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PREMIER ISSUE

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Welcome!



I'm so pleased to present our first issue of *Sweet Home Chicago Magazine*. I hope you enjoy it.

There are great plans for future issues, so stay tuned! We'll be featuring local experts in home design, gardening, cooking and some great creative projects—we'll showcase businesses in the area and give tips and tricks from local knowledgeable professionals.

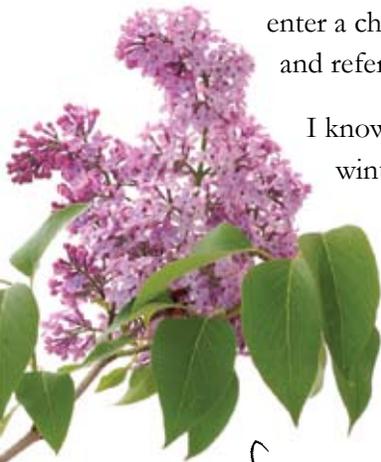
We'll also feature a lot of "green" ideas and resources, which Maggie Wilkins begins to do in this issue. Jane Carroo shares her clutter coaching experience to help you get focused on how you're storing your stuff, and how to get clear so you can create space for the things in your life that you're wanting.

The article by local feng shui expert Jucimara Markoff will help you take an objective look at your home, and how your personality is reflected there, and decorator Laura Heitz presents some great information to help you relocate some of your existing items to create a room that is balanced and fresh using the items you already have in your home.

This is your magazine, so we'd love to hear your ideas and comments as we get going. The website is up with some simple information right now, and we're working on the expanded final product. You'll be able to find back issues of the magazine there, sign up for home subscriptions and enter a chat room where you'll find other readers sharing ideas and referrals.

I know we're enjoying Spring so much this year after the winter we had! The flowers are a welcome site.

One of my tips for Spring: when you've cut some lilacs to bring inside, take a knife and pare the wood off the sides of the stems, a few inches from the bottom, exposing the green center. This makes them able to absorb a lot more water, and they stay fresh so much longer! Talk to you again in June!



Debbie Mackall, *Editor and Publisher*

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April, 2008

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We'll be updated and expanding in the coming months with local resources and a referral area. Register to receive special offers and coupons from our advertisers.

The next issue of *Sweet Home Chicago Magazine* will be available June 15.

Please write in with your ideas and comments to debbie@shcmagazine.com. Thanks!

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Heart of the Home

with Maggie Wilkins

Maggie Wilkins – President of C&M Wilkins has been designing, and building since 1985. Her Passion is what she calls, the “Heart of the Home”.

Maggie will explore different areas in the building and design industry in each issue. You can write in with your questions, or we'll choose a timely topic.

Email: building@cmwilkins.com

or call 847-648-0606.

In this issue I'm focusing on the new buzz words *Green* or *Green Friendly*. What does *green* mean?

Green building is the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings use resources— energy, water, and materials— while reducing building impacts on human health and the environment, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal — the complete building life cycle.

It is key to see if the products you are planning to use in your project fit within these areas. Not only will these certified products support our earth's life and beauty, but most of them don't have the toxic levels that some other products do. I've found these products to be wonderful to work with, and it feels good to know that I'm not contributing to the toxins on the planet!

Following are a few of the products I have used in the past that have helped to create a perfect balance between building and design.

