

AUGUST 2016

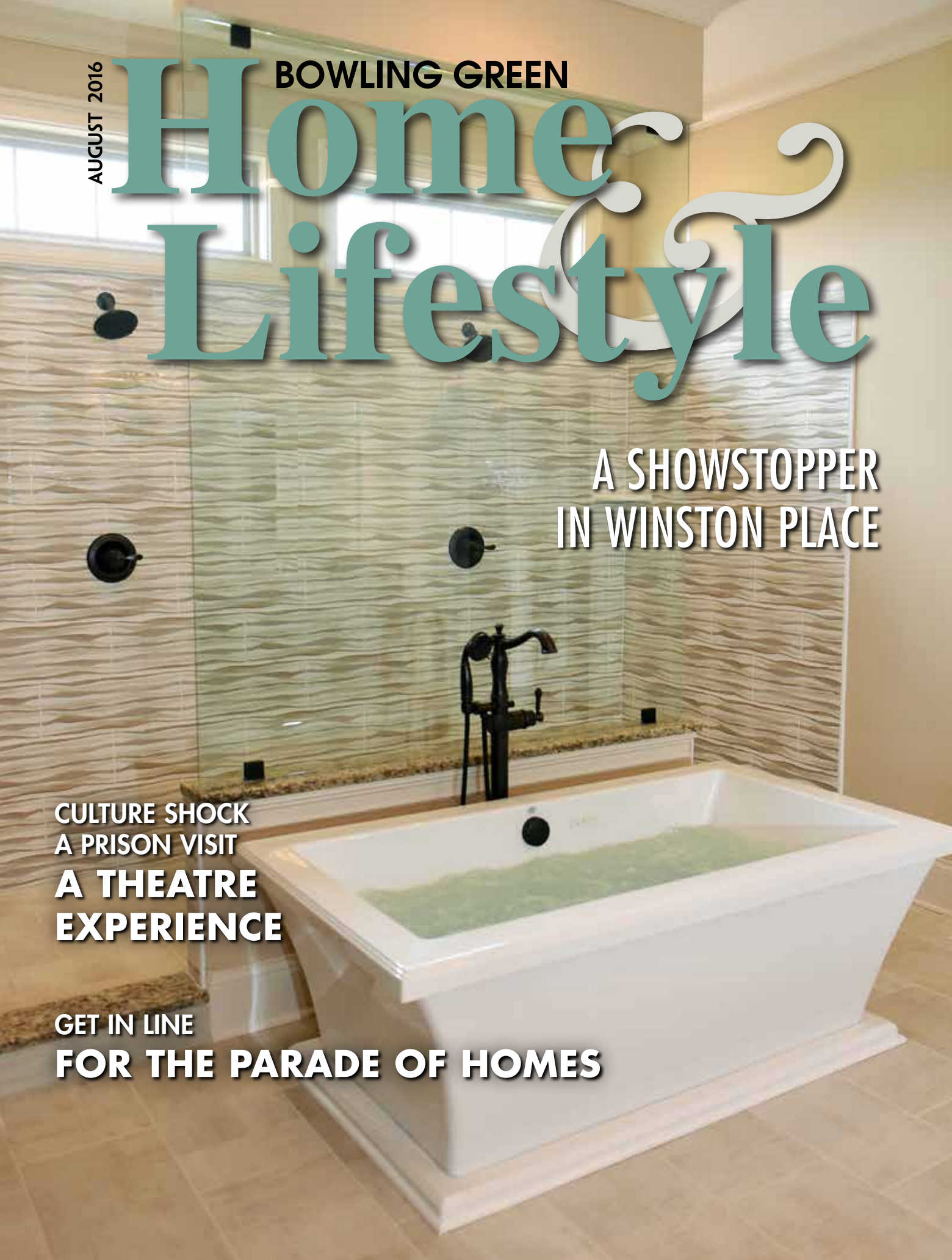
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AUGUST 2016

Picture Perfect

A slideshow of Joe Imel's photographs of this beautiful Providence Homes project can be found at www.bgdailynews.com/community.

COVER FEATURE

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Stunning Architecture, Casual Living

At Winston Place in South Warren, Liz and Steve Nelson of Providence Homes work together to design and build one of a kind custom homes. This time, they took on a spec project with fabulous results.

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42 REFLECTIONS

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HUMOR



Less is more—more or less a headache Our dysfunctional multifunction tiny-living experience

BY **BERNIE ERICKSON**

It's no secret that I love houses and everything to do with them. Over the years, I've owned eight homes in every size and style imaginable. I earn my living in residential real estate, and I wisecrack about home and life for *Inspired Home*. I am known to change room colors just for fun or to see if it's really true that a rich, dark wall color makes a small bathroom feel grand. (It does.)

Recently, I've been intrigued by those TV shows that talk about tiny living environments and how the virtue of living and doing with less can, in fact, be more.

I'm of the mindset that anyone who thinks less is more never had quite enough more.

We live in a comfortable home that has more bathrooms than people, but I was curious about this humble home culture. Clearly these compact, multifunction spaces have something to offer.

I'm as adventuresome as the next guy. I enjoy spontaneity in small, controlled doses, so our scheduled trip to Paris was the perfect opportunity to live in one of those humble homes.

After contacting a real estate rental professional and reviewing a few properties, we committed to leasing "Casa Claustrophobia."

Our leasing agent Picoletta demonstrated the gate code and the interior lobby door pass card and opened the door to our humble home.

It was breathtaking!

It had an "Iseeya"-brand component kitchen in a cool tangerine orange. The fridge and the dishwasher were cleverly integrated into the lower cabinets. It had an induction cooktop with a glass range hood and a microwave/convection oven mounted on a shelf over a foldout multipurpose ironing board/cutting board/dining table combination.

That was my first clue the whole "multipurpose" concept may take on a whole new level in the humble home. I've done a quick shirt pressing with a towel placed on the kitchen table rather than dragging out the ironing board.



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↑ Tiny living in a tiny home is an admirable life change to consider; however it may result at times in multiple big headaches.

But ironing on the same surface I use to prepare food and eat dinner?

Then there was the bathroom.

Even though the space was markedly smaller than I'd anticipated, after years of staying in hostels and modestly priced hotels, I knew we could make this microscopic space work.

