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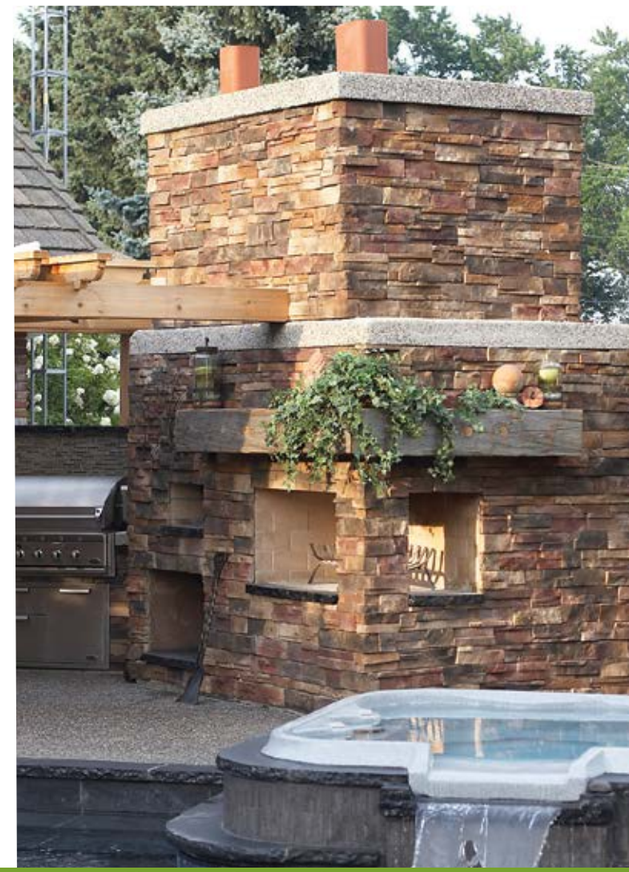

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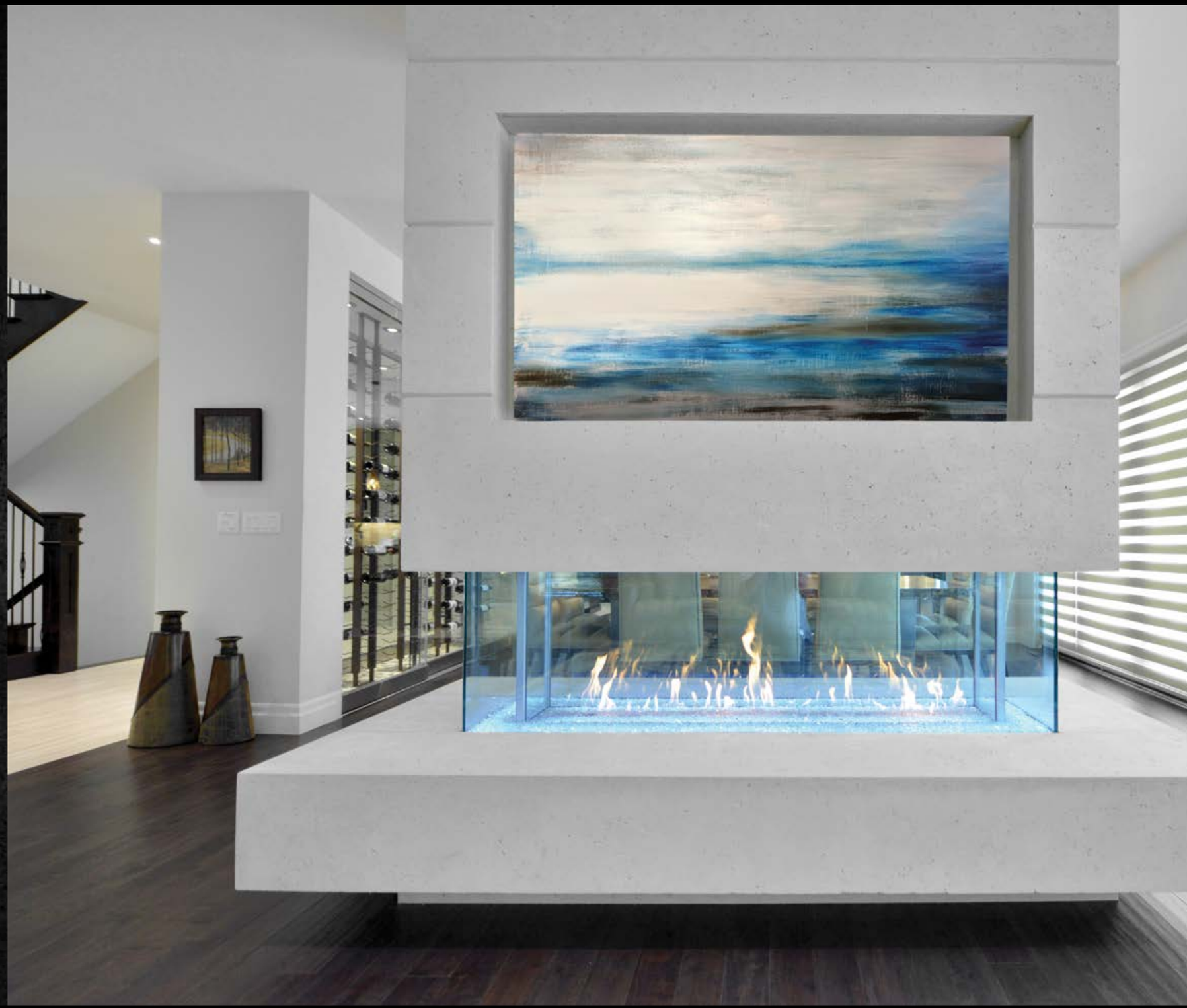

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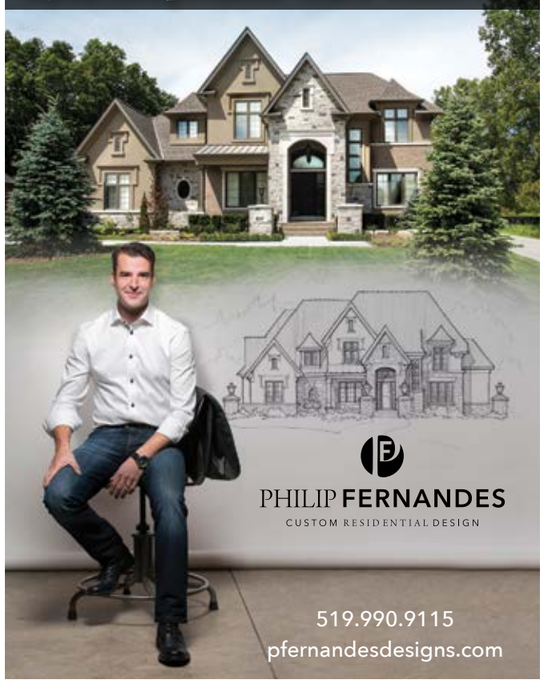

editor's note

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, nothing heralded summer's arrival more than the first night it was warm enough to sleep outside. Memories of backyard camping in the leaky canvas tent are like time travel. I can still feel myself watching the lights in the big house go out one by one with a mixture of excitement and fear. I can still hear the ghost stories my brother told. "A phone rings and a raspy voice says, 'It's the Viper and I am coming to your house...' " Ten minutes of agonizing shaggy dog ramblings later came the punch line! "I am the Vindow Vasher, I come to vipe your vindows, heh, heh, heh!" Even after I knew what was coming it was a spine-tingling thrill – especially when he told it while making ghoulish faces and holding a flashlight under his chin. I would lie in my sleeping bag (an oxymoron if ever there was one), hyper-aware of every rustling sound, hooting call and high-pitched whine. At some point I'd fall into a shallow doze only to waken in the early hours of the morning with a stiff neck, mosquito bites covering my arms and a need to go to the bathroom (because who had the courage to get up in the middle of the night and pass all the red-eyed, wild animals that were no doubt lying in wait?). Finally, it was dawn and with the night shadows receding, I would dash through the dew-soaked grass, onto the porch, through the screen door and into the kitchen where my sleepy parents would make us endless slices of toast thickly smeared with strawberry jam.