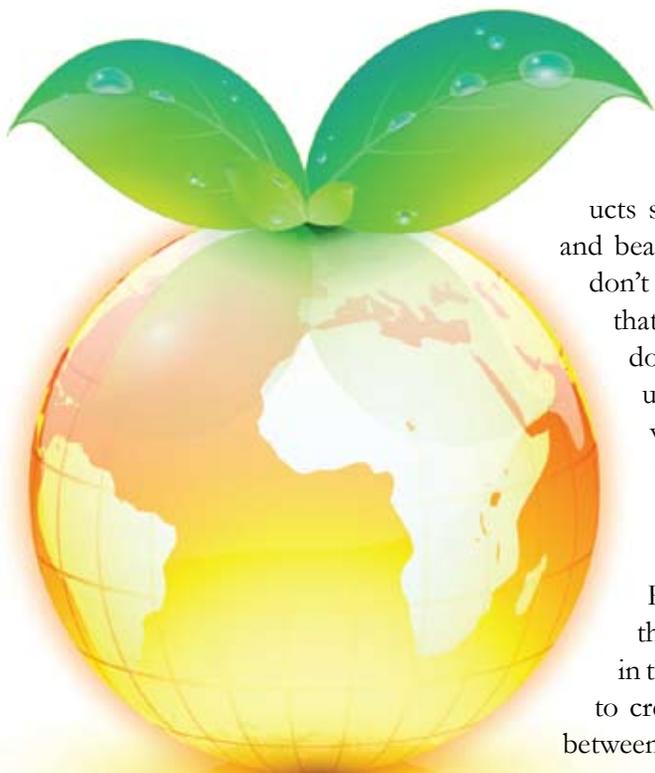
KCMA Approved Cabinetry

I work with Fieldstone® Cabinetry, and it is *ESP certified* which stands for *Environmental Stewardship Program*. KCMA is the Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association, and in 2006, they began certifying cabinet manufacturers who proved they are using sustainable practices and products. After meeting the certification requirements in areas such as air quality (low-formaldehyde emitting composite wood), resource management and environmental stewardship, companies are awarded the ESP seal to display on their products. It's important to look for cabinetry that qualifies in these areas. The certified cabinetmakers are listed on their website (www.greencabinetsource.org) so it's easy to find just what you are looking for.

Flooring

One of the new flooring products that has become very popular is bamboo. This is a wonderful alternative to wood and is considered a green product based on the growth process of the plant, and the ability to manufacture it without a lot of waste.

Living in the Midwest we have to be aware, though, that bamboo does not like the extreme heat and cold fluctuations of our weather. If not installed with care it will warp over time, so it's important to hire a contractor that is experienced in installing this flooring!



In 1999 Maggie was nominated “Woman Entrepreneur of the Year” in Vancouver. In 2000 she won the Woman in Business Association award Be Your Own Boss. Her design experience, coupled with years of working with Green Friendly products and her background as a 5-star chef have led her clients to rely on her as an expert in home building.

There is another product I love called Lyptus®. Lyptus is an eco-friendly hardwood hybrid, grown in the heart of what was Brazil’s devastated forest lands. Derived from the cross breeding of the Eucalyptus Grandis and the Eucalyptus Urophylla, this hybrid, interspersed with reintroduced indigenous trees, was created to preserve the region’s already depleted native ecosystem.

Right now my most desired flooring (besides wood and stone) is cork. Cork today comes in many different colors, is waterproof, excellent for sound proofing, and most of all is designed for high traffic areas like homes with kids and animals. It looks great all the time, has the look of exterior wood and is very much a GREEN product. No cork trees are cut down, only the bark is peeled without destroying the tree, and it grows back within nine years, ready to be harvested again. Also— the cost on cork is fantastic. Make sure that you do seal this flooring or buy the cork that is pre-sealed. It will last a lifetime, and a beautiful cork floor is good for your health as well as the environment.

The next area is paint

I recommend using low VOC or zero VOC (antimicrobial properties) paint. It is fantastic. After all the dust has settled and it is time to paint, why not use a non-toxic paint that won’t leave toxins in the air? Some paints can

take up to a year to clear out. The little extra money it costs for VOC paint is worth the overall expense when it comes to living in your home after the job is done. The color range is outstanding and will create a perfect look for your room. Benjamin Moore recently spent \$150 million developing a new line of paint, *Aura*, which is less harmful to the environment because it releases only one-third as much in volatile organic compounds as regular paint does, Forbes reports. But the company isn’t marketing the eco-friendly aspects because customers aren’t that interested and because “green” paint has an image problem. In the past, low VOCs meant subdued hues. Benjamin Moore says it has fixed that problem and that *Aura* can offer any of the company’s 3,300 hues.

