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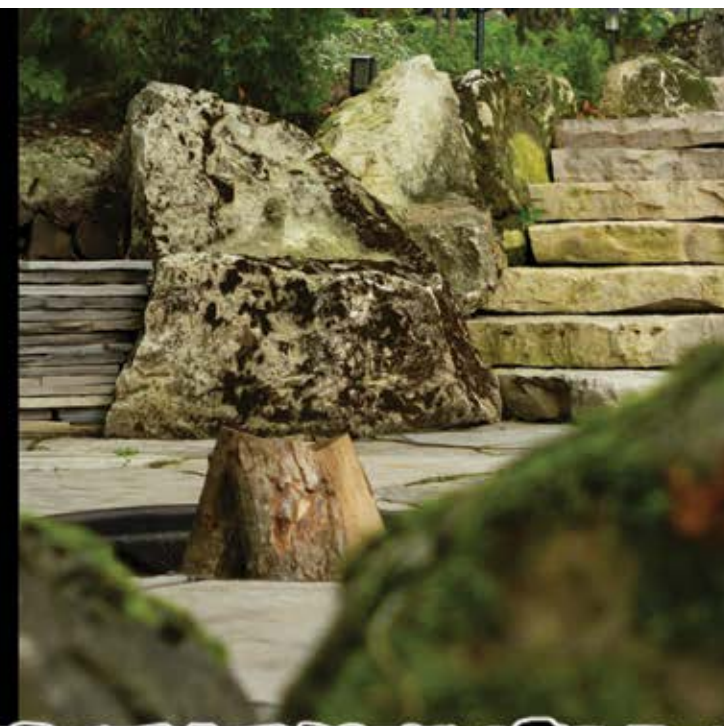
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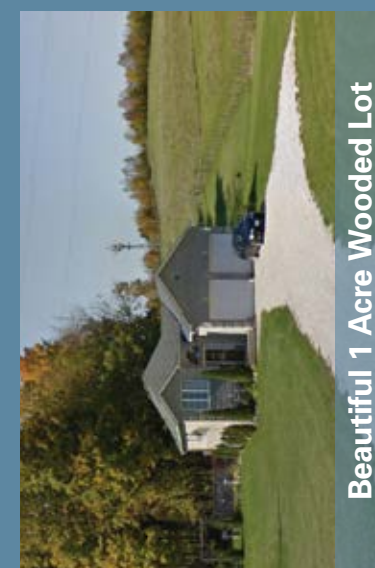
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AS WE MOVE INTO THE SUMMER MONTHS, we will continue to see an increasing focus on developing and decorating our patios, decks and outdoor spaces. One of the greatest attributes of a well-landscaped yard or deck area is lighting, which can accent beautiful features, improve after-dark safety and extend entertainment hours well past dusk. Unfortunately, stray lighting caused by urban areas is the greatest contributing factor impacting the deteriorating quality of our nighttime sky, and stargazing opportunities are all but non-existent in urban and semi-urban areas. Even rural settings are impacted by light pollution as nearby cities, towns and large industries cast visible halos that diminish the brightness and visibility of stars. Additionally, many insects and nocturnal animals are confused and disoriented by stray light from residential and industrial areas, as well as passing cars. It's suspected that light pollution is one of the main reasons firefly populations have so dramatically decreased over the past two decades.

Light pollution is fairly easy to remedy and restoring the brilliance and beauty of our starry skies is as easy as minimizing stray light through dark-sky compliant outdoor lighting, turning off outdoor lights when you head inside and participating in internationally recognized dark-sky community designations.

Only a handful of towns in all of Bruce and Grey Counties (South Bruce Peninsula and North Bruce Peninsula) have declared themselves dark-sky friendly communities. Given the size of our region and the importance of preserving our natural environment for our tourist-based economies, it's surprising that more communities haven't implemented dark-sky measures.

Here are some tips to reduce your light pollution footprint: turn your lights off, use blinds, use yellow low-wattage compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), reduce wattage of light bulbs, install



a timer or motion detector on your outdoor lights, re-aim your lights, angle fixtures so light is always directed down, install light shields and choose dark-sky compliant light fixtures.

One thing you might not know is that Canada is home to 13 Dark-Sky Preserves and Urban Star Parks, a designation that is mandated by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, which is justly concerned about the future of Canada's night-time stargazing opportunities. For more information about the importance of dark skies visit www.rasc.ca/dark-sky-site-designations

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ON THE COVER

Landscaping The Lakeside Cottage Story, page 22. Photography by Becky McCreary & Amy Kell.



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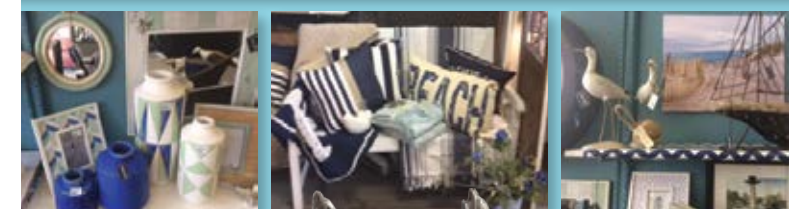
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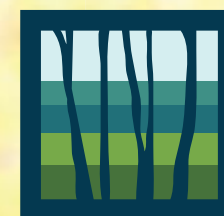
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Designer Stephanie Redmond shares her ideas.



Benjamin Moore: Caponata



Farrow & Ball: Pale Powder

Farrow & Ball: Teresa's Green

Farrow & Ball: Pink Ground

1. Mahogany Stool: BluDot 2. Brass Hook: Golden Biscotti 3. Resin Bowl: Martha Sturdy 4. Wall Sconce: Lindsay Adelman 5. Copper Side Table: West Elm

SUMMER TRENDS AND QUIRKY COLOUR COMBOS

Much like taste and smell, colour is subjective. What is aesthetically pleasing in one's surroundings may seem dull and joyless to another. The good news is, this year it seems that anything goes, *with anything!* Green is definitely at the forefront. The weirder the green the better, and you can pair it with just about any colour. For 2015, it's back to nature with greens, metals and a handcrafted feel.

PINK + MINT PASTELS

Introverted & Soft

I'm a pink lover, and Farrow & Ball has it covered. Pink Ground is an amazing pastel tone that is soothing yet somehow modern. The mood it sets will please the introverted decorators with its gentle feel. They have it paired this season with two greens – Pale Powder and Teresa's Green. You get that Easter egg, spumoni ice cream vibe. This is classic and not trendy. To modernize, hang a mirror with faceted edges. This subtle detail is all the rage but won't overpower the softness of the backdrop.

