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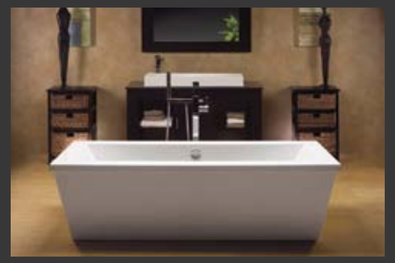

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I'M A FAN OF SPRING RESOLUTIONS, even more than the New Year's variety. Something about the green, the sun, the breeze – not to mention the lack of slushy brown stuff underfoot – just puts a spring in my step.

After walking through our backyard, where grass is making a mighty comeback and tulips are giving their all to a fresh start, I've made a mental blueprint of where this year's annuals should be planted the moment the temperature allows.

Yes, if you love the thrill of the plan, then spring is by far the best season to be a homeowner. There's a blank canvas awaiting your fresh inspiration and if you can imagine it, you can do it. (Well, you can plan it, anyway.)

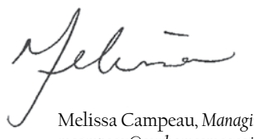
For this issue, we visited two remarkable homes, each with its own story of reinvention. The first, a 1940s Westdale cottage owned by Art Gallery of Hamilton and AGH Design Annex retail manager Cathy Yantsis, was a study in re-imagining (page 28). Mood-shifting art from the gallery's rental program and accessories from the retail shop helped us transform five of the home's principal rooms into two distinct styles.

Our second feature home in Mount Hope, belonging to Willow Valley Golf course co-owner Steve Schiedel and his wife Christine, backs onto the rolling hills of the course, as did their last home right next door (page 22). For the new build, Steve and Christine wanted to recreate what they loved about their previous home, but with considerably more space and some much-wanted extras. The result is a stately and welcoming home that's filled with personal touches.

If your reinvention sights are set on buying a new home this season, our People section (page 34) introduces you to three experts to help with the process. And if you'd like to breathe new life into an older kitchen or tired piece of furniture, our Comfort Zone shop, Decorrestore, can help you do just that (page 18).

Whatever your refresh plans are this spring – a new room, a new garden, a new house – we hope you're inspired by the season and enjoy every step along the way.

Happy planning!



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SPRING! WHEN YOU STEP OUTSIDE, IT'S IN THE AIR. Bulbs are peeking out of the garden, the air is a little softer and the street is stirring as neighbours begin planting spring gardens and fixing up their outdoor spaces.

I find myself especially inspired to take on some new projects this season, thanks to this second issue of OUR HOMES Hamilton and Area. Temptation has been everywhere. Each time I walk into a shop, talk to a painter, walk through a fabulous home or chat with a tradesperson, I pick up another new idea and want to start a fresh decorating or renovation project, on the spot.

Putting this issue together for you has been a tremendous whirlwind of activity and excitement, meeting new people and seeing some remarkable, local houses. Hamilton is a special and distinct region with wonderful and beautiful homes and landscaping. It has its own character, reflected in its people, its landscape and its surrounding areas. And of course, it's filled with exceptionally talented craftsmen, designers, builders, decorators, woodworkers, artists, real estate agents, artisans, landscapers, tradespeople, architects and consultants.

Hamilton area homes-related businesses and service providers are second to none. Our mission as a magazine is to capture this excellence within our pages and share it with all our readers. We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions, too, and we'll do our best to provide answers for you as quickly as we can.

We hope you enjoy this issue and encourage you to share a copy with your friends and neighbours. Savour the season! (Summer will be here before you know it...)

Sincerely,

Laurie

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Local finds add sparkle and shine to help welcome back the sun this season.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY HORKOFF

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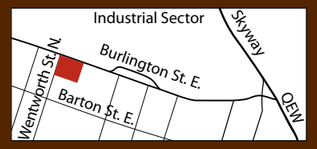