After Picoletta did the walk through—which wasn't really a walk through because with three people in the home, there was no place to walk—we signed the 10-day lease and began to settle in.

It never occurred to me that a one-room house would not have a closet, but that was the case with Casa Claustrophobia. Clearly that must be what those hooks all over the wall were for, and I ended up creating an interesting textile collage wall art from my suitcase full of khakis and polos—a vertical laundry pile, if you will.

Speaking of laundry, I know humble homes pride themselves on being self-contained, and I was curious about laundry facilities, as there was clearly no washer-dryer unit in the space. Turns out, keeping with multipurpose uses, the



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dishwasher had kind of a removable cage inside to hold laundry.

I'm as much into saving water as the next guy, but there was no way I was going to wash my dinnerware with my underwear. However, the thought of this dishwasher/clothes washer was intriguing, so I decided to put my travel clothes through the wash cycle.

What about the dry cycle? As I feared, the clothes cage baking in the dishwasher heat-dry cycle yielded a steaming orb of apparel with a faint smell of Jet-Dry and scrambled eggs.

Like every guy on the planet, I think instruction manuals are for someone else but decided maybe I should look into exactly how clothes were supposed to dry. It seems the hooks on the wall were part of the plan—and so was the range hood, induction cooktop and exhaust fan.

The instructions said to drape smaller items over the range hood, turn on the exhaust fan, heat up the cooktop for five minutes, turn off the cooktop, and then let time and the exhaust fan be your friend in drying your unmentionables.

Modern textiles seem to be designed to go through an actual heat and tumble-drying process, because the next morning when I put on my newly clean socks, it was like putting baggy, shapeless pillowcases on my feet.

At least the bathroom was not going to be an issue. I've used down-the-hall bathrooms in U.S. hostels and down-the-hall, down-the-stairs and across-the-street bathrooms in Europe. A private bath, albeit humble, was going to be just fine. The entire room was the shower, and rinsing off the soap while trying not to get my towel and bathroom tissue wet was kind of a challenge, but I made it. The real issue was when I bumped an \$80 bottle of wrinkle cream into the composting toilet.

All told, I do have a newfound respect for these pioneers who are up to the challenge of doing less with more. Many of the couples on those cable network programs indicate that they live small at home so they can enjoy living big in the city. I know we sure did. *

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Presented by the Builders Association of South Central Kentucky and sponsored by Farmers National Bank, Bowling Green Home Furnishings and WBKO, this is an opportunity to see new colors, building products, home fashions, new trends and much more.

The self-guided tour includes both custom-built homes designed for particular families and spec homes that are available

for sale. They range in size from about 2,700 square feet to about 9,200 square feet. All homes in the Parade are built by general contractors who have earned Registered Builder designation by meeting a stringent set of criteria including building education and experience.

This year marks the return of a showcase home for the tour. Barrett Hammer, owner of Hammer Homes and the current President of the Builders Association, served as general contractor. Proceeds from the sale of this home will go toward helping the Association serve its members and the community.

Also returning this year is the second *Dream Room Give Away* from Bowling

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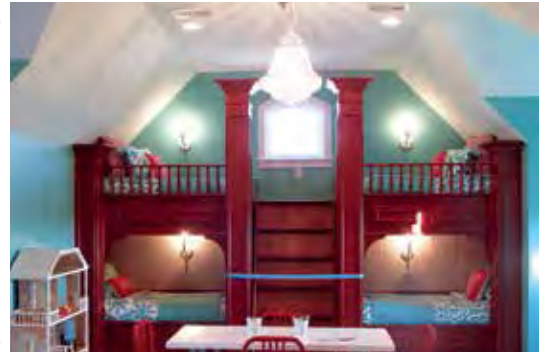
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Saturday, September 17	10am – 5pm
Sunday, September 18	1pm – 5pm



Green Home Furnishings. Attendees will have the chance to win a prize of furniture valued at \$5,000. Look for final details and rules coming soon.

We hope everyone will visit these homes to see the work of our Registered Builders and also our Associate members who represent all areas of the building industry including designers, landscapers, bankers, painters and much more. We encourage everyone to choose wisely when hiring professional contractors. The Builders Association is a one-stop shop that can provide lists of members who can take care of all building and homeownership needs.

We thank our co-sponsors, and we are proud to say that each year, a portion of the proceeds are donated to a non-profit community organization. This year's recipient is once again Bowling Green Christian Academy.

Tickets, which are only \$10, are available for purchase at every home on the tour during the Parade and are good for all four days and entrance into all homes on the tour. Tickets can also be purchased in advance at the Builders Association office at 859 Lovers Lane. Children under twelve get in free. Each ticket holder will receive a Parade Magazine that includes information on the Registered Builder, the home, and decorator information that is known at the time of printing.

For more information, call the Builders Association of South Central Kentucky at 270-781-3375 or visit their website at www.bascky.com. If you are considering a building or remodeling project, please consider using one of our members. They are qualified professionals promoting the integrity and professionalism of the building industry. *

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Don't be shy—of color, that is

Learn to embrace different hues in your space

BY Ashley Ferragut JOHNSON | PHOTOS Courtesy of **TECH LIGHTING**

Think of your favorite place to relax or your favorite room to read a book in. Imagine what your dream master suit might look like, or picture yourself drinking a cup of coffee on a bright and airy veranda. Artwork, desirable furnishings and the right design are all important components in making these spaces work and feel the way you want them to. The most obvious and probably the most basic element of designing any room is color. Color can change the way a space feels entirely and elicits a certain vibe or feeling depending on the hue you choose. You can take a dark and despondent room and with a coat of paint transform it into something brighter and lighter in an instant. Many people have become accustomed to safety when it comes to color in the home, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, but keeping a home neutral doesn't mean everything has to be "builder beige."

For those who may be "color shy," the thought of adding a bright, bold hue in the home may seem intimidating at first. Painting an accent wall a vivacious color is the route many take to create some dimension, but even the go-to one-wall color pop may be too brazen for some. There are many ways to add pops of color without having to change the paint on your walls.