COPPER, EMERALD & NAVY

Romantic & Daring

I adore copper, but I prefer mine aged with a patina, darkened but not green. Copper was a traditional background piece, like old, too heavy pots hanging above the stove. And for the country, what could be better? The copper trend, however, is shiny and bright. It's modern and urban. Paired with emerald green it is a definite win. Add navy blue to accentuate this pairing. If you want to add a little copper to your existing palette, try this West Elm side table. It's simple, stylish and looks right at home just about anywhere.

AUBERGINE, BRASS & GRANNY SMITH

Modern & Refined

I'm not quite ready to say goodbye to black forever, but it's time to add a little edge to our moody tones. Deep aubergine is certainly a step in the right direction and cooked is even better! Try Caponata from Benjamin Moore for

a regal backdrop. It's lovely paired with brown or deep pink for a serious and refined look. For a contemporary edge, throw in a quirky green accessory like Martha Sturdy's resin flower bowl in granny smith apple. And for a little glamour, try these beautiful aged-brass wall hooks that I found on Etsy. Their clean lines highlight the brass and would be stunning on an aubergine backdrop.

AZURE, DEEP MAHOGANY & LEAF GREEN

Sophisticated & Fresh


Deep mahogany is another tone that will allow us to shift away from black. This rich brown creates a stunning backdrop on a wall or shelving unit. Simple pottery on a shelf disappears on a light background, but a deeper tone allows you to see the lines of each piece. Jewelry is a big inspiration in interior design this season. Take these Lindsay Adelman wall sconces for instance. On a much smaller scale, they would make a lovely pair of earrings! Add a hint of nature with a leafy green through furniture, an area rug or a beautiful ivy plant. Sometimes there is no substitute for the real thing.

I'm going out on a limb, but I think we've become more daring in our decorating, which is a good thing. It's fun. Colour is in, so don't be shy. Even the grey lovers are adding a pop! **OH**









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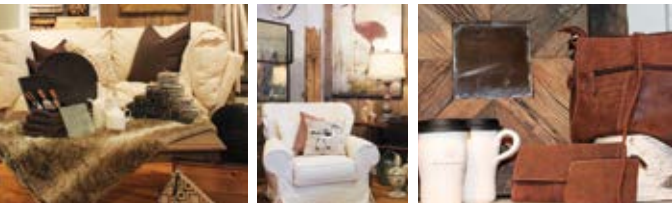
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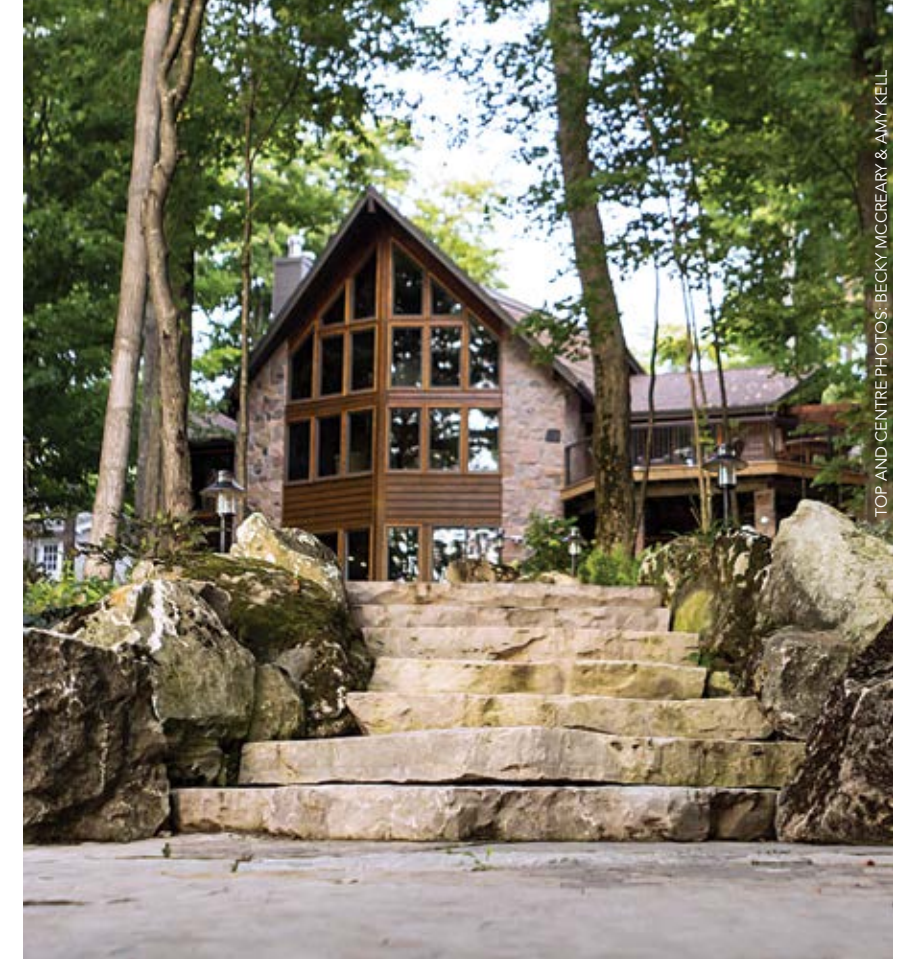
STORY LAUREL FORTIN
PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY MACKAY

T “The lake was frozen

solid, clear as glass when we first saw it 25 years ago,” tells Frank Gerencser. “The temperature had plummeted early in the season and no snow had fallen. It was a once-every-ten-years, magical weekend.” From Plantt’s Point on Lake Eugenia, Frank and his wife Shirley watched a lone skater trace circles on the endless rink. This would be a spectacular escape from the city for the entrepreneurial couple.

They turned to the east end of the lake where a few forested lots were staked out on the shoreline. They chose the one on the ridge with a sunset view straight down the channel. “We were one of the first three cottages here,” says Shirley. Each season since has brought its own magic as their cottage evolved, the family grew, and the area developed. The Gerencser’s son and daughter, now in their early 20s, grew up spending entire summers at the cottage and winters skiing at the Beaver Valley Ski Club. Their daughter continues to compete nationally in snowboarding slalom and giant slalom.