Summer is a rare time. It is time for making and distilling experiences into crystal memories that can be uncorked and savoured on long winter nights. Cheers to your summer memories. May they be as intoxicating as mine.

Nancy

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ON THE COVER

Artful beach house style in LaSalle. Story, page 38. *Photography by Max Wedge.*

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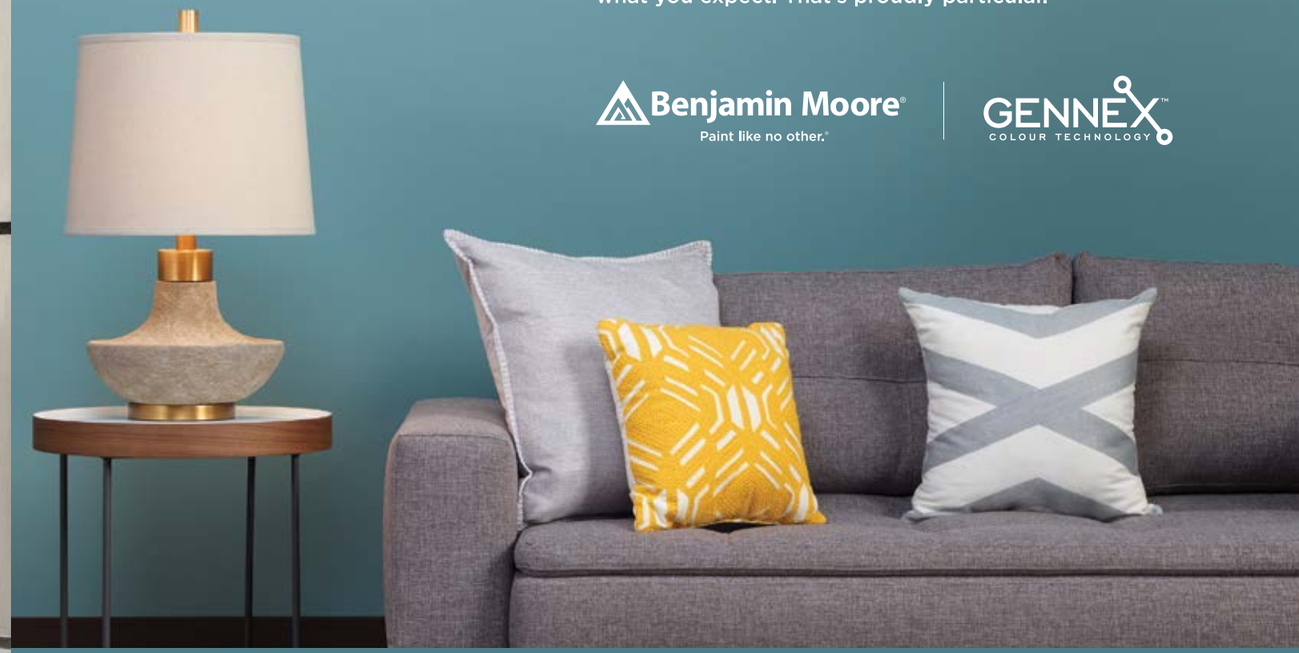

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NIGHT LIGHTS

Interior Designer **Dolores Pian** shares her ideas.

FEISS: Hilo 12-Light Outdoor Chandelier

First impressions matter, whether it's a single family bungalow or a condominium building. Outdoor lighting can improve curb appeal, welcome you home and make you feel safe and secure.

Because lighting choices and applications are limitless, you need a well-thought-out plan to help beautify your outdoor living space.

LIGHTING STRATEGY

What is your outdoor personality? To determine that, you'll need to ask:

What do I love most about my yard, patio or balcony?

When and how will I be using my outdoor space?

When and where is security lighting most important?

Do I need help? Can a professional help me achieve my objectives?

Lighting up your yard, garden, deck or patio is a great way to extend the square footage of your living space. It adds ambience to your home, promotes enjoyment and maximizes your entertainment space, adding to your personal style, comfort and convenience.

FEISS: Ledgend LED Outdoor Sconce

Strategic placement of fixtures can enhance the architecture and the use of your space. Here are some options:

Up-lighting – lights from below to create a focal point in the landscape

Wall washing – general illumination

Silhouetting – dramatizes an interesting shaped object

Step lighting – illuminates stairways and walkways

Path lighting – enhances landscaping elements such as flower beds, shrubbery and borders while safely illuminating pathways

Deck and patio lighting – provides safety and accent lighting

BEFORE YOU INVEST

What you need to know before purchasing and installing outdoor light fixtures:

Not all light fixtures can be used outdoors. Check the safety rating for damp or wet locations.

Hire a qualified electrician. Outdoor lighting requires special attention and fixtures can be located in hard-to-reach places. You only want to do this once, safely and according to the Ontario Building Code.

Buy quality, long-lasting finishes. Quality housing protects the light and is more resistant to the elements, so fixtures last longer with little to no maintenance.

Colour temperature. Do you want cool or warm light? Selecting the correct lamp can dramatically change the look and feel of your outdoor space.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Be kind to the night sky and your neighbours by directing lights downward, use low glare fixtures and place motion sensors on essential outdoor lamps. Turn lights off when not in use.

NEW, NOTABLE & SOMETHING SPECIAL

Today's technology lets you have more fun outdoors both night and day, with clever and charming items such as:

DWR: Uma Sound Lantern

Portable LED lanterns with wireless speakers. Great for condos and other areas where no electrical outlets are available. The Uma Sound Lantern by Design Within Reach (DWR) has a dimmable light with a speaker.

Chandeliers for that extra bit of panache. Feiss makes an explosive orb chandelier that adds elegance to any outdoor dining area.

Mobile lighting in the form of wireless globes, cube tables and other pieces of furniture. They are cordless and rechargeable with a colour rotation to suit your mood or occasion. DWR makes a variety of globes that are waterproof and glow in a variety of colours.

DWR: Ball Portable LED Lamp

String lights in a variety of shapes and sizes and price points set a festive mood for patios and balconies.

LED candles come pretty close to the real thing.

P.S. PREPARE FOR WINTER

I know it's summer, but don't forget to prepare for winter. Check bulbs and replace them with LED bulbs, clean fixtures and adjust timers. You can still enjoy the winter landscapes while cosy inside.

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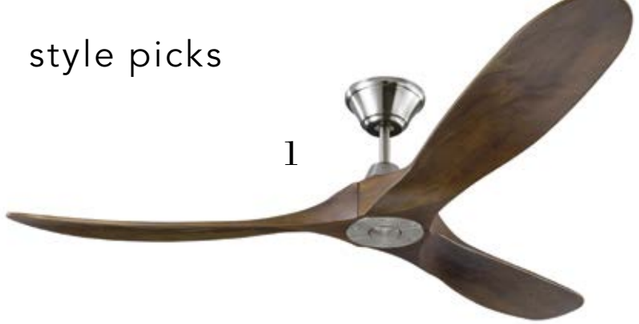

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Summer is here. Make the most of it with these great local finds.

