to be physically active and all the land requires us to be very active. We kayak and we love to watch the wildlife that is a wonderful part of being here: deer, wild turkeys, coyotes and a returning family of bluebirds and, we have a habitat for endangered bobolinks who nest in standing grass."

The two occupy this space with wildlife, the past and the future in mind. "Our connection to the land and to who came before us here is important to us." explains Karen. "Half of our pastures are left to be wild, and I'm looking into a conservancy, a land trust, that will hold this land as it is in perpetuity."

"We love the house," says Karen. "The house is spectacular, and we have already made so many memories here but it is nothing without the land." on





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EMILY GRIFFIN DESIGN: Kawartha Lakes Barn

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It's buzzy, romantic and a little over the top. But by most accounts, the cottagecore trend is set to stick around for a while.

So what is it exactly? Aesthetically, it's a nod to the traditional English countryside style – romantic and nostalgic. Essentially, it celebrates an idealized rural life.

It's youth-based and started as a fashion trend on TikTok and Instagram around 2019 before setting its sights on home décor. Whether or not we're aware of it, the pandemic has seen many of us starting to embrace cottagecore elements at home.

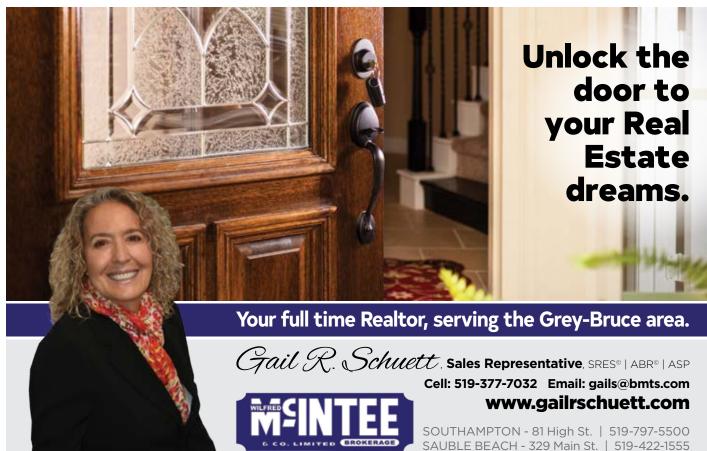
If cottagecore fashion means flowing floral frocks and a nice straw bag, in home décor it's a more tactile, low-tech sensibility. Think hands-on activities like gardening, baking or needlepoint, and cosying up a room with nubby crocheted throws and squashy velvet cushions.

A similar story has emerged among Ontario designers and retailers. Call it what you will – cottagecore, farmcore, granny chic, during the pandemic homeowners have been dabbling. What does the rise of cottagecore say about our lives right now? And how can we play with this trend at home? Here are thoughts from local professionals:

Layered spaces + natural materials + whimsy

In Toronto, Emily Griffin, principal at Emily Griffin Design says to be sure, people still love their modern conveniences, their tech and good WiFi. Yet the pandemic has encouraged an aesthetic shift to something warmer and softer: "People want layered spaces. They don't want to live in stark places anymore. They want places that feel cosy, that feel welcoming because they're spending so much time at home." Continued on page 52







Natural materials

Wool and sisal rugs go hand-in-hand, Emily says, as do vintage pieces and more colour and playfulness. In bedrooms for example, she says, "I think people are tiring of the standard white hotel duvet cover and are looking for colour and pattern and a bit of whimsy." Emily, who launched her own line of hand-blocked Indian cotton bedding in 2020 called Imli, says linens are one easy way to explore the cottagecore aesthetic at home.



Embellishment + vintage pieces

In Toronto's west end, A Changing Nest carries a mix of new home furnishings plus vintage pieces like ginger jars and furniture. Here, shop owner Diana Ross has noticed a similar shift among her clientele, younger customers included. There's more nostalgia and interest in vintage pieces, she says. "We are seeing an absolute little uptick in people who are wanting something unique and different and are tired of the same old things they're seeing in shops. They'll buy themselves a beautiful tea cup and return to say: 'You know what? I just sat and had a cup of tea in that tea cup I bought from you. Oh my gosh, it was so beautiful!"

As for those décor staples like cushions, she's seeing more taste for embellishment texture, lovely fringe, pompoms, even floral patterns. "Which is interesting, because 10 years ago no one wanted to see that," says Diana. "They wanted a clean knife edge. No piping. Nothing."

Statement cushions as well as vintage pieces are two more ways to bring the cottagecore look home.

Repurposed furniture + quilts + linen

In Dundas, Lorna Parcher owns Graham & Brooks, a shop that carries both new and vintage furnishings. While she saw interest in a cottagecore-style aesthetic before the pandemic, Lorna says COVID seemed to ramp that up across all demographics. "With COVID we want to kind of come and centre ourselves in our home and have things around us that give us comfort."

Among the popular cottage-core type pieces she carries, Lorna lists antique furniture - medium wood tones and painted pieces work well, she says. "The quality is there and it has stood the test of time." She also stocks quilts from Montreal, plus lots of cosy cushions, pillows and throws. As for how to introduce this aesthetic successfully, Lorna suggests neutrals with splashes of colour. "It's a lot more about texture than lots of colours, so a neutral palette is something we really embrace in our store."



Nature + texture+ neutral palette

Interior designer Jenny Pink of Back 40 Designs PTBO in Peterborough, also feels that a neutral colour scheme can work to ground this trend. And finally, beyond some of the other hallmarks - vintage, texture and natural materials - Jenny says nature can provide wonderful cottagecore accents. "Honestly just taking a walk down a trail or through a forest and collecting some natural pieces, or making your own flower bouquets. It's just simple pieces like that. People are appreciating that more because we've had the time to kind of stop and look and reflect on the things that matter to us." OH



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SELLING? YOU CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO TAGE YOUR HO

When Allison Ross of Across Ottawa Home Staging started her business a decade ago, staging for resale was a hard sell.

STORY GEORGETTE MCCULLOCH | ILLUSTRATIONS SHEILA BRITTON

Continued on page 56

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Picturesque views of Georgian Bay

from many rooms within this private, 3 bedroom, 4 bath home. Situated on 27 acres, this property has been strategically positioned to capture the north west views of the islands at both Owen Sound & Wiarton harbours. Vaulted ceilings in an open concept kitchen/dining/living, great room, all warmed by the focal, builtin, propane fireplace. Patio doors from dining room lead to large, wrap-around, tiered deck, perfect for entertaining & enjoying the sunsets. Spectacular views also accessed from the main floor, primary bedroom, ensuite, walk-in closet & built-in, corner propane fireplace. Upper level has 2 large bedrooms separated by 4-piece bath, perfect for family or guests. Third room on this level currently used as office, but could be utilized as child's bedroom. Fully finished, large rec. room has lots of light & a fireplace. Basement has bedroom, 3 pc. bathroom & large workshop area & convenient, direct access to the 2 car garage. Beautifully landscaped grounds with mature, perennial gardens & in-ground saltwater, heated, pool.



real estate

"CLIENTS COULDN'T UNDERSTAND

why they would possibly spend money when they were selling, not staying," she says. "Now, everyone clearly sees the value in home staging and we have been busier than ever."

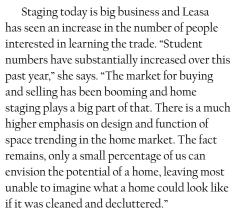
It's no secret that most buyers want a move-in-ready home – a home that looks like reveal day after a major renovation on an HGTV show. Homebuyers are smart. They have a list of must-haves and if a seller hasn't bothered to clean, declutter and paint the walls the latest colour, they will move on to the next listing on realtor.ca.

Leasa Wright, staging course instructor at Sheridan College, agrees. "Buyers want to purchase a home turnkey and do as little work as possible to move in," she says. "If they see a home that looks like it needs any type of work, all they see is money, effort and time spent getting the home the way they want it."

There's more in it for sellers than just making their homes look good. Home staging also helps to increase the final sale price of a property and reduces the length of time on the market.

