

Getting ready for winter, circa 1860

—Press staff photo

Fall Home Improvement

A special supplement of the Wednesday, Oct. 5, 1994

WINCHESTER PRESS

Creating a 'green' kitchen

What is the central room in your house? If you're like most Canadians, it's the kitchen. We cook, eat, talk, entertain, meet and play in that one room more often that any other. We also tend to remodel that room the most; it's usually the first target of a home's new owner.

The idea of a "green" kitchen is beginning to catch on in the environmentally aware '90s, but for many remodelers it is still a new idea. Incorporating environmental awareness into your kitchen design or remodel begins by looking at the materials you or your contractor will use to do the job.

Popular materials such as particle board or plywood give off vapors when they are new. Although the emissions are small, they can cause irritation to people sensitive to chemicals. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which is studying indoor air quality, recommends that cabinets made of hard plywood or particle board be finished with a high-pressure laminate. This cuts emissions by sealing the vapors. The same holds for countertops which, while covered by plastic laminate on top, may have unfinished particle board or substituting solid wood when rebuilding cabinets and counters.

Another environmental "strategy" for home remodelers is to use recycled materials wherever possible. Also, look at the potential for recycling both the existing kitchen materials which you will discard and those you are installing.

Any modern kitchen would be sadly lacking if not designed with municipal recycling in mind. More communities are instituting mandatory recycling every year and with a little planning, your remodeled kitchen can accommodate this growing trend. A modern kitchen must include a recycling system, something that will reinforce recycling as a regular habit in the daily kitchen routine.

Appliances are another area where consumers can make a positive environmental impact. While the "perfect" appliances haven't been built yet, there are a wide variety of refrigerators and other appliances that can perform well while also saving energy. The yellow "energy guide" labels attached to all large appliances give consumers a good comparison between different appliance brands and models. Saving energy is more than a thrifty move; it's also good for the environment.

Light and sound are two factors sometimes overlooked in remodeling, but they can certainly affect the quality of life within a home. Energy-efficient lighting such as compact fluorescents can significantly reduce your utility bills. Replacing just one 75 watt incandescent bulb with an 18 watt compact fluorescent can save and average of $40 in one year.

But because these lights are not "true color" lights, you need to balance them with other types of light in places of food preparation and serving areas where proper color is important.

Our cover

Getting ready for winter was an important fall ritual for the pioneers of this area, and one of the many important tasks that were left to the ladies of the household was the making of quilts to help warm the long, cold winter nights. Quilt-making is still a craft today, as it was circa 1860 as demonstrated on our cover by Mary Jane Daniels of Monkland, shown at Upper Canada Village working on a four-patch quilt. The color photo was taken by a Press staff photographer and was reproduced for this supplement by Windmill Web Inc. of Prescott.

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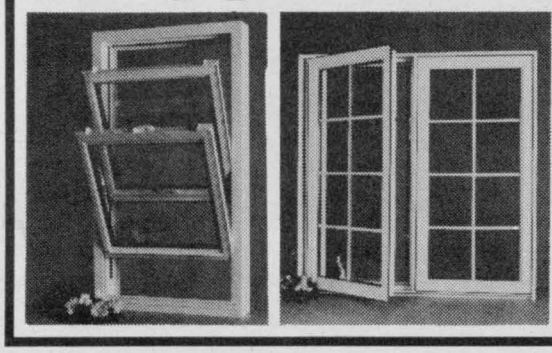

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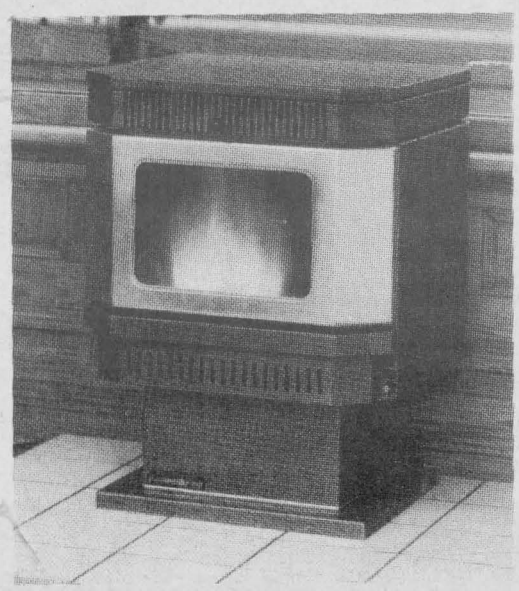

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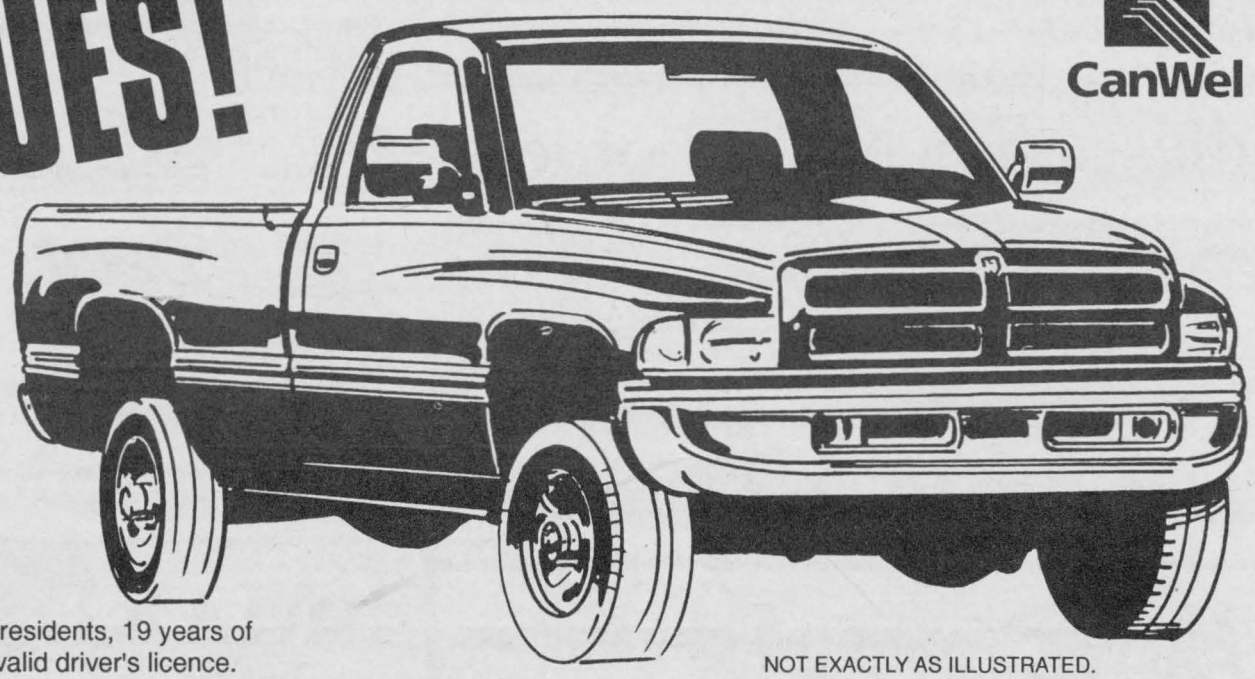