2

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1 THE LIGHTING BOUTIQUE

Outdoor Ceiling Fan
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2 SCOTTS FIREPLACE

Electric Fireplace
This sleek three-sided fireplace from Amantii can be installed inside or out, making it the perfect, versatile choice for anyone who appreciates the ambience of a flickering flame at all times of the year.

The Home Gallery, 2 North Talbot Rd., Maidstone
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3 PHOENIX HOME & GARDEN

The Athens Collection
This grouping combines a sleek, chic and contemporary design with the strength and needed durability to withstand the elements. The on-trend matte-black finish works perfectly with any colour palette and will bring you comfort and pleasure for years to come. A great investment in getting the most out of summer.

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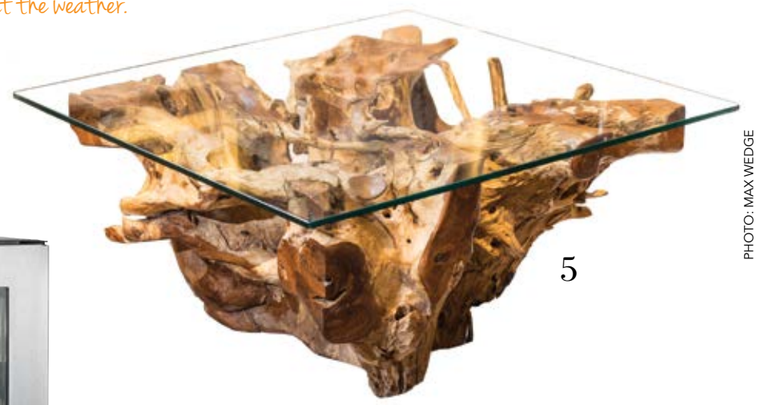

5

PHOTO: MAX WEDGE

6

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4 **THE APPLIANCE SHOPPE**

Outdoor Fridge
Outdoor living trends are hotter than ever and this outdoor under-counter fridge from Perlick is a great way to make your backyard entertaining as convenient as possible. Keep your food and beverages handy, cool and food safe with this little beauty. It won't falter even in temperatures as high as 42 degrees.

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5 **URBAN HOME WINDSOR**

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6 **ANNA'S FLOWERS**

Garden Bench
The Lancaster Bench in vintage yellow is just about the cheeriest thing that could happen to your garden, other than your green thumb. Imagine it in a shady nook – the perfect place to sit and contemplate the meaning of life, or even the gorgeousness of your garden.

1911 Seacliff Dr., Kingsville
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sweet summer MEMORIES

STORY **NANCY BELGUE**
PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX WEDGE**

The wooden box is from the family farm where John Mastronardi grew up.

"We fell in love with Erieau after we visited some friends who had a place on the bayside," says Leamington native John Mastronardi of the quaint beach town just south of Chatham. *Continued on page 25*

ABOVE: The rear exterior with its series of module-like square rooms shows how strikingly different Coulson's design is. **LEFT:** The view that launched a hundred windows. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The beach is only steps away. The stone pillars combine dramatically with the design's concrete, glass and wooden elements. **OPPOSITE INSET**: A vibrant red entrance is an eye-catching accent to the home's neutral colours.

Great family memories infuse every corner of the home.

The kitchen shows the owners' rustic and industrial style. Appliances from Essex Appliances. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** Cog wall mirrors were sourced at Lionheart Interior Design. **BOTTOM:** Sleek white leather chairs are a fun find from Bertoni Chairs & Things.

"We dreamed about one day getting a place of our own here but our friends weren't terribly optimistic," says John. They told us how these properties are passed down from one generation to another and almost never go up for sale. Luck was on our side, however. Not long after that conversation my in-laws, who were from Cambridge, were looking for a beach property anywhere from Muskoka to Southern Ontario. Their agent had three different locations lined up for them to see and this house happened to be one of them. We drove out from Windsor to meet them when they viewed the property and when we shared the news that we were expecting their first grandchild the deal was sealed. They bought it 15 years ago and three years ago, when they decided to sell it, they sold it to us."

Although John and his wife Cathy loved the original house and all the sweet summer memories it held, once they acquired the property, they began to think about giving it a facelift to accommodate the needs of their family of five. They found builder **Drew Coulson** (**Coulson Design Build**) at a home show they just happened to attend with John's brother. "Looking at the homes Drew transformed really inspired us to think about what we could do with our place," John remembers. "One thing led to another, as it so often does, and we ended up rebuilding 95 per cent of the house." The results are outstanding. It is pretty much the perfect beach house, the kind of house you dream

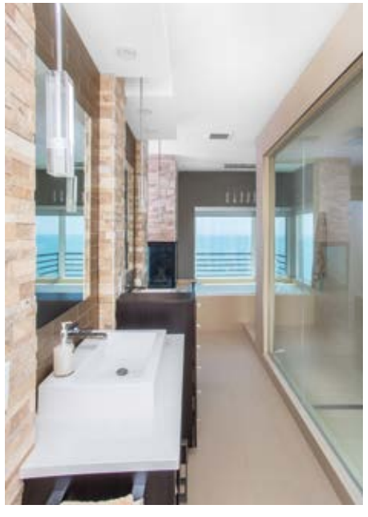
Continued on page 26

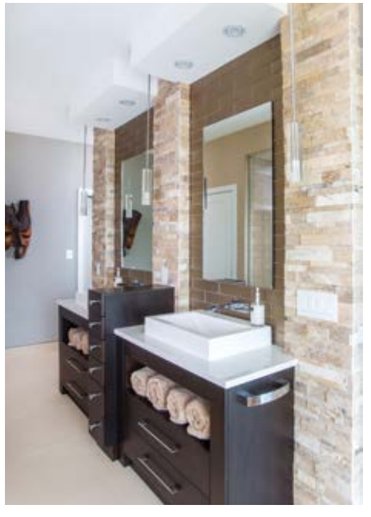
Builder Drew Coulson

about spending summer weekends in while the waves lap at the sandy beach, the children play creative outside games and everyone kicks back and relaxes.

Other than the redesign of their office spaces, the couple had no experience renovating or building a house. When they sat down with Coulson to discuss basic concepts and things that were important to them, Coulson really encouraged them to think "outside the box" and do something that was different from what was already on the strip. "These homeowners were dream clients," says Coulson. "We wanted to break the mould with the redesign so we brought in Californian and European influences. The square profile, the use of concrete and blonde wood give the house a modern yet organic feel." They eventually went with a look that was much more modern than what they had originally envisioned. As the design process progressed, "It was clear to us that the view was at the heart of the renovation," John says. "We wanted to make sure that the living room, kitchen, dining room and master bedroom all focused on the view."

With that goal in mind, Coulson transformed the original house into a 2,000 sq. ft., four-bedroom home that takes the view very, very seriously. The dramatic two-storey entryway leads into an open kitchen (**Windmill Cabinet Shop**) with a generous quartz-topped island.





TOP: The lake is an inspiring view to wake up to. **ABOVE:** The master bedroom en suite has all the comforts including an oversize walk-in shower (BayView Glass) a two-sided fireplace and a tub with a view. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** Designer Jodi Mason of Urban Home was very helpful in selecting the interior colours as well as lighting and furniture.