Another good option is Mythic paint, or YOLO Colorhouse. They’re non-toxic, ultra low odor, and provide the durability and coverage you expect from a premium paint without the off-gassing VOCs and toxins that emit years after drying.

This is just a small offering of information for getting more green products in your building projects. Throughout the year we will be offering more ideas for you. *Think Green* has been around for a long time in the Pacific North West and is growing in awareness and uses in our area.



I love that we are beginning to consider creating our dream homes not just with awareness on the beauty, style and price, but most of all on the whole picture of the process which includes our planet and home health.

Know that Green does not mean Brown— it means *beautiful* from the inside out!

Enjoy your home. It is the heart of every family, the place we celebrate life with food. And smile when you remember that you have taken the extra steps to protect our planet. ✨

Next Issue!

Maggie will be doing a special series of articles taking you on a journey with Tom and Susan as they do an extensive renovation of their Highland Park home. Master bedroom, new kitchen, breakfast room and mudroom will all be recreated to fit the home’s heritage style. From planning, blueprints and permits to the final finishing touches right down to the last doorknob, we’ll share in their experience and learn from their process. Don’t miss it if you ever plan to remodel a room yourself!

Clear Corner



Clutter Clearing with Jane Carroo

Jane combines her past experience as an educator, corporate consultant and life coach to help clients gain clarity and control over their space, paper and time. You can write also her with your questions and clutter challenges which may be featured in an upcoming issue. info@cluttercoach.com

Also check out Jane's website at www.cluttercoach.com.

I had a revelation while downsizing after my divorce. While going through all this stuff—partway through it just hit me. Why had I thought all of this STUFF was so important? Long story short, I ended up getting rid of about half of it, and didn't miss a thing.

This started my journey as a clutter coach. The transformation that happened in my life was so profound after clearing out all the things I didn't need or use, my entire life felt free and open and I was effortlessly making changes

in other areas as well. For example, I had been working in the corporate world and studied to be a life coach, finally quitting my job and doing it full time. And I loved it!

Soon after, while happily working as a life coach I noticed that a lot of the people that came to me for help in areas of career and personal growth would be greatly assisted and propelled forward by clearing out their unused stuff as well. I thought that they might have a better, tangible

Life Snapshot

Ever wonder how people are able to create their lives intentionally?
Would you like to create what you want in your life, too?

How do you begin?

A great way to start is by taking a personal snap shot of your life. This is a fun exercise!

Get a piece of paper and make a list of all the major categories of your life. List areas such as personal, family, health, career, fun, etc. Then take a quick hit of where you are right now regarding each area. Do this by rating each area on a scale of 1-10. When you are done, take a step back and see what areas feel neglected to you, and which areas feel important. Now, prioritize by choosing just one area as your top priority. Congratulations, you've just reviewed your life and clarified your priorities!

Now list ways that you can increase or incorporate that category into your life. Choose the ones that would be easiest for you to implement and do so. This is a quick tool that you can practice over and over again. Use it periodically and see how you are able to refocus your intentions. This is one great way to stay connected to yourself and on your path to creating a more intentional and fulfilling life.



understanding of the process by clearing out the things in their lives that were no longer serving them.

Well the rest is history and now I focus on teaching and assisting people in the process of clearing out the clutter in their lives. This can be anything from the stacks of mail and paper around the home or office, clothes and things we think we may need “someday” and even people and activities that are draining your energy.

Take inventory

The first step I recommend is to take an inventory of everything in your environment. This doesn't have to be a huge document! Just begin a list of projects that have been on your mind and need attention. Think about what is really driving you crazy right now!

Assign time

I find it's helpful to assign some amount of time daily/weekly/monthly for organizing. Schedule it into your calendar. When it's time for organizing you will know exactly what project to work on. Even if you only have 15 minutes on a given day, it will get you closer to your goal. 15 minutes a day adds up over time. In a year you could accumulate over 90 hours of organizing time. Just imagine what you can accomplish!

