

# Our Country Home





# Our Country Home

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**MLS 5046 \$469,000**  
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**MLS 5041 \$155,000**  
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**MLS 2632 \$99,000**  
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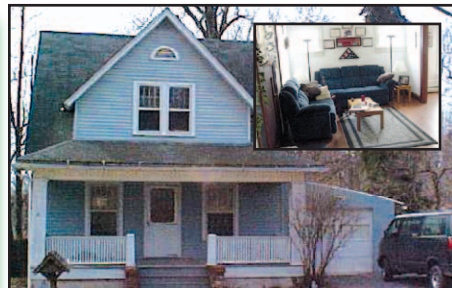
**MLS 2634 \$235,000**  
**Beautiful PA Dutch**

3 open and wooded acres, stonewalls and seasonal views come with this very charming home, open living/dining and kitchen, this home offers 3 master bedrooms, 3 upgraded baths, full, dry basement all studded and ready for finishing, woodstove hook-ups on 2 floors, attractive, custom brick hearth, very nice country location, on good road, and close to all services and activities. Great location for hunting & fishing enthusiasts.



**MLS 2603 \$359,000**  
**18 Acre Mountain Paradise**

Stunning views of Tyler Hill, offering woods, trails, fruit trees, open field, great for horses, and a magnificent home. Beamed & Cathedral ceilings, 2 custom brick hearths with efficient decorative woodstoves, sunken rooms, enormous deck with privacy and long views, private yard, superior master suite and highest quality master bath, 4 lovely bedrooms in all, 2 baths, country kitchen, a gorgeous full time or get-away home!



**MLS 2602 \$125,500**  
**Beach Lake Cutie**

Charming 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath home, beautiful hardwood floors and trims, extra high ceilings, loads of closet space, country covered porch, back deck, on a 1/2 acre of open yard, close to village for shopping and services, minutes to Delaware River and Narrowsburg, NY. A cute little gem of a home, in move-in condition.



**MLS 5019 \$325,000**  
**Cedar Contemporary**

Built to perfection by the owner, this home offers cedar exterior, superior trims, dramatic windows, skylights, sunken living room, stone fireplace, formal dining, eat-in kitchen, family room with Alaska Stoker wood/coal stove, large master suite and bath, long distance views of rolling countryside, full dry basement with potential for enormous family room, located on 5 acres in a lovely, lovely neighborhood.



**MLS 5035 \$495,000**  
**Home for the Stars**

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**MLS 2623 \$319,000**  
**Country Charmer**

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**MLS 5043 \$299,995**  
**Wrighter Lake Beauty**

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**MLS 2610 \$295,000**  
**20 Acre Hidden Mountain Dream**

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# Our Country Home

## Spring 2005

**P**ainted meadows and lush, green ridges are soon to be ours in the Upper Delaware River Valley and Catskill and Pocono mountain regions.

The new spring will offer occasion once again to enjoy our homes from both sides of the walls that have lent us shelter all winter.

With this new issue of *The River Reporter's* "Our Country Home," we have taken a look at the restoration of two extraordinary houses in the region. The homeowners took brave steps when they committed to bringing the timeworn dwellings back to glory, and their answers to our questions revealed that they never looked back with regret, despite the countless hours of tiring attention to detail. We thank them for graciously inviting all of us to take a look at the work they've done.

The first feature in the section explores the restoration of a Queen Anne Victorian as well as the



Charlie Buterbaugh

gratification of family life in Milford, PA; the second feature looks at the restoration of a farmhouse that has survived over 150 years of transitions in the landscape and agricultural economy in Sullivan County, NY.

The newly energized construction economy in the region is the focus of the third feature, which draws pointed observations from the front line of real estate and home construction growth.

Arriving with the spring of 2005 are new opportunities to treat ourselves to more enjoyable experiences in and around our homes, which could mean getting to work on a new garden or organizing a new recycling system to treat our individual environments and the world at large with renewed respect.

The new season should afford us time to pause, and watching the natural beauty of our region spring back to life will, without fail, remind us of why we have chosen to live in this highly valued rural setting.



TRR photo by Charlie Buterbaugh

Caroline von Reitzenstein enjoys a warm weekend afternoon at Old Burr Farm. Read about the complete restoration of this 150-year-old farmhouse in Bethel, NY on page 5.

## Inside this section

### Features

#### 5 Opening doors to rustic beauty of a bygone era

Through Daniel Ionescu and Caroline von Reitzenstein's restoration of the old Burr family farmhouse in Bethel, NY, the couple resurrected original furnishings and allowed what was left behind over 150 years of farmhouse living to lead their way to a pure rustic style.

#### 15 Town-style living in a big Queen Anne

New parents Brian and Ingrid Pimley chose Milford, PA for its quaint, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere and lively cultural scene. The borough's "Forsythe House" presented a host of challenges during a two-year renovation, but the colossal Queen Anne Victorian is now an architectural treasure on a charming side street.

#### 21 Making waves in a red-hot market

Based on his work on the front line of new home construction in Sullivan County, NY, Charles Petersheim connects the dots in an analysis of the region's real estate and construction economies.

### Spring repertoire

#### 10 Stimulate your senses

With just a few touches, enhance your home's interior and increase your sensory indulgence in the new season.

#### 14 Dandelion greens with fresh lemon

Food columnist Pauline Glykokokalos offers relief for those wearied and weakened by too much spring cleaning.

#### 27 A 'physics' garden in your own back yard

Gardening columnist Nanny Fontanella shows how to build a terrace garden for cultivating medicinal herbs in a region challenged horticulturally by heavy clay soil.

#### 30 Completely organized recycling

It takes a bit of organization to maintain recycling as a rewarding endeavor. Take a look at Narrowsburg, NY resident Helle Henriksen's comprehensive recycling system.

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Our Country  
Home

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**Our Country Home**, a special publication of **The River Reporter**, is published by Stuart Communications, Inc. Entire contents ©2005 by Stuart Communications, Inc.

**The River Reporter** maintains an office at 93 Erie Ave., Narrowsburg, NY. Its mailing address is P.O. Box 150, Narrowsburg, NY 12764. Phone 845-252-7414. E-mail editor@riverreporter.com. **The River Reporter** is online at riverreporter.com.

Subscription to **The River Reporter** is \$53.00 for two years, \$30.00 for 1 year or \$21.00 for six months. USPS 354-810. Periodical postage paid at Narrowsburg, NY 12764, and additional mailing offices.

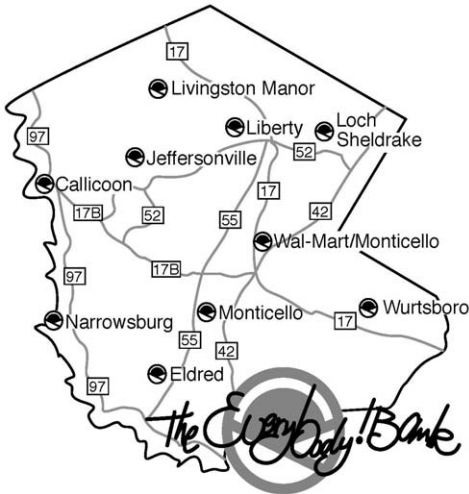
Publication date: March 24, 2005

On the cover: A view from the dining room at Old Burr Farm. The antique door is one of many found in the original farmhouse and reused in interior entryways.



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# Opening doors to rustic beauty of a bygone era

Story and photos by CHARLIE BUTERBAUGH

Like many things of beauty, it took time to understand the 150-year-old Burr family farmhouse.