The kitchen's main work area faces the water and its expansive windows showcase the ever-changing artwork that is Lake Erie. The covered patio is easily accessed through sliding glass doors, making the flow from the inside out seamless and inviting.

The living room, which adjoins the kitchen, has three oversize windows that provide light, endless views and a sleek style statement. The cosy floor-to-ceiling fireplace (**Forest Glade Fireplaces**) and the modern stone surround (**Dekko Concrete**) are in keeping with the home's industrial chic meets modern beach house vibe. Carefully curated designer touches like the brushed metal and pendant lights above the kitchen island (**Urban Home**) give the home its industrial feel, as does the open metal staircase, black-and-white art with its distressed wood frames, and reclaimed wood tables. The oversize coffee table and bookshelves in the living room were designed by the homeowner and crafted by **Michael Difazio** of **Reclaim Artistry** and are the perfect places for the couple's collection of board games, vintage crocks and books.

Continued on page 28

The family loves playing board games and often gathers in the sitting area to test their skill. Art is from Art Expressions.

Upstairs the master bedroom has an absolutely stunning vantage point over the lake. A two-sided fireplace divides the master en suite's beautiful bathroom, complete with soaker tub (**Windsor Factory Supply**), from the main bedroom. It is the perfect place to relax with a glass of wine on those cooler evenings during the shoulder seasons. Not just a summer getaway, the family enjoys the house throughout the year. "We had an awesome time last March break," recalls John. "We decided not to go anywhere and my mother came down and conducted a pasta-making workshop right on the kitchen island. It's the kind of quiet family time that makes for an unforgettable memory."

Tucked away at the front of the master bedroom suite is a cosy sitting area, perfect for even more family gatherings and for playing board games in the evening while watching the glorious sunsets. Of course, on the warm days of summer, there is nowhere the family likes to be more than outside – either lounging on the covered patio (furniture by **Patio Palace**) or down on the beach.

Spending time here is "everything you would think a beach day should be," says John, "lazy, unstructured, peaceful. I'll have days where my son might be wandering on the beach, he'll grab a stick and go into imagination land, something he's done since he was three."

It's the kind of unplugged time that seems so rare in these days of technology. "It's the only summer place our children have ever known," says John. "And we hope to keep creating sweet summer memories here for generations to come." **OH**

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OPENING THE DOOR TO SUCCESS

Steven Johnson

PHOTO: MAX WEDGE

THE PLACE: Founded by David Johnson and Marc Rivest 33 years ago, **The Planning Centre**, your window and door destination, has thrived in a highly competitive market by staying small and nimble, keeping abreast of the changing needs of customers, and by making personal service a priority. David, Marc and David's son Steven are the current team in charge and each brings valuable skills and experience to the company – from engineering and construction to banking and marketing.

THE STYLE: The Planning Centre's goal is to make the process of buying windows and doors as comfortable as possible. They recognize that often the cost associated with this investment is the same as a small vehicle and pride themselves on finding solutions that create the exact look customers visualize at a price they are happy with. The team enjoys working with customers, architects and designers in ways that not only spark their creativity but deliver outstanding results. To this end, technology has been incredibly helpful. Clients can see their ideas on a big screen before committing to a purchase – but once they are ready to go they can rest assured that The Planning Centre's full-time team of dedicated installers delivers quality control that is second to none.

L-R: Marc Rivest, Kyle Lebert, David Johnson, Brad Rivest, Chris Rutherford and Steven Johnson

PHOTO: MAX WEDGE

WHAT'S HOT: The contemporary look is surging in 2018, gaining ground on the Craftsman style, which has been so popular for several years. Big glass windows and doors with black interior finishes as well as oversize doors are the look of the moment. The replacement market is growing as homeowners install energy-efficient windows.

WHAT'S NEW: The 100 Series windows from Andersen are an excellent green product according to Steven. It is a composite product, with a comparable price point to vinyl, twice the strength and superior wear and longevity. Black on black is a modern design choice and vinyl doesn't easily offer this option, making the 100 Series the ideal choice for today's on-trend looks.

FAVOURITES: David loves "giant doors" and opening up a homeowner's view to their back yard. "The Andersen A Series is perfect for that – we can install sliding doors that are 16-feet wide and 10-feet tall. What's even better is how affordable they are relative to similar options."

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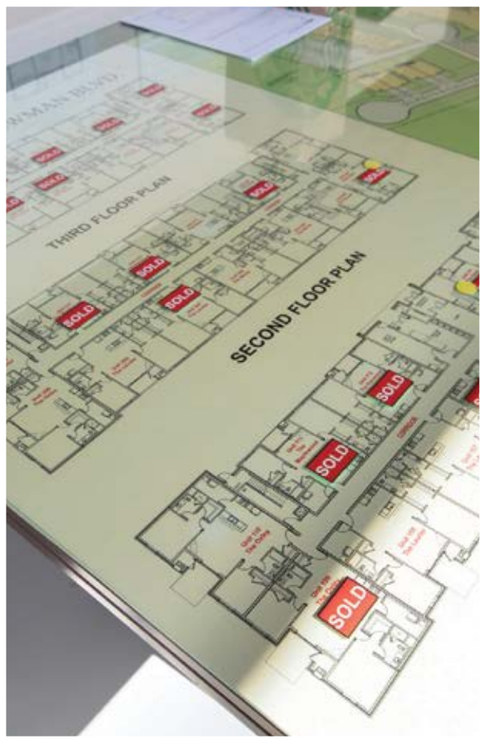
Where your new life begins...

OAKDALE TRAILS



Photos by Devon Pastorius

An elegant lifestyle in the heart of LaSalle just might be where your new life begins. Maybe you're ready to close the door on the demands of home ownership and want the convenience and streamlined lifestyle of condominium living. Maybe you just want to downsize but can't imagine leaving the neighbourhood that has been your home for many years. Whatever your reasons, **Oakdale Trails Condominiums** could be the perfect place to launch the next phase of your life.

