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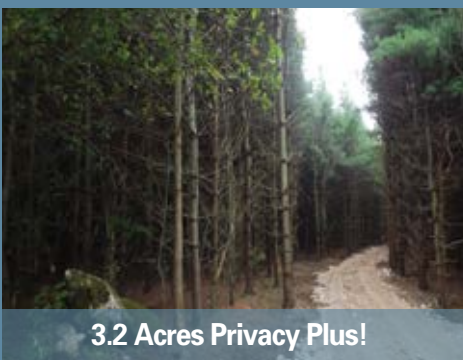
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As I sit holed up in my house, dreaming of sunny skies, I am wowed that I now have the luxury of enjoying an outdoor view from the comfort of our kitchen island. I am wowed that we have a kitchen island.

Just under a year ago I was sitting in the very same spot, in a very different house; there was a very large wall impeding my view. We had just started to talk about undertaking a renovation of our main floor. Getting from that point to this one was tiresome and dusty – oh, the dust – you should have seen my furnace filter after the fact. It involved a lot of cursing, sore knees and apologies. It also involved a lot of very talented people catering to my whims and mood swings, like our contractor who moved a light fixture six inches to keep my tears at bay, and our tile installer who patiently situated each of the awkwardly shaped ogee drops with care, and our cabinetmaker who crafted a gorgeous walnut kitchen despite the pinging of my incessant emails, or the mason who came through in a pinch and cut a last-minute gaping hole in our exterior brick wall in the dead of November.

I firmly believe that our renovation wouldn't have been half as smooth or enjoyable without this magazine. The results would certainly have not been as nice. Working as a managing editor for OUR HOMES has allowed my passion for design to flourish, placing important tools and inspirations at my fingertips.

But, foremost, working with OUR HOMES has acquainted me with the thriving home industry in Grey-Bruce. I knew immediately who I would turn to for advice, lighting, paint, backsplash tile and general feel-good encouragement on my darkest days. When it came time to select our granite countertop I knew where to turn, because I had witnessed firsthand the craftsmanship of local companies in so many kitchens. When I was overwhelmed by options all I had to do was flip through back issues to see examples of how they played out in reality. When I didn't know where to source something (like all that Annie Sloan Chalk Paint I probably shouldn't have splurged on) all I had to do was check our directory.

I'm so happy that we were able to turn to local companies for the work in our home. Without OUR HOMES we wouldn't have even known where to begin.

Jennifer Schleich

Jennifer Schleich, Managing Editor
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Family Cottage Overhaul.
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Photography by
Sandy MacKay.



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advice

Designer
Stephanie Redmond
shares her ideas.



HOME OFFICE SPACES

As life becomes more mobile and employers embrace the idea of teams working remotely, more people are turning their homes into multi-use spaces.

The home office used to be a reprieve from family life, a place to pay bills and catch up on the occasional unfinished project. More a library than a workplace, the chair was a little too comfortable and the light a little too dim. Today's mobility has changed that.

We take our work with us in our pockets wherever we go. iPhones, Blackberries, Androids, iPads – it's increasingly hard to disconnect from work but also increasingly easier to work from anywhere. A home office can provide some fantastic advantages and make achieving that life/work balance easier.

TO SIT OR TO STAND?

Most of us spend a lot of time at a desk and many people are switching to a standing desk. They are generally "sit or stand" – as in, they convert. They are designed so that your computer is brought up to eye level and you stand at your workspace. It's a more energetic pose to keep you alert and stop the negative effects that bad posture and sitting all day have on your body. For all the slouchers out there, this is something to consider. Although standing has its benefits, all day on your feet can be tough, so sitting for periods of time is still recommended.

When sitting, try using an ergonomic stool like the Buoy by Steelcase. Again, this "active seating" keeps your core engaged as it tilts and turns. Traditionally, people have spent a lot of time sedentary at a desk. We'd convene at the water cooler for a quick chat before getting back to work. But it wasn't just about the chit-chat. The water cooler provided us with a destination to stand at for a moment, to move and stretch our legs.

If you have the space, throw an accent chair in the corner. This wood frame chair by Structube is a stylish, compact piece that's cosy enough to read in, but guests can sit in it for a quick meeting. The fabric is 80 per cent polyester so you don't have to worry too much about stains from spilled coffee.



WHAT ABOUT BREAK TIME?

Personally I've made it my goal in 2016 to not use plastic bottles. And it's hard. But an offshoot of that resolution is to also cut down on disposable cups and plastic in general. It's important to stay hydrated, and if you work at home, you have your kitchen at your disposal. But don't forget your travel mug or bottle for meetings. I just bought one of these S'Well stainless steel water bottles for my dad because I thought it matched the inside of his car (and he needs to drink more water)!

WHERE TO PUT YOUR STUFF?

USM offers a wide variety of durable products that are customizable. Choose modular options like pull-down doors that hide your printer, regular drawers, filing drawers or open areas for display. It's a chrome and steel combination unit in a rainbow of colour options. I'm convinced it will never go out of style and is my personal favourite. If chrome is not for you, try Knoll for the higher end, or Ikea, which is always a brilliant standby.

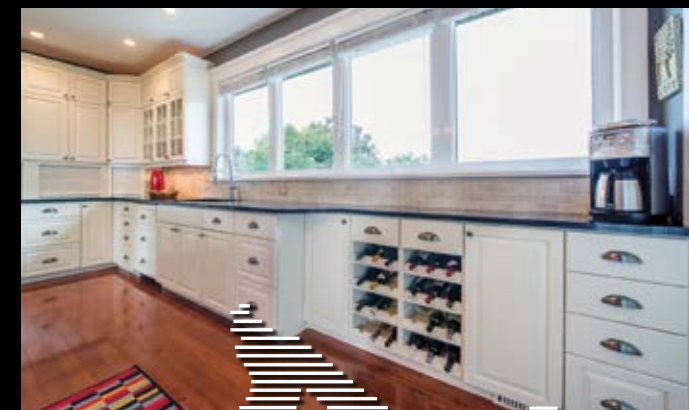
GOT TECH?

If you're at home solo you may need a little music for company. Try a Sonos system that you can manage via your phone, computer or iPad. The speakers are lovely to look at and provide great sound. And last of all, for those who are trying to spend more time outside of the city, say, at a cottage or chalet, look into the magicJack for an area code that doesn't give away your whereabouts. **OH**

1. USM MODULAR FURNITURE: Haller Modern Credenza in Anthracite Gray **2. STRUCTUBE:** Klein Armchair in Beige **3. SONOS:** PLAY:5 Wireless Speaker **4. IKEA:** Alex Drawer Unit on Casters in White **5. DESIGN WITHIN REACH:** Herman Miller Renew Executive Sit-to-Stand Desk with Walnut Veneer and Black/Aluminum Legs **6. S'WELL:** 25oz Teakwood Water Bottle **7. STEELCASE:** Turnstone Buoy **8. ORIGINA CANADA:** LED Desk Lamp

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style picks



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PHOTOGRAPHY **STEVE SMALL**

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style picks

4 DURNIN'S CUSTOM CABINETS

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Oakmoor and Britannicca are Cambria's newest quartz styles. Oakmoor is infused with strong contemporary veining and is much darker than whiter Britannicca. Also consider Maui from Santa Margherita Quartz, which features a textured surface analogous to leathered granite. Quartz surfaces are an excellent durable option for outdoor kitchens and patio bars.

