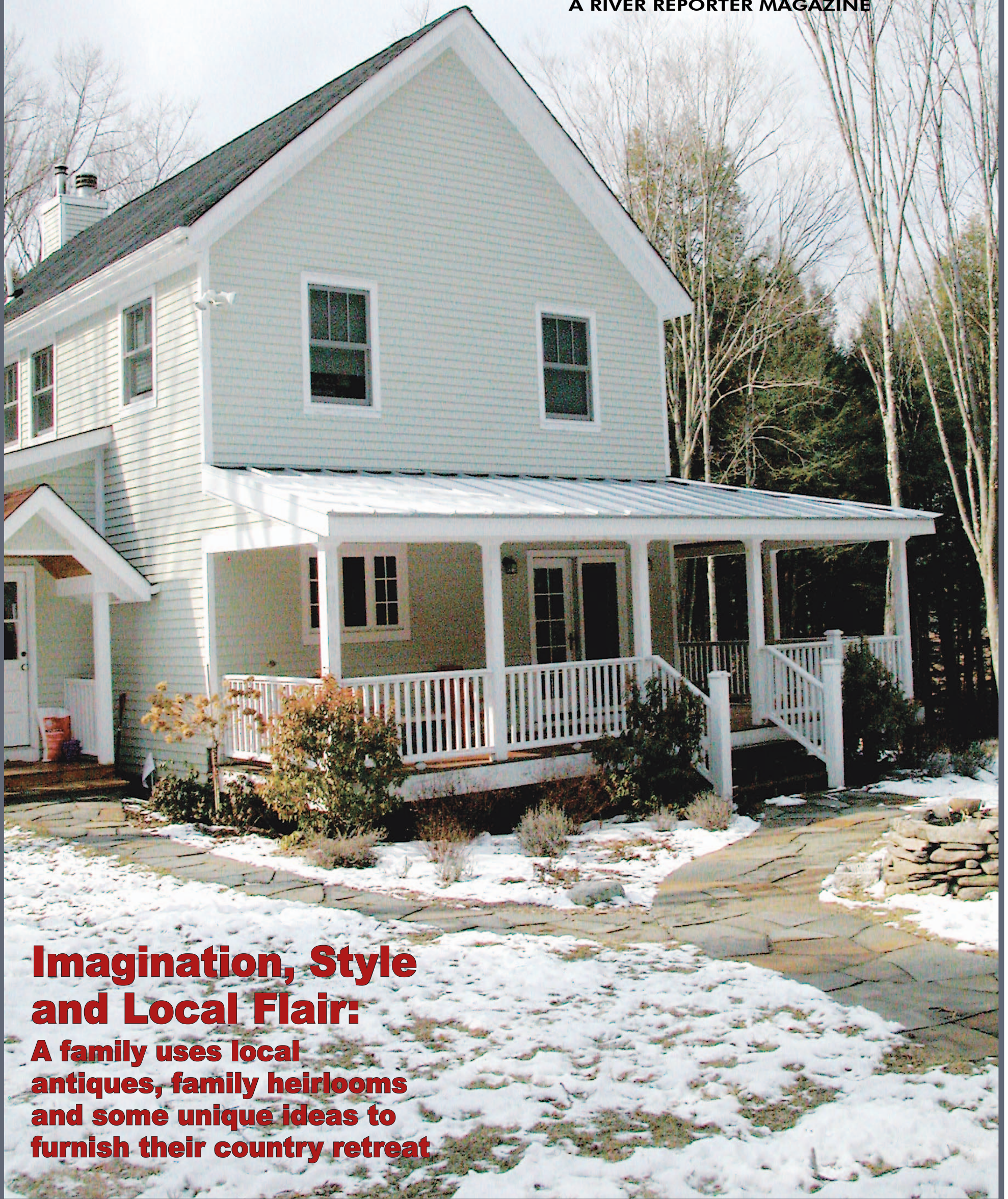


WINTER 2007

OUR COUNTRY Home

A RIVER REPORTER MAGAZINE



Imagination, Style and Local Flair:

**A family uses local
antiques, family heirlooms
and some unique ideas to
furnish their country retreat**

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Ref# 5205 \$185,000



2+ LOVELY ACRES IN WAYNE COUNTY

Gentle sloping, mostly open building lot. Lot offers picturesque views of the leisure farmland below transcending to the rolling hills beyond. Road frontage both on Carley Brook Road and Bryn Mawr. There is an additional 2-acre adjoining lot also for sale.
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Ref# 5170 \$339,000



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Located in the Bavarian Village only minutes to Beach Lake, Honesdale and Narrowsburg, NY. This house is well maintained with many new improvements such as: vinyl siding, thermal windows and doors. The roof is only 7 years old. Nestled on a 1.2-acre property with trees.
Ref# 5206 \$172,000



66 LOVELY ACRES, BARN, POND & FARMHOUSE

REDUCED!!! Beautiful property located in Damascus Twp. with nice country views. A blend of lovely meadows with enough wooded area for hunting. 1900s plank home with 100-year-old barn and small pond.
Ref# 2697 \$419,000



COZY DUCK HARBOR LAKEFRONT CABIN

Take a look at this rustic lakefront cabin on the shores of Duck Harbor. Perfect for seasonal recreation or for year-round. Enjoy all the beauty Duck Harbor has to offer such as motor boating, fishing, swimming and just relaxing... Game lands are also nearby.
Ref# 5204 \$259,000



31 PRIVATE ACRES OF NATURAL BEAUTY

Just look at the beauty of nature with these 31 private acres mostly wooded with stream and beautiful stonewalls. Recently perked. This parcel is tucked away on a quiet gravel township road.
Ref# 2721 \$239,900



LOVELY RIVERVIEW W/PRIVATE BEACH ACCESS

Lovely home site, beautiful hardwood floors, eat in kitchen, separate dining room, sunroom/den, large covered porch. Back deck, extended 2-bay garage for up to 6 cars woodstoves, walk to deeded Delaware River front private beach access.
Ref# 2732 \$410,000



LAKEFRONT LOG HOME

You will not want to miss seeing this beautiful lakefront log home!!! Warm yourself by the fire and relax in from of the gorgeous stone-faced fireplace. Admire the breathtaking lakefront views from the wraparound deck. Look no further to find privacy and seclusion that you've been looking for. There are plenty of extras to fall in love with. In this nearly 3000-square-foot Beaver Mountain Log Home on 10 acres, located just outside trendy Narrowsburg, NY.
Ref# 5202 \$599,000



1890s FARMHOUSE RETREAT

Fill your house with fresh cut flowers, home grown vegetables and fruit from the multiple fruit trees and berry bushes. This beauty is perfect for someone who wants to work from home and/or entertain with friends. This unique retreat situated on 45 private acres is meticulously remodeled and has an additional 35 acres available. The two-acre pond and a large barn complete the total package!
Ref# 2705 \$850,000



COZY HONESDALE RANCH

Let us show you this lovely 2-bedroom ranch in great shape! This cozy home boasts an eat-in kitchen, living room and full bath upstairs and the basement that includes family room/den downstairs. A perfect starter home, the basement and 1-car garage makes it convenient for bringing groceries. All the must-haves include: natural gas heat, central water/sewer, nice front deck, side door entry and a sizeable storage shed, too!
REF# 5203 \$129,900

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HOUSE IS IN MOVE IN CONDITION. Private, large family room with fireplace. PTM-R-ONEI \$260,000.



MAINTENANCE FREE...
Private ranch home on 2 acres just a few miles from Honesdale, Wal*mart, shopping! Nice private 2-acre lot, huge back yard, beautiful views! Don't miss your chance! PTM-R-CONW \$195,000.



BEAUTIFUL FARMHOUSE
with 3-story barn, 2 pristine ponds and an apple orchard all on 7+ acres only 1 mile north of Honesdale! The private drive leads to this fantastic farm with picturesque views!! PTM-R-RAMB \$469,000.



HOME IS IN MOVE IN CONDITION- many, many extras. TLC by past owners. 3-car garage, good neighborhood, walk to town. PTM-R-WOLF \$169,000.



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Walk through the woods to the babbling brook on the back side of the property. Enjoy complete privacy on your huge back deck, but still walk a few minutes to the neighbor's house. Only 2 hours from NYC, 5 minutes from amenities! This one is priced to sell and won't last long. PTM-R-ANDE \$425,000.

LAND

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Stanton Corners lots. 2 lots on Boyds Mills Road - already perked for your home. Lots consist of 5.3+/- acres and 5.38+/- acres for a total of 10.68+/- acres. PTM-L-HATT \$70,000.

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37 beautiful acres in Beach Lake! 5 test pits, nice fields. Beautiful pine trees. Incredible views of NY!! Minutes to Delaware River & a just a few miles from amenities. PTM-L-GORS \$269,000.

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OUR COUNTRY Home

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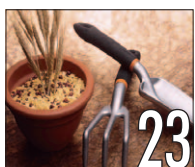
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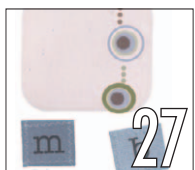
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COVER
 This Narrowsburg, NY house, furnished with local antiques, serves as a refuge for Brooklynites Angie and Richard Dalton, their two young children and chocolate lab puppy. The long, forested yard borders secluded Half Moon Lake. (See story on page 7.)
 Cover photo by Tom Lasher

Dear Reader.

Welcome to the Winter edition of Our Country Home. We hope you will find many enjoyable, doable projects and ideas within its pages.

