

Home &  
Garden

March 2017

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO

**THE DAILY HOME**

# 'It's not a business – it's a hobby'

## Sylacauga designer creates unique home furnishings

By **BUDDY ROBERTS**  
Special Projects Editor

Designer and home furnishings creator Chrys Braxton doesn't do plain.

Not even if you ask her to.

"I remember winning an art contest in school, not because I was a great artist but, I think, because what I turned in was different," she said.

About that same time, her family had obtained an unfinished storage crate, which Chrys decided to paint based on a Picasso print she had seen on some fabric. "Now, I was in the fourth grade, and I didn't know anything about Picasso, but I painted that crate to look like Picasso. I just can't do plain, Buddy."

"Well, people don't want plain, do they?" I asked.

"No, they want something different and unique, something that doesn't look like it just came out of a furniture store."

Nothing Chrys produces could be accused of looking like that. I've known the Talladega County native for going on a decade now, but it's only been during the past couple of years that I became aware of her talent for creating functional home furnishings from things most people would say have outlived their purposes. It's a talent she shares through Chrys at Home, a purveyor of furniture, décor and jewelry.

"It's not a business," she emphasized while I spent part of a recent morning at one of her booths at The Pickle Patch Antiques & More on U.S. Highway 280 in Sylacauga, where she's Vendor 323. "It's a hobby that's turned into a passion. Decorating has always been a passion for me, really. I've always liked doing quirky things that nobody else was doing."

Transforming repurposed items (such as old headboards, ironing boards, tables, reclaimed wood and mirrors) into furniture and home décor came later, as a means of developing a new skill set during her recovery from a health condition. "Eventually, my new hobby caught on, and now people request certain items from me."

There's a reason it caught on.

"Chrys has a tremendous amount of vision," said Scott Williams, who has owned The Pickle Patch for the past three years. "She is able to see something that most people would say has seen better days or would think needs to go see a landfill and turn it into something remarkable."

While Chrys will admit that she has such a knack, she's modest about it. "I just take what I see or what I have and make something I would



Buddy Roberts/The Daily Home

Sylacauga native Chrys Braxton is Vendor 323 at The Pickle Patch Antiques & More. Her booth is filled with uniquely crafted home furnishings.

enjoy. If other people like it, too, then that makes me feel really good."

If you visit Chrys at Home at The Pickle Patch this week, you're likely to see a number of home furnishings she describes as "repurposed vintage shabby chic with a touch of quirky:" a mid-century modern dresser paired with a 1940s mirror, a 1950s table with a Chrys-created chalkboard top, a vintage ironing board shelf, a brass and enamel headboard bench, a table made entirely of reclaimed vintage wood and a vintage hall tree.

And even if you don't see something at her booth, it doesn't mean Chrys doesn't have it.

"About six months ago, someone was travelling through town and came to my booth and was looking at a chair I had weaved with belts. Fast forward to last month. They told me at The Pickle Patch that there was a lady up front who wanted that chair if I still have it. I didn't have that exact one, but I had another that I was able to bring over for her. It makes you feel good when someone

likes your stuff, no matter how quirky it is."

I like quirky, too, which is why I'm glad to feature Chrys' patented brand of it in this special Home & Garden section. The Daily Home staff has worked quite hard to prepare it as a guide of sorts for finding what you may need for home improvement, decorating, gardening and planting projects this spring.

We hope you will enjoy reading it, and as always, we encourage you to support the many advertisers who have made it possible for us to bring it to you.

While you're out shopping for home and garden goods, be sure to stop by The Pickle Patch to see Chrys at Home's wares. Chrys says she isn't on site every day, but when she is, she's always happy to meet and talk with customers.

Just remember ... don't ask her to do plain.



Buddy Roberts/The Daily Home

At left and above are two examples of Chrys Braxton's imaginative repurposed items for home decorating. To request custom items, visit the Chrys at Home Facebook page or contact her through The Pickle Patch in Sylacauga.

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David Atchison/The Daily Home

The St. Clair Co-Op extends its regular hours during the spring and closes at 2 p.m. Saturdays, instead of at noon.