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5 THE FYRE PLACE & PATIO SHOP

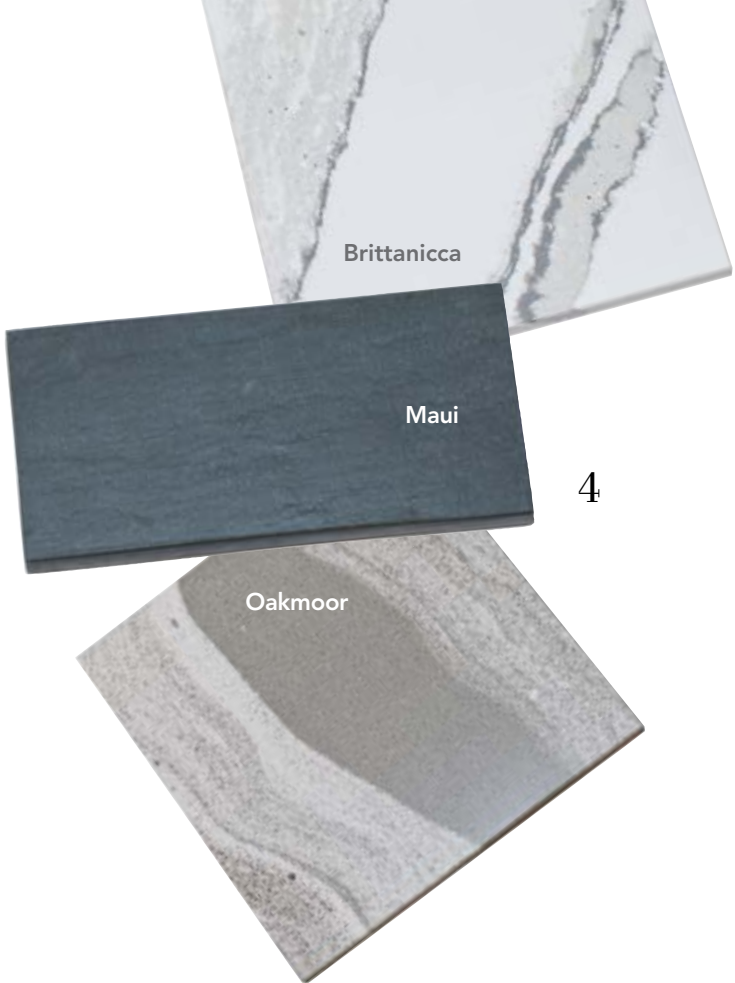
BAZZA Patio Set
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Orchids have an instantly luxe air, appearing delicate and sophisticated.

PHOTO: BRANDON BARRE



STORY **YANIC SIMARD**
PHOTOGRAPHY **GILLIAN JACKSON**

We can't all have a green thumb, and we can't all reside in tropical climates. However, it is possible for anyone to bring their home to leafy life, no matter where they live! I've put together 10+ of my favourite ways to add some greenery to your every interior, so you can love your home no matter what the season.

FORCE OF NATURE

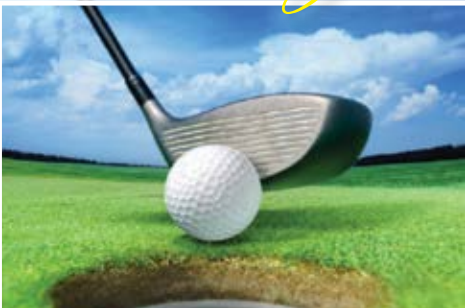
While blue might seem like everyone's favourite colour, green is an easy choice for adding some edge without taking a wild risk: the intensity of rich greens makes them feel haute couture, but these classic hues don't go quickly out of fashion. Use vivid shades in fabrics with a sheen (like velvet or silk) for accents that feel alive, or go bold with an emerald sofa or stool – it's near-neutral enough to not clash with other furnishings.

For a more romantic or eclectic approach, try a green powder-coated metal accent, such as a garden basket, rustic ladder (great for holding towels or books) or a vintage sign. This colour softens metal's tough exterior and adds a sense of whimsy, bringing the outdoors in with no maintenance required. *Continued on page 24*



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VEGETARIAN PALETTE

Green is usually a popular paint colour, but there is an especially strong selection of verdant hues on the market at the moment. Vivid emerald shades add drama while working well with other hues; try Benjamin Moore's simply named 2044-10 Green for an accent wall or a full room where you want a moody, intimate feel. For an airier all-over colour, try HC-119 Kittery Point Green (part of Benjamin Moore's 2016 palette), or the subtly minty HC-141 Hollingsworth Green.

Don't want to commit to such a large stretch of colour? Use tinted glass accents to add vivid colour in bite-size doses. Seaglass vases especially add a sense of beachy calm; add a few branches for height and you've got inviting all-year greenery.

EXOTIC APPEAL

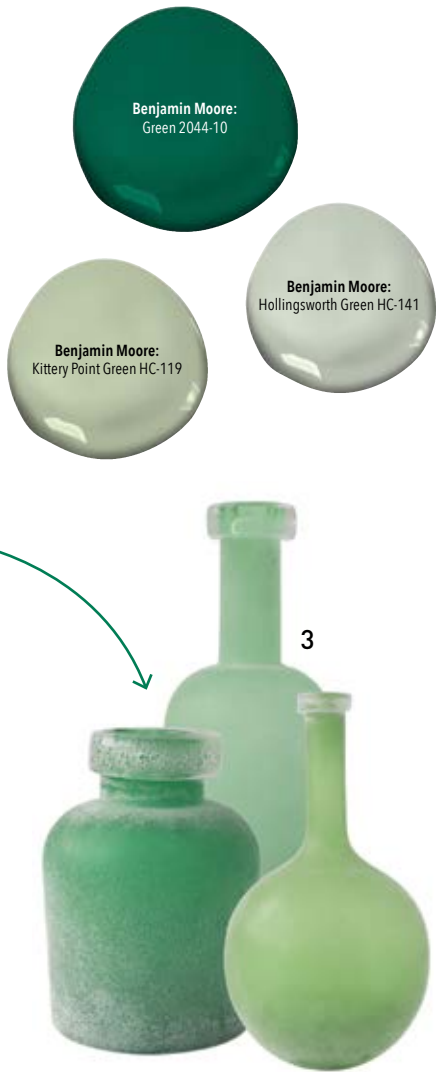
Orchids have an instantly luxe air, appearing delicate and sophisticated. Luckily, however, they are hardier than they seem. Due to their tropical origins, orchids actually thrive in steamy environments, making them an excellent choice for bathrooms and spaces that may seem unsurvivable for other plants.

Cactus planters are another smart option for those who find it challenging to keep a living plant...well, alive. They typically require watering just once a week, perfect for adding some exotic flavour to your home even if you're often on the go. Have a planter prepared by a florist in a glass vessel of your choosing for a sculptural statement.

FIDDLER ON THE ROOT

Fiddle leaf fig trees are must-have décor plants right now: once you see one, you'll notice them everywhere in magazine spreads and online blogs – or even past episodes of *House!* The oversize leaves make an eye-catching statement, feeling earthy but also modern, and what could be more indoor-outdoor than a perfectly home-size tree?

These trees require a decent amount of indirect light, so they work well for rooms where light is available in the day, but isn't too intense (usually south-facing). Beyond this they aren't tough to care for, as long as they get monthly fertilizer and the occasional dusting. Also consider a cheerful lemon tree, moving it outside in the summer and back in during the cold.



NO DIRT ON ME

Air plants seem almost miraculous: they don't need soil to survive, instead drawing nutrition literally from the air. Care usually involves occasional misting, so they're a good option for those who want a living plant in a small space without too much effort.

If you prefer your blossoms grown by someone else, you can always grab them fresh at the local supermarket. Pick up inexpensive but shapely flowers, strip away any fillers like excess leaves and stems, and place the blossoms in threes in small bud vases. You'll show the sense of pride in your home of a true design maven without an outrageous budget. **OH**



1. JONATHAN ADLER: Lampert Sofa in Emerald
2. MOBILIA: Emile Accent Table in Green 3. WEST ELM: Waterscape Vases.

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RESETTLEMENT PLANS

STORY **MARY HATT** | ILLUSTRATIONS **SHEILA BRITTON**

Downsizing? Take it from someone who is going through it – moving from your family home can be a daunting experience. For me, there was the emotional toll of closing the door on a place that held me in its arms for years. Then, the practical challenges, especially since I am downsizing and getting rid of lots of stuff. Did I say lots? I mean tons!