This summer’s excitement will be to enjoy the threefold evolution of the property that tapped into local and neighbourly talent. An indoor renovation was executed by a neighbour’s niece and her partner: Breanne Firth and Steve Conroy of Conroy Contractors. *Continued on page 24*



TOP: The lake side of the cottage offers stunningly landscaped curb appeal to passing boaters, while stacked windows provide a beautiful view for the cottage’s owners. **ABOVE:** A beach-bar cabana located above the dock area is a refreshing respite for the Gerencsers and their neighbours on balmy summer days. **LEFT:** The Gerencsers’ lot looks straight down the channel of Lake Eugenia, and in mid-summer the sun sets precisely in the centre.



ABOVE: The front entranceway to the family cottage has been updated with new stone and timbers. **RIGHT:** An antique sitting bench welcomes guests into the foyer. **BELOW:** Family sporting heirlooms adorn the stairway and give the cottage a vintage all-season feel.



They also embarked on a curbside facelift on the cottage, adding a garage (foundation by **GBL Construction**) and enlisting **Scott Hay Handcrafted Log Homes** to add timbers and a welcoming portico to the face of the cottage.

The Gerencsers' beachside landscaping makeover, including a neighbourhood-renowned beach bar, was designed by Vogel Landscape Design and implemented by **Rocksolid Landscapes**, which helped the couple's vision for their backyard become a reality.

Frank and Shirley say that from the cottage's early days and through the decades, their "cottage construction was a labour of love." Their approach was they never wanted to complain about quality. "You can complain about price once, but not about quality," says Frank. The land was selectively cleared and the shell of a well-built Viceroy home in 1992 became their cottage. The couple got to work on the insulation and painting themselves.



Entrepreneur Frank had just established TriOS College, a private career college in Toronto. As the school expanded over the years – currently into nine campuses across Ontario – the Gerencsers spent the following years saving up and planning for the cottage's next phase of work.

For example, the kitchen they installed 20 years ago is still solid today, needing updates only to the colour on the walls and the backsplash. But waiting for quality also meant the family lived with a simple plywood subfloor, painted white, throughout the great room and bedrooms until they had the time and funds to install the cherry hardwood that was on their wish list. Today, the cottage features gorgeous cherry floors, doors, windows and trim to match.

Continued on page 26



TOP LEFT: Shirley and Frank Gerencser lounge in a pair of Muskoka chairs on their private dock. **ABOVE:** Light wood cabinets give the kitchen a timeless appeal. **LEFT:** Looking down the hill toward Lake Eugenia, the new stone landscaping and bar area take centre stage.

feature



The indoor transformation included gutting and reconfiguring the master bathroom (Conroy Construction) by installing a walk-in shower and dual vanities under the existing skylight. Elsewhere, since the exterior renovations necessitated moving the existing oil supply tank, the family opted to convert their heating to propane (**David Petch** of **Petch Heating**), and a propane granite fireplace is the new focal point in the master bedroom.

Out front, Scott Hay added a portico at the front door that ties in with the new exposed timbers at the roofline. Local stonemason **Glen Weatherall** of **G.W. Masonry** skirted the house with decorative granite. The new two-bay garage (Conroy Construction) is sided in cedar to match the house. It was designed so that one bay is deeper to store the family's boat trailer. The new driveway is edged in flagstone, which ties into the stone pathways that flank the house. They also updated the windows and matched the soffit, fascia and eavestroughs to their existing façade with help from **Advanced Aluminum** and **Centre Grey Builders & Supplies (1975) Ltd.**

John Pedlar from Rocksolid Landscaping ran 250 feet of stone and rocks leading from the driveway right down to the edge of the lake to create a sweeping stone staircase. "He helped us find rocks and boulders that were covered in moss and were blackened, that looked more natural," says Shirley. The family loves Pedlar's interpretation of Fran Moore's design from Vogel Landscaping, which involves several pit stops on the descent to the dock, including a patio area, beach bar and stone fire pit.

They coordinated with truss expert Scott Hay to install an arbour over the entrance to their waterfront. "We were looking for something with character," recalls Frank, "Scott said, 'I've got this crooked tree!' and he took it sideways and planed it and it formed

Continued on page 28



TOP: One of the children's bedrooms has been preserved with relics from childhood cottage adventures, despite the fact the Gerencser children are all grown up. **ABOVE:** The pool table dominates the lower-level rec room, which is adorned with neon lighting and fun vintage signage.






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a perfect arch at the top of the stairs leading to the water.” The sight line from the lower fire pit runs through the harbour to the cottage above. The three waterfront patios are accented by three dry-stacked stone knee walls repurposed from the flagstone from the property’s original patio.

“As we went along we would talk to our neighbours – it’s a very social area here,” says Frank. “They would say, ‘Have you thought about...’ and gave us a lot of ideas, like that we installed power, Internet and coax cable (**Darryl Verbeek, DV Electric Auto Parts Plus**) down to the shore so we can have movie nights or watch the game.”

The couple entertain a lot – as evidenced by the waterfront log post bar Frank designed: Frankie G’s. They run a “bar is open” flag up the dock’s flagpole and roll up the shuttered windows to signal boaters and neighbours to stop by for a sampling from the margarita blender or the stocked fridge (countertop by **The Old Barn**). The dock and patio fill with cottagers at sunset, and as the evening wears on, the Gerencsers turn up lights, music and light a fire, creating a magic of their own at the lake. **OH**

LOCAL SOURCE GUIDE

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ABOVE: The master en suite has been updated with new granite countertops and sleek modern cabinetry. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The freshly renovated master bedroom features exposed timber frames and rich hardwood flooring. **RIGHT:** An antique vanity and jewelry box lend a simple rustic vibe to the master bedroom.



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YOUR HOUSE, YOUR RULES

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

THE PLACE: On one hand **House Rules Design Shop** is a brand new home design centre in Hanover, but the heart of the company is no stranger to Grey and Bruce counties. Founded by designer Heather Smillie and business partner Kari Detzler, the pair came together to purchase retiring local business JD's Flooring, from which they grew House Rules. Both Heather and Kari hail from Bruce County and have returned home to their local roots in recent years. "Through her clients and designers Heather could see the area was lacking in a one-stop shop for building and renovation needs," explains Kari. Heather is well known for her design work abroad and at home on TV shows such as Slice's *The Mom Show* and HGTV's *Property Brothers*, while Kari managed business operations in the high-tech industry. "I'm the dreamer and Kari is the realist," says Heather, "which makes for a perfect combination in this business."



