OCTOBER 2012

Fall HOME IMPROVEMENT

& Real Estate Guide





A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE WINCHESTER PRESS





From past to present

Brittany Boyd (pictured) and her husband, Thomas, owners of For Life, a wood reclamation and furniture business, have set up shop north of Winchester, creating pieces for the home from decades-old barn boards.

Press Photos – Uhrig



Barn board gets second chance at local business

Breathing new life into old wood

by Matthew Uhrig
Press staff

WINCHESTER – It is of news to no one that this region prides itself on its agricultural upbringing. Dundas County, of course, is home to numerous farming operations, covering a wide-range on the agrarian sphere.

However, as the past slips into the shadows, and the local farming community changes with the times, those decades-old barns, taking on a life of their own as they crumble, are being saved.

A drive through the local countryside will lead many to find well-worn structures decaying deep in a field. It was on a trek of her own when Brittany Boyd watched as an old barn, having sat empty for years, was being torn down and buried in a farmer's field.

But destruction does at times breed creation, and Boyd, along with her husband, Thomas, found inspiration in the ruins, leading the couple to chart a new career path for themselves.

"Thomas began taking barns down, selling the wood to mills," Boyd said.

But, they soon found the plants were only interested in the soft wood, leaving Boyd and her husband with piles of hard wood, and no clear direction or purpose.

"One hundred or more years ago, people cutting wood used what they had, but it is not like that today," Thomas said. "Barns are mixed with a lot of wood…. When we were left with the hard wood, the question arose, 'what are we going to do with it?'"

With that, For Life, a wood reclamation and furniture business, was born.

Today, however, focus has shifted from the tearing down of old barns, which Thomas considers to be "construction in reverse," with emphasis placed solely on what can be created from the product. (Until the need arises, the couple isn't actively soliciting new barn projects.)

"These are really special pieces of wood," Boyd said.

At the business' headquarters, located at 1511 County Road 31 north of Winchester, both a workshop and showroom are housed. Items currently in stock include



a dining room table, coffee table, and end tables, all of which have been handcrafted on site from reclaimed wood.

"The furniture is built to take the abuse of [everyday life]," he said.

While Thomas completes much of the furniture's craftsmanship, Boyd has added her artistic flair, reworking other items found while tearing down a barn. She has created stained glass artwork, as well as mirrors from repurposed stovetop mounts, among other things.

"I try for a lot of mixture with both steel and wood," Boyd said.

Meanwhile, the couple also expressed joy in being able to show their creative sides, while also working to keep their environmental footprint as minimal as possible.

"The other side of the coin is, if you think about tomorrow, we're never going to have this old growth lumber ever again," Thomas said. "Truthfully, there should be laws against burying and burning [old wood]."

Boyd echoed her husband's sentiments.

"It is our way to preserve our heritage," she said. "We know where the wood [we use] comes from. "

As well, Thomas said, tearing down old barns helps to clear clutter from the rural landscape, exposing the serenity of the fields that have existed for decades.

"[For our furniture items] we don't cut down trees for nothing," he said. "I can see the saw marks in the wood, where they were cut years ago, and I can see the imperfections for the beauty that exists…. It makes every piece unique."

For more information about For Life, visit www.woodforlife.ca or call 613-774-5659.

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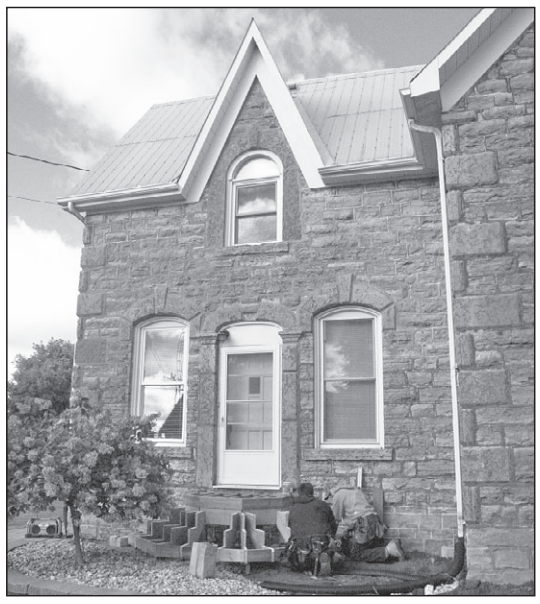

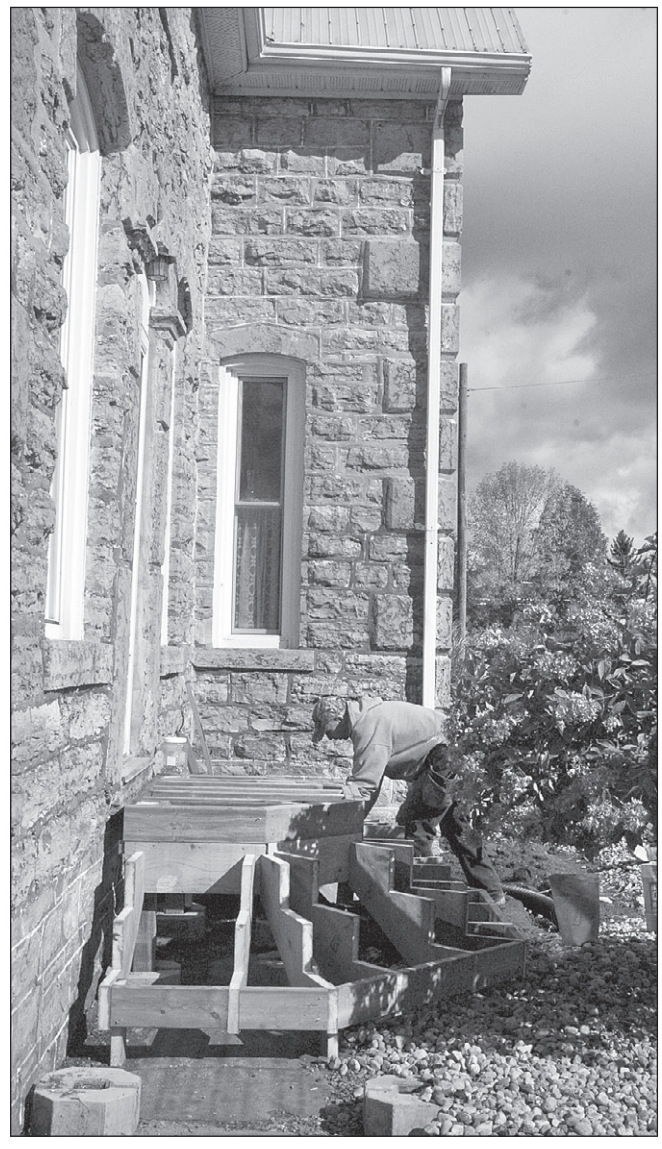



Featured on our cover

Fall reno

This stately, two-storey limestone home has stood in the hamlet of Inkerman at the junction of County Road 3 and Cameron Road since approximately 1879. Originally owned by a Mrs. Pinkus, the residence was constructed from locally quarried limestone during the same era (1870 -1880s) as two historic Winchester landmarks, Winchester United Church and the Redmond residence. For the last 50 years, Betty Saunders has called the heritage building home. In September, she had a cedar deck, which served both front entrances, replaced with individual three-sided steps to service the kitchen door and a small landing and steps for the living room entrance. Craig Wylie, life-long Inkerman resident, and owner of Wylie's Carpentry was hired to do the work. Wylie (left) and helper Eric Foster (top left photo) applied composite tongue and groove decking material to the wooden pressure-treated frames.

Press Photos – Van Bridger

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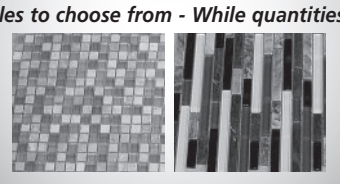

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Terri-Lee Tilley, a paint specialist at Lannin Home Building Centre in Winchester, demonstrated how easy it is to add colour to base paint. *Press Photo – Casselman*

Lannin's splashes customers with colour choices

WINCHESTER

Imagine if life were lived solely in black and white, no hint of colour at all. It would seem rather dull, and maybe even a bit flat, wouldn't it? Now imagine a magic water gun filled with all the colours of the rainbow, spraying a generous splash of colour over everything.

The world comes alive, seems a little bit brighter, and just a bit more vibrant with just a dash of colour. Why not add some brightness to your home with a fresh can of designer-coloured paint from Lannin Home Building Centre in Winchester?

Owner J.D. Van Noy carries a vast array of Beauti-Tone paints, including the Beauti-Tone Designer Series at his store on County Road 31 just south of Winchester.

"A lot of people don't realize that we still carry paint," said Terri-Lee Tilley, one of Lannin's paint specialists. "We still colour match too."

Van Noy's paint team includes Merrilyn Haarsma, Sam Hummel, and Tilley. Together, the three have 20 years of experience mixing and selling paint.

"We've all got training [and] we've all been to seminars," said Haarsma.

According to Tilley, the store's paint supply has grown considerably in the last year, and "we're still growing our inventory."

Currently, the store offers more than 2,738 colour options from which to choose. Exclusive to Home Hardware, Lannin's offers customers choices from the Simon Chang and the Sesame Street colour lines.

According to Tilley, Chang has a new colour swatch coming out this fall. Haarsma pointed out that Chang's paint colours are based on his clothing designs.

She also said that Home Hardware had been approached by the "Sesame Street people" to design a colour line specifically for children.

Regardless of the size or type of painting job, Lannin's has the paint customers need.