What I've learned is that a home exists in two parts. Part one: the furniture, accessories and housewares we need and use every day. Part two: everything else. Once you go into the far reaches of your home's hiding places, you'll be staggered by what gets pulled out and tossed into the stockpile of stored belongings. Bedding, equipment, knick knacks, old rugs, guitars, karaoke sets, board games, party supplies, household items you thought your kids would want but, of course, they didn't, precious kindergarten crafts, soccer trophies and heirloom pieces from the ancients.

It's time to make some ruthless decisions about what to keep and what to toss. But it doesn't have to be overwhelming.

"Give yourself two to three months to get organized before your move," advises Janice Kirwin, owner of Lighten Up! Kirwin is a move manager and professional organizer in London, Ont., coaching people in the art of moving and downsizing. She adds, "You can't say you're going to organize your garage this weekend if it hasn't been touched in 15 years."

In helping her clients de-clutter their homes before a move, Kirwin advises taking on small tasks first, such as cleaning and organizing a closet or junk drawer. Once they have got the hang of household editing, they can move on to bigger jobs, like that garage, easily dividing things into "must have" and "can live without" categories.

These days, our environmental mindfulness is getting us to look beyond the local landfill when it comes to disposing cast-offs. There are consignment stores that may be interested in your gently used or quality goods. Kirwin notes that while charities welcome good pots and pans, lamps, dishes and clothing, many no longer accept sofa beds or fabric furniture, especially in dated styles or upholstery.

When planning your move, it is certainly helpful to know your destination. If possible, get a floor plan of that new space so you can figure out which of your things can be accommodated and how much extra room you will have.

Storage solutions become a necessity when you're downsizing. Here are a few ideas for creating storage in your new home with existing furniture or new additions:

Armoires and bookcases: take them with you. They make ideal homes for extra stuff.

Ottomans: those with lids that lift can store blankets and cushions.

Beds with built-in storage underneath or under-bed storage containers make good use of unused space.

Floor-to-ceiling storage in the house or garage, where shelving, hooks and even a pulley system can handle sports and garden equipment.

Add built-ins to blank space, such as over the bathtub or toilet.

Invest in built-in closet systems or closet shelving to maximize available space.

While storage is one way to deal with your extra stuff, living with less is another. It's a big trend these days. Kirwin observes, "People want less and that is why they are downsizing, even at younger ages."

My own downsizing project is not yet over; most of my worldly goods have been in deep storage for the last few months while we look for a permanent, smaller home. With few exceptions, I haven't missed, nor needed, any of it. I am, however, comforted by knowing it's there. Guess I know what my next hurdle will be! **OH**



Photo By: Wendy Webb Photography

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DESIGN AND PROJECT **ANDREA RAMACIERI**
PHOTOGRAPHY **BONNIE FOX**



THE MAKEOVER

for this chic trailer included:

Removing carpet throughout and replacing with laminate flooring

Priming and painting all the ceilings, walls and cabinets

Installing bead board throughout with some wallpapered accent walls

Adding window trim to all windows

Installing rods and drapes

Moving in furniture and accessories



The built-in banquette was removed from the living room and replaced with some stylish leather chairs.



Designer Andrea Ramacieri completed the ultimate upcycling project. She gutted a 32-foot 1989 Glendale Golden Falcon travel trailer and turned it into an elegant, versatile and inviting space.



In the kitchen, the table and bench seating were replaced with a small table and chairs.



The bathroom received a fresh new look with tongue-and-groove pine bead board, elegant wallpaper and a decorative mirror.



In the master bedroom, wheel wells were boxed in and covered in bead board, and the built-in closet was gutted. A ready-made cabinet was installed for attractive storage.



Custom-made bedding completes the facelift in the master bedroom. OH



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DIY s'mores STATION

STORY **EMIL & GINA MAKKAR** | PHOTOGRAPHY **ROBYN RUSSELL**



MATERIALS:

- Three 1x8-inch planks, cut to 4-foot lengths
- Two 1x8-inch planks, 8 inches long (for the ends)
- Nail gun
- 2-inch brad nails
- Carpenter's wood glue
- Trigger clamps
- Antique American stain
- 2-inch stain brush
- Decorative stones
- Insulation or foam peanuts
- 3 to 6 Sterno ethanol gel cans



HOW-TO:

- Lay one 4-foot plank flat for the bottom of the station. Run a bead of carpenter's wood glue around the edge of the top surface.
- Place the remaining two 4-foot boards perpendicular on the surface of the bottom board.
- Use trigger clamps to fix the bottom and sides together tightly while the glue dries.
- Using a nail gun and 2-inch brad nails, fasten the sides to the bottom board.

- Run a bead of glue around the ends of the station.
- Press the two 8x8-inch pieces on the ends of the station and nail them to form a box.
- Sand the box until smooth and let stand for two hours or overnight.
- To stain: Shake the stain well and apply using a 2-inch brush. Wait until completely dry and add a second coat if desired.

TO ASSEMBLE:

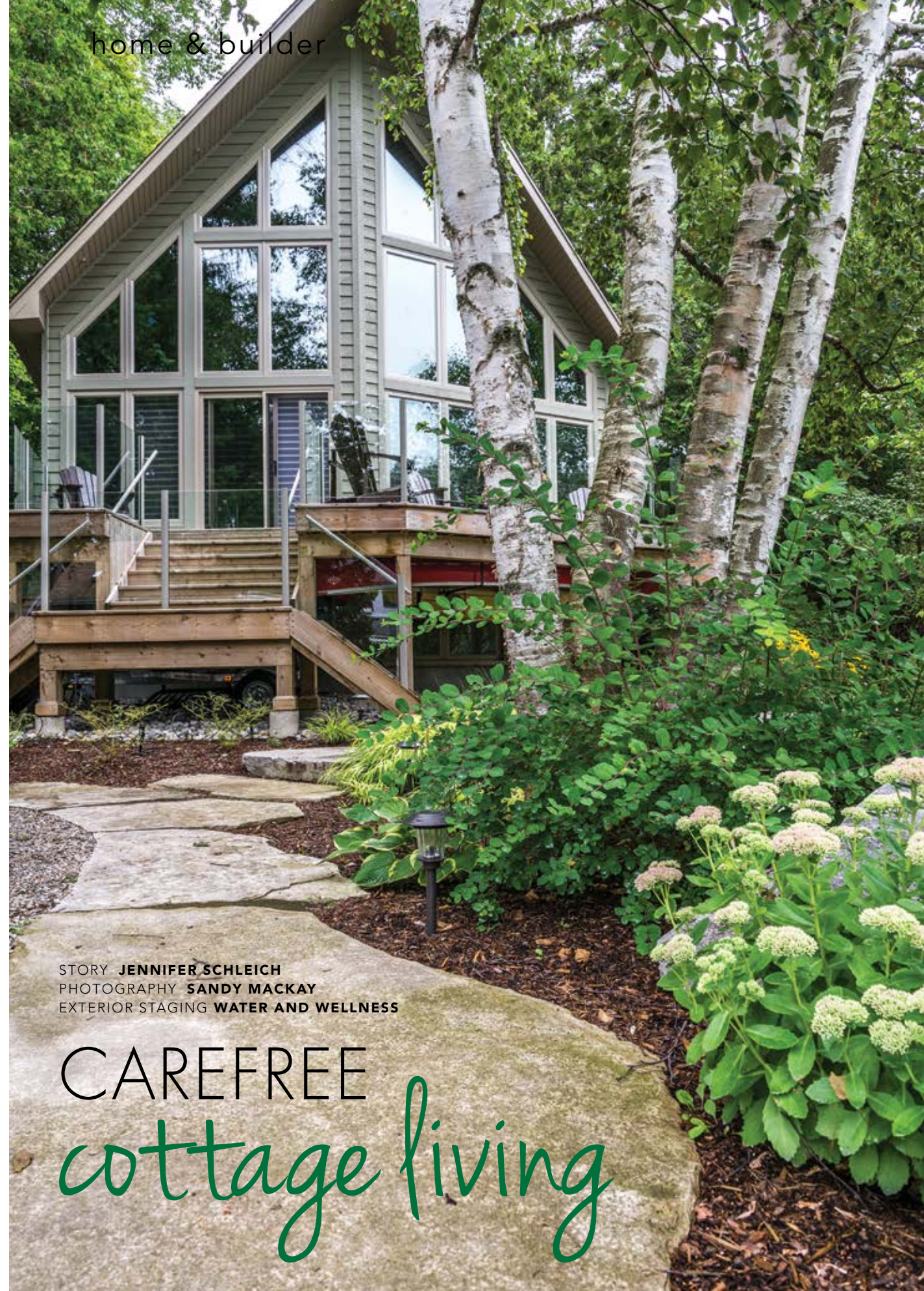
- Cut a piece of insulation the size of the box and lay it in the bottom, or fill two inches of the box with foam peanuts, to cushion the stones and elevate the Sternos.
- Place the Sternos about a foot apart and fill the box with decorative stone. Voila! Your s'mores station is ready.

