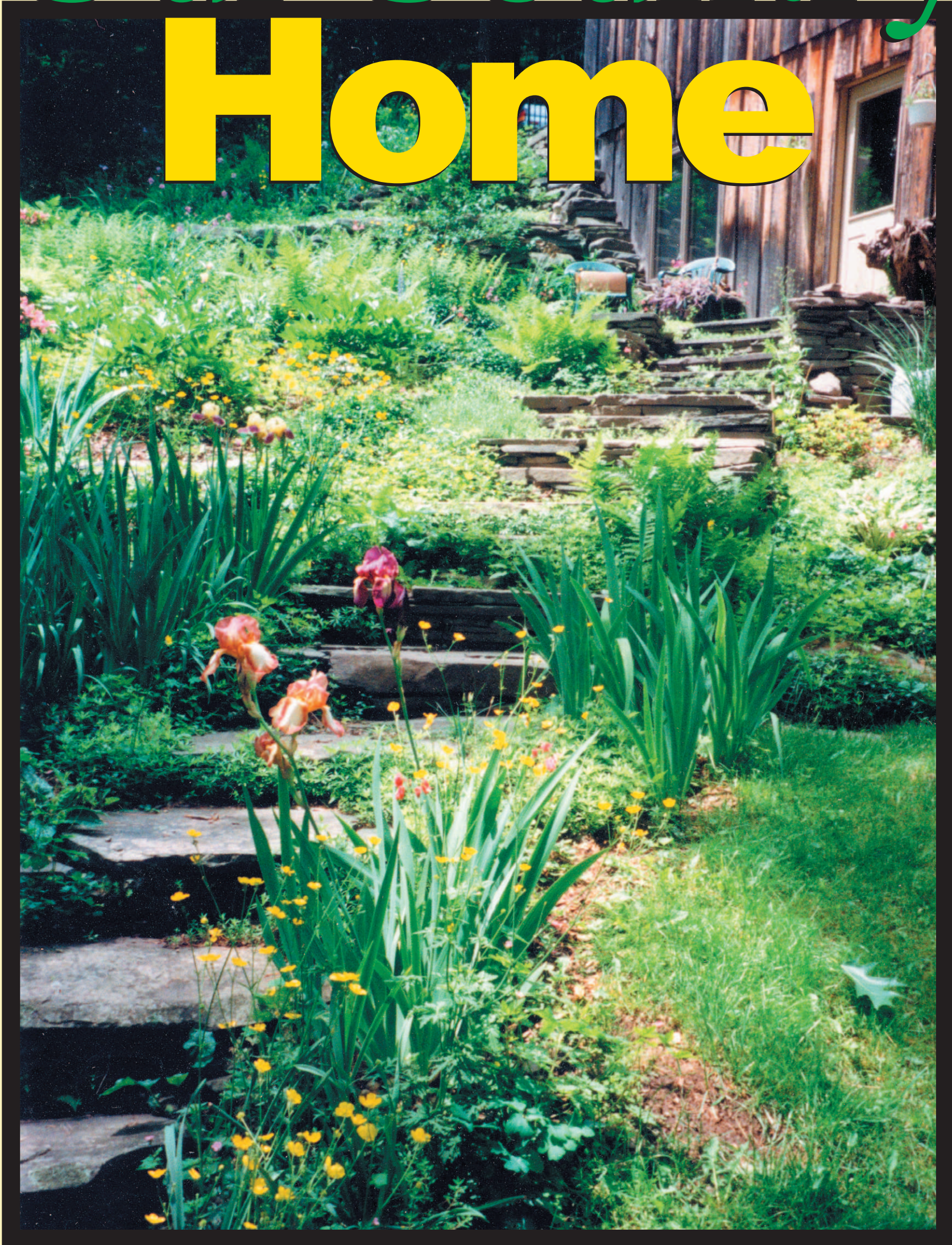


# Our Country

# Home



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Spring 2006

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# Our Country Home

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TRR photo by Marcia Nehemiah

Beverly Sterner stands at the entrance to her country home that she has fondly named "Beverly's Hill."

## Making the most of the season

**T**here is something about spring that gets us to thinking about our homes: cleaning, renewing and maybe even renovating.

From relatively minor undertakings like sewing decorative accessories for your bedroom, bath or kitchen, to more substantial undertakings like adding a sunroom or patio, this issue of **Our Country Home** focuses on sprucing up your house.

Every spring

holds the anticipation of summer, and we offer a few suggestions to help you plan for the coming season. Many of you have gardens: our gardening column helps

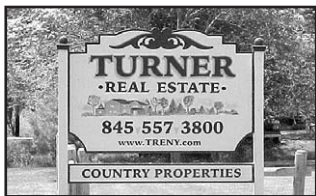
you expand your planting by bringing flowers onto a deck or patio in containers. And summertime is a time of celebrations. Start planning them now by reading our piece on hosting an elegant barbecue for an upcoming graduation or Father's Day or even a wedding.



Marcia Nehemiah  
Section Editor

## We want your home

If you have a unique country home and would like to see it featured in this special section, call 845-252-7414 or e-mail [marcianeheimiah@riverreporter.com](mailto:marcianeheimiah@riverreporter.com).



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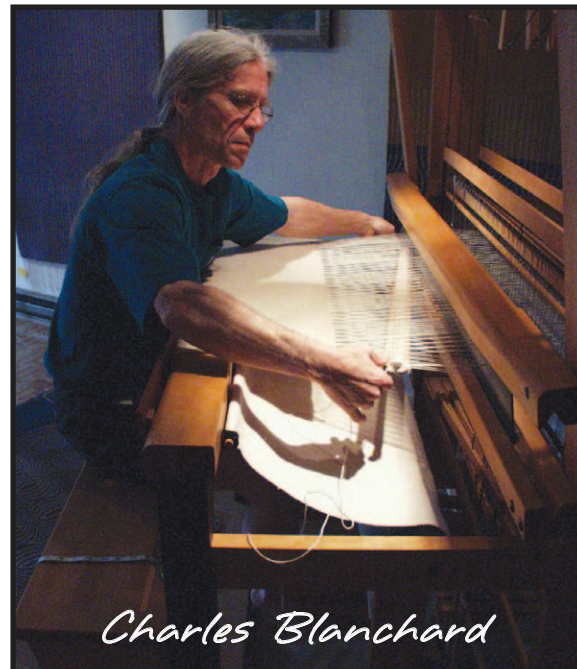


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# Beverly's Hill

By MARCIA NEHEMIAH

**B**everly Sterner's country home is about transformation. It is about providing functionality at the same time that it endows a space with a spirit. And like all great country homes, it's about blurring the boundaries between the outdoors and the indoors.

Once two separate buildings set into the side of a hill along the river, Beverly and her late companion Bill Kestler worked for many years to integrate the spaces and create a flowing arrangement of rooms and outdoor spaces that lend this little hill a little magic.

In 1975, Beverly visited Mila-ville, PA with a friend and fell in love with the Upper Delaware region. She said, "The minute I stepped foot on this property, I knew I had to live here," even though it needed a tremendous amount of work.

"When I moved up here full time in 1983, it was just me and my dog, a fabulous German Shepherd named Ruff." She began renovating by removing the dilapidated hunting cabin, connecting the living room to what was then a workshop, making the workshop into a room and installing a bathroom.

Her young friends Zeke Boyle and the late Tom O'Brien helped her. "I was the general contractor, and I didn't know a thing about renovating. I had a vision, but I didn't have all the details figured out," she said.

During this phase of renovation, she was left without a bathroom or kitchen, so she had to use the neighbor's outhouse, brush her teeth in the creek and bathe in the river. That's how "The Nourishing Rock" got its name. When she thought she just couldn't face the turmoil and upheaval of renovation, she sat on the rock in the middle of the river and found some space in her soul.

## The second phase

"I knew that when the right man would enter my life, I would create a bedroom out of the garage," she said. "But I never dreamed that he would be able to do it himself, and so much more. Bill came into my life in 1989 and together we began the second phase of the



*Contributed photo*

Although the house has only three rooms, a sense of space is achieved because each room is on a different level and united by decks and stairways.



Although this door faces into the house, the placement of unique cut-outs and mirrors reflects the outdoors.

transformation. I would dream it up and design it, and he would build it. Skylights were installed in the living room, the garage became the bedroom, the cottage was built and stone paths, steps and terraces were constructed all around the house and garden."

## Letting in light and nature

Light is a key component in the 950-square-foot house. The bedroom has a large sliding glass door that faces the river and leads out to a deck and a hot tub. But the wall facing those doors also has a unique configuration of cut-outs with mirrors that reflect the outside trees back into the room. Two skylights allow not only daylight into the room, but also moonlight which pours what Beverly calls "moon baths" over the bed.