"We have paint for anything from apartments and student housing, all the way up to designer jobs," said Haarsma, pointing out that the store also sells paint in quantities contractors find convenient.

With their new and improved paint-shaking machine, the paint specialists at Lannin's can now shake either eight quarts of paint at one time, four gallons of paint at one time, or a one five-gallon pail of paint by itself.

Tilley explained that paint comes in three bases (white, clear, or medium), and the type required is dependent upon the colour formula.

Using a computerized database of formulas, the paint specialists can be sure to get the right mix of colour and paint to ensure a successful end product.

"A good primer is definitely a basic before painting," said Haarsma, pointing out that it is also important to use good quality rollers and brushes with top-of-the-line paint, "or you're not going to get the same effect."

She equated using quality paint with substandard tools to using a "top-of-the-line speaker with a bottom sound system."

For quality paint, Haarsma and Tilley would both point to Lannin's inventory of Beauti-Tone Designer Series paint, which, according to Haarsma, "is a top-of-the-line paint [with] ceramic microsphere technology that makes it tougher" than the average paint.

While it is paint and primer in one, Haarsma said that there is an exception to the rule: for drywall or wood surfaces that have never been primed or painted before, a primer is needed first.

The interior line of Beauti-Tone Designer Series paint has four finishes: matte, suede, silk, and trim and door.

The trim and door paint is a multi-use paint for interior or exterior work. It comes in two sizes, quarts or gallons, and it is self-leveling.

In addition to the interior line of Beauti-Tone Designer Series paint, Lannin's expects to carry the exterior version by next summer as well. For those interested in using the exterior paint, it can be ordered now, taking no more than a week to arrive. (At this time, Lannin's carries Beauti-Tone's Signature exterior paint in velvet and semi-gloss.)

"We're also getting 500 square feet of paint that cures in seven days. It's scrubbable and it's mold and mildew resistant," said Tilley.

Predicting customer needs, and with an eye on customer satisfaction, Lannin Home Building Centre is growing its Beauti-Tone paint line one brushstroke at a time.

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Harbers makes fireplaces unique to customer

WILLIAMSBURG

It's a cold crisp winter's night, snow is falling gently, but steadily outside the window of the Luckhaveit family home. Inside, the family of four sits cozy, and warm, snuggled up in front of their custom-designed Harbers fireplace, sipping delicious sweet hot cocoa and talking about the day's events. Sound good?

Brian and Joy Harbers, owners of Harbers Flame Centre and Masonry in Williamsburg, recently completed the addition of a design room to their company showroom at 4385 Billy Lane.

"The big thing for this fall is the design room," said Joy.

The new room is set up to provide a comfortable space for Joy to sit with customers, while sifting through and "trying on" the various fireplace options. This is all done with the help of a computer connected to a wall-mounted flat-screen television.

Customers can choose the type of fireplace they'd like, the outer finish they'd prefer, and they can even try out the different media kits, to see which they'd like best. Choosing the type of mantel, whether stone or wood, can also be done in the design room.

The computer program allows Joy to connect with the manufacturers' websites, where all of the options are available.

"We try to have on hand as many of the stone options [as possible] so you have a physical sample to look at," she said, explaining that the actual colour may look slightly different than it does on the computer screen.

If a customer is interested in a stone option not currently in the store, it can be ordered to give customers the chance to see it before making a decision.

Joy also pointed out that "we don't have to go with traditional log sets."



In the comfort of Harbers Flame Centre and Masonry's new design room, Joy Harbers shows how easy it is to experiment with different fireplace options using the virtual design tool on her computer and a wall-mounted flat screen television.



Brian Harbers showed off the new addition to the Jotul Rangeley wood stove, which loads from the top or from the front. The winter grill was made as an optional insert for the stove, giving owners the option of cooking while staying warm. Brian grilled up a couple of steaks during customer appreciation day in September.

Press Photos – Casselman

The Mendota fireplace, one of the new fireplaces on display in the Harbers' showroom, comes with the option of five different media kits: white tumbled marble, liquid clear glass, clear ice cubes, natural river rock, or midnight black glass.

The Atra fireplace, another new addition, has three media kits to choose from: black glass, tumbled stone, or clear glass.

Examples of the media kit options are on display in the design room. Also on display are the stone options for the face of the fireplace, and for the hearth.

The displays and options are "growing as samples come in. It's unbelievable the options available," said Joy.

Looking like a wall-mounted flat-screen television, the Modern Flames electric fireplace is hanging on the wall in the Harbers' showroom. This fireplace has the option of looking and feeling like a fireplace, or just looking like a fireplace. There is a switch that allows users to turn the heating element on or off.

Right now, as the business is entering its busy season, Joy pointed out that while it only takes a couple of weeks to order in the product, there is a four to six week wait for installation. Ordering now, however, will get customers their fireplace before winter.

At Harbers' showroom, customers are treated to personal and professional service. Brian, a certified licensed mason, is also a W.E.T.T. (wood energy technical training) technician.

In addition to selling and installing fireplaces and woodstoves, Harbers also provides annual inspection and cleaning services.

Whether someone is looking to install a new fireplace or switch out a wood-burning unit for a gas unit, Harbers is equipped to get the job done. In business since the 1990s, Harbers has years of experience working with customers to find them the right fit for their home.

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Vinyl siding still a consumer favourite



Vinyl siding can mimic the look of wood shake and even logs on cabins.

Vinyl siding is trusted by homeowners looking to add aesthetic appeal to their home's exterior. Though vinyl siding may seem to be a cut-and-dry type of product, the vast array of vinyl siding colours and styles has created certain trends among consumers.

Made chiefly from polyvinyl chloride, or PVC, vinyl siding is the most commonly installed exterior cladding for residential construction in the United States and Canada, according to the Vinyl Siding Institute. The history of vinyl siding can be traced to Ohio, where it was introduced to the exterior cladding market in the late 1950s by a private company. The process of mixing colours was done by hand, and the product was very inconsistent. New innovations in siding manufacture during the next few decades helped solidify vinyl siding's place among cladding materials like shake, wood, and aluminum.

Vinyl siding comes in several different types. Here are the key variations.

Seamless vinyl siding

In the past, siding was created in specific lengths, requiring siding panels to overlap at points, often creating an unpleasant pattern. These points provided spots for insects, wind and moisture to infiltrate, leading to a weaker product. Today there are vinyl siding products that have removed the seams, creating a more visually appealing and durable product.

Solid core vinyl siding

Even the best-made vinyl siding had a flaw: it was not rigid and generally didn't lie flat against the surface of a home. Solid core vinyl siding alleviates that problem by having a solid backing on which the vinyl panels are attached. The core is then attached to the home. These products also boast a higher-than-average insulation rating because the foam core interlocks during insulation. This makes a solid barrier around the home.

Vinyl shake siding

Vinyl shake siding has been designed and coloured to look just like real cedar shakes, but without the maintenance, such as powerwashing or staining, associated with a wood product. Vinyl shake siding offers the same benefits of other types of vinyl siding, but tends to look like it is an expensive cladding material.

Vinyl log siding

Log cabins may seem like an adventure. However, being surrounded by wood can have its disadvantages, most notably maintenance issues surrounding wood. Vinyl siding manufacturers have created vinyl log products molded directly from real lumber, providing a look that mimics real wood, like that used for a log cabin.

As vinyl siding continues to be a favourite among homeowners, certain trends emerge each year. While rich-coloured siding was a popular trend just last year, homeowners engaging in siding renovation products are now turning more to warm, earthy colours. Expect to see more gold, clay, and warm red shades with trim colours only one or two shades off, for a monochromatic effect.

Another trend involves a continued interest in renewable materials or siding comprised of some post-recycled consumer content.

Energy conservation is also on the minds of consumers, and some areas of the country have modified building codes to require continuous insulation of home exteriors to prevent heat and cooling losses more effectively. As a result, more customers may opt for solid core vinyl siding to meet demands for home insulation.

For homeowners who prefer a one-of-a-kind look to their homes, mix-and-match siding trends have developed. Mixing and matching siding styles can create instant curb appeal and an interesting backdrop for outdoor gardens and patios. Stone entryways mixed with vinyl siding as well as a mixing of traditional horizontal siding with vinyl shake or board-and-batten are also considerations.

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Winchester Flooring enters the furniture business

WINCHESTER

It has been a time of growth for Winchester Flooring and Furniture.

Although it has been some time since the business' move to Dawley Drive (having previously operated out of a County Road 31 south location), the local store recently expanded its sales efforts, taking on the Ashley Furniture line.

"If you look at the fact that if someone is doing a room over, new furniture and flooring goes hand in hand," Scott Cole, one-third of the business' ownership, said.

In July, Bob Geggie, a longtime local businessman, decided it was time to retire, and closed Geggie's Furniture and Mattresses. Eyeing an opportunity, Winchester Flooring and Furniture primary owner Bob Craig swooped in to keep the furnishings shop in town.

"We're starting to see people coming in, while not knowing [the Ashley Furniture line] stayed here in Winchester," Cole added. "It has definitely been a smooth transition."

He acknowledged that going from straight flooring sales – hardwood, laminate, and carpet – has been a change, but certainly for the better.

"Business has just kept increasing since we purchased the flooring store [about five years ago]," Cole said. "We're trying to keep it local, to keep [opportunities] here as much as possible…. Because if you're not giving people the option of shopping local, what's keeping them here?"



Some examples of the store's offerings include sofas, loveseats, dining room tables, bedroom sets, mattresses, and more.