# All you need for your garden or yard

By DAVID ATCHISON  
Home staff writer

The St. Clair County Co-Op in Pell City has about everything someone would need for their garden or yard.

"There is a misconception that the Co-Op is just for the farmer, but we serve the do-it-yourself homeowner," said Amy Milliron, the manager for the St. Clair Farmers Cooperative store, at 210 Hardwick Road.

She said the store is one of four overseen by a board of directors. The board oversees the store in Pell City, Talladega, Ashville and Columbiana.

Milliron came to the Pell City store from Columbiana.

"This is my third year here," she said.

The store in Columbiana, she said, had more customer volume, but the store in Pell City is one of two in St. Clair County.

"Our goal here is always quality," Milliron said.

All the stores sell the same feed, fertilizer and seed, but from there, they differ in merchandize.

"We have a pretty big store with a large lawn and garden section," Milliron said.

The store has a wide range of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.

"We have brands you can't find at other places," she said, adding that the store is the exclusive vegetable plant supplier for Bonnie.

The Co-op has many fruit trees, including pear, apple, peach, plum and pecan.

They also have many fruit plants or vines like strawberries, blue berries and muscadines.

The store also has small to large bags of grass seeds.

The Co-op also has garden tools -- from hand tools to larger tillers or spreaders. The Co-op even has much larger tractor equipment and the store sells Hustler zero-turn mowers. "We have a full line of Hustler

mowers -- residential and commercial," Milliron said.

She said the Co-Op has two greenhouses that are filled with plants, ferns and shrubs during the spring and summer.

Milliron said the Co-Op also has a shade house for their Bonnie plants.

"If we don't have it, we'll get it for you," she said.

The Co-Op has everything a garden store would have.

"You name it, we have it," Milliron said.

The Co-Op can meet every landscaping need for the business and home, and Milliron said one reason that the Co-Op outshines the rest is the expertise of its employees.

"One key to our success is that we have a knowledgeable staff," she said. "We strive to educate our staff."

That knowledgeable service is important to the customer who wants to improve his or her 1-2 acres of land or patio garden.

Some customers enter the store wanting to know what to plant, how and where, or what fertilizer to use.

Milliron said customers leave the store confident, knowing they have the right items, plants, chemicals or fertilizers they need, and they are armed with the knowledge of how to use what they bought at the Co-Op.

The St. Clair Co-Op is open Mondays-Fridays 7:30 a.m.-5 and on Saturdays, 7:30 a.m.-noon, although the store has extended its Saturday hours to 2 p.m. through the spring.

"We have a big garden meeting in April," Milliron said.

The Co-Op will have seminars, promotions and drawings that Saturday, April 22.

"It falls on Earth Day," Milliron said. "If you have any green in your thumb, that's a day you want to be here."



David Atchison/The Daily Home

The St. Clair Co-Op offers a wide range of flower seeds.

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# If you can walk on it, you can find it at Floor Fashions

By GARY HANNER  
Home staff writer

Floor Fashions, at 4310 Martin St. South in Cropwell, offers customers anything they can walk on. "From carpet to hard surfaces," owner Lynn Mulvehill said. "I have vinyl, laminate, prefinished hardwood, luxury vinyl plank and tile, as well as ceramic and porcelain tile."

Her store is at the site of the old Big Bull Restaurant & Motel, where Floor Fashions has been since the fall of 1986.

"I started out as Carpet Corner," she said. "My husband Benny and I started the business." He died in 2003, but Lynn has continued the business.

Mulvehill said the most popular items she offers right now include luxury vinyl plank and tile.

"It snaps together so it lies loose, just like a laminate, but it is also waterproof after installation," she said. "These are the newest things I offer now. These products have been on the market for about four years."

Mulvehill said she is now selling more of those products than prefinished hardwood.

"Since it is waterproof, it's a great option for homeowners with pets," she said. "Many of my customers with pets worry about water damage to hardwood floors, and the luxury vinyl plank offers them peace of mind with-



Gary Hanner/The Daily Home

**Lynn Mulvehill has owned Floor Fashions in Cropwell since 1986.**

out sacrificing beauty."

Mulvehill said since she's located right on the lake, she also sells a lot of boat carpet to her customers.