But in the end it was time that yielded episodes of discovery for Daniel Ionescu and Caroline von Reitzenstein, who stayed intent on getting to the core of the home's rustic essence. In a painstaking restoration, they exhumed furnishings left behind by generations of the Burr family, and the relics are now favored as central features at Old Burr Farm and sidedoorgallery.

Not much local history is written about the original farmhouse, located near what is now a western border of Bethel, NY. In 1847, Leslie Burr pointed out the hand-hewn timber beams and clapboard siding that still belong to the farmhouse today. It is unclear who Leslie was, according to Town of Bethel historian Marion Vassmer. Leslie described the house as a one-and-a-half story farmhouse with a summer kitchen, and then in the early 1900s, noted a division of the house into two separate dwellings.

These precious few clues, though valuable and abiding, represent only a brief foreword to what Ionescu and von Reitzenstein have come to appreciate about the farmhouse. They scraped away layers of plaster to uncover what more than 150 years of renovation work had concealed.

In the end, they brought about a modern-day dwelling that is soundly tied to what they found.

An old pantry table discovered in the house became a bathroom vanity. Ionescu and von Reitzenstein resurrected the original porcelain bathtub for their master bathroom, and they washed off an old tool cabinet for use as a cupboard in their dining room.

"One of the reasons we wanted to buy the farmhouse was to be able to connect with a history," said Ionescu, a Romanian-born architect.

The couple built an armoire for

their master bedroom with some of the old boards they found entombed behind the old kitchen walls. Ionescu also built a laundry-room barrier with the salvaged boards.

"It's our way of preserving the past, which I think is important for all of us to relate to," Ionescu said.

Familiarity with the home's 150-year-old identity can be enjoyed while passing through the interior doorways of the farmhouse. Ionescu and von Reitzenstein reclaimed and preserved the home's original doors, allowed their faded colors to remain and even

Continued on page 7



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## Opening doors to rustic beauty of a bygone era

Continued from page 5

influence their decorative choices in the refurbished rooms.

They found a collection of old books, many of them German prayer books, which are now piled on an old dresser they found discarded. They discovered two pianos, old trunks here and there, and two armchairs, which they had re-upholstered.

From the beginning the couple started doing the work on their own, but they eventually needed a contractor to manage jobs requiring special tools, like saving the old barn that had collapsed into the back of the house. A hired carpenter labeled each board of the barn and reassembled it about 50 feet from the farmhouse.

At one point their contractor abandoned the project, and Ionescu and von Reitzen-

stein resumed working on the house alone. As the saying goes, when one door closes, another one opens.

"Then I started to do things on my own. That's how I started to look into preserving 150 years of renovations of the house," Ionescu said.

He said he doesn't at all regret the window of time between contractors because the void left him with time to work through the restoration with the kind of diligence that he craved.

"We enjoyed doing that, working on it the way it should."

As von Reitzenstein aptly pointed out, "Sometimes it takes a while for a house to speak to you and tell you what it is."

When they bought the property a few



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*Sometimes it takes a while for a house to speak to you and tell you what it is.*

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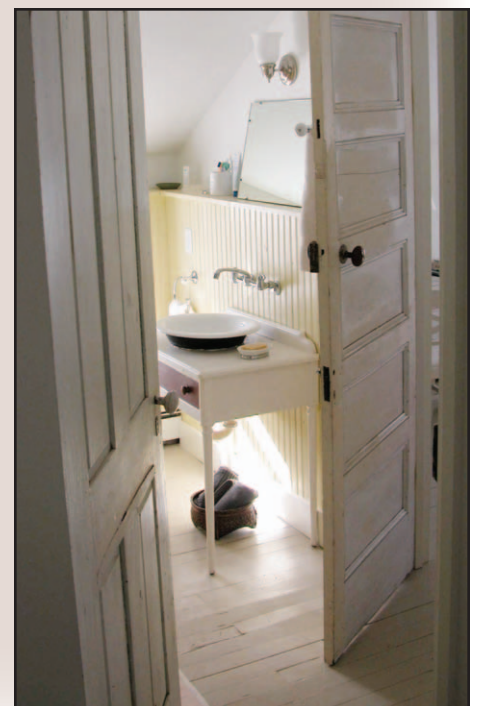
years ago, Ionescu observed that while the farmhouse was made up of a series of little rooms, it was also naturally divided into observable halves; each side represented a distinctive personality, and the couple decided that the house should be restored to embody what Ionescu calls a "mother-daughter concept."

One side is private and one is public in concept, though not exclusively.

"The house inspired me. I knew it was a mother-daughter house. We wanted to do the house that way, keeping the kitchen and master bedroom private. The other side is public, for guests and the gallery," he said.

In 2004, sidedoorgallery at Old Burr Farm was chosen as a finalist for Best Residential Renovation in the Sullivan County Showcase Awards.

Continued on page 9





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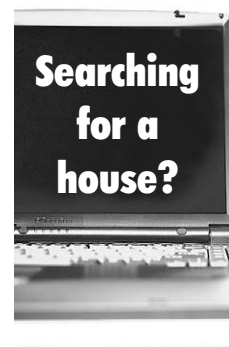
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## Opening doors to rustic beauty of a bygone era

Continued from page 7

The gallery, on the north side of the house, features a permanent display of Ionescu's photography, "Images of Sullivan County." Many of his photographs capture Sullivan County architecture, particularly agricultural images, such as the many distinctively large chicken coops that can be found within a five-mile radius of the farmhouse. Other photographs give attention to numerous local barns that have been mended over the years with a patchwork of available materials.

A statement in the gallery reads, "Dan's work reflects not only his personal visual commentary on an area he has long adopted as his second home, but harkens to a deeper, underlying resonance that permeates life in similar, small communities across our country and throughout the world."

The spacious gallery, located where the old kitchen used to be, also has on display a collection of Roberto Rabanne's photographs taken at the original 1969 Woodstock Festival, which took place just a few miles from Old Burr Farm.

"We feel fortunate to be close to a piece of history," von Reitzenstein said about Woodstock.

From the beginning of his architectural training in Romania at the early age of 13, Ionescu was taught to design anything from a pencil to a cathedral. No matter how small the object, he was educated to put substantial thought into its design.

He later graduated from Pratt Institute in 1987, a school that pro-

vides an international approach to design and architecture, he said.

In February 2005, Ionescu designed a stainless steel cradle to protect a celebrated pair of red-tailed hawks, Pale Male and Lola, from being evicted from their nest on a landmark-designated building in New York City. Working with the National Audubon Society, he captured the hearts of bird watchers around the nation. The challenge was to construct a platform capable of supporting the nest as well as securing it in place away from the surface of the building façade in order to alleviate the damaging effects of the nest.

The project alleviated public concern and allowed the hawks to rebuild their nest. In one sense, it is one more manifestation of Ionescu's deep appreciation for the value of familiarity in any living space.

Every window on the front of the house at Old Burr Farm—framed by heavy hand-hewn trim—is original.

Walking on the same floors their forbears walked on, gazing out the same windows, bathing in the same porcelain tub—these represent the intimate rapport Ionescu and von Reitzenstein wanted with their Sullivan County farmhouse.

The rustic appointments give Old Burr Farm a pure and fine aesthetic.

Standing in the master bedroom on a bright, late-winter afternoon—high on the south side of the two-story farmhouse, the room receives sun all day—Ionescu said, "We chose the place, and life slowed down a bit."

Photos—Page 5: Upper left is a view of the restored farmhouse at Old Burr Farm. Lower right is a view from the dining room, across the foyer and into the gallery. Page 7: Upper right is the bathroom by the master bedroom, with the original porcelain bathtub. Lower left is a view across the original floorboards that lead to the master bedroom. Lower right is the second bathroom upstairs. Page 9: Upper right is the downstairs bathroom, with the original pantry table. Lower right is the guest bedroom.