Nicole Schenk is the Ottawa chapter president of the Real Estate Staging Association (RESA). She says statistics prove staged homes sell faster and sell over asking price. "In a 2020 study completed by RESA, they found 85 per cent of homes staged sold between five and 23 per cent over list," says Nicole. "On an average investment of one per cent, 75 per cent of sellers saw a return on investment of between five and 15 per cent over ask."





The pandemic has changed the way buyers look at homes for sale. Buyers cruise the internet looking for homes that tick all their boxes. First impressions matter and if a home isn't beautiful inside and out, it's not worth an

"COVID has affected the market in unprecedented ways," says Nicole. "While it has been a sellers' market with homes selling just as soon as they hit the market, staging has had a remarkable effect on the price. Earlier this year a home I staged sold for \$130,000 more than a comparable unstaged listing. Both homes were in the same area, with similar features and same asking price."





So what exactly does a stager do? Leasa teaches six essential principles of home staging:

- Depersonalize so people can envision themselves in the space
- Highlight the home's features and architectural details
- Enhance curb appeal to get people in the door
- Complete home improvements and repairs, update fixtures
- Declutter to create space
- Neutralize colour palettes and generalize décor to appeal to more viewers

"We cover so much in our curriculum from what an ideal floor plan would look like, to what colour palettes work best, how to partner with a trusted team (including trades and real estate agents) and how to budget and build your staging inventory from the ground up," Leasa explains. on



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Krista's Tips for Winter Showings

Clear snow and ice to make it easy for buyers to access your home.

Keep your home a cozy temperature so buyers are comfortable.

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Allow as much light as possible into the home, perhaps even put lights on a timer.



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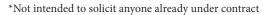
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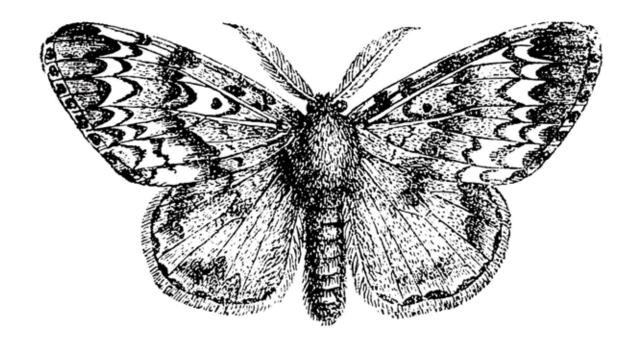
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INVASION PREPARATION

STORY MELANIE REKOLA

Formerly known as the culturally offensive European gypsy moth, the Lymantria dispar dispar (LDD) moth caterpillars devastated forests, backyard trees and even outdoor enjoyment for many this past year. So many times, at a client's outdoor space, we'd be picking fallen caterpillars off each other with caterpillar feces raining down on us from the tree canopy above. Some people even avoided their outdoor spaces completely for fear of an encounter! Next summer may shape up to be another heavy LDD caterpillar year. Read on for facts, history and support.

Continued on page 62



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WHAT ARE LDD MOTHS?

LDD moths are an invasive species from Europe and Asia introduced to the U.S. near Boston in the 1860s and reaching southern Canada by 1969. Outbreaks hit every decade or so, lasting one to three years. Our current record-breaking eruption began in 2019.

LDD moths need specific weather conditions to thrive and this makes sense considering our present outbreak. They cannot survive below -20 degrees Celsius for long, and they're susceptible to certain fungal infections during wet weather. In recent years we've had warmer winters followed by dry springs, creating the ideal natural conditions for them to flourish - and flourish they have! The continuing warmer temperature trends are favourable for future LDD moth populations.

Most other moth and butterfly caterpillar species are picky eaters and can only use one or two plants as hosts for their larva, but not LDD moth caterpillars. They have voracious appetites and can eat a wide variety of tree leaves including oak, maple, birch, poplar, willow and more.

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

LDD caterpillars are hairy, about six centimetres long with five pairs of blue dots and six pairs of red dots on their backs. The adult male moths are brown and fly around erratically in summer, whereas the females are larger, white and flightless. Their light-brown egg masses resemble the skin of a tennis ball and can be found on tree trunks, under branches and in tree crevices.



WILL MY TREES DIE?

Many people think that once a tree has been defoliated it's dead. Luckily this isn't true. Trees often have latent buds as a defence mechanism, allowing them to regrow their leaves. But it does take a lot of energy to do this and some trees, like oaks, take longer to regenerate, leaving them weak and more susceptible to pathogens. Add the extra stresses of drought and being defoliated by LDD caterpillars in successive years and this will be too much for some trees to handle. Unfortunately we will see more tree death in upcoming years as a result of this epidemic.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Some municipalities are spraying Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki (Btk) to control LDD outbreaks, target-spraying "high-value" trees, but many others are just letting nature take its course. Btk has the potential to kill many of our beneficial native caterpillars, so it's not a responsible long-term option. Unfortunately, LDD moths and caterpillars are likely here to stay.

Here's what you can do to mitigate their damage at home.

In fall, inspect all your trees and vertical surfaces around your home as best you can for their light-brown egg masses. Remove them with a paint scraper or butter knife and put them into a bucket of soapy water. This last step must be done or the eggs will still hatch into caterpillars.

In spring, tie a band of burlap at chest height around your trees so that it folds over in half. The LDD caterpillars will be present until the middle of July and they often hide in the shade of the burlap fold. Check the burlap daily and dump any found LDD caterpillars into a bucket of soapy water. They can also be squished, but it's pretty ghastly and the soapy water solution often ensures a quicker, more sanitary and more guaranteed death.

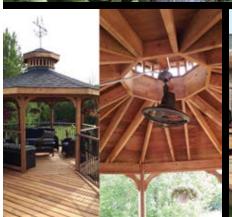
Some birds and other wildlife will eat LDD caterpillars and moths, but not enough to make much of a dent in their population.

Native species balance overpopulation together - if one is doing particularly well, its predators will also do well taking care of the issue. This is why invasive species are so problematic! OH















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THE HISTORY

Jerry and Mary McGlynn started a hardwood sawmill outside of Wingham in 1964, supplying lumber to farms. Jerry and Mary had 10 children – a daughter and nine sons, including Bernie, their oldest. In 1983, Bernie purchased the sawmill from his father. Jerry continued to do the buying and bush work while Bernie took care of building the business and its customer base. They expanded their sawmill operation to Mildmay in 1999 and added kilns to dry the hardwood, which allowed expansion into international markets. Today, Bernie's wife Doreen and their children Lucas, Sheldon and Sherena manage production, including the logging operation and work together to produce superior products for their customers.



THE PLACE

South Bruce Flooring is adding strength and growth to Bruce County with its many local products. Owner Bernie McGlynn, his family and employees produce a half-million square feet of hardwood floors at their location near Mildmay every year. Byproducts are turned into sawdust, mulch and woodchips for use in landscaping and farming. They also offer solid-wood building materials at factory prices.



SHOWROOM

Their retail showroom, South Bruce Flooring, opened in 2004. They sell hardwood flooring from trees sourced from Midwestern Ontario, including hard maple, ash, cherry, rustic maple, walnut, elm, beech, pine, oak and hickory in many sizes and stains. They also sell trim and mouldings, stairs, wood doors and lumber. Engineered hardwood flooring manufactured off site is also on display. Bernie McGlynn Lumber Ltd. has come full circle from renewable natural resources to finished products. OH



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STORY CONNIE JESKE CRANE

We've all felt it, that uneasiness that follows a happy round of holiday gift-giving.









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Eyeing those mountains of crunched-up paper, sticky tape and jiggly ribbons, we know much of this stuff isn't recyclable. And the uncomfortable truth is, holiday waste isn't insignificant. According to Zero Waste Canada, Canadians generate 545,000 tons of waste each year from gift wrap and shopping bags. And during the holiday season alone, we motor through six million rolls of tape.

What to do? It's no surprise that more consumers today are on the hunt for sustainable gift-wrap options. Social media sites like Instagram and Etsy are seeing the proof in their search results. In April 2021 for example, Etsy noted: "Interest in reusable or recyclable wrapping paper, gift boxes and mailers is on the rise." Astonishingly, the company saw a 936 per cent year-over-year increase in searches for eco-friendly gift boxes!