THE STYLE: Multi-faceted styles predominate inside House Rules. They've set up a series of inspiring vignettes throughout the store combining furniture, accessories, plumbing fixtures, flooring and lighting. "We want our customers to envision the whole package and decide what looks they gravitate towards," says Kari. House Rules is all about "facilitating" their customers and local trades as they travel the often messy road of home construction. "Heather has always focused on intuiting her client's style," adds Kari. It's all about helping people create a living space that's true to personal taste. "If we don't have it, we can find it," says Heather.

WHAT'S HOT: "Chrome is in," they say. Whether it's faucets, lighting or accessories, chrome has regained its foothold as a favourite finish. "It has sparkle, shine and durability," explains Heather. "Chrome will look like new long into the future and always give your room shine." Other hot products include Walnut furniture, exotic hardwood flooring, digital shower heads, Edison bulb lighting and more.



FAVOURITES: Solid wood, custom cabinetry and local products are prominent favourites. "We really believe in supporting the local trades," says Heather. "Our local trades offer superior quality and workmanship, and we're so pleased to work with them." Local manufacturers featured include West Bros Furniture (Hanover), Topnotch Furniture (Gorrie), Beachwood Cabinetry (Mildmay) and Stone Ridge Woodcraft (Markdale).

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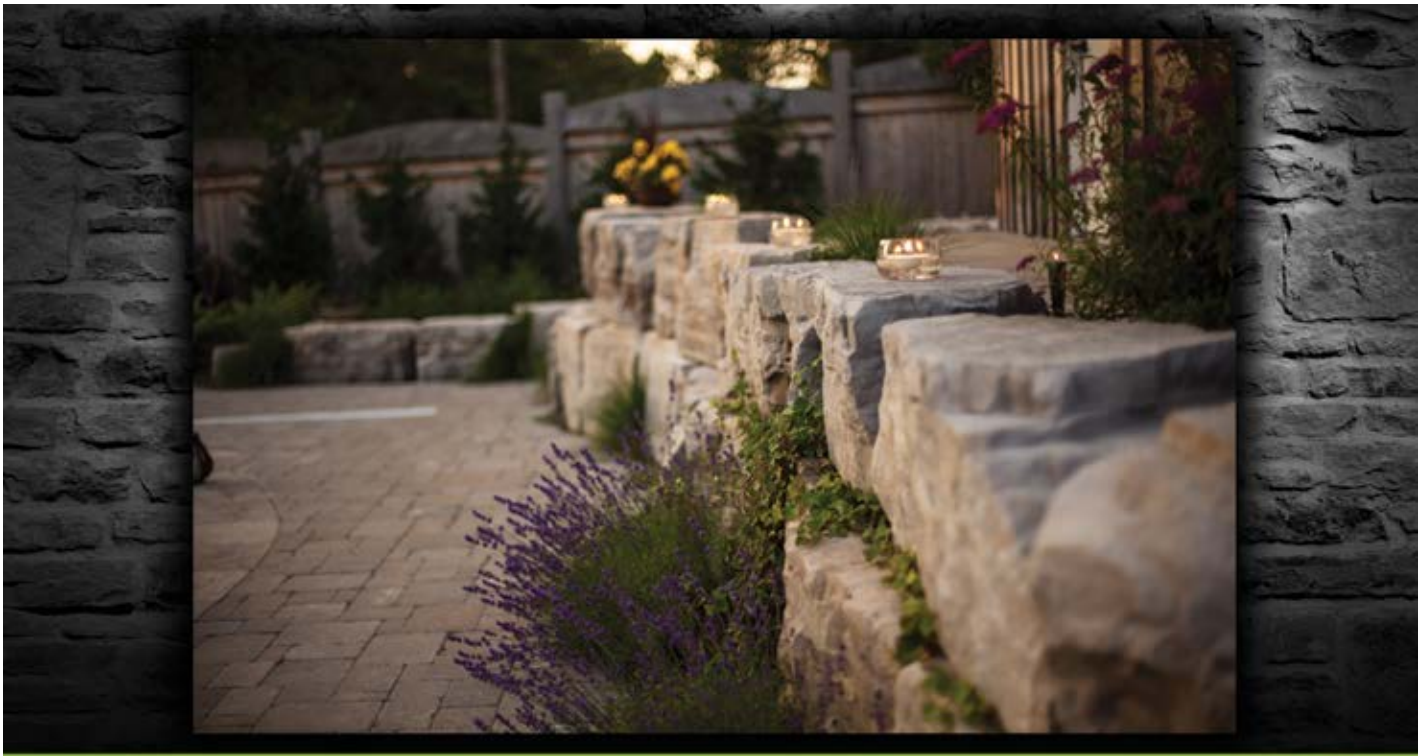
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1At time of writing, the budget has not yet passed through Parliament and received Royal Assent. CRA will allow financial institutions and individuals to act upon the new change effective immediately, however you should still be aware that you may still be liable for taxes under current law in the event that the budget proposal is not ultimately passed. RBC Dominion Securities Inc.* and Royal Bank of Canada are separate corporate entities which are affiliated. *Member-Canadian Investor Protection Fund. RBC Dominion Securities Inc. is a member company of RBC Wealth Management, a business segment of Royal Bank of Canada. ©Registered trademarks of Royal Bank of Canada. Used under licence. © RBC Dominion Securities Inc. 2015. All rights reserved. 15_90591_LVQ_002

tiny treasures

THE RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

STORY **MELANIE REKOLA**

I am an avid and all-inclusive bird-lover, and as promised in a previous fowl-related story, it's now time I tell the tale of the glorious pint-sized jewels of the summer sky – the hummingbird. Why not join in all the fun and ready your garden for the hummingbirds this year?



These beloved little creatures are an amazing feat of nature. The tiny seven-to-nine centimeter birds have a heart rate that reaches 1,260 beats per minute and can hover in mid-air as their wings furiously beat 50 times per second! To keep up with this pace, they need to consume their weight in nectar each day and are continually just hours away from starvation at any given time. Although hummingbirds are well known to feed on nectar, they also eat many small insects. This fact makes garden chemical and pesticide use strictly prohibited for a safe hummingbird environment as these can kill both adults and young alike.