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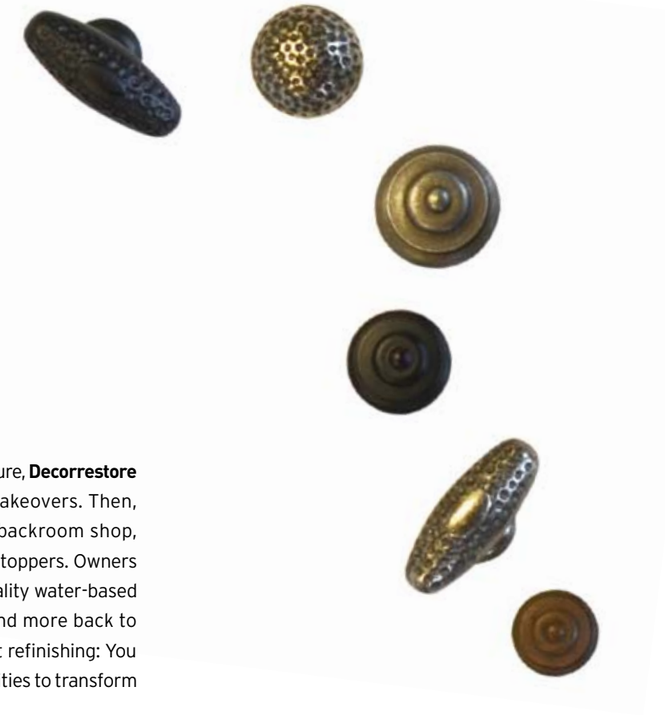
REUSE, RECYCLE, RESTORE

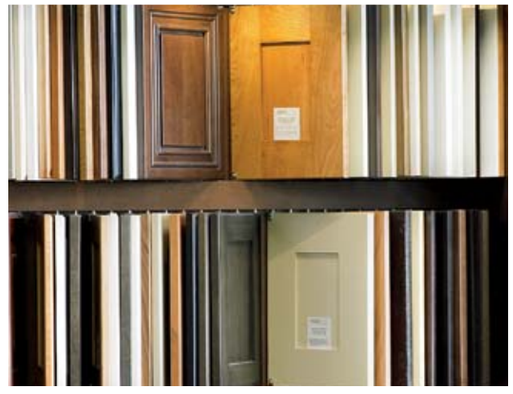
BY MELISSA CAMPEAU
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY HORKOFF

THE PLACE: Kind of like a Cinderella shop for furniture, **Decorrestore** welcomes tired, worn-down pieces in need of makeovers. Then, restoration experts weave a little magic in the backroom shop, turning past-their-prime pieces into refined showstoppers. Owners and brothers Dennis and Rick Tosello use high-quality water-based lacquer paints to bring cabinets, desks, chairs and more back to shining, polished life. But they offer more than just refinishing: You can also source granite, hardware and other necessities to transform your older furniture, or even your entire kitchen.

THE INSPIRATION: Dennis and Rick came up with the concept of Decorrestore over a round of golf. At the time, Dennis had built his own business as a painter and decorator and Rick had been making his mark as a realtor in the Hamilton area for well over a decade. The two decided to pair their expertise and create something brand new.

THE TREND: Dennis and Rick have tapped into something big. When they opened the shop two years ago it was just the two of them. They've since grown to a staff of five full-time workers with imminent expansion plans to handle all the business. Part of their success, says Dennis, is the quality of their work. But there's also a cultural trend that's been critical to their success. Between the economic slowdown and a growing eco-awareness, people are more inclined to recycle and reuse whenever they can. "Most people don't want to spend big money to replace an older or worn-out piece of furniture, so what are your options?" asks Rick. "That's where we step in." Dennis and Rick imagined, when they first opened the shop, they'd be refinishing furniture of all shapes and sizes. But very quickly they were flooded with requests for complete kitchen overhauls. While they still welcome armoires, tables and anything else that can be refinished, Dennis estimates kitchen makeovers amount to at least 80 per cent of their business.





GIVING BACK: The brothers recently refinished a dining table in cranberry red and a set of chairs in a soft cream shade, and donated them to a fund-raising auction run by The Millionaire's Daughter consignment shop (272 Ottawa St. North, Hamilton). Visit www.themillionairesdaughter.com for details. Proceeds from the auction will support the Hamilton ywcaencore program, which provides fitness classes for women who've had mastectomies, lumpectomies and breast reduction surgeries.

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built FROM the greens UP

BY MELISSA NORTH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY HORKOFF

With a beautiful landscaped home they both loved, why would this Mount Hope couple choose to build another home, right next door? For **Steve Schiedel**, it was the thrill of the process: "I've always liked building things. Always. Constantly. Building intrigues me."