All the windows in the house face south or east. Beverly takes advantage of this when she wakes early each morning (at 4:30!) and watches the sun rise over the river from her chair in the living room where she writes or reads at the beginning of her day. The placement of windows also gives the advantage of passive solar heat in the winter.

Continued on page 9

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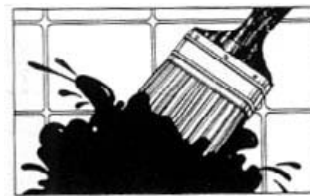
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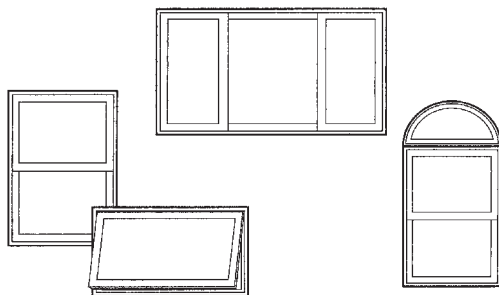
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# Beverly's Hill

Continued from page 7

The dining nook in the living area looks out on a white pine tree and the river. She said that, in addition to the chickadees, goldfinch and woodpeckers that come to the feeders, she sees eagles and great blue herons gliding over the water from that window.

## Simplicity and functionality

The kitchen is an example of well-used space. "I purposely designed the room to be functional. I was very precise because I had a small space and I wanted it to work for me."

Pull-out drawers in the moveable island function as a recycling center. A counter separates the living area from the cooking area. On the living room side of this counter are bookcases and on the other side are open shelves for dishes, pots and pans. The refrigerator is a small European model with wooden facings on the doors that blend in with the cabinets.

Frequently, walls lining a staircase are wasted space. Not so in this house. A thin pull-out shelf holds vases, and two other doors open to reveal storage space for various kitchen items.

Detached from the house is a small one-room cottage that functions as a guest house with a compost toilet. Here, Beverly placed futons and pillows on the floor, and created a gathering room/sleeping area. This one-room retreat has served as a meditation space and workshop classroom.

## Maximizing the setting

Although set on only two-thirds of an acre, the property, like the house, feels much larger than it actually is. A creek borders Beverly's property on the south, meandering down to the river. In addition to the natural stone

formations lining the creek, stone steps and plantings create terraces that correspond to the levels of the house. In the summer, Beverly suspends a hammock between two trees over the creek, and even when she is in the house, she can hear the sound of water running over the rocks. Russian olive trees and fir trees abound with bird feeders and the twittering of birdsong.

## In the future

Beverly's house is a true expression of her values and beliefs. "Our lives are a path of consciousness, if we so choose," she said. "We become aware of who we are, our purpose here, how we live and how we relate, both to people and to our environment."

"I tried to apply consciousness to the renovation and transformation of my home, really thinking about how it functioned so that it could best serve me and my environment. I recycle everything I can, I compost, I garden organically, I try to live as consistently as I can with my values, treasuring the precious gift of this land and this community."

Prominently displayed in the entrance to her house is a framed piece of artwork Beverly obtained over 30 years ago. Written on a tree trunk is a verse of poetry describing what a house should be: "May it be a lighthouse beam for travelers buffeted by storm."

A social activist who has devoted her life's efforts to the causes of peace and justice, she plans to create a foundation to bequeath her house on the hill to those working to improve the world. "This house has been such a blessing in my life. Such a gift," she said. "It will be my legacy. I intend to leave it as a retreat for healing and for social activists. This is what I can leave to the world."

"This is a little paradise to be shared," she said.



This rice-paper screen hides a large closet.



The kitchen of Beverly's home maximizes space and provides a view of the river.



TRR photos by Marcia Nehemiah

The built-in handmade bed and cabinets make optimal use of space in the bedroom.

**On the cover:** A stone path beside Beverly's country home follows a stream that runs down to the Delaware River.

Contributed photo

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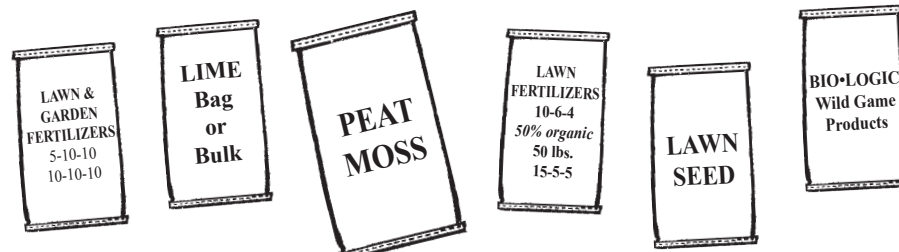


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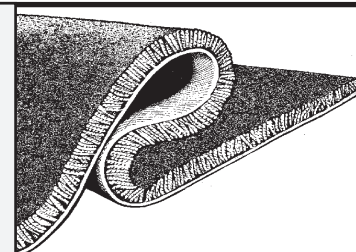
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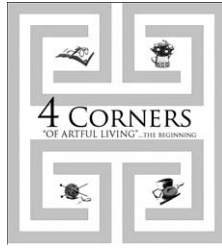
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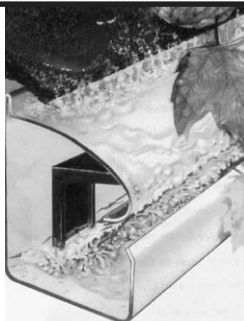
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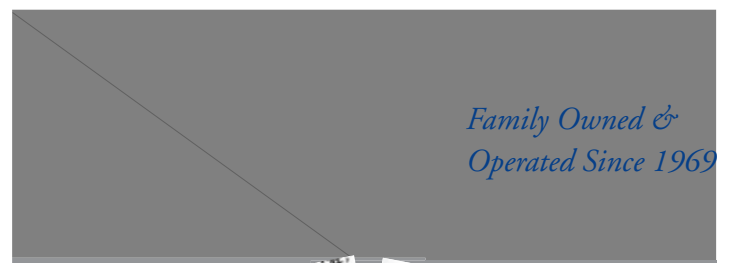
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# The more the merrier

By DEBRA CONWAY

To John and Deb Botti, a good collection is like a good potato chip: you can't have just one. The Orange County couple collect collections. And that's how they've decorated their 1791 stone country home as well as their Middletown, NY business, John's Harvest Inn.

Between the two places, they have over 160 antique clocks dating from 1849 to the 1920s; 50 frogs—both indoor and outdoor—made of cement, resin and ceramic; glass cabinets full of Hummels and cut and pressed glass; more than a dozen Humpty Dumptys; nearly two dozen glass baskets; and nearly a dozen antique music boxes dating back to the 1830s. If that's not enough, the couple also has rooms full of Raggedy Anns and Andys; snowmen; Christmas villages; Byer's Choice Christmas Carolers; woodcuts and framed Amish paper cuts; pictures of chickens, roosters, eggs, cats, cows, hot air balloons, birds and birdhouses; Lizzie High Dolls; teapots; pocket watches; perfume bottles; light houses; and assorted furniture and accents—including a large planter, carved settee, wall and stair stencils, vase and hanging candles—all in a pineapple motif.

And don't even ask about their daughter Jessica's Mickey Mouse, key chain and leopard-skin ensembles.

"I always liked decorating with accents," said Deb, who wasn't a serious collector until she married one. "So I got an angel because I like angels. Then I realized, 'Who says I only need one? I can have as many as I want.' There's always room for one more."

## Start your own

John Botti got his first frog as a gift when he was 10, liked it and accumulated a few others prior to his marriage 10 years ago. When they were combining households, they discovered that Deb had a few frogs also, and the coincidence sparked their interest in their current over-the-top collection.

"Usually, collections start with something meaningful, something with sentimental value or some kind of a memento," said Kelly Wilson, owner of Hare Hollow in Milford, PA. "Someone gave you a rabbit as a gift, and you liked it and wanted more. Or, you inherited your mother's bell collection and decided to add to it."

"Collections can also start as souvenirs from your travels," said Wilson, who pointed to the wooden cut-out Cat's Meow village houses she carries.

Sold all over the country, Cat's Meow Village collectibles feature such things as a well known lighthouse from Cape Cod, or a particular B&B in Maine. Wilson sells a replica of building from Milford that is very popular with tourists who collect the series.

Diana Barreiro, co-owner of Bridgewater Mercantile in Jeffersonville, NY, has a personal collection of sun faces that started with one she was attracted to while on a trip to Mexico.

Another way to start a collection is with a color, said Helene Santeramo,

*Who says I only need one?*



Chickens, roosters and eggs congregate atop kitchen cabinets.