"It's really everything you'd need to furnish a home," Cole said. "And if we don't have it in store, it can be ordered from [Ashley Furniture's] warehouse."

Meanwhile, with the expansion having taken place (and a grand opening hosted late last month), the shop is continuing to complete flooring jobs, outside of the increased furniture sales.

"Everything has been really good so far," Cole said. "Nothing but a positive response from the community."



Upward and onward

Winchester Flooring and Furniture owners Scott Cole (below, left) and Bob Craig have recently undertaken an expansion of the Dawley Drive business, taking over the Ashley Furniture line from the now-retired Bob Geggie. Cole said the shop has many home furnishing items, such as sofas, available in-store, while anything else can be ordered from the company's warehouse.
Press Photos – Uhrig

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Selecting the right carpeting for your home

Although many people may tout the benefits of hardwood flooring over carpeting, there are plenty of individuals who like to have the soft and luxurious feeling of carpeting underfoot.

There are many advantages to carpeting. It can help insulate rooms both in the summer and winter. It can be easier on feet than a hard floor, and few materials absorb sound better than carpet.

Also, carpeting can be an added safety measure that makes play areas safer, potentially lessening the severity of an injury in the event of a fall. This is why carpeting is often preferred in children's rooms and play areas.

Selecting the right carpeting for a particular room and purpose can be a bit daunting because of the abundance of available colours and materials.

Start by identifying the kind of foot traffic you expect in your home and which carpeting options most suit your needs.

Tips to get started

• **Don't overlook padding.** Padding can make the difference in the way carpeting feels and how long it lasts. The thickest or most expensive padding isn't necessarily the best or the best-suited for your home. However, it is wise to pick a pad that matches the type of carpeting you're selecting. You may be able to go with a thinner pad in low-traffic rooms and under dense carpeting like berber. In high-traffic rooms, choose thicker, more durable padding. Padding prevents carpet backing and fibres from coming apart over a duration of time, so if you're spending a lot on the carpet, it pays to invest in a padding that will last the duration of the carpet as well.

• **Recognize the type of carpeting that best suits your needs.** There are many different types of carpeting, and they won't all be the perfect match for your home. For example, plush and saxony carpets are better in low-traffic areas. These carpets may show footprints and also vacuum tracks and dirt. Berber, meanwhile, is more flat and dense, making it highly effective at masking stains and tracks. Textured carpets like frieze are cut from fibres of different heights, so they mask stains and are also softer on the feet than berbers. An entryway or a den may be better off carpeted in a dense carpeting, while a bedroom may be fine and luxurious with plush carpeting. Carpeting may come in stain-resistant varieties or low-maintenance options. These are generally best in homes with pets and children.

• **Choose colour wisely.** Choosing a colour comes down to preference and how much the room will be used. Although light, neutral colours are often preferred because they work well in just about any room, lighter coloured carpets will show stains much more easily than other carpet colours. Textured, multi-coloured carpets are preferable to hide stains and can look just as elegant as solid-coloured carpeting. Much in the way paint colours are chosen, carpeting colours come down to personal preference. Drama may be created with bold colours that draw the eye to the carpet. However, for those who want the carpet to fade into the background instead of upstaging decor, neutral colours are better.

• **Hire a good installer.** There are many beautiful carpets available, but unless you choose a reliable installer and store, you may end up paying more or receiving subpar service. Poll friends and family members for recommendations to help you narrow down options. Then be sure to have stores price out materials separate from installation so you can make more accurate comparisons.

Carpeting can make a fine addition to your home and make it feel more comfortable and inviting. Remember to take your time when selecting carpeting, as your decision will have long-lasting effects.

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How to winterize your lawn

In order to ensure your lawn makes a complete recovery after winter hibernation, you may want to spend some time this fall taking steps to help your lawn survive the winter months ahead.

• **Remove fallen leaves and debris.** Leaf cleanup is among the tasks homeowners dread the most. Raking leaves can be arduous, but it is well worth the effort. Fallen leaves can smother the grass and lead to dead spots and decay next season. Wait until the majority of the leaves have fallen from the trees before you begin to rake; otherwise, you could find yourself repeating the process throughout the fall. Mulched leaves can be added in small amounts to garden beds to provide rich organic material for next year's crop of flowers.

Be sure to pick up any twigs and other debris as well. Additional debris can become trapped under snow and hinder grass growth when spring arrives.

• **Cut your lawn short.** Unless the season is unseasonably wet and warm, your lawn shouldn't grow too much in October and November. Continue to cut your lawn until there is no visible growth for about two weeks. It pays to give it a short cut before frost arrives so that long piles of dead grass will not smother any new growth in the spring. Also, long grass tends to bend down upon itself, trapping moisture that can lead to fungal diseases like snow mold.

• **Aerate the lawn.** Soil can be compacted over time, especially in yards that see heavy foot traffic. You can rent an aerator from a lawn supply store so that water and fertilizer can reach the soil.

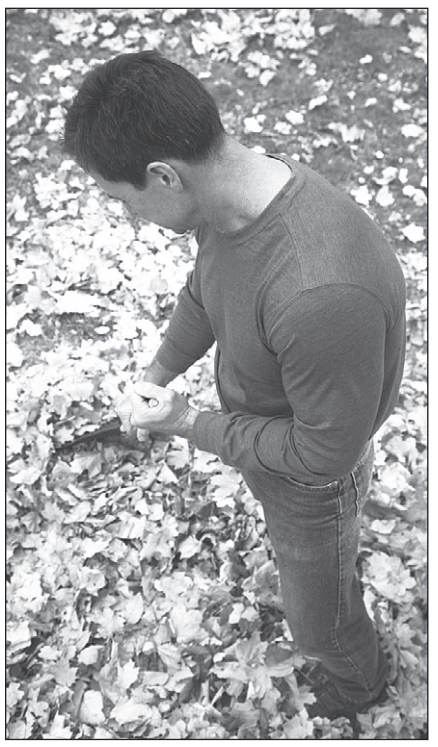
• **Fertilize.** Now is the time to give the lawn fresh food to overwinter and also replenish the strength of the root system. All summer long the lawn has been depleting the soil of nutrition, but autumn presents a great opportunity to strengthen those roots. Consider a slow-release formula designed for winterizing that will feed the lawn all winter long.

• **Edge the garden beds.** Take advantage of the cooler weather and slow-growing grass to re-edge around flower beds. Even though the grass above the surface of the soil will stop growing, the roots will remain viable and the lawn will still be sending out rhizomes and tillers to produce new grass blades in the spring. These can easily encroach on garden beds. Edge now so you will have less work to do in the spring.

• **Trim hedges and trees.** If there are any overhanging tree branches or shrubbery blocking sunlight from reaching the lawn, cut back these areas once the foliage has thinned. Take advantage of leaf and yard waste collection days.

• **Seed bare patches.** Scour the lawn for bare patches and put down some seed in these areas. The cooler weather will enable the seeds to germinate without having to compete with weed growth.

Once you have prepared your lawn for the winter you can bring in any lawn tools that need repair and have them set and packed away for the spring.



Raking leaves is a key step in preparing your lawn for the winter months.

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It's time for your annual check-up

Have you booked your annual check up? HRAI (the Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada) reminds us to schedule a furnace maintenance inspection and cleaning before turning the heat back on.

A furnace is among the most expensive appliances in the home but it is easy to neglect, even more so when the weather is hot. During the spring and summer seasons, furnaces stand dormant in basements across the country, collecting hazardous dust, dirt and debris within blowers and electrical components.

Over time, this buildup becomes hazardous to a homeowner's wallet and health, but it can easily be prevented by an annual visit from a licensed heating technician. Annual maintenance costs are modest and the financial and health benefits from a clean furnace are more than worth it.

Homeowners can take on some of the work themselves, like replacing filters seasonally, but a proper furnace cleaning and tune up should be done by a licensed technician. A qualified service technician can quickly and conveniently inspect and clean a heating system, ensuring it is safe and ready for the coming winter months.

Inspections performed by a licensed technician should include the following:

• A safety test for carbon monoxide (CO);

• Checking for hazardous debris in the chimney and flue;

• Cleaning of air filters and re-installing;

• Checking operation of thermostat and safety controls;

• Checking gas pilot safety system and cleaning as required;

• Cleaning the motor and fan;

• Checking the blower operation;

• Checking condition, tension and alignment of fan belt, and performing required adjustments (on older systems);

• Cleaning burners and setting for proper combustion and ignition;

• Checking the gas piping to furnace.

Yearly cleaning extends the life of a furnace, prevents the risk of expensive emergency repairs and improves air quality, leading to a reduction of allergies, asthma and other illness.

A well-maintained heating system can also deliver greater furnace efficiency, which prevents energy waste and homeowners from getting burned by ever-increasing heating costs.

To make sure your heating system is up to handling another cold Canadian winter, book a checkup with a licensed contractor this fall. To locate a qualified HRAI contractor near you, go to www.hrai.ca or contact the call centre at 1-877-467-4724.

– News Canada

Smoke alarms wear out

We replace all sorts of things in our homes on a regular basis. So why is it so hard to remember that smoke (and carbon monoxide) alarms need to be replaced too? They are working 24/7/365 so it makes sense that they don't last forever.



Fire safety officials remind us to replace all smoke alarms every 10 years.

For CO alarms, they need to be replaced every seven to 10 years depending on the manufacturer. This is true whether alarms are battery operated or hardwired.

So the next time you're in a hardware store, pick up another "decade of defense" for your family's peace of mind.

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Power up outside and stay injury free

Raking leaves and shoveling snow can be a pain in the neck, not to mention a pain in the back, shoulders, wrists, and knees.