NOTE: Sterno ethanol gel is recommended for use with marshmallow roasting. It's biodegradable and water soluble. **OH**



Add an old-school classic to any backyard gathering with a self-serve marshmallow roaster. Arrange ingredients for s'mores in a variety of fun containers and light the Sternos for instant fun. S'more laughter, s'more love, s'more family and friends. That's all you really need!





STORY **JENNIFER SCHLEICH**
 PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**
 EXTERIOR STAGING **WATER AND WELLNESS**

CAREFREE cottage living



ABOVE: The Mote family relaxes on their outdoor flagstone patio after a busy morning at the Port Elgin Main Beach. **TOP RIGHT:** The circular stone patio, which houses the fire pit, has a curved organic shape that is common in the home's landscaping. **RIGHT:** A carved stone functions as a water fountain, sourced with natural water flowing on the property.



Sunsets and s'mores, long walks on the beach, canoes drifting down the mighty Saugeen, rough granules of sand clinging to damp toes, giggles echoing through the evening air, children scampering across mossy stone and sailing toy boats down a tiny stream – these are the goings-on at **Les and Karen Mote's** cottage in Saugeen Shores. The family cottage, built on ancestral land, just footsteps from Port Elgin's main beach is a tiny pocket of summer filled with the sounds of nature. *Continued on page 35*

BELOW: Les and Karen Mote love watching cousins playing happily together in the green grass. **RIGHT:** The dining table, custom-built from salvaged wood by a family friend, is a centerpiece in the great room. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The custom kitchen in a pale neutral wood lends a beachy coastal vibe to the cottage. **MIDDLE:** A live-edge solid-wood pedestal table is a great place for snacks and drinks. **RIGHT:** The stone fireplace and rustic mantel are a strong focal point in the living area.



Along a tiny gravel lane, a series of quaint cottages lit with dappled sunlight are set back from the road. Many of the cottages surrounding the Motes' home are owned by members of Karen's family, forming a little community within a larger one.

"Karen's great grandfather was a United Church minister who came to this area with his wife and 10 young children," explains Les. "They settled and owned much of the land surrounding the cottage and left each of the 10 children a piece of the property. Our cottage sits on the piece given to Karen's grandfather, and many of the surrounding properties remain in the family."

Wrapped around the family cottage is a stunning landscape designed by **Hutten & Co. Landscaping**. Completed in 2012, the gardens have matured nicely, turning the property into a green oasis near the sandy beach, complete with in-ground sprinklers from **Aqualine Irrigation Services**. The natural and sympathetic aesthetic of the landscaping, enriched with low-maintenance plants and beautiful flagstone from **Bruce Peninsula Stone Inc.**, adds character to the cottage and extends the cottage's entertaining area into the outdoors.

More than gardens and stone, the cottage's landscaping is a microcosm of endless adventures for the children, who call it their summer getaway. A swiftly running miniature river formed from natural spring water on the property plays host to competitive boat races and feeds a gurgling water fountain, doubling as a wash station for sandy feet. Winding stone paths, a bonfire pit and an outdoor shed packed with sporting fun, all find a home thanks to the work of Mark and Ken Hutten.

"Their (Hutten & Co.) passion for what they do was so evident from start to finish," says Karen. "They are energetic, creative and talented and we are thrilled with the outdoor space they created for us."

The landscaping is the icing on the cake. The cake being the new cottage situated on the Motes' property. In 2011, Karen and Les embarked on a project to transform the original humble structure on the property into a space that was more comfortable and amenable to their family's lifestyle. Working with local home construction company **Snyder Development**, the couple set to work on an extensive rebuild.

Continued on page 36



ABOVE: A gentle stream flowing along the border of the beautifully landscaped property is a favourite destination.

home & builder



Benjamin Moore:
Hemp Seed CC-578

All bedrooms are painted Hemp Seed.



“Right from the start we knew Bryan from Snyder Development was going to be the best to work with,” explains Karen. “We knew that we would not be able to be on the site as much as we would like during the build, but we never had to worry about what Bryan was doing. Everyone involved were all top notch. We had high expectations and they surpassed all of them.”

The new airy cottage fills with natural light during the day, thanks to vaulted ceilings, an open-concept plan and soaring glass windows (**Georgian Bay Window & Door**, tinted by **Georgian Glass Coatings**). Neutral colours like Benjamin Moore’s Nantucket Gray and Hemp Seed (paint work by **Williams’ Painting**) add a contemporary feel to the wood tones and vintage touches. In fact, the cottage’s great room is the couple’s favourite space.

“It brings the outdoors inside,” they say. “The natural paint colours and the reclaimed woods, along with the large windows, high ceilings and glass railings (**Shore to Shore Glass & Mirror**) on the deck, help to make you feel like you’re outside. The furniture, art and knick-knacks blend the family history with our own story.” *Continued on page 38*



Benjamin Moore:
Nantucket Gray HC-111

The upper hallway is painted Nantucket Gray.

TOP LEFT: The master bedroom is accompanied by a private balcony overlooking the backyard. **TOP RIGHT:** The guest room bed is styled in a unique way to showcase the character of the wood frame. **ABOVE:** The upstairs landing is open to the great room, allowing natural light to stream into the space. The lamp is a vintage salvage from the original cottage.



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Adjacent to the great room is the custom maple kitchen, built by **Kreller Kitchens**. The accompanying dining table is a rustic wonder, constructed from reclaimed barn board by a friend in Midland. Underfoot, stylish laminate and ceramic flooring runs throughout the cottage, giving the space a durable, worry-free, family-friendly functionality.

Snyder Development assisted the family in their hope of preserving some of the vintage character of the original cottage. With Bryan's assistance, they were able to salvage all the wooden doors from the old cottage. Snyder Development restored and installed the doors in the fully-finished basement, which houses a pool table from **Double D Company**. The couple also saved a number of favourite antique chairs, which they had reupholstered, a few occasional tables, dishes and serving ware, wall art, and other memorabilia from Karen's grandparent's cottage.

"We carry on with some old traditions, and have made some new ones like ringing in the New Year at the lake," the couple add. The Motes' new cottage is truly a convergence of the old and the new, nestled amidst peaceful nature. **OH**

ABOVE: A large pool table and other game boards take over a large portion of the finished basement. **RIGHT:** A vintage backgammon board is converted into a unique side table in the basement, which houses reclaimed timber beams.