TRR photos by Debra Conway

An assortment of frogs adds interest to the space above the entertainment unit in the Botti home.

one of the partners of Oui Three Antiques in Honesdale, PA. If you have a lot of green in a room, you might start a collection of Depression glass to go along with it, she said, or add a lamp with a green glass shade.

The Bottis have a blue glass collection in their blue and yellow dining room "to take the eye around the room," said Deb.

## Display your collection

How you display your collections is crucial, the experts agree.

Cardinal rule: similar items should be grouped together for maximum impact. Barreiro offers Hummels for sale in a glass display case that is also for sale. The Fiesta ware, Yellow ware and Blue Willow dinnerware in her store is merchandised in a country hutch (also for sale) or on tops of cabinets. She recommends the same for home displays.

Wilson suggests displaying the Willow Tree angels she sells in the same shadow boxes she offers or standing them individually on decorative shelves.

The Bottis find that commingling two collections adds interest. They display some of their clocks mixed with the various Humpty Dumptys hidden in between.

"Some are high, some are low, some hang over the edge of the shelves," John said. "The variation of sizes, heights and textures makes it more appealing to look at. It's not all one thing."

Juxtaposing elements—usually in odd numbers—also adds interest, he said. In the clock collection, which he said will pay for his retirement, he may place an Art Deco style next to a marble Rococo one.

When curios, cabinet tops and

tables can't contain some collections, entire rooms of the Botti homestead are assigned a theme. Thus the cat collection in Deb's office where she used to write a column for *Cat Fancy* magazine, or the welcoming pineapples of hospitality at the grand main entrance to the historic home, work together.

"The idea is to have fun with it all," said Deb Botti.

"And the key is: the more, the better," added John.

For more information, call Hare Hollow, 570/296-5757; Oui Three Antiques, 570/253-8008; Bridgewater Mercantile, 845/482-4044.



Displaying similar items in a beautiful breakfast nook like this one draws attention to a collection.



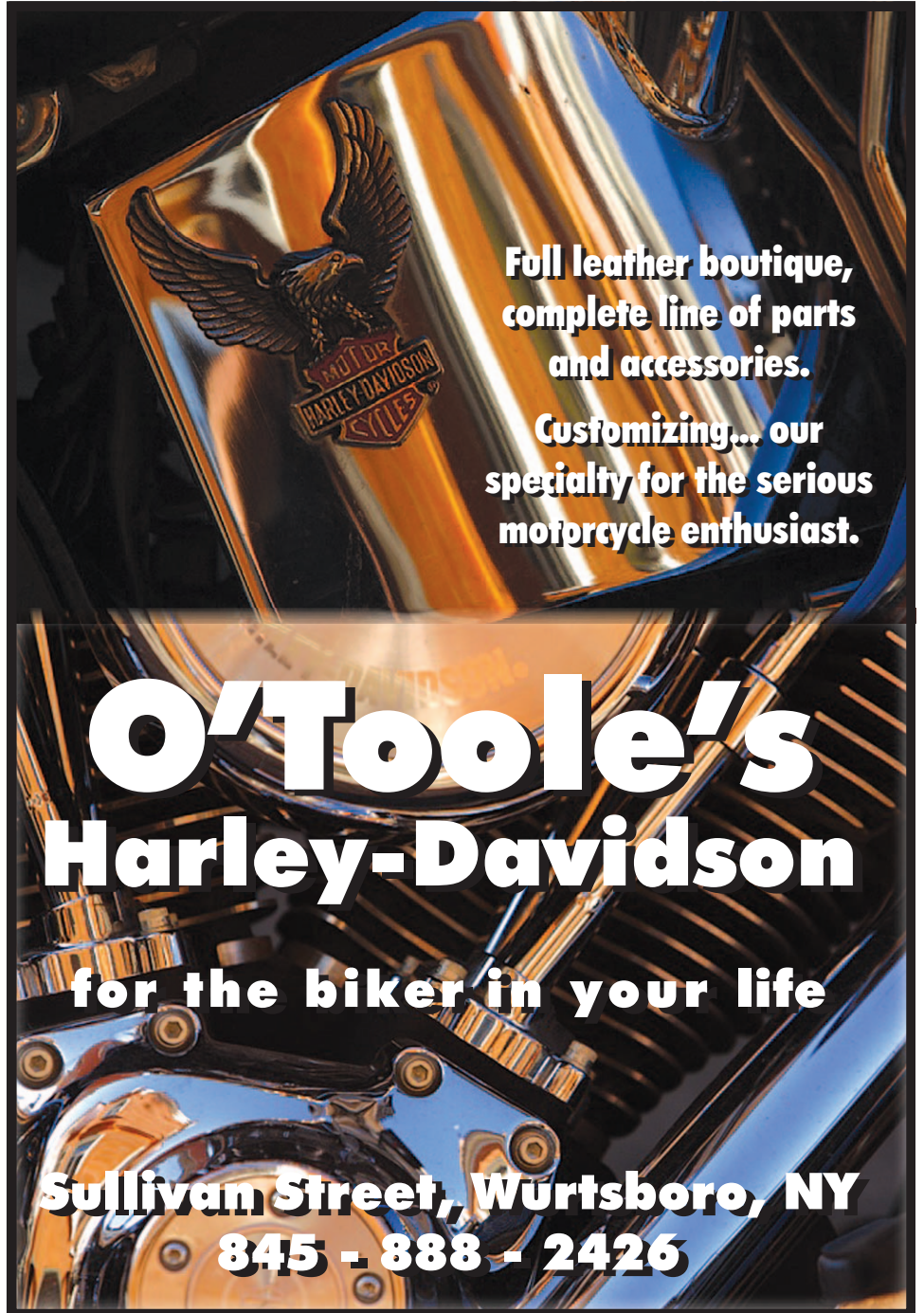
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# What exactly *is* a tricky tray?

By KAITLIN CARNEY

**T**he tricky tray and the firehouse dinner are the essence of small-town community life. A tricky tray is generally a fundraiser for a church or school-affiliated group or club. The firemen's dinner raises money for volunteer fire departments. Both are social events that bring together familiar faces and some strangers to help the greater good in typical small-town fashion.

Tricky trays depend on small-town support because most, if not all, of the prizes are donated by local businesses. Participants buy sheets of tickets and then browse the displayed items; when they decide which items they want to win, they place tickets in trays. The caller picks a winner, and runners dart around the room delivering prizes. Revenue is generated not only by ticket sales but also by concession sales.

Not unlike tricky trays, firehouse dinners aim to bring small, country communities together to support a worthwhile cause. In country towns, the local firehouse relies on volunteers ready to respond to a call at any time of the day or night. The support of the community goes beyond staffing, however.

High attendance at these events not only nurtures the ties within a close-knit country community, but raises much needed funds to offset the costs of uniforms, equipment and firehouse upkeep.

Why do these events depict typical country life? They represent the innate desire of people within these communities to support and nurture their own.

The Business and Professional Women's Club (BPW) of Port Jervis, NY recently sponsored "Stars of Tomorrow," a tricky tray event to raise scholarship money for local high schoolers. About 800 people filled the Port Jervis High School gymnasium to enjoy a day of winning and socializing. Young and old admired the prizes and stuffed trays with tickets. When Liam McCann, nine, was asked why he attended tricky trays, he responded emphatically, "To win stuff!"

Yvonne Duryea, president of the BPW, views the tricky tray as "more than a fundraising event." Instead, she sees "a community event where people come together to have fun and ultimately be part of donating money to scholarships for our future." Highlighting the community aspect of the event, she remarked, "We couldn't do



TRR photos by Kaitlin Carney

Mackenzie Trainor, left, and Samantha Outwater, both of Port Jervis, NY enjoy the "Stars of Tomorrow" tricky tray held at Port Jervis High School.

it individually. It's a group effort."

The BPW relied on local businesses for their donations and for sponsorship to help advertise. The Tri-State Chamber of Commerce also helped. With this support from the community, they were able to raise \$12,000 in scholarships to deserving graduates of Port Jervis and Delaware Valley high schools.

Rachel Cecchini, a Port senior and Honor Society member volunteering at the concession stand, was happy about the turn-out. She said, "Because we are so small, we do a lot to help each other. When something is going

on, people come together. There are a lot of familiar faces here."

The corned beef and cabbage dinner at the Yulan Fire House annually feeds upwards of 400 people and raises money to support the department in its endeavors throughout the year. This year, the firefighters transformed the firehouse from a garage for the trucks to a place where the community came together, enjoyed a hearty meal and supported their local firehouse. Long tables and folding chairs were continuously filled and refilled by families, couples, small children and grandparents. Neighbors caught up and visited in a room where family-style seating encouraged the chatter that eventually took over the room.