As our region continues to grow, we continue to search for green alternatives to traditional building, and we know that many contractors and planners in our area are doing the same. It seems as though if we do not look ahead, in a fifty years our children and our children's children will be asking us: Why not? Why did you not try to save anything good for us?

Traditional Native American governance focused on planning, not for our children or our children's children, but for the seventh generation. Such a foresighted policy might have served us well on this planet, except that technological changes in the last few decades would have been unimaginable seven generations ago. Likewise, it seems difficult to imagine in any certain, useful way what our world will be like seven generations hence.

Nevertheless, as resources dwindle and population grows, and as global warming becomes an ever more evident reality, we must hoard what is still plentiful among our planet's resources, and look to non-human as well as human needs—down to the seventh generation. This does not mean that we must become pessimistic or fearful. Indeed, humankind is best in a crisis, and we are at our best when it becomes personal: when it is the well being of our children, our parents, our neighbors and our community—large and small—that is at stake. This beautiful area is a last holdout of mountains, rivers, scenic byways and small-town life. The more we shop locally, eat local foods and live lightly on our small corner of the planet, the more we foster hope and goodwill.

So: create a mudroom. Cook a chili dish for your loved ones. Invite your new city neighbors over for fondue. Make a scrapbook to preserve your memories and family lore for future generations. Visit the antique shops for unique finds, and employ your local woodworker to make a special table, bed or door for you. Visit your local furniture store for that new dining set you've been wanting. Light candles. Start a garden. Become aware of green alternatives, and make steps in that direction. Most of all, enjoy this precious gift of life that we have been given—and give a smile to those you meet today.

Mary Greene, Section Editor
 Our Country Home

Mary Greene



Section Editor Mary Greene

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 marygreene@riverreporter.com.



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HOME WITH A HEART

Make this cozy 2 BR ranch your home. Located on a quiet, dead end street, home boasts fireplace in living room, full basement & new flooring. Perfect for those couples just starting out or downsizing. Don't miss your opportunity, call today for your appointment! \$134,500



MINT CONDITION!

You must see this adorable village ranch! Features 2/3 bedrooms, new carpets, thermal windows, woodstove & full basement. Paved drive, fenced yard, garden shed & large deck complete the picture! Located in commercial zone, possible professional offices. Convenient to all the amenities Wurtsboro has to offer. \$159,900



PEACEFUL VIEWS

Make your appointment today to see this 3 BR, 1BA ranch style home with views of the spectacular Bashakill Preserve. Features include: woodstove in DR/FAM combo, fireplace in LR, 1-car garage & renovated bath. Set on 3.86 rolling acres. \$199,000



VILLAGE OF ELLENVILLE

Pride of ownership evident in this pristine, 4/5 BR, 2.5 BA Tri-level. All new windows, furnace, HWH. Features CA, pegged floor, unique built-ins, lots of storage. LR has cathedral ceiling & French doors to patio. Double lot for extra privacy. Slate walk way, bluestone accents & exterior lighting complete the scene. \$259,900



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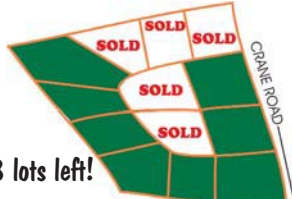
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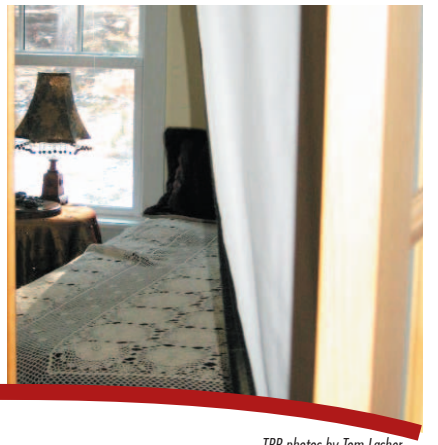
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TRR photos by Tom Lasher

Imagination, Style and Local Flair

A family uses local antiques, family heirlooms and some unique ideas to furnish their country retreat

By MARY GREENE

Homey red benches brighten the front porch of the secluded, woodsy country house belonging to Richard and Angie Dalton. The young couple, who reside in Brooklyn, comes several times a month with their two small children and chocolate lab puppy to enjoy the four seasons upstate. The Narrowsburg, NY house, built to resemble an old farmhouse, is furnished with local antiques. From its wide plank porches, the Daltons have a wonderful view of the wild and unpopulated Half Moon Lake.

The couple purchased the home in May 2004. They came to the area after searching the New Jersey shore, which was not to their liking, then exploring north along the corridor of the Upper Delaware River. In 2002, they purchased their first country retreat, a log cabin in Eldred, NY. As the Dalton family began to grow, they wanted a bit more land and privacy, which they found in the new home and accompanying six and a half acres.

“This area reminds me of the rural part of England where my husband was raised.”

Both Richard and Angie share a passion for antiques and family heirlooms. The couple, who both work for USB investment firm in Manhattan, met in 1999. Ironically, Angie, who is from Kansas City, planned to move to London to work for the firm, and was in New York for training purposes only. She met Richard, fresh off the boat from his home country of England. Richard was carrying a pair of battered suitcases that had belonged to his grandfather. “I called him Paddington Bear,” said Angie. The couple never left New York. “We love it there now,” said Angie, although living with the two kids in a cramped Manhattan apartment (where they lived prior to moving to Cobble Hill in Brooklyn) was a challenge. Richard’s two old suitcases, piled atop each other, now serve as a TV stand in the house upstate. A large, weathered Coca Cola sign hangs on the wall above the TV, one of the many antiques purchased by the couple from White Barn Antiques in Cohecton, NY.

In addition to family heirlooms such as an antique sofa handed down to Angie from her great great grandmother, and a large ornate wreath that was designed by Angie’s mother, the Daltons have furnished the house with antiques bought locally. “Virtually half the furniture in the house came from White Barn Antiques,” said Angie. “And the other half came from La Shed du Fred [in Callicoon, NY],” added Richard.

The quality and price of antiques in this area is amazing, say the couple. Now that local dealers know what they are looking for, they will often call with ideas, said Angie.

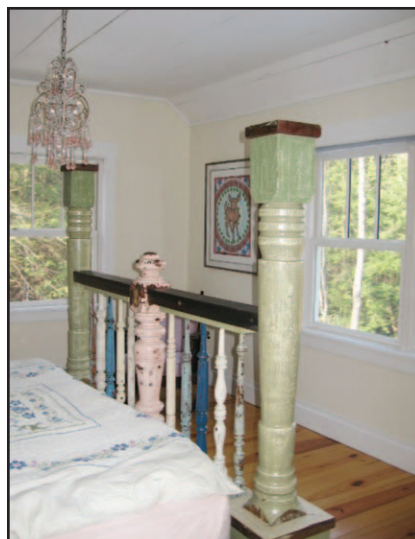
The rooms have a wonderful appeal, combining a primitive look with artful and warm placement of furniture and accessories. And, there are some truly original touches. The master bedroom showcases a one-of-a-kind bed, designed by Angie with the help of Kamas from La Shed du Fred, who built it, took it apart and reassembled it in the couple’s bedroom. It features banisters and columns that Angie collected at Good Old Things near Scranton, PA, and elsewhere. The family’s locally homemade table, large enough to comfortably seat 12, came from Paul’s Antiques in Narrowsburg, and is adorned with an unusual centerpiece, made from a chicken feeder from White Barn. The upstairs bath is simple and pleasing, using restful, plain colors. It features a claw foot tub that was a gift to the couple from the builder, Catskills Farms, and an antique washbasin, another find from White Barn. The downstairs guest bedroom, designed by Angie, has an alluring, old fashioned charm, featuring an old coverlet from Angie’s grandmother, and romantic, floor-length curtains.

In addition to creating a showcase living space, the Daltons have another reason for coming upstate. Richard, raised in a small town in western England, and Angie, raised in Kansas, want their children, Evangelia (“Eva”) and Charlie, ages four and five, to learn about nature. “We want the kids to appreciate and get to know nature,” said Angie. And just enjoy it. “We want them to know there is more than the city.”

Charlie, who spends time outdoors creating earthy monuments in the tree trunks with rocks, sticks and turkey feathers, “likes the sunshine. And the lake.” He “finds lizards in the woods, sometimes frogs.” And sometimes mice, added Angie with a smile.

The couple completed landscaping last summer, with help from Gaye Donofrio and Perennial Gardens. “It was basically just mud around our house when we bought it,” said Angie. “Gaye did all the landscaping for us, and she did a beautiful job.”

“This area,” said Angie, “reminds me of the rural part of England where my husband was raised.” She is also most appreciative of the new shopping in Narrowsburg, and on the day of our interview, she was wearing an elegant skirt and top, purchased at Enochian Boutique in Narrowsburg. The couple also likes Nest, another new shop in Narrowsburg.



The Dalton family by the fireplace in their country home. The outfit worn by Angie Dalton was purchased at Enochian Boutique in Narrowsburg, NY.

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A Rare Find!!

This 4.5+/- acres is located in the charming hamlet of Narrowsburg and would be a perfect spot for your home. The property is mostly level with some woods and some open land. There is a small wet area at the rear of the property. This land could be subdivided and has rights to the majestic Delaware River just across the street!! A must see @ \$49,000 #10671



Lovely Log Sided Cape!