In fact, raking and shoveling result in more than 100,000 serious emergency room visits in North America every year. You can always hire out these tasks, but a change in equipment might be all you need

Edward Andria from Husqvarna, a company that is reported to be the world's largest producer of outdoor power products, says today's leaf blowers and snow throwers are built for ease-of-use: "Nowadays, ergonomics are central to innovation and design when it comes to power products. Without compromising power, we are always trying to build things lighter, nimbler and more comfortable so there is less strain on the body."

Here are a few tips to ensure you choose the right product for you and your home:



Choosing the right power tools can make fall cleanup a breeze.

Leaf blower

• Look for a machine with an efficient vibration-dampening system to ease stress on your hands and wrists.

• Consider a backpack blower with a load-reducing harness and hip belt and wide shoulder straps for comfort.

• Make sure the engine is powerful and easy-to-start and ensure you have easy access to all the controls.

Snow thrower

• Look for a model with power steering, which will make it easier for you to manoeuvre your machine in tight places and through heavy snow.

• Test out your machine and ensure the levers and controls are within easy reach.

• If your area is large and you tend to get deep, heavy snow, choose a snow thrower with a powerful engine and wide working width which will save you time and effort.

• For more comfortable operation, choose a snow thrower with heated handles and a light to illuminate your way on those dark winter evenings.

More information is available online at www.Husqvarna.ca.

– News Canada



Keeping current

Like all homes, maintenance is a necessity. New windows and doors, fresh paint or siding, every little thing can help to update a home's look, or increase its efficiency. The rule is most often applied to many of the village's decades-old houses, such as this home on St. Lawrence Street in Winchester. Press Photo – Uhrig





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How to make the most of small bathrooms

Renovating bathrooms is commonly at the top of home improvement to-do lists. Though some rooms around the house may remain timeless, bathrooms, like kitchens, show their age (and era) much more easily, which could be why homeowners are always on the lookout for new ideas.

Although many people may dream about creating a spa-type oasis in their homes, not everyone is lucky enough to have a large bathroom, much less a large budget for a full-scale renovation. Small bathrooms are common, particularly in older homes, but they needn't force homeowners to compromise on style when renovating.

Small bathrooms may be a half-bath on the main floor or even a full bath, depending on the home. By thinking creatively, homeowners can maximize their spaces and redo bathrooms in ways that bring out their best assets.

• When space is at a premium, it's best to look for fixtures and items that fit with the scale of the bathroom. Although you may want a large vanity and cabinet in which to hide all of your toiletries, this simply may not be practical – taking up most of the bathroom real estate. Instead, look for elegant pedestal sinks that have a much smaller profile. They'll also help you control the clutter in the bathroom because there won't be anywhere to hide it.

• Use optical illusions to make the bathroom appear more roomy. For example, lay tile diagonally to create the impression of space. A large mirror will reflect the room back and make it appear much larger than it really is.

• Select lighter hues in paint colours and accessories. Dark paints and fixtures could make the room feel cramped. Dark colours are generally used to make spaces feel more cozy. In a small bathroom, it may make the space feel claustrophobic. Instead, think light and bright and the room will instantly feel more airy.

• Minimize wall hangings and keep fixtures smaller. Filling the walls with knickknacks may contribute to clutter and make the space appear closed in. Use decorative items sparingly.

• If possible, store towels in a closet outside of the bathroom. This way you won't have to devote space inside the bathroom to a closet, leaving more room for other things.

• While some people like the thought of a separate bath and shower, in smaller bathrooms this may not be possible. Instead, look for a combined shower and bath, or select a walk-in shower with a much smaller profile.

• Windows are often welcome in bathrooms because of the ventilation they provide, but they could be a hindrance in smaller bathrooms because they take up prime wall space. Cover a window in a shower stall to free up space. Just be sure to install a venting fan to reduce moisture in the bathroom.

• Maximize wall space if you need storage. Find cabinets that will fit beneath windows or be able to fit in thin areas between sinks and toilets. Over the toilet is prime area for cabinetry.

• Consider a frameless shower. This is a partitioned area of the bathroom that's set aside for the shower and is typically only cordoned off by a thin wall or piece of glass. Or a shower with no walls at all is the ultimate in space-saving. The entire bathroom floor is decked out in tile, and a portion is sloped toward a shower drain.

• Think about installing a skylight if you prefer natural light, but there is no room for a traditional window.

Thinking creatively can help turn a cramped bathroom into a space-saving and well-designed room homeowners desire.



A frameless shower can appear to take up less space in a small bathroom.



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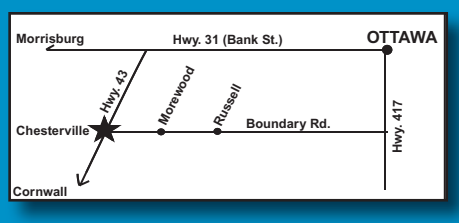

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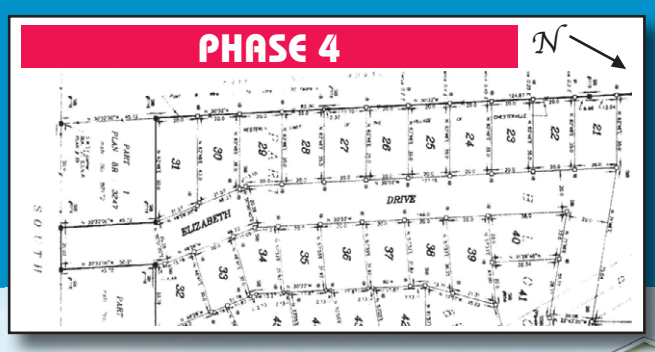

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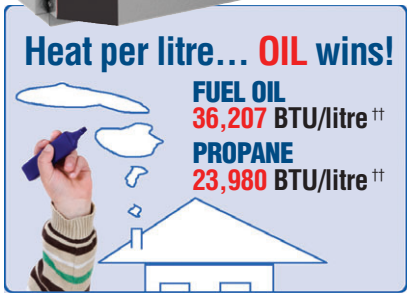

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Massive expansion key to Winchester BMR's future

WINCHESTER

Change is afoot at Winchester's BMR location.

Construction has been ongoing for months as the local hardware store gets set to expand into a one-stop shop for virtually every need a homeowner or contractor might have.

When all is said and done, the County Road 38 facility will incorporate a drive-through system for lumber pickup, a roughly 40,000 square-foot storage area for wood and other products, a 50-by-100-square-foot steel building to house retail construction materials, and a garden centre with both an indoor, heated location, and the traditional outdoor setting.

Meanwhile, the retail portion of BMR is set to expand from roughly 13,000 to more than 20,000 square feet, creating a transformed floor plan, combined with wider aisles and a new layout.

"We really will be a full-line store," Ken Boje, co-owner of the local BMR, said.

Renovations are expected to be done by Christmas, he added, with a complete overhaul of the store's interior completed by February 2013.

It is the completion of some of Boje's long held plans, after acquiring what was at the time Geggie's Home Hardware in January 2005. (The Home Hardware store became affiliated with the Quebec-based BMR in 2011.)

Since the 2005 sale, Bob Geggie continued ownership of the property, and operated a furniture and mattress shop out of the adjacent building. However, in July 2012, Geggie decided it was time to retire, prompting Boje to enter into an agreement to acquire the land and facility.

Today, the property is a hive of activity, with tradesmen working daily to transform the business.

"Everything here is being done by local contractors, because I think it is important it is done on a local level," Boje said. "And we're fortunate that we can supply all our own materials."

However, he did admit things have been hectic these past few months.

"Things have been moving around in here," Boje said. "But we're still open, despite the construction."

He continued, adding that staff members are at the ready to help find the many items that have been shuffled around due to the ongoing work.

"Staff will assist to ensure the customers safety," Boje said.





Winchester BMR co-owner Ken Boje expects much of the store's major expansion, complete with an overhauled interior and exterior, to be finished by Christmas.

Boutique blooming

One of the newest features that will be added as part of BMR's expansion is the Boutique Inspiration.

"That will be front and centre in the new store," Boje said.

The line features a number of accent furniture pieces, including chairs and coffee tables, as well as throw pillows, comforters, and window treatments, and even paint colour sample displays.

"The items are similar to what you'd find at a Bouclair or Pier 1 Imports… Maybe not as expensive, but certainly similar products," Boje said.

Aside from the new line, Winchester BMR's existing Country Treasures section will be enhanced in order to carry a larger selection of items in primitive and country decor.

Other changes

But that's not all customers can expect from the revamped store.

The exterior of the building is to be transformed, featuring a series of windows in order to allow natural light to flow inside. As well, a secondary driveway has been developed in order to keep transport trucks and other delivery vehicles away from the customer entrance and parking area.

Meanwhile, Winchester BMR will be expanding a number of its already intact product lines, including plumbing, lighting, and paint (BMR is the only hardware dealer in the region to stock Benjamin Moore paints), while at the same time keeping stock of houseware items, such as coffee makers and toasters.

"We'll probably be the only BMR to stock housewares," Boje said. "But we don't want to lose that aspect of sales."

Other facets of the to-be-transformed shop include the addition of a cut room, where lumber can be cut to the specific needs of customers, while Boje also anticipates adding another truck to the store's fleet, perhaps one with a boom lift.

"[We plan] to have everything you could really need… Maybe other than the milk and the eggs," Boje said with a laugh. "And if we don't have it, we'll take the time and effort to source and order it for you."