Are you, too, seeking out sustainable wrapping this holiday season? We've got you. Here's our list of sustainable gift-wrap inspiration aimed at helping you deliver all the joy - without all the waste. Happy wrapping!

Wrappr (wrappr.com)

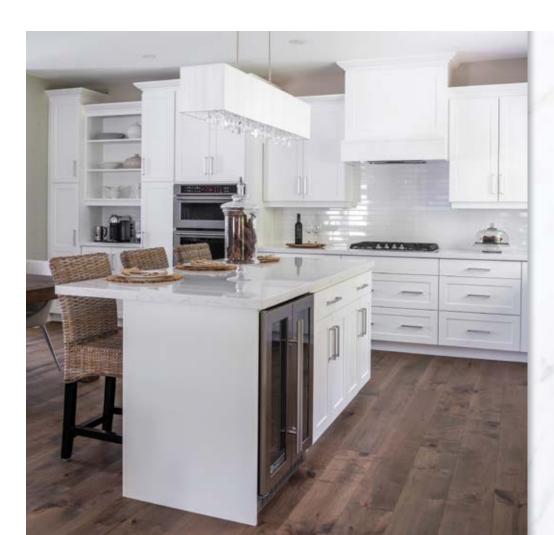
REUSABLE FUROSHIKI GIFT WRAP DESIGNED BY ARTISTS

In Toronto, Brittany Trafford is the founder of Wrappr, a small business now in its second year of selling artist-designed furoshiki wraps. As Trafford explains, "Furoshiki is a tradition in Japan. It's been a craft there for about 1,200 years and it's the tradition of wrapping gifts and transporting books or food with fabric wrap." Wrappr's mission is first environmental, she says. The company website offers not only colourful product photos of reusable wrap designs, but also education such as tying tutorials and notes



on alternate uses for furoshiki. Trafford's secondary mission is support for artists. Wrappr furoshiki come in a stunning variety of designs by artists from around the globe, making them a joy to gift and reuse. (Artists, says Trafford, are paid up-front and also earn a one-dollar royalty from every furoshiki sale.) Beyond designs by Canadian artists, Trafford says, "We're also working with artists from Argentina, Japan, Germany and all over the place!"

Continued on page 70







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joywrap (joywrap.ca)

REVERSIBLE FABRIC BAGS, FLAT WRAP AND BATH BOMB GREETING CARDS

In Dundas, Ont., Amy Ballinger's company joywrap is also prepping for its second holiday season. Signature products include reversible furoshiki-type flat wraps and gift bags with a twist - or crinkle, to be exact. Ballinger started out making products for her family: "We decided we didn't want to contribute to the waste anymore but then we were joking about how it would be a silent Christmas morning with everyone unwrapping their fabric gifts!" Thanks to a bit of innovation (via a non-toxic and BPA-free material between fabric layers), joywrap products deliver on nostalgia, offering lots of classic crinkle when they're unwrapped. With reversible fabrics - wraps and bags are festive on



one side, while the other is more generic – Ballinger says pieces are designed to be used year-round.

Joywrap's made-in-Canada offerings include an option to customize wrap with photos of family or furry friends as well as reusable gift tags and bath-bomb greeting cards, which are biodegradable and can be tossed in the tub.



DIY PROJECTS

Prefer a DIY project? If you have some basic sewing skills, making your own cloth wraps and bags is another compelling option – with the bonus of going fabric shopping! The internet is absolutely brimming with sewing tutorials, but rest assured sewing a furoshiki – essentially a hemmed square of fabric – is a fairly simple task. From there you could also try your hand at sewing simple tie bags, wine carriers or totes.



NO SHOPPING REQUIRED

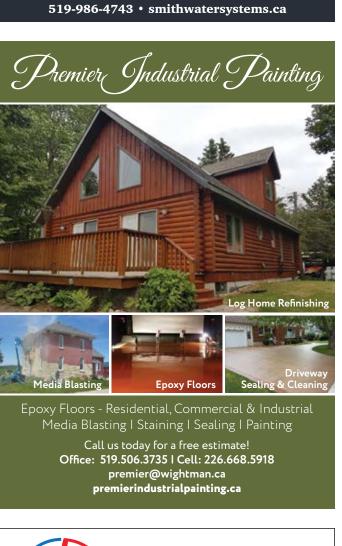
Don't want to shop at all? No problem. There are lots of elegant ways to package gifts by reusing what you already have. For example, in place of traditional gift wrap, consider using a colourful map or your children's artwork. Vintage pieces are also great for packing gifts – and as a bonus, mason jars, tins, wooden crates, baskets, scarves and tea towels deliver lots of whimsy and visual interest.

Consider pieces of ribbon, jute or string in place of cello tape. And topping it all off, rather than non-recyclable ribbons and bows, why not head outside? Gathered bits like pinecones, branches and sprigs of greenery make for simple yet breathtaking embellishment on gifts.

EMBRACE THE FUN

Admittedly, developing more sustainable traditions takes some time and thought. Yet Ballinger likes to frame this as more about fun and creativity than guilt. Just like those holiday stockings and décor you bring out every year, reusable wrapping pieces, she says, can become part of your family's cherished traditions. "You're not losing anything here," she says of ditching the waste. "For me it's really about 'What traditions are we passing on to future generations?" OH









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It wouldn't be a holiday edition without a feel-good festive feature from the The Chantry Island **Cham-bettes Christmas Tour of Homes**. This fabulous group, through its annual home tours, has raised more than \$130,000 for the Southampton Hospital. Reflecting on tours of Christmases past, we sat down with two participants from the 2020 virtual event – home tour host alumni, Heather Joynt and longtime attendee but first-time host, Darylyn Johnston.





ABOVE: Heather Joynt is happy to welcome visitors to her home. **RIGHT:** The magic starts just inside the front door. Heather's husband Pat is her elf and helps put up and take down the decorations each year. **TOP:** A window frame is repurposed and painted to highlight greenery and a pair of skates.



THE JOYNTS' 12 TREES OF CHRISTMAS

Heather Joynt has never met a Christmas tree she didn't love. Each year, the Joynts fill their home with merriment and multiple trees. For the Cham-bettes Christmas Tour of Homes, Heather knew she needed something extra.

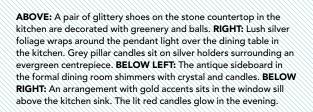
She decorated 12 trees for the tour – each with its own personality, from traditional, to sports, movie and hobby-inspired themes. Heather refuses to play favourites. "They are all unique, have their own theme, meaning and connection to family and friends, and that keeps growing from year to year." Continued on page 75

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The Party Shoe Tree pays homage to the annual Christmas arranging party Heather has hosted for almost 30 years. Every year Heather compiles supplies for friends and family to use for Christmas décor creation. Following praise for some glittery green party shoe arrangements in 2019, Heather collected more sparkly shoes in a year of no parties! As much as Heather loves the *Party Shoe Tree*, she's hoping it's temporary, noting that "Once the party can be held again, we will need all those shoes to create some fabulous Christmas arrangements."

RIGHT: The Black Woodland Tree uses a colour palette of champagne, silver, platinum and gold. Owls and deer make an appearance through the sparkly oak leaves, birch bark and pine cones. **BELOW:** The living room mantel is a decadent display of rustic trees touched with snow and deer set amongst the