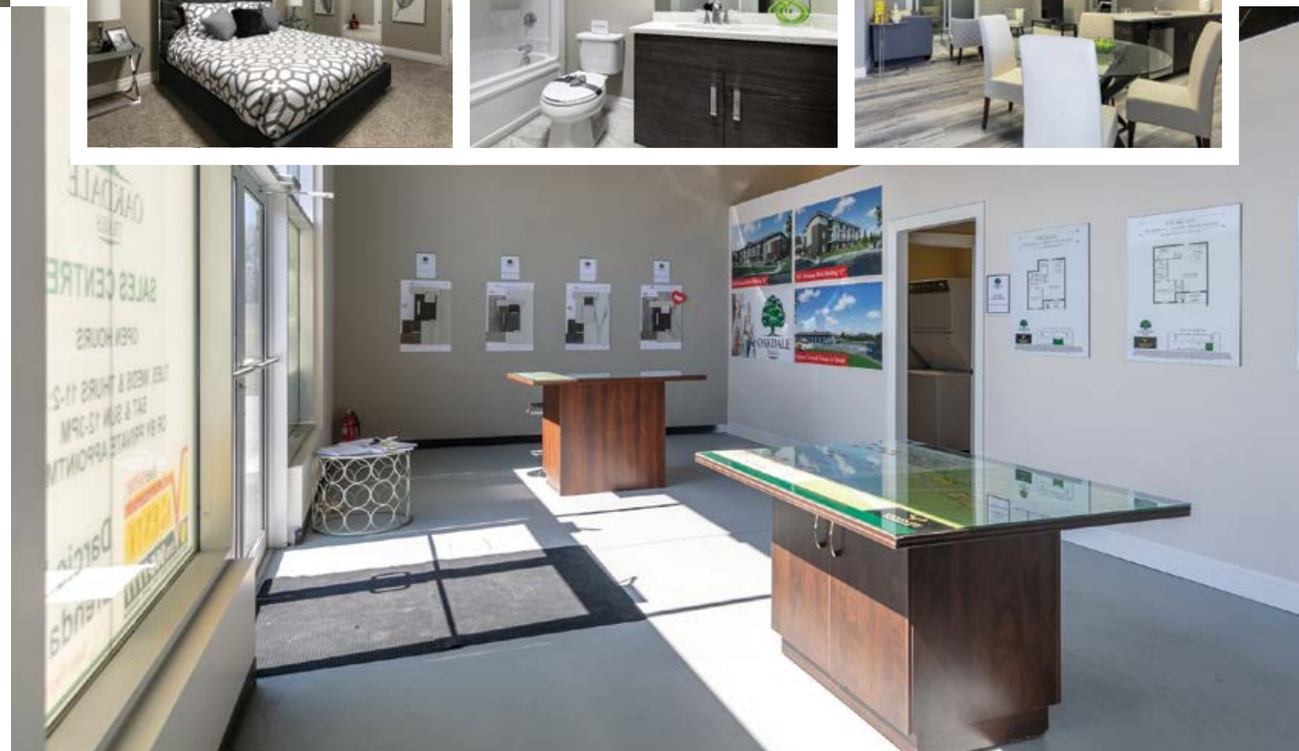
Built by **Valente Home Development,** these suites come with all the Valente signature touches – from quality finishes to thoughtful amenities to a central location with a high walking score. In the heart of LaSalle, at the corner of Sprucewood Road and Malden, **Oakdale Trails** is just steps away from all the important services and shopping the area has to offer. Grocery stores, coffee shops, banks, the library, a pharmacy, and medical professionals are within an easy stroll of your front door – as is the LaSalle Trail, an ideal place to enjoy the beauty of nature while out walking, cycling or jogging.

The brick, stucco, and stone, craftsman-inspired development comprises two, three-storey condominiums which are available to purchase, and one apartment building (the perfect option for those who prefer to rent). Built with the changing needs of residents in LaSalle and South Windsor top of mind, **Oakdale Trails** offers an exciting opportunity to fully embrace a new, freer lifestyle without compromising location, comfort or style.

The one and two bedroom suites, ranging in size from 890-1696 square feet (Phase I Building B and Phase II Building A), come with standard features like luxury vinyl plank flooring, tile backsplashes in the kitchen, and a generously proportioned quartz island. A large sliding door opens from the living room onto a balcony or terrace. The master bedrooms are spacious enough for a king size bed. Walk-in closets lead into a beautifully finished bathroom with a glass-enclosed walk-in shower. These are the luxury touches and quality finishes that one might expect with a much higher price point. Starting at $264,900, these units represent incredible value and it's no surprise that Phase I is 88% sold and Phase II is selling fast.

Valente is an award-winning builder with an impressive track record of creating developments that embrace the freedom that comes with downsizing. Their recently completed **Rivertown Terrace** development in Riverside was a huge success and underscored the demand for well-appointed properties catering to this market. Peter Valente believes that downsizing is an exciting time in a person's life - a time for discovering new possibilities and exploring new interests. He is committed to creating equally exciting residential options – options that are informed by what the community demands and by the unique flavour and character of the neighbourhoods where they are located. He and his team take great pride in providing homeowners the perfect place to live and thrive as their new life takes flight.

Visit the Oakdale Trails Sales Centre and tour the fully-built Model Suite at 5881 Malden Rd., behind Rexall! For more information contact Darcie Valente or Brenda Hawtin, Sales Representatives at Valente Real Estate, at **519.966.7777** or visit **valentehomes.com/oakdale-trails**.



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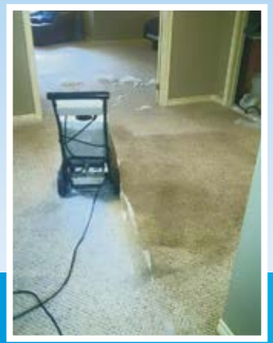

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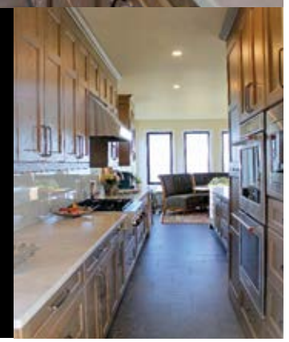


AS GOOD AS IT GETS

STORY **NANCY BELGUE** | PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX WEDGE**

The Brizo Salona articulating faucet is one of Doris' favourite design touches in the kitchen. It is from Windsor Factory Supply. **OPPOSITE:** The entry is a study in serenity. The welcoming elephant ear palms draw visitors into the rooms beyond.

Having struck out on her own in the last few years, **Doris Lapico** has a new life, a new home and a renewed passion for the design side of the real estate and construction business she has been a part of for so long.

Known primarily as one of **RE/MAX Preferred Realty Ltd.**'s most successful real estate agents in Windsor, Doris has also long worked behind the scenes as the muse and guiding force in the planning and selection of the stunning décor that helps make **Lapico Custom Homes** so special. Now, as she moves forward in her new life, she is partnering with **Michael Murray** to add design services to her already thriving real estate career. "It will be the modern way to buy real estate," Doris says, "a one-stop-shopping opportunity allowing the customer to buy and sell or renovate and design – and do it all from one source. It will be our version of "Love It or List It," and we're calling it **dōm**."

Continued on page 40

Doris Lapico. Art by Zoe-Theodora Kolonelos.

LUSH AND DRAMATIC WALLPAPER MAKES AN ARTFUL STATEMENT.

LEFT: The dining room is used mainly for wine and desserts when Doris hosts one of her music nights. **BELOW:** The art and wallpaper in the powder room is quirky and fun.

Her new house is a perfect example of the originality and playfulness clients can expect her to bring to all her projects. Inspired by a Hamptons-meets-Malibu beach vibe, Doris has created a house that looks like it could be part of a movie set. "It is my coming out party," Doris says of her design. "I decided I was going to the beach with this look. I didn't follow a lot of rules – which is what I love. I challenged myself to work with tone-on-tone, wanted the furniture (**Façade Furniture & Interiors**) to blend with everything and let the art have a starring role.

From the moment you walk onto the front porch you expect to hear waves crashing on a windswept beach. The porch is a design element Doris cherishes. "I love a porch," she says. "It reminds me of my childhood and people sitting outside on hot summer nights talking to neighbours. It fosters a real sense of community."

But it is inside where all the design elements come out to play. With the bleached, wide-plank wooden floors (**Plaza Ontario Marble & Tile Inc.**), shiplap on the walls and the whiter-shades-of-pale colour scheme, the home is the perfect backdrop for the surprising and whimsical touches that define Doris's signature look.

To the right of the foyer, the music room is a nod to the great albums of yesteryear. A bookshelf containing a collection of vinyl records and a classic turntable on the Italian pop-art coffee table bring the room to life. This is where Doris and her friends get together for music parties. Everyone chooses or brings their favourite LP and music, which is a huge part of Doris's life, fills the house. "To me the music room is a room with a purpose," she says. "I use it a lot. And because vinyl is coming back I also used that trend as a design element." *Continued on page 43*

The music room bursts with eye candy including the Guido Crepax comic strip inspired Valentina console table. **ABOVE:** The typographic art is by internationally collected artist Matthew Heller. **OPPOSITE:** The outdoor living space is funky and beachy.