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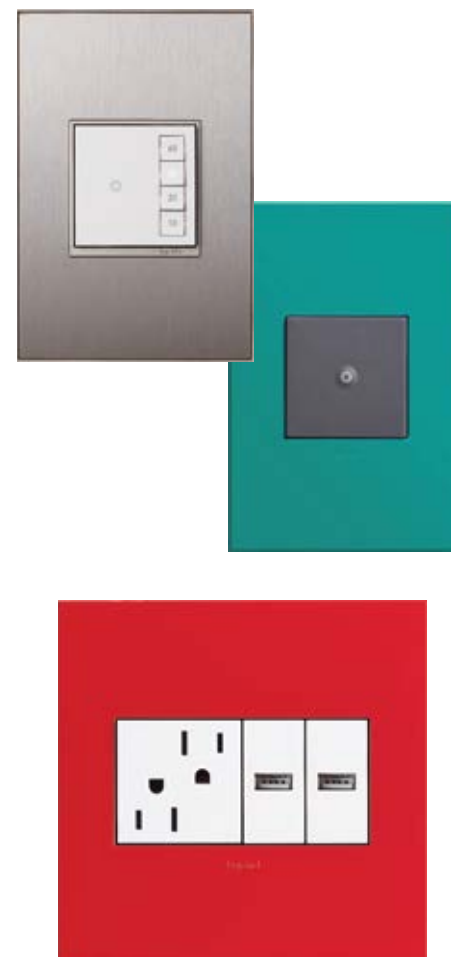


STORY **JENNIFER SCHLEICH**
PHOTOGRAPHY **STEVE SMALL**

THE PLACE: Inside **Living Lighting Owen Sound** the ceilings and walls blaze with light emanating from hundreds of stylish fixtures. Every way you turn, a sleek pendant, a glittering chandelier or a captivating lamp stops you in your tracks – each fixture picked by owner Brandon Vanderschot and his knowledgeable staff. Brandon is the third owner of Living Lighting, which opened its doors in 1988. “Living Lighting is a franchise,” explains Brandon. “It brings us both buying power and opportunities that allow each store to carry multiple brands and styles. We are able to source almost any light on the market, or find something similar.”

THE STYLE: Living Lighting is home to a diverse array of styles and, at the flip of a catalogue, the company can cater to every aesthetic imaginable. “We have some styles that dominate our showroom, including modern and traditional,” notes Brandon. The huge swath of outdoor fixtures installed in the showroom tends toward a more traditional classic lantern look, with lots of dark hues and blacks. Aside from the fixtures themselves, the shelves are stocked with plenty of lighting accessories and a repair service.

WHAT’S HOT: “Hot and coming products right now include fixtures with clean lines, youthful colours and warm metallics like brass and soft gold,” says Brandon. The purchase of integrated



Nicole Wolfe, Brandon Vanderschot, Laurie McRae

LEDs is also ramping up, with many homeowners making the switch as prices drop and the technology flourishes. Keep an eye out for chrome and bling in vanity lighting, wall sconces that double as dramatic statement pieces, richly traditional exterior fixtures with customized glass, and crystal and alabaster glass flush mounts. That said, the most intriguing product on the shelves at Living Lighting right now isn’t a fixture at all, but a range of ultra-sleek, European-inspired, high-tech light switches, electrical outlets featuring USB ports, and switch plate covers by Legrand.

FAVOURITES: “People love the big chandeliers, especially for dining tables or large foyers,” adds Brandon. Of all the lovely fixtures housed in the 3,000 sq. ft. showroom, it’s the chandeliers, vanity lights and kitchen pendants that sell like hot cakes. “Bathrooms seem to be the most renovated room in a house; we sell a lot of vanity lighting.”

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An early epiphany leading to a career in horticulture and landscape design occurred in my 20s. I had just purchased my first home and was eagerly poring over a bulb catalogue, planning my first spring garden. I was so excited about the rich riot of colour and diversity that I literally could not sleep that night!

STORY AND PHOTOS
MELANIE REKOLA

Melanie is a certified horticulturalist and landscape designer.

online Get more in outdoors at ourhomes.ca/mag/outdoor

Oh, how tastes change with time and experience. I am no longer seduced by big, bright blooms that perish after only a season or a few short years. I have evolved into a thrifty gardener, of both time and money. Call me anti-annuals. I even use perennial plants in pot displays. You, too, can follow suit and choose bulb workhorses that are truly recurrent and/or that multiply over time and you won't feel deprived of a gorgeous colour range or variety – I promise.

BULB BASICS

Spring bulbs can add an extra two months of beautiful blossoms to your garden, and because our Canadian garden season is short, it makes them especially important. This spring or summer, plan where you would most like to see those blooms appear next year and you'll be ready for bulb planting this fall.

Place spring bulbs amongst perennial plants so that their emerging leaves will mask the bulbs' unsightly, but necessary, dieback foliage. Bulb foliage must be left intact so that their energy can be reabsorbed back into the bulb for next year's bloom.

I am using the generic reference of "bulbs," but really, these underground storage organs come in several forms. Bulbs, corms and tubers are the three most common. Regardless of which type, always plant bulbs in well-draining soil to avoid root rot. Plant in autumn with the pointy side up; perhaps you can also spot the remains of the old roots on the bottom. If it's still not clear which side is up, plant on its side. *Continued on page 46*



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gardening

Melanie's Perennial Bulb Picks



Flowering in later spring, the small orchid-like Dutch iris is a classic available in all sorts of sumptuous colours. The true-blue hues are especially handsome.



This old fashioned favourite heralds the end of winter and promises fair weather to follow. The very early blooming, miniature plant often is found flowering amongst the snow with bright, pure white blossoms. New offerings include larger, doubled blooms with interesting markings.



Another small but familiar mainstay, crocus comes in both early and mid-spring blooming varieties. Crocus hues include white, bright and subtle shades of yellow, plus cool-tone purples and blues that are a perfect complement when planted side by side.



Very diverse in size, the striking spherical shape of ornamental onion flower adds excitement and grandeur to the late spring garden. Purple shades are most commonly seen, but they're also available in white, blue, yellow and pink. Though expensive, it's a worthy long-blooming addition.



Most of the large and lovely hybridized tulip blooms you know and love do not reliably return in our Canadian climate. The red, orange, and yellow varieties of the Darwin Hybrid series have a good chance of re-bloom. For the most dependable sort, choose species or botanical tulips and their barley-hybridized strains. If marked as "naturalizing" you're on the right track. Though smaller than their commonplace counterpart, these demure beauties will dependably reappear, every year.



The large daisy-like blossoms of the Grecian windflower are available in a rich and delicious colour range. From cool mauves and blues to happy pinks and fuchsias, these hardy bulbs boast an extended bloom period of four-to-six weeks, beginning in mid-spring.



Daffodil blossoms are gorgeous, enormous and some (dare I say) are even exotic looking. New varieties are offered in a number of warm colour combinations, sizes, styles and bloom times. A glamorous and showy addition to the spring garden with a lengthy display, plant them in droves.

A WORD ABOUT COLOUR

Though some bulbs listed here may be considered common, it is how you use their colours to keep your garden fresh, exciting and current. A common blunder is to add all hues to the garden. Instead, choose a restrained palette. Decide on warm or cool tones or a monochromatic, analogous or complementary theme for a spectacular and sophisticated springtime display. Now is the time to take note and plan your next spring garden wisely. Enjoy! **OH**

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An antique milk can and church pew add a vintage country feel to the foyer. **RIGHT:** Scott Young of Scot-Build Developments Inc. goes over plans with homeowners Dave and Deb. **BELOW:** The main floor sitting room retains the character of the original cabin with wooden walls and rustic mirrors.



Markdale

MODERNIZATION

STORY **JENNIFER SCHLEICH**
PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**

This story starts in 1968 with a Pan Abode cedar home kit – a tiny house long before tiny houses became hip. For just \$4,000, the homeowner’s father built a log cabin nestled on a sprawling wooded acreage in the heart of Grey County.



TOP LEFT: An old iron grate becomes a durable and fun vintage doormat at the front entrance. **TOP RIGHT:** Long shadows from the forested property fall across the brick façade of the newly renovated home. **RIGHT:** Dave’s father pictured in 1968 during construction of the original cabin.