"OVER THE YEARS I'VE USED THE SAME
PIECES, ADDING
DIFFERENT
CONCEPTS FOR
HOW THEY GO
TOGETHER." - Heather Joynt

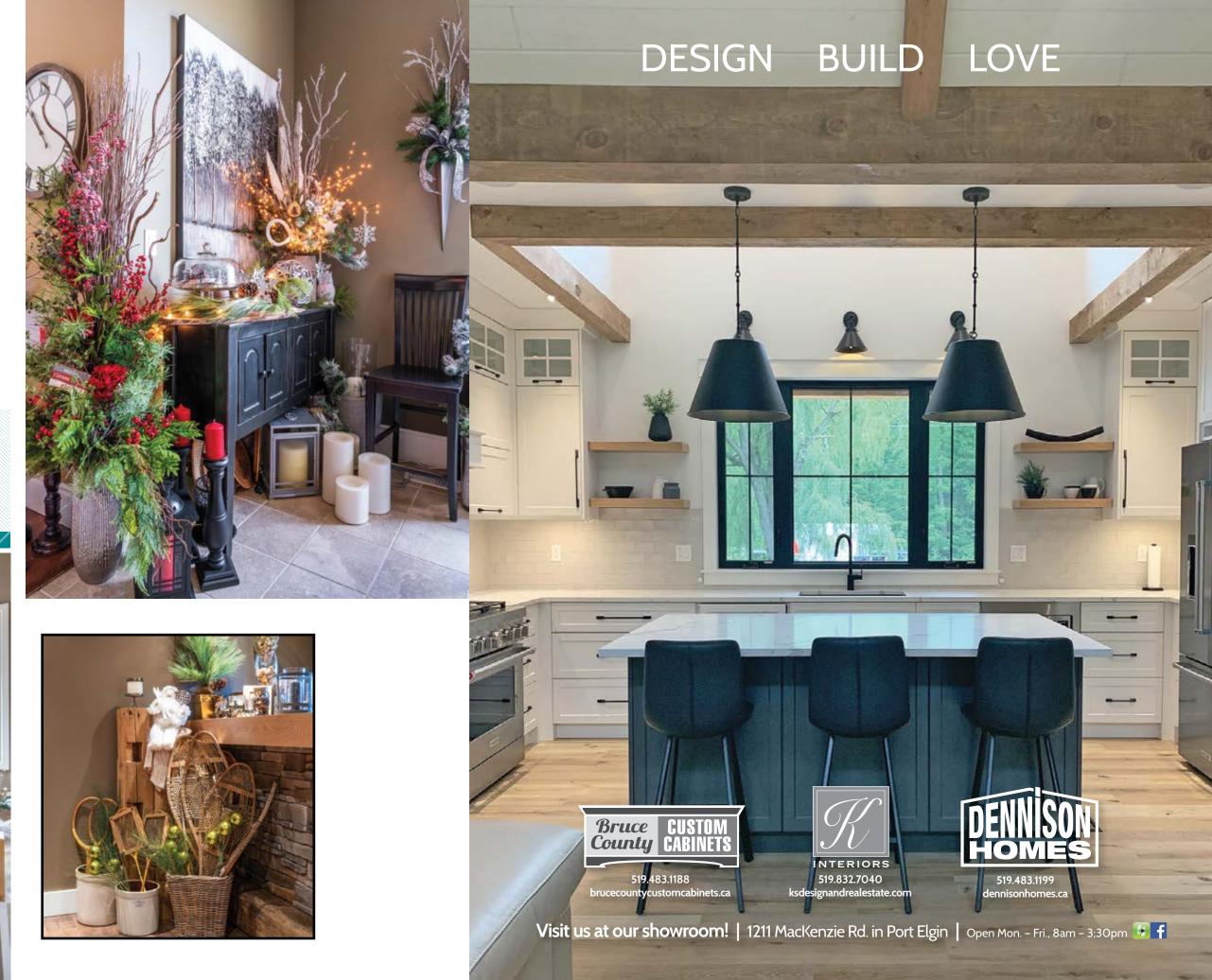
The Bat Flip Tree and the Christmas Story Tree are also new and a nod to husband Pat and his interests. The Bat Flip honours the iconic moment former Toronto Blue Jay José Bautista flipped his bat after hitting a home run during a playoff game in 2015, and a reminder of Pat's love of baseball. The Pittsburgh Steelers Tree has gold, black, red and white balls and Steelers ornaments. "It's a tribute to our family's favourite football team." The Christmas Story Tree is a tribute to Pat's favourite movie.

The trees illustrate Heather's approach to décor as a means of telling the family's story, combining old and new decorations throughout their home. "Over the years I've used the same pieces, adding different concepts for how they go together."

Continued on page 78

RIGHT: Gold, silver and red co-mingle around a sideboard in the kitchen, creating a feast for the eyes. BELOW LEFT: The primary en suite's corner tub is ready for a luxurious Christmas Eve soak. BELOW RIGHT: The Christmas theme extends to antique snowshoes, tennis and badminton racquets in a corner of the lower level.







LEFT: White, orange, gold and burgundy glass balls set the colour scheme on the main tree where the family gathers to open presents on Christmas morning. **TOP RIGHT:** A decorative charger in the living room reflects gold sculptural trees next to an

Two trees are central to the overall look. The Main Tree is the grand centrepiece, where the family opens presents on Christmas morning, and while its look has changed over the years, the angel on top, a gift from a friend nearly 30 years ago, hasn't changed. The Vintage Tree is heavily decorated with coloured lights, painted glass and handmade ornaments and a vintage plastic angel on top. Home to the kids' special ornaments, made at daycare and beyond, this is the tree where crafts from the grandkids will eventually go, too.

Heather's top décor tips include combining the old and new, reusing and reimagining and making your décor personal. For new pieces, Heather's favourite local spots include K interiors and Everest Trees for big and beautiful trees. Continued on page 81



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A VIRTUAL DELIGHT

Darylyn Johnston has attended Cham-bettes Christmas Home Tours for several years. In 2020 her sister-in-law Lori Johnston, a Chambette herself, convinced Darylyn to host. An easier pitch than normal, 2020 was a purely virtual event, which allowed for participation without foot traffic.

The Cham-bettes virtual tour expanded Darylyn's decorating footprint, from the usual main floor into bedrooms and bathrooms. With the help of **Kerri McLean** of **Interior Motives & Co.**, who regularly supports home-tour hosts, the Johnston family home was prepped and polished by early November, featuring a main tree as well as a newly added entry tree. Continued on page 82

RIGHT: Darylyn Johnston takes a moment to relax before the Christmas fun begins.

ABOVE: Nostalgic items are found throughout the house, including a table made from a sewing-machine base and a decorative pair of old skates.



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CONTES

opposite, LEFT: A dream coffee and hot chocolate bar has been set up in the dining room. TOP RIGHT: A lush floral arrangement of red roses, carnations and white spider mums complements the gold china and red placemats on the dining table. BOTTOM RIGHT: Santa will be spoiled for options when he comes down the Johnston chimney. A garland of red-and-white woolly mitts and coats form a garland below the fireplace mantel.







TOP LEFT: A snowman face hangs above a Christmas scene in the primary bedroom. TOP RIGHT: Open shelving by the fireplace holds a collection of whimsical decorations. ABOVE: A Christmas mouse joins the elf on the shelf. LEFT: The home is very close to the shores of Lake Huron and beach themed décor has found its way into Darylyn's holiday decorating.

"I've always loved Christmas, the colours, the traditions," Darylyn says. Spending time decorating my own home and family members' homes is my favourite part of the season." A self-professed fan of the traditional, red and green dominate the colour scheme. Decorations change, with new additions coming annually from favourite local shops including The Woman's Cave in Port Elgin, Southampton Market and It's a Shore Thing in Sauble Beach.

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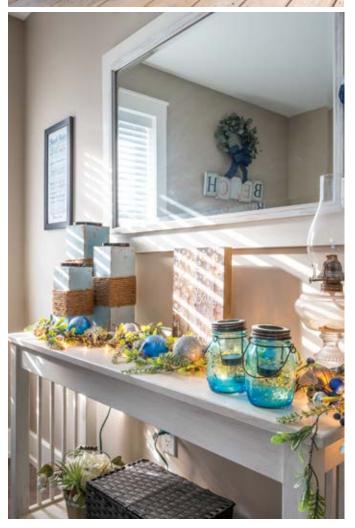


Christmas gnomes are the latest decorating addition. The whimsical nature of the new gnomes combines perfectly with the playful holiday look Darylyn has cultivated over the years.

Darylyn's top decorating tips include adding colour and character. She says Christmas is a great time for tradition, but don't be afraid to change it up and keep it fresh. on

TOP LEFT: In the front foyer, evergreen garland with lights wraps around the handrail to the second floor. A tabletop tree in a metal urn is decorated to match the garland. TOP RIGHT: Planters on the front porch filled with boughs and coloured branches flank the wagon-wheel bench. RIGHT: This tablescape embraces a beachy vibe with blue touches and fairy lights.