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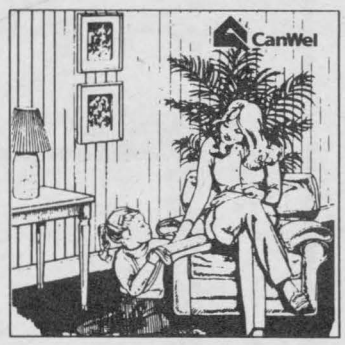

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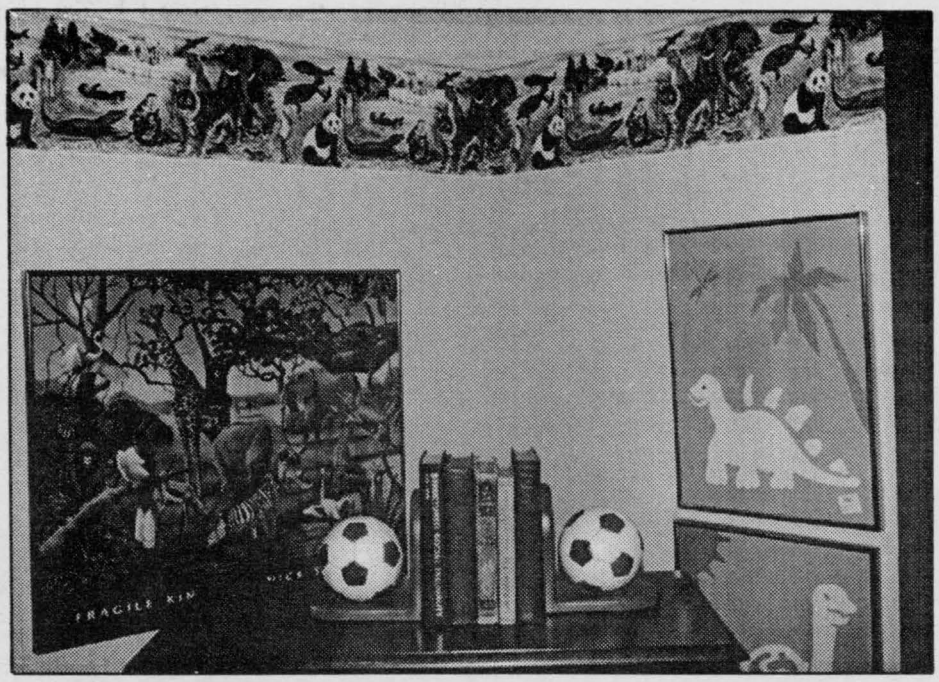

Head for the border

Wallpaper borders are easy to use even for first time do-it-yourselfers.

Endless choices for borders

(NU)—Wallpaper borders present almost endless decorating possibilities, from ceiling accents to faux "wall panels."

And borders are so easy to use, even first-time do-it-yourselfers can create design elements with them successfully.

Here are some suggestions on decorating with borders:

• Highlight an elegant crown molding by adding borders both under the molding and on the ceiling.

• Create the illusion of architectural detailing by using borders as faux "panels" on wallpapered walls.

• Use a border to highlight a staircase or to "frame" a fireplace.

• Put a border around a window frame and add one at the ceiling, too.

• Off the wall, borders can decorate a wooden valance, headboard, child's toy box, hat boxes and storage containers.

Blowers, mulchers make fall clean-up a breeze

(NU)—Notice the comics page lately? Charlie Brown and the gang; Calvin and Hobbes; Nancy and Sluggo. Everybody's raking leaves . . . and hating it.

It's that fall rite—the great, albeit abhorred, tradition.

Too bad these comics kids don't have the latest equipment for leaf gathering, from leaf blower/vacuums that actually mulch—no kidding—to rideable mulching mowers. Their antics might not be as funny, but their chores would become a lot easier.

Take the new generation of hand-held electric blower/vacuums. They're more powerful and lighter than ever.

It's difficult to believe units less than seven pounds can produce 180-mile-per-hour jet streams. But they do, as well as convert to equally powerful vacuums. All for about $100.

However, these fun tools can do much more than blow debris into neat piles. They can clear hard-to-reach areas such as flower beds, hedges, window wells or gravel-covered beds.They are also good for cleaning gutters and downspouts, garages and driveways.

Some walk-behind mowers can be turned into mulching mowers simply by closing off the grass chute and using the mower without the bag. The machine's instructions will say if this option is available.

Any mower, however, can gather leaves and reduce the amount of debris through a simple trick—particularly if the debris is brittle and dry.

The trick: Run the machine once over the area with the unit's side-discharge attachment in place—or in the mulching mode—to cut the material into small pieces.

When the area is gone over for a second time, with the clippings bag attached, the mower or rider will chop the debris even further and simultaneously pick it up, allowing more than normal to be packed into the bag.

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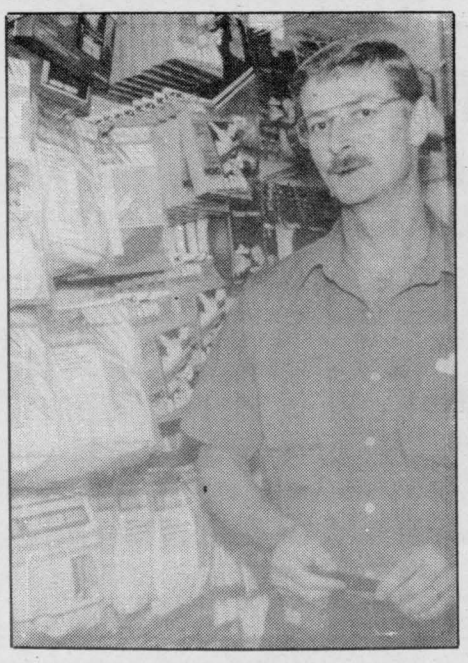

Dave Begg says it pays to use quality products when preparing for winter.

Preparing for winter's chill

WINCHESTER — Less expensive products are not always the best when it comes to preparing one's home for winter.

"If you want quality, you have to pay for it," says Dave Begg, hardware manager at Geggie's Home Hardware Ltd. near Winchester.

Although in the past homeowners made major renovations and home improvements in the fall, they are now improving their homes year-round.

However, in the fall, he adds, homeowners are kept busy preparing their homes for winter whether by weather stripping, insulation or painting.

"The rush is on to get things done now that were meant to be done in the summer."

Homeowners looking for supplies are heading for the window kits, caulking and "basically anything that keeps the heat in and cold out."

Wood-burning stoves and gas fire places are also sold far more often during this time of year.

"People are also looking for heat-exchange units for their homes." For newer homes these are vital, he explains, because they are virtually completely air-tight. "Fresh air has to be brought in regularly."

Today, more than ever, people want value for their dollar, says Begg. "However, cheap is cheaper and if you want a quality product, it means paying more. Better quality means it lasts longer and is more durable."

Energy conservation is also high on the list of homeowner's minds. "People are really energy conscious and are looking to save as much as possible."

Whether it be by insulating pipes and hotwater tanks or using energy-efficient lightbulbs, says Begg, "people are leaning towards energy conservation."

How to choose your new carpet

(NU)—The economy has left most of us feeling the tug on our wallets and pocketbooks. So, we're shopping more carefully and demanding more accountability for our dollars.