Putting up a feeder is a surefire way to entice hummingbirds to your garden, and the best feeders are made from glass or acrylic. It is essential to clean your feeders twice per week to avoid nectar spoilage and accidental fowl fatality. Place the feeder away from windows, ideally near tall plant cover such as a tree or hedge. Home-made food mix is a one-quarter sugar-to-water ratio, and it's best to avoid colouring the fluid for the bird's optimal health. Hummingbirds also love spraying water. Unlike most backyard bird bathers, these birds enjoy flying in and out of a spray of water.

It is in the hummer's nature to forage

constantly, and they only use a feeder for about 20 per cent of their daily nectar consumption. By providing spraying water, trees, a feeder plus their favoured flower-nectar sources in a succession of bloom you will deliver a utopia they may even nest in! But don't be surprised if you don't spot the nesting site. The tiny little cup-shaped nests made with spider silk, thistledown and animal hair often include lichens, which almost completely disguise them. If you happen to see a minute emerald/red bird flying fast in a U-shaped flight pattern, you are witnessing a male's mating dance. After copulation, the petite pair does not raise their young as a couple. The male

Continued on page 36

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leaves the female to raise their young unaided. Contrary to popular belief, Hummingbirds do not feed only on red flowers or feeders. They will feed from any that is rich in nectar, but do have a preference for vivid colours.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds migrate north much earlier and stay far later than one might assume. Ensure your feeders are full and available mid-April until late fall. It is the strongest males that return first to establish the premium territories, which usually include the all-important feeder. They are also the first to leave, often early August, followed by the females. The new fledglings are last to leave and left behind to accumulate fat stores for

their solitary migration south. Hummingbirds will not stay past their usual fall migration time when feeders are left out.

Our miniature feathered friends feed most actively in the morning and evening, making these the optimal times for viewing. At my home, the acrobatic performances of our resident hummingbirds are the after-dinner entertainment as we sit in the garden surrounded by a multitude of miniature speed-demons whizzing by our heads! The impatient and frustrated little birds are extremely territorial, and I've witnessed many a squabble between rival males. They'll even try to chase away other bird species,

bees and butterflies to defend their terrain. If you ever observe several birds at the feeder together without aggression, they are likely related family. Unfortunately, their small stature leaves them prey to a host of common backyard life such as the (gulp) praying mantis and blue jay.

We'd love to hear your garden stories as well! Join the discussion online at ourhomes.ca and find me under the subheading OUTDOOR. In the meantime, I encourage you to live, love and landscape. **OH**

Melanie is a certified horticulturalist and landscape designer.

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HOME FOR THE summer

STORY **WALTER FRANCZYK**

A sunny southern exposure, breathtaking views and a sandy beach – alluring delights of a summer home are easy to picture. “We all want the dream,” says realtor Caitlin Hill of Royal LePage. But the joys of summer aren’t always available at a price buyers can afford. “The reality is, that dream is \$500,000 and you may only have \$300,000, so you have to give up something in your dream,” says Fred Aitken, a Royal LePage broker. “We can go out and find the next best thing,” says Hill.

The Lakes of Muskoka realtors expect another strong season of recreational property sales in Ontario’s cottage country. A healthy economy, rising employment and low interest rates have buoyed the residential housing market. Like a rising tide, it has lifted recreational property sales to their highest levels since the financial meltdown of 2008. With house values rising, some people are leveraging equity gains in their urban homes to buy cottages and summer homes all over Ontario.

Typical cottage hunters want a woodland retreat within a two-hour drive of home. Ideally, they want a country house on the water, with cathedral ceilings and windows overlooking the lake – a property where children can play safely, where they can swim, launch a canoe, dock a boat or fish. With many of the six million denizens of southern Ontario cities eager for respite from summer heat and suburban hubbub, demand for summer homes is high, and so are the prices.

Royal LePage’s 2014 Recreational Property Report estimates that cottages on Lake Erie and Lake Huron, within an hour or two-hour drive of London, ranged from \$195,000 to \$2.4 million. In Muskoka, two hours north of Toronto, typical waterfront cottages with road access were selling from \$525,000 to \$650,000. On larger Muskoka lakes, more than 100 waterfront cottages fetched between \$1 million and \$8 million.

There are comparative bargains. In eastern Ontario, in the land of 1,000 islands, waterfront cottages with road access in the Kingston area ranged from \$185,000 to \$325,000. Waterfront properties accessible only by boat cost \$175,000 to \$210,000 while inland sites were \$80,000 to \$110,000.

In the Meaford and Collingwood areas, the average price of a waterfront cottage with land access was estimated at \$345,000. A similar property on the Bruce Peninsula ranged from \$250,000 to \$400,000. In Haliburton, the price averaged \$350,000.

If you’re lucky enough to live in northern Ontario or are willing to drive several hours, you can buy an affordable recreational property and still have money for all the toys to equip it. Up north, they’re usually called camps, not cottages. On St. Joseph Island, a 45-minute drive



southeast of Sault Ste. Marie, cottage owners can watch gigantic lake freighters ply the St. Marys River from waterfront properties that can be bought for an average of \$150,000. Inland camps run about \$100,000.

Near Sudbury, home of Science North, Dynamic Earth and the Big Nickel, waterfront camps and cottages average \$190,000, while a water access only site will run about \$140,000 and an inland property \$100,000 – a bargain if you’re willing to drive four hours from Toronto. Similar prices can be found around Lake Nipissing in the North Bay area.

The three things that most affect the price of the cottage are the size of the lake, size of the cottage and its condition. The proximity of amenities, such as shopping, dining, a movie theatre or golf, is also a factor. The closer the amenities, the more a cottage might cost. Cottages accessible only by boat are less expensive as are those inland without any waterfront.

Rob Serediuk, a salesman with Chestnut Park Real Estate Ltd. Brokerage, estimates that more than half the people he deals with have considered renting their cottage when they’re not using it to help cover expenses. Cottage rental agencies can screen tenants and handle all the administration for a fee. Keeping a cottage, maintenance and repairs, utilities and taxes will cost just as much as a home in the city.

Many people are making more use of their country homes than their parents did a generation ago. The demand for year-round road access and four-season liveability is hot. With the proliferation of reliable Internet service, four-day weekends at the cottage are getting more popular. “People who are working from their house are now working from their cottage,” says Aitken.