This house features a lovely great room, cathedral ceiling, two bedrooms, full bath, enclosed rear porch, slate floors, plus a second floor is unfinished master suite. Also a full finished walk-out basement w/ a family room, laundry room & full bath. 3+/- acres w/ beautiful views of the Delaware River & PA mountains. \$319,000 #6159

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Tips For Saving On Energy Costs Year-Round



According to a **USA Today**/Gallup Poll, the price of gas is creating financial hardship for 58 percent of Americans. As a solution, The Alliance to Save Energy suggests energy efficiency. The simplest place for consumers to start saving energy is at home.

Saving energy also saves money. By using energy-efficient products, the average household can save up to \$400 per year on utility bills.

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy estimates that if each of us increases the energy efficiency in our major appliances by 10 – 30 percent, we will release the demand for electricity by the equivalent of 25 large power plants.

Weatherizers

The gaps around the windows and doors in an average American house are the equivalent of a three-foot-by-three-foot hole in the wall. Caulk and weather-strip to seal off these air leaks. Stopping air leaks in a home can save as much as 40 percent on your home's heating and cooling costs.

Stop air from escaping under doors with "sweeps" or "shoes" attached to the bottom. Use window putty to seal gaps around loose window panes. Install foam gaskets behind all the light switches and electrical outlet covers, even interior walls. These simple foam gaskets help seal the holes created when the outlets and light switches are built into homes. Then use child safety plugs to keep the cold air from coming in through the sockets.

Thermostat Control

Programmable thermostats that have earned the ENERGY STAR help you save money and keep your home comfortable by automatically adjusting your temperature settings while you are asleep or away, saving you about \$100 per year.

Zoning

In a typical two-story home, the upstairs can be up to 10 degrees warmer than downstairs. One solution to help regulate uneven temperatures is a temperature control system that divides the house into separate zones, like those offered by Aprilaire. These systems use multiple thermostats and dampers in the heating and cooling duct work that control temperature in separate areas to deliver conditioned air only to the part of the house that needs it. The result is greater comfort and convenience, as well as energy savings of up to 20 percent

Ceiling Fan

And in the winter, you can save up to 10 percent on heating costs by reclaiming the hot air trapped near your ceiling by running the fan in reverse.

Save over \$125 annually by following these three simple steps:

- Replace three old style light bulbs with modern fluorescent twisters
- Set your heat at 68 degrees in winter and your AC at 78 degrees in summer
- Unplug three appliances—or switch off a power strip full of plugs—when not in use.

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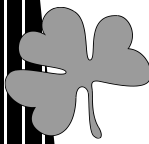
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"LIFE, AS YOU WANT IT TO BE"



Contributed photo

Mudroom Magic

Organization for the busy household

By CASS COLLINS

You see it coming and going. It leaves a first impression and a lasting one. It belongs to everyone and no one in particular.

It's the mudroom. Its name evokes its purpose and its genesis: mud. That messy stuff of springtime and children, dogs and dirt. The mudroom tries to keep it all outside, where it belongs.

For some, it is the shamefully ignored back porch that collects boots and mittens by winter, river shoes and sunscreen by summer. For others, it is the new frontier of decorating, complete with drying racks for wet clothing, iron boot-scrappers and engraved granite welcome mats.

With the surging interest in home design and function, the lowly mudroom has become another outlet for self expression. Whether you have one or are considering building one, here are some things to think about.

Organization

A well-designed mudroom will consider the needs of the family home, and can keep its occupants organized, and the house a little cleaner. Ideally, it is situated by a side or back door, leaving the foyer for more formal uses. But, in foul weather, even guests can be ushered through the mudroom, and, if you've given it some thought, may even be impressed by your attention to form and function.

Often, the mudroom is merged into the laundry room, with unsatisfying results. There, two opposite functions, one to keep clean, the other to trap dirt, compete, with neither wholly served.

Think about separating the two, if you can, leaving room for a portable clothes hamper in the mudroom that can be transported to the laundry room when needed.

A busy family may want to use this area for notes. A bulletin board or blackboard, perhaps with a magnetic surface for flyers, PTA notices and notes, and hung at eye level for the youngest reader in the house, will help keep everyone on schedule and informed of plans. An attractive key-holder will keep everyone organized when it comes to house and car keys.

And coat hooks are a must—especially with young ones—but if you use the mudroom as a coat closet (not recommended, if space allows), your outerwear will form unhappy lumps from hanging by their necks. Instead, hang some sturdy hangers from the hooks, or install a closet rod for longer term storage. A good rule of thumb for hooks is two per person. Families with small children should have two rows, with one at child height to encourage neatness.

Coat trees are more popular than they should be. They take up a lot of space and are prone to tipping over. Leave the trees outside!

A well-designed mudroom is the place to remove shoes and boots, replacing them at once with slipper or moccasins, before entering the living area.

Furnishings

A bench or stool is essential for changing shoes, as is a boot rack for muddy or wet footwear. A boot tray of slate or tile will protect floors. An even simpler idea is to fill a large jelly-roll or other baking pan with pebbles and leave it by the entrance. The ice or snow will melt into the pan, and evaporate into the air.

Floor coverings are an important functional choice. Natural stone or porcelain tile with a low-slip ratio are ideal. Vinyl is easy to clean but can be slippery—a big no-no in a room that traps water and mud. Linoleum is a naturally based product that is making a come-back in green-building. It is easy to install and comes in a wide variety of colors.

If you plan to build on, a central drain would allow the entire floor to be hosed down occasionally, a great benefit.

Speaking of water, an ideal mudroom would have at least a small utility sink, outfitted with a scrub brush and oil soap. The size of your room will dictate its uses. A seven-foot by five-foot entryway will have room for a bench and coat hooks, a basket or shelf for mail and keys, while a 10-foot by 17-foot room (the average size of a dedicated mudroom is 175 square feet) will have room for washing the dog, potting plants, and grabbing a glass of water between yard chores.

A larger room could also have an area for storing sports equipment. Golf clubs, cross country skis, skates, fishing gear and hockey sticks are all candidates for mudroom storage, as they often return from an outing bearing copious amounts of earth and water, as do their companion footwear.

If your existing space is a narrow entry, consider building "in." When our family room flooded this summer, and the walls had to be replaced, I asked my husband to build a four-foot-wide by 12-inch-deep pocket into the wall that backs into the garage. It left a nice ample space for coat hooks and can even be closed off to the room with curtains or a sliding door.

Pet owners will want to have room for leashes and footwear for delicate pads that need protection from salt and ice-melting chemicals. Keep a towel for your pet on a hook for wiping messy paws. A framed picture of your hound can adorn his dedicated hook.

Mittens and gloves are high-maintenance items in a busy family. A multiple-skirt hanger with clips will help keep them dry and accessible. Then, the dry ones can be stored in baskets on a shelf, or a tall narrow bookcase or CD shelf, using baskets or plastic shoe boxes as containers.

Mudroom must haves:

- hooks or closet storage for coats
- designated hook for dog leash
- umbrella stand stocked with functioning umbrellas
- baskets, bins or draws for hats, gloves, maps, flashlights, lint brush, stamps, sunscreen, hair brush, chapstick and a few towels
- mail receptacle
- paper shredder or paper recycle bin for quick disposal of junk mail
- key holder
- message board to post reminders, lists and schedules
- cell phone charger
- good, absorbent mat
- shoe rack or tray for wet boots and shoes
- mirror
- stool or bench

Quick tips for high-traffic areas:

Paint

Use high-gloss or semi-gloss paint on walls and trim for easy clean up. Vinyl wainscoting or tile are also good applications for the area.

Flooring

- Vinyl and linoleum are economical choices but may be slippery
- Natural stone or tile (with a low-slip ratio) offers high-style and holds up to moist conditions
- Concrete can be painted with an epoxy finish available in a wide range of colors.
- Matting such as sisal, sea-grass and man-made fibers are very durable for high traffic areas.

Ventilation

Exhaust fans and heat lamps are great features to incorporate into your next mudroom remodeling. The heat lamps come either separate or as part of the fan unit. A good exhaust fan will help circulate the air, a great feature if your mudroom houses the kitty box or pet bed.

Appliances

Whether or not your mudroom will also be a utility room, make sure that your appliances are secure from catching fire or flooding the house with hundreds of gallons of water. Have a licensed electrician update power receptacles and a licensed plumber install a floor drain. Remember to maintain your appliances regularly. Change those rubber hoses, including the metal wrapped ones, every five years. Clean lint traps after use. Replace the plastic vent duct from the dryer with metal tubing too.

Wall units and storage

It helps to have shelving and storage containers that are ventilated so wet or damp items can dry. Modular shelving systems are perfect for organizing shoes and other things you might want to store in your mudroom.

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Plain and Simple

The latest fashions in home decor

By EMILY GRILLO

Did you know that trends in furniture last only about four years? According to **Better Homes and Gardens**, every three to five years, 65 percent of consumers are ready to respond to new ideas about what is chic and appealing in the arena of home decor. Color, size and patterning, as well as how furniture is placed in the room, are some aspects affected by new trends. Home furnishing and decorating shops are quick to respond to nationwide trends and how they are playing out locally.

Is your TV in charge?

Believe it or not, experts say family and living rooms are designed around the television set. It is important that every seat afford a clear and comfortable view of the TV. As televisions have become smaller and more precise, so does the furniture in these rooms. "Trends are always changing because of TVs," said Herman Zube, proprietor of Hockenberry Furniture in Port Jervis, NY.