For homeowners looking to redecorate, home furnishings have become as important an investment as a new car. Carpet is no exception. The following tips are designed to help make you a smarter carpet shopper.

After deciding which rooms you'd like to redecorate, the next step is determining how many square yards of new carpet you will need. Measure the length and width of the room. Next, multiply the length and the width to find the total number of square feet of carpet needed to cover the floor. Divide this total by nine for the number of square yards.

Determining the quality of a particular carpet style is really very easy. Simply press down on the carpet pile with one finger and see how easy or difficult it is to penetrate the carpet backing. The harder it is to penetrate the backing, the better the carpet's quality.

Denser carpets provide longer wear and better crush resistance. Since soil and stains remain mostly on the surface, these styles are also usually easier to clean and maintain.

Another way to determine value is to check the quality of the yarn. Generally, the tighter the yarn is twisted, the better the wear and performance. Look closely at the cut ends of the individual carpet fibers. These should be neat and well defined, and should not fray or "blossom" at the ends.

Carpet padding, the cushion that lays underneath the carpet, and installation often are included in the overall price. Quality padding not only will add to the life of your carpet, it also helps insulate cold floors. Another important consideration is if the carpet features a recognized treatment, such as Scotchgard Stain Release carpet protection, to guard against soil and stains.

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Supplies required for wallpapering projects

(NAPS)—Homeowners can add value to any room and save hundreds of dollars by doing their own wallcovering. But, where does a "wallcovering wanna-be" begin? First, get walls in shape by doing minor repairs and patching. You want your wallcovering to stay put once you hang it, and the following tips should help.

Remove all switch plates, fixtures, and if possible, moldings. Begin by doing a preliminary dry layout of the paper, to see how many full-width sheets will be needed. Papers that are pre-pasted require submersion in a water tray. When paste is needed, it may be purchased premixed or as a powder to be mixed with water.

The right wallcovering can be a perfect coverup. When selecting wallpaper for problem walls, use a heavier vinyl wallcovering with fabric backing to minimize show-through. Avoid patterns with stripes or plaids, which draw attention to uneven walls.

A plumb line is a good tool to determine a true vertical line for your starting point.

Here are the recommended tools to do the job: pencils; sponge; pasting brush; wide-blade taping knife; seam roller; razor knife with breakaway blades; casing knife (optional); wallpapering shears; water tray (for pre-pasted wallpaper); roller (may be used as alternative to pasting brush); plumb line; drop cloths; protective eyewear; gloves.

Evenly apply paste to pre-cut strips with the paste brush or roller. Do not allow paste to touch the pattern side of the paper. You may fold over the pasted area to meet another pasted area to make it easier to manage.

Start by laying paper where wall meets ceiling; the rest will unfold itself down the wall. Position the strip according to your plumb line marks and remember to leave some overhang at the top and bottom. Beginning at the top, smooth wallcovering out from the center in both directions with a smoothing brush. Check for bubbles and be certain seams are properly butted. A seam roller may be used to flatten paper into corners and crevices. Remove excess paste or marks with a dampened sponge. For a professionally trimmed look use a wide-blade taping knife to press paper into the crevice where wall meets ceiling and around trim. Then, run a breakaway razor knife along the crease, using the edge of the taping knife as a guide. Peel away excess wallpaper. Use a casing knife (which looks like a pizza cutter) to trim hard-to-reach areas around windows and door jams.

For the next section of paper, butt it against the first strip to match patterns, without gapping or overlapping, and proceed as previously mentioned.

Now that you've prepared and covered your problem walls with one of the beautiful wallcoverings on the market, think of the money saved on installation . . . and the thousands of ways to spend it on future projects.



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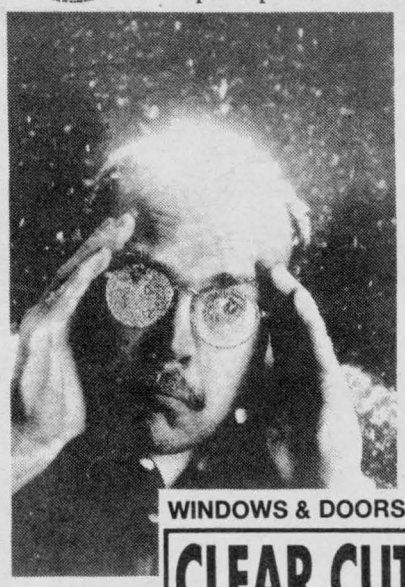

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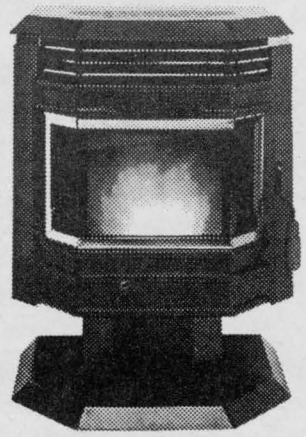

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Efficient pellet stoves take work out of wood

by Liz Edwards
Press Staff Reporter

WINCHESTER — It's a woodstove with about half the work.

If you don't like chopping or splitting logs, a wood pellet stove might be an alternative.

The fire is fueled by the small pellets, made of compressed wood byproducts. A ton of the pellets costs approximately $180. Since the stoves are designed for supplementary heat, the average home would go through about three tons a year, says Dave Acres who sell the units from his Acres Equipment business in Winchester.

Acres sells the pellets himself and adds there are other suppliers in the area who do as well.

And it's handy for people who aren't home all the time to keep the fires burning. The stove is thermostat-controlled. The hopper holding the pellets will automatically feed them into the fire according to the desired temperature. A variable speed fan will direct the heat outward.

"It's too easy. Storage-wise you keep the pellets in plastic bags and then you zip them open," he explains.

They're even easy to clean, producing about two per cent ash. A ton of the fuel will give out approximately two pounds of ash. They also produce a bright flame just like a real wood fire.

The pellet stove was invented by Dr. Jerry Whitfield in Mountlake Terrace, Washington. It was in the States that Acres first learned of the stove when he and his wife were looking for a corn stove for their own use.

He preferred the wood pellets over both corn and logs because they don't attract rodents and bugs. As well they're easier to store.

Last year he began selling two brands, Whitfield and Martin, and so far has installed about 30. He guarantees satisfaction. If within 30 days, the customer doesn't like the stove, Arces will remove it and give a complete refund.

One customer with respiratory problems had a stove installed on the condition it didn't irritate his illness as woodstoves can. He was happy with the product.

For people with asthma who are concerned about the effects of woodsmoke, these models are ideal because they are airtight, says Acres.

His models range from $1,895 to $2,695 while a woodstove can cost anywhere from $500 to $3,000, Acres estimates. The chimney is a three-inch PL vent and relatively inexpensive, averaging $250.