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# Stimulate your senses this spring

Easy ways to tease your five senses



## Scent

Bring spring scents into your home with new soaps that smell like grapefruit, lemon, cucumber, lavender, hibiscus-rose or any floral fusion. Fresh bouquets of daffodils are a sure pleaser and make the house seem clean and new. On a warm day, open windows throughout the house and let the light breeze flow in.



## Vision

A new pair of rain boots is inexpensive, and placed alone by your front door, the image can inspire excitement for spring showers, which we all know bring May flowers. Any remaining winter ornaments should be removed immediately. Think spring with pale flower, butterfly, firefly and fantasy knick-knacks. Replace your bedding and dark bathroom and kitchen towels with light-colored fabrics, and don't be afraid to think about making a fresh start with a fresh coat of paint in a dark or neglected room. Create a safe haven for fairy figures, and the sense of wonder they create will be surpassed only by the view from your window as the first plants of the season poke their way through the earth.



## Touch

Hang your favorite sundress on a door to remind yourself that warm spring weather is coming soon. And when the first 60-degree day arrives, feel free to wear that dress with thin layers, such as a light-knit sweater. Replace dark, heavy curtains with light sheer fabrics and pack away fuzzy bedspreads and quilts. Put out non-clingy fabrics and feel comforted in light-colored pillows and throws. Feel the earth in your fingertips while you plant an indoor garden. Fill a series of pots or a window box with some of your favorite flowers. Hand plant and baby the little garden and let it bring life into your house. These plants can later be transplanted into your outside garden.



## Taste

There's nothing like the sweet nectar of mango and other tropical fruits to help you think spring. Also keep strawberries and oranges within reach. To fight the chill of a slightly colder spring day, consider making a fresh fruit pie. The oven will warm the house while the fruit reminds you that the season is soon to spring.



## Sound

After being forced to escape the cold in the refuge of layers of clothing, there is nothing that says spring more than squealing children stomping around in goliathes and building passageways for toy boats to launch in puddles. Allow the happy sounds of children and the gentle singing of birds to flow in through open windows. Play that CD that reminds you of the fun you had in prior springs.

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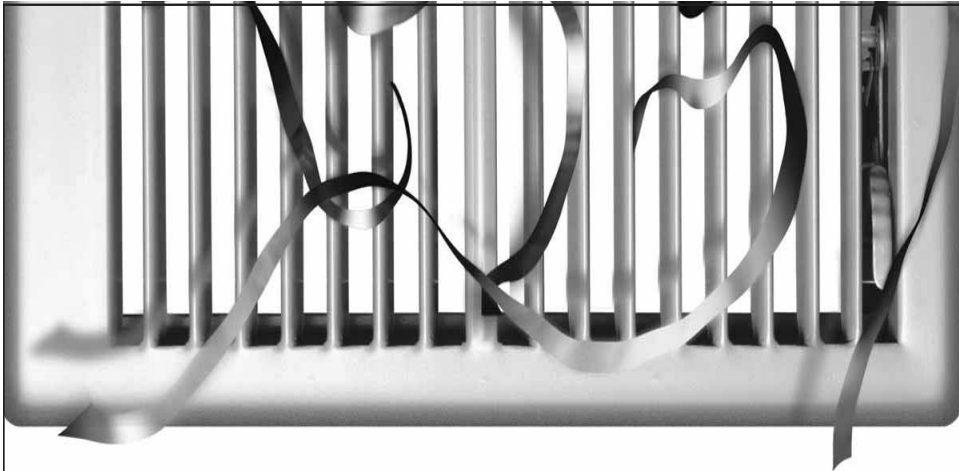
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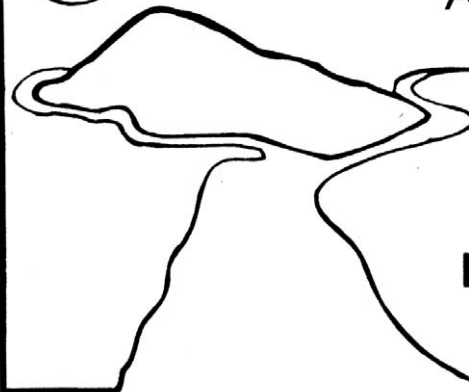
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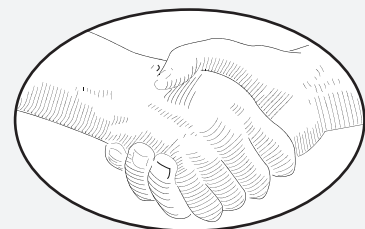
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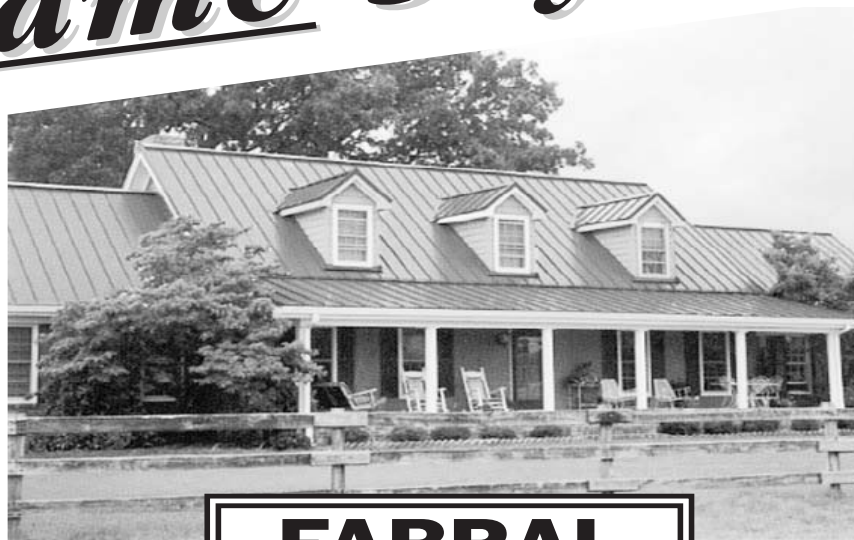
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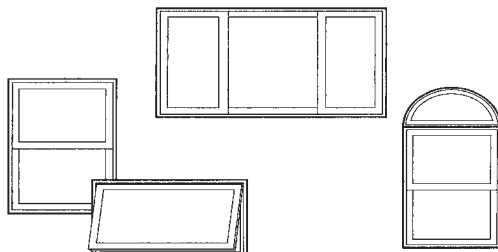


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# Spring cleaning within reason

**F**or most of the year, my mother-in-law and I were good friends. But come spring, forget it. We couldn't stand each other. She changed, I changed—it was spring, and we couldn't help it.

To Mom, spring did not mean daffodils, sunshine and fresh arugula as it did to me. Her ultimate garden plan was to pave over the chemical wasteland she called a lawn with bright, squeaky-clean blacktop.

No, to Mom spring meant house cleaning—not just ordinary house cleaning but the event, House Cleaning; the passion, House Cleaning; the sacred domestic ritual of purification, eradication, sanitation and deodorization, House Cleaning.

Now I admire a woman who knows she can eat off that bit of floor under the refrigerator. I really do. Inspired by her Amazonian example, I attempted to accomplish likewise in my own kitchen once, but decided I preferred the floor without gouges, my knuckles with skin rather than without, and who cares about that blasted bit of filthy floor anyway? As long as nothing moves under there, I'm OK

with that.

For my part I couldn't get enough time outdoors come spring. There were crocuses, daffodils and tulips to admire; the garden to be dug, planted and rearranged; pruning, raking, potting and a thousand other wonderful things, not to mention the intoxicating and divine aroma of unfurling cottonwood buds wafting around to be smelled.