Originally from Cambridge, Steve and Christine moved to Hamilton in 1989. They only planned to stay in the area a couple of years, yet here they are, in their third custom-built house, with no plans to leave.

Backing on to Willow Valley Golf Course (Steve co-owns the course with his brother, Ron), the one-acre lot posed a challenge for Steve. How to keep to the single-level bungalow style they wanted, while incorporating a walkout basement and replicating the two-car deep, three-car garage he'd built for his motorized toys?

Two people were critical in bringing Steve's designs to life. **Richard Weatherston** of **R.G. CAD Service** helped with plans and layout and **Joseph Waszczuk** of **Simgraf Art Visualization** rendered the designs in 3D. "That was so, so valuable," says Steve. "We could say no, let's change the shape of the windows, and we could see it all. Joseph changed our design criteria, I bet you, 30 or 40 times. It was very, very beneficial."

The results are striking. The façade is a combination of stucco, brick, aluminum and Bruce County stone (a combination of four different colours and sizes). The roof is a 10/12 pitch with 50-year architectural shingles, accented by a double-stacked frieze board. Interestingly, the gable treatments look like wood, but were in fact created from a cost-effective mix of polyurethane, PVC and fiberglass materials.

Inside, the four-bedroom, 5,000 sq. ft. home feels both spacious and warm. The entranceway, with its 12-foot-high ceiling, gives way to the open-plan living areas. A see-through gas fireplace by **Eco Efficiency Energy Systems** ties in the outside stone. And here, the 14-foot-high ceiling is studded with repurposed fir beams originally used in the building of a stadium for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. *Continued on page 24*

An artist's rendering shows the multi-peak roofline and the two garages, one joined by a drive-through archway.

South-facing, 14-ft. windows provide plenty of light for the kitchen, family room and dining nook.

A pair of comfortable chairs and a mirrored cabinet line part of the walkway connecting the home's two parts. **LEFT:** A stone archway and graceful steps lead to 8-ft. entrance doors, made to look like stained oak but crafted from fiberglass for extra security and efficiency.

It was the kitchen that took the most planning. Christine wanted a large, user-friendly space. "I'm cooking more now than ever before," she says. "I just feel that when you do have people over they end up congregating in the kitchen." So they included two islands to accommodate both cooking and entertaining. There's also extra room on either side of the six-burner range, so cooks can turn pot handles without hitting the pillars.

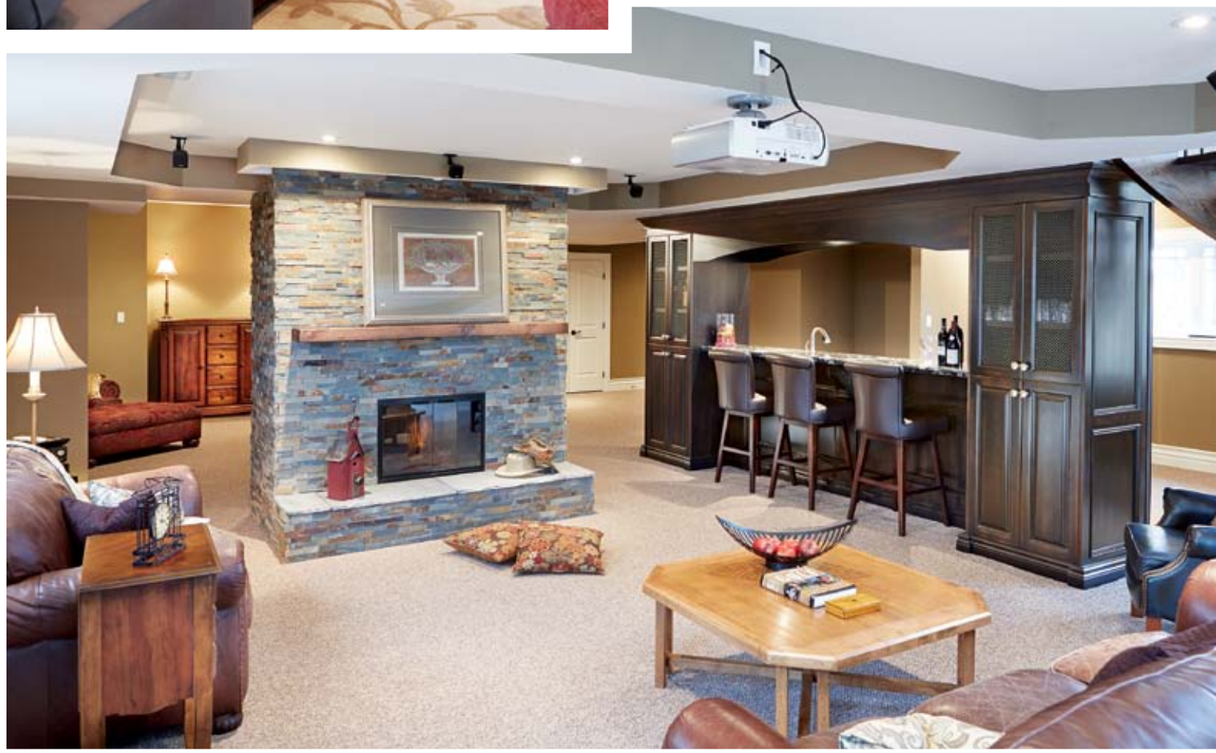
To keep with the home's French-country style, Steve and Christine worked with **CR Technical Woodworking** to get the right cabinetry. They chose a traditional country design, custom mixing a dark brown for the islands, choosing antiqued white for the cupboards, and adding a dark accent wall to make all the white pop. They travelled to import shops to choose granite and marble, eventually handpicking Bordeaux granite slabs from **Granite Inc.** for the counter and muted, earth-toned backsplash tiles from **Via Roma Marble & Tile Centre**.