Lights, votives and candles add ambience to every room.

Connecting the music room to the family room is an art wall. "It's a little gallery that leads you from room one to the other," Doris notes. "There's no sense of being disconnected from the front of the house."

The dining room is defined by an entire wall hung with Italian wallpaper that was custom made for the space. "You can send this company the dimensions and they create one large piece of wallpaper to fit," Doris says. "It is much more like art than wallpaper."

Doris loves the juxtaposition of surprising design elements – the rustic beach vibe with sleek and witty Italian-inspired art; the modern linen sofas with cheeky 60s-inspired hanging wooden lamps; pop art Warhol soup cans with Carrara marble. It's the mixture of pop culture, retro design references, European (especially Italian) art and culture with dashes of New York and Miami that make the eclecticism of the space so visually stimulating.

One of her new favourite trends is bringing outside plants inside. The foyer is dominated by a pair of giant potted Elephant Palm trees (**Anna's Flowers**). Two strategically placed ferns punctuate the white colour scheme of the family room.

The kitchen (**Frank Cremasco Fine Cabinetry**) was designed with the whole farm-to-table movement forefront in Doris's mind. "I wanted a casual space, a place where

Continued on page 44

A white picket fence and welcoming front porch add to the beach vibe Doris loves.

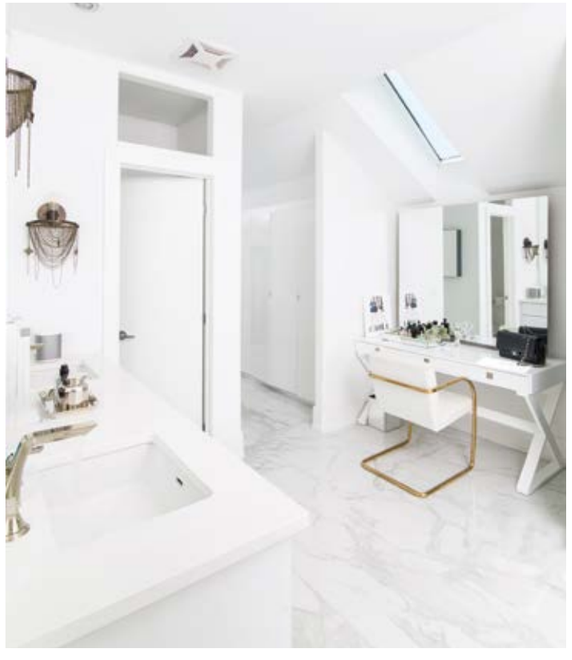
everyone could kick back and relax and enjoy being together eating family style." The overlong island flanked by 11 rustic stools is exactly that space. The clever butler's pantry that adjoins the kitchen helps keep clutter to a minimum and allows diners to spread out on the island, pass food back and forth and carry on exciting conversations.

Immediately off the kitchen is a covered patio, planked and flanked with decking-style wood to create both protection from the elements and privacy from the neighbours.

The master suite is a glamourous getaway. With a soaker tub, a built-in dressing table and a walk-in wardrobe, the room calls up the chic feel of stylish boutique hotels.

With more than 15 projects in various stages of development in Seven Lakes and her design business set to launch, 2018 is proving to be a busy year for Doris. A rule breaker and iconoclast, she is surging ahead, looking forward to branching out and bringing her sense of style and passion to whatever lies ahead.

It is, quite simply, as good as it gets. **OH**



RIGHT: The master bedroom dressing room is a nod to 30s glamour. **FAR RIGHT:** The graphic love lamp and heart pillow are the stars of the show in the master bedroom.

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PHOTOGRAPHY **TARA CHATTELL**

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MATERIALS

Jars with lids (mason jars or recycled jars)
Cabinet knobs or drawer pulls
Paint for metal and wood surfaces
Paintbrush
Large nail
Hammer
1 piece of wood in desired tray size
Cork pads for bottom of tray

HOW-TO

Remove lids from jars. Mark the centre of the lids.

Using the nail and hammer, punch a hole in the lid.

Paint lids and wooden tray with the same colour of paint.

When dry, fasten knobs to lids and cork pads to tray.

TIP: You may have to cut or replace the knob screws if they are too long. **OH**

BUILDING ON *success*

PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX WEDGE**

Our year-long salute to our valued advertising partners continues with a look at how these outstanding businesses stay at the top of their game.

PHIL & AMANDA FERNANDES

Philip Fernandes Custom Residential Design

10-year milestones: Over the past 10 years we have had the opportunity to design some truly spectacular homes – in part because we have built an incredible team starting with my wife, Amanda and then expanding to include Stacey Clark, who manages our drafting team. The dynamics of this team have enabled us to expand our customer reach while maintaining our dedication to professionalism, understanding our clients' needs and producing quality design.

Success secrets: Honesty, understanding clients' goals, staying adaptive and grateful and plain, old-fashioned hard work!

What's happening in 2018: We are expanding our services to include both 3D modelling and exterior finish selections. We will continue to adapt to our clients' needs with great design and solid working drawings. We are also one of the partners behind the redevelopment of 531 Pelissier St. into The Hive, which is in the design process right now!

JILL STRAKY

HouseWears

10-year milestones: At HouseWears, we're celebrating our 14th year in business. Over the past few years, along with great residential new construction, complete home makeovers and loads of renovation projects, HouseWears has expanded into the corporate side of design, working on some unique multi-phase commercial projects.

Success secrets: Working hard to please our customers, always aiming to create thoughtful design tailored to the needs and aesthetics of each client, having a genuine connection with clients and being truly passionate about what we do! We are blessed with a large base of repeat customers, and these wonderful people often tell everyone they know about their satisfaction with our services, and so it continues! In addition to our solid relationships with clients, we value our trusted suppliers and trades, who work equally hard to make our vision reality. OUR HOMES has definitely contributed to our success by featuring our work!

What's happening in 2018: Beyond the numerous homes we are transforming this year, we are excited about the multi-phase commercial projects we are currently working on, and we are thrilled to be assisting in a home makeover for the Make a Wish Foundation this summer.

Continued on page 52

JANIS O'NEILL SCHERER

Beddazzle Bed & Bathroom Studio

10-year milestones: After celebrating 34 years in business, we are now providing linens for our client's children. They proclaim, after sleeping on good sheets, they can't sleep any other way, and want the same for their children!

Secret of success: It's staying on top of trends to share with our loyal customer base. We offer a wide variety of products in every price point. But most of all, we have a great team at Beddazzle – full of high energy, good design sense and colour awareness. Our know-how helps our customers make the right purchases for their design goals.