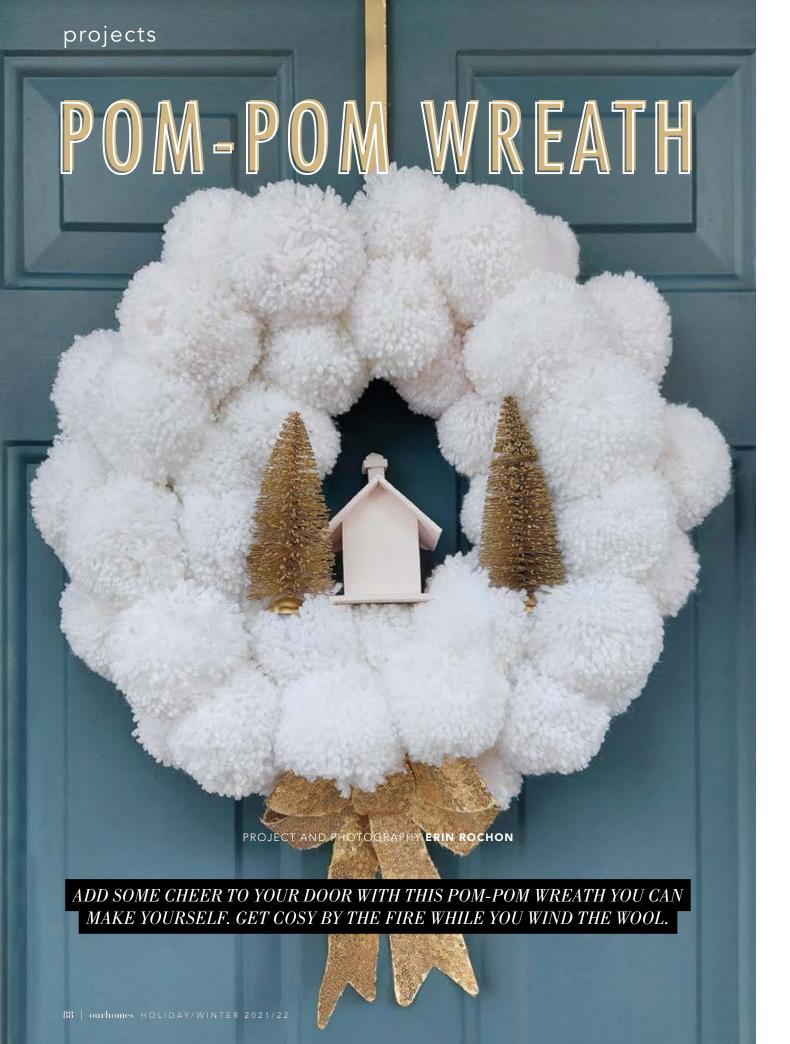








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MATERIALS Approximately 4 or 5 skeins of size 4 white yarn 12-inch wire wreath frame

Large pom-pom maker

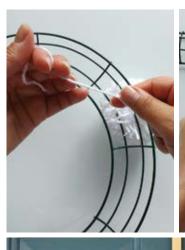
Fabric scissors

Winter accessories for centre. (We used miniature trees and a toy house.)

Glue gun

STEP 2

Starting at the centre of the frame, begin tying pom-poms, moving around and to the outside until the ring is full. Don't leave gaps between pom-poms. If needed, add a small drop of glue to keep pom-poms in place.









STEP 1

Using a pom-pom maker, create approximately 35 identical pom poms to fill the wreath frame. Trim pom-poms with scissors if needed.









STEP 3

Glue your accessories to the centre of the wreath.

Hang your wreath on your front door (inside or outside on a covered porch) or onto a mirror for your family and friends to swoon over throughout the season. OH

Lifestyle SHOPPING

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I joined Engel & Vökers to raise the bar for premier real estate service in the Grey, Bruce and Owen Sound marketplace. For us at E & V, luxury is the fullness of life that begins and ends each day in the most important space we know, home. It's the simple enjoyment of the best in life. My goal as a Sales Representative is to help you make luxury personally yours by discovering what it truly means to you.



KEY QUESTION

The pandemic has been the biggest influence on interior design, making practical amenities like home offices important design trends. Many new homes are being built with home office space. Renovations include built-in desks, sectioned-off alcoves and other areas converted into workstations. "Where can I set up my office?" is key in a lot of buyers' minds when viewing properties.





AWAY FROM WORK

When not helping my clients, I can be found at a hockey arena volunteering my time with Owen Sound Minor Hockey as vicepresident and coaching my son Keagan and daughter Isla's teams. My passion for hockey started on frozen ponds and rivers as a child.

Continued on page 92

people & places



TRENDS

The landscape of our little towns is changing. With the ability to work from home, more and more newcomers are moving to the area. I welcome those relocating and encourage them to get involved in their new communities.

"Home is not a place, it is a feeling."

SUTTON SOUND REALTY INC., BROKERAGE

I love where I live and love what I do. I have been helping buyers and sellers for more than 15 years. Technology has changed over the years, but I feel my business is all about people and good communication. The opportunity to work with many wonderful clients is very gratifying and I am truly blessed when they refer my services.

GREY BRUCE LIVING

As lifelong residents, my husband and I are lucky to have raised our children in the most beautiful place in the world. Our busy family is actively involved in the community and we participate in a variety of sports and recreational activities and love the outdoors.





Continued on page 94





people & places



"It's incredibly humbling when previous clients reach out to work together again."

HELPING HAND

I enjoy listening to my clients' needs and helping them navigate the process of a real estate transaction to completion. Whether it is listing, selling or exploring the variety of options available in the market, I provide a no-pressure, diligent, attentive, friendly service to the clients I represent.



WILFRED MCINTEE & CO. LTD.

Originally from Bruce County, I have been proud to call Saugeen Shores my home for the past 16 years. I have been a sales representative with McIntee for the past 12 years, where I divide my time between Southampton and Sauble Beach. I love the diversity and development that has taken place over the last decade. This is one of the reasons why my passion and commitment for the business continues to grow!



UNIQUE PROPERTIES

In addition to working with residential home sales, I have had the pleasure of listing and selling a mill pond, an island, a castle-shaped home, leased-land cottages and multi-use rural/recreational land. When dealing with an unusual property that brings a distinctive set of challenges, doing the homework and being creative makes these types of properties fun to work with.

Continued on page 96



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RE/MAX GREY BRUCE REALTY INC.

Living in the Grey Bruce area for more than 30 years, I know how blessed I am to live in one of the most beautiful spots in the world. I have always loved houses and people, which has led to a job that I absolutely adore.



DOWNTIME

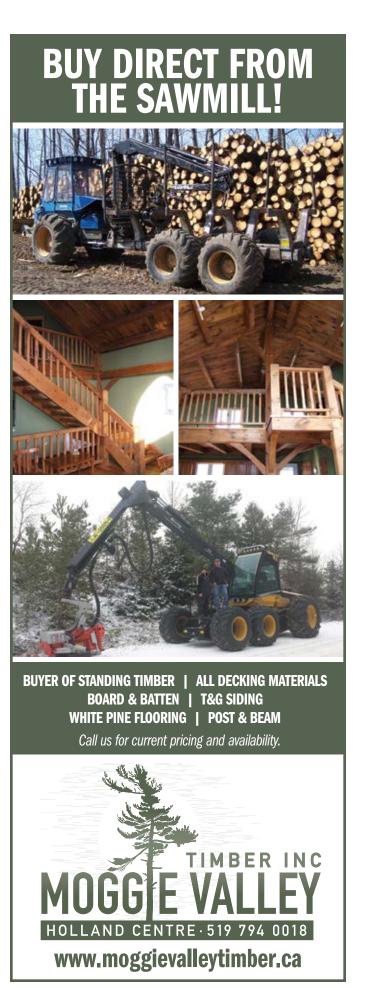
Time off can be hard to find and plan, but when I do, I teach fitness at my local gym and spend time on my farm with my dogs and horses. They keep me grounded and can relieve stress better than anything. No matter the time, night or day, they are always happy to see me.

VARIETY

This area has everything anyone could be looking for: Waterfront on the shores of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron offering spectacular sunrises and sunsets, small hobby farms, large cash-crop operations and getaway locations. They all share great country living with all the amenities needed.