Of course, the real reason for doing all this organizing, is so that you can live a *simply organized* life, and have time to do all the other things you want to do.

Start now!

If a closet is at the top of your list, start by taking everything out of that closet, and begin organizing it by sorting into piles. All long sleeve shirts together, short sleeves together, pants

Did you know...

- that the average person wastes an hour a day looking for things?
- that 80% of what we own we never use?
- that getting rid of excess clutter would eliminate 40% of the housework in the average home?
- that about 80% of the clutter in your home is a result of disorganization, not lack of space?
- that 23% of adults say they pay bills late (incurring late fees) because they lose them?
- that a large department store surveyed customers in which 31% reported they were more satisfied after clearing their closets than they were after sex?
- that more than 90% of Americans are planning on organizing some part of their life this year?

together, jeans together, and so on. It's much easier to go through your items when you have all of them together at the same time. If, for example, you have pants in different closets around the house, go get those as well and put them in the pile you have made.

Then go to each pile, and look at each item. You can keep a criteria such as: love it, wear it sometimes, never wear, etc. and decide (if you're daring!) to just keep the items in the love it pile, and put the rest into a bag to donate. Come up with a criteria that works for you, but be a bit ruthless! Sometimes a *maybe* pile can work for a bit while you're sorting. You may find all of the maybes in a bag by the time you've finished! It's fun once you see the space you're creating.

Putting it all back

One big mistake I see a lot of people making is to go out and buy a bunch of “organizing stuff” before they begin. Much better to do your sorting, and then take a look at the closet you have. Think for a few minutes about what is working for you personally, and what isn't. Just because you got a great organizing product doesn't mean it is working for you, or the way you operate. For example, some people have

large rods for hanging clothes, when most of their clothes fold and stack. If this is the case, you might be better off with more shelves than rods. It's your closet and you know how you like to operate. Make it work for you.

Today we are doing so many things with the spaces we have. The guest room is also the gift wrapping room, office, craft room and on and on. So we're trying to cram all these things in there and it becomes confusing and overwhelming and we can't function. Or, we have a hobby that is scattered all over the house, and we can't find anything. By learning some techniques you can begin to create some order, which then has this great ripple effect on your entire life.

You may find your thoughts are clearer, you have more time on your hands, you feel better as you're leaving the house when it was that easy to get ready in the morning! And, coming home to a great, organized home can relieve a lot of stress that you may not even know you are experiencing.

We'll share tips and projects in upcoming issues to help you get going if you're interested in clearing out some space in your environment. *Stay tuned and get started!* ✨



The concept of reflections is very significant in feng shui. Is your personality reflected in your home? Or, are you reflecting the personality of your home? The shift in the question here is subtle but the implications are deep. What kind of message does your home give off about yourself to yourself? Our personal spaces are alive and we interact and exchange information with them constantly

The spaces we live in hold precious hidden messages that can help us to reflect upon our existence and how we manage our thoughts, words and actions in the world. Our homes can easily tell anyone what our values are, as well as the highlights of our lives. Many of us feel that we are *forced* to live in a certain way— due to the circumstances— but deep within, if we are willing to unveil our own subconscious messages, we can find parallels or reflections in our current way of living even when it does not express the way we *perceive* ourselves.

Our homes function as our outer garments. So, if we can look at this sequence together, we can work with the idea that the soul has the body as it's garment, the body has it's clothing as a primary layer of garment, then we have our homes as a secondary garment, our offices as a temporary garment, our cars as our movable garment, and so forth. Even when we don't own a house or a car, during the

time we are occupying these spaces, they will be meaningful to us and become somewhat part of our experiences and consciousness. Now, please realize that although this is a phenomenal way to learn more about our inner self, know that who we are is NOT defined by our homes or cars. As a matter of fact, we are not defined by our behavior. We are not our emotions, we are not even our thoughts, much less so our belongings! We are infinite beings having multiple experiences in various realms that enrich us as a whole.