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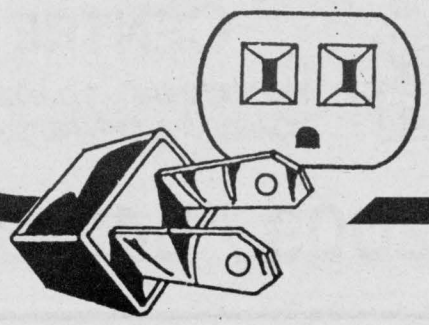

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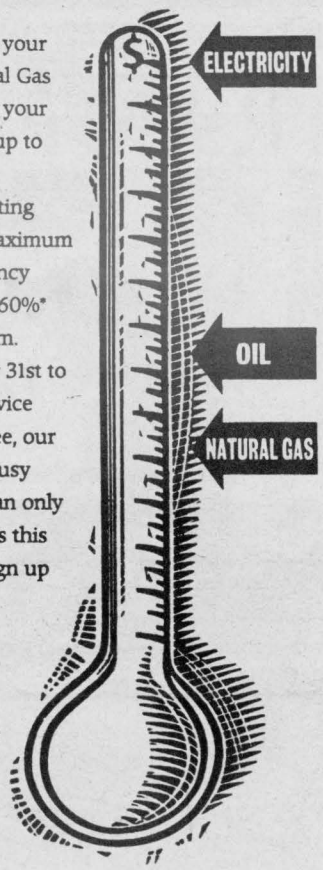

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Kitchens updated for '90s

Family lifestyles are changing in the '90s. Gone are the days when one person, typically the female member of the household, shoulders all the cooking responsibilities

In addition to family members sharing the food preparation, the kitchen has become a social center. Often, friends and guests who drop by to visit the cook join in the cooking process. In order to meet these changing lifestyle patterns, kitchen design has also evolved. If you're building a new kitchen, or remodeling your old one, it is important to evaluate your needs and consider how many cooks use your kitchen.

Two (or more) cook families need to examine their patterns of meal preparation. No two cooks will prepare a meal exactly the same way and no two people cook together the same way. For example, do the members of your family take turns cooking? Do you prepare meals jointly? Do you cook a particular item while your spouse is responsible for a different item? Is one cook the leader and the second cook the helper?

If you answered yes to the first question, then your kitchen can be designed for one cook. It is not necessary to have double sinks or work stations since only one person is using each item at a time. A single cooking centre which includes a microwave and range will probably be sufficient.

For the last three questions, a yes answer requires an entirely different type of design. These two-cook kitchens would need one large work station approximately 60 inches wide or even two separate work stations. If two work stations are decided upon, each should be no less than 36 inches wide. Space and funds permitting, it is also a good idea to provide two separate sinks. Then each cook would have his or her own space. If this is not feasible, consider placing the sink as well as the dishwasher in a central location. It is possible to install the sink with the faucets at the side, so that a person on either side of it can reach.

Next there is the consideration of storage space. It might not be immediately apparent that two cooks affect storage, but consider the last time you both reached for the same pot and knocked heads. To reduce these conflicts as well as reduce the number of trips required to and from cabinets to the work center, duplicate the storage space for frequently used equipment and supplies.

Finally there is a question of walkways. Extra space should be allowed so that two cooks can pass each other without interference. Allowing 48 to 54 inches of space from obstacle to obstacle will enable two people to pass each other with bodies parallel. A distance of 60 to 64 inches would allow enough room for true walking.

As you can see, adapting your kitchen for two cooks requires more than just adding extra counter space.

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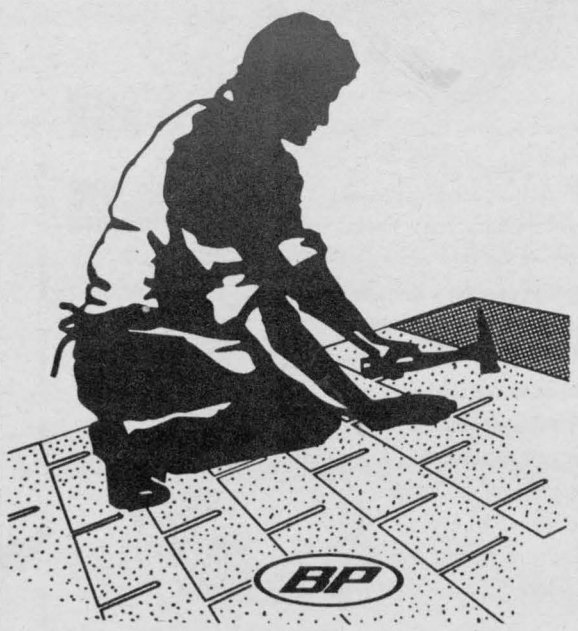

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Attractive landscaping adds value to property

(NU)—While the economy may be picking up steam, big-ticket transactions such as home sales remain quite slow in many areas.

However, there are those who, because of a career move or some other circumstances, have no choice but to sell their home.

Under such conditions, knowing the tricks is essential to avoid being one of those all-too-common sellers today with a "for sale" sign sitting on the lawn for a year or longer.

It may come as a surprise to some, but one of the best of these tricks is landscaping. According to appraisers and real estate agents, a beautifully landscaped and maintained home will sell faster and for more money than neighboring homes with unstyled grounds.

Landscaping adds value to the entire neighborhood. Just as a neglected property brings down property values, a well-maintained landscape adds to the desirability of the area.

In making home improvements and renovations to add value to their homes, a majority of people seem to overlook the importance of natural exterior beauty.

This is particularly unfortunate because, unlike most home renovations, landscaping lets a homeowner recover 100 to 200 per cent of the improvement cost.

Statistics show that most renovations to a home itself result in more money being spent than can ever be recouped when it's time to sell. For example, owners who add an indoor room may get back only 75 per cent of the costs.

In a survey of homeowners, landscaping was reported to have increased home values by an average of 15 per cent.

Still, there is the fact that many people want an extra room anyway. Some homeowners have taken landscape professionals' suggestions to add outdoor "rooms" instead. By that, they mean an outdoor living area designed to match a family's particular lifestyle.

This idea offers an unseen benefit to everyone and everything. Plants and trees absorb ozone-damaging pollutants, produce oxygen and help keep temperatures down.

There's even a psychological advantage to landscaping. Researchers have actually determined that attractive landscapes play a significant role in reducing stress.

Homes need deep cleaning in autumn

(NU)—After inadvertently tracking the oily, sticky traces of a long summer into the home, homeowners should initiate a fall comprehensive cleaning of all interiors to thoroughly remove the residues left behind on carpets, furniture and draperies, and to prepare the home for the cooler holiday months.

The oily residues associated with summer build up on furniture and within carpets over time. While the problem may initially be unnoticeable, these residues act as magnets that attract dirt and grime and may cause some items to become permanently soiled.

When planning a fall deep cleaning homeowners should note the following:

- Furnishings that come into daily contact with exposed skin, such as upholstered chairs and sofas, are in special need of attention, since they may contain residues of sticky perspiration, suntan oil and lotion.
- Upholstered furniture should be professionally cleaned as often as carpeting because furniture fabric is more delicate than carpet and more likely to be damaged by dirt.
- Once soil becomes visible on an item, it typically means that the fibers are saturated with dirt and that removing discoloration may be impossible; thus it is important to initiate a deep cleaning before furnishings actually appear soiled.
- A deep cleaning also removes bacteria and fungi which are imbedded in furnishings and cause allergies and other illnesses in some people.
- More dirt enters the home through open windows during the summer, so it is important to shake out draperies and vacuum the header. As a general rule, the drapes should be cleaned every two years.
- Having carpets and upholstery professionally cleaned twice a year is roughly equal in cost to a once-a-year cleaning, as there is less soil penetration in the carpet and upholstery fibers.
- Many carpet manufacturers and fiber mills include professional cleaning of products as part of written warranty guidelines.