What's in store 2018: We will continue to search the world for affordable, exciting home accents that will remain in style for many years to come. Fun new looks and colours await our customers, all with a shopping experience that is second to none! **OH**

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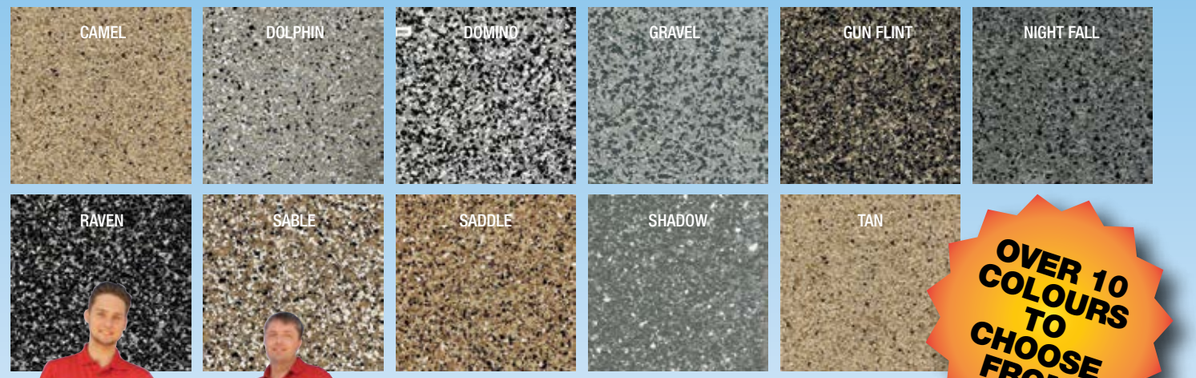

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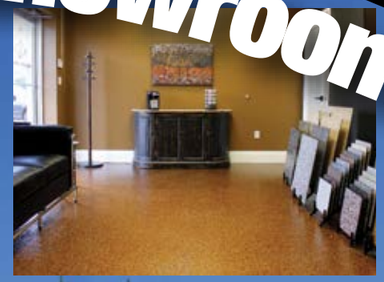

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STORY **MELANIE REKOLA**

The addition of a fabulous outdoor structure enhances a backyard garden by providing an architectural destination to enjoy with family and friends. Garden structures firmly underpin and contrast the relaxed shapes of plants, thus providing valuable focal points.

Not only do garden structures provide functional requirements such as shade, shelter and privacy, they also enhance the landscape by adding opportunity to express one's individual personality and style.

Garden structures have countless uses – anything from saunas and yoga rooms to complete outdoor kitchens with fireplaces, pizza ovens and home theatres. They also come in many different shapes, forms and combinations. Let's take a closer look.

Cabana: A cabana (sometimes called a pool house) is basically a miniature house that usually shares architectural style with the existing home. They typically hold the pool equipment and have plumbing, electrical and fixtures just like any house, and can serve a multitude of functions in the backyard. Pool houses are the epitome of luxury and can even be equipped with glass walls and pocket doors that can open up fully for the summer months. They sometimes are designed with a pavilion or pergola attached to create a unique structure that maximizes outdoor living space.

Pergola: A pergola is an outdoor structure that consists of posts or columns and an open "roofing" grid of beams and rafters. Often rustic and made of wood (though sometimes modern and metal) these offer aesthetic value and a feeling of walls and ceiling. They provide some sun protection by way of light filtration but not any real protection from rain and other adverse weather. An option is to build it with a louvered cover system that can open and shut as needed, offering maximum versatility. They can be freestanding or attached to the home, depending on the structure and rooflines with pillars added to the posts if appropriate for the space.

Arbour: An arbour is similar to a pergola, but on a smaller scale. Both arbours and pergolas can provide support for climbing plants, adding a lovely lush effect. Arbours can frame a view when placed alone or added in succession to provide a gorgeous tunnel effect.

Pavilion: A pavilion is an open-air structure with a solid roof. They generally don't have walls but are sometimes enclosed on one or two sides for privacy or wind shelter. A wonderful function of having a solid roof is that these spaces are protected from the elements so there's no need to store outdoor cushions or apply furniture coverings. These spaces are ideal as outdoor living rooms complete with plush sofas, toss pillows and, of course, a freestanding fireplace.

Gazebo: Similar to a pavilion and offering many of the same functional benefits, a gazebo has a solid roof and no walls but with one key difference – they are always octagonal in shape. These fit in well to country settings but in a modern application they often look awkward.

TIP: Sometimes prefabricated metal and cloth canopy structures (typically sold by big box stores) are also called gazebos. Though these are tempting because of their price point, they are a temporary solution and will require frequent replacement.

Greenhouse: Perhaps these buildings are self-explanatory but couldn't you just imagine a gorgeous glass greenhouse in your backyard filled with lavish plants and a swanky little seating set ready for afternoon tea or an evening glass of vino? As these are prefabricated, there is no need for architectural design, though proper placement is crucial. Buyers beware – permits may also apply!

Though a landscape designer can provide concept plan and inspirational photos as the starting point for outdoor structure design, most will require a technical draftsman to blend detailing with local building code requirements. This can be accomplished through some combination of a Landscape Architect/Engineer/Builder/Architectural Technologist. Designing an outdoor structure is a process and a specialty field – larger structures will require building permits and zoning permissions.

As the illustrious Benjamin Franklin once said, "The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten." The application of this phrase to outbuilding construction is no exception. Be forewarned – great tradespeople are in short supply and many good builders are already fully booked a whole year in advance. Take your time to find the construction company that's right for you and be prepared to wait for the perfect end result. **OH**

Melanie is a landscape designer and a certified horticulturalist.

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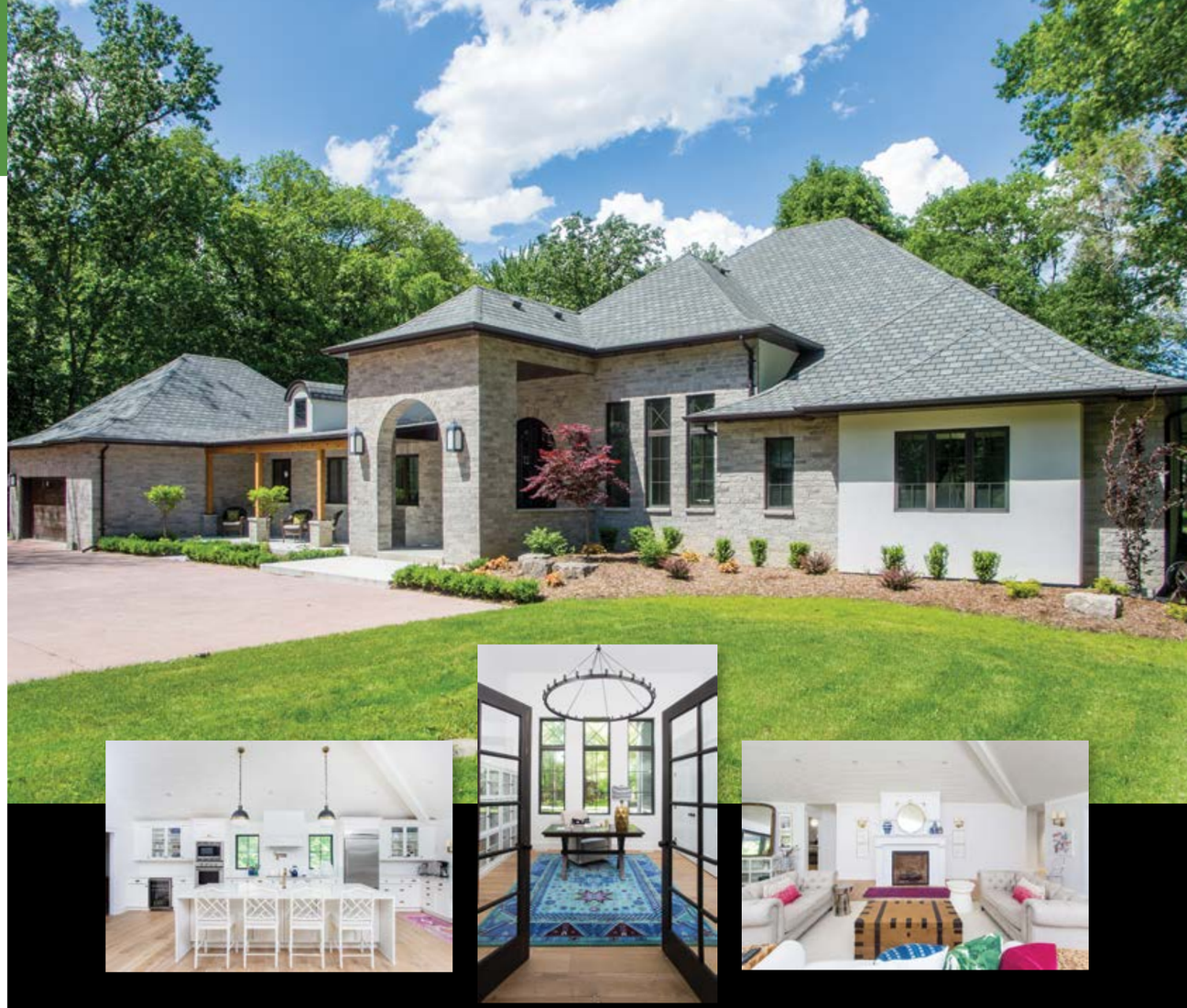