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Finding the right place to call your own



Confessions of a Country Convert

by Adele Eyman

by Adele Eyman

Having a nice, comfortable home is something we all aspire to, but we also want large homes. Citing a survey of home buyers, online writer Carol Ochs said that "Buyers... Want more living space... How much space did they really want? The median response was 2,071 square feet." ("New Home Trends Favour One Storey and Small Lots," www.realtytimes.com) How much floor space did respondents currently have? According to the survey, the median or, middle, size was 1,770 square-feet. And how much living space do buyers actually get? According to the National Association of Home Builders, the median size of a new, single family home in 2003 was about 2,070 square feet.

That's a lot of house to clean, furnish, and look after, as many readers know. Still, many of us prefer to build, buy, or keep a house that is larger than what we really need, given our current life situation. This means that much of our house may not be occupied, or even used for much of the time. Meanwhile, we invest a significant portion of our time, energy, and money on the entire property. So, why do people spend their limited resources on space they hardly ever use? Why don't we consider "downsizing" as a home improvement option?

One reason is that, as a culture, we believe "bigger is better" for everything, including our homes. Historically, having a large home was how the owners showcased their prosperity. Only the very wealthy could afford the bigger homes, which came with bigger mortgages, insurance rates, and operating costs. More recently, however, large homes reflect the social trend toward increased privacy. Alan Heavens wrote, "family size has decreased almost 25 per cent over 30 years, [whereas] the size of new houses has increased about 50 per cent, to slightly more than 2,300 square-feet." ("In 30 Years of Experience," *Philadelphia Inquirer,* April 25, 2004) Since the 1960s, homes have become larger and families, smaller. Family members are also sharing fewer activities in the home. People have begun seeing their homes as a collection of private and public spaces, with private spaces for individual pursuits and public spaces for activities shared with other family (or, household) members.

Consider the evolution of bedrooms in the middle-class home. Ideally, each child now has his or her own bedroom, where they can do their homework, play video games, listen to music, watch television, and hang out with their friends. Parents occupy the master suite, which nowadays may look more like a small, self-contained apartment than a sleeping area. Indeed, as society moves toward more solitary pursuits (such as gaming and online entertainment) the demands for private space in the home may outstrip the desire for "family rooms." Once upon a time, family members had to gather around the stove or fireplace for the evening. The invention of central heat and electric lights meant that family members could disperse into all areas of the home, even at night. The days of the kids doing their homework around the kitchen table, while Mom baked cookies are gone.

Concerns other than privacy can also play a role in deciding what size of house to buy. For example, my sister Patrice and her husband bought a massive home for themselves and their four children. Just how big is this house? "On the day we moved in, we lost our two-year-old for a while," Patrice recalled. Apparently, the toddler wandered downstairs and became lost in all the basement rooms, bathrooms, and storage areas.

But they had a reason for a buying a really big house. Their eldest child was approaching high school in a small town with high rates of teenage drug and alcohol abuse. "We wanted our kids to be able to bring their friends home, instead of hanging out at the mall all of the time," she said. "We also felt we could be more in control of what our kids and their friends did under our own roof rather than under someone else's roof."

Their plan worked: the kids brought their friends home. In fact, the plan worked a bit too well. Patrice recalled her husband counting up the house's occupants one Saturday to know what size of pizza to order for supper. He paused at door to their home office and said, "I have just discovered that we have 24 children currently playing in our house, and that only two of them are ours." (Patrice always laughs at this part, and goes on to assure me that the non-resident children were all escorted home, the resident children collected from friends' homes, and the traditional Saturday pizza was ordered and enjoyed. But I digress.)

There are other social reasons for having a large house. People who live far away from important relatives and friends often choose to keep a spare bedroom ready for guests. Empty nesters with grandchildren may want to keep the family home intact so their adult children can come home with their own families. Parents of the so called "boomerang" generation hold on to the house after the kids leave home, just in case they need to move back in for a while. Some people simply enjoy having frequent house guests.

But still, having a big home can strain-and-drain your resources. Why not consider "finding the perfect home size" as a home improvement project this spring? Perhaps the best place to start is to ask yourself, how much house do we really need?





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Bring in the firewood – not the bugs

If you have a wood-burning fireplace or woodstove, you should be aware of the risk of bringing in wood that may be hiding termites or carpenter ants. Although other insects like to nest in wood, it is the termites and carpenter ants that can cause damage to wooden building structures.

Carpenter ants are six to 12 mm long, with larger queens at 25 mm. They vary in colour from reddish-black to all black.

Termites are a little smaller, with the workers and soldiers measuring up to six mm, and up to 12 mm for the winged ones that reproduce. Termites can be almost transparent, dark grey, brown or black. While the carpenter ant looks like it has a tiny nipped-in waist like a wasp, the termite body is about the same width throughout.

Take the following precautions:

• Inspect the exterior of your home for any areas of high moisture or exposed wooden structures and make repairs.

• Prune back any tree branches that touch the house.

• Clear away or replace any decaying or infested wood from around buildings.

• Clean gutters to avoid clogging.

• Fix any high indoor humidity problems.

• Always store firewood outdoors on a raised platform so that the wood is not in direct contact with the ground, covered from rainfall, and away from buildings.

If carpenter ants have already moved in, the most effective way to eliminate them is to use a combination of physical and chemical controls. There are many registered domestic pest control products available to homeowners. For indoor applications, check the label to ensure it is registered for use inside the home. Always read and follow directions.

If you discover a large infestation or a nest of carpenter ants – or have found termites – Health Canada recommends you consult a pest control professional.

More pest prevention and management tips can be found online at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/pmra or by calling Health Canada's Pest Management Information Service at 1-800-267-6315.

– News Canada

New rules for pesticides in 2013

Every year poison control centres across Canada receive calls from parents concerned about the possible poisoning of their children. While most calls relate to medication and household cleaners, some are about pesticides to control rats or mice (rodenticides). Health Canada has put new safety measures in place to reduce the risk of children and pets coming into contact with these products.

As of January 2013, all rodenticides sold to consumers will only be available with a pre-packaged, ready-to-use bait station, designed to be tamper-resistant to children and pets. In addition, certain high toxicity rodenticides will only be available for use by licensed pest control professionals.

Until these measures come into effect, Health Canada recommends that consumers purchase tamper-free bait stations for use with rodenticides. Consumers should also read all label instructions carefully before using rodenticides or any other pesticide product. To reduce the need for rodenticides, follow these tips:

• Repair any exterior cracks or holes that could provide access.

• Apply metal weather-stripping under exterior access doors and weather-strip windows.

• Cover dryer vents, attic vents and soffits with fine mesh, metal screening.

• Avoid having tall grass or vegetation up against the house.

• Secure garbage in containers with tight-fitting lids.

• Place woodpiles well away from the house and 30 cm off the ground.

More tips on how to safely prevent and control rodents are available at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/pmra.

– News Canada

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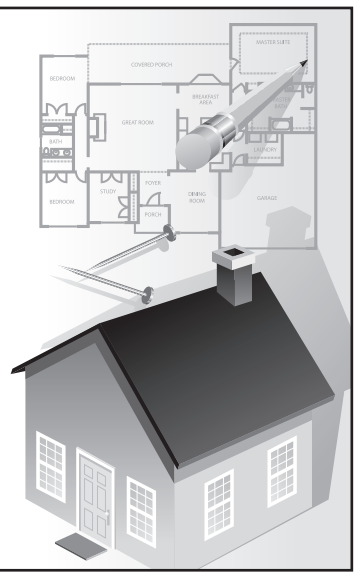

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From the ground, up

A fire in the spring of 2010 destroyed the original home located at 534 St. Lawrence Street, Winchester, and in the time since, the lot sat empty. Recently, however, Tony Van Gurp Construction has been hard at work erecting a new, two-storey home on the property, complete with a garage facing Victoria Street. *Press Photo – Uhrig*

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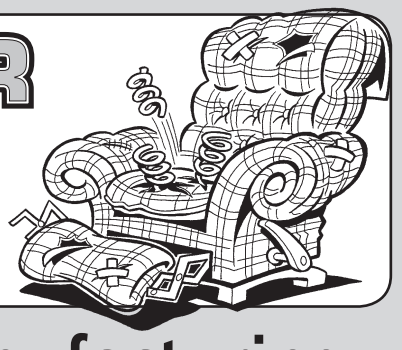
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Planning for nutrition



The Lighthearted Vegetarian

by Janice Atkey Videto



This article is for all of you inexperienced cooks, impatient eaters, people that live in their car, people who claim they just don't have time to cook, and those folks who ran out of ideas about five years ago. I've been there and I know all your dirty little secrets. Any of these sound familiar? The beer-and-a-brownie dining experience hopefully left behind in the college dorm! What I used to call the five-minute feast. You stand with the fridge door open and eat for five minutes. The meal is done. And the most nightmarish eating habit of all – using nutritional supplement drinks in place of food. Enough! Stop the madness!

The first adjustment that needs to be made is that of attitude. Sure, teens and those on their own for the first time might get a little nuts with the take-out, but that is a phase that passes quickly once the pounds and the costs start piling up. Eventually we all grow up and have to take responsibility for our health and ourselves, and that includes basic nutrition. No time to cook, you say? Sorry, I'm not buying it. Prioritize. You make time to shower and wash your hands. You make time to put on clean clothing. You make time to brush your teeth. Why? These are necessities, right? So is providing your body with good nutrition. Neglecting nutrition is sending your body a message of disrespect.

Grabbing those nutritional supplement drinks or energy bars because they list a number of vitamins on the label? The drinks I checked were loaded with corn syrup and sugar, artificial flavouring, salt, and a list of chemicals, including hydrochloric acid. So unless you are in a medical situation where you are physically unable to eat normally or have an issue absorbing nutrition, these drinks and bars are not a valid substitute for food.