Irene Elder, of Port Jervis, attended the dinner with two of her children to "support the local fire department... they donate all of their time and it is a great and fulfilling way to give back." Elder remarked on the great time that her family had in the little hamlet of Yulan: "The three of us were seated with five great people," strangers to the Elders, members of a long line of firefighting families. Everyone in the room enjoyed the camaraderie that accompanied a \$9 dinner ticket.

Firehouse dinners and tricky trays are not just fundraising activities. They bring communities together, reunite old friends and neighbors and introduce new ones. The bottom line is not a dollar figure, but the perpetuation of a small-town lifestyle where people give, care, respect and support one another in every way.




Prizes line tables at the "Stars of Tomorrow" tricky tray in the Port Jervis High School gymnasium.

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# Host an elegant barbecue

By MARCIA NEHEMIAH

**S**ummer is filled with special celebrations. Hosting an elegant barbecue for a special occasion can turn a typical backyard meal into an unusual summer dinner party. Planning and preparation will take a little extra consideration and care, but the investment of time will pay off for you and your guests.

## Set a perfect table

To make your barbecue special, start with the table. First, to create a country look, spread a vintage embroidered or printed tablecloth and use cloth napkins in a complementary color. Layering two cloths, one of starched white linen or Battenburg lace underneath a vintage print will make the table even more festive. Use your good china or mismatched antique plates.

For a more contemporary feel, try a bright orange or lime-green tablecloth and color-coordinated printed napkins. Intensify the pizzazz with plates in a variety of hot colors. Arrange crystal or stemware and silverware at each place setting.

Rather than a large centerpiece, strew wildflowers on the table, or bunches of fresh herbs and vegetables from the garden. Light candles at dusk, but avoid votives as wind will quickly blow them out. Lynne Glinisky of Glinisky Kitchen Capers in Honesdale suggested placing candles in clay pots,

small mismatched juice glasses or jam jars, or filling tin buckets or clay pots or bowls with dirt or sand and placing candles on top. You might also want to drape white lights through the trees and around the deck railing to cast a subtle glow as night falls.

Citronella candles or torches repel insects as do incense sticks with pest-detering scents. Placing a fan in an unobtrusive spot will help keep flying insects at bay since they don't like wind.

Position comfortable lawn chairs strategically around the patio and in the garden to create conversation nooks where your guests can gather before and after the meal is served.

## Make it different, not dull

As host of your event, you'll want to spend a less time in the kitchen and more time enjoying friends. Prepare simple dishes ahead of time. Start the meal with an easy gazpacho. Buy the gazpacho at the supermarket, add lump crab meat, and serve with focaccia bread brushed with olive oil and grilled until golden. Other cold soups like pear vichyssoise or chilled plum soup are a light and refreshing beginning to a barbecue.

Your main course, consisting of a meat dish and vegetable kabobs, should be marinated the night before your party.

Side dishes can also be prepared in advance and served cold or at room



TRR file photos

Serving elegant dishes at a barbecue creates a special feel at an outdoor party.

temperature. Instead of the usual macaroni salad, serve tricolor pasta salad with mushrooms, olives and fresh oregano, or summer ratatouille with zucchini, peppers and fennel. Instead of the typical potato salad, make an avocado and citrus salad with oranges, grapefruit and chicory in a light lime and mint dressing. Be sure to use beautiful bowls and serving trays.

Dessert should be simple and in season. Poached pears or baked peaches can be prepared and plated ahead of time. Add a scoop of ice cream and a sprig of fresh mint or lavender to each plate before serving. Store-bought chocolates and cookies can supplement dessert.

Glinisky suggested another easy dessert. "Bring back classic parfaits. They are simply ice cream and a sweet sauce layered in tall glasses. They look fun and festive, can be made to match your color scheme (if you have one) and can be made up to one week

ahead of time," she said.

She also recommended bread pudding as a versatile dessert, adding that you can use ingredients that match your color scheme or a particular theme (i.e. blueberry for July 4th). This dessert can also be made ahead of time, said Glinisky.

## Beverages

Set up a small table for the alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. In the center of the table place a punch bowl filled with ginger ale and sherbet punch. Serve iced tea and iced coffee from your best glass or earthenware pitchers. Keep soda, beer and white wine chilled in a wheel barrel filled with ice. Make sure to have stemware and glasses easily accessible.

Peach kir is a light summer drink. Pour one-half jigger of peach schnapps into a wine glass and fill with white wine and ice.

Continued on page 21



Setting a special table with linens, china and silverware helps create an elegant atmosphere.

## Go bigger

If you decide to host a party for one of the traditional summer celebrations like Father's Day or a graduation, don't let your lack of basics dissuade you from sending out lots of invitations. Consider renting what you need.

Community Rental Center in Milford/Westfall, PA can supply you not only with the basics like a tent, tables, chairs and linens, but also with champagne and chocolate fountains, tow-behind grills large enough to roast a pig, balloons and helium, and popcorn machines. They can also deliver the items you rent.

Contact 570/491-2721.

# Fabulous Finds

in Narrowsburg

Narrowsburg, NY is an artsy enclave located on the scenic Delaware River. Its Main Street is home to great art galleries, quaint gift & antique shops and trendy restaurants. For more information about Narrowsburg log on to [www.narrowsburg.org](http://www.narrowsburg.org).

**Tom's Treasures, Main Street**  
A fine collection of antique and vintage tableware, paintings and jewelry.

*Below Left: Vintage Roseville Pottery, \$95.*

*Below Right: Vintage Fire-King, Tulip Motif Mixing Bowl, \$44*



**Dyberry Weavers, Main Street**  
Weaver, Charles Blanchard, creates beautiful, one-of-a-kind rugs, purses and pillows.

*Below: Hand Woven Rug, Hand Dyed Wool on Linen Warp, 40' x 72' - \$8,000*



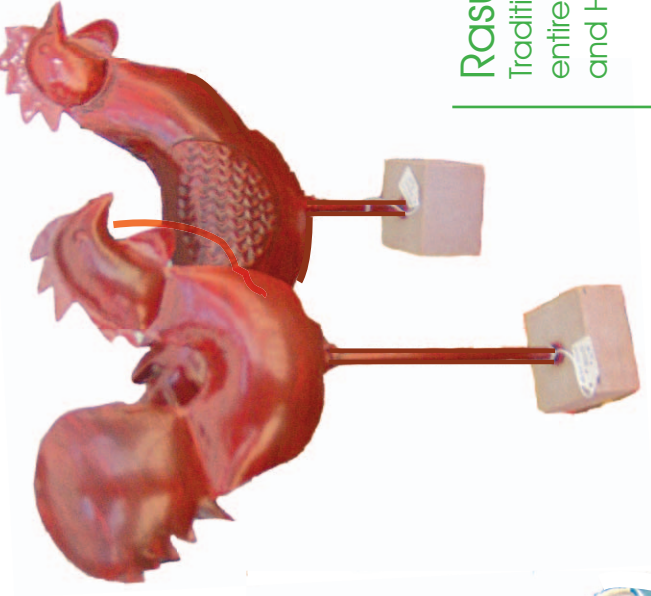
**River Gallery, Main Street**  
Antiques, Original Art, Imported Soaps and Gourmet Accoutrements are stylishly featured throughout this beautiful shop.

*Below: Asian and American Antiques, and original Artwork. Please call for prices (845) 252-3230*



**River Dog, Main Street**  
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*Right: "Good Dog", "Good Cat" ceramic bowls, Dog Bowl \$18, Cat Bowl \$14*



**Rasussen Furniture, Main Street**  
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*Left: Tin Rosters by Globel Views, Large \$44.99, Small \$34.99*

*Below: Wooden entertainment armoire by Hooker, \$1,849*



**Signature Gifts, Main Street**  
Housed in the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance Building, this gallery giftshop features original pottery, artwork and hand crafted jewelry.

*Above: Hand crafted vessels by Phyllis Billick. Large \$24 Medium \$22 Small \$21*



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**4 Corners of Artful Living, Main Street**

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*Above: Tag, Garden Platter \$28  
Right: Tag, Garden Plates set of four \$23*



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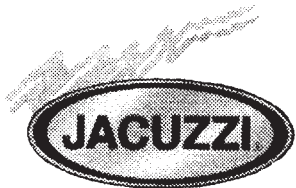


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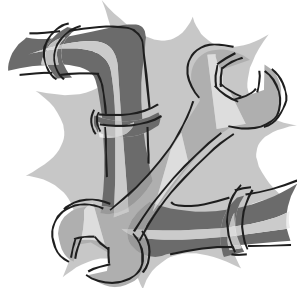
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## Grilled to perfection

By EMILY BACCHIOCCHI

**N**othing can quite beat the aroma of a real barbecue. Slow-cooked meats release a tempting aroma. With the growth of barbecue popularity comes thousands of recipes, tricks and strategies.