A sweeping red oak staircase by **Norwood Stairs & Railings** leads down to the lower level. A games area and comfortable lounge space share a two-sided gas fireplace, flanked by a CR Technical–built bar, topped with a conglomerate granite by Granite Inc.

Choosing everything, making so many decisions, is probably the most difficult aspect of custom building, Steve says. Yet he loves it, probably because of his father. Growing up, Steve and his father would act as general contractors together, generally starting with a sketch at the kitchen table. "He'd sketch a garage or a barn or a complete renovation right there at the kitchen table," says Steve, "and then he'd manage the project and sub-contractors himself, saving money and getting the job done right to his expectations."

Steve struggled with whether or not to hire a project manager, but in the end decided not to. Working close by and living right next door meant he could be on site a lot. You have to be prepared though, he says, to go home at night and spend hours online researching the procedure or materials your subcontractors are suggesting. *Continued on page 26*

OPPOSITE: Pillars on either side of the six-burner range pull out to reveal hidden spice cabinets. Flowers in this room and throughout the house provided by Fascination Flowers. **LEFT:** A two-sided gas fireplace By Eco Efficiency Energy Systems provides a warm divider between the sunken family room on one side and the kitchen, family dining table and a fireside reading spot on the other. **BELOW:** A sweeping staircase in red oak connects the main floor living space with the lower level games and bar area. **BOTTOM:** The homeowners outfitted the lower-level recreation room with comfortable sofas, a full bar and a two-sided gas fireplace. There's also a walkout leading directly to the backyard and outdoor kitchen.



Each decision is the result of the many Friday and Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons Steve and Christine spent driving around, going to open houses, sorting out what might work, including ways to implement technology into their living space. The home is hardwired for any smart feature they want to add. Right now speakers are installed throughout the house with controls in each room and there's a plan to add light controls, programmed to dim or brighten appropriately for occasions such as dinner and bedtime. The basement and the garage floors are heated, using large residential dual core heaters. The master bedroom en suite features a programmable shower: a digital control outside the stall sets the water temperature before you enter.

What are they most proud of? Perhaps the drive-through archway with the office skyway above – uniquely linking the master bedroom with the rest of the main floor. Or, with spring finally here, it might be the outdoor kitchen area and gazebo build by **Tonmar Timber Framing and Construction** and grounds designed by **Cedarlane Landscape Inc.** (with a country septic system designed and installed by **Frem Excavating**).