Furniture, art or even tapestries can all be used to introduce a bit of boldness into the home without a huge commitment on your part. Change out the drab shag beneath



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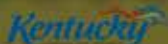
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↑ Bold printed artwork draws the eye in adding depth and interest to an otherwise neutral space.

the dining room table and add a rug with a fun print in a color you are naturally drawn to. This subtle swap is just the thing to create a colorful, functional space and can be done in a snap. Funky lampshades, colorful throw pillows or even a jazzy, bright table runner can add just enough spunk to a space without pushing you too far out of your color comfort zone. All of these items can easily be exchanged at different stages in life and can alter the look and feel of a space without having to change much else. In a clean, neutral or white kitchen, things like a contrasting color on the hood vent or island or vibrant-colored stools at the breakfast bar can add a touch of drama.

Lighting fixtures are another easy way to add a splash of color and are easily switched out should your tastes or needs change. Vivacious pendants or striking chandeliers can draw the eye, creating a bold ambiance in what otherwise may be a fairly neutral space. Tom Sargeant, vice president of new product development for Tech Lighting, knows a lot about what good light fixtures can add to a space. Tech Lighting is a company revered for quality crafted, unique, artful light fixtures. Sargeant says, "Lighting can be the crowning glory of a décor plan with a spectacular statement piece, add warmth and texture to a room's aesthetics and define spaces within an open floor plan." With the flip of a switch, a room can go from drab to fab.

In the end, the palette is endless. Whether you're drawn to the sea blues of a Nantucket-style home or you enjoy the brightness of fuchsia and teal in a more modern scape, the sky is the limit. Take inventory of your home, and you will surely find ways to add splashes of color in some rather unassuming places. Ditch the old and opt for chic and fun. Color, after all, can be your friend.*

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↑ These pendants are both functional and aesthetically pleasing, adding the perfect splash of color to the area.



↑ A robin's egg blue pulls the outdoors in, warming up the cozy nook.



↑ Use a bright colored area rug to add a pop of color to a room without the commitment of paint.



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When Designing a New Kitchen, Form Should Follow Function

Q: *Tim, what should we consider when designing our new kitchen?*

A: Whether you're a gourmet cook or a master of the microwave, everyone enjoys a kitchen that looks great and functions efficiently. But what makes some kitchens remarkably appealing while others just seem to be lacking? Certainly the quality of the materials will have a profound effect, but adding a few thoughtful design ideas can make your kitchen both functional and dazzlingly beautiful.

1. Design Wide Walkways

Paths throughout a kitchen should be at least 36 inches wide. Paths within the cooking zone should be 42 inches wide for a one-cook kitchen and 48 inches wide for a two-cook configuration. When planning, adjust kitchen islands and peninsulas accordingly.

2. Find the Right Height for the Microwave

The best height and location for a microwave oven depends on the chef and the degree of kid-friendliness desired in the kitchen. For adults, 15 inches above countertop level is a good microwave height. For kids, a below-countertop setup might be safer and more suitable.

3. Plan Landing Space

When designing your kitchen, allow 15 inches of countertop on each side of a cooktop and refrigerator. Landing space is also important near the microwave.

4. Cut Cleaning Time

Careful design decisions make cleaning easy. Glass refrigerator shelves catch spills that wire shelves let through. Flush-set or undermount sinks don't have a crumb-catching rim to worry about. Matte finishes don't show dirt as much as glossy ones do.

5. Store Small Appliances

Avoid an overly industrial look in your kitchen by hiding the microwave oven, toaster, blender and other tabletop appliances in an appliance garage with a door.

A kitchen is more than just a stunning backsplash and gorgeous cabinets. By integrating a few thoughtful tips when planning your new kitchen, it can become a beautiful space that also serves your family's needs for many years to come. *



Tim Graham has been building homes in South Central, KY for over 25 years. He is a Master Builder, a Registered Builder and a Certified Green Professional.

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↑ Bowling Green Home Furnishings helped Liz Nelson of Providence Homes source and select furnishings. Staging the home with beautiful furniture and custom artwork allows potential buyers to see how it lives.

↑ In the study, interior transoms with contemporary detail allow natural light. The desk is from the Lexington Home Brands and the upholstered wing chairs are from Fairfield Chair.



This 4200-square-foot spec home at Winston Place in south Warren County combines an existing blueprint with a circulation that builder Steve Nelson designed to be super functional.



Winston Place offers large lots, beautiful vistas, and custom homes. The development features many Providence Homes projects.

Winston Place Combines Stunning Architecture and Casual Living

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JOE IMEL**
LAYOUT BY **M. SCHOFDING**

Steve and Liz Nelson make up the construction and design team of Providence Homes. Many of their signature projects are showcased at a development called Winston Place, 3.5 miles off Three Springs Road in south Warren County where large lots surround a natural lake and life seems to slow down a little. Here, neighbors still wave, and Liz jokes that streetwalking is encouraged.

Most of the development's 24 lots are occupied, and each of the finished Providence homes features custom blueprints and architectural details. "There are no cookie cutters here," says Liz. "We are a 95 percent custom builder throughout our 13 years."

For this project, the couple decided to test the old adage of "build it, and they will come." This 4,200-square-foot spec home is a blend of Steve's love of traditional detail and Liz's ability to guide design decisions. They not only "morphed" a blueprint to include a beautiful master "quadrant," but they also adapted architectural details to give that blend of traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design.