Charlie Wieland, head grill man of The Narrowsburg Fire Department said, "Applying a marinade to the meat after you start grilling helps it from sticking to the grill or pit." Wieland also suggested basting the

meats every time you turn them to ensure the flavors of the marinade permeate the meat. Marinades break down the muscle in meat and make it more tender.

Watching the food carefully is an obvious tip. You don't want your meat, veggies or fish to burn.

Fish, vegetables and potatoes wrapped in foil and cooked on your grill steams the food and eliminates black lines.

### Host an elegant party

Continued from page 19

#### Get the grill ready

Don't forget to light your coals about half an hour prior to cooking time. If you have a gas grill, preheat it for about 15 to 20 minutes. Immediately before grilling, clean and oil the hot grill grates to keep food from sticking.

#### More tips for outdoor dining

from Lynne Glinsky-Goodwin of *Glinsky's Kitchen Capers in Honesdale, PA.*

Contact 570/253-8886.

- Fold napkins to make a pointed pocket where you can tuck a fork, knife and spoon.
- Bright colored, striped or decorated tablecloths and napkins help add a festive atmosphere to the table.
- With a solid tablecloth, use bright colored dishes to add pizzazz.
- Mix and match platters and bowls for a relaxed, fun look on the table.
- Decorate with fruit. Use bunches of berries, grapes and sliced fruit in different bowls. Then they can be served as dessert with different colored and flavored whipped creams and sweet sauces.
- Decorate with flowers. Use an old watering can, wicker baskets or an old straw hat or two. Put flowering herbs and grasses in jam jars all around.
- Food can be decorative as well as edible. You don't have to have a Mexican or Spanish theme to serve sangria. It looks very festive in glass pitches with fruit floating in it. There are many different types of sangria, ranging from deep red in color to light pink or peach. Offer a few different flavors.
- Use rosemary stalks or lemon grass as skewers instead of metal or bamboo for chicken, beef or seafood. Not only do they look beautiful, but they also add extra flavor to whatever you are cooking.
- Garnish platters or serving bowls with sliced lemons, limes or colored lettuce (i.e. radicchio or purple cabbage).

#### An award-winning marinade

In 1956, Phil Schaffer won a New York-state fair award for his chicken marinade recipe. The secret marinade recipe was passed down to Wieland. "No one else in the Narrowsburg Fire Department knew how to duplicate the recipe," he said.

Here is the original recipe that has been used by the fire department ever since:

2 2/3 quarts of cider vinegar  
2 1/3 quarts vegetable oil  
2/3 of a 5 lb. bag of white sugar  
1/2 of a 7/16th ounce jar of oregano  
1/3rd of a 4 oz. bottle of black pepper  
1/2 lb. of salt  
6 eggs

Note: The marinade can be frozen, but because it includes eggs, it should not sit in the sun.

#### A reason for wine

Choosing wines to complement a barbecue is not difficult. Just know what you're cooking before you select your wines.

Michael Eurey of Narrowsburg Fine Wines and Spirits said that if you serve ribs, pulled pork or any other pork product, you want something bold but light with a hint of sweetness. He suggested chianti or a fruit-forward merlot.

Eurey suggested pairing steaks or good burgers with something heavier. Wines such as shiraz, cabernet, zinfandels or merlot compliment the flavor of beef because they are bolder and spicier than other reds.

For an afternoon barbecue or gathering, you should feature white wines such as pinot grigio or sauvignon blanc. These wines are lighter than their red counterparts and can also be served with kabobs, chicken or fish.

#### Getting to it

With the ever-rising popularity of grilling and barbecuing came the advent of barbeque restaurants. Buster's Barbeque and Big Willie's Barbeque are restaurants that call the river valley their home. Big Willie's currently has two restaurants and is soon to open a third. Upscale eateries have been jumping on the bandwagon by adding barbecue selections to their menus as well.

Marriane Lamantia, owner of Buster's Barbeque in White Lake, shared some of her recipes.

For grilled vegetables, combine a dash of oregano, fresh basil leaves, a sprinkle of garlic powder, salt and pepper to taste, two tablespoons of olive oil and one tablespoon of balsamic vinegar. Toss over vegetables before grilling.

Add the juice of one fresh lemon or lime and substitute cilantro for the basil in the above recipe for an outstanding fish marinade.

#### The Bacchiocchi family barbecue sauce recipe

1/2 cup ketchup  
1/4 cup cider vinegar  
1 melted tablespoon butter  
1/2 cup dark brown sugar  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 tablespoon brown mustard  
4 dashes of hot sauce  
4 dashes garlic powder  
Salt and pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients together well. Let sauce sit at room temperature for an hour so that the brown sugar melts.

### Get a gas grill

Seventy-five percent of customers who buy grills at Luhr's Hardware in Matamoras, PA prefer gas rather than charcoal grills for a number of reasons; they heat quickly, are clean and don't require the use of lighter fluid.

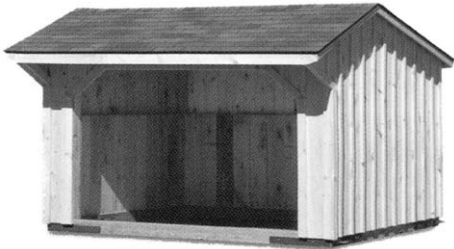
On Saturday, June 3, Luhr's will host a demonstration of grilling techniques and accessories, such as using a cedar plank on which to grill food. Contact 570/296-7012.



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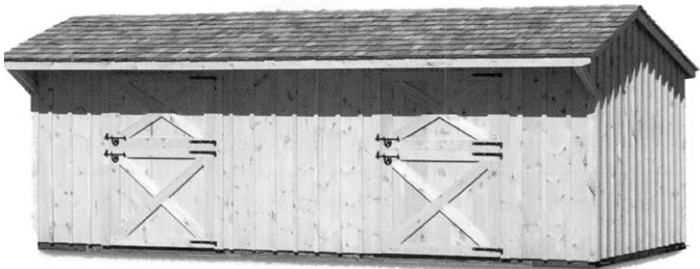
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# Plants, pergolas and patios

By JENNIFER O'REILLY

**N**ow that spring has sprung, many people look forward to initiating an improvement project. Since the approaching warm weather extends activities to the outdoors, consider one of the many options for enhancing, as well as extending, your outdoor space.

If you are a new homeowner, you are probably as eager as you are wary about the money, the "strangers" you will hire and the overall plan to enhance your acquisition. If you are a seasoned pro returning for another helping of the improvement pie, you know most projects are not an all-or-nothing endeavor.

Depending on the complexity of your job, your particular talents (or lack thereof) and your uptake on new skill sets, you can save money, contribute to the effort with personal elbow grease and get the result you want by combining the best of all worlds.

## Landscape enhancements

Often minimized or even overlooked, landscaping can dramatically change the entire feel of your home. A landscape architect or designer can give advice on plant and tree selection, evaluate slope and drainage concerns and create an overall design.

Jason Maciejewski of Maciejewski Landscaping in Damascus, PA said the top three residential jobs requests he fields each spring are "new patios and walkways, lawns for new houses, and plant and tree installs." He said the assistance of a landscape architect or designer is especially helpful for planning new planting beds and tree placement. A landscape architect will provide a representation of the work requested, down to each type of bush, tree, flower and even grass variant.

Several aspects of landscaping lend themselves well to novices. If you have the itch and time to really work your project, use a landscaper to mark the utility lines, set drainage, sculpt berms and beds, and assist you with plant selection and purchase (they get a discount). Then you may choose to dig your own holes and truly feel at one with your project without much danger of catastrophe. (A cautionary note though: while your budget may relish the savings such a split on labor brings, your pro may not be able to extend a guarantee on plantings if he does not do the install.)

## Stone work

A patio or series of patios linked by walkways is also a great way to extend your usage of outdoor space. Designing and laying patios and walkways is a multi-step, heavy-labor, time-consuming process. Regional considerations such as depth and scope of the frost line and climate are best left to a local pro.

Frank Bannan, of Fernhill Stoneworks in Indian Orchard, PA specializes in the use of local keystone and paving stone to create dramatic outdoor living spaces he personally guarantees against lifting or shifting for a year. "If anyone promises you more than that," he said, "or that their work won't move, they're being untruthful." From his perspective, the job is "100 percent labor, all hard work" with the prep as "the hardest, most important part in that it's all about the drainage and getting it level."

Bannan also builds beautiful fieldstone walls. When the patios and walls are used in combination, the effect is breathtaking. Bannan believes, "Adding stone improves the appearance and value of a home."



Stone work patios and walls such as the one pictured above define the outdoor space. The deck pictured below expands a home's living space.



Contributed photos

One way to expand the square footage of your house is by creating a patio extension that adds a light, bright room to your home.