When it comes to designing and building a home, you've got to like the planning, says Steve, or the process can be onerous. "Every time you get a little better and try to do something more. And then you start thinking about what you could do next time..." Steve laughs. "It's a lot of fun!" **OH**

ABOVE: The couple's daughter chose a dramatic black and white colour scheme for her modern bedroom. **RIGHT:** The master bedroom's expansive window offers a clear view of the backyard and the golf course just beyond. **BELOW LEFT:** Steve and Christine built an office area with a built-in desk and ample shelving along the walkway between the living room and the master bedroom. **BELOW RIGHT:** In the master en suite bath, Christine added some flourishes with a dramatic chandelier, glass pulls for the cabinetry and metallic tiles on the tub and backsplash, but the colour scheme was kept muted and masculine for Steve.

SOURCE GUIDE

Allen's Heating, Campbell Glass & Mirror, Cedarlane Landscape Inc., Convoy Supply Ltd., CR Technical Woodworking, Dalmarcor Inc., DeFilippis Cut Stone & Marble Co., E-Zee Forming Ltd., Eco Efficiency Energy Systems, Frem Excavating, Grand River Natural Stone Ltd., Granite Inc., Interior Design House, Jonarc Construction Ltd., Marty's Mechanical Plumbing & Heating, Norwood Stairs & Railings, Pollard Windows & Doors, Riverside Door & Trim, R.G. CAD Services, Simgraf Art Visualization, Tonmar Timber Framing and Construction, Union Lighting, Via Roma Marble & Tile Centre

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art APPRECIATION

BY MEREDITH BIRCHALL-SPENCER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY HORKOFF

When **Cathy Yantsis** and her husband **Steve Strba** first saw the quaint home on an idyllic tree-lined street in Hamilton's west end, they knew they had to have it. But there was one small problem: It wasn't for sale. Luckily, the couple and the then-homeowner had a mutual friend in common. So when Cathy and Steve got word the owner was thinking of selling, they made her an offer she couldn't refuse and they scooped up this post-war gem before it even went on the market.

"We really loved the character of the home – the interesting multi-peaked roofline, leaded glass windows, original moulding and glass door-hardware are all authentic to the period," says Cathy. But while tradition drew the couple to the home, Cathy's design aesthetic is anything but. "I would describe my design sensibility as eclectic," she says. "I love adding unexpected art and objects, such as animal-skin rugs or graphic-patterned pillows to traditional rooms to add depth, character and visual interest."

As manager of retail at the **Art Gallery of Hamilton** and the **AGH Design Annex**, Cathy takes the same approach in her work. "The Design Annex, in particular, is a unique shop focusing on Canadian hand-crafted products with a contemporary feel," she says. And much like the rooms in Cathy's home, everything has an unexpected edge.

To showcase how different styles of art and objects can be used to create different looks, Cathy took five rooms in her home and added unique finds from the Design Annex and Art Gallery of Hamilton to give each of them two distinct looks.

Take away all that modern, and you're left with a classic black and white palette that is easy to live with. Add depth to the simple colour scheme with shine (provided here by an aluminum deer head from imm Living) and texture (with the richly grained wood tray by Chong Wu).

EAT-IN KITCHEN

It doesn't take much to modernize a casual eat-in kitchen. By adding on-trend airport code pillows by Nicole Tarasick, an orange acrylic lamp by Pablo Designs, a classic reproduction phone by Wild & Wolf and bright mixed-media artwork, the space gets an urban makeover. A standout in both looks, the repurposed school chair by Brothers Dressler is made from salvaged materials and felt. Flowers in this room and throughout the house provided by Fascination Flowers.

LIVING ROOM

The stained glass window serves as the perfect springboard for adding hits of yellow (left), found in the throw pillows and landscape, into the décor of this primarily neutral interior. The saturated pop of purple in the custom occasional chair by Brentwood Classics adds another dimension to the traditional space and is complemented by the glass bowls and vases (above) by Tsunami Glassworks on the mantel and the multi-hued vintage Clara lamp by Mod Pieces.

To make it more neutral (top), remove some of the bold objects, tone down the yellow and add soothing blue accents. The abstract painting by the homeowner herself takes centre stage in this serene space. *Continued on page 30*

DINING ROOM

When your dining area is compact, you can fit in more people and create better traffic flow with a round table. Play up the glamour of the table's curves and sparkling crystal chandelier with depression-era glassware from Charles McIntosh of **Branch Design** in Westdale, a spectacular floral arrangement by Fascination Flowers and an art deco mirror. A custom hutch flanked by vintage Chinoiserie prints makes a stunning focal point.