Who had the time or inclination to be indoors fussing over dusty Venetians when the sun was shining and you could finally be outside without a coat, hat and gloves?

Not me. Those dust bunnies could multiply to their fuzzy little heart's content for all I cared.

Usually by Memorial Day Mom had every dust particle bigger than a quark safely banished to the outer limits and was ready to talk about something other than where she could get triple coupons for cleaning products. For my part, having thrown my back out almost enough times to impress even the illustrious Mr. Guinness, and having had

my monumental horticultural labors rewarded by successive visitations of Pennsylvania's entire woodchuck population, I was ready to acknowledge the smarts of simply buying pro-

*There were crocuses, daffodils and tulips to admire, not to mention the intoxicating and divine aroma of unfurling cottonwood buds wafting around to be smelled.*

## Sharing the repast

with Pauline Glykokokalos



duce from a farmers market. Mom and I could safely talk to each other again. We'd done it—survived spring yet another year.

As for cooking, forget it too. There's too many other things to do.

Spring is take-out season, hoagie season, peanut butter and jelly sand-

wich season, one-huge-pot-of-soup-that-lasts-all-week season. Unless, of course, you can get your hands on some lovely crisp, young, tender dandelion greens. And who can't do that? We're in the country after all. And dandelions aren't exactly on the endangered species list, are they?

### Dandelion greens (Swiss chard or beet greens)

#### Ingredients

1 to 1½ pounds greens  
½ cup olive oil

Juice of 1½ to 1 lemon  
½ tsp salt  
¼ tsp pepper

#### Method

Pick over greens, removing discolored leaves and tough stems. Wash well, several times if necessary, to remove dirt. (Do not use dandelions if there's a chance they've been sprayed with chemicals.) Steam or boil greens until tender. Dandelions take longer to cook than chard or beets, at least one-half hour. Turn into a colander to drain. Mix together oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper.

Transfer greens to a large bowl. Pour over dressing and toss to mix well. Serve with fresh, crusty bread.

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# Town-style living in a big Queen Anne

'Forsythe House' of Milford is reborn

By SANDY LONG



“

*We always thought Milford was a cute little town. You can walk just about anywhere—to the pharmacy, the coffee shop, the dry cleaner, to a collection of shops along the main street.*

”

The sagging floor needed shoring up; the water-stained ceilings were falling down. But Brian and Ingrid Pimley sensed something special about the spacious old Queen Anne Victorian house in Milford, PA.

Maybe it was the grand foyer with its hidden sliding pocket doors, or the ornate ash staircase curling from the foot of the huge fireplace crafted from imported Italian brick. One thing is certain: despite the grime and neglect, the Pimleys saw the home's potential.

Built in the late 1800s as a summer home by Margaret Hart, the house was sold after several years to the Forsythe family, who passed it down through several generations. When the family finally sold it, the home was converted into two apartments and rented for the decade before the Pimleys made their proud purchase three years ago.

By that time, the building had fallen into substantial disrepair. Impressive wraparound porches on the first and second stories had been demolished. Peeling paint, crumbling plaster, uneven floors and exposed plumbing and wires told a sorry tale of absent caretaking.

But all that was about to change the day the Pimleys pushed open the worn but solid wooden door.

"It felt like the house was saying, 'Save me! Help me!'" said Ingrid. Nodding, Brian added, "We had to see through the dinginess. But I always dreamed of having a big house."

At 4,200 square feet, with four and one-half bathrooms, six bedrooms, a kitchen, living room, dining room and pantry, that dream has been realized. But the path from dream to reality was comprised of hard work, focused effort, careful prioritizing, substantial stamina, and even sacrifice. "I sold one of my best guitars to afford the granite kitchen counter we wanted," admitted Brian.

Their band, Frilly Lizard, recorded its CD "Dancin' On the Water" in 2000. Ingrid writes the lyrics and plays bass, and Brian writes the music and plays guitar.

But for now, their musical endeavors have taken a back seat to crafting the home they desire.



Continued on page 17



TRR photo by Charlie Buterbaugh



TRR photo by Charlie Buterbaugh

The octagonal tower, above, sided with fish scale shingles, is a defining characteristic of the "Forsythe House," a Queen Anne Victorian in Milford, PA restored by Brian and Ingrid Pimley, who are shown with their son Evan at right. The Historic Preservation Trust of Pike County points to the Pimley's house as "an example of the current architectural revival taking place in the Borough of Milford." It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

At left, the original fireplace features imported Italian firebrick.



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## Town-style living in a big Queen Anne

Continued from page 15

The couple sold their Jefferson, NJ home in an inflated market, allowing them to afford their new home and its initial renovation. Brian, 41, is vice president of Filtrex Inc., a company specializing in large-scale pool filters. He usually works from home, enabling him to care for Evan and take pride in playing “Mr. Mom.” Ingrid, 36, commutes to a job as a systems engineer for medical device manufacturer Becton Dickinson.

The couple lived in the home’s third floor apartment while they worked on the first and second stories. They completed much of the work themselves, but found a local carpenter, Al Perlowski, who wasn’t daunted by the challenges inherent to renovating an old house. Perlowski reconstructed the porches based upon an original 1898 photo of the house, and tackled many other interior projects.

When the ceilings were removed, the wall surfaces began crumbling, revealing an absence of insulation, which Brian and Ingrid took pains to correct. Three 30-yard dumpsters later, their home was stripped to its bones, then renovated with a respectful nod at restoration, balanced with a practical desire to create a livable home.

“While we definitely enjoy the character and details of its age and history, we’re not aiming so much for authenticity, but livabil-

ity. We don’t want to spend our lives trying to keep the old faucets working,” laughed Ingrid.

“A lot of people say we’ve done 10 years worth of work in two years,” Brian said. “We tried to renovate and make it look like everything belonged.”

The Pimleys have other important matters to consider. Their son, Evan, now 2, tops the list.

“We want Evan to be from a good place and we think Milford will be a great place for him to grow up. There’s so much to do outdoors. The Delaware River is only a block away; you can go boating, swimming, camping or hiking,” Ingrid enthused.

Ingrid’s parents, Peter and Alice Jane Loewrigkeit, live near Milford in Twin Lakes, Shohola, PA. The Pimleys would visit them on weekends and liked what they saw.

“We spent a weekend at the Black Bear Film Festival and had a great time. We realized that this was a great town for a lot of different reasons, including good cultural opportunities and local interest in preservation and restoration. So we began looking at homes. Although we were scheduled to see a different house, we noticed a paper on the realtor’s desk and asked about it. It turned out to be our future home, and the first home we looked

at,” related Ingrid.

Renovating a community eyesore in a small town has its rewarding moments. People have been very supportive and interested in the project, even stopping by to ask questions or take a quick tour.

“People’s enthusiasm kept us going,” Brian said.

One day, a truck pulled up and a man stepped out with his dog. He walked up to Brian, passed him the dog’s leash and said, “I have something for you.” He handed over some photos and antique postcards depicting the Pimley’s home in days gone by.

It was Skip Gregory, a former Milford mayor, just making a house call.

“That’s one of the best things about it,” said Ingrid. “Milford seems to be a place that brings out the good in people. We always thought it was a cute little town. You can walk just about anywhere—to the pharmacy, the coffee shop, the dry cleaner, to a collection of shops along the main street. And there are lots of interesting alleys to explore. When we walk the baby to the park, we see people we’ve come to know and they just seem friendlier here. It’s cozy, homey and authentic. The houses have character. It’s got a sense of place and history that’s real, not manufactured. We’re happy to have found a place that’s not like the places we’re from.”