So, if you find yourself in conditions less favorable than you would like it to be, you may want to at least try to look at that from a learning standpoint and to take it to next level towards an outcome that best fits you. But please do not define yourself by the physicality around you. Never give up on self-actualizing, never give up on growing and learning, never give up on fully expressing who you really are, never give up on achieving your dreams even when the journey seems a little too rocky.

Having said that, we can now take an objective look at our homes and evaluate if and how our personalities are reflected in it and what we can do to improve our current living conditions. Imagine your home as a huge mirrored cube where everything you see is a reflection of some aspect of you. Is there a theme that seems to ap-

pear often in your home? Maybe you got yourself into such a light way of living that your home feels too empty. Perhaps you have water motifs everywhere, or birds, or items that come from a culture that is not apparently yours, but seems to keep showing up in pictures, music, or decoration. If you find a recurrent theme, you may ask yourself these questions:

- 1 What does this theme really mean to me?
- 2 What aspects of my life am I trying to make sense of by surrounding myself with this particular theme?
- 3 Do I really connect with it, or does it represent only a phase in my life?
- 4 Is this theme related to my past, present, or future?

Let me give you some specific examples. When I was a young teen, I started collecting cactus. I was living in Brazil and shortly my whole backyard had an infinite amount of cactus all over the place. I had gone through some traumatic events at that point in my young life. Well, caring for cactus is not necessarily that easy. Yes, it sure takes little water (water is symbolic of emotions and I was pretty unable to deal with the strong emotions of those years.) Isn't that interesting that I chose such a harsh plant that is not even native of that region? That was a theme that showed up in my life for just a short period of time and it was a reflection of a painful occurrence in my teen years.

I have visited many homes where the family wants to improve their understanding of each other. Yet, when I walk through their homes, I find signs



Her experience as a scientist in Brazil, combined with her knowledge and sense of space and form make Jucimara a natural at the art of Feng Shui and spacial alignment for the home.

By Jucimara Markoff



that indicate the valuing of individuality, literally as well as figuratively, such as a lack of conversation areas that can be enjoyed by the family as a whole.

I have also visited homes where the parents have a deep and sincere desire to prioritize their family lives. Yet, I find signs that indicate that their careers are more important than the family activities. Most of the time, we are not really aware of these reflections in our personal spaces. Occasionally, even a difficult phase in one's life that happened years ago is still giving off messages of suffering through painful pictures on the wall and other reminders.

Some actions you can take

- 1 Bring yourself to the present time by searching for recurrent themes in your home that are attached to the past
- 2 Seek to understand the message and unique meaning to you
- 3 Practice detachment by letting go of the theme, thus creating room for perhaps a more mature and refined expression to take place

On the other hand, some themes can be inspirational. They can help us to achieve something we desire. As a young chemist and pharmacist working for an American multinational company in Brazil, I wished to improve my English language skills.

I had the blessing of learning English from the most adorable and skilled British teacher in town. Mr. Bentley (of blessed memory) was advanced in age when I met him. With him I learned not only to speak English (my mother language is Portuguese),

but I also learned to honor and value the wisdom of the elders. He would spend hours sharing his stories with me. I looked forward to every class. He motivated me to study abroad to improve my language skills. I started researching programs and before I knew it, my whole chemical lab was filled with pictures from England and its beautiful scenery.

Shortly after that I found myself in the south of England. That was just the first of many trips abroad that eventually led me to meet my now husband and to move to the US. An action you can take to create a new scenario for yourself is to choose to use symbolic reflections of your goals to inspire you to think, vocalize, and act towards achieving these goals.

These were just a few examples to illustrate how revealing and inspiring these discoveries can be. Now that you have imagined your home as a mirror, lets take a quick look at one of the many symbolic meanings of mirrors in itself. When we look in the mirror we see our own reflection. When we express love towards others, we attract love towards us. The same holds truth for negative feelings. When we express anger towards a fellow being, we attract

anger towards ourselves. What we see in others, either good or bad, reflects some aspects of what we see in ourselves, whether we are conscious of it or not. I cannot help but thinking of a well-known proverb: "As when looking in water, face reflects face, so does one's heart find reflection in another's".