## Augment the indoor/outdoor space

Adding square footage creates extra space for friends and family and a pre-engineered sunspace is a brighter, less costly alternative than a frame-construction room. Dorothy Burton, of Elite Patio Enclosures in Lake Ariel, PA, said, "Sunrooms and patio enclosures are the fastest growing segment of home improvement today." These

glass-enclosed panoramic living areas, such as conservatories, greenhouses or solariums, come in three- or four-season varieties.

Burton said, "The windows are built for maximum comfort and energy efficiency" and feature "insulated glass, which repels heat during summer and retains heat during winter." The enclosures come in a rainbow of colors to match virtually any house and Burton emphasized that Elite "specializes in custom design to insure... it blends with the rest of the home... This is a quality room that looks and feels like an extension of your home." And most sunspaces can be installed in a few days instead of the weeks it takes for a site-built addition. Additionally, this product comes with great warranties on structure as well as glass breakage. Burton put it best when she said, "I don't think you can get much better than that."

Should you set your sites on any of these options, remember: research needs to be a continuing process and your timetable/completion date should have some elasticity. If you are doing some or all of the work yourself, pace yourself. If you hire a pro, keep in mind that the best professional is the one who has done your type of job before.

And once the job is completed, pull up a lawn chair and enjoy the season.

For more information, contact Elite Patio, 570/698-1214; Fern Hill Stoneworks, 570/251-4353; Maciejewski Landscaping, 570/224-6405.



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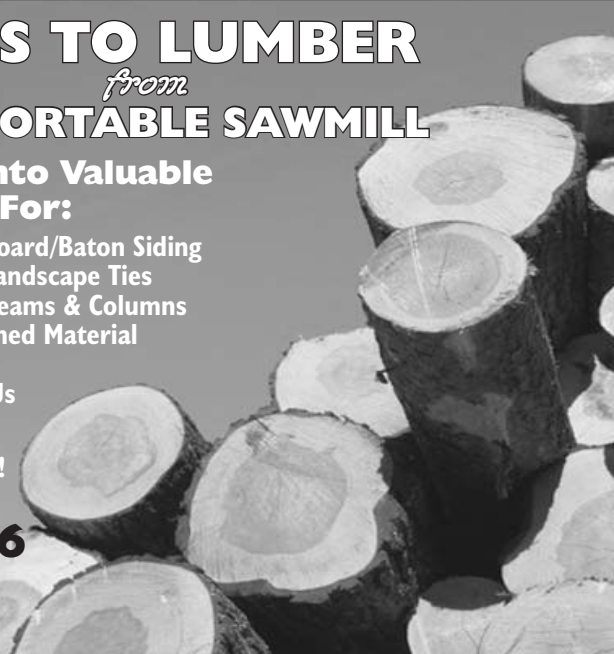
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# Stitch witchery

By MARCIA NEHEMIAH

**Y**ou're shopping for home décor and nothing you see suits your style. Or you're looking for a certain color green for the bedroom curtains, or a '70s pattern for a shower curtain and it's nowhere to be found. And you don't want to spend an arm and a leg to get what you want—if it's even out there.

That's when you should take matters into your own hands.

Try sewing.

Sewing lets you choose your own fabric to exactly match the color of your walls. You can make custom curtains for those odd-sized windows one often finds in old houses. You can add embellishments that you won't find on factory-made items. And, as Linda Borrelli of Sew Can You in Callicoon, NY, said, "You can be proud of what you made and the quality is there."

You don't need to be an experienced seamstress to succeed at making items for the home. Borrelli said that only "basic sewing skills are required," because home accessories have no darts or shaping; they involve simple straight seams and stitches. They are good projects on which to start learning to sew.

Borrelli's shop offers classes and "open sewing days" to help both novices and those with experience who want to learn new techniques.

What can you make? The list is virtually endless—tablecloths,

place mats, chair cushions and Roman shades for the dining room. House skirts (to hide unsightly vanities or exposed pipes under a sink), tissue box covers, embellished towels and curtains for the bathroom. Balloon shades, pillows and lampshade covers for the bedroom. You can even make a fabric bowl.

You may want to embark on a more ambitious project—making a quilt. Borrelli's shop holds beginners quilt classes that teach basic skills, like learning how to use a rotary cutter and mastering the one-quarter inch seam a quilt requires. Making a quilt doesn't have to be a long-term project if it is made on a sewing machine. Borrelli said that the sample "Around-the-World" quilt hanging in the shop takes only two days to complete.

Other decorative techniques include "petal play," in which fabric is cut into petals and placed on a background piece of material so that a 3-D effect is achieved. The panel can be used in a quilt, as a pillow or as a wall hanging. Another technique is landscaping with fabric—using the color and pattern of small pieces of material to "paint" a picture.

If you've never sewn before, the initial investment is minimal. You can purchase a new portable sewing machine with basic features for under \$100 at a retail store or online. Borrelli offers machines you can rent to see if you like the craft. Her shop is located at 25 Lower Main Street and can be reached at 845/887-6247.



TRR photos by Marcia Nehemiah

The wide array of fabrics at Sew Can You in Callicoon, NY can complement most home decors.



Crafting this tissue box and fabric bowl is easy, said Linda Borrelli of Sew Can You.



Yes, you can make your own lampshade and table topper to add a personal touch to a bedroom or den.



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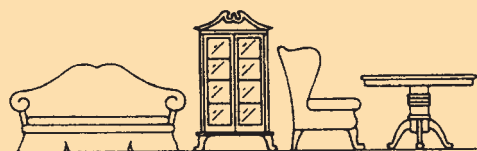
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# Gardening in containers

By ROSEMARY MANDEVILLE

I have no place to garden.

I'm getting older, and I can't get down to garden as easily as I used to.

Any time I plant things in the yard, the deer eat them or the dog digs them up.

These are all legitimate problems, but they shouldn't stop those who want to enjoy flowers or vegetables around their home all summer. By using containers, you can garden when you have no yard, while sitting in a chair and, with a little planning, your pots can be out of reach of even the hungriest deer or most mischievous dog.

Gardening in pots is as individual as the person filling them. Everyone has different tastes and preferences. Some like to plant several different plants together in a large pot, while others prefer to group several small pots together, each filled with only one type of plant. Pots can then be rearranged to suit your mood or to highlight different plants.

## Pick the pots

While individual tastes vary, there are a few tricks to getting the most out of the plants you choose for your garden, starting with choosing the containers. This step can be a lot of fun. Use your imagination. Pots of all shapes, sizes and colors can be found at the

local garden center made from clay, plastic, wood or cement. From "farm-y" to sleek and modern, you can find containers suitable for your home.

You don't have to limit yourself to traditional pots. Anything that can hold potting mix and withstand moisture is a potential candidate. Old leaky buckets, milk cans, wash basins or work boots are possibilities if they can be made to drain.

Whatever "pots" you choose, though, stick to one theme or style to keep your garden from looking chaotic.

## Too hot in the pot

A seriously limiting factor to the growth of plants growing in pots out on the sunny deck is the soaring temperature of the soil. It can become so hot in the pot that the roots literally cook. To help alleviate this problem, insulate the pot before filling it with soil. I line the sides of plastic and clay pots with a thin, flexible sheet of insulating material. (It is sometimes used as shipping material for appliances.) An old space blanket cut to size might work as well. Thin rigid insulation might work for straight-sided boxes. Experiment by trying anything that will keep temperatures down while not taking up too much space.

## Fill it up

Once the pots are chosen and insulated, it's time to fill them. You



TRR file photo

Your local garden center is the source for beautiful pots in a variety of sizes.

can't use garden soil in pots without amending it with lots of compost or peat moss and perlite. It just won't drain and you'll end up with a solid mass of wet muck. Instead of trying to mix your own soil, it's far easier and more reliable to buy either potting soil (not top soil!) or a soil-less potting mix at the garden supply store. If that seems too expensive, remember that you don't have to replace it all every year, but just top it off before planting each spring.

You can also save on soil by creating a false bottom in a large pot with several inches of fill. I've used packing noodles and even plastic soda bottles. Cover the layer of fill with a bit of nylon window screen to keep the planting medium from mixing with the fill, then fill the pot with soil mix. Keep in mind, though, the more

soil mass in the pot, the less often it will need to be watered.

Which brings me to my next tip. Before planting, mix in some water-retaining crystals. You'll be amazed at how much it will reduce your need to water. Mixing in a slow-release fertilizer designed for potted plants, like Osmocote, will reduce, but not eliminate, the need to feed your plants all summer.

## What to plant

Now your pot is finally ready to be planted. Be creative, but consider the light and moisture needs of the plants you'll be grouping together to be sure they're compatible. Mix perennials that have interesting foliage with annuals that will bloom all season, or create a vegetable pot with different lettuces, followed by colorful Swiss chard and nasturtium. A pot of herbs by the kitchen door will keep fresh seasonings handy all summer. In a place receiving only morning or dappled sun, go tropical with a large pot filled with houseplants of different heights, shapes and colors. The possibilities are almost limitless.