Continued on page 98







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RELAXING

There are so many activities right outside our doors. I personally enjoy taking advantage of the trails with my dogs and going out on the snowmobile when I have the time.





ROYAL LEPAGE LOCATIONS NORTH BROKERAGE

I love real estate and Grey County! Born and raised on a farm in Grey, I am proud to call this area my home and enjoy helping others find their piece of paradise here, too. When selecting a brokerage, it was important to me to work for a Canadian company, which led me to Royal LePage.

Continued on page 100



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RE/MAX GREY BRUCE REALTY INC., BROKERAGE (TOBERMORY)

Born and raised locally on the Bruce Peninsula, I am passionate about living here with my husband and two energetic Siberian Huskies. My bachelor's degree in interior design is an asset when showing homes to clients. I want to help my clients realize their ownership dreams, whatever that might be - retirement, relocation, cottage, business and more!



TRENDS

Year-round cottaging has grown in popularity, as people tend to have more flexibility to work remotely. Cottages or homes with separate office spaces or an extra bedroom that can be converted to an office are in demand.



YOUR BRUCE PENINSULA **REAL ESTATE TEAM**

Our experienced team consists of five full-time realtors who are available to help buyers and sellers navigate the complex real estate market. Living and working across the Peninsula gives us the familiarity with all the great neighborhoods the area has to offer. Also, RE/MAX is a worldwide company, which allows us to support you where you want to go.







people & places



CHESTNUT PARK REAL ESTATE LIMITED BROKERAGE

By establishing office locations in desirable luxury and recreational markets throughout Ontario, including Owen Sound, Wiarton and Tobermory, we are able to serve a wide range of clients looking to buy and sell. Our dedicated team of professional agents provide excellence in service, client dedication and local knowledge. Along with our steller reputation, local expertise and global reach through our affiliation with Christie's International Real Estate, we bring a unique advantage to each of our markets.





WORKING TOGETHER

Our local agents are on top of the complex and dynamic real estate market. They are savvy and skilled negotiators, neighbourhood experts with established brand quality service, who embrace innovation and what it takes to successfully market properties for sellers and provide buyers with the information they need to make informed choices.

TRENDS

Since the onset of the pandemic, our agents have served many clients who have left urban centres for the quality of life and more affordable real estate opportunities in Grey and Bruce counties. This growth has created a decrease in supply, which is increasing prices. It is expected that prices will remain high, especially with ongoing low interest rates and demand, therefore supply and affordability will continue to remain the main concern. OH







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Looking for something to do on a cold winter day? Go birding! Wait, what? Birding in winter? Will you see anything interesting? Well, yes! You'll be surprised by what is out there in our seemingly barren backyards and snow-covered countrysides.



Feeder watch

Once winter sets in with a vengeance, you may not necessarily want to venture out. No problem! From the comfort of home, we can do a good bit of birding through our windows. Watching birds at your feeder is a great way to brighten a dreary winter's day. Set up a feeding station in your yard, fill it with quality seed (black-oil sunflower seed, peanuts, nyjer or suet) and cosy up by the window.



So, what will you see? Project FeederWatch – a citizen science project that records birds at feeders throughout the winter – has the answer. That friendly little ball of feathered fluff, the chickadee, is the number-one bird, followed by downy and hairy woodpeckers, the always gorgeous cardinal, the upside-down nuthatch, the dopey mourning dove, the bossy blue jay, the jaunty junco, and last but not least, the goldfinch, somewhat incognito without its summer golden cloak. Once you've identified these species, your winter bird list is off to a good start.

Getting to know these common, top-10 visitors will also make it easier for you to recognize a new species should one appear at your feeders. That's when it gets exciting. What could it be? Get that field guide off your shelf and crack it open. Flip through, discovering the possibilities and narrow it down by the distinctive identification points – size, shape, colour and markings. Give it your best shot!

ale pine grosbeak



Rough-legged hawk

Expect the unexpected

Knowing what unexpected birds to expect, or at least hope for, in the dead of winter also helps. Some years we are treated to an invasion of what ornithologists refer to as winter finches. When the pine and spruce cone crops are low in the north, this family of boreal-forest birds comes south to central and southern Ontario in search of food. They travel in gangs and descend upon our feeders with much enthusiasm. Last year was an irruption year (a sudden surge of birds), and often there is a rebound irruption year of visits, so keep your eyes to the skies and on your feeders for big, beautiful evening and pine grosbeaks, frosty redpolls, squabbling pine siskins, and maybe even colourful, parrot-like redwinged and white-winged crossbills.



There will be days in the midst of winter when the sun is sparkling on the snowbound land, the air is crisp and clear, and you'll feel the call of the great outdoors. Such a day is perfect for a drive, on the lookout for open-country winter birds. If you're lucky you may come across snow buntings flying across fields flashing their white feathers, sprinkling the sky like snowflakes.

You might also notice the bouncing flight pattern of a bunch of beautiful bohemian waxwings flying across the landscape or in your neighbourhood, searching for berrybearing trees. Living up to their name, they are true nomads and never stay long in one place, so consider yourself lucky if you catch a flock in action.

Or your winter drive may be rewarded with a sighting of one of the big arctic raptors. The rough-legged hawk occasionally comes south in search of small rodents when their arctic supply dwindles. Look for this big bird perched on a branch of a leafless tree out in the open or hovering like a giant hummingbird, surveying the snow for mice.

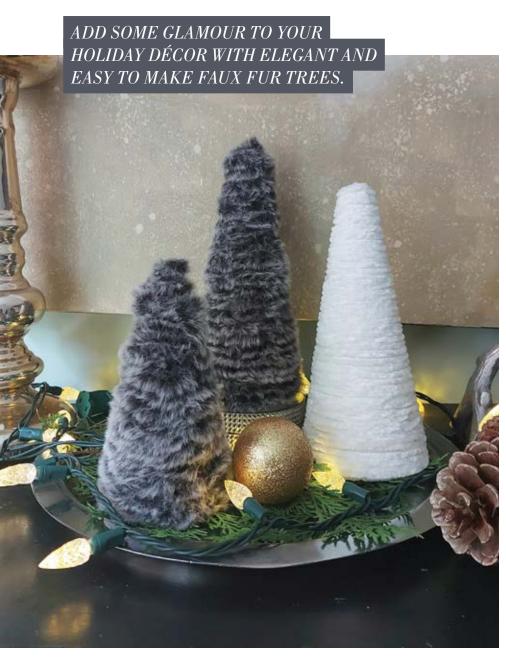
This same tundra-like habitat just might yield that most coveted of arctic visitors – the snowy owl. A sighting of this bird alone makes the outing worthwhile.

As always, relish the discovery of each new bird, keep your distance and take photos without disturbing their never-ending fight for survival in the depths of winter. OH



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HOW-TO

Add a small amount of glue to the bottom of a cone, place end of yarn on glue and hold in place.

Tightly wrap the yarn around the cone, applying a dab of glue as needed, until reaching the top of the cone. Make sure there are no gaps.

Coil a small amount of yarn at the top to give it a point and glue in place.

Make a statement by creating a group of 3 or 5 trees of different sizes. Mix colours and materials for more visual impact. Place on a tray and add greenery and accessories.