Those who conduct fall deep cleanings of their home benefit from having a healthier environment in which to live and furnishings that will look better and last longer.

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Durability makes metal roofing attractive

(NU)—Ah, the roof over our heads. It protects us from rain, hail, snow, fierce winds. And when these inclemencies are past, the punishment continues with relentless, baking sunshine.

And what do we do for our roof in return?

Usually just forget about it.

We spend days, weeks, even months trying to decide on colors and other design schemes for the exterior of our homes. Yet how very often we forget the most prominent area—the roof.

Ironically, nature's cruel side—from Florida hurricanes blowing roofs away to California's drought leading to blazing wooden roofs—is making homeowners focus on roofs like never before.

Safety and environmental concerns are leading to higher building code standards around the country for roofing.

REDISCOVERED, WITH STYLE

Changing roof standards are reintroducing metal roofing for residential and commercial building, a clear boon for the metals industry. Conversely, homeowners and builders have discovered a surprisingly diverse styling option.

Without building code improvements, most people may never have learned that metal roofs are now fashioned to simulate such traditional roofing materials as hand-split cedar shakes, expensive-looking slate or western-style tile. And metal permits every possible color from dove-white to vivid rusts to elegant charcoals and browns.

Architects are letting their imaginations run free with a stunning array of simulated designs and even adding metal sidewall trim packages, creating everything from elegant manor looks to understated rural elegance.

INNATE ADVANTAGES

Beyond style considerations, metal roofs are superior for energy efficiency, wind resistance, lower maintenance costs and fire protection. They are phenomenally light—100 square feet of aluminum roofing can weigh as little as 45 pounds.

Prices fall, time to buy

(NU)—The days are shorter, and so is the grass—the one good part about summer's passing. Soon, it won't need to be cut anymore.

And next year, many a lawnmower owner now vows, it will be off to the store to replace old (shabby) faithful with one of those new, super high-tech machines. Maybe even a mulching mower.

A nice thought to look forward to, but a costly delay.

Fall, when grass cutting is about to end, is the ideal time to go out and buy that new lawnmower.

Why? Mowers don't sell in the cold season at all. Unless a dealer wants to carry an inventory of mowers all winter long, he's got to find a way to move them. So what does he do? In a word: discount.

So the best deals on lawn mowers are right now.

Before shopping, however, it's worth thinking about your needs.

Most people can remember trying to start their first lawn mower. Not too many years ago, that meant yanking repeatedly on a starter cord and swearing until that little engine turned over. Ask for a mower guaranteed to start within two pulls.

Don't forget to consider width, which determines how wide a swath of grass is mowed down with every pass. Widths range from 17 to 22 inches. Homeowners with congested yards (flower beds and other obstacles) may prefer one of the narrower widths for easy manoeuvring.

VERSATILITY

Today's mowers perform a variety of tasks. First and foremost, with more and more landfills not accepting yard waste, your mower should mulch grass. Mulching mowers cut grass finely, forcing clippings back into the yard to act as fertilizer.

However, also look for a mower that changes easily, without tools, to a bagging or side-discharge mower for those days when the grass is too long to mulch.

Because of their higher cost, dealers especially do not like to hold onto riding mowers. When looking at riding mowers (garden and yard tractors) make sure they can accept many attachments such as a snow thrower, blade, bagging attachment and mulching deck, to name a few.

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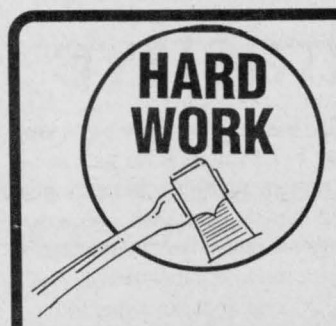



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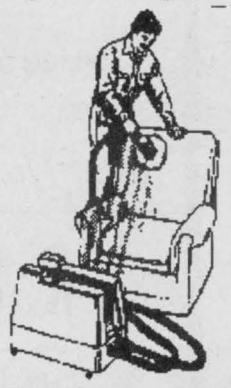
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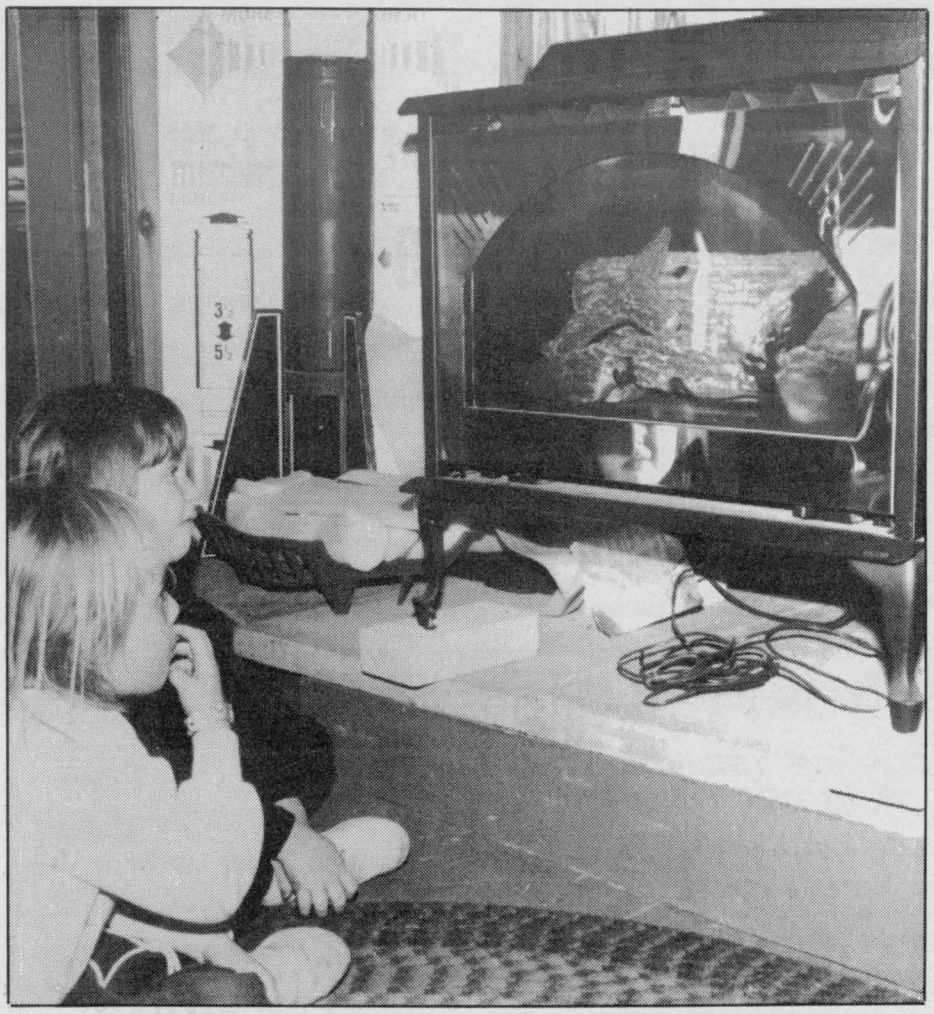

Cheery glow

Cassandra Gibson, 4, and Brittney Faulkner, 5, watch the flames of a Heat and Glow direct vent stove, which can run on either gas or proprane. The gas stove, one other alternative to chopping wood, is available at Winchester Fireplace and Stove Centre.