As the Pimleys and their son weave their lives into the fabric that is Milford, their home anchors them firmly in the town’s ongoing history.

“We saw it in its worst state; we knew it needed work. We got a lot of opinions and took our time. You can’t panic over every little thing. You need to calculate the costs, but it comes down to a feeling and this feels right,” affirmed Ingrid. And despite all the effort, time and sweat equity, Brian agrees. “You’ve got to take a chance, and you’ve got to have vision. Or, you’ve got to be crazy,” Brian said.

“I’d do it again—in a second.”



Before & after: The Pimley’s Queen Anne—above when they bought it two years ago and below with its rebuilt double-decker porches.



*The path from dream to reality is comprised of hard work, focused effort, careful prioritizing, substantial stamina, and even sacrifice.*



1898: Complex roof forms, wall textures and color variations are typical of the Queen Anne Victorian style. A porte-cochere originally extended from the right side of the house.



The renovated kitchen features granite countertops and plenty of recessed halogen lighting.

TRR photo by Charlie Buterbaugh



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# Making waves in a red-hot market

A look at the inner workings of our real estate economy

By CHARLES PETERSHEIM

It's time to buy a house. You know the market is hot. You know each passing day brings higher prices. You have confidence that the region's real estate values are poised for a long climb up.

Or maybe you own a home and those higher taxes mean one thing—the value of your largest asset is appreciating, moving up, making retirement look easier and displacing the memory of a decade of housing stagnation.

By now, even those residents far removed from the daily hustle of real estate gossip understand that the local and regional economies are growing in ways not seen for quite some time. The rejuvenation is putting money in the pockets of a broad array of residents, businesses and employees.

Opportunities abound.

## Impact of real estate

One essential factor to remember about a vibrant real estate market is that individual transactions and decisions broadly affect a region.

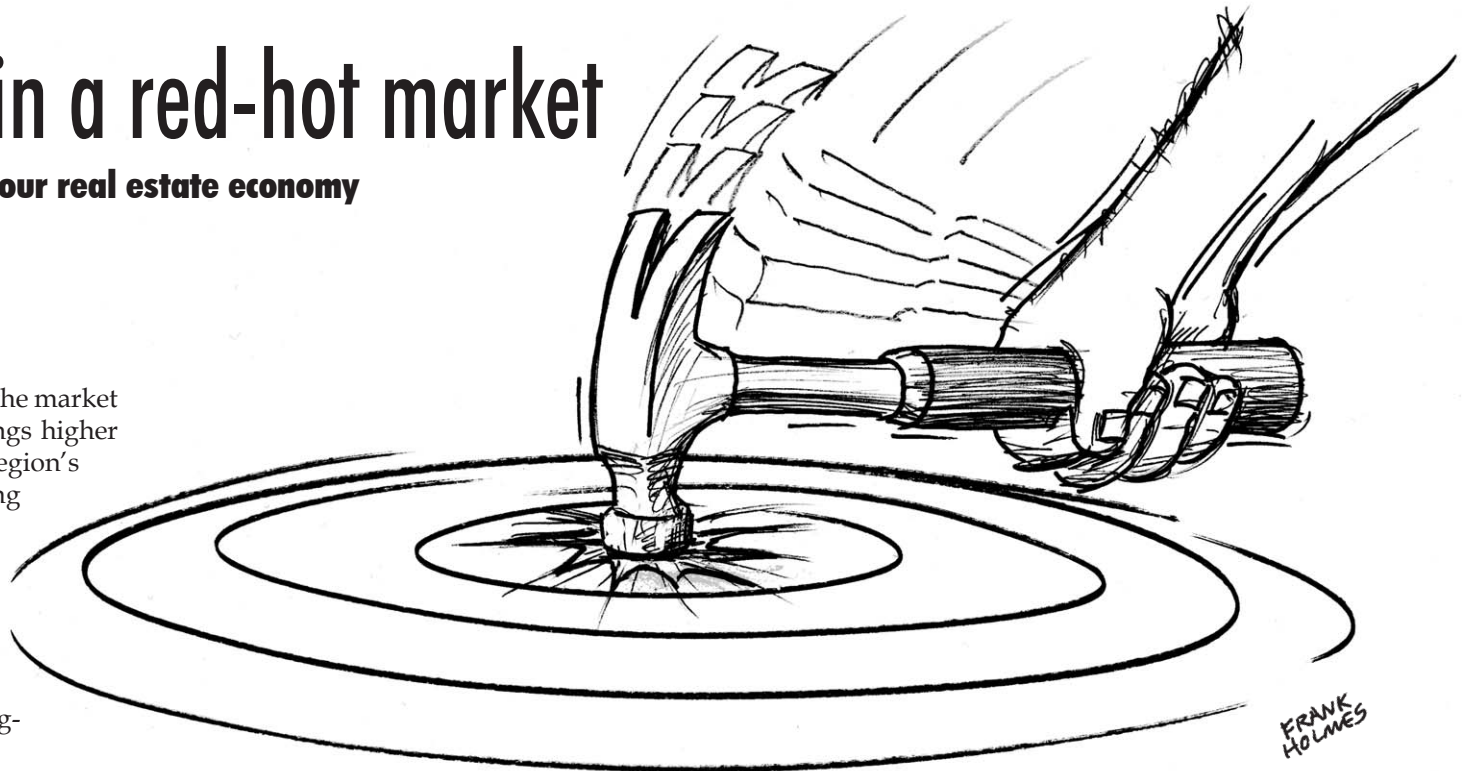
Historically, home sales and construction have served as forecasting tools for what is happening and what is about to happen to an area's economy. Real estate—even cheap real estate—is expensive, and buying a home entails a long-term commitment to an area. Similarly, fixing up or adding onto a home usually means the homeowner has confidence in a region's prospects. And confidence is contagious and self-perpetuating. Not everyone wants to plunk down their life's savings into an unproven investment, but once the rumors swirl about the money being made, more and more people who manage their money conservatively are willing to buy a piece of the pie.

The ingredients of a growing economy may seem mysterious but really are simple once the recipe is broken down into the impact of everyday decisions made by you and me.

Like a stone tossed into a still lake, a buyer's decision to purchase an old farmhouse, fix it up and spend his weekends there with his family ripples outward from where the stone enters the water.



Charles Petersheim



*The ramifications of individual transactions and decisions broadly affect a region.*

## Individual decisions, collective benefit

Mr. and Mrs. Jones, hypothetical city slickers, hear about this place two hours from the metropolitan region.

Being somewhat shrewd and savvy with their money—and never entirely comfortable with the economic health of a very expensive city real estate market—they decide to diversify their real estate portfolio. After a bit of research, they choose the Delaware River Valley and its surrounding region, which they feel is the most undervalued area that meets their prerequisites, those being the area's proximity to the city and its relatively low costs.

They begin to research the area and eventually tour around. They also begin talking about the area to their friends and associates, beginning the soft, casual sell that is much more effective than the slickest chamber of commerce brochure.

They finally find an old house on 20 acres and pay \$400,000 for it. Along the way, they have hired a local attorney, a local surveyor, a local title company and maybe got financing from a local bank. They have paid real estate commission to a local real estate company and probably hired a local home inspector. Their taxes are higher than the previous homeowner's, providing the local municipality with more revenue. Through one decision to buy a home, two individuals have affected the region's economy.

Take 30 transactions per week, 120 per month, 1,440 per year, and you start to see the dramatic impact these hardly isolated decisions drive forward on a young economic landscape.