Furniture stores now stock compact entertainment centers. The large, boxy entertainment sections that grew into prominence in the '70s and '80s are becoming a thing of the past. Hi-definition (HD) and plasma TVs take up a small amount of space—in fact, they can be mounted on the wall. Some entertainment centers now feature a component that allows you to attach the TV right to them. This prevents wall scarring if you decide to move the TV.

With the advent of smaller, sleeker TVs comes smaller furniture with clean lines. "People are starting to downsize and minimize," said Zube. The current trend in buying furniture for the living room, he said, is to buy smaller furniture and less of it. Say good-bye to the days of sectionals and big end tables. "People are investing in a smaller table called a condo end table—half the size of the old end pieces."

But there is one piece of traditionally clunky furniture that has not gone out of style. In fact, say experts, the recliner is still the most popular piece of furniture purchased. "There is no change in this—comfort is king," said Scott VanGorder, owner of VanGorder's furniture stores in Hawley and Honesdale, PA.

How important is size?

Does the increasing popularity of smaller furniture mean sacrificing comfort? "No," said both Zube and Kidney. Popular furniture manufacturers such as Lazy Boy still create their oversize, comfy recliners and couches, but they are also introducing smaller, more modern-style couches and chairs in new, toned-down colors. Some of these models even incorporate cup holders, magazine racks and remote control holders to eliminate the need for an end or coffee table. According to Lazy Boy, the new lines of furniture have been very successful.

The trend toward smaller furniture, and less of it, has the effect of opening up the room, making the space look larger and less compact.

Back to basics

Simple is better. Plaids, floral patterns and prints are becoming less popular in our furniture decisions. "We find that most people are getting back to basics. Simple

lines and neutral colors are in. In our experience, traditional-style furniture is always a staple in customer purchases," said Linda Kidney, owner of The Furniture Find in Milford, PA. The Furniture Find keeps up with trends by showcasing traditional furniture that incorporates colors appealing to today's consumer. Color, said Kidney, is the main component to any furniture trend.

Red is the most popular accent color. Warm, earth-toned shades, popular in the 1970s, are making a comeback, too. Variations of orange and brown create a comfortable and soothing living room environment.

Zube suggests incorporating color accents to create a quick, affordable new look. Pillows, throws, vases and frames can now be purchased in a variety of bright and warm colors such as red and orange. These bright colors can liven up the look of a relaxed room. If red and orange are not your thing, VanGorder has seen blue make one of its classic periodic comebacks, while the ever-popular greens are slipping after a long run as the most popular color choice.

Fine dining, less formal

Furniture colors in the dining room are following new trends as well. "Black and cherry-colored dinettes have replaced the natural look," said Kidney. Lacquered tables with high shine and ultra gloss are making a comeback, especially in these beautiful, rich, darker colors.

The dining room is also becoming less formal. People are opting for smaller tables with chair sets of only four, allowing dining areas to be roomier and less dominated by table and hutch. A casual attitude toward dining has replaced the formal dining room table, and fine china, silver and cloth napkins are often replaced with flatware and paper napkins. Zube said, "The new trend in the Port Jervis area is to market homes using a family room or great room instead of a dining room."

Country charm

One of the charms of country living is that it takes the fashions of New York City, Paris, Rome or Los Angeles plenty of time to reach us. We tend to hold on longer to our own ideas about style and comfort. Second-home owners bring new fashion excitement to the region, but they also enjoy decorating in a country style, with natural materials such as wood, stone and fibers, using floral arrangements, antiques and quilts to create a soft, nested look. Such a look enhances the feeling of peace and refuge that city dwellers often seek in the country.

VanGorder feels very positively about country style and the trend toward nature-inspired upholstery that is becoming more popular in our region "The trend has been well-received here, where we are surrounded by natural beauty. These [fabric choices] bring the outdoors inside, and celebrate the bounty of our homeland.

"Local people are completely immune to the trend pox," quipped VanGorder. "We focus on home furnishings that will maintain an aesthetic appeal and utility for a long time."

"Old habits die hard in our area," agreed Kidney. "But we have a lot of fun bringing new things into our showroom and seeing how people react."



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Art in the Home

Quality and style in hand-crafted furniture

By NANCY DYMOND

The decision to furnish your country home with hand-built furniture is a labor of selection, style and imagination. Furniture is a substantive investment. It makes a statement about the existing synergy of the space, the geography of the location and the intent of your original vision.

In the stream-laced valleys and conifer forest ridges of the Pocono-Catskill region, three unique craftsmen stand out as true representatives of the quality and diversity of their art.

Precision is key for L.B. Woodworking's Larry Braverman

"I'm in a specific market for people who want hand-made furniture as opposed to factory-made," said Larry Braverman from his 4,000-square-foot workspace and future showroom located near Beach Lake, PA.

"I'm a builder, not a designer," he said. "If a client brings me pictures of key elements of what he wants, I can build it. I build what interests me. I build people's dreams."

If you are moving to the country with the idea of having a really nice house with handmade furniture out of particular types of wood, L.B. Woodworking will consult with your architect to give you the living space you have always dreamed about. Braverman enjoys the challenge of building to the situation according to the client's exact criteria. Among his completed projects are a round bath house/art studio made from redwood, a set of mahogany windows for a custom-built house in Colorado and a copper-clad exterior door system (pictured above) for a penthouse in Manhattan.

Working closely with the architect, who is attuned to the client's preferences, gives Braverman the large design picture from which he takes his cues. Although his shop is mainly set up for working with wood, Larry also works in metal, stone and other materials, as they are called for in the design. All the boards that Larry uses in his work are made in the shop from raw materials he buys. He transforms rough logs of maple, cherry, oak, walnut and other varieties of wood into windows, doors, fluted columns, sliding wall systems, cabinets, bars and furniture of all types. "I do entire rooms," said Braverman. "Whatever the situation is, I make it."

Quality with precision is Braverman's hallmark. Words like "plumb," "square," "true" and "crisp" pepper descriptions of his various projects. "This entire wall is 40 feet long and it's an eighth of an inch out of level. I wanted it to be a sixteenth," he said about a barn-to-residence renovation that was awarded first place in an architectural competition.

"I build people's dreams."

—Larry Braverman



TRR photos by Nancy Dymond

"We can furnish a house top to bottom within a rustic realm."

—Michael Barber

The Rustic Cottage: offering high end rustic style

The Rustic Cottage in Jeffersonville, NY is an assemblage of three of co-owner Michael Barber's dreams: owning his own business, making furniture from natural materials in his own shop and providing an outlet for the most talented rustic woodworkers in the Northeast.

Barber owns The Rustic Cottage with his wife, Colleen Barber, who designs the six showrooms in the store. And if you think that "rustic style" means birch branches lashed together with leather thongs, think again. The showrooms are arranged to offer the shopper a full panorama of design possibilities. Lodge-style furnishings made from bird's-eye and tiger-eye maple infuse the room with a living warmth. The enduring appeal of classic styles in cabinetry, dining tables, chairs and living room furniture is particularly adaptive to rustic enhancements such as birch veneer drawer fronts with river stone drawer pulls.

Many of the furniture pieces are worked by Barber in cooperation with other artists and craftspeople. For the larger pieces such as dressers, the couple buys the hand-crafted frame and finishes it with hand-twiggging, staining, painting and other design enhancements. Recently, Barber has begun working with artist Holly Macbain to create conceptual pieces that "morph" from wall to furniture.

Describing the variety of rustic furniture and accessories available at The Rustic Cottage, Barber said, "We can furnish a house top to bottom within a rustic realm. We have lights, rugs, coat racks, towel racks, bathroom accessories, even a line of curtains and a quilt line."



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Attractive Eight commercial units in fabulous location! Everything has been updated within the last three years. Paved parking in rear. Professional offices surround. Near Gov't Center/ Retail/ Gas Stations/ Banks/ Schools /etc. and also Racino. #18866



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 - 5+ Acres - Bethel, level, open, near Bethel Woods \$89,000
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TRR photos by Nancy Dymond



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John Roth: art furniture that’s fun and functional

What has four blue legs, two red feet, outstretched wings and seven spoons? If you guessed a John Roth “art chair,” you’re right on the mark. Formerly a Boston carpenter who used his skills to express the visions of others, John moved to an old farmhouse in Milanville, PA in 1992, which gave him plenty of opportunities to express his own “creative self.”


Roth’s house is filled with examples of his “functional art.” Imagination rules. Mirrors and picture frames dance the walls into life. Overhead in the kitchen hangs a pot rack made from a child’s wooden sled. Lamps that look like cages filled with glowing colored glass, triangular bookcase panels decorated with symbols of illumination, drawer pulls made from billiard balls and children’s blocks—all are evidence of the state of creative joy that informs Roth’s work.

Roth often incorporates found objects into his work. Pottery shards left by the previous owner find their way into plant pots, mirrors and wall mosaics. “I like taking found objects and using them in a way that gives the viewer the opportunity to see an object in a completely different way, such as using maple sugar taps for latches or old wooden shoe forms for the legs of a cabinet. Things that are made to serve one specific function are often beautiful in themselves.”

One of John Roth’s cabinets was included in the WJFF’s Art Party Silent Auction, a fund-raiser for WJFF public radio and NACL Theatre that was held in February at NACL in Highland Lake, NY. His work is for sale at the Bridgewater Mercantile in Jeffersonville, NY, at various art exhibits and by direct commission.