Dr. Max Pemberton, medical doctor, author, and journalist for the *Daily Telegraph* notes that food substitutes do not work because "it is not just the vitamin that is important, but a complex interplay between it and other naturally occurring substances, which just can't be replicated and packaged." Food and nutrition is a complex dance. It cannot and does not come out of a plastic bottle or a box of take-out.

For those of us with children, behaviour must be modelled to be taught. You can't preach health then rush everyone out to a fast food restaurant. Respect for food and the life-giving disease-fighting forces it offers needs to be fostered at an early age. Maybe you weren't taught that at home. Make it a learning journey together, get books from the library and make Sunday afternoons family cooking time. The Lanark County Student Nutrition Program estimates that 800 schoolchildren participate in their aptly named "Food for Thought" program daily. This suggests that the education system has recognized the vital need of nutrition in a child's development. We are extremely fortunate in Dundas County that our farming community keeps that food connection strong so we can learn and teach the journey of healthy soil, healthy plants, to healthy foods resulting in healthy bodies.

The benefits...

Admit it, don't we feel just a bit important when we are always too busy to eat? Let's do a reality check. My own observations of office workers for more than 30 years showed that a lot of people who were chronically "swamped" were also chronically disorganized and the fact is, skipping meals does not improve the situation. Poor meal planning equals poor nutrition, and that actually diminishes your productivity, causing you to end up putting in more hours in the long run. Kathleen Hall, a stress and work-life balance expert notes "food boosts mental and physical productivity and regulates moods. But don't just eat anything within reach. Nutritious foods boost brain activity. Foods can also fight anxiety, stress and panic, which is good if you're having an especially difficult day."

Good food means a bit of organization, a small commitment, and self-respect whereby you are choosing to do something positive for yourself. I like to reserve a time period for cooking. When I was in the corporate "rat race" that was Sunday morning. Now that I am freelance, I still make a point of scheduling cooking time. Pick a time that works for you, be it an evening, weekend, or weekday and commit to it. Make several dishes you enjoy eating, and choose foods that are multi-purpose. Get the family involved!

Until next time...

Watch for our Commuter Food Survey coming up in the upcoming *Winchester Press* Car Care supplement, to be published later this fall. It's a real eye-opener! And until then, plan for nutrition. Be proud of what you have made. See it for what it is – a symbol of respect for yourself, your body, your health, and an investment in your children's future.

Now try it on your plate

Vegilicious recipe du jour

Loafing About

1½ cup canned lentils (rinse before using, then partially mash)
2 onions, chopped and sautéed in oil until tender
2 cups cooked brown rice
1 tsp garlic powder
¼ cup frozen veggies, such as corn, peas, your choice
1 tsp sage
1 tsp marjoram
1 tsp parsley
Salt and pepper to taste

Mix together, press into an oiled loaf pan and spread ¼ cup ketchup or BBQ sauce, your choice, on top. Bake at 350F for about an hour.

Planned Nutrition Tip: Serve as your main course for dinner with vegetables, slice it for a hearty sandwich with a splash of barbecue sauce, or crumble it into a wrap with salad fixings.

Tape like a pro

What's the secret to a wonderfully painted room? A professional-looking paint job begins with a good painting tape. Not all tapes are created equal however, professionals say. To ensure maximum protection for baseboards, trim and doorways or to create sharp lines and a clean, smooth finish, make sure to use the right tape for the job.

Since tape is designed for use on different substrates, reduce the guesswork and use one that's designed for multiple surfaces, like a popular brand called Painter's Mate Green tape. It's made from premium paper and backed with a one-of-a-kind adhesive that creates a tight seal on a variety of surfaces.

Even though taping may seem time-consuming, it's an important step in the painting process and is critical for protecting your surface. Here are a few tips to make the job easier:

• After selecting the right painting tape for the project, apply it in individual, one-foot sections instead of a long strip. When applied in one long strip, the tape stretches and won't lay flat or stick properly, resulting in paint bleeding underneath.

• When you lay the tape down, be sure to burnish it to ensure a tight bond to the surface. You can easily do this with a putty knife, 5-in-1 tool or credit card.

• Although many tapes can remain on the painting surface for more than a week, the best results come from removing the tape immediately after you are finished painting. This prevents paint from bridging over the tape and tearing during removal.

• To remove, slowly pull the tape off at a 135-degree angle toward yourself as soon as you're done painting.

• Remember – a thorough taping job will make the final results look crisper and like it was done by a pro. More information is available online at www.PaintersMateGreen.com. *– News Canada*

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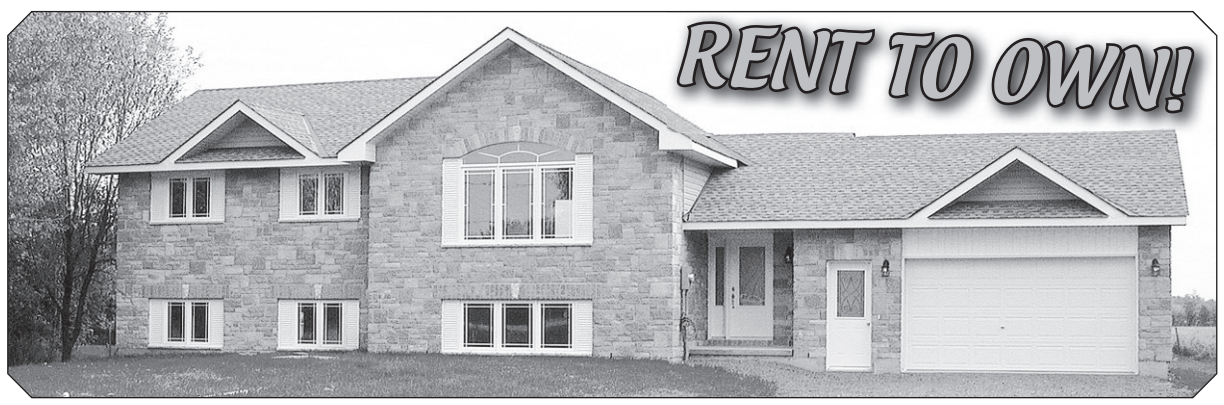

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How to identify septic tank problems

When septic systems are working properly, homeowners seldom give them any thought. However, if there is a problem with a septic system, things can get messy and expensive very quickly. The key to keeping septic systems running smoothly is prevention.

Septic systems are installed in homes that do not have direct access to municipal sewer lines. Septic systems are typically found in rural homes or in towns that may not have the resources for extensive sewer piping.

While a properly designed septic system can be trouble-free, maintenance is still essential. Because septic systems tend to be out of sight and out of mind, homeowners can forget about them. But ignoring your septic system can cause problems in the future.

Ignoring your septic system can cause problems in the future.

How does a septic system work?

Most septic systems have two main components: where the waste enters from the house and breaks down and a filtering system where the waste water exits into the ground. Waste travels from toilets and sinks to the septic tank, where natural bacteria help break down the waste. Then the remaining water flows out through a filter into the surrounding ground.

Identifying problems

Septic system problems occur when waste doesn't properly break down, leading to system backups.

At the least, you may notice odours coming from the drains or toilets in your home. Or you may realize that sinks aren't draining properly or toilets are not flushing with the right amount of power. At the worst, toilets and the septic tank itself may overflow.

Outdoors you may notice soggy grass around the septic drain. Grass in one part of the leach field area may even be greener than in other areas. Each of these signs could indicate a septic system problem.

What causes problems?

The main culprits in septic system problems are blockages that cause the system to overflow or back-up into the home. Septic tanks need to be pumped out at regular intervals. A professional inspection is also necessary. Flushing or putting difficult-to-degrade items into the system also can cause problems. Be sure to heed the following:

- Do not flush non-biodegradable items down the toilet or sink drains. Cotton balls or plastic can clog the system.
- Do not pour cooking oil or grease down the sink drain.
- Limit the amount of food particles that enter the system.
- Set up a regular maintenance schedule to keep the system working.
- Advise guests as to what is and is not allowed to go down the drain. Those without septic systems may be unaware.

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Building a business – one step at a time

MORRISBURG

With hard work, determination, and a focus on customer service, Dwayne and Lloya Sprague have breathed new life into Morrisburg Home Hardware.

"We're gearing up for Christmas," said Lloya. "We have a Christmas catalogue coming out and Christmas flyers. We've got a lot of merchandise for that."

Last Christmas, having just taken over the store on County Road 2, the Spragues were busy clearing away old stock, reorganizing, and working toward the eventual restocking of the store. In fact, deciding not to stock a regular toy section, the couple donated all the toys in stock to a local toy drive last December.

According to Lloya, they've been taking "baby steps" from the beginning, and will continue to do so, one sure step at a time.

The Spragues recently purchased two acres of land directly behind their store, in what the Township of South Dundas is hoping will become a full-blown industrial park.

According to Dwayne, however, there are no immediate plans to develop the property, but "it's going to be developed in the next two years," with the addition of a building in the third year. The goal is to eventually have a fully functioning building centre and lumberyard in place.

Although the store, as it is now, is not an actual building centre, Dwayne, who is the vice-chair of the Lumber and Building Materials Association of Ontario, said, "we've already dabbled in some building products this year." (Some examples include patio stone, flooring, bathtubs, and more.)

For right now, the current Home Hardware building is sitting on a piece of land that will allow for expansion on its east side, and according to Dwayne, "we're planning to develop the east side of the land next year."