The Joneses, however, are just beginning. They now need to renovate and update their home, do some landscaping, build a barn for the old truck and tractor they bought when they got carried away at a local auction, purchase furniture for an entire house, hire a guy to mow their lawn, hire a house cleaner, buy appliances, hire a snow plow guy, etc. All the while, their friends and associates continue to hear about this grand adventure and amazing place—this experiment in frontier living only two hours from the city where a gentleman's farm costs less than a nice one-bedroom apartment in the city.

## Business spending

The impact of business spending is of course much more dramatic than an individual's spending. The Joneses may end up buying a lawn mower, but a busy landscape company might buy



four of them, plus a trailer to haul them and a truck to tow the trailer. The landscaper, a hard worker as well as a good salesman, might land four new accounts, might need some local bank financing, and might need to hire four more employees next year. Because his competitor is also a good businessman, he will need to compete for these workers, driving up wages, increasing the spending power of each of his new employees and putting more money in the pockets of his workers.

This newly hired worker with cash in his/her pocket now has more money to spend and may decide to build that garage she has been dreaming of, or buy a new washer and dryer, or upgrade her house or buy a car for the child who just turned 17 and got all As on a report card.

The ripple effects continue to swirl throughout the economy. Former President Reagan called this phenomenon "trickle-down economics," but in a truly heated economic environment, the effects can be more like a mountain waterfall in springtime when the winter's snow is melting.

A construction company probably impacts an economy like no other business. Building a house entails the hiring of dozens of companies, working together, working individually, intensely utilizing the area's resources, pushing suppliers for better pricing and faster service. Architects, engineers, surveyors, framers, plumbers, electricians, masons, carpenters, painters and landscapers—all with more work, more cash flow, more incentive to work harder and grow their businesses—take a chance, because for the first time in a generation, tomorrow has a chance of being better than today.

Continued on page 23

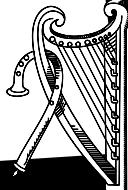
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## Market Mechanics

Continued from page 21



### Economic growth spurs challenges

Good news seldom travels alone, and an overheated economy can bring bad tidings in the way of higher prices, slower service and a general scarcity of labor, be it for a homeowner trying to find a plumber or a plumber trying to find a new good employee at a wage he can afford to pay.

Quickly rising real estate values cause alarm among new homebuyers. The overloaded and overworked infrastructure of banks, attorneys, surveyors and other professionals gets bogged down, turning the purchase of a home into a test of perseverance and patience. Planning boards and building inspectors—all unpaid or underpaid—find it hard to address all the concerns and requests. Contractors learn the hard way that being too busy can be as dangerous to the health of their business as not being busy enough. Businesses across the economic spectrum intensely compete for new help.



### Good help is hard to find

Be it a homeowner looking for a contractor or a contractor looking for a carpenter, finding and retaining help is never easy and is especially difficult in a red-hot market.

Being a builder myself, I remember when my construction business just started to thrive. One of my carpenters—an all-around tradesman with masonry skills as well—was full of great attributes. While he was generally happy and liked where he worked, a chance encounter with a contractor at Home Depot evolved into a lucrative job offer. Before I knew it, this carpenter gave me his two-week's notice. I thought about matching the offer, but when I learned it was nearly double

what I was paying, I stopped attempting to lure him back. Consequently, I was in a position where I could barely keep up with scheduled work, let alone think about adding new customers.

Similarly, the customer is also affected. The contractor that paid my carpenter unheard-of wages had to pass these costs onto his customer, and my company that lost a carpenter could not keep up with its workload.

Perversely, as prices for goods and services escalate, the wage earners that are earning more money find that rising prices have diminished their spending power, creating a cat-chasing-its-tail scenario.

This is an economy of inflation, where more money buys less.

*In a truly heated economic environment, the effects can be like a mountain waterfall in springtime when the winter's snow is melting.*



### Small towns, national trends

While individual decisions greatly impact a region's prospects, national (and even international) events also play a role in sustaining or restraining an area's economy. America's punitive tariffs on soft-wood imports from Canada raise the cost of building a house. The Federal Reserve Board's decision to raise interest rates takes money out of the pockets of homeowners and

businesses alike. The World Trade Center tragedy shot insurance rates through the roof, forcing businesses to decide to be properly insured or to hire another worker. A war in the Middle East that causes oil prices to double affects every type of business.

These unseen forces can cause bedlam for a small business or homeowner because the effects are gradual and largely unseen. But subtly, bills become harder to pay and monthly balance sheets show less profit than they should, considering how busy the contractor seems.



### Speed, quality or price

While participating in this type of economic environment can seem a bit like a Darwinian jungle, adhering to an old business rule can provide some much needed solace. The rule states that a provider of services—be it a construction company or a graphic design company—can deliver a product with two of the following three attributes: speed, quality or price. The company can provide a good service fast while sacrificing a low price; it can deliver a good service at a low price while sacrificing speed; or it can deliver a mediocre or poor service fast at a low price. But it can only very rarely deliver a quality product, quickly, at a low price.

Anyone who is consuming real estate or home improvement products in a fast moving economy will be at an advantage to remember this golden rule.

*Charles Petersheim was born and raised in Lancaster County, PA, attended the University of Pittsburgh and spent a few years in New York City before discovering Sullivan County, a place he hopes to call home for many years. He presently makes his living designing and building turn-of-the-century farmhouses.*

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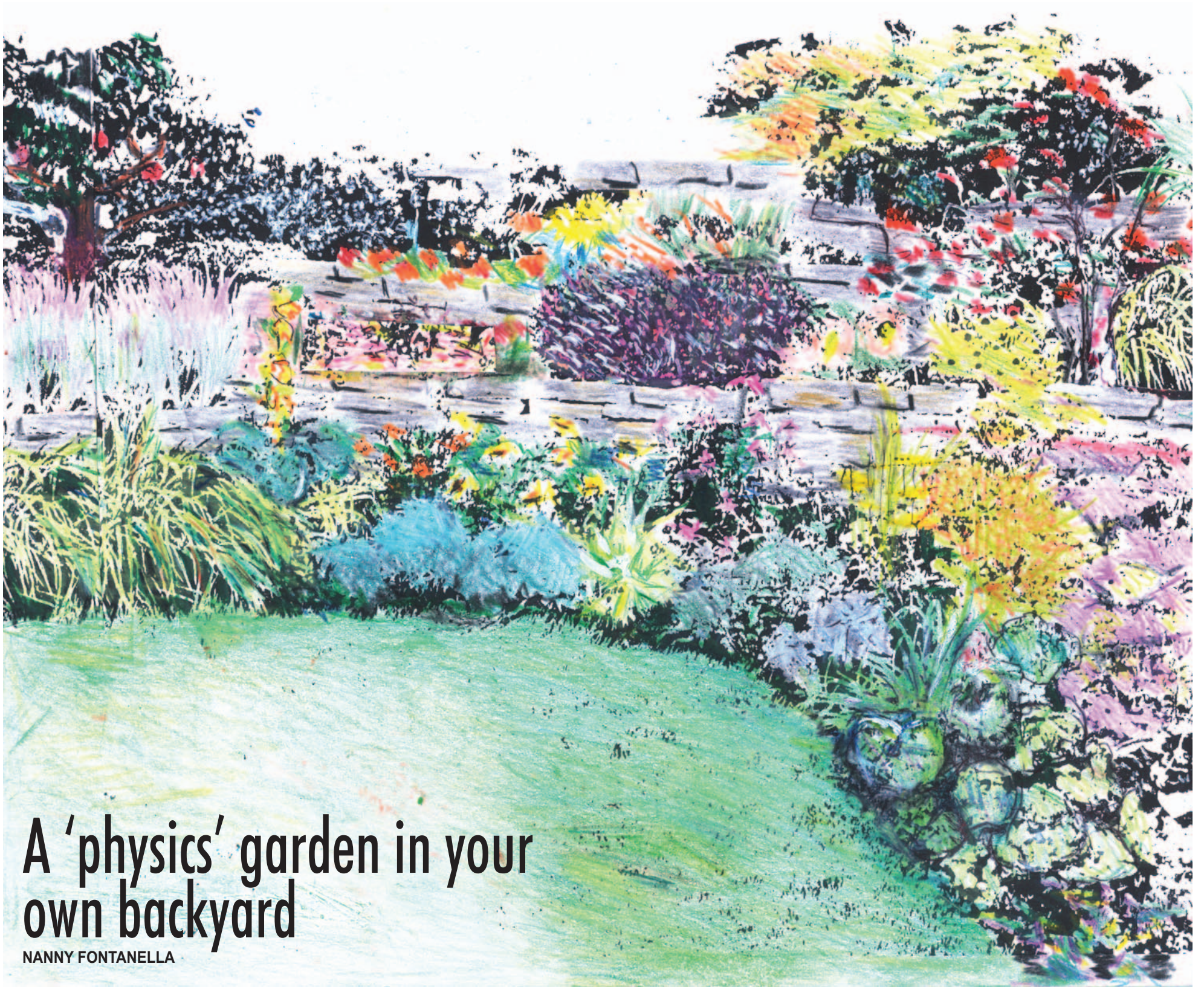
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# A 'physics' garden in your own backyard