I wish you all find in your homes your most refined qualities reflected as clearly as your mirrored image on still deep waters. ✨

For questions or more information contact Jucimara Markoff. Call 847-520-5952, email: juci@livinginalignmnet.com or visit her website: www.livinginalignment.com



Decorating Tips *and some mistakes to avoid!*



Notice how beautifully the above living room feels balanced and bright

If you aren't feeling so loving about your familiar space, see if perhaps some of these ideas can help you create a new room for yourself using the items you already have! Once you've fixed any decorating mistakes, you'll be sure to fall in love all over again, and be ready to enjoy the new season in your new space!

Spring is Exploding Outside—
and, it's a great time to spruce up your nest!

Best selling author Lauri Ward, founder of the Interior Refiners Network (IRN), developed the *Use What You Have* philosophy in 1981. In her book, *Use What You Have Decorating*, she presents some great decorating tips.

Defining your priorities

Does the space need room for multiple functions? Do you need a space for the kids to play? Do you plan to entertain? How about TV watching? Do pets co-inhabit the home? How much storage do you need? Do you rent or own?

Define the function(s) of the room, as it sets the tone for all the other situations that follow.

Comfortable conversation area

Have you ever been in one of those houses where you almost have to shout at the others to be heard? How about when the couch is 15 feet away from the recliner?

The goal for a comfortable conversation area is to make sure that everyone is facing each other and that a conversation can be held at a low decibel. Keep in mind that everyone should have access to a table to place a drink on. Who wants to sit perched on the end of couch, holding hot tea, with nowhere to set it down?

Take a look at your furniture placement— are the items so far apart that it encourages foot traffic? Thoughtful arrangement of the furniture encourages conversation and intimacy. The best arrangement is the couch on the longest wall, with the loveseat and a pair of chairs opposite each other, so that you have a U-shape.

Furniture Placement

Have a friend come into your home to give you a fresh perspective. Often, we are so accustomed to our surroundings that we don't see the possibilities.

Are you pushing all of your furniture up against the walls? If so, join the crowd! It's one of the most common decorating mistakes. But you can break free of the habit. When you look at your rooms, think about how you can give easy access to the dining room table, the living room couch, etc. Never place furniture in front of a doorway; it restricts flow and is unsightly. In some cases it's fine to angle the furniture. In fact, it can really add interest to a room. Just make sure your furniture looks good from all angles.

A room that is balanced

Take a look around your living room. Is all of the "heavy" furniture on one side? That's easy to do, what with media centers, couches, upholstered chairs, etc. It's important to create vi-

sual balance in all your rooms. When all the “weight” is at one end or one side of the room, you’ll know instinctively that something isn’t right.

To create balance, your furniture doesn’t have to “color match” but they should “weight match”: two tall pieces at either end of a room, two larger chairs across from a couch, etc. Study the dimensions of each significant piece to see how they relate to the other pieces in a room.

Furniture of different heights

Do you have a 12 foot armoire next to a three foot table next to an eight foot armoire? Is there a very large artwork next to tiny collectibles? Does this disparate mix of furniture and accessories look good to you? A mix of pieces that are vastly different creates visual chaos— your eye doesn’t know where to focus! Keep balance in mind when placing your furniture, artwork and accessories around the room. If you have an oversize armoire try to balance it with another large piece on the opposite wall— diagonally. They will relate visually to one another.

A room with a cohesive look

One floor lamp, one side table, one floral painting. It’s a nice start, but what is missing is the other half of the equation. In decorating, sometimes pairs can add balance— two bookcases, two table lamps, two related prints for the wall. If the lamp bases don’t match, but are the same size you can buy the same lampshade for both. If the bookcases are different colors, but the same size, paint or stain them the same color, to give a cohesive feel.