More and more buyers view the cottage as more than a summer home. Rob and Jennifer Anderson of Newmarket designed their cottage on Lake of Bays with their three young children in mind. But they also planned years ahead. “It will eventually be where Rob and I will retire,” says Jennifer. “We would be there half the time and hopefully somewhere warm through the hard winter months, when we get to that stage of our life.” **OH**

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

NATURAL PROGRESSION

Perched atop one of West Grey's highest hills is an old barn. From the hill's summit, the water towers of Durham, Hanover and Chesley can be spotted, and on a crisp, clear summer's evening the distant red twinkling lights of Saugeen Shores' wind turbines can be seen glittering below the stars along the Lake Huron shoreline.



OPPOSITE: The rural property's original barn has been updated and refreshed to house the Hunter family's granite workshop and retail centre. **LEFT:** The spacious garden shed from Ace 'n JJ's sits alongside the sandbox designated for the family's various grandchildren. **BELOW:** Ted and Reay Hunter (back row) and their respective wives Brenda and Courtney are the past, present and future of The Old Barn.

The old post-and-beam barn, which has withstood decades of farming, is the reason the Hunter family continues to pass on the family homestead from generation to generation. It's the centre of a bustling local business, **The Old Barn – Polished Stone Creations**, that is about to switch hands from father to son, along with the fully renovated farmhouse situated below it.

"When I was a kid this seemed like the biggest forest in the world to me," says Reay Hunter as he gestures toward the old maple forest to the north of the family home. "Now I realize it's only 10-feet wide. Everything's completely different; my grandparents' house was old, dark and full of 70s-style wood panelling. It was like a cosy place to visit where you'd curl up and fall asleep."

He's not joking. The home has been completely transformed, along with the old barn, by Reay's parents Ted and Brenda after they purchased the property from Ted's mother and stepfather in 2003. The barn was the first project the couple tackled, reconstructing the outer façade to make it business-worthy while they turned the interior into a granite workshop. The home renovation came later, after Ted and Brenda took over the working farm from Ted's parents in 2008 and said goodbye to the livestock.

"We were both farm kids, my home farm is just down the road too," says Brenda, "but we didn't really want animals. I had three kids – I had enough to do without chickens."

Prior to Ted and Brenda's move to purchase the family farm, the duo had no previous experience in the granite industry. Ted's parents had been farmers, and the old barn had been just that, a barn. *Continued on page 42*





“That’s when I got into the business,” says Ted. “I’d seen it and thought, hey I could do that [polish and cut granite] so I took a four-day course in Minneapolis on polishing and cutting. I’ve always been in the trade industry though.”

Ted had recently retired from his plumbing and heating business and wanted to refresh by tackling a new challenge. Luckily for him, his son Reay and Reay’s wife Courtney were looking for a change too, and in December of 2006 the young couple moved home to Durham from North Bay to join the business and take a stab at the granite industry. Now Reay and Courtney are less than a year away from taking over the Hunter homestead and the business; they’ll be the third generation of Hunters to live alongside the old barn.

Of course the home they’ll live in and the barn itself are barely recognizable from old photographs. Originally a double-wide mobile home, the Hunters knocked down a major wall, relocated the basement staircase, finished the basement and reorganized the internal flow of the house. Obviously sparkling granite surfaces predominate throughout the home.

ABOVE: An antique deacon’s bench – repainted a multitude of colours over the years – welcomes guests into the home. **TOP LEFT:** The new sitting-room addition at the front of the home opened up the living space and provided expansive windows to enjoy the country view. **LEFT:** The front door of the Hunter homestead is a bright bold red, a precise match to the door and trimming of the barn at the top of the hill.



The modernized farmhouse kitchen is adorned with light wainscoted cabinetry and complemented with black granite countertops. **ABOVE:** A reading nook in the family’s living room plays off the “barn red” colour present throughout the home and property. **BELOW RIGHT:** The vintage solid wood kitchen table is set and ready for the Hunters to gather for a family meal.

Ted and Brenda added an addition onto the front of the home to create a spacious foyer and living space, and closed in a former breezeway at the back of the home to make an all-season access to the garage. They also removed a wall between the kitchen and original living room to enlarge the dining area and create a more open-concept feeling (renovation work by **Progress Builders**). To accommodate the new layout of the home, they updated their furnace system and ductwork with help from **Pratt Plumbing and Heating**.

“By eliminating the hallway and moving the stairway we opened up a nice sized room,” explains Brenda.

The couple replaced the original kitchen with contemporary cabinetry and accented it with two slabs of bold Absolute Black granite (The Old Barn). They replaced the flooring with tile from **JD’s Flooring Centre** (now owned by **House Rules Design Shop**) and modernized the windows and doors (Progress Builders). Regional ironworker and welding instructor at Georgian College, Dan Duquette, crafted custom railings for the home. He also constructed a beautiful iron table in Ted and Brenda’s living room that was originally an antique floor register salvaged from an old church and topped with a round granite surface from the shop. *Continued on page 46*



feature



ABOVE: The custom granite fireplace in the home's lower level was designed and installed by The Old Barn founder Ted Hunter. **RIGHT:** Blue-toned granite surfaces sparkle in the master en suite. **BELOW:** The master bedroom is furnished in vintage solid wood pieces from local furniture company Durham Furniture.



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Don



Susan

feature

At the end of a long day working in the barn, the family likes to reconnect around the large solid wood kitchen table by local furniture maker **Durham Furniture** (products carried at **Smitty's Fine Furniture**). The home's spacious kitchen and open-concept living area come in handy for the growing family, which has already welcomed seven happy grandchildren into its midst.

After all the work they've done, it seems a shame to pack up and move, but Ted and Brenda are more than ready to leave the farm for the convenience of in-town living. Heading in to Durham, they are practically trading places with Reay and Courtney's small family, who are also ready to leave Durham's quaint semi-urban life behind for some fresh rural air.

"We're excited to move out here to the country with the kids," says Courtney. And who wouldn't be? **OH**



The property's barn is equipped with impressive granite working machinery that enables the Hunter business, The Old Barn – Polished Stone Creations, to create beautiful counter tops and other stone features for regional homes, and beyond.

LOCAL SOURCE GUIDE

- Ace 'n JJ's • Barry Yack Construction And Insulation Ltd.
- Dan Duquette • Durham Furniture • Eckhardt's Floral Treasures
- Filomena's Photography • GBL Construction
- JD's Flooring Centre • Jan Croghan • House Rules Design Shop
- Home Hardware • Postman's Antiques
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how to GRILL the PERFECT STEAK

STORY **ADRIENNE BROWN**

Almost anyone can toss a burger on the barbecue and be happy with how it's cooked. A steak? Not so simple. But with a little prep and some know-how, it can be just as easy to cook a succulent, juicy steak on the grill as anything else.