Find a great spot on a console or mantel to display your gorgeous DIY! OH



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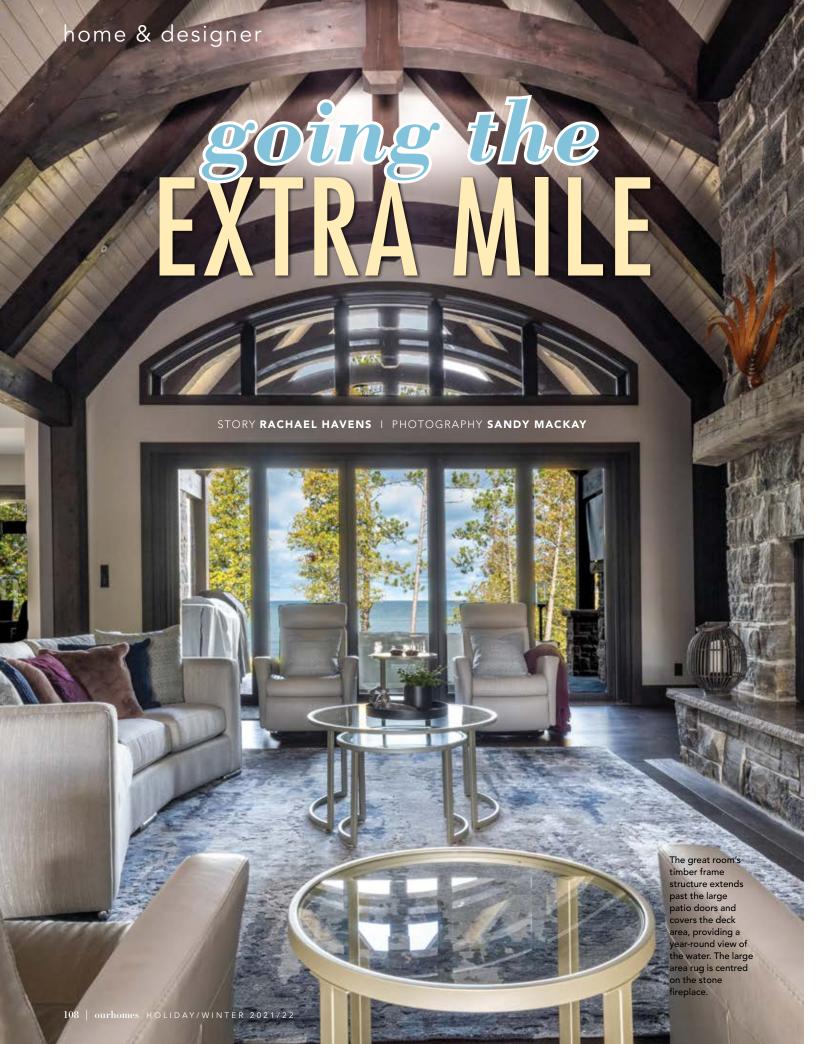
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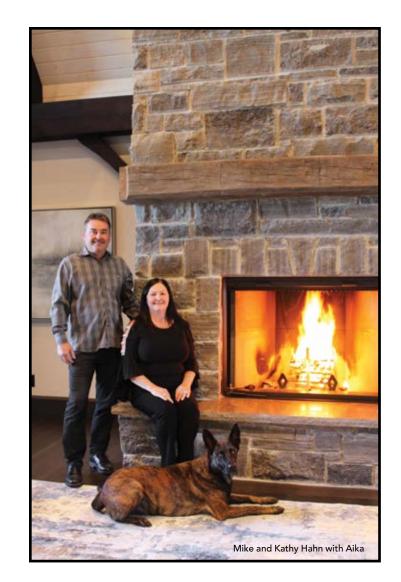
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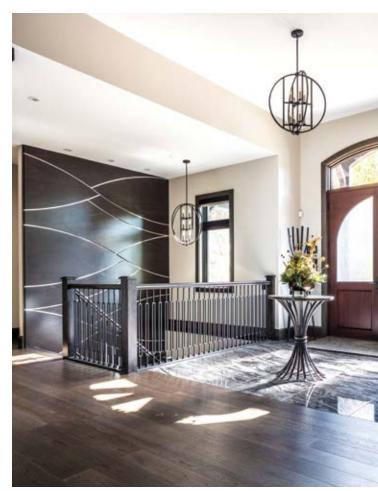
THE FIREPLACE IS THE HEART OF THE HAHN HOME. IT WAS BUILT FIRST, WITH THE TIMBER FRAME AND STRUCTURE RAISED AROUND THE CENTRAL STONE HEARTH.

Kathy and Mike Hahn had an expert team on their side to make their custom home a reality. Designer **Heather Smillie** of **House Rules Design Shop** played a central role in bringing the Hahns' vision to life. House Rules is a full-service design centre, working with both clients and contractors. Builder Tim Clancy of Clancy Builders Ltd. introduced Heather to the Hahns. Tim says that, when the Hahns asked him to recommend a designer, he told them: "Heather, that's it. You'll see what I'm talking about when you get there." Continued on page 110

A feature wall in the front foyer that extends down to the lower level uses wood panels mounted on a metal background. The design was a collaboration between Heather Smillie and Wood & Wallworks, which also built and installed the one-of-a-kind design. The preserved floral arrangement is from Carrie Lynn Floral + Event Styling.



The project started with the construction on the soaring stone fireplace by Vinny's Masonry. The timber frame structure by Rockwood Tree Farm & Timber Frame Homes was raised next, followed by the rest of the home.





ABOVE: Ground Effects Landscapes completed the beautiful landscaping around the home. Ziemba Exteriors installed the steel accent roof above a main-floor guest bedroom. Just Roof it completed the rest of the roof with supplies from Miller Home Hardware Building Centre. Stone for the project was sourced from Owen Sound Ledgerock and Maxwell Stone. LEFT: Builder Tim Clancy and designer Heather Smillie. BELOW: Arbour Hill Custom

Furniture and Cabinetry built the kitchen cabinets and supplied the stone countertops. The tile for the backsplash was sourced at House Rules Design

Shop and installed by Beisel Contracting Inc.

"Some of my favourite builds have been Clancy projects," Heather says. Owen Sound-based Clancy Builders, started by Tim's parents in the 1980s, is mainly focused on custom homes.

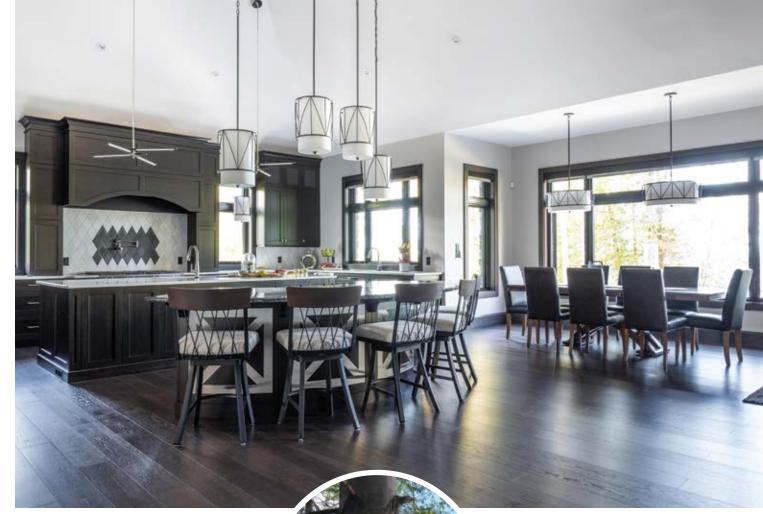
Mike and Kathy's style is a fusion of rustic and contemporary. The rustic base of their home on the lake near Port Elgin – the stone fireplace by **Vinny's Masonry** and timber frame by **Rockwood Tree Farm & Timber Frame Homes** – is complemented by contemporary finishes, including sleek light fixtures. Kathy had a vision of what she wanted in her home and Heather helped her design the look. Kathy and Heather shopped and found furniture, carpets and artwork in Toronto as well as selections from House Rules Design Shop and **Smitty's Fine Furniture**.

It was important to include stainless steel accents throughout the home, as Mike built their business in the metal industry. There are stainless details on the stairs, island and in the wine room, along with a steel accent roof by **Ziemba Exteriors** and shingles installed by **Just Roof It**. "Because this was a new chapter in their life, I wanted to make sure there were nods to where they came from," says Heather.

Continued on page 113







Pandemic Ponderosa — 2020 —

> **ABOVE:** The view of Lake Huron is captured in the windows that fill the kitchen and dining area. Metal details on the entertainment island are repeated on the back of the stools and in the $\,$ lighting. **BELOW LEFT:** The lower ceiling height and the alcove location in the dining area create an intimate atmosphere. The door leads to the covered outdoor seating area.

Mike had this sign made and hung at the end of the driveway. It summed up the Hahns' determination to build their home during the pandemic.

It's all about the details, big and small for Heather and that's something Kathy and Mike appreciated. It changed Mike's perspective throughout the build. He recalls visiting friends' homes in the past with Kathy saying "did you see that chandelier?" Mike didn't notice but says: "After spending so much time with Heather and Kathy going over paint, lighting and fixtures, I do notice now."