Once your new garden is planted, maintenance is frequent but not difficult. Check the soil every day at first to see if it needs water. Obviously, smaller pots will need watering far more often than large tubs. If you are around only on weekends or want to eliminate some of the worry, an automatic watering system can be set up using drip emitters leading to each pot. Your pots will also need to be fed every two weeks or so with a liquid feed like Miracle-Gro or fish emulsion to keep them in top condition. Otherwise, groom and rearrange to your heart's content and enjoy the colorful fruits of your labor.



TRR photo by Rosemary Mandeville

Patios, decks and sunrooms decorated with potted plants bring the garden close.

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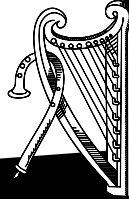
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# A long strange trip

By JENNIFER O'REILLY

**S**pring is traditionally the time to renovate your home. Whether the impetus to remodel is a desire to be free of formica and linoleum, or a need to accommodate an expanding family, a major renovation is an opportunity to enhance return on a key investment while improving quality of life.

## Why renovate?

John Schmidt, vice president of Davis R. Chant Realty, who works from the Honesdale, PA office, points out that although pricing on smaller, unimproved local homes "has flattened out," for mid- to upper-tiered properties featuring quality renovations in the kitchen and bath, "upward pricing is still occurring." National indicators (from the U.S. Department of Labor) report slowing demand for construction, but these statistics are based on new home starts rather than existing home remodeling.

Both Larry Braverman of LB Woodworking, LLC in Beach Lake, PA, a high-end remodel specialist, and Terry Tenbus of Tenbus Construction Corp in Narrowsburg, NY, which runs crews that renovate large-scale projects, remain encouraged by continuing high demand for renovation services in our region.

Given Schmidt's observation, if you plan to move within five years, renovating now may foster an extra cash kick toward what otherwise may be a steep step to the next house. CNNMoney.com hosts a link to a helpful "Renovation Wizard," providing average costs of various renovation projects as well as a projection for the expected return on investment.

## Which project is the right project?

CNN Money columnist Gerri Willis stresses that to get "the most bang for your revo buck, look to the kitchen and the bathroom" where a "98- to 100-per cent return on your money" is not unusual. "Think trends, not fads" to avoid today's equivalent of shag carpeting. Moreover, homeowners in typical neighborhoods "should take care not to be too out of step with neighbors." Most financial institutions suggest that renovation projects not exceed 25 percent of the home's value, and Schmidt said



Contributed photos

While living through a renovation, be prepared for lots of dust and disarray bordering on chaos.

that "estate homes (on several acres of land) without a doubt recapture the investment and often profit on it... especially when quality upgrades like marble or granite countertops or tiled floors are installed."

## Build a budget first

Now for that dreaded word: budget.

Braverman flatly stated, "Believe there will be problems, cost overruns..." and Tenbus said, "Renovating is unpredictable; you never know what you're getting into until you're in it." So how do you come up with a budget?

Step one is to get a market value for your existing home. This guideline will help you determine what to spend given your project specifica-

tions. Next, build a list (from multiple price sources) of the features you want. Go through this list with a professional to determine the estimated installation costs. If you are a do-it-yourself type, "The National Renovation & Insurance Repair Estimator" (Craftsman Book Company) is an excellent tool for determining and pricing items needed on most renovations.

Keep in mind that a budget represents an ideal: therefore, it is fluid. Because projects often do not come in on target, your true top number should be as much as 25 percent above your projected costs. As Tenbus put it, "The most common complications are bad primary work, old stuff, crooked, old material and rot."

## The road ahead

Whether you do the project yourself or hire a pro, a "revo" is like a first-time road trip. You know where you want to go but not exactly how much gas or time it will take to get there. Your pro has been there before, but because every trip is unique, you consult a map (a.k.a. budget). As you drive, the two-lane road narrows to one and progress slows. When the cause for the slow-down is finally clear, the best solution is to find another route because the boulder that rolled into the road is not moving again anytime soon. You back-track, thus impacting your time and gas. No fault of yours. If you set that 25 percent aside, you can buy more gas, proceed with your budget and pull an extra night in a hotel. If not, some other aspect of your trip must be compromised.

Renovations share these unexpected obstacles. Neither you nor your pro can see under siding, through brick, walls or dirt. If

Continued on page 33

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## A long strange trip

continued from page 31

your house reveals anything unexpected, you just encountered a rock in the road. If you want something unique installed, you have just rolled out a proverbial boulder which will require extra effort and impact costs.

### Professional or DIY?

So, go pro or no-pro? Laymen successfully tackle many facets of renovation, but a general rule is that if your project requires written plans and you cannot draw or interpret them, hire people who can.

Master craftsmen like Braverman often only work with designers/architects, and Tenbus also prefers to work with an architect. Tenbus said, "If the job is planned for the worst-case scenario—good. If not, where do you stop?" Braverman relies on the skill of an architect to "straightforward show what the client wants" so that he puts his "knowledge into the production rather than the design."

How do you choose an architect, contractor or builder? First, meet with several. Willis recommends obtaining at least three bids to gauge the going rate. You should have a written estimate that lists products, material, labor costs and a time-table. "Consumer Reports" warns against jumping on the lowest quote because

"consumers who did generally got poorer work."

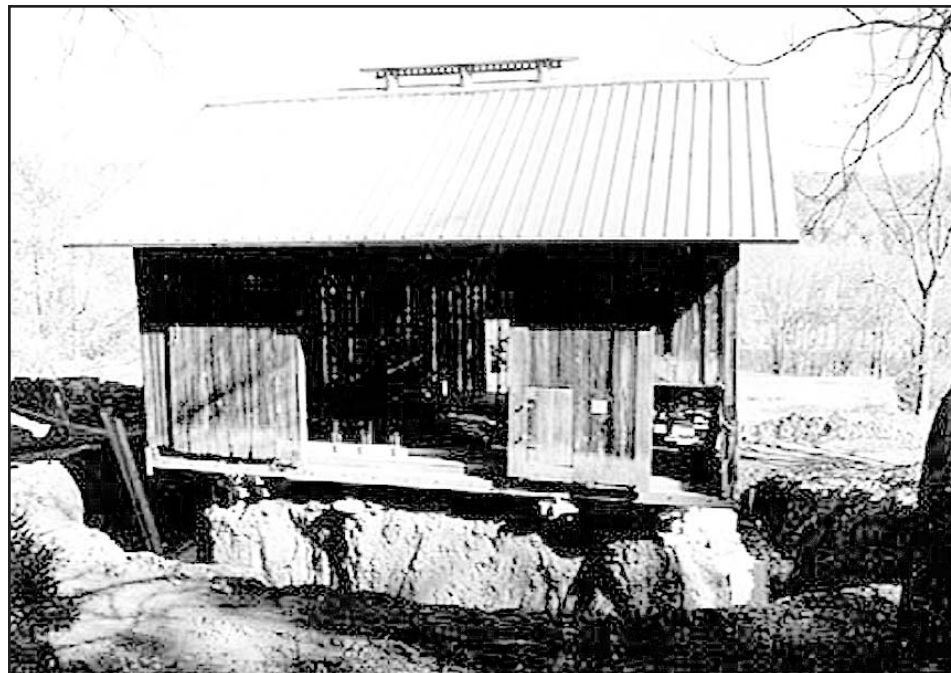
Second, consult with professionals who have been referred whenever possible. Who is dependable? Who returns calls? Who does the highest quality work? Your pro must be appropriately licensed and insured to get your job and certification from

the National Association of the Remodeling Industry is a big plus. As the saying goes, you can get it done fast or you can get it done right.

Third, Murphy's Law is always at work. Acting as your own general contractor keeps down costs, and Braverman advised "finding people you are comfortable working with," and how your professionals interact is key "because it's a long term project, like you're married."

Every phase of remodeling, from tear-down to cleanup, will impact your family and your daily lives. You will live with dust, noise and aggravation, but if you have made the best choices as the project progresses, what you gain will be infinitely better than what you had.

For more information, contact Tenbus Construction, 845/252-3500; LB Woodworking, 570/729-0000.