Jamie Hussey, Executive Chef at Glen Abbey Golf Club in Oakville, Ontario, recommends strip loin or sirloin steaks for the grill. "They have a better flavour, and they are robust," he says.

Ted Reader, the author of *Gastro Grilling*, agrees but adds that he loves rib steak too. "I like my steaks to be cut about one-and-a-half to two-inches thick and weigh about 12 to 16 ounces each, depending on the cut. A thicker steak will cook more evenly and give you a little wiggle room in case you get distracted," he says.

Prepare your steaks

According to Reader, good quality steaks do not need to be marinated or tenderized – only if you want to add a certain flavour.

On the other hand, if you're using a tougher cut, marinate it for at least a day before grilling. Hussey recommends a base of red wine, garlic and herbs – and always a ratio of two-to-one for oil and vinegar.

Salt your steaks just before grilling. This will give them a nice crust. This is the time to season with herbs and garlic if you like, too. Chef Hussey says chimichurri is his favourite steak finisher of all time.

Bring your steaks to room temperature before placing them on your barbecue.

Hit the grill

Cook your steaks for a short time at a high temperature. "Six hundred degrees Fahrenheit or higher if you can," says

Reader. Leave your barbecue lid open and resist the temptation to poke your steaks.

Never overfill your grill. Leave at least an inch-and-a-half clearance around each piece of meat.

Cook your steaks to your preferred doneness (see our chart), and then let them rest for 10 minutes before serving, says Chef Hussey. This prevents bleeding onto your plate.

Never cut your meat to check whether it's cooked to your liking. "Cutting the steak lets all the natural juices escape, leaving you with a dry and tasteless piece of meat," says Reader.

Don't flip out

Only turn and flip your steaks as necessary. Reader suggests this flip-and-rotate approach:

- Place steaks on a hot grill on a 45-degree angle at 11 o'clock.
- Grill for two-to-five minutes to sear, depending on the thickness and doneness you want.
- Turn 45 degrees to 2 o'clock, cook for another two-to-five minutes.
- Flip steaks and baste the grilled surface with your favourite baste. Continue to grill for two-to-five minutes on a 45-degree angle.
- Turn 45 degrees and cook for another two-to-five minutes.
- Flip and baste again.

"Now you have that fancy steakhouse diamond pattern!"

Two final pieces of advice from Chef Hussey: "It's always better to undercook a steak than to overcook a steak. And have fun! Buy the best local products you can, have a couple of beers and enjoy it!"

Pick the perfect steak

Ted Reader's four rules for picking the best beef:

1. **Buy the best quality steak you can afford:** "Not all good top cuts (rib eye or strip loin) are always tender. There are many grades of meat." Grade A is the worst quality and AAA is the best.

2. **Dry aging:** "The older a steak is, the more tender it will be." Many butchers dry age beef themselves.
3. **Fat:** "To put it simply, fat equals flavour. Internal fat or marbling is what gives a steak its succulence and juiciness." External fat will also add flavour, but can be cut off after cooking.
4. **Find a good butcher:** Nobody else will be able to answer your questions better, nor cater to all your steak needs. Learn what you like and want and ask for it.



How do you like your steak cooked?

A meat thermometer is the best way to test doneness. Here's Ted Reader's guide to the steak rainbow:

Blue Rare: A blue rare steak is quickly charred on the outside and barely cooked on the inside. For best results, bring the steak to room temperature before cooking. (130°F)

Rare: A rare steak has a cool red centre. (130-140°F)

Medium-Rare: A medium-rare steak has a warm red centre. (140-145°F)

Medium: A medium steak has a pink centre, and the juices are clear. (145-150°F)

Medium-Well: A medium-well steak has a hot pink centre, and the juices are clear. (150-160°F)

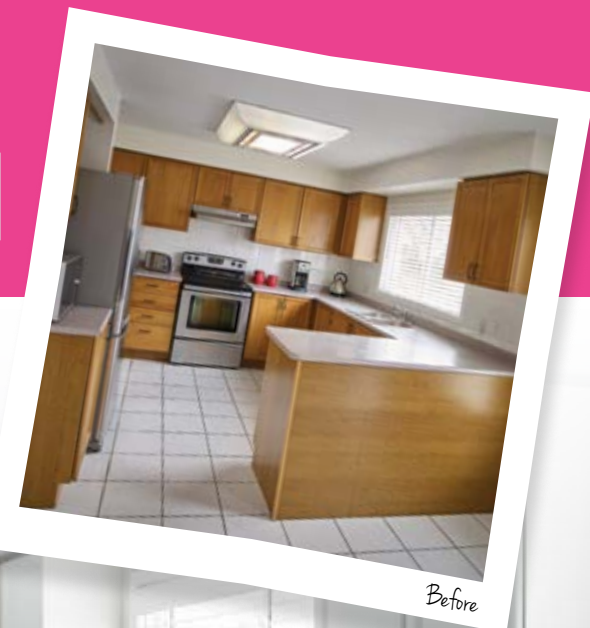
Well-Done: A well-done steak is grey throughout without any trace of pink and the juices are clear. (160-170°F)

Super Well Done: This steak is weighted with a brick until heavily charred on the outside and without any trace of pink and no juices inside. (170°F plus) **OH**

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Continued on page 52



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Tell us how to prepare the air conditioner for summer: Ensure that the outdoor unit is clean and clear of debris, sitting correctly and not vibrating. Indoor units may have filters that should be changed. If the air blowing isn't cold enough it may be low in refrigerant.

What tips do you have to stay energy efficient? Set your thermostat to a comfortable temperature, which will also help the humidity levels. On sunny hot days, close windows and pull blinds to keep out as much heat as possible. **OH**



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Our café serves up custom built sandwiches, and soups made from scratch, including our slow simmered stock, to eat-in or take-out.

The frozen soups and meals to go are popular for those days when you want a healthy meal and life gives you too much else to do, leaving you no time to cook. They are also very convenient for elderly parents and singles. We will also cook up meals to order for a meal plan.

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Through annual signature events and visiting exhibitions, the Southampton Art Gallery has played an integral role in the nurturing and development of the local arts scene since 1999. Two summer events that should not be missed are "50 Little Masterpieces", July 4th, and "Up Your Alley" an outdoor art market, September 5th.