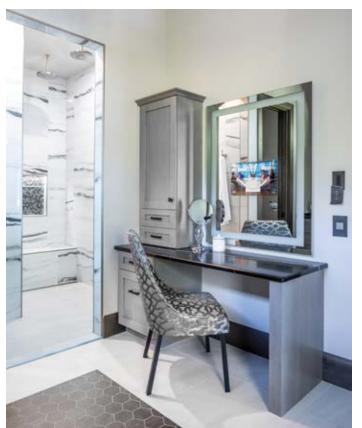
The entire team, the Hahns say, went the extra mile. Tim jokes that electrician Lee Sammons of LDS Electrical literally used more than three miles of electrical wire for the home, which was necessary to make the home automation by Station Earth Total Home Technologies function seamlessly as

Continued on page 115

home & designer



ABOVE: Tranquility in the primary bedroom is achieved with a neutral palette and luxe furnishings. Automated blinds can be operated from switches beside the bed. The coffered ceiling has wood detail, adding visual interest. **BOTTOM LEFT:** A tile inset on the floor of the primary bathroom appears like an area rug. Beisel Contracting Inc. installed tile throughout the home, also sourced from House Rules Design Shop. The mirror over the dressing table has an integrated television. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A window runs the width of the mirror above the vanity by Arbour Hill Custom Furniture and Cabinetry in the primary bathroom. The mirror reflects the walk-in closet with built-ins by Wilson Solutions.







TOP: The door to the primary bathroom by Wood & Wallworks hangs on barn door hardware. Its pattern is repeated in the pendant light hanging over the bed, a side table and dresser. BELOW: The guest powder room is located off the front foyer. A hammered metal vessel sink sits on a live-edge slab from Mark Grubb. RIGHT: The bay windows in the main-floor guest bedroom flood the room with light. The wall colour throughout the main floor is Benjamin Moore Wish.





planned. The house is a smart home from top to bottom, from lighting to window coverings and security. Station Earth also completed the home theatre.

Beisel Contracting Inc. brought in an exceptional team to install all tile in the home. "Twe never seen a tile job like that," says Tim. **Ground Effects Landscapes** did such a beautiful job on the landscaping

that a neighbour took her wedding photos in the garden.

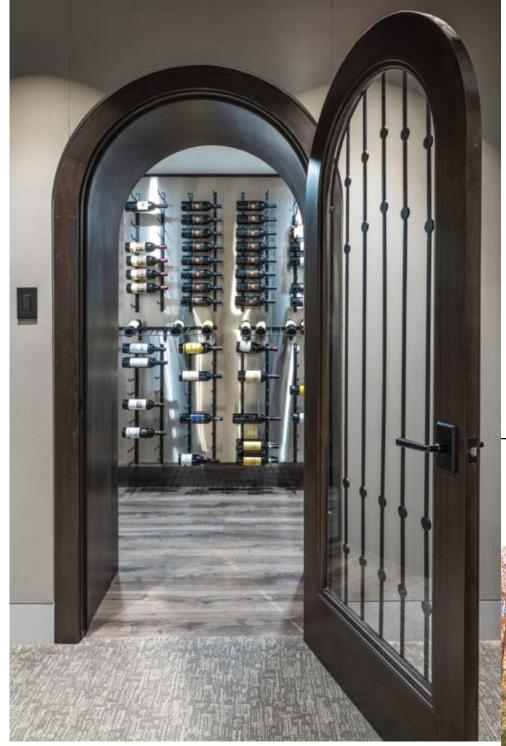
The project was affectionately named *Pandemic Ponderosa* 2020. Mike even had a sign made for the end of the driveway. "I really appreciated Mike and Kathy's enthusiasm," says Tim. "Last year was challenging for everyone, but I quickly learned they were building this house no matter what."

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ABOVE: The walls of the wine cellar on the lower level are lined in metal. The arched door into the temperature-controlled room was custom made by Desboro Doors. **TOP LEFT:** The bar area on the lower level has a glass-tile backsplash and open shelves displaying a collection of Van Gogh Vodka. **LEFT:** Station Earth Total Home Technologies installed the acoustic panels on the ceiling in the theatre. LED lights appear like stars when the house lights are dimmed.



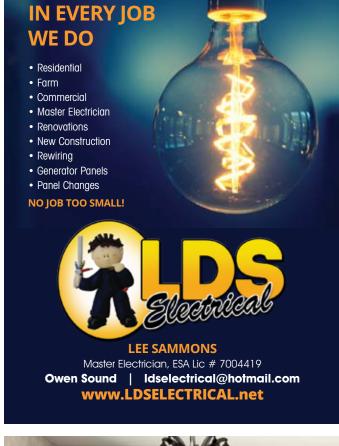






LEFT: A welcoming bed in one of the lower-level bedrooms. Luxury vinyl on the floor was sourced at House Rules Design Shop. ABOVE: K-W Glass Systems Inc. supplied glass for all the showers in the home. This one has a curbless entry and a niche with contrasting tile and lights. **BELOW:** A vessel tub with a floormounted faucet sits on heated tiles. The teak tray has a book stand and enough room for soap and wine.





WE TAKE PRIDE







Now happily settled into their home, Mike and Kathy are enjoying all that Grey-Bruce has to offer, including lots of fishing. They belong to the Lake Huron Fishing Club, an organization that is working to repopulate the lake by adding 250,000 fish every year.

A hidden light in the top attic window of the house, facing Lake Huron, guides Mike home after a long day on the lake. "I can use my phone to turn on the light and it will guide me home." The light can be seen from three kilometres out. "You know the light on a football field?" laughs Tim. "It's a little bit brighter than that."

It was actually a fishing trip that brought Mike to the area in the first place; his uncle would bring him up to catch local salmon as a young boy. He fell in love with the area, and Kathy has too. "Now it feels like home," they say.

This house has been a swan song for Kathy and Mike, who are both now retired, and they are ready to settle in and enjoy. Kathy gets emotional when she looks back on the project. "We've worked all our lives for our dream house." он



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(Please see ad on pg 8&9)



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INGREDIENTS

CAKE

2 ½ cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp baking powder

¼ tsp baking soda

½ tsp salt

2 ½ tsp ground ginger

2 tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp nutmeg

½ tsp allspice

34 cup butter, at room temperature

1 ½ cups brown sugar

2 eggs, at room temperature

½ cup molasses

1 cup coffee, cooled

ICING

1 cup icing sugar

1 tsp vanilla

1/4 cup milk







DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease Bundt pan if necessary.

Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spices in a bowl and set aside.

In a stand mixer, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, followed by the molasses.

Add one third of the flour mixture to the wet ingredients, followed by half of the coffee, rotating between the two and ending with the remaining flour mixture.

Pour batter into Bundt pan, smoothing the top.

Bake for 50-55 minutes. Allow cake to cool completely and invert the pan onto your cake stand or plate.

Prepare the icing by combining icing sugar, vanilla and milk until smooth. For a thinner glaze, add more milk. Pour icing over cake. **OH**

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RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY JENELLE MCCULLOCH

This celebratory cocktail features tart pomegranate and sweet black raspberry liqueur – topped with some bubbly! Perfect for your holiday party.





INGREDIENTS

POMEGRANATE SYRUP

2 cups pomegranate juice ½ cup granulated sugar

COCKTAIL (FOR 1)

A spoonful of pomegranate syrup

1 ounce Chambord liqueur

Dry sparkling wine

Frozen raspberries, to garnish
Rosemary sprig, to garnish

DIRECTIONS

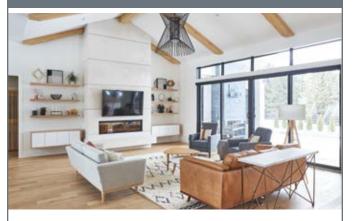
SYRUP

Combine pomegranate juice and sugar in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring to a simmer then lower temperature to low. Simmer for 25-30 minutes or until reduced by half. Let cool completely.

MAKE COCKTAIL

Add ice and frozen raspberries to a glass of choice. Add a spoonful of syrup and 1oz of Chambord. Top with a dry sparkling wine and stir. Garnish with a rosemary sprig for a festive touch! **oh**

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