Press Photo — Edwards

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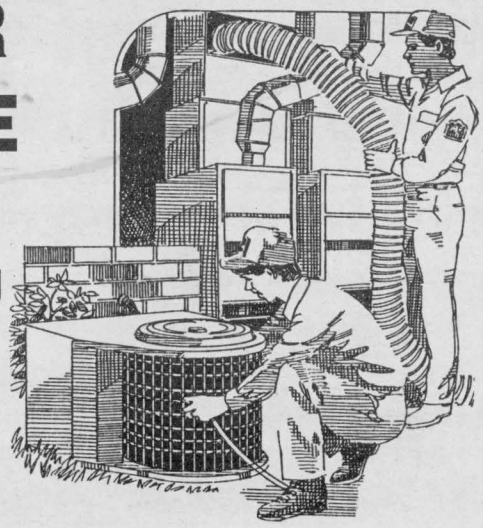

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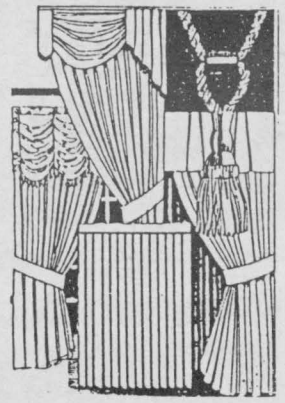

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High-performance filters improve home air quality

(NU)—When it comes to a clean, healthy indoor environment, more homeowners are focusing attention on air filters. Combined with a forced-air heating system or central air conditioning, high-performance filters can help improve air quality.

Homes buttoned up too tightly for energy efficiency fail to allow air to circulate and prevent the escape of pollutants. Recent statistics indicate that: indoor air can be 10 times more polluted than outdoor air; allergy sufferers look to high-efficiency air filters for relief; some doctors recommend the new electrostatic filters.

Filters, according to the air-quality experts, are designed to catch particulates, which is another word for household dust. The dust consists of soil particles, lint, airborne cooking grease, tobacco smoke, pet hairs, pollen, mold spores, bacteria, viruses, skin flakes, carbon particles, dust mites (and dust mite feces) and insect scales.

About 99 percent of the particles circulating in indoor air are one micron or smaller

The degree of improvement of indoor air with a filter depends on the kind of filter that is purchased.

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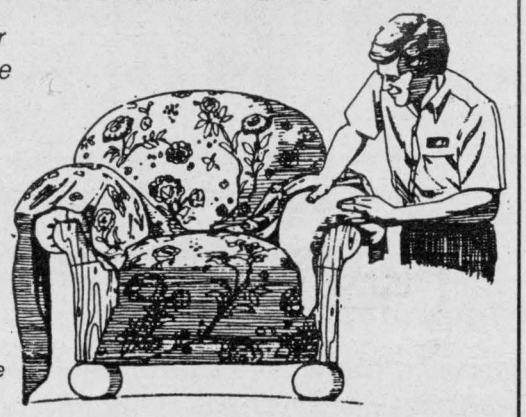

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Reupholstering restores treasured furnishings

by Michelle Valiquet
Press News Editor

MOREWOOD — From tractor seats to car interiors, from sofas to custom work, Claude Cousineau's upholstering skills bring a second life to treasured objects and household furniture.

For more than 35 years, Cousineau has been plying his trade, the last 26 from his own shop, Claude's Manufacturing and Upholstering in Morewood.

"Customers come in with heirlooms, gifts they've received or something they bought when they first married and they just don't want to give those pieces up," states Cousineau. "I can't recall a job we couldn't do."



Power punch

Richard Shay, an employee at Claude's Manufacturing and Upholstering, uses a power stapler to apply fabric to a chair that requires reupholstering.
Press Photo —Valiquet

"We've even remodeled a sofa that got stuck in someone's basement after they refinished it and couldn't get out. They sawed it in half. We recovered it and put it back together."

Cousineau says when people begin looking around their homes for ways in which to spruce up their decor, the first item that often catches their eyes is the tired-looking couch or the ratty old armchair.

By applying new fabric, new stuffing and maybe springs, furnishings can be rejuvenated. "People often don't appreciate what can be done to restore their possessions," he notes.

According to Cousineau, older furniture is worth giving a second chance; often it's better constructed then the current mass-produced items. Mass production cut new furniture costs, however, consumers may be trading price tag savings in exchange for shoddy workmanship. He says many manufacturers use green wood for framing, cheap foam in the interior and poor upholstering work on their "bargain" furniture.

"I see pieces come into my shop that are only two years old but they're falling apart. Some of the new stuff out there is just crap."

Other work that finds its way into Cousineau's shop is from amateur upholsterers, individuals who have begun a refinishing job only to discover upholstering skills aren't as simple as portrayed on televison "do-it-yourself" shows.

"People tend to think if they take one course they can upholster anything. I've taught upholstery courses at St. Lawrence College and ended up finishing most of the students projects myself," chuckles Cousineau. "It's not as easy as it seems."

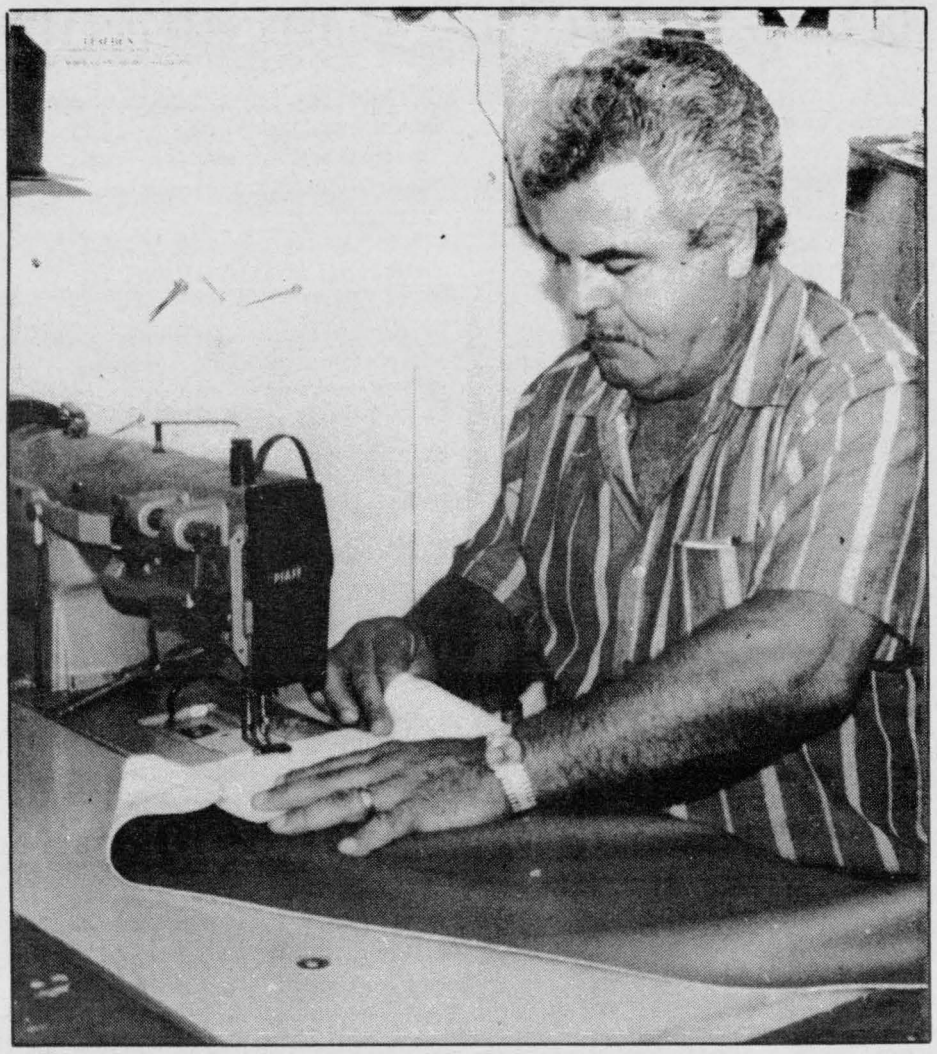
Whether it's a snowmobile seat or a chesterfield, Cousineau says his approach is the same. He usually goes to a client's house and provides an in-home estimate for the job. Then he and the client view a wide range of fabric samples. Cousineau uses a host of suppliers from London to Montreal.