A room’s focal point

Is your fireplace blocked by a kids’ toy

chest? Is there a media center in front of a window, blocking a lovely view of the park?

Your focal point can be a significant piece of furniture, the view onto a tree filled backyard, or perhaps an architectural element, such as a fireplace. In a room with several functions, such as a dining-living area, both areas will need their own focal point.

Decide what it is and play it up! Balance the obvious focal point with additional accessories or artwork to create a greater sense of importance. When the focal point becomes the center of attraction the entire room feels right.

Use of artwork

Do you know someone who has a tiny landscape hanging two feet above a very large sofa? It looks odd, almost lost. Proportion and balance are the keys to using artwork. According to Lauri Ward, “hold your art where you think it should be, and then lower it three inches.” This tip works like a charm— every time!

Also, give your artwork room to breathe... some white space is good. And, don’t think you need to fill every wall with something. Keep the finishes the same; frames don’t need to match, but choose all metallic, all wood, or the same color – it’s a unifying element.

Effective use of accessories

Honor your belongings with a judicious use of restraint. Too many knick-knacks in a room can make it feel like a store or a garage sale. It’s never a good idea to cover every surface with things. Instead, rotate your collections. Try changing out your accessories every three months, or in the spring and fall, to give your

rooms a new look— without spending any money.

If you have three of a kind, you have the start of a collection. Keep common items together— tea cups, silver boxes, or, like my husband, gargoyles. Group your collection on a round table, with varying heights, tallest in the back. The collective items will add impact and give importance to your cherished collection!

Using lighting Incorrectly

Sitting in a living room with only a harsh overhead fixture is uncomfortable. A variety of light sources gives dimension and brings warmth into a room.

Remember the lighting mantra: general, task, and accent. General is for broad illumination, usually from an overhead light. Task is for a specific function, such as reading or computer work. Accent is used for highlighting collections, artwork, and plants.

The right mixture of light sources adds depth and brings a room alive. Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) have been improved in recent years, and duplicate the softer, warmer tones we’re used to from the old incandescent bulbs. They are more energy efficient and last much longer.

I think you’ll find that using some of these tips around your home will freshen things up and give you the feeling of a redecorated space with little investment! ✨

Laura Heitz is a Certified Interior Refiner and the owner of Right Now Redesign, Inc. She transforms homes in hours, using your belongings. She can be reached at 773-972-6548 or visit her website at www.rightnowredesign.com.

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with Patrick Cribben

What's in the Coffee Menu?

Espresso A small but potent coffee served black, in a small demitasse cup or glass. Characterized by an intense flavor and aroma. The perfect espresso can only be created by forcing water at 9 bar pressure and 190 °F through a tightly compact wad of 8 grams of freshly ground coffee beans, producing 1.7 fluid oz. of coffee in exactly 22 seconds. Such precision is crucial for what is the base of most specialty coffees.

Espresso con Panna Short, strong and sweet. Full bodied Espresso with real whipped cream served in a demitasse cup or glass.

Macchiato A small strong coffee with a delicate first impression created by placing a small amount of foamed milk on top of the crema. Served in a demitasse cup or glass.

Mocha A delicious medley of pure Espresso and real chocolate filled with steamed milk and crowned with a swirl of whipped cream. Completed with a garnish of sweet chocolate or chocolate shavings. A rich and indulgent chocolate experience, served in a tall straight glass or cup.

Ristretto An extra strong variation of the Espresso, using the same amount of coffee but half the quantity of water. Typically served in a demitasse cup or glass. Not to be confused with a double Espresso.