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What's The Legal Edge?

**It's about experience. It's about teamwork.
It's about trust. And, it's about confidence.
It's about success.**

By Jesse Ziter, Today's Real Estate Staff

To really uncover The Legal Edge, though, you need to learn more about Mark Eugeni, licensed attorney, Sales Representative for Manor Windsor Realty Ltd., and leader of The Legal Edge Team. You don't need to read too deeply to discover that there are several layers to Eugeni, a multi-million dollar top producer with one of the most interesting résumés in Windsor-Essex real estate. In addition to being simultaneously a lawyer and real estate agent, Eugeni speaks English and Italian, and holds three post-secondary degrees despite spending years dabbling in professional athletics. It's the sort of information that makes for an interesting profile, to be sure, but – as clients and friends across Windsor and Essex County already know – these details really do work together to make up one of our area's most dynamic and successful real estate professionals. They also translate to results: Mark Eugeni is Manor's Number One Sales Representative for 2017, as he has been for twelve years in a row.

Let's start with the "Legal": Eugeni is a licensed, degree-holding attorney with the State Bar of Michigan. He obtained his Juris Doctorate through the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, choosing a course of study that saw him tackle International Business and European Union Law at the University of Siena Law School in Italy. He also holds, from the University of Windsor, a Master of Business Administration with majors in Marketing, Human Resources, and Accounting.

While virtually all real estate agents acquire similar toolsets as they enter the industry, negotiating skills can make all the difference when it's truly time to do business. Lawyers? Lawyers negotiate. The fact is, having a licensed attorney acting as your sales representative on your side of a real estate transaction can actually alleviate your concerns and potentially save you serious money. Through the eyes of an outstandingly successful sales representative who also happens to be an accredited lawyer, easy-to-overlook matters like real estate contracts are cast in a new light. In his everyday work, Eugeni's sales experience and legal knowledge translates to real value for clients – especially when they find themselves in real estate transactions, whether they're buying or selling, that involve complicated, uncommon, or new, never-before-seen details.

Significantly, Eugeni has spent most of his life involved with land development and new home construction. Tony Eugeni, Mark's father, established himself as a fixture in the Windsor construction community as he grew his building and development business over four decades. Mark spent his formative years working in the family business and living in its circle of influence.

After earning his real estate license in 2001, Eugeni immediately joined forces with Manor Windsor Realty Ltd., a locally owned brokerage with significant resources and a sterling reputation in our region. In his first year, Eugeni won "Rookie of the Year" honours at the brokerage, and has maintained a multimillion-dollar sales profile year-on-year ever since. Through Manor, The Legal Edge Team is capable of offering its clients the support of one of our region's largest real estate sales staff. This backing includes a complete marketing plan and access to resources that will ensure you obtain the ultimate service whether buying or selling. Under the Manor umbrella, Eugeni formed The Legal Edge Team, a group of cooperative professionals that harnesses the power of communication to help Windsor-Essex residents buy and sell residential and commercial real estate across the county at virtually every price point. Formed in 2003, The Legal Edge Team includes Eugeni and Tina Pickle, Sales Representatives, and their supportive and administrative leader Donna Eugeni.

Working alongside Eugeni, since 2003 Pickle has brought to The Legal Edge Team a compassionate, communicative skill set honed as a former nursing student, and her years of management experience in the service industry help invaluably when working with clients. Pickle's longstanding personal and professional interest in interior design and her experience in home staging perfectly complement her partner's mastery of the technical side of home buying and selling. Importantly, Eugeni and Pickle's team-oriented approach ensures that clients have access to both male and female voices, ensuring that the Team is always able to relate to gender-sensitive concerns and queries.

Legal Edge Team clients understand better than most that three heads are better than one. The members of The Legal Edge Team work collaboratively to develop a comprehensive buying or selling strategy that takes into account each person's point of view, body of experience, and wish list.

Moreover, The Legal Edge Team offers advertising and marketing beyond even the level that you would expect or demand from top-producing real estate representation, including a number of creative, progressive, and outside-the-box marketing solutions. In addition to using MLS, The Legal Edge Team builds each client a comprehensive online platform that starts with a purpose-built webpage for every property. These online showcases feature custom photography and virtual tours. Each Legal Edge listing is given additional online exposure via MarkEugeni.com, TinaPickle.com, and several other popular real estate portals.

Eugeni and Pickle, both Windsorites born and raised, are enthusiastic about the stable, developing market in and around their hometown, the prospects of which have been buoyed by our region's recent popularity as a destination retirement community. Over the years, the two have lived in several of the county's neighbourhoods – including LaSalle, Riverside, South Windsor, and Walkerville – which has broadened their personal understanding of the Windsor-Essex real estate market.

Planning on buying or selling a home? Give yourself an Edge. Contact Mark Eugeni and Tina Pickle and The Legal Edge team today, and start writing your family's story.

Mark Eugeni and Tina Pickle work out of Manor Windsor Realty Ltd. Brokerage's central office at 3276 Walker Road in Windsor. To get in touch, phone (519) 250-8800, fax (519) 966-0536, or email sales@markeugeni.com or sales@tinapickle.com.

The Legal Edge Team
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The Legal Edge Team

"When you're in the business of designing custom luxury homes, you're bound to be exacting about the details of your own home. We loved working with Mark and Tina because they understood this. They were just as meticulous about the details as we were; they listened to what we were looking for and they were endlessly patient with us as we weighed alternatives. With their extensive knowledge of the local market, they were quick to identify the kinds of homes and neighbourhoods that might interest us. Their "legal edge" also gave us the confidence to know that all the details of the transaction would be properly addressed. We've worked with Mark, Tina and Donna on several projects and, in each case, they've been great to work with. When we've recommended them to our friends, we've always received great feedback. That, more than anything else, is why we're confident recommending them to others."

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"We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Tina Pickle and Mark Eugeni for making the buying and selling process totally stress-free. They were knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and professional from start to finish. After months of looking with our family, friends and on our own, we hired Tina and Mark and they found the perfect house for us quickly and in the exact location we wanted that we never would have found on our own. We were 100% satisfied, now live in our dream house, in a great neighbourhood, we couldn't be happier. Selling our older home was an even easier process with The Legal Edge Team; two days and sold. It was really reassuring to know that we were being represented so competently and professionally. There really is a Legal Edge and would recommend them to all.
Thanks again Tina and Mark and Donna."

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