Morrisburg Home Hardware currently has room for expansion on the east side of the building. The Spragues are hoping to have an addition completed for next spring.

Press Photos – Casselman

The first step in both expansion projects is an estimate. As Dwayne explained, they need a cost estimate for developing each piece of land, as well as an estimate for the cost of erecting a building.

As for how they're doing, "it's been great," he said. "Stock is right up. We're beyond our forecast. There's growth. We're stopping a lot of people from hitting the Home Depot."

In fact, many customers have already come to the Morrisburg store for help with home renovation projects, and the Spragues have been there step-by-step, providing the help and support necessary to complete the project.

"We believe that customer service plays a big role," said Dwayne. "We've helped a lot of people through projects. Our goal here was to be service-based."

While Lloya has had more than 18 years of experience in sales and customer service, Dwayne has had 27 years of experience.

Morrisburg Home Hardware also does "home installs," said Dwayne. "We look after the whole project, we have contractors who do that. We do it and we do it right."

Inside the current store, customers will find the typical hardware supplies, along with other various home necessities, like cookware for example. The Spragues have devoted an entire aisle to the Kuraidori cookware line, which is exclusive to Home Hardware.

Leaving toys and sporting goods to the other stores, the Spragues have focused on home-related products from building supplies to furnishing rooms. They also offer a line of pet supplies and bird feeders. What they don't have in the store, they can order directly.

Customers have the option of searching the company website from home, or at the store where Lloya or Dwayne can tell them if an item is in stock and how soon it can be in the store once it's been ordered. They can order almost anything, from something as small as a shower curtain to something as large as a bathtub or refrigerator.

"The place has grown up considerably since a year ago," said Lloya. "The paint is going like you wouldn't believe. We're selling tons of paint."



Dwayne and Lloya Sprague took a quick time out from helping customers to pose for a photo in front of the two acres of land they recently purchased from the Township of South Dundas. The Spragues hope to eventually expand their business to include a building centre.

While not just a typical hardware store, and not yet a full-blown lumberyard and building centre, Morrisburg Home Hardware does cater to both types of customers as much as possible.

"We're kind of a hybrid store," said Lloya. "We cross over, which is where we want to be right now."

To make things easier for contractors to purchase the supplies they need, the Spragues adjusted their hours from a 9 am opening to 7:30 am.

"Changing the hours has made a huge difference," said Lloya.

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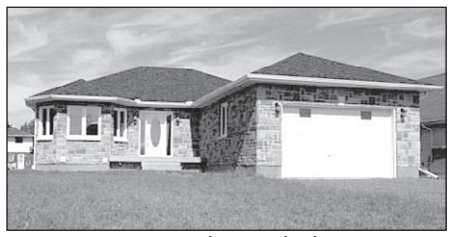
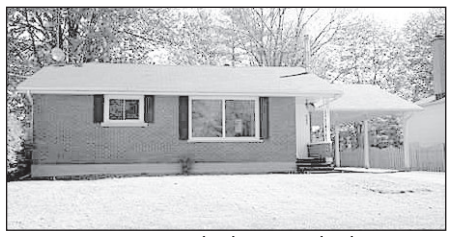


WINCHESTER - Brand new, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, 1,800 sq. ft., deep lot. MLS 830746 **$315,000**



WINCHESTER - 2+1 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2011 windows and floors. MLS 846148 **$179,900**



WINCHESTER - Like new, 3 bedrooms, bath + en suite, finished basement. MLS 832835 **$309,900**



WINCHESTER - 2,200+ sq. ft, 4 bedrooms, 3 baths and great yard. MLS 836363 **$369,900**
.



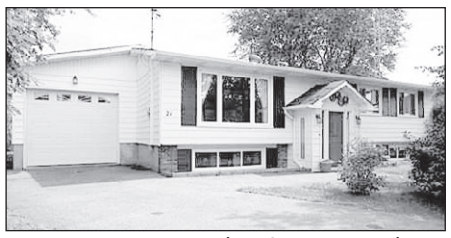
WINCHESTER - 1,400+ sq. ft., 3+1 bedrooms, 2 baths, pool. MLS 836989 **$249,900**



WINCHESTER - 2 to 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, in-law suite/rental possible. MLS 843086 **$164,900**



CHESTERVILLE - Nearly new beautiful home, 4 bedrooms, 2 baths. MLS 842157 **$289,900**



CHESTERVILLE - Great location, many updates, 2+1 bedrooms. MLS 845242 **$232,000**



WINCHESTER - Massive 4,400+ sq. ft., 4 bedrooms, 4 baths, 3-car garage. MLS 834553 **$469,000**



CHESTERVILLE - Giant 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, Boyd block on 1 acre. MLS 837902 **$375,000**



CHESTERVILLE - 2,750 sq. ft., 3 bedrooms, 4 baths, amazing quality. MLS 839634 **$529,900**



WINCHESTER SPRINGS - Built 2011, 1,500 sq. ft., 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. MLS 841670 **$295,000**



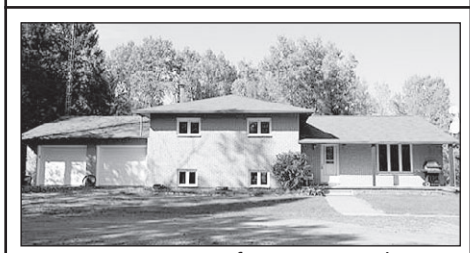
WINCHESTER SPRINGS - 11.7 acres, large 4-bedroom and 2-bath home. MLS 845488 **$349,900**



WINCHESTER - 5 acres with barns and 4-bedroom, 2-bath home. MLS 829168 **$399,000**



MOUNTAIN - 1.31 acres, 3 bedrooms, private. TLC needed. MLS 835703 **$99,000**



HALLVILLE - 6.65-acre forest, renovated 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom home. MLS 839645 **$334,900**



INKERMAN - 1880's 4+1-bedroom, 4-bath home + shop, AMAZING reno. MLS 843952 **$359,900**



SOUTH MOUNTAIN - 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom home AND separate apartment. MLS 844279 **$259,900**



WINCHESTER - 2008 3-bedroom, 3-bath home on 1-acre treed estate lot. MLS 844818 **$337,900**



MORRISBURG - St. Lawrence view on 0.87 acre, gas heat, 2 bedrooms. MLS 830051 **$169,900**



SOUTH DUNDAS - 2.5 acres with updated 4-bedroom, 3-bath home. MLS 832453 **$269,900**



WILLIAMSBURG - Spacious brick 3-bedroom, 2-bath home and garage. MLS 840932 **$199,900**



WILLIAMSBURG - 3.84 acres, renovated 3-bedroom brick house, pool. MLS 842147 **$269,900**



Be prepared to be impressed

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Don't be afraid of pattern

Many homeowners want to introduce pattern to their rooms but don't know where to start. They may wonder if two patterns match or how to determine scale. It may take a little practice, but using pattern is easier than one may think.

Nothing adds visual interest to a room more than pattern and colour. While homeowners may have the knack with colour, they may shy away from pattern. Individuals can trust their instincts – they're usually right. For those who have mastered pattern with their wardrobes, it's time to try out some pattern in home design.

Varying pattern size adds dimension to a room. Not every pattern should be the same size and variety, otherwise things can look too matched and staged. Try varying patterns of similar colours but experiment with size. For example, place a large-scale patterned area rug on the floor. An ottoman may feature a medium-sized pattern. Mix things up by alternating throw pillows in a floral or paisley print with subtle stripes. Just make sure the texture of the fabrics match.

When selecting patterned items, choose similarly coloured items. This way even if the fabrics or patterns aren't exactly the same, they'll look cohesive through colour. For a room to feel a bit more upbeat, consider complementary colours. If you prefer a more restful atmosphere, try a palette of colours from the same family. Just vary the intensity of the shades.

Homeowners who have gained some pattern confidence may want to strike out on their own to create a room that is unique. Those who still need a little help may want to consider taking the path of designers before them. There are certain patterns and fabrics that have already been established as working together for certain design styles. Here are a few.

• **American Southwest:** Navajo patterns are at the forefront of this design style and can be used on upholstery or pillows. Use a smaller-scale stripe on window treatments. Solid-shaded throw pillows in a complementary colour to the Navajo pattern will coordinate well.

• **English country:** This style is about large-scale chintz on sofa and draperies. Mix in narrow striped, slip-covered lounge chairs for a little extra panache.

• **American country:** A small floral print on the sofa or comforter can be offset with a large country quilt pattern hung on the wall as a wall treatment. Checkerboard checks, medium stripes on draperies, or select crocheted valances coordinate well.



Try out pattern, even if it is only on an accent chair in one room of the house. It can add visual dimension to a space.

• **18th century:** Lavish patterned fabrics in chintz or paisley featuring golds and robin's egg blue are just some of the options for classic decorating.

• **Modern:** Mix stripes and geometric patterned items in splashes of colour to add a modern feel to a room.

Individuals can experiment with patterns to make a room more personalized and less of a neutral blank page. If it proves difficult to come up with patterns that work together, look at design magazines or books for some inspiration.

Home features that are disappearing

While home sales figures are improving, money is still tight in the building industry and among home buyers. Instead of over-the-top features in homes that were once becoming the norm, builders are now focusing on more value-conscious designs and offerings. Here are a few of the features that are falling by the wayside.

• **Sunrooms:** Although the "bring-the-outside-in" movement was once strong, builders are now focusing on home features that immediately add value and attract the eye. They're putting their resources into linen closets and laundry rooms while de-emphasizing sunrooms.