Although jobs vary in price, he says an average armchair costs approximately $175 in labor, with the balance of a job's expense coming from the cost of material selected. Upholstery fabrics range in price from lows of $20 a yard to highs of $60 per yard.

Next comes measuring and cutting the required material. With Cousineau's practiced eye, he could put the back on a couch, complete with piping and have an eighth of an inch to spare—all without picking up a ruler or measuring tape.

Separate pieces of material are sewn together, while the old upholstery is stripped from the frame of the furnishing. If new padding or springs are required, they are refitted. Then the new fabric is stretched over the frame and applied.

"It brings me a certain amount of satisfaction to see a piece go out of the shop with a whole new lease on life," Cousineau concludes.



Stitch in time

Claude Cousineau sews together fabric for seat covers heading to a Kingston restaurant. He has often dealt with commercial businesses as well as private individuals during his 35 years in the upholstery trade.
Press Photo —Valiquet

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Keep recycling convenient

If you're one of the many Canadians who recycle, chances are you have discovered that a green existence has its price in space. Depending on how many materials you recycle, and how you separate them, a weekly collection of recyclables plus trash could easily become the focal point of your kitchen. And who wants to look at all that stuff piling up?

Studies show the key to maintaining recycling habits is setting up a system that blends in with your family's lifestyle and fits comfortably in your kitchen. A convenient and attractive (or hidden) sorting container system helps keep the process from becoming an irritant.

PLANNING AHEAD

Recycling needn't take over every available inch of floor space in your kitchen. While there's no single right way to organize for recycling, a little planning helps. Recycling can be convenient, if you develop a system that's right for you.

Selecting the right system depends on what your community is recycling and how it is doing it. Some communities recycle plastic milk jugs and soda bottles. Others don't. Most recycle newspapers, aluminum cans and glass. You may be required to separate newspapers from glass and aluminum, or you may be asked to put all recyclables into one bin. If you're not sure, call your county or municipal solid waste office or sanitation department. They will have this information.

The next step is to devise a personalized system that works for your family. You're going to need a place to put those recyclables until collection day, or until you have time to haul everything to a recycling center. Whether you need to sort aluminum cans from newspapers and glass or simply to separate recyclables from your trash, a set of stackable bins in your kitchen or pantry can be a real space saver. You can designate separate bins for various materials, and eliminate the need for sorting later.

SORTING AND STORING MATERIALS

Kitchen cabinets are another great place to store recycling containers. Whether you put your recycling bins under the sink or stacked in the corner, consider adding a decorator's touch to the room by selecting versatile colors.

Convenience is the key for outdoor recycling storage. When choosing an outdoor bin, consider choosing one with a lid. This will keep recyclables clean and protect against raids by pesky animals.

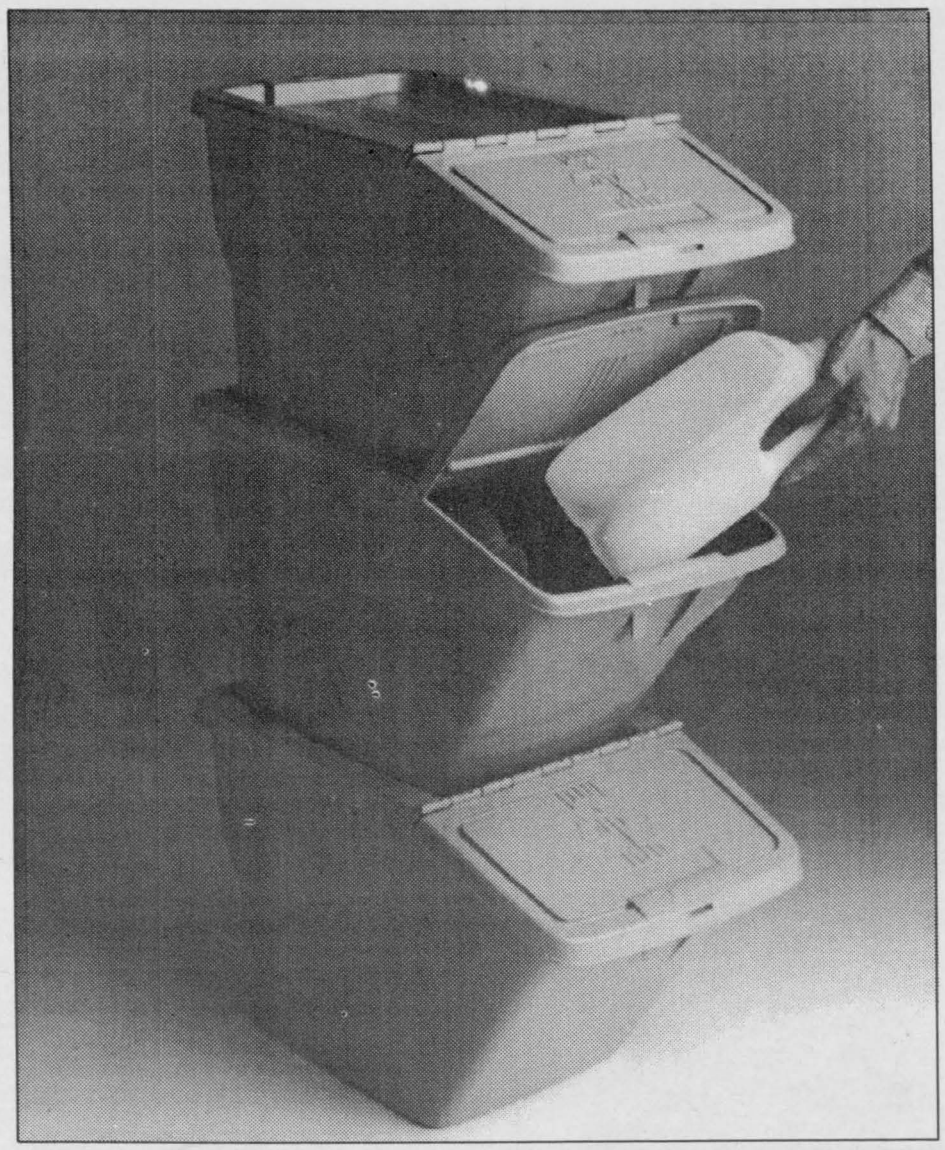
Outdoor stackable bins with lids allow recyclables to be separated and stored until collection day. You also might consider a dolly for rolling the containers out to the curbside.