Cafe Americano A velvety smooth coffee, brewed fresh from the bean which results in a thick moussy head

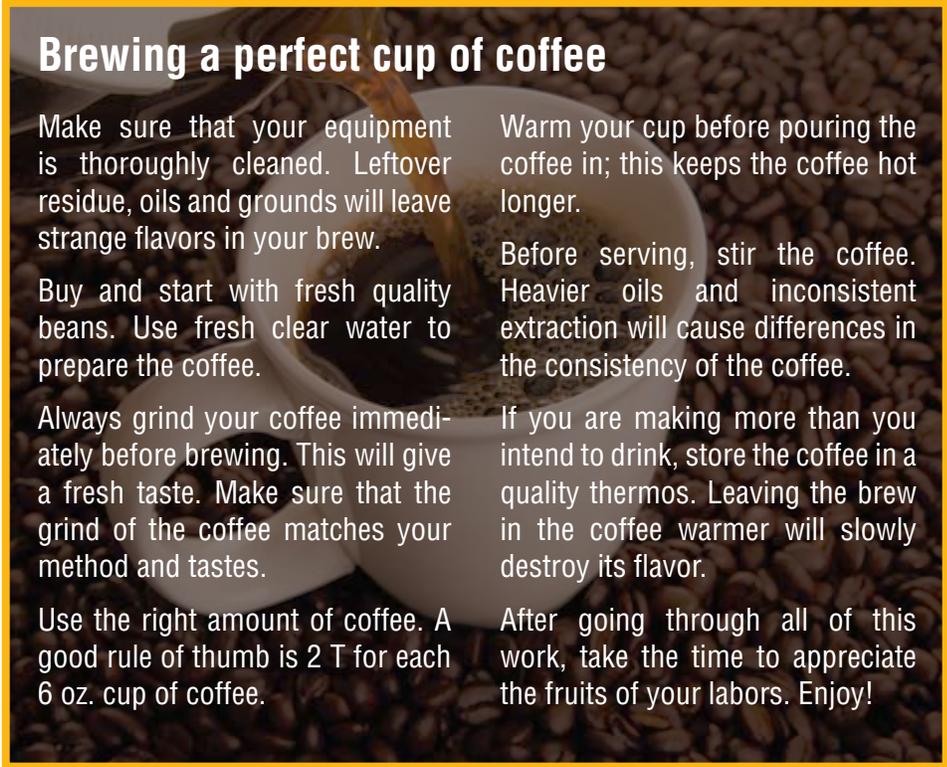
called a crema. The crema is sometimes mistaken for cream, but is actually an indication of the freshness of the coffee bean. It's delicious with or without cream and served in a conventional coffee cup.

Cafe Latte A long refreshing coffee, usually served in a tall glass. The fresh espresso and steamed milk should always be topped with a small amount of frothy milk, to seal in the warmth.

Cappuccino A decadent combination of strong Espresso smoothed out with equal quantities of steamed milk and foamed milk, creating a luxurious cap that can be garnished with either chocolate or cinnamon powder. Usually presented in a large classic cup.

Patrick Cribben owns and runs the Honey Hill Coffee Company, a great little coffee shop in downtown Wauconda.

Patrick has been the chef at a Galena B&B, caterer, and master baker. We'll be fortunate to share some of his tips and tricks in upcoming articles. From recipes to special stores in our area, he'll be sharing ideas and information on gourmet items and great buys in the area for everyday treats, your parties, and special occasions.



Brewing a perfect cup of coffee

- Make sure that your equipment is thoroughly cleaned. Leftover residue, oils and grounds will leave strange flavors in your brew.
- Buy and start with fresh quality beans. Use fresh clear water to prepare the coffee.
- Always grind your coffee immediately before brewing. This will give a fresh taste. Make sure that the grind of the coffee matches your method and tastes.
- Use the right amount of coffee. A good rule of thumb is 2 T for each 6 oz. cup of coffee.
- Warm your cup before pouring the coffee in; this keeps the coffee hot longer.
- Before serving, stir the coffee. Heavier oils and inconsistent extraction will cause differences in the consistency of the coffee.
- If you are making more than you intend to drink, store the coffee in a quality thermos. Leaving the brew in the coffee warmer will slowly destroy its flavor.
- After going through all of this work, take the time to appreciate the fruits of your labors. Enjoy!

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