"I have a warehouse with in-stock goods," she said. "I stock vinyl, carpet, boat carpet, etc. If I have something in the warehouse and the customer wants it in a different color, I can order whatever they want."

*Hours at Floor Fashions vary, but generally Mulvehill is open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and from 9 a.m.-noon on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The best way for anyone to contact Mulvehill is through her cell phone, 205-812-5254.*

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# Bring color and personality into your interior

By **KELLI TIPTON**  
Home staff writer

Colorful interiors are making a comeback this year, and the forecast calls for happy hues and playful palettes. Bold, bright patterns and animal prints are also on the horizon.

Interior designer Renee Lilly will go to market next month to purchase items for her Pell City retail store, Lilly Designs, A Design Resource, and she expects to see lots of colorful items on display.

"I think it's wonderful that color is coming back," she said. "We have been in such a gray, monotone market because of the downturn of the economy. It is cheaper to make furniture with no finish on it. When the downturn happened, everything went gray, and raw and unfinished. So now we are seeing color and furniture with fabulous

finishes on it, and it excites me."

Bringing color into a room can be as easy as adding a few throw pillows. "If you have a white or gray monotone sofa, a pop of color could come from pillows. Or if you just sat some colorful vases on the end tables, you could brighten up the room and add some freshness to the room. Colorful accessories are a great way to add personality to a room," Lilly said.

For those looking for a more dramatic change, painting is an option. The right paint color can refresh and change any room in the house. "A small room can appear more spacious when painted a light color, especially white. You wouldn't believe how many shades of white there are. Ivory, alabaster, snow white, lily white -- all these are different shades of white, and

See **Interior**, Page 6E



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Interior designer Renee Lilly says colorful accessories are a great way to add personality to a room.

Spring Home & Garden

# Looking for unique outdoor items? River Rat is the place to go



David Atchison/The Daily Home

Renee Davis is the owner of River Rat, an outdoor patio store offering a wide selection of outdoor furniture and artwork for outdoor spaces. River Rat also sells quality cookers, smokers and grills.



By **DAVID ATCHISON**  
Home staff writer

Renee Davis of Pell City said she found a niche that is now a growing business that can serve all your outdoor patio needs.

"It started out as decorating your lake house, and it grew from that to outdoor patio cooking," said Davis, owner of River Rat, at 1604 Martin St. South.

Cooking on the grill and relaxing on her outdoor patio is one of Davis' favorite pastimes or hobbies.

"It's probably my favorite thing to do," she said. "I love to grill."

River Rat offers just about anything someone would want for the patio, and the store, which has been open now for two years, offers unique items to personalize an outdoor setting.

"We look for different unique things for people to decorate with," Davis said.

River Rat is filled with unique items to decorate your lake home, patio or dock.

Davis said she only stocks two or three of the same items, so customers can add unique touches to their home and patio spaces.

"Of course, if someone saw something and we didn't have it, we could order it for them," she said.

Marsha Ann Jones with River Rat said the store offers merchandise and quality products for "unique outdoor living."

Jones walked over to one corner of the store designated as the "grilling" area, where there were grills and smokers/pizza ovens.

She said River Rat carries the top brands in outdoor cooking: Green Egg grills, Mountain Pellet grills and Forentto smokers/pizza ovens.

"They are awesome," Jones said as she opened the oven door to the Forentto smoker/pizza oven.

She said Mountain Pellet grills have become quite popular, and controls on some grills can be adjusted through an app on your cellphone. "You can actually turn this grill off by using an app on your phone."

The store has outdoor furniture for the patio or for any outdoor spaces.

River Rat sells outdoor chairs, rockers, couches and tables.

Jones said the cypress outdoor swing bed that's on display in the store was made in Alabama.

A beautiful cedar slide rocker sits next to another wall.

"It's so comfortable," Jones said.

The store also has a wide range of indoor/outdoor wall art. Another area of the store has bird houses and hummingbird feeders.

"We have everything you need for your patio," Jones said.

River Rat also carries the sturdy, well-insulated Pelican Coolers.

The store sells a wide range of spices and rubs for food that's going to be cooked on the grill.