PREPARING RECYCLABLES

Before you throw those recyclables in the bin, give them a quick rinse in cold water. This will get rid of food residue and will keep odors to a minimum. It's not necessary to run glass jars through the dishwasher.

Most recycling programs don't require you to peel off labels of glass jars. However, many do ask that you remove labels from soup and food cans and that you take the plastic or metal tops and rings off plastic beverage containers. "It's good to do this as you go along. Otherwise you've got things piling upand that's when it becomes an irritant."

If you take a few minutes to learn about your community's recycling program and set up a system that works for you, recycling will quickly become second nature.



Stackable bins with lids allow recyclables to be separated and stored until pick-up.

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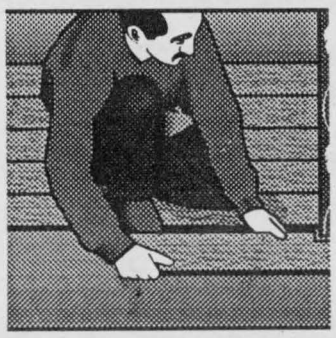
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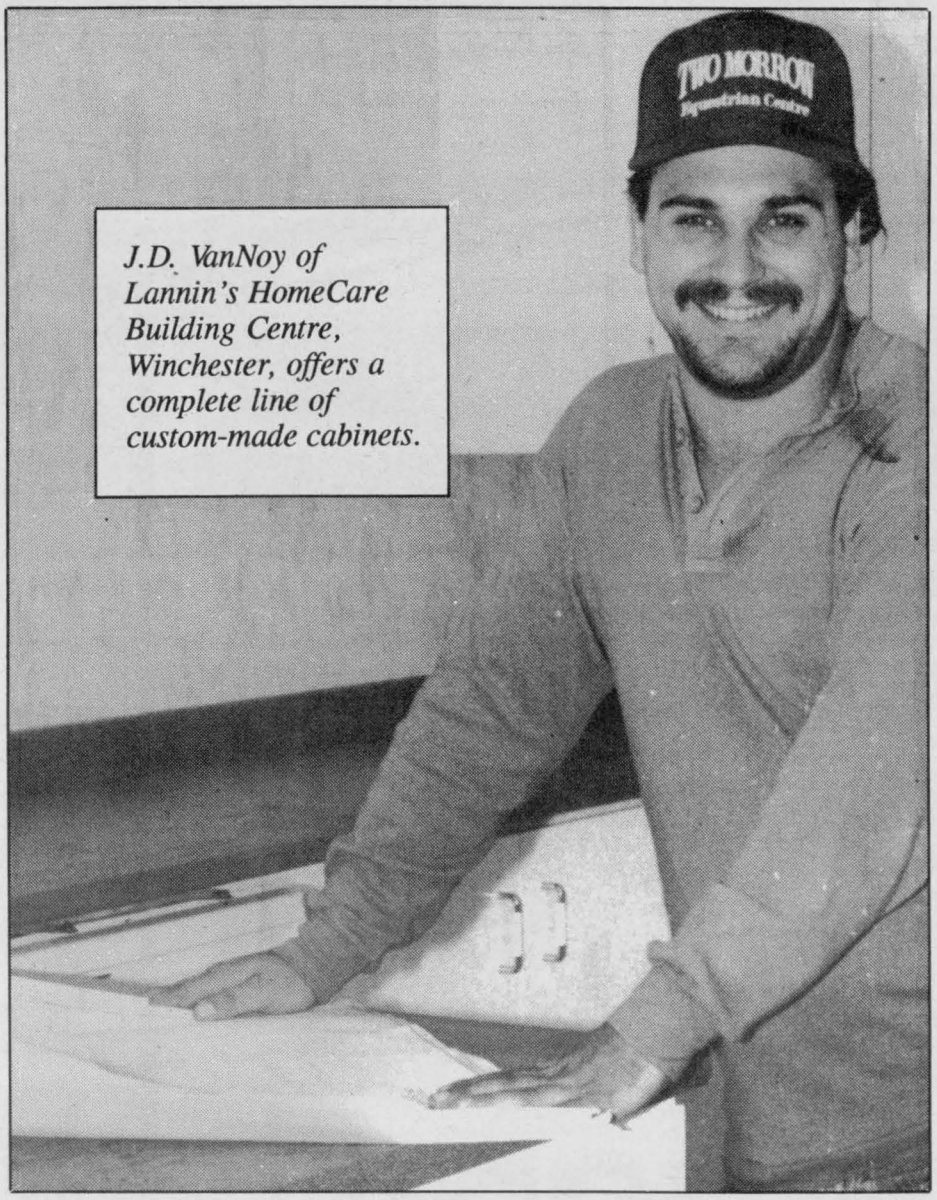

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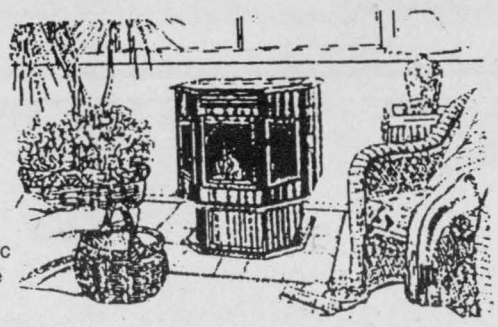

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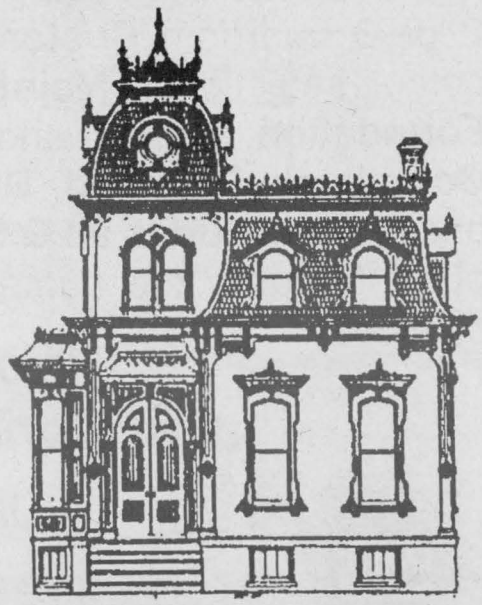

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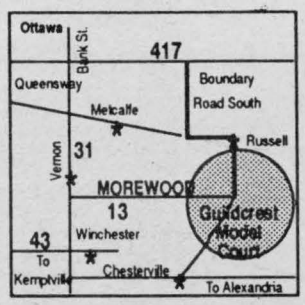

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