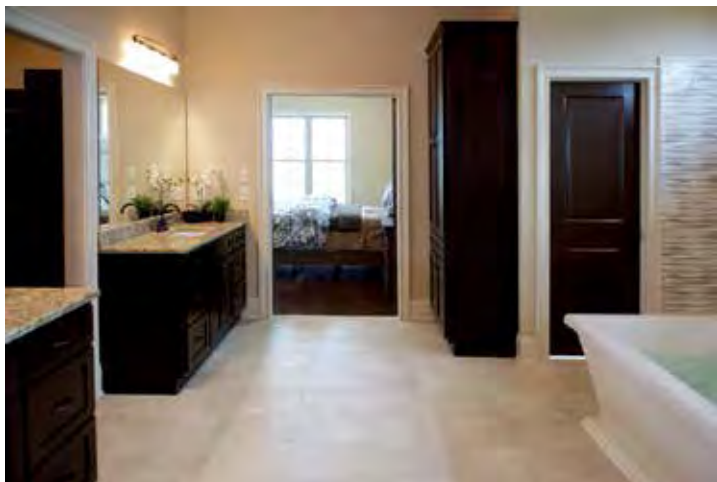
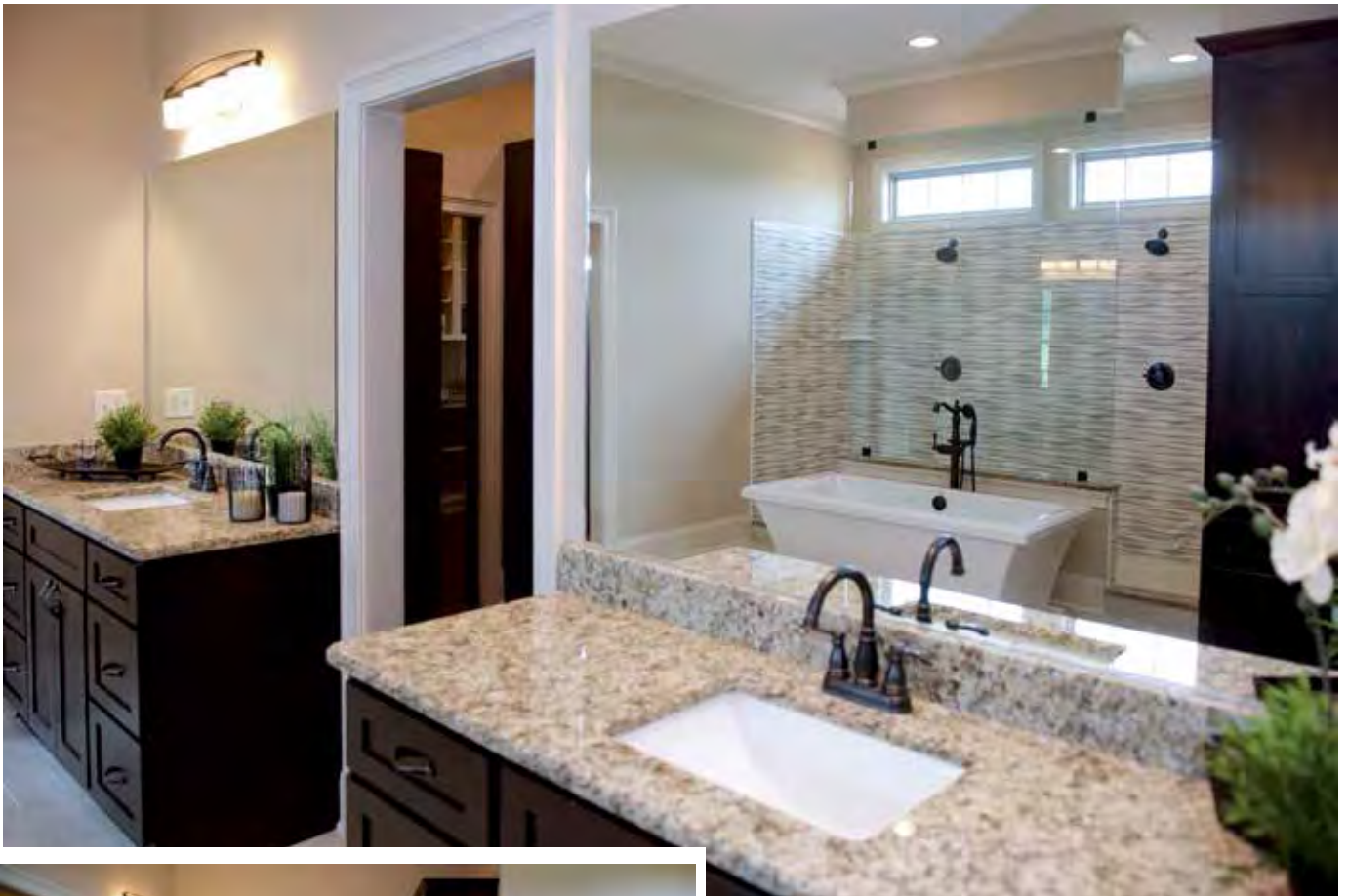
"We rarely get to feature our own taste and our own abilities," Liz says of the process of building a spec versus a custom home. "And this is a great house in a wonderful location."

Steve prefers a formal aesthetic, and for this project, Liz wanted a contemporary vibe, so the challenge was to incorporate both elements.

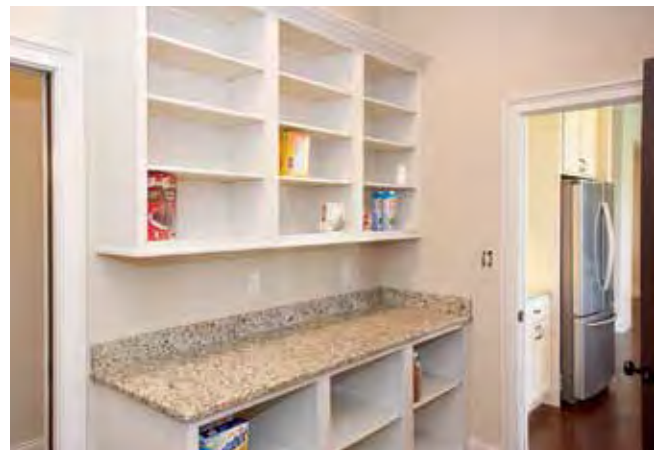
For example, above the doors throughout the home are finely mitered transom windows that speak to Steve's love of trim carpentry, but Liz believed they would



↑ A drop ceiling with Edison pendant lights above a live-edge reclaimed wood table from Home Trends & Design gives the traditional detail a rustic comfortable vibe.



For more pictures of this beautiful home, please visit the Bowling Green Daily News website at www.bgdailynews.com/community.





←↑↑ The master suite goes beyond the beautifully appointed bedroom and bath. By re-imagining the circulation, Providence was able to incorporate incredible functionality. There is an outdoor access to the back porch that leads directly into the bedroom where privacy windows allow natural light without the need for curtains or sheers. There is a master bath with a freestanding rectangular tub and custom tile beyond the

glass-front shower space. A flex room can be used for a workout space, a nursery, or a home office, and the connection from the garage through the utility room and pantry into the kitchen gives it great functionality. The laundry room is also conveniently located. And custom closets are signatures of a Providence Home. Throughout the entire home, chamois wall paint is offset by prism white trim and dark walnut flooring.

be unique if they were shaped more like squares than rectangles, and instead of the traditional trio of glass panels, there are only two. This seemingly small detail combines with other finish decisions to lift and lighten the spaces.