NANNY FONTANELLA

TRR drawing by Nanny Fontanella

**B**uilding a medicinal garden close to the house and combining with it vegetables and ornamentals that are also not frequently eaten by wildlife provides a source of beauty and can improve the value of your property.

A few hundred years before medicine became a specialty or even a profession, healing herbs were grown in monasteries and by village "wise" women (who were a little like the wise guys of today). The word "physician" comes from *physic*, an herb or mineral that focuses on the digestive system.

Medicinal herbs have a long blooming period, are fragrant and often deer resistant.

Herbs like a sunny exposure with rare exceptions (like comfrey, which will grow anywhere in anything). They prefer sandy loam, but we have heavy clay around these parts. The easiest way to conquer this problem is to construct a raised bed, using a step design (see inset on page 29).

If your house is built on a hill, carve narrow terraces and face the steps with stone or brick as mini-retaining walls. If your terrain is flat, it's possible to use this design by creating a wall behind the steps. The wall becomes a charming screen edging a path from the house on which clematis or other vines grow. Thyme cascades over the wall, becoming easily available for culinary uses. Parsley is best grown in pots or windowsills because it is deer caviar. And if it's in a pot, it can be overwintered indoors.

Four or five railway ties (available at local lumber yards) should be sufficient to create the wall's height. Measure and drill holes on either end of the wood so that one or two metal rods (used to reinforce concrete) run through the holes and are hammered a foot into the soil to stabilize the retaining wall.

On the garden side, construct steps by building stone or brick "cribs," and fill with rubble, garden debris or newspapers (any refugee from the dump will do). Top off the steps with one-third sand, one-third ordinary topsoil and one-third compost. Sand is usually available at the transfer station, free if hauled away.

The advantage of a terrace plan is an easy-to-care for garden with the spontaneity of a cottage garden but without the cluttered design. A labor-intensive alternative (see inset on page 29) is the classic knot design, a formal garden that can be edged with boxwood or small-leaf holly.

Certain herbs repel insects and aid the growth of other plants. Fennel is the exception, which will retard the growth of beans, tomatoes and kohlrabi. Stinging

Though a life of retreat offers various joys,  
None, I think, will compare with time one employs,  
In the study of herbs, or in striving to gain  
Some practical knowledge of Nature's Domain.

Get a garden!

—'Hortulus', by Walafrid Strabo (AD 900)

nettle and yarrow, grown near herbs, increase their aroma by increasing the amount of essential oils. Chamomile and borage increase neighboring plants resistance to disease. Basil planted around a rose bush repels aphids. Feverfew inter-planted between rows of carrots deters carrot fly.

Adding "weedy" herbs such as comfrey, dandelion, nettle and yarrow to compost accelerates the breakdown of other plant components and adds minerals.

Using the aroma of herbs for healing has had a long tradition. Angelica is uplifting, strengthening and invigorating. Basil is calming, pain-relieving and antiseptic. Chamomile is calming, sleep-inducing and pacifying. Clary-sage is relaxing, uplifting and euphoric. Coriander/cilantro is invigorating, stimulating and pain-relieving. Fennel is cleansing, refreshing and relaxing. Honeysuckle is romantic, relaxing and calming. Hops is sleep-inducing, relaxing and mentally strengthening. Jasmine is sensual, reassuring and calming.

Continued on page 29





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## A 'physics' garden in your own backyard

Continued from page 29

Lavender is insect-repellent, anti-septic and calming. Lemon balm is insect-repellent, strengthening and calming. Marjoram is comforting and strengthening. Mint clears the head and is refreshing. Rosemary is uplifting and invigorating. Thyme is antiseptic, insect repellent, warming and strengthening. Violet is sleep-inducing, calming, soothing and cooling.

Planting an aromatic herb garden is sensual and promotes health. The tiny oil-secreting glands can often be seen as tiny pinprick dots when the leaf is held up to the light. The oils are released when the flowers or leaves are brushed against or rubbed between the fingers. Some herbs like angelica, lavender, thyme

and elder are released by the warmth of the sun.

The following is a partial list of herbs that will grow well in a pot or in the terraced garden: angelica, artemisia, basil, black cohosh, borage, chives, catmint, chamomile, calendula, chives, comfrey, cilantro, coriander, dill, echinacea, fennel, heather and heath, horse radish, hyssop, inulin, lavender, lemon balm, lovage, marjoram, milk thistle, mint, meadowsweet, marsh mallow, motherwort, mullein, nasturtium, New Jersey tea, parsley, primula, pulsatilla, purple sage, rosemary, rue, shiso, skullcap, stevia, strawberry, stinging nettle, tarragon, thyme, valerian, viola, yarrow. These cultivars are interplanted with tomato, gourd, cucumber and squash. The squash and

*The advantage of a terrace design is an easy-to-care-for garden with the spontaneity of a cottage garden but without the cluttered design.*

cucumber wander here and there to fill empty spaces.

The following are a few herbal anecdotes and rhymes:

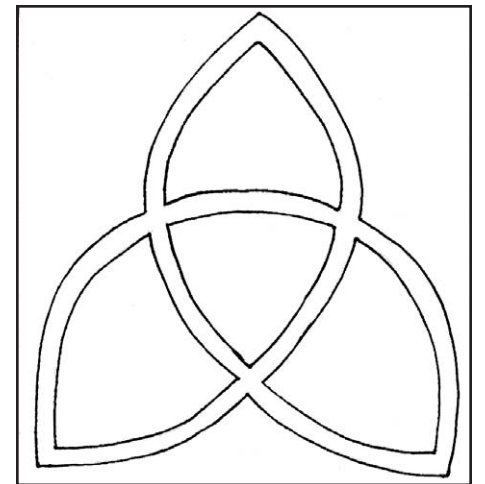
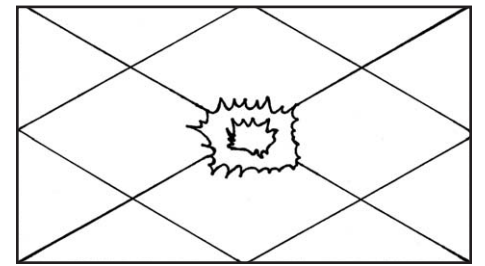
- Borage for courage! So runs the old proverb. The rough green leaves have a flavor of cucumber and a reputation for healing eczema. The blue flowers are stunning and the bees go wild. Our great-great-great grandmothers candied the flowers.