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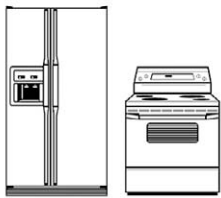
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Miracle Season

Getting an early start on the garden

By ROSEMARY MANDEVILLE

The season of miracles is now underway. Fresh leaves are pushing out of dead-looking twigs and flowers are appearing out of the mud, asking only for the warming rays of the spring sunshine. Best of all, you and I have an opportunity to contribute to the miracle season by spreading what looks to be bits of grit and dust onto moist soil, and watching as tiny new plants appear, grow, and eventually produce flowers and fruits.

Starting seeds isn't complicated if you stick with the easier to grow seeds. After all, a seed's only purpose in life is to sprout and grow, and it contains everything it needs to get started. As soon as surrounding conditions are right (a little moisture, some warmth and sometimes light or darkness), the pre-formed bundle of energy springs into action, fulfilling its destiny.

Preparing to participate in a miracle is pretty heady stuff, and when looking through glossy seed catalogs or colorful racks of seed it's almost impossible to make clear, rational decisions, but you must try in order to avoid disappointment. After all, it is the job of the seed company to suggest that every seed will sprout with ease, grow with abandon, and be undeterred by insects, disease or drought. It is up to you and me, the consumers, to do our research and read the fine print.

For those who are relatively new gardeners or inexperienced with seeds, avoid those that are described as "unusual" or "rare." There's a reason that they are uncommon, and it's usually because they have very particular conditions that need to be precisely met in order to sprout. Good seed catalogs (Thompson and Morgan comes to mind) will provide honest information on how easy or difficult each type of seed is and its germination requirements. Even if you choose to shop locally or from other sources, T&M is a good catalog to take shopping with you to use as a reference. It may come in handy when your resolve is weakening, your hands are shaking, and you are about to spend way too much money for seeds that will only sprout for specialists.

When you get your treasures home, it's time to decide when to plant them. The back of the package will usually suggest how many weeks before the last frost date to start them indoors. In our area, the last frost date is sometime in the last week of May, but the risk-takers amongst us may push that date up to the middle of the month. Count back from the last frost date the number of weeks suggested to find the planting date. Note the date on the seed pack and on your calendar so you won't forget. Resist planting too early or you'll end up with plants that are desperate to be planted out before the weather will allow.

As planting day draws near, gather together the things you will need for the big day. Containers should be absolutely clean of old soil, which can harbor plant diseases. I prefer to use new flat inserts or shallow pots. You'll need seed-starting mix—a soil-free planting medium that is finer

than regular potting mix—masking tape or duct tape, plastic wrap, newspaper and a heat mat or cables. Before planting, stick a piece of tape onto the outside of each container large enough to write the name of the seed, planting date and any other information you think might be useful (color, height, seed company, etc). I use tape on the pot at this point because plastic labels get in the way and can be lost—believe me. Fill the containers with damp seed-starting mix, tamp it down lightly, then tap the seeds out of the packet, trying to spread them evenly over the surface. Before covering them with a light covering of soil mix, check the package or catalog one more time for information about how deep the seed should be planted. Covering the seed more shallowly than suggested is fine under these controlled conditions, but some seeds require light to germinate. Covering those seeds will prevent them from sprouting. Cover the others with a light sprinkling of soil, then water the pot either by setting it into a shallow dish of water, or by using a mister. No matter how careful you may be, a hose or watering can will disturb the fresh soil and wash the seeds out of place. Misters that attach to the end of the hose do exist, but may not be worth the expense unless you're starting a large number of seeds. Cover the pots with plastic wrap to keep in moisture, then newspaper—one sheet for those seeds requiring light for germination, several sheets for the others. The newspaper will keep the sun's heat from building up under the plastic, cooking the seeds. Gentle bottom heat via heat mats or cables are so helpful as to be almost essential for good germination. They are well worth the cost. Once the seeds are sprouted, they will need as much light as you can provide for them. Unless you are lucky enough to have a greenhouse or sunroom, it may be best to grow them under fluorescent lights set as close to the plants as possible.

Check for sprouted seeds daily, and remove the plastic as soon as germination begins. I usually leave a sheet of newspaper loosely tented over the new seedlings for a day or two to allow the plants to adjust to the change in humidity. Keep them moist and leave them on the heat until they are well established.

Once the seedlings have at least one set of true leaves, it's time to transplant them into their own space. Use a potting mix to plant them into the packs that held last year's annuals, or into their own pots. It's okay to put several plants into a pot as long as they are well separated and have their own room to grow. It's usually not a good idea to plant such tiny plants directly into the garden until they've gotten more established. Feed them with a liquid fertilizer from time to time, give them plenty of light, and harden them off before planting out by putting them outside for short periods of time on nice days, and soon the pots will be bursting with healthy plants—the miracle realized.



Contributed photos

“Preparing to participate in a miracle is pretty heady stuff...”



“Fresh leaves are pushing out of dead-looking twigs and flowers are appearing out of the mud, asking only for the warming rays of the spring sunshine.”



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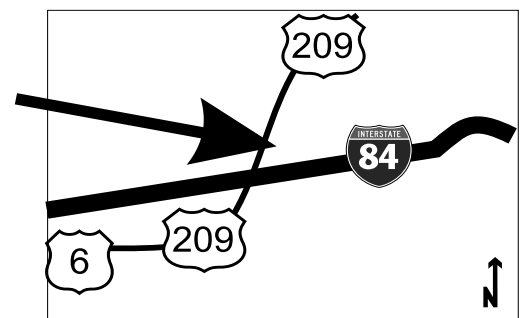
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It's Chili Time

Chili traditions and award-winning recipes

By CYNTHIA O. TOLIVER

If you're like most Americans, chili is as familiar as apple pie. Nothing is as warming and satisfying on a winter day as a bowl of chili. But chili appears on the American table in all seasons, and can be prepared using ground beef (chili con carne), pulled pork, chicken or vegetarian style.

There are many legends and stories surrounding the origins of chili, but Charles Ramsdell, in "San Antonio: A Pictorial Guide," says, "Chili, as we know it, cannot be found in Mexico today except in a few spots which cater to tourists. If chili had come from Mexico, it would still be there" because Mexicans do not change their culinary habits. Many die-hard chili aficionados, or "chili-heads," swear that tomatoes, onions and beans should never be included in authentic chili. Early chili recipes are rumored to have included some rather strange ingredients, ranging from Spanish conquistadores (pobrecitos!) to horses to deer meat.

Here in the United States, a chili cookoff is as common as an old-fashioned picnic in the park. There are two major chili organizations, The Chili Appreciation Society International, Inc. (www.chili.org) and the International Chili Society (www.chilicookoff.com). They sponsor chili cookoffs worldwide, and donate millions of dollars to local charities.

The Hudson Valley Regional Chili Cookoff will hold its next cookoff on October 13 at the Woodstock Harley-Davidson store in Kingston, NY. The New York State Chili Championship will be held in Saratoga Springs, NY on August 18 and in Pennsylvania, the Turn Up the Heat Chili Cookoff will be held March 4 at Strawberry Square in Harrisburg.

Closer to home, the Bethel Woods Farmers Market in Bethel, NY will hold its annual chili cookoff on October 7th, Columbus Day weekend (farmfest@gerryfoundation.org). The Hawley-Lake Wallenpaupack Chamber of Commerce (www.hawleywallenpaupackcc.com) just held their Fifth Annual Chili/Wing Cook Off on January 28th at Ehrhardt's Waterfront Restaurant in Hawley, PA. The first place winner was Sweetheart Chili, perfect for lovers and prepared by Ross Rosencrance of Ceasar's Cove Haven in Lakeville, PA.

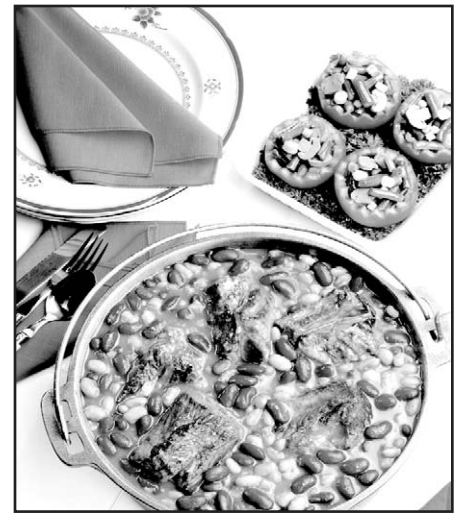
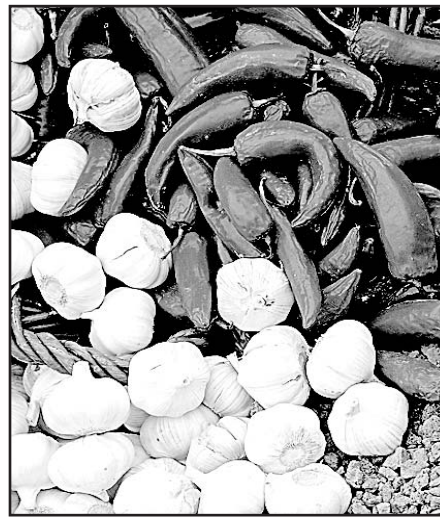
Enjoy!

Steve Falkowski's Gold Miner's Chili*

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
 3 pounds beef, cut into ¼-inch cubes
 1½ cups white onion, finely minced
 8 garlic cloves, finely minced
 ¾ teaspoon garlic powder
 2 cans (15½ ounce) chicken broth, fat removed
 4-ounce (½ 8-ounce can) tomato sauce
 3 tablespoons ground cumin
 10½ tablespoons chili powder (a combination of hot and mild, depending on taste)
 2 teaspoons salt
 ½ teaspoon meat tenderizer
 ½ teaspoon light brown sugar
 1 teaspoon pepper sauce

In a large pot, simmer onion and garlic in 2 cups chicken broth for ten minutes. Add tomato sauce and all dry spices, except the tenderizer and sugar. Mix well. Brown the meat in oil using a separate pan and drain well. Sprinkle meat with tenderizer. Add meat to the onion/spice mixture. Add remaining broth and simmer for 2 ½ hours. Mix in brown sugar and Tabasco sauce just before serving.