Another example of that intersection of formal and contemporary is the blueprint itself. The home has traditional elements like a formal dining room, a sweeping staircase and a study with finely crafted built-in bookcases. But instead of walls, large-cased openings and a drop ceiling define the footprint of the dining room, and the study has a glass transom for an airy, open ambiance. From there, the open-concept kitchen with breakfast dining area and a large family room transform the circulation into a much more contemporary, family-friendly design.

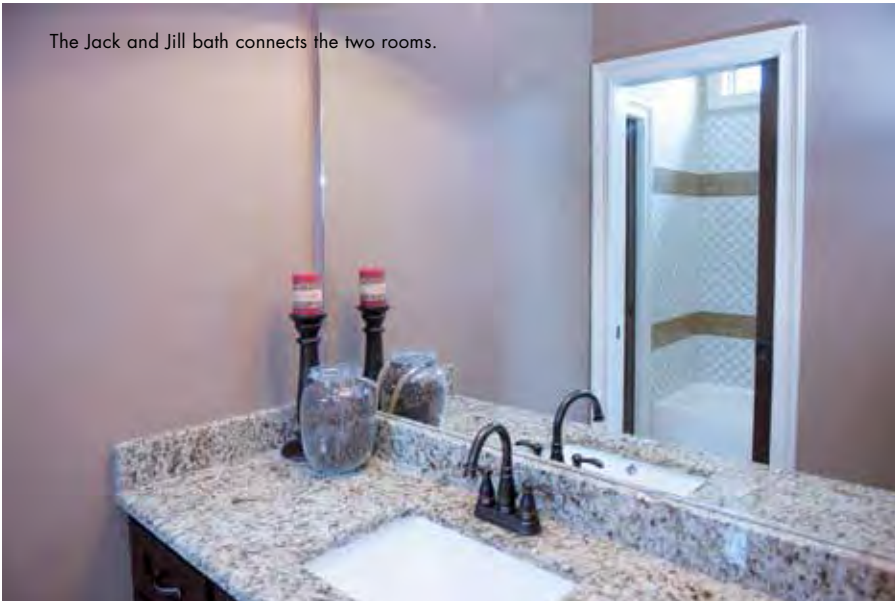
One of the home's finest features is the master suite. Liz calls it a quadrant.

It is positioned on the back side of the kitchen and connects in a closed loop. The quadrant includes a master

Opposite the master suite quadrant are the children's rooms. A pair of vintage metal beds offers a durable and yet charming motif.



The Jack and Jill bath connects the two rooms.



↑ A simple tile set on point and grouted in the shade of the accent ribbons makes a big impact in a small space.

bedroom complete with privacy windows, a stunning custom closet space with tons of room, and a master bath with a freestanding flat-wall tub positioned directly in front of a glass-enclosed shower with custom tile detail. In addition to the traditional design of a master bath and bedroom, the quadrant incorporates a large flex space that could serve as a nursery or a home gym or a second office, depending on the needs of that family who occupies the home. A pair of pocket doors connects to the laundry room, which makes for easy access both for dirty clothes on their way to the wash and clean clothes on their way back to the closets and dressers of the master suite.

The entire space connects in a circle through a pantry with easy access to the kitchen. The garage is close by, which makes unloading groceries a breeze and creates a functional flow from one space to the next.

On the opposite end of the house are two additional bedrooms and a Jack and Jill bathroom, which Liz has decorated to showcase her design skills and give potential buyers some ideas.

Upstairs, the home offers a second large living area that includes a

A young lady's room is pretty in pink with a custom wall hanging made to look like quilt squares.





Back downstairs, Steve is busy adding a few minor furnishings to the new model home. The couple's 13-year-old son, following in his father's footsteps, has begun woodworking and building furniture, so Steve is busy positioning a pair of handmade, reclaimed wood, wall-mounted candleholders that his son designed and built specifically to complement the framed artwork in the formal dining room.

As Liz walks down the wide staircase, she can see him trying to hold the piece far enough away and against the wall to eyeball the positioning and keep the balance on opposite sides. From her perspective, Liz can see it better, so she directs him to move a little left, a little right before finally giving him the thumbs-up.

"It's too close to the window, but the height is perfect," she advises as Steve repositions the piece.

"Yep, back it up, and that looks about right," she continues as he gently eases it across the wall before drilling it into place.

When Liz gives it the thumbs-up, she says, "OK. You did good," and it's obvious that she could be talking about the candleholder or she could be referencing the entire finished home.

"You did good." ✨



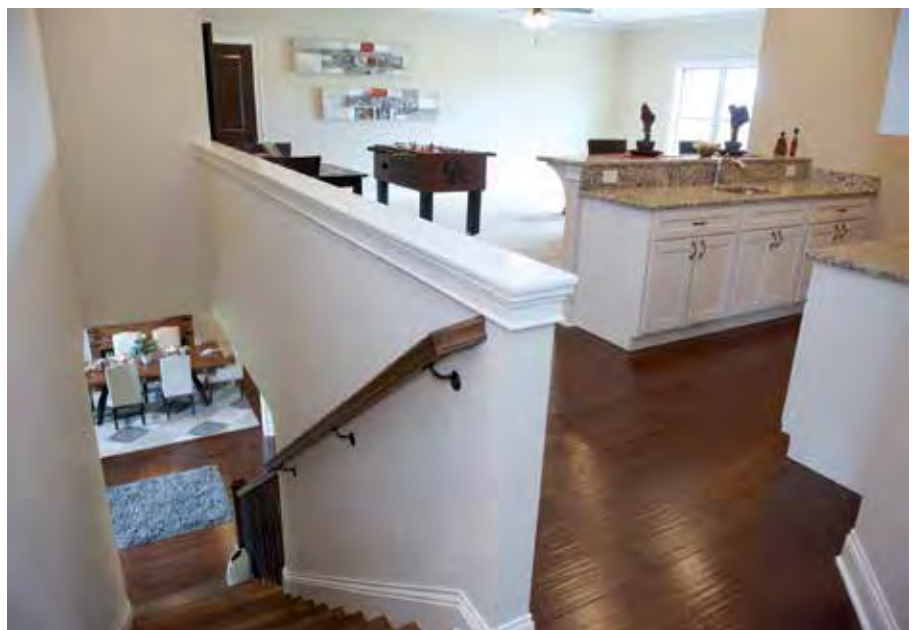
↑ This entertainment loft features a large den with room for billiards, or foosball, or a big screen TV. Plenty of natural sunlight illuminates the space, which offers a bird's eye view of the backyard hearth. The kitchen/bar area accommodates a full refrigerator and a microwave oven. Privately situated down the hall, a large upstairs guest room includes a custom closet and full bath. Guests may just want to stay awhile longer.