Calling the original structure a house is a bit of a stretch. It was certainly a home, but it didn’t start as a house. It was, in fact, a Pan Abode garage with glass doors filling in the space for the garage door. It was a little cabin constructed of three-by-six double tongue-and-groove cedar timbers, and it grew in the hearts of the family to become a soothing countryside retreat – a shelter for the soul. Maybe it was the idyllic nature, maybe it was the rural atmosphere, maybe it was the little cedar house itself.

Nearly 50 years later, the story takes a left turn. Owners Dave and Deb, looking to more permanently relocate into the countryside life at *Chalet Normac*, turned to **Scott Young** of **Scot-Build Developments Inc.** to transform their family’s weekend getaway cabin into a more permanent home. Scott and his team of trades (**Mad River Electric, Bumstead Brothers Plumbing & Heating, Grey Bruce Roofing & Renos, David Hartle Excavating & Haulage, Grey Northern Powerline Inc.** and **McNabb Construction**) were charged with the task of expanding the living space and bringing the cabin into the present. “We were able to encase and protect the old; this project was a modernization,” explains Dave. Dave and Deb are very pleased with the work, and how accommodating Scot-Build Developments was. *Continued on page 50*

A corner bookshelf from the original cabin adds a bold pop of blue to the rich wood tones of the room. BOTTOM: This sitting area with a fireplace provides a comfortable gathering area for the whole family.

“We interviewed some builders and Scott had the best ideas, plus he was willing to keep us living here through the whole build,” notes Dave. Hours of planning between Dave, Scott and **Neil Pitcher** of **Pitcher N Designs** resulted in plans that paid attention to the details, like soaring windows to showcase the view, tile flooring (Floorcrafters) for practicality, energy efficiencies, and materials that would keep the spirit of the original cabin alive. “We tiled everywhere, so just leave your boots on,” they say with a smile. “It was our daughter’s request. When we told her we were renovating she was aghast, ‘You’re going to wreck the place!’ She didn’t want to have to start taking her boots off.”

Keeping the spirit of the cabin intact was very important to the family. To accomplish that feat, they did as requested and laid tile throughout much of the house, and chose finishes that are easy to clean. They also made room for vintage furniture pieces that have always called the cabin home, and channeled The Matriarch’s (Dave’s mother Norma’s) intuitive eye for colour while selecting their paint palette. “I call her a genius with colour,” says Deb. Benjamin Moore’s White Heron became a soft neutral backdrop for the stunning pops of green, blue, red and orange, inspired by The Matriarch, throughout the home.

The centre of the home is the old cabin, featuring a fireplace built of stone from the property, and its original bedrooms. The kitchen, which was formerly in the walk-out basement, was relocated to a new wing on the main floor adjacent to the original structure. Finished with tile flooring, a series of windows (Cedarport Window & Door Centre Inc.) offering a panoramic view, custom cabinetry and a sleek quartz countertop from **Van Dolder’s Home Team Kitchen and Bath**, the spacious eat-in kitchen has become a focal gathering space in the home.



The clean white paired with the dark greys of the backsplash and chairs grant the kitchen a fresh, contemporary look. **RIGHT:** A delicately carved wooden bird courtesy of family friend Gary Dover. **BELOW:** The captain’s chairs at the harvest-style dining table evoke humorous childhood memories for Dave, who once believed their engraved patterns of the west wind blowing to be a ferocious lion.



White Heron forms a soft backdrop for the pops of colour found throughout the cottage.



The two-storey wing that hosts the kitchen also contains the new bedrooms, and comprises the main portion of the home. Dave and Deb were very cognisant of heating costs. Though they wanted to create room for their family and other guests to visit, they didn’t want to heat an excessive amount of square footage when it was just the two of them. In the end, Scot-Build Developments constructed a second wing on the opposite side of the original cabin that could be closed off with ease, containing a garage, a bedroom and a sitting room offering a glorious view of the nearby pond, woods and sprawling country sky.

Each room seems to contain an item of interest, whether it is a carved wooden bird from a family friend, an outrageous parrot light from Norma, or intriguing furniture amassed while living abroad in Malaysia and Singapore. The vintage and repurposed items Deb enjoys breathing new life into are also present, complemented by lovely mirrors from **The Rusty Star**. “Nothing makes me happier than finding something, like an old chair, and fixing it up, not throwing it out,” says Dave. *Continued on page 52*



Every aspect of the home was a compromise between old and new, as well as between Dave and Deb. “Dave likes sparse furnishings,” says Deb, while Dave adds with a laugh, “Deb likes colour and texture. Deb kept suggesting things and I was starting to get scared the stuff up in her bedroom was going to spread.” A fabric window seat (**Georgian Bay Upholstery**) in Deb’s bedroom provides a great setting to sit and enjoy the scenery, wrapped up in her mementos and memories. On the other side of the wall is Dave’s sleeping quarters, sparse and minimalist, just as he likes it. *Continued on page 54*



ABOVE: Deb’s room, a.k.a. the “treasure cave,” features a wall-length window seat. **TOP RIGHT:** The second floor bathroom houses an antique vanity in bold blue, complemented by fun contemporary sinks. **RIGHT:** A small nook on the upstairs landing functions as a quiet reading space for Deb.



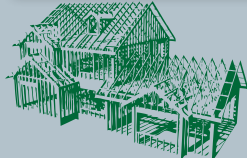
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“I love the city, but now we treat it like a destination,” says Deb as she reflects on their big move. “When we go back we look for new restaurants and entertainment. I never expected to live here but what a lovely turn our lives took. It’s just the best.”

The whole family seems truly fond of the Pan Abode’s modernization, comforted by the preserved slices of history scattered throughout. **OH**

BELOW: A minimalist vanity without handles and a white quartz countertop merge rustic and contemporary style in a main-floor bathroom. **RIGHT:** A lamp made from an antique heirloom finds a perfect home in the walkout basement. **BELOW CENTRE:** The Korean step cabinet is one of the couple’s acquisitions from their time spent in Asia. **FAR RIGHT:** Dave’s bedroom, known colloquially by the family as the “monk’s room” is a pure example of sparse living.



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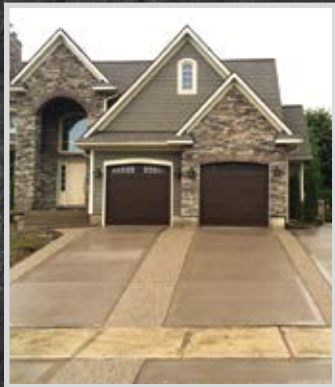
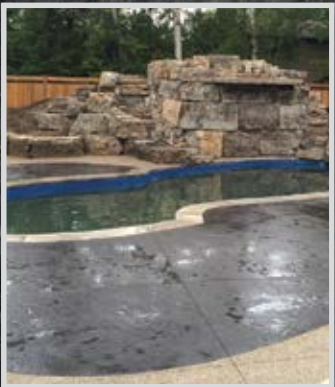
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Old kitchen utensils come back to life as a whimsical hydroponic garden nourished by goldfish in an aquarium below.

STORY AND PHOTOS
WALTER FRAN CZYK

Ancient Aztecs used aquaponics, a combination of aquaculture and hydroponics, to grow maize, beans, squash and tomatoes in their fabled floating gardens. In Thailand and China, farmers used similar soil-less methods to raise fish and snails in rice paddies.

While aquaponics has spread to many Canadian backyards as a source of tasty trout, tilapia, fresh fruit and vegetables, it is also moving indoors as living art.

Erica Jack, co-owner of Fab & Funky, a Muskoka furniture, home décor and clothing store, recycles utensils, furniture and glassware to create decorative aquaponics with delicious results. "It's a neat conversation piece," she says of an old kitchen sink with softly gurgling taps that water a bowl of thriving greenery. Nutrient-rich water flowing from the taps is pumped from an aquarium below, where goldfish swim.

Her tiny ecosystems imitate nature. Water from aquariums is fed to hydroponic plants while bacteria dissolve fish waste into nutrients for the vegetation. Filtered by plant roots, gravel and stones, clean water circulates back to the fish tank. The fish fertilize the plants. "I call it lazy gardening because you don't have to do anything but eat the herbs," Erica laughs.