• **Extended ceiling heights:** It can take a lot of energy to heat rooms with 15-foot ceilings. As a result, grandiose family rooms and two-storey foyers are less attractive to buyers focused on saving money. Homeowners want spaces that are easier to heat and cool.

• **Luxury bathrooms:** Many private residence bathrooms rival those found at popular four-star hotels. But luxury bathrooms are being phased out in favour of less expensive, more practical options.

• **Outdoor kitchens:** Although entertaining at home is one way to keep budgets in check, some homeowners have realized they don't need a complete backyard kitchen with a pizza oven and brick fireplace in order to host guests.

• **Media rooms:** Individuals certainly love their gadgets, but many of these gadgets have become smaller and more portable. This reduces the need for giant home theatres and gaming spaces.

While certain features are disappearing, there are others that are growing more and more popular. Dual sinks in kitchens, walk-in closets, extra storage areas, and hidden charging stations for devices are likely to show up more and more in new home designs.

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Creating a sanctuary on the St. Lawrence River

by Sandy Casselman
Press Staff







Pictured above is one of the windows, frame and glass, Pederson discovered hiding behind paneling and drywall, while renovating her St. Lawrence River home just west of Morrisburg. Pictured top left is a view of Pederson's home from the river. Moving left to right, is the 1800s portion of the house, the late 1700s portion, and the studio. Bottom left is just one of the amazing river views from the Birch Lane property.

MORRISBURG

Driving along Lakeshore Drive, between Iroquois and Morrisburg, it is impossible not to notice the many beautiful homes dotting the St. Lawrence riverfront and wonder about the people who inhabit them, or maybe even think about what it might be like to live there too.

About eight years ago, Mae Pederson and her adult daughter, Shannon, were two such people, just enjoying a drive along the river when they spotted a sign advertising a house for sale on the river. Thinking, "why not?" they headed down the road to check it out. Needless to say, it was love at first sight.

According to Pederson, although the period home hadn't been lived in for two years at that point, she could see the possibilities and the promise, and that was that... it became a matter of taking a leap of faith. An offer was submitted, and then accepted, and she, with the help of her daughter, got straight to work renovating her new weekend home.

Pederson, married for more than 40 years with two grown children, four grandchildren, and more than one successful business knew a treasure – even one covered by years of plaster, panelling and dust – when she spotted one.

In the initial months of owning the property on Birch Lane, just off Lakeshore Drive about halfway between Morrisburg and Iroquois, Pederson discovered some wonderful treasures hidden in the walls of her new home: hidden window casings, complete with the unbroken windows themselves.

After meeting several neighbours, Pederson learned that the eastern section of the main house (now the kitchen) was the original house built in the late 1700s. While the fireplace and loft were removed, the structure, floors, (and trap cellar) still remain.

She also discovered that the western section of the house was added sometime in the 1800s. Here, Pederson took out the interior walls, widened the staircase leading to the upstairs loft, and added a beautiful stone fireplace. While the floors on the main level are new hardwood, the upper floor is still original to the home and renovated to perfection.

Realizing the importance of supporting local businesses, Pederson has made it a point to hire locally whenever possible.

"I stuck with local contractors," she said. "They were just so open to my ideas."

Pederson has liked to design and decorate since her youth, and has the designer's gift of being able to visualize "what could be."

Many of the decorations are "found" pieces collected from her travels. Each year, in fact, she adds another antique gem that she finds at the annual Morrisburg Antiquefest, which, as a member of the Morrisburg and District Lions Club, she organized this past summer.

In addition to the main house, Pederson's property also has a garage with an attached office, as well as a studio. Many of the local Lions meetings are held in Pederson's office.

She joined the Lions after moving to the Birch Lane home "full-time" about five years ago.

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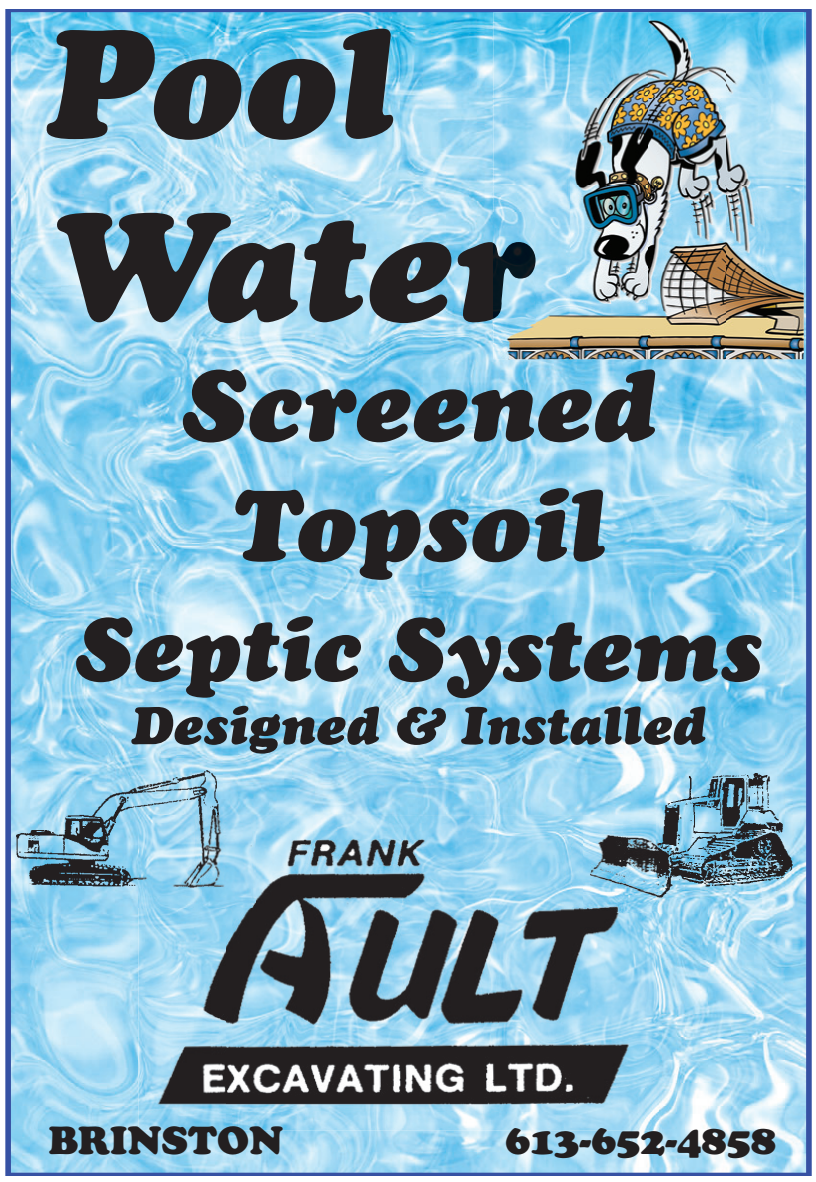





Today's kitchen once made up the entirety of the late 1700s home.

Sanctuary

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"It just became too difficult to leave on Sundays," she said, and so, while she and her husband still have their home in Manotick, Pederson spends much of her time in South Dundas.

According to Pederson, although the home on Birch Lane is fairly "finished," there are always projects each year. This past summer, she had a local contractor build a gazebo out of reclaimed lumber to sit atop some large quarry stones her son brought home. Also, she just finished a new addition to the landscaping – a new flower bed attached to the office – adding colour and warmth to the pathway between the studio and the garage, on the way to the house.

If this doesn't sound amazing enough, there is a view of the St. Lawrence River from almost every window of Pederson's home. The property is on the point, and is surrounded by the river on two sides.

The south side of the house, facing the U.S., sits right on the water with its own private beach, complete with beautifully matured trees, dating back to the home's origin.

Pointing to a dark blue "line" in the river, Pederson said that the original County Road 2 was just beneath. In fact, she had recently gone swimming with her son and was able to stand on the road, head above water, and enjoy the view of her home from the river.

The pride and passion Pederson has for her home and its history are obvious in the care and attention to detail she's shown during its renovation, but it is not a showpiece. It is a home. Her grandchildren call it "Gran's on the River," actually, while Pederson herself calls it "my soft place to land."

In the eight years she's owned the property, Pederson and her family have had many happy times together. In her words, "it's a happy place shared by all."

Mae Pederson and her husband own Pederson JK Landscaping and South Ridge Sod Supply on Manotick Station Road in Osgoode.



Pederson recently added to the landscape lining the walk between the studio and her office, on the way to the main house.

Press Photos – Casselman

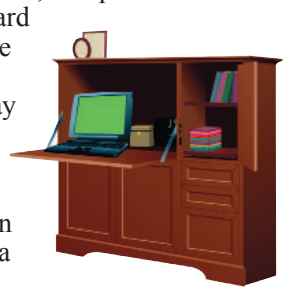


Home offices in tight spaces

A home office is a necessity for many adults these days. While some people have entire rooms available to house a home office, others have to make do with less space, and that can mean fitting an office into a tight space.

The first step in establishing a small home office is figuring out the space you have and any limitations that may accompany it. For example, maybe you have an unused corner in the living room but don't want to have wires and equipment out in the open. An armoire-type desk that can be closed when not in use is a viable option in such a situation.

Perhaps there is an unused closet in a bedroom. A wall-mounted desk surface, such as a piece of custom-cut countertop material, complete with foldaway mouse and keyboard tray can easily turn the space into a compact nook.



Maybe there is an entryway with a small table that would be large enough for a laptop. A stool or ottoman that can be tucked under it can serve as a desk chair and extra seating for company.