← Craftsmanship and attention to detail help blend the line between a custom home and a spec.

 kitchenette and a family game room with large custom media closets. Adjoining the space is a guest room to relax in privacy and also a full bath.



↑ A wood-burning fireplace offers an ideal place to relax on those cool autumn nights.



↑ Another angle of the upstairs game room showcases the home's comfortable circulation.



Locked In Act Out

How Shakespeare Helps Inmates Feel Free

BY BARBARA JOHNSTON, FRED KEITH, MARILYN KEITH



↑ The Society for Lifelong Learning, with support from WKU, offers academic and recreational pursuits for Warren County residents 50 and older. This is a guest column facilitated by founding SLL member Barbara Johnston with insights from SLL members Fred and Marilyn Keith (pictured).

One of the hallmarks of those participating in the WKU Society for Lifelong Learning is openness to new experiences. Going to prison to see a play proved to fit the bill. Joanne Wallace introduced the idea to the Lifelong Learners because her son, Matt Wallace, is the director/facilitator of a unique program here in Kentucky called Shakespeare Behind Bars.

Every spring at the Luther Lockett Correctional Complex near La Grange, Matt Wallace works with a group of male inmates to prepare a Shakespeare production that is presented in the prison but is open to the public. While there is no charge for attending the play, a security clearance and a reservation are required, and the popularity of the program means the seats fill quickly.



↑ The 21st season presented Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Public performances are held each year at Luther Luckett Correctional Complex in LaGrange, KY. According to the website, Shakespeare Behind Bars gives participants the ability to hope and the courage to act despite their fear and the odds against them.

The Lifelong Learning group prepared for their unique theater experience by studying *Twelfth Night*, the play selected for this year's performance. Under the guidance of WKU instructors Assistant Professor Gillian Knoll and Professor Lloyd Davies, they spent several weeks learning the play. Knoll says, "As we studied *Twelfth Night* with the Shakespeare Behind Bars performance in mind, our group took extra time to consider the play's representations of order and misrule. How would the inmates interpret and

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“As an English professor who specializes in Renaissance drama, I have seen many Shakespeare plays performed, but I count the SBB performance among the most important and resonant of my experiences in the theater.”



perform those moments when an unruly character loses control? Where is the line between mischief and malice? And how would the prisoners portray the scene when Malvolio is wrongfully incarcerated and no one will believe his innocence?”

Knoll continues, “As an English professor who specializes in Renaissance drama, I have seen many Shakespeare plays performed, but I count the SBB performance among the most important and resonant of my experiences in the theater.” She added that if you missed this unique experience this year, check the WKU Lifelong Learning website at

www.wku.edu/sll for information on their Shakespeare Behind Bars course in the Spring 2017 Lifelong Learning session.

Fred and Marilyn Keith were two of the WKU Society for Lifelong Learning participants who were introduced to *Twelfth Night* in Knoll's course and made the drive to La Grange to see the play. Here, in their words, is what they found in their visit to Kentucky's most unique playhouse:

"It is difficult to accurately describe the experience of first glimpsing the landscape of two of Kentucky's largest and most serious prisons. The Luther Luckett Correctional Complex in La Grange is a men's maximum security facility and has a similar facility for women close by. Our visit was to the men's prison. Metal detectors, pat downs and personal property confiscation greet you immediately upon entering the front



↑ In the play, despite his innocence of the charges, the character Malvolio is imprisoned during a cruel trick. SLL founding member Barbara Johnston says she was struck by the poignancy of a person behind bars portraying another who, although he was a fictional character, shared the same fate.

doors. Then, standing in a small room, you watch as the outside world disappears behind a wall of sliding iron bars. The bars on the opposing wall would open into the world the actors in the play we were there to see spend each and every day.

"The actual prison was bright, clean and rigidly organized. After an additional screening, we assembled in an interior

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area of firmly anchored chairs and tables where friends and family could meet with inmates. Interestingly, there was a large courtyard outside with similarly anchored furniture and a play area, where the same interactions could take place, weather permitting.

"After a short wait, our group was escorted along a long, wide walkway to the chapel. On the walk, we caught our first glimpse of prisoners in the distance, adding weight to the chain link and cantina wire that fully surrounded us.

"The audience filled most of the available seating for what was to be the first performance of the play for the public. Many of those present appeared to be friends and family of the inmates. This performance was opening night for the 21st year of Shakespeare Behind Bars.

"The production began with a procession of the entire cast through the audience. This first close contact with the convicts that were to entertain us was exhilarating and sobering. These men were so normal.

"This select group of inmates spends an entire year preparing for very few actual performances. They are introduced to next year's play only after the final performance of the current year's play. Each inmate studies the play to determine the roles that they would like to have, and then they audition and negotiate among themselves for that role. Interestingly, every inmate actor learns and rehearses multiple roles in the event that someone is released or is unable to participate for some other reason.

"It is apparent from the start that the inmates take this very seriously. Their lines are well memorized and presented, and their actions, sets and costumes reflect their pride in the program. The preparation we had in our classroom made it easier for us to catch and understand the occasional scripted aside written into the script that allowed them to relate what was happening in the play to their current incarceration.

"Following the performance, we were introduced to the cast members and encouraged to participate in a question-and-answer period with the cast. The

It is apparent from the start that the inmates take this very seriously. Their lines are well memorized and presented, and their actions, sets and costumes reflect their pride in the program.

humanity of the inmates was difficult to dismiss, and you couldn't help but wonder what had led these men to a life behind the bars and barbed wire that surrounded them.