*Falkowski is a Pennsylvania resident and winner of the 1997 International Chili World Championship.



Contributed photos

Cynthia O. Toliver's Vegetarian Chili (serves 4-6)

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 2 Vidalia (sweet) onions, coarsely chopped
 1 red pepper, diced
 1 green pepper, diced
 1 small head garlic, chopped
 3 jalapeno peppers, chopped (add seeds only if you like it hot!)
 3 or 4 large portabello mushrooms, cubed
 ½ pound button mushrooms, chopped
 2 tablespoons chili powder
 1 tablespoon ground cumin
 6 plum tomatoes, chopped
 1 can black beans, drained and rinsed
 ¼ teaspoon cayenne
 1 15-ounce can of tomato sauce
 ¾ cup vegetable stock
 ¼ cup red wine
 3 sprigs fresh thyme
 3 sprigs fresh oregano
 Kosher salt to taste
 Sour cream or plain yogurt
 1 cup chopped green onions
 ½ pound shredded cheddar cheese

Heat oil in saute pan over medium/high heat. Saute onions and peppers for a couple of minutes. Add garlic, jalapenos, mushrooms and tomatoes and cook for 3 minutes. Add all spices, beans, sauce, stock and wine and let simmer over low heat for 20 - 30 minutes. Add salt at end, to taste. Serve over rice or plain, topped with sour cream or plain yogurt, chopped green onions and a generous helping of cheddar cheese.

Stephen Stuart's Chipotle Black Bean Chili (makes three gallons)

4 pounds dried black beans
 2 medium to large sweet potatoes
 5 green bell peppers
 5 red bell peppers
 1 head garlic
 7 medium to large onions
 8 teaspoons Hungarian paprika
 10 teaspoons cumin
 5 tablespoons dried oregano
 8 teaspoons coriander
 2 cans black olives, pitted
 1 48-ounce can tomato juice
 4 35-ounce cans peeled plum tomatoes
 12 ounces molasses
 1 can chipotle chili in adobo sauce

Soak beans in cold water for 24 hours, then drain, rinse and cook with adequate water until tender. Add four chopped onions to the pot as the beans are cooking. Add sweet potatoes during the last 20 minutes. Dice onions, bell peppers and garlic. In a large kettle, gently cook the onions in a generous portion of extra virgin olive oil. When tender, add the garlic and the peppers. Cook an additional ten minutes. Mix all of the spices in a separate bowl, then add to the pot and stir. Slice olives and plum tomatoes add along with tomato juice and molasses. Process one third of the black beans, sweet potatoes and the chipotle peppers in a food processor until smooth. Add to the pot. Add the remaining black beans and simmer on low heat until all flavors have reached their peak.

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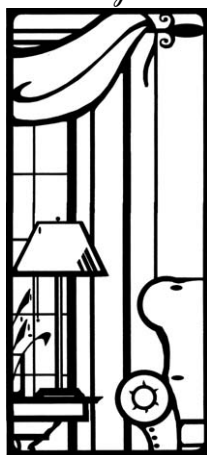
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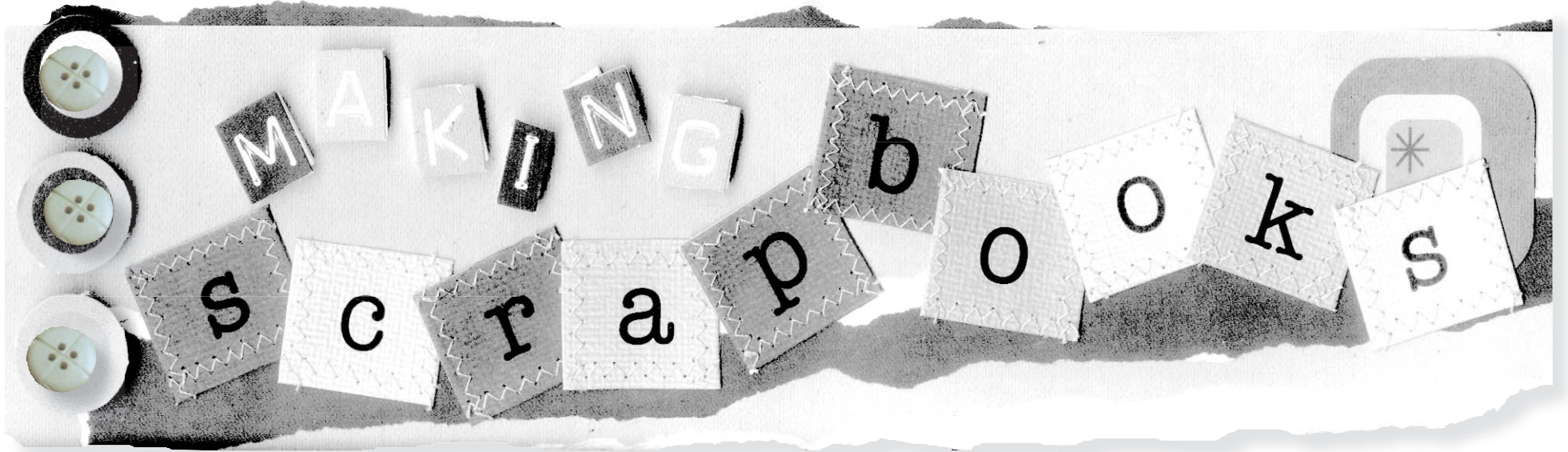
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Telling and preserving our stories

By Pamela Jones

Whether it's a phone call to a friend or a Hollywood movie, we tell our stories every day to connect and share our experiences. Scrapbooks have endured as a versatile and accessible medium to express ourselves and tell our stories as simply or as elaborately as we choose.

Scrapbooks in various forms have been around for centuries. Beginning with the Renaissance, people kept commonplace books, which were handwritten collections of information ranging from quotes and poetry to measurement tables and medicinal remedies. The books were often handmade and reflected, by their content, the unique interests, thoughts and values of the person who made it.

Thomas Jefferson kept scrapbooks of newspaper articles for future reference and also made scrapbooks of cut-out poems that he gave as gifts. Mark Twain was such a scrapbook enthusiast that he invented and marketed books with gummed pages as easy self-pasting scrapbooks.

For some insight into today's scrapbookers, I spoke with Stacey Sarnicola, a high school teacher by day and a scrapbook facilitator by night. She got started in scrapbooking when she wondered what to do with the big boxes of photos, report cards,

pictures. In that case, you may want to scan any original documents or clippings you may have to include in the album. Handwriting is very personal and will provide an added dimension to your subject. If you have some personal belongings that have been passed down, such as a pocket watch, harmonica, cigarette lighter, service medals, try arranging them as a still life to photograph and allow the unrelated objects to unite in a reflection about the person you are recording. You could try to find pictures, post cards or maps of significant places in that person's life.

A technical aspect emphasized in modern scrapbooking is archiving photos and memorabilia that will be preserved for future generations. Many of us have older scrapbooks with brittle pages that break apart upon turning them, discolored photographs marred with adhesives, or newspaper clippings obscured by aging browned tape.

Today's scrapbook makers suggest that all paper and materials be acid-free. Wood pulp used in paper production contains natural acids that will eventually cause the paper to yellow and become brittle. These acids can also be released onto pictures or documents mounted on the paper. Acid-free paper is treated with a neutral-

“Scrapbooks look both forward and backward. Think about a future generation scouring your pages for clues about their family.”

certificates, drawings and other memorabilia she saved for her kids. She attended a workshop for scrapbook making and got hooked. Now she teaches her own workshops and enjoys helping others to realize their scrapbook goals.

Many of us have boxes of pictures and mementoes that we intend to organize some day. I asked her if she noticed any common motivating factor that inspired people to finally take action with their collections. “Yes,” she answered, “guilt! You would be surprised at how many people come to a workshop for the first time, apologizing to me for storing their pictures for so long!”

She shared that many people feel overwhelmed at the idea of making a scrapbook. They feel that it will be a time-consuming project, that it will be hard to do or that they may not be creative or artistic enough. But scrapbooking is open to all levels of time and creativity. Some people want to keep it simple and just get it done. She said that a good scrapbook can be completed in one afternoon. Others want to spend more time and take longer to create their pages. It's up to the individual. Let your own vision guide you.

Popular scrapbook themes are wedding and baby albums, but a scrapbook can document anything from a vacation to a relationship. A scrapbook can also be a unique and personal gift.

To get started, get your pictures together. Pick out the ones that best tell the story. Start placing and arranging them on pages and decide in advance where they will go. You may want to crop some pictures to get rid of distractions and focus on the subject. Cropping may also allow you to fit more pictures on a page. Then, stack them in the order of your planned layout to prepare to fix them onto the pages.

To add texture to your scrapbook, you can include items other than photos. You can use ticket stubs, programs, brochures, cards, whatever helps you tell your story. If you are creating a scrapbook about an ancestor, you may not have a lot of

izer during production to reduce the acidity. Some paper is marked as lignin-free. Lignin is also a natural substance in wood that will eventually cause discoloring. You may see scrapbook papers that indicate they are buffered. This is a process of coating the paper to help protect it from external pollutants. If you are scanning items, make sure your prints are on acid-free paper made for your printer.