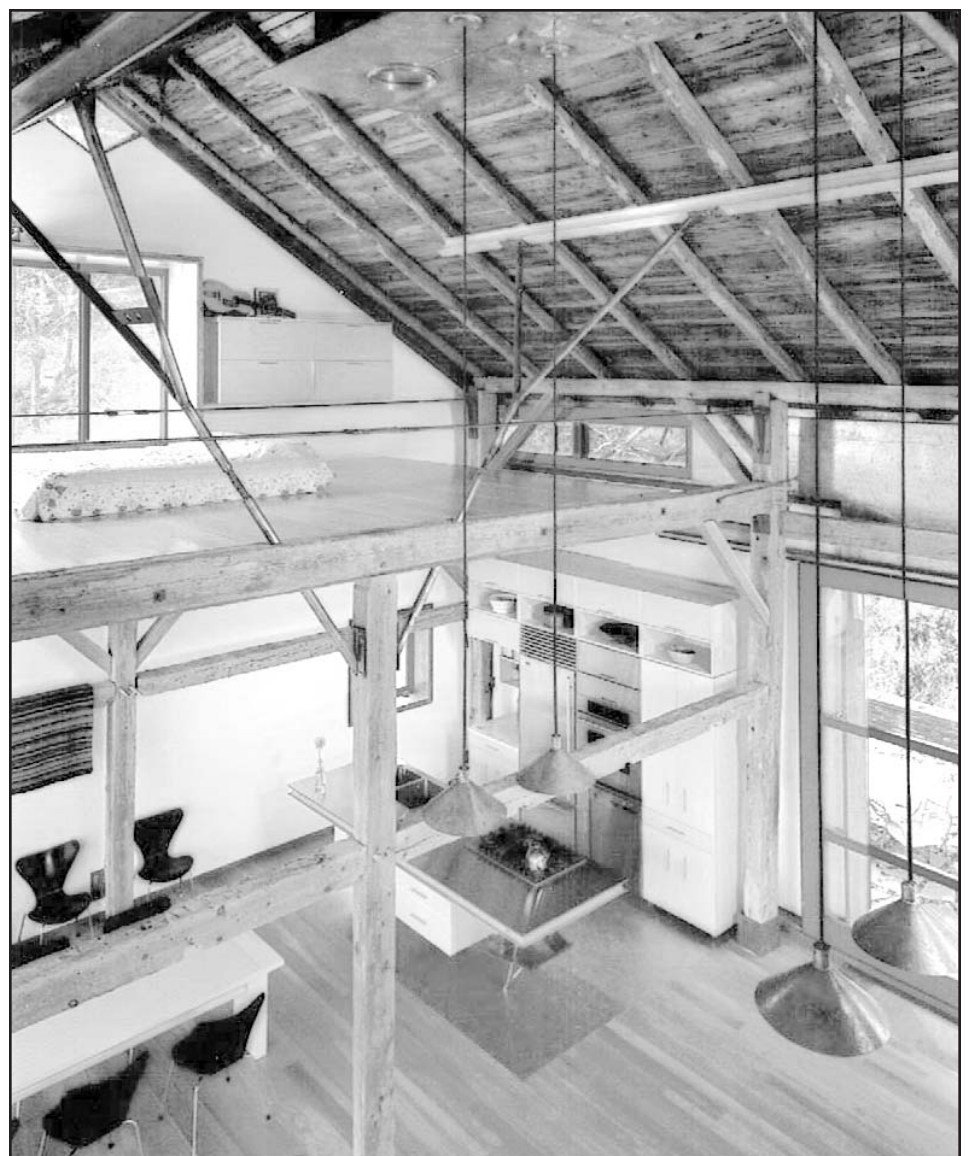
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These photos show the process of reforming a barn into a residential home in Milanville, PA. The excavation of the barn, above...



...during the renovation...

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# The frame's the thing

By MARY GREENE

**Y**ou have found that colorful print to hang in your bathroom, or the perfect painting to offset your new sofa. Your teenager has won an art contest, or you've spent hours on a photo collage to commemorate your nephew's first birthday. The right frame will preserve your artwork and showcase its colors and style, as well as enhance its value and your pleasure in displaying it.

There are a number of frame shops in the area that will frame the object for you or serve as a consultant while you do it yourself. Jessica McManus is manager of the picture frame department at Kristt Company in Monticello, NY, where she has worked for 19 years. Sometimes a customer will come in with a frame in mind, she said, and then she assists the customer in matching it as closely as possible. "Sometimes customers want to match something they already have, or something they've seen," she said. Or the customer has no idea what to choose.

"We start with the picture. We lay things out that look nice with the picture, and we go from there," McManus said.

## Making the right choice

When choosing a frame, consider how the frame will fit into the overall look of the room. Are the furnishings light or dark? What color are the walls? What color is the carpet? A frame should complement and blend with these elements of the space. And it should highlight some aspect of the picture by drawing out a certain color, or muting a certain color, and matching the picture's style.

"With a colorful print or photo, you try to pull certain colors out," said McManus. "Or if you want to downplay a color, you go with a totally opposite, contrasting color that will tone it down. It depends on the piece."

With black and white, she said, you usually go with a black and white frame, or shades of gray. "Sometimes people want to add a little color in, so we will find a dark mahogany or even a bright red frame."

A modern painting might call for a basic black, stylistically. "A traditional painting, like a Renoir, might need a traditional gold frame with filigree," she said. A picture of a rustic landscape might get a weathered wooden frame.

Size is important too, and the size



A grouping of beautifully framed art objects brings personality to a room.

TRR file photos



*We lay things out that look nice with the picture, and we go from there.*

TRR photo by Marcia Nehemiah

Colorful frames can accentuate the overall look of a room.

of the frame is usually proportional to the object being framed. But, said McManus, a wide frame on a small picture can be nice "because it focuses you in."

You have a choice when it comes to the glass as well. "Regular old glass is fine," said McManus. "Plexiglas has some UV protection, and we also have non-glare and clear glass that provides 99-percent UV protection."

Those who desire a high-end, handmade frame can visit Richard Seehausen at Fine & Applied Art Services in Hawley, PA. Seehausen, who specializes in framing work for artists, makes all his own frames from hardwood. They are fine-finished and splined-cornered (held together with wood inserts rather than nails). Seehausen works with name galleries and has framed locally for the Blue Victorian in Jeffersonville, NY and for Jerry Horn, proprietor of Jericho Fine Arts Gallery in Callicoon, NY.

Seehausen's wife, Ann Finneran, said some customers buy frames to match furniture "if it matches the art." And, she said, "a colored matt will compete with, rather than complement, the art." A good matt should enhance the experience but not be noticed, like a good waiter, said Finerman.

## Beyond paintings and photos

What kinds of things do people frame? In addition to paintings and prints, photo collages are popular, as are rugs and needle arts. Memorabilia such as sports jerseys, play or concert programs, tickets, plates, military medals, family heirlooms and wedding flowers also come into the shops for framing.

Bill Holster, a custom framer at Picture Perfect Framing in Hawley, PA, points out that old items can be brought in for framing, and old frames can be refurbished. "Whatever little thing it is" has value, he said, and things that have been in the family for years can be "spruced up" and protected with proper framing.

At times, admitted McManus, the requests have been a bit bizarre. Once she created a frame for a Ritz cracker, and another time she framed a toe nail. "We frame anything," she said.

For more information call Kristt Company, 845/794-6639; Fine & Applied Art Services, 845/436-5668; and Picture Perfect Framing, 570/226-6442.

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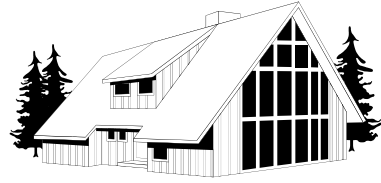
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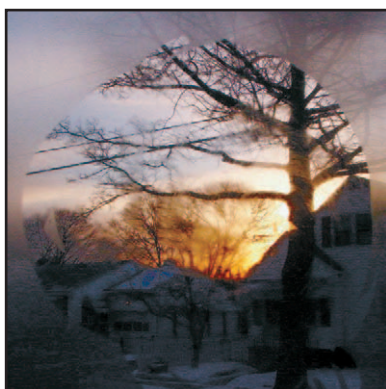


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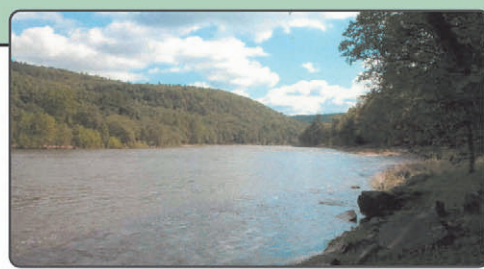
### CHARMING VILLAGE HOME

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### PERFECT NEIGHBORHOOD

Very attractive 3 BR, 2 BA town & country residence nestled on almost 1 acre with picturesque grounds in highly desirable quiet neighborhood. Home features spacious living area with cathedral ceiling & stone fireplace, eat in country kitchen with all appliances and sliding glass door leading to expansive deck, full basement, plus garage and carport. Priced for immediate sale! (20897) \$235,000.



### 11+ ACRE RIVERFRONT

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