She grows parsley, green peppers and chives in a fish-fed bowl in her window. In addition to strawberries, her aquaponic sink nurtures peppermint and chives. Another system grows spider plants, Christmas cactus and English Ivy. Lettuce grows very well, she finds. "It's all trial and error." If something dies, she advises, don't grow it again.

Continued on page 58



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A repurposed percolator waters green peppers, parsley and chives in an aquaponic system (goldfish bowl not pictured).



Glass and silver vases, combined with a baking pan and bowl, hold all the ingredients of this tiny aquaponic environment.



Strawberries and peppermint sprout among the rocks in a recycled kitchen sink where the taps run rich with nutrients fed by a goldfish aquarium.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Goldfish
- Fish Food
- Aquarium / Fish Bowl / Big Jar
- Selection of Plants and/or Seeds
- Container to Grow Plants
- 8 mm to 16 mm Pebbles / Crushed Rock / Glass Beads
- Pond Pump (available where garden supplies are sold)
- Plastic Tubing and Clamps
- Location with Adequate Sunlight

HOW-TO

- Furnish and fill the aquarium, glass bowl or jar with water.
- Install the pond pump and connect plastic tubing to move water from the aquarium to the surface of your plant container.
- Fill your growing container with pebbles, crushed rock or glass beads.
- To avoid unnecessary contamination, wash soil off the roots of plant seedlings before planting them in the growing medium. Plant densely. If seeding the system, sprinkle seeds on the growing bed after you've transplanted any seedlings.
- Once you've operated the system for a day and checked for leaks, introduce your fish to their new home. **OH**

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STORY AND PHOTOS **JENELLE MCCULLOCH**

Brighten up your gathering with these playful and fresh cupcakes filled with decadent raspberry cream and laced with fresh orange zest.

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Ingredients for 12 cupcakes

CUPCAKES

- 1 ¾ cup cake flour
- 1 ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 ¾ cup sugar
- 2 ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup butter, room temperature, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tsp orange zest

FILLING

- 8 oz cream cheese
- ½ cup butter, room temperature
- 1 ½ cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp orange juice
- 1 tsp orange zest
- Raspberry spread, store bought or homemade

SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

- 5 egg whites
- 1 ½ cup sugar
- 2 cups butter, room temperature, cut into chunks
- 1 Tbsp orange juice
- 1 tsp orange zest
- 1 tsp salt

DECORATION

- Fresh orange slices
- Fresh raspberries

MAKE CUPCAKES

- Preheat the oven to 350° F and add liners to cupcake pan.
- In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.
- In another small bowl, combine the milk, vanilla and orange zest.
- Place the bowl of dry ingredients on the mixer fitted with a paddle attachment and stir on low to combine ingredients.
- With the mixer still on low add butter cubes, a few at a time, until the mixture resembles a coarse crumb.
- Add eggs, one at a time, and then slowly add the milk mixture until combined. Turn mixer to medium and beat for 2 minutes.
- Pour the batter into the cupcake liners until each is two-thirds full, or about ¼ cup of batter. Bake cupcakes for 15-20 minutes – or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
- Once cooked, place on a rack to cool.

MAKE FILLING

- While the cupcakes are cooling, prepare the filling. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine the cream cheese and butter; beat on medium speed until smooth.
- Slowly add the powdered sugar, about ½ cup at a time, and beat on medium after each addition.
- Lastly, add the vanilla, orange juice and orange zest and mix until combined. Place in the fridge until ready to use.



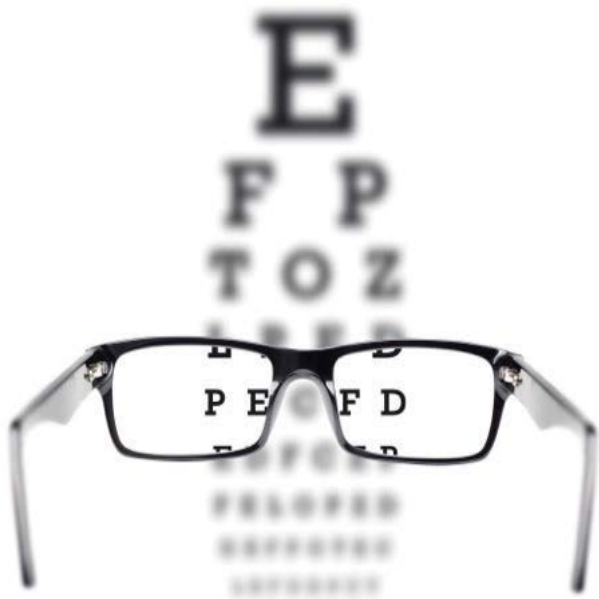
MAKE SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

- Start the buttercream by cooking the egg whites and sugar together over a double boiler.
- To do this, select a metal pot or glass bowl that fits snugly over the top, preferably the metal bowl of your stand mixer.
- Fill the pot with a couple of inches of water, ensuring the water does not touch the bottom. Bring the water to a simmer, then place the bowl with the egg whites and sugar on top.
- Whisk continually until the temperature of the egg whites reaches 165° F, or until the sugar is completely dissolved.
- Remove the bowl and place it on your stand mixer fitted with a wire beater attachment.
- Beat the egg whites on medium-high speed for about 10 minutes or until the bottom of the bowl feels cool.
- With the stand mixer still on medium-high, add the butter a chunk at a time. The buttercream will come together and resemble fluffy whipped cream.
- Add the salt, orange juice and orange zest.

ASSEMBLE AND ICE

- To assemble the cupcakes, hollow out a small hole in each cupcake with a knife or cupcake corer.
- In a piping bag fitted with a circular tip, combine the cream cheese mixture and raspberry spread, alternating each so that they swirl together.
- Fill the centre of each cupcake.
- Using a pastry bag and tip of your choice, pipe the buttercream on top of the cupcakes and decorate with an orange slice and fresh raspberry. Enjoy! **OH**

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easy BAKED WHITEFISH



STORY AND PHOTOS
PAT CROCKER

Bake a whole whitefish, trout or salmon fillet on a bed of diced spring vegetables. What could be easier? This dish comes together in less than 30 minutes for a delicious main course with a vegetable side. Serve with a warm or cold green salad or a side of rice. See our guide to spring vegetables for substitutions.

- INGREDIENTS**
Makes 4 to 6 servings
- Whole whitefish, trout or salmon
 - 2 new potatoes, coarsely chopped
 - 2 fresh spring turnips, coarsely chopped
 - 1 onion, coarsely chopped
 - 1 large carrot, peeled and shredded
 - 1 cup fresh spring peas
 - 10 fresh basil or sage leaves
 - sea salt and pepper to taste
 - 3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil or coconut oil

- DIRECTIONS**
- Preheat oven to 350° F
 - In a lightly oiled 9 x 13-inch casserole dish, combine the potatoes, turnip, onion, and carrot. Lay fish over vegetables and spread basil leaves over top. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle with oil. Bake for 10 minutes. Add peas around fish and bake for 5 minutes or until the fish turns opaque and flakes easily with a fork.
 - Remove from oven and let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

SPRING VEGETABLES

Now is the time that fresh, tender, young vegetables and greens appear at Farmers' Markets and many supermarkets. New potatoes, spring peas in pods and turnips are spring superstars, and while fresh is always best, sometimes substitutions are necessary.



peas: Small, sweet, green gems, spring peas are so tender they really need only a minute or two to cook, so consider adding them in the last 2 minutes of cooking the fish. Substitute frozen for fresh and add frozen in the last 6 minutes of cooking.



new potatoes: Small and tender, with thin skin, new potatoes are delicious boiled and served with butter and seasoned with salt and pepper. I sometimes make a meal of potatoes and peas to celebrate spring. For a change, use sweet potatoes or yams in place of the potatoes in this recipe.



turnips: The small, round, white and pale mauve vegetable we call turnip (*Brassica rapa*) is often confused with another root vegetable, the larger and more hardy rutabaga. When the milder, sweet-tasting turnips aren't available, swap in rutabaga. **OH**

Pat Crocker is a culinary herbalist, writing and growing herbs in Grey County. She is the author of 18 cookbooks.