"Our exit from the facility was as our entrance: checkpoints and sliding bars leading to the return of our personal belongings and to our release from Luther Luckett."

What impact does this program have on the inmates who participate? Matt Wallace, who facilitates the SBB program, reports, "The Shakespeare Behind Bars program currently has just a 5.1 percent recidivism rate compared with the 29.5 percent Kentucky rate and the 67 percent national average. The program works to transform inmate offenders with an ultimate goal of them becoming contributing members of society, developing empathy and preventing future crime."

For additional information about this unique program, visit www.shakespearebehindbars.org. A film made about the Kentucky Shakespeare Behind Bars program was one of 16 documentaries out of 624 entries to be selected for its world premiere at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, and is available for streaming on the website. *

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DISH

Nature's Color Palette

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHEF GRANVILLE WOOD

Glistening rows of salmon and ahi tuna sushi

Years ago, working as a young chef, I was drawn to working the cold food station. This is where most young pups are put, as to some, it seemed the safest place for rookies, a place where they could do the least amount of harm. I tend to disagree with that theory and hold those positions in high regard. Working in garde manger—aka the cold kitchen—as opposed to the hot side of the kitchen reminded me of George Carlin’s monologue on baseball vs. football. The cold kitchen is nice, cool and fresh with bright colors while the hot kitchen is loud and hot, and everything seems to be brownish.

I asked a fellow colleague back in those times why he liked the pantry, as most of the young chefs wanted to be “over there” doing the “real cooking.” He answered quite succinctly: “Because the colors are so nice over here.” Now keep in mind, this was the late ‘60s, and he might have been high as

→ Holland peppers offer an array of colors.



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↑ Chive and pink peppercorns garnish salmon rosettes.



↑ Scallop crudo with red onion and orange

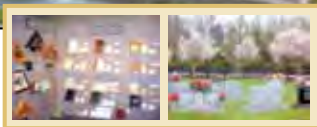
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a kite, but regardless, he was right. Walk through a farmers market in the summer and revel in the wonders of nature's garden and the wonderful brilliance.

We put out bowls of vibrantly bright red apples on our counters at home. Why? Because those rosy reds make us feel good. Even a meat counter loaded with fresh-cut steaks is more appealing to the eye than the cooked product. Sushi's darling, ahi tuna, is our favorite not only for the lush texture and mouth appeal but for that rich, deep, red luster, which is far more appealing than its over-cooked counterpart.

The saying goes "we eat with our eyes first," and this was never more true than in the 1970s when a group of French chefs broke from the norm and started a culinary revolution known as nouvelle cuisine. This revolution shook off the notion of heavy, flour-laden sauces and meals based on copious amounts of rich food. It returned to freshness, quality and the true taste of the food. Food was stylishly plated, emphasizing form and color. This was the culinary equivalent of getting a color television over the old black-and-white box.

As a young chef, I embraced this movement. The clean lines and vibrant colors excited the senses, from your eyes to your palate. The real taste of the food rested lightly on your tongue and stomach as portions were lighter and smaller. This revolution would spawn "spa cuisine" and years later influence every aspect of how we approached cooking and eating, right down to today's farm-to-table movement.

The French have always had enormous



↑ An artfully arranged summer garden salad

respect for food and take great care in maintaining the integrity of the ingredients. Nouvelle cuisine brought this to the forefront of how chefs now approach cooking. Influenced by the clean, simplistic approach of Japanese cooking, the ideals of the cold kitchen merged with the hot side. Or as Carlin might have said, baseball made football nice.

And it wasn't just the Japanese influence. Vibrant spices brought to France by Algerian and Moroccan immigrants found their way into the flavors, textures and colors of the times. It was indeed a culinary revolution, and it was not just being led by young upstarts. These were respected, seasoned chefs. The Godfather Paul Bocuse along with Michel Guerard and Louis Outhier were bringing something new to the table, and it wouldn't be long before it went global.

France has always been the mothership when it comes to cuisine, but Italy refused to be left on the sidelines. As American chefs made their pilgrimages to the gastronomic temples of Europe, they discovered a whole new approach

The saying goes "we eat with our eyes first," and this was never more true than in the 1970s when a group of French chefs broke from the norm and started a culinary revolution known as nouvelle cuisine.

Here's my to-do list for the year!

- Put new lighting in the Living Room
- Remodel Kitchen
- Find out what's wrong with the ceiling fan
- Hook up the new pool
- Move the hot tub to the side deck - don't forget to hook it up!

Love, Mom

Dad's To-Do List:

- Call Buck Electric

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The clean lines of Scandinavian cooking have always been about farm freshness and enticing natural flavors, all with a respect for the natural beauty nature provides.

and respect for food. Nothing came from farther than a few miles away from where it was consumed; this was farm to table before the phrase existed. Like every good revolution, nouvelle evolved into a drive or cause to put the freshest, most vibrant foods on our plates and in our mouths. Cooking became simpler in a sense, more honest.

Meyer lemon vinaigrette replaced heavy cream reductions. Exotic spices such as turmeric, saffron, smoked paprika and chiles brought flavor and color to our palates, and chefs were ecstatic. Not to be outdone, Scandinavia was about to take this new approach to a whole new level. Enter Noma.

The clean lines of Scandinavian cooking have always been about farm freshness and enticing natural flavors, all with a respect for the natural beauty nature provides, whether it is from the sea, farm or forest. Noma is a restaurant in Copenhagen, Denmark, and its chef, Rene Redzepi, would turn cooking as we know it upside down. He is a forager chef. His approach to food is so simplistic; his use of items is stunning and shockingly simple. And the culinary world took notice, voting Noma the number one restaurant in the world two years in a row.

This playfulness would influence and help evolve how we look at food in a rather tongue-in-cheek manner. Menus started using language that had never been seen before as chefs took liberties to entertain their guests. Steak and eggs conjures a nice strip steak and fried eggs, but in today's new world, it could be something else entirely. Molecular gastronomy was a revolution not unlike nouvelle as it changed our perception of food in a way no one could have imagined.