In addition to the album, papers and page protectors, you will need acid-free adhesive to mount your items on the page. There are a number of different types available, including glue sticks, photo tabs and double-sided tape. You may also want to add stickers, pre-cut strips for borders or mats for your pictures to add color and dimension. Special pens in a variety of colors are also sold specifically for scrapbooks. They should be color-fast, fade- and water-resistant.

Scrapbooks look both forward and backward. When you create your scrapbook, think about a future generation that may be scouring your pages for clues about their family. Think about things that were missing from photos, albums or collections from your ancestors that frustrated you, like a wedding announcement from a newspaper without a date or unmarked pictures of people you don't recognize. Make sure your captions help to tell who, what, where and when.

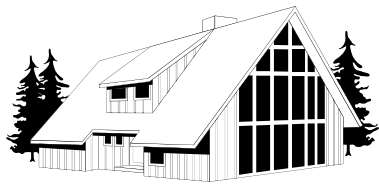
Whether you take four hours or four months, your scrapbook will be unique. You can get those boxes of photos and memorabilia off your mind and into an attractive display to share. Tell your story completely and make it completely yours.

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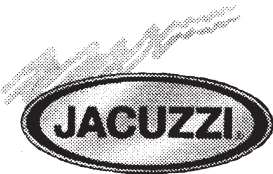
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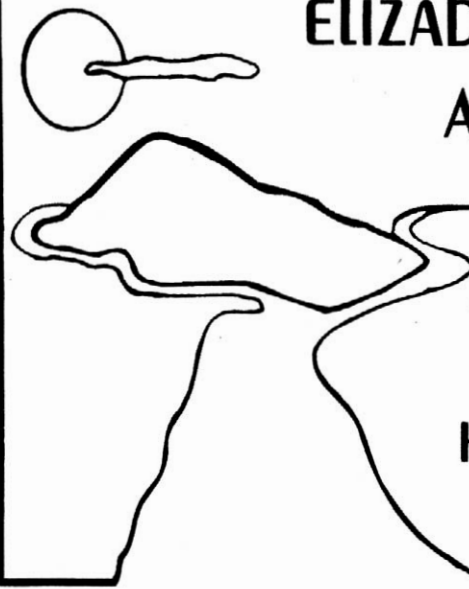
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GOING GREEN



with Dick Riesling

How to make your home more green

Q. What is the best way to begin thinking about “going green” in my house and back yard?

A. Let’s begin with some of the images we have of a “green” house where there is wonderful light, plenty of heat and healthy, delicious food and beautiful flowers. A natural grace and many distinct enjoyments abound. We can bring all of these benefits into our homes.

Q. Isn’t a green home also about the environment, about energy and materials?

A. Absolutely. I just wanted to remind everyone that a green home has unique cultural and psychological aspects as well as the physical and economic. We have great expectations from a green home in terms of living more lightly and living more enjoyably.

Q. Is it possible to have a zero net energy home or at least get close?

A. Yes, and it is very affordable. Admittedly, it is easier to achieve when constructing a new home.

“Changes in the ambient temperature around your home will create energy savings that pay for all of this attractive landscaping.”

Q. So, what can I do to make my home “greener?”

A. Let’s start outside the home with some nice aesthetic additions that also reduce energy use. Plant trees, hedges and shrubs on the north and west sides of the house for shading against heat in the afternoon and wind breaks when it is cold. Flowers and shrubs, a vegetable garden rich in compost from the lawn and kitchen can be planted wherever there is space. Changes in the ambient temperature around your home will create energy savings that pay for all of this attractive landscaping.

Q. What can I do on the exterior of my home?

A. Here is a short list. Add decorative awnings to south and east windows and doors and insulating, attractive shutters all around. Be certain these products are made from biodegradable materials. Put in some sky lights or light tunnels to bring the benefits of natural lighting and reduced need for energy. Have an energy audit done to see where the envelop of your home needs to be sealed. The cost will be \$250 or more but the savings from the energy savings gained will more than pay for the audit and the conservation measures. This is true even if you decide to go beyond sealing electric outlets, doors and windows to the purchase of energy saving ones. Roofing and siding products can provide very significant energy savings as well.

Q. All right, that’s outside. Can we move inside?

A. Let’s begin with lots of additional flowers and plants that bring fresh oxygen and sequester carbon dioxide and many other contaminants. Next, read a guide on non-toxic, bio-degradable cleaning agents and then inventory what’s in all the cabinets. Adding insulation in the attic is usually possible without much expense and will pay for itself over and over again. The same is true for adding insulation to the walls, but the initial cost is greater.

Q. What can I do in the kitchen?

A. If your refrigerator or freezer is more than 10 years old, replace it with an energy star unit, even if the old one seems to be working fine. It isn’t really. Spending \$900 on a new, energy-efficient refrigerator will result in savings that cover the purchase price in three years and save \$4000 over the lifetime of this refrigerator and avoid

several tons of CO2 emissions. Look at the power of this one purchase decision. Turn off the electric coffee machine.

Q. Anything else I can do?

A. Here are just a few very easy ways to green your home. Turn down the thermostat 3 -6 degrees and wear a sweater if needed. Turn down the hot water heater setting by 10 or more degrees. Unplug all of your electronic devices, except a clock. Purchase condensed fluorescent lights. Avoid using air conditioning as much as possible. Wash clothes in cold water and hang clothes to dry. This list could be 50 energy saving items long. The result is the greening of your finances as several thousand dollars a year are saved, and the greening of your home contributes to the greening of your community and world.

Q. What about installing renewable energy systems?

R. This is much easier and more affordable than most people think and adds significant value your home. Remember that you are saving from \$1,000-3,000 a year or more through energy conservation measures. Solar electric and small wind turbines come with 50 percent subsidy and net metering which allows you credit at retail rates when your home is producing more electricity than it is using. Solar thermal and geo-thermal systems for heating and cooling are available for almost every home. All renewable energy systems are supported by a loan program that pays the first 4 percent of interest. Add these programs to the energy savings through your conservation practices and every homeowner should conclude that generating most of their own energy and becoming a green home where wonderful things happen is the very next decision to be made.

For more information visit HomePower.org; NYSERDA.org; NESEA.org; Powernaturally.org; Getenergysmart.org; SASDonlne.org



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Dick Riesling energizes Apple Pond Farm and Renewable Energy Education Center in Cohecton, NY with solar electric and solar thermal systems and a wind turbine. He is a member of Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development that develops renewable energy and green building projects.



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Candle Warmth



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From the ceremonial to the secular, candles light the way

By PAMELA JONES

Radiance is that intangible element of beauty. It's a glow that reveals a spiritual quality or inner presence. It's no wonder that the glow of candles is used by almost every religion to enhance spiritual rituals and ceremonies.

Candles are often used by Buddhists to help enable meditation through relaxation. Hindu religious ceremonies use oil candles with cotton wicks in clay lamps as a symbol of enlightenment or prosperity. Candles are used in Christian worship to represent the light of God and as an aid to prayer. Wicca ceremonies use candles to represent the God and Goddess. In addition to Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, Jewish tradition calls for candles to be lit at the start of each Sabbath. Candles are central to Kwanzaa celebrations, which employ seven candles to reflect the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

The glow of a lit candle is a universal symbol that is incorporated in many secular themes as well. Many humanitarian organizations use candles in their logos. Scientific organizations also use the candle to symbolize enlightenment. Candles are used in vigils for peace and in remembrance of loved ones.

And don't forget the candles on a birthday cake! Some sources attribute the origin of the birthday candle to a symbol that celebrates the light of life.

While we associate candles with holidays or special events, the enjoyment of candles can be an everyday indulgence. Their widespread appeal is reflected in the fact that over two-thirds of American homes use candles. Increasingly, candles are becoming a focal point of home décor. The ambience created by the warm and magic glow of a candle is an accessible and inexpensive comfort. In addition to the mystique of candlelight, candles can provide an array of colors and scents to help create an aura of calm and well-being.

Candles can create atmosphere at your table and you don't have to wait for a dinner party to use them. Our fast-food culture tends to rush us through our evening meal, which should be an important daily event when households of any size can get together and share the day's experiences. Kindling candles can create a warm and inviting setting. It's best to use unscented candles at mealtimes. You don't want the aroma of your cooking competing and clashing with scented candles. You should also avoid candles that are at eye-level for table settings. Instead, look for either short or tall candles, or a combination of both.

Nicolina's, in Narrowsburg, NY, has a large selection of unscented candles. You can find both pillars and tapers. While pillars are currently very popular, you might not want to overlook the classic elegance of tapers for your dining room table. You can find 12-inch tapers in 14 different colors at Nicolina's. They are also expecting six new colors in time for spring, when we will all be looking for a change.

If you like to reflect the world of nature, Nicolina's selection of handcrafted, all-natural, honeybee-beeswax candles are ideal. These come in their natural creamy color, which will go with any décor, but are especially wonderful with earth tones. Beeswax candles carry their own innate light, sweet scent of honey.

Scented candles started to gain in popularity with the increasing use of aromatherapy. Our sense of smell is powerful, and a pleasing scent can help to influence our mood and create feelings of well-being.