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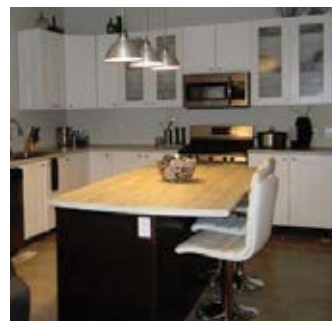
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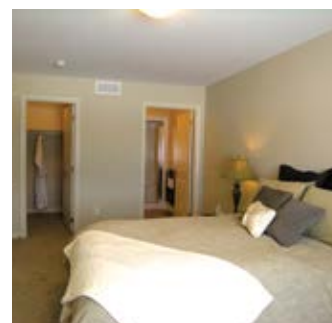
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OUTDOOR OVERHAUL

STORY **JENNIFER SCHLEICH**
PHOTOGRAPHY **STEVE SMALL**

Spring is in the air, so think about making some changes to your property this season. Whether you want to change your landscaping, go green or build a deck, these people can help you get there.

ROB & JOY BLACK

Blackline Power

Why install solar panels? Solar is an excellent environmental and economic investment. It's the only investment that is stable and predictable; it can't be compared to real estate or stocks, which fluctuate. Many jurisdictions around the world, including some Ontario municipalities, have committed to converting to 100 per cent renewable power within the next few decades.

How can you earn income? There are two types of grid-connected systems: you can earn approximately \$3,500 or more a year with a MicroFIT/FIT, or choose to offset your hydro bill via net metering. We can assess your options and provide a sound recommendation.

Who can have solar panels? Everyone! We have no typical client. Everyone is increasingly finding value in solar, including homeowners, farmers, commercial businesses and municipalities.

DAN JOHNSON

Postech Grey-Bruce

What are screw piles? A Postech Screw Pile is a galvanized-steel screw with an adjustable head that is thermally insulated to prevent frost from lifting it. It is a ground-anchoring system used for building foundations.

Screw piles vs. traditional concrete piles: Screw piles are reusable, eco-friendly and cost-effective. They are installed with minimal disturbance to the landscape and can be installed and built upon on the same day.

Why did you start Postech Grey-Bruce? I believed it would help both residential customers and contractors in the region; fewer delays means more time for other work. The versatility was something I couldn't stop thinking about, as screw piles can be used for decks, porches, cottages, cottage leveling, mobile homes, garages, gazebos, additions, bollards and solar panels. *Continued on page 70*





LYNDA GRIMOLDBY
Owen Sound Ledgerrock Ltd.

Types of stone veneer: At Ledgerrock we offer a variety of stone veneer, including Algonquin, Eramosa and our natural bed ledgerrock.

How can you use stone veneer? Stone veneer can be used in the interior and on the exterior of homes. For example, a veneer works great for an inside or outside fireplace, in a shower, a wine cellar, or as a backsplash.

What are the benefits of using a stone veneer? Stone veneers are long lasting, durable and offer an authentic and ornate look because they are made with natural stone directly from the limestone quarry. Stone veneer is not a man-made product. They are available in different widths, and the narrow veneers are lightweight and easily handled by a homeowner or mason.

Continued on page 72

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JOHN PEDLAR
Rocksolid Landscapes

What is your favourite landscaping material for Grey-Bruce homes? That would have to be oversize flagstone from the quarries in Wiarton. Nothing looks better than a tightly cut walkway or patio in local stone.

Tips for low maintenance landscaping: Use lots of “rock!” If you’re not a real green thumb, but want your property to stand out, limit the size and number of plant beds. Use plants that don’t require a lot of pruning throughout the year, drought-tolerant plants, and maintain two

to three inches of natural mulch. Most people don’t think this is the case, but a lawn is the lowest maintenance of any landscape.

Where can you get the most value? In my opinion: the backyard. Often, people are trying to create an extended living space outside of their home, and the backyard is where you can create the most privacy. When you want to hang out by the pool, or roast marshmallows by the fireplace, the backyard is where it all happens. **OH**

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COOLING YOUR HOUSE *au Naturel*

STORY **MARY HATT**
ILLUSTRATIONS **SHEILA BRITTON**

Canadians love trees for their natural beauty. We should love them, as well, for the ways they protect our homes from the elements. As we welcome the warmth of spring and look forward to the heat of summer, our trees are preparing to do their part as nature's air conditioners.

Looking for ways to reduce your energy bill by cutting back on air conditioning costs? Consider this seemingly old-fashioned idea and design your landscape as a cooling system as well as a source of beauty. It can shrink your environmental footprint, too.

Start with a bit of homework to understand the path the sun takes across your property and hence, where shade trees will be most effective.

"There is a science to it," advises landscape architect Ron Koudys of London-based Ron Koudys Landscape Architects Inc.

Numerous apps and programs can help you calculate exactly where and when the sun hits different parts of your property any day of the year. Koudys recommends the sun-angle tool developed by Sustainable By Design (susdesign.com/sunangle). Suncalc.net is another source and gives answers as quickly as you can type in your home address. You can also get valuable information by installing the Google Earth app (google.com/earth), or

consulting a landscaping firm.

Besides sun angle, consider what landscape professionals call surrounding "shadow casters," such as neighbouring houses and other physical structures.

Armed with knowledge from your homework, you will know precisely which parts of your house are most vulnerable to the sun's heat, and be able to landscape accordingly.

As well as where to place trees and shrubs, consider their shape, size and leaf density. The larger the leaf area, the more the tree can draw heat out of the air through the process of evapotranspiration. Koudys recommends hardy native varieties such as maples, oaks and other large-leafed deciduous trees. Deciduous trees are great in four-season climates because, in addition to cooling homes in summer, they lose their leaves when the weather turns colder and allow the sun to warm up the home.

Climbing vines, like trees, will reduce the inside temperature of your home through natural evapotranspiration. Reference a hot, sunny climate like Greece and you will see how vines have been planted deliberately on houses there to provide dense shade from the sun. Ivy, Russian-vine and Virginia creeper are ideal choices for reducing your home's daily temperature fluctuation.

Consider the architectural elements of your landscape design, as well as its trees, shrubs and vines. Homes built in new suburban areas that don't have mature shading, for instance, get particularly hot inside and out. Yet for privacy, there is a tendency to surround these homes with high fencing. This creates a problematic sweat-box effect where little air flows. To avoid this, incorporate lattice or louvers instead of or into parts of the fencing, especially on the southwest side of the property. You will be encouraging, rather than blocking, breezes. Koudys cautions that while many people build pergolas as potential sun blockers, they need to do so only after considering the sun's angles so they can structure their pergola boards accordingly.

While mechanical air conditioning units are considered by some as an indispensable modern convenience on scorching summer days, careful attention to your home's natural landscape will mean you are less dependent on it. There is no better way to connect the beauty of your natural landscape to your indoor living, *au naturel*. **OH**



Landscape Architect Ron Koudys says landscape architects have an adage: the right tree in the right place. Here are a few dos and don'ts for selecting trees:

- Do place trees a strategic distance from the house, generally at least 10 feet, depending on the variety.
- Don't necessarily plant trees on the south side of your house. Place your trees to take advantage of spring and summer's southwest prevailing winds so cooling breezes can be drawn into your home.
- Do think about the size of your house. If you are in a townhouse, you won't likely want an oak tree since they can grow to 25 feet in height.
- Don't place a tree where it will grow close to a roof; you may end up with moss.
- Do consider maintenance requirements. A crab apple tree beside your patio may bloom beautifully in the spring, but once those crab apples start falling, you will be cursing it.
- Don't plant trees where roots could cause damage to your home's foundation or underground pipes and cables.

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