- Chamomile makes a great lawn, which requires little or no mowing and the odor is heavenly. The finely dissected foliage is velvety in appearance with little daisy flowers.

- "The leaves of chervil are exceedingly good, wholesome and pleasant among other salad herbs, giving the taste of anise seed unto the rest." — John Gerard, 1597.

- The dandelion has existed since the creation of the universe and sows itself, wrote Father John Kunzle in 1911.

- Dill is excellent for infant colic. The name is derived from the Saxon verb "dilla," which means to lull, because it helps babies sleep, wrote Frances A. Bardswell.



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# Completely organized recycling

By LAURIE STUART

**T**o many, recycling is a way of life—which makes perfect sense.

With plastics being made from precious and dwindling oil reserves and our nation's shrinking landfill space, we are challenged as responsible consumers to expend a bit of energy and cultivate awareness to reduce, reuse and recycle. From take-out containers to highly engineered zip-lock plastic bags, we are constantly bombarded with either the specter of burgeoning waste disposal bills or managing the clutter of saving and re-using useful containers.

And it takes a bit of organization to manage the flow of recycling through our households.

The Barrett and Henriksen household in Narrowsburg, NY has recycling down to a science. Helle Henriksen lives with her nine-year-old son Winter and husband Niall Barrett, a furniture-maker and editor. They recycle everything from newspaper, junk mail, chipboard products like pasta boxes, cans, clear glass, colored glass and number 1 and 2 plastics that are recycled easily in either Wayne or Sullivan County.

"I even give some of the five and sixes to friends from New Jersey who can recycle them in their community, but you have to draw the line somewhere," Henriksen said with laugh.

"Recycling was a big thing for a while when the county started its program in the 1990s," she said, "but I'm not sure that people are as concerned now. As citizens, and as a nation, we could do better. If there were more incentives for busi-

ness and the government to recycle we could take recycling a whole lot farther."

And taking recycling to its most organized and complete level is what Henriksen excels at.

A stainless steel covered bucket sits on her kitchen counter for kitchen scraps and the compost bin. An open cabinet of buckets and shelves in a room just off the kitchen take the glass, plastic and paper on a temporary basis. There, Henriksen also stores returnable bottles and number 5, 6 and 7 plastics to give to the local tackle shop to use as bait containers.

"I use the plastic bags that I get from the store to line my kitchen garbage can; they just seem to be the right size. I don't really have that many bags because I take a canvas bag to the grocery store."

Henriksen said recycling was handed down as tradition from her mother in Denmark.

"Whenever we tore off a piece of aluminum foil, my mother would always advise us to be frugal. She would ask, 'Do you know how much of the world's resources go into making that product?'"

"My mother actually saves things that I throw away," Henriksen said. "I wash out heavy [self-closing] plastic bags, but if they are really gross, I'll just throw them away. At some point you say, 'I don't have enough time and energy to recycle everything.'"

"Still, as responsible consumers I can't help but think that if we all were to use something that we would normally throw away, even just one more time, we would cut down on our consumption of natural resources and save room in our landfills."



Helle Henriksen holds a plastic take-out container. "These things drive me nuts" she says. "But my husband sometimes thinks I'm crazy for saving all of it."



A set of shelves holds plastic tubs for mixed paper, cans, glass, plastics and newspapers for recycling. Shelves hold deposit bottles and non-recycled plastic containers to be taken to the local tackle shop for bait and cardboard egg carton to go back to the farmer. The tubs are emptied into another set of 55-gallon cans in the basement and then taken to the recycling center when they are full.



A stainless steel bucket sits on the kitchen counter to hold food scraps for composting.

TRR photos by Laurie Stuart

## Recycling resources

The following items can be recycled in Pike and Wayne counties in Pennsylvania and Sullivan County, New York:

- Colored glass bottles (brown and green) Wayne and Pike counties
- Clear glass
- Corrugated cardboard
- Metal cans
- Plastic bottles (bottles marked with #1 or #2 on the bottom)
- Newspapers (clean newspapers and newspaper inserts)
- Magazines (catalogs, magazines and junk mail)
- White goods (refrigerators, freezers, washers and dryers, stoves and ranges, hot-water heaters, furnaces, air conditioners) in Wayne County
- Light iron (BBQ grills, microwave ovens, metal desks, lawn mowers (all fluids drained), bicycle frames, lawn chair frames, old swing set frames)
- Chipboard (cereal boxes, tissue boxes, shoe boxes, gift boxes, dry and frozen food boxes, paper product end rolls) in Wayne County
- Used motor oil (Sullivan County)
- Used tires (Sullivan County)

### Where to Recycle

#### Pike County

- Delaware Municipal Bldg., Wilson Hill Road, Dingmans Ferry, PA
- Dingmans Municipal Bldg., Fisher Lane, Milford, PA
- Dutch's Market, Rte. 507, Greentown, PA
- Lackawaxen Municipal Bldg., Rte. 590 and Township Road, Lackawaxen, PA
- Lehman Township Municipal Bldg., Municipal Road, Bushkill, PA
- Midtown Convenience Store, Rte. 434, Shohola, PA
- Milford Township Municipal Bldg., Rte. 6 and 209, Milford, PA
- Palmyra Township Municipal Bldg., Gumbletown Road, Paupack, PA
- Pocono Environmental Education Center, Bushkill, PA

#### Wayne County

The Wayne County Recycling Center is located on Route 652 in Berlin Township.

#### Municipal drop offs

- Bethany Public Library lot, Bethany, fourth Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Damascus Township Building, second Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)
- Dreher Township Building, Newfoundland, second Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Dutch's Market, Hawley, first and third Saturdays of the month (9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)
- Lake Township Building, second and fourth Saturdays of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Lehigh Township Building, first Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Manchester Township Building, third Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Paupack Township Building, second and fourth Saturdays of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Brown's Country Store, Pleasant Mount, first and third Saturdays of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Lakewood Fire Hall, Lakewood, every Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Salem Hardware Store, Hamlin, third Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Sterling Township Building, Maple Grove Road, third Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
- Robert D. Wilson School parking lot, Waymart, first Saturday of the month (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

#### Sullivan County

All municipal transfer stations located in Ferndale and the towns of Cochection, Highland and Rockland, as well as the Sullivan County Landfill, have recycling facilities.



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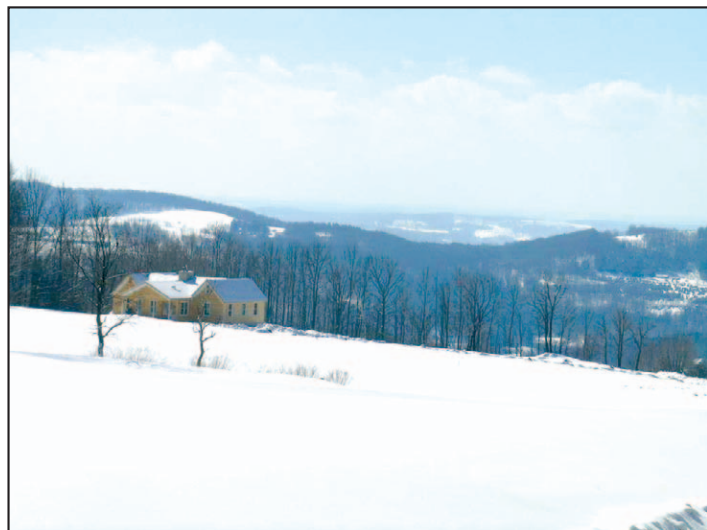


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