If you are looking for an original statement piece for your home or cottage, a wedding gift or just a unique souvenir, The Southampton Art Gallery has it in spades. We also offer a full line of art supplies.

For a full listing of Gallery Artists, gallery hours, art classes and events, visit
www.southamptonart.com

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Food dishes crammed in kitchen corners, leashes hanging haphazardly over benches, raggedy dog beds welcoming guests in the foyer, toys strewn across the floor and kibble scattered under the kitchen table; these are facts of life pet owners learn to live with.

It doesn't have to be this way. Pets don't have to equal clutter, and they certainly don't have to be incompatible with your décor. Seamlessly integrating your pets' needs and accessories into your home is simple, and it can be done stylishly – we promise.

Accessories You Can't Live Without:

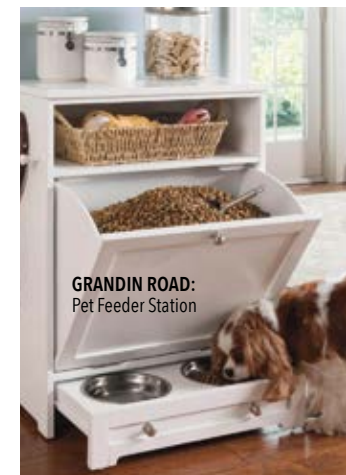
The luxury market has become saturated with pet accessories, so there's no excuse for unsightly dog beds and dollar-store leashes. Whether your home's style is modernly minimalist, industrial, coastal, country chic or more traditional, you can find an accessory that matches.

- Food dishes now come in patterned ceramic.
- Climbing structures for the active kitty can be works of art.
- Raised feeding stations are great organization solutions.
- A vintage suitcase cat bed is a fun living room addition.
- Leather storage bins are stylish hideaways for toys.
- Dog leash racks make great DIY projects (check the OUR HOMES Pinterest board)

Hide The Clutter In Plain Sight:

Even if you replace every pet accessory with a stylish one, you will still have too much stuff. Choosing items with multiple functions can cut down on clutter.

Have you considered solid wood end tables that double as dog crates, or how about a Murphy bed for your pet that folds up into a shelf? Try a cat tree, which on first glance appears to be a corner shelf, or replace your living room console table with a sleek alternative that cleverly conceals a litter box. The options are as endless as your imagination.



GRANDIN ROAD:
Pet Feeder Station



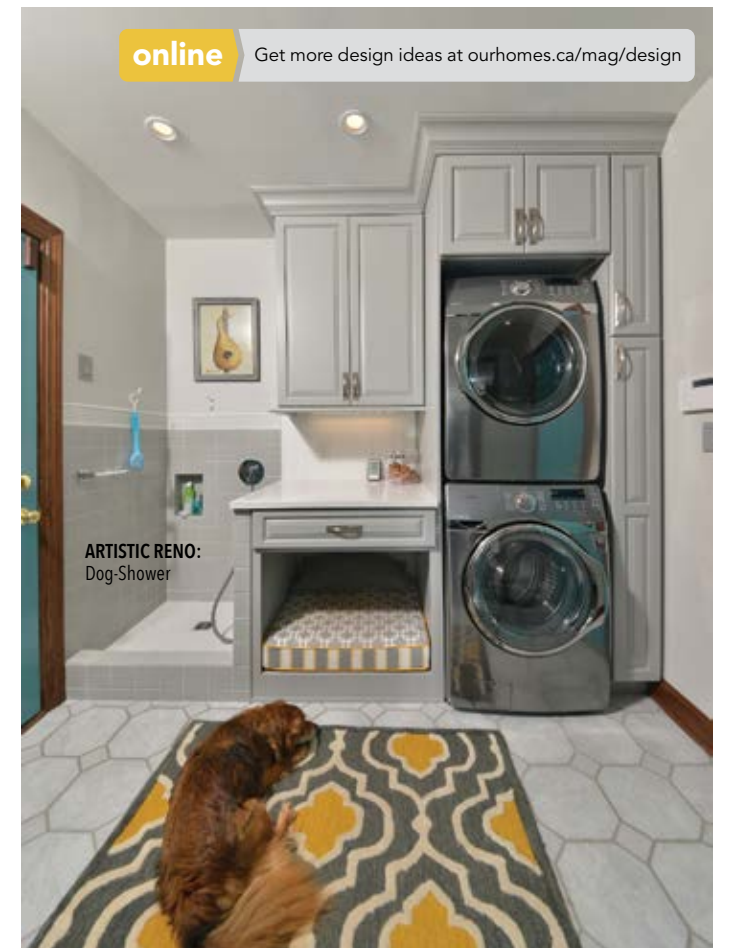
ELIPS DESIGN:
Catteux-Litter-Cabinet



BARNES OF ASHBURTON:
Built in dog bed



Photo Courtesy of Eric Roth Photography



ARTISTIC RENO:
Dog-Shower



ENCHANTED HOME PET:
Pet Toy Box



MURPHY'S PAW DESIGN:
Andrea Calo Murphy Dog Bed

Design Your Home With Furry Friends In Mind:

From the moment you start a build or renovation you should consider every customization that will streamline your life, pets included. From feeding and bathing to storage, a good contractor will be able to offer a well-designed solution.

- Craft a built-in pet feeding station in the kitchen or mudroom.
- Construct a dog shower in the laundry room.
- Hide the pet bed in the space below the kitchen island.
- Convert unused under-stair storage into a mini dog bedroom.
- Install pocket door dog gates.
- Plan for a second slide-out garbage drawer in the kitchen: they make great pet food storage.

Fabric And Flooring:

Despite common opinion to the contrary, leather is a great option for furniture in a pet-friendly house. It's allergen resistant, easy-to-clean and should resist normal wear from most paws.

If you prefer to go the fabric route, never pick an open weave or textured fabric, which will catch claws and allow hairs to migrate into the fibres. The best options are tight-weave polyester fabrics. Fabric furniture should be vacuumed twice a week to prevent the oils from your pet's fur from penetrating the fabric.

When considering carpet, keep the same tips in mind: tight weaves and short nap will go a long way to eliminating headaches. The Mohawk Group's Lees brand of carpet tiles come with a special pet warranty to protect homeowners from stains.

Though hard-surfaced floors are more popular, even the most durable hardwoods won't withstand the wear and tear from your pets. If you are set on hard-surfaced flooring, consider tile, laminate and the newer vinyl luxury products. **OH**

directory

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Continued on page 62



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