The most recent movement brings us closer to the sources of our food. Whether it is the way plants are nurtured from the ground or through humane animal husbandry, our farm-to-table revolution is the most important revolution for our time. I am sure those giants of the French culinary world that started the nouvelle revolution would agree. Keep it fresh, simple, light and above all, colorful. *

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REFLECTIONS



When food feeds the heart

BY DAYNA DEL VAL

My grocery bill has gone up—way up. But I am happiest when my trips to the grocery store cost double or more what they typically do these days. Do you know why?

It means my boy, now decidedly a young man, is home for the summer, and he and his friends are piled into our too-small kitchen or spilled out onto the back deck to enjoy homemade personal pizzas or breakfast for supper or vegetarian chili or a host of other meals.

They were recently sitting around the outdoor table, laughing and joking with each other, and I was struck anew by my good fortune. I buy some extra food and take the time to prepare it, and they gather at our home, sometimes for hours at a time. I can look out a number of windows and see this fantastic group of young adults, some of whom I have known since they were in kindergarten, and there they are, sitting in our backyard, enjoying each other's company, making years-old inside jokes that are still funny and cementing their incredible bond. Their close-knit friendship lights up our backyard like a shower of stars and warms my heart every single time I feed them.

These are the young men and women who are my son's solid foundation. These are the kids who consciously chose not to drink and drive or delve into drugs, who all successfully graduated and went off

to college, and who are starting to get internships at impressive companies in town and beyond. These "kids," as they will always be to me, are a part of my more-than-one-child extended family. I take great pride in their successes and feel terrific sadness at their disappointments.

It feels, of late, that our metro has been hit with a terrible loss of young people. Death by suicide, drug overdoses, car accidents and more have taken someone else's shower of stars. Where glorious cascades of colorful joy and laughter surround me, others must be living in a steady state of flat gray and black.

I don't know how to reconcile my abundance with someone else's scarcity. There is little fairness in the world, and something as simple as a night on the back deck with a gaggle of young people makes me acutely aware of that.

And so all I can do is go to the grocery store. All I can do is chop more tomatoes, make more pancake batter, ask my husband to add a leaf to the table and say, "Yes!" when my son asks, "Mom, can so and so come for supper?"

There is no greater joy for me than when my grocery receipt is long and gets multiple folds as the checkout person hands it to me. That signals that my world is full of richness of color, joy and love, and I am filled with gratitude. ✨

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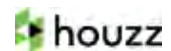
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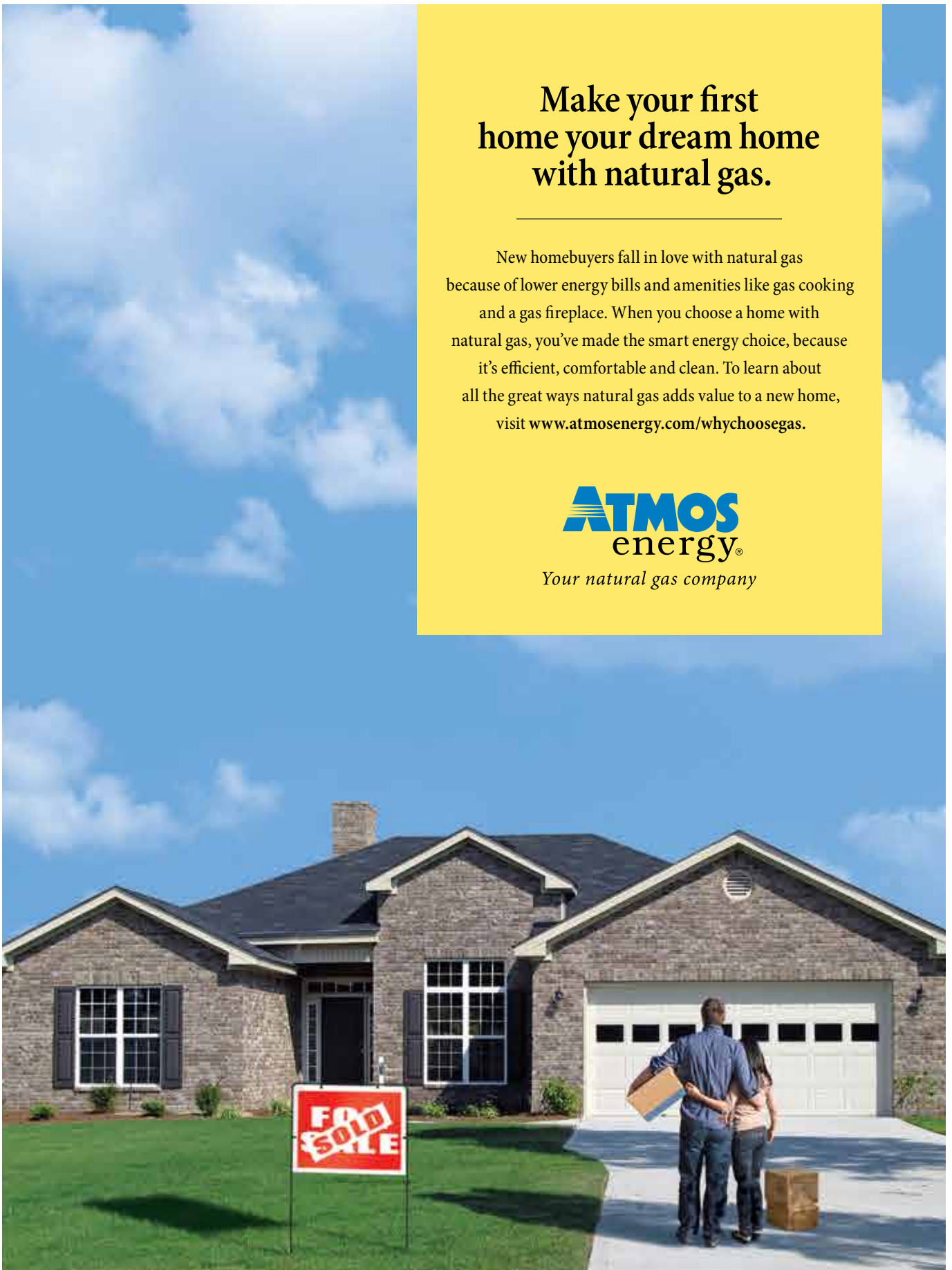
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