For a thoroughly modern take, replace two of the French provincial dining chairs with a custom celadon bench from Brentwood Classics, add contemporary photography by Charlene Serdan, modern bowls by Tina Frey Designs and a bold, vintage gold lamp.

FAMILY ROOM The muted warm grey and beige fabrics of the plush furnishings, shag carpet and dark wood accent pieces make this cosy family room the hub of the home, and the perfect place to decompress after a long day. "I prefer a neutral colour scheme with lots of texture added through furnishings," says Cathy.

It doesn't take much, however, to lighten up the look for spring. Colourful contemporary artworks, red paisley cushions from Branch Design, punchy coral Tina Frey Designs resin bowls and a cuddly Avoca Mill mohair throw from Branch Design play up the feminine in an otherwise masculine family room. A resin lamp, nesting tables by Chong Wu and modern Brothers Dressler rocker add extra levity. *Continued on page 32*

For a more contemporary feel, eco-friendly pillows from Goodlines Decor For Earth & Home in a soft colour palette lend just the right touch to this guest room, complemented by the modern Brentwood Designs ottoman, Branch Design vintage stools and an expressionistic painting by the homeowner.

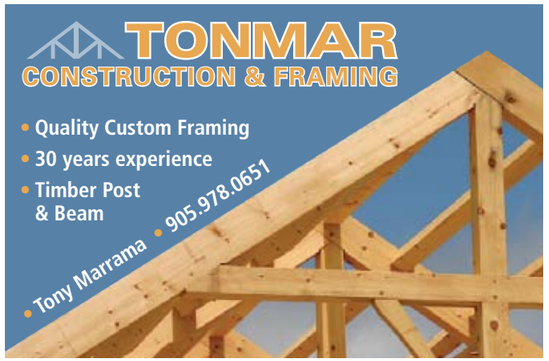
BEDROOM

A pretty blue bedroom can look a little bit country or a little bit rock 'n roll depending on the bedding and artwork. A vintage quilt on the bed and a modern botanical print by Tammy Ratcliff creates a look fit for chic country living.

ARTWORK GUIDE

ART PROVIDED BY AGH ART RENTAL AND SALES

Bedroom: (botanical print in country look) Tammy Ratcliff, ***Small Branch***, etching monoprint and chine collé. **Dining Room:** (framed photographs in contemporary look) Charlene Serdan, ***The East Wind***, digital photography; Charlene Serdan, ***The Beauty of Fall***, digital photography. **Eat-in Kitchen:** (red abstract print under aluminum stag head) Emilie Rondeau, ***Nappe Rouge***, Mixed media on linen. **Family Room:** (artwork placed in built in, in feminine look) Emilie Rondeau, ***Gris Hipopo***, mixed media on linen; Emilie Rondeau, ***Fleur de Pomme***, mixed media on linen; Emilie Rondeau, ***Terre a Jardin***, mixed media on linen; Emilie Rondeau; ***Notes***, mixed media on linen; Mike Smalley, ***Euthropia #2***, oil and charcoal on canvas. **Living Room:** (colourful look featuring purple accent chair) Jamie Kapitain, ***Autumn Near Salerno Lake No. 2***, Oil on canvas. **OH**



home IS IN THE DETAILS

These local pros help homeowners find, finance and insure their biggest investment.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY HORKOFF

Sarit Zalter

Sales Representative
Judy Marsales Real Estate Ltd.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT WORKING IN REAL ESTATE? It's all about the people. I get to hear the good stories and the sad stories. When it's good, we celebrate. When it's sad, I help my clients as much as I can. Every day is an adventure.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE IN HAMILTON? My husband was recruited for a job here and we had family and friends in the area. Since then I've fallen in love with quaint, small-town living. Hamilton has charm and character, it's safe and we're only an hour away from both Buffalo and Toronto.

WHAT EXPERT ADVICE CAN YOU OFFER HOMEBUYERS IN THE HAMILTON AREA? Stay true to yourself and what you want because the right house is out there. When you work with an agent who hears and sees what you want, they'll find it. Just like putting on a glove, it has to fit perfectly.