Candles come in hundreds of fragrances. The candle industry has broken these down into five categories. The most popular are the kitchen aromas, like vanilla, mocha, brown sugar and hazelnut. Next are the fruit scents, which include citrus, apple, peach and melon. The third most popular are the floral scents, including lavender, peony and jasmine. The fourth category is referred to as spa or Zen fragrances. Examples of this type are green tea, ginger and sandalwood. The last group is called fantasy fragrances, which catalogs the more intangible scents like rain, linen or ocean-breeze.

For a varied selection of scented candles, you may want to stop in the Secret Garden in Jeffersonville, NY. They carry scented pillars in sizes ranging from one inch to 10 inches tall. They also have jar candles, including candles layered with three different scents in one jar. As these candles burn down, the scent will change.

For the ultimate in kitchen aromas, you may want to try some of the dessert candles at the Secret Garden. They not only appeal to the sense of smell, but have visual appeal as well. They are crafted to appear just like the real dessert. They come in just about every dessert-scented-flavor you can think of, including German chocolate cake, tarts, pies, muffins and cookie warmers that come in 10 different flavor-scents.

While you're at the Secret Garden, you might want to check out their candle accessories. They have a whole section of candle holders and candle rings. Susan, shop

“The ambience created by the warm and magic glow of a candle is an accessible and inexpensive comfort.”

proprietor, told me that her customers have fun mixing and matching different colored candles and accessories to make their own centerpieces. You might want to include one of their hurricane-style candle holders for a dramatic effect.

Another local store with a big candle selection is Hare Hollow in Milford, PA. They carry mostly scented candles, but offer unscented candles as well. Hare Hollow features Yankee candles and sells Yankee's other fragrance products as well, so you can maintain your fragrance choice, even when you can't burn a candle.

In addition to traditional jars, pillars and votives, Hare Hollow carries primitive-style pillars and candles in the shapes of stars, hearts and cinnamon buns.

They also sell floating candles, which are often used as centerpieces for parties. You can put colored beads or stones at the bottom of a glass container, with the candle floating above them. Placement on a mirror, surrounded by a reflective garland, will enhance the sparkle of these arrangements.

At Hare Hollow you can also find a wide selection of accessories. They carry candle rings, taper holders, wall sconces, candle snuffers and wax trimmers.

While candles provide us with pleasure and tranquility, it is important to respect an open flame. Most candles come with a fire safety label, which you should read before lighting your candle. General safety rules include not leaving a burning candle unattended, not placing the candle near flammable objects and keeping them out of reach of children and pets.

As we grow weary with the waning days of winter, we start to yearn for the long summer days. At times when we can't bring the sun in, when it's a little gloomy outside, or inside, we can light some candles and let their radiant glow warm our homes and hearts.

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For a Quick Home Makeover, Change Your Interior Doors

With the growing number of home decorating and improvement shows on cable and network TV, as well as syndicated radio, newspaper columns, magazines and special Web sites devoted to the subject, do-it-yourself (DIY) has become today's hottest home design trend.

From newlyweds and urban singles to second-home owners and empty nesters, home décor and remodeling isn't just for the pros any more. As consumers of all ages take DIY home matters into their own hands – literally – one of the quickest, easiest and most affordable ways to add personality and brighten up any home is to install new raised-panel doors throughout the house.

While often overlooked in favor of new paint, flooring and wall coverings, interior doors can energize an otherwise bland, lifeless space. They can be the spark of personality that brings life to a room or the finishing touch that makes a drab look attractive again. Above all, they accentuate your personal style.

Doors With A Purpose

Serving as the entry to a room and conveying its initial impression, doors play an integral role in home décor and should be considered along with any home improvement or remodeling project. Spend a few minutes looking at your home's interior doors – from the main floor to the bedrooms and even your closet's bi-folds. Chances are the doors lack much in the way of style. Or, what style there is may not match your decorating tastes.

You can change all that this weekend. Just visit your local lumberyard, home center or visit with a professional remodeler and look for new doors with raised-panel designs that complement your interior décor. Installing new raised-panel doors throughout your home is inexpensive compared to many renovations or decorating projects.

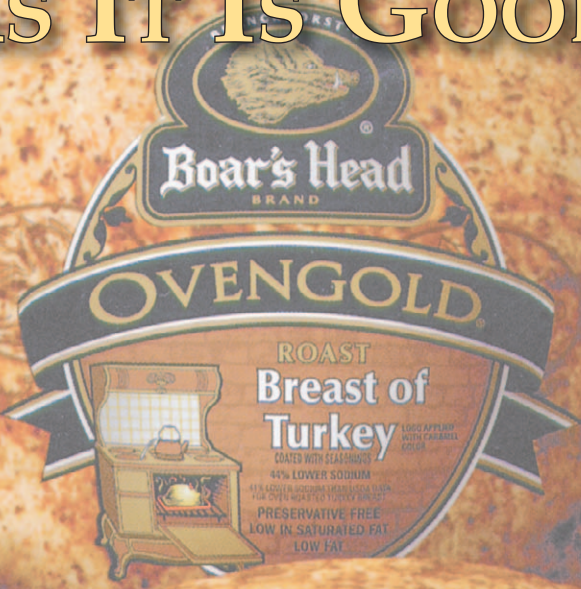
Many homeowners often keep the existing frame and simply replace the doors, called slabs. For ease of installation, measure each door's hinge and doorknob location and order the doors pre-drilled. For a fresh new look, you can purchase a pre-hung door and replace the frame. In this case, you should heed a few installation tips:

- Ensure the pre-hung door is squarely in the frame, then lock it in position with a cross brace.
- Use wood shims between the jambs and the studs, as necessary, to ensure a plumb square and proper fit.
- Keep the frame flush with proper positioning of the cross brace.
- Add trim by cutting, gluing and nailing it in place after the door has been installed.

There are many styles, finishes and sizes available to showcase your home's true character.



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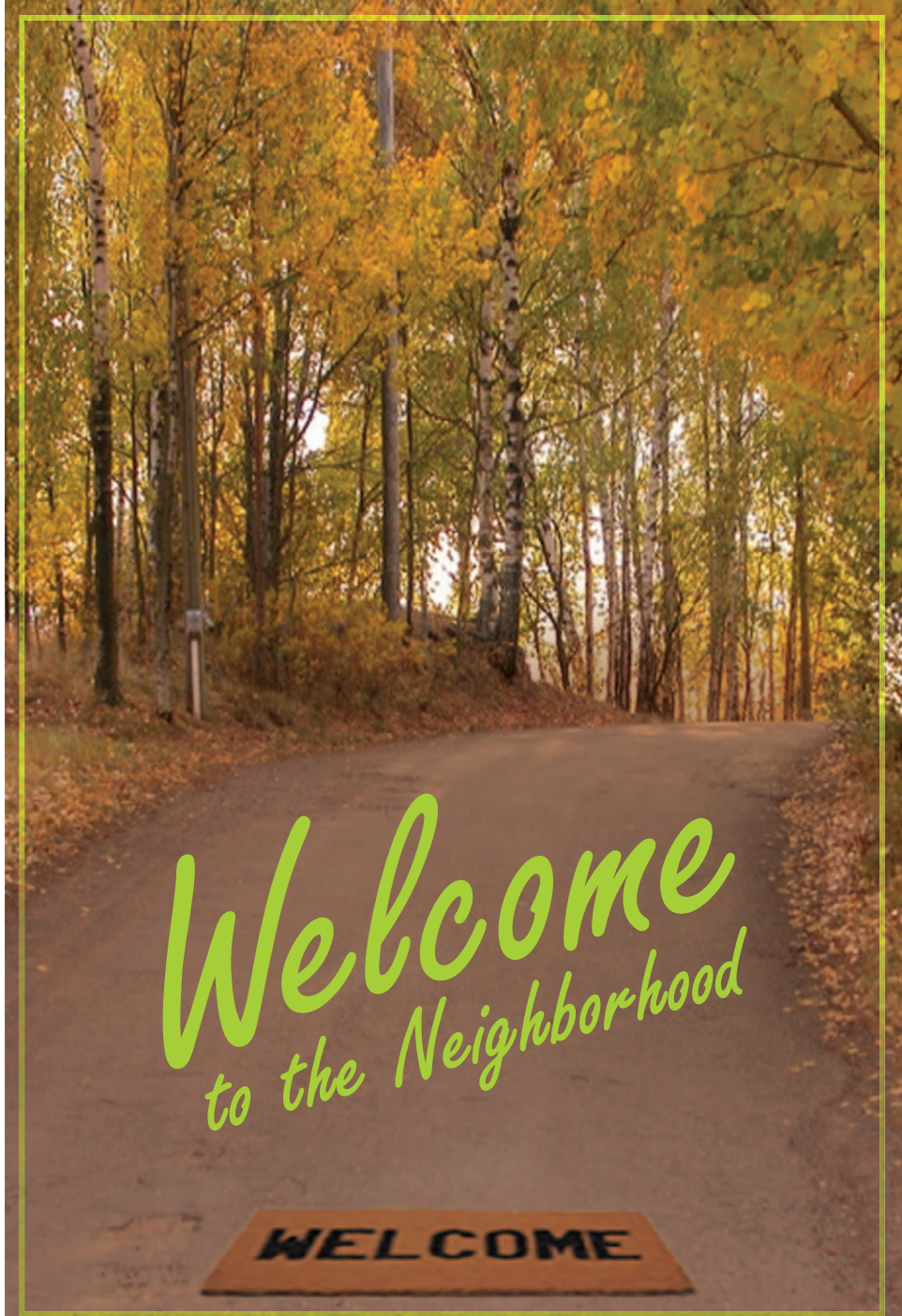
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