Continued on page 36

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The listings below are organized alphabetically by industry.

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◀ Suzanne Bauman

Sales Consultant, Cowan Insurance Group

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WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE HERE AND WHAT MAKES THE AREA SPECIAL TO YOU? I love the Hamilton area and have enjoyed watching the city change and grow. We have faced challenges but I feel Hamilton is one of the best-kept secrets in Ontario. We need to promote all the wonderful things we have here: beauty, recreation, culture and exceptional dining.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER HAMILTON-AREA HOMEOWNERS? I have two quick tips. The first: If you have art, jewelry or a special collection, review the limits under your policy with your broker to make sure you're well protected. The second: Take pictures of valuable items in your house in case of fire, theft or water damage. Cowan has an app you can use to do a home inventory and easily store the photos.

Lynda Kernick ▶

Senior Private Banker
BMO Harris Private Banking

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT THE BUSINESS YOU'RE IN? Quite simply, it's people who make the difference. I enjoy building long-term relationships with my clients and their families. I bring the best people together to help my clients discover what's important to them. I want to make it easier for clients to make the most of the opportunities their wealth can provide for their families.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT LIVING IN HAMILTON? I was born and raised in Hamilton, the city of waterfalls. I love its natural beauty, its people and its diverse resilient economy. Hamilton is a perfect location and it's a prime choice for future economic growth.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO'S ABOUT TO BUY A HOME? Purchasing a home is one of the largest investments you will make. At BMO Harris Private Banking we believe it's important to have professional advice when it comes to understanding your options today and through critical times of transition. **OH**

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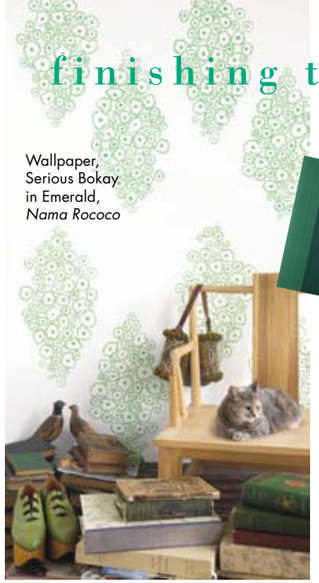


Wallpaper, Serious Bokay in Emerald, *Nama Rococo*

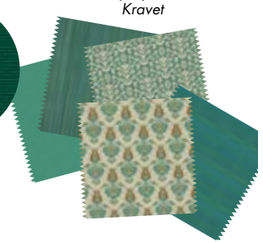
Wallpaper, Broad Stripe, ST 1330, *Farrow & Ball*

Paint Colour, Ming Jade, *Benjamin Moore*

Emerald Jug Lamp, *Cisco Brothers*

Canvas Forest Green, *Sunbrella*

Assorted Upholstery & Drapery Fabrics, *Kravet*



Panini Press, *Lodge*

Kelly Pilllows, *Tobi Fairley Home*

Reusable Water Bottle with Replaceable Carbon Filter, *Bobble*

PANTONE'S COLOUR OF THE YEAR

EMERALD

Green Eden Lavatory Faucet, *Kingston Brass*

Wrongwoods Low Cabinet, White with Green Richard Woods & Sebastian Wrong, *Established & Sons*

Classic Whistling Kettle in Fennel, *Le Creuset*

Park Avenue Chair in Robert Allen Velvet Geo Turquoise, *Kincaid Furniture Company, Inc.*

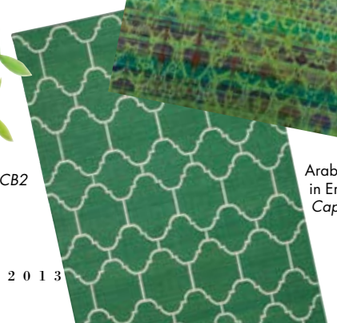
Astoria Cabinet Pull & Knob in Emerald, *Emtek*

Silk Orchid Green Rug, *Elte*

Cast-iron Range Cookers in British Racing Green, *Aga*

Lamp Green Swirl, *Lampe Berger Paris*

Sprout Bookmarks, *CB2*



Arabesque Rug in Emerald, *Capel Rugs*

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