River Rat even has a large stainless steel steamer, perfect for a crawfish or shrimp broil.

The store also has acrylic dinnerware and glasses and cups perfect for patio use, and scented candles to provide soft light and welcoming fragrances for the patio area.

"We also design and build outdoor kitchens," Jones said.

Davis explained that she is in the concrete business.

"We have built 3-4 outdoor kitchens in the Pell City area," Davis said. "They can pick out what they want, and we'll custom build it for them."

River Rat is open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and is closed on Sundays. The store telephone number is 205-338-2548.

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Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Renee Lilly's retail store offers unique home décor, and she can special order items from her vast number of resource catalogues. She is also a purveyor of artwork by local artists.

### Interior

From Page 5E

they can be used to make a room appear larger," she said.

And certain colors can make a large room more intimate. "You could do a color like red or blue on just one wall. A dark blue accent wall would make the room appear cozier. If you had a white bedroom with a navy wall behind your bed, the wall could pick up the colors in some artwork above the bed and in the bedding. Accent walls are a great way to add color to a room," she said.

With so many different shades of yellow, green, blue and red available this year, finding the right color could be challenging. Lilly is an expert in color, and she enjoys helping people find ways to use color in their homes.

"We offer color consultations. I am trained in using the color wheel, and I know which colors work best together," she said. "I love color, but for me, it's about what my customers and clients prefer. I try to bring their personality and their tastes into their rooms. It's about what they want."

Lilly said millennials are responsible for the revival of color in interior decorating.

"We are seeing a lot more color because the millennials are into it. They are very positive. They want clean lines and smaller spaces. They want to spend their money on travel and experiences and not have a huge mortgage on a huge house," she said. "They are also into the mid-century look. I was born in the 1960s, and I remember the harvest gold and the olive green, but there was color everywhere. Flower power, bright orange, greens, yellows, purples -- it is all coming back. You will see a lot of paisleys and flowers. You are going to see bright geometric shapes and animal prints. Natural, blonder woods and natural plants are also coming back."

Lilly Designs, A Design Resource is at 1917 Cogswell Ave. in Pell City. Lilly is a full-service interior designer, lending her expertise in lighting, flooring and other areas of interior design in new homes and remodels. Her retail store offers unique home décor, and she can special order items from her vast number of resource catalogues. She also is also a purveyor of artwork by local artists.

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Tucker Webb/The Daily Home

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## Need a small engine repaired before starting lawn or garden work? JR Air Cooled Engine can get your mower or tractor running again

By CHRIS NORWOOD  
Home staff writer

Jerome Walters has been the owner and proprietor of JR Air Cooled Engine on the historic square in Talladega for the last two years, but the business has much deeper roots than that.

Founded by Jimmy Rollins, the original JR dates back 35 years, originally occupying a single corner of the current two-building operation. Walters said he is 46 years old now and first went to work for Rollins when he was 18.

"That's how I got started in this line of work," Walters explained. "I had a friend who had been working here at the time Jim hired me. About two months later, he let my friend go, but he decided to keep me."

It was always about more than just an employer-employee relationship, however.

"I lost my dad when I was 13 years old, and Mr. Jim and Ms. Jane were always good to me. Whenever there was a family occasion, I was invited. They always treated me like I was part of the family. Their kids considered me part of their family."

During the first four years he worked for Rollins, the business only occupied one building.

"We would work on the riding mowers right there on the sidewalk, and then handle the chainsaws and small equipment in the back room," he said. The business expanded a bit, then took in the next building, which was joined to the old one by cutting out a wall. "It's still two different addresses, 242 and 244."

Walters later ventured off on his own, earned his certification through Talladega International and eventually landed back with Rollins.

"He actually tried to sell me the business before he passed, before he even knew he was sick. He said he wanted me to have it. He was able to take care of his wife and kids here, and I hope to be able to do the same."

His nephew, Christopher Walters, is working with him now. "This business is still family-owned and -operated, and I want to keep it that way. If anything happens to me, I want it to go to my nephew."

The name of the business pretty well says what it is. "We can work on anything with an air-cooled or a diesel engine: tractors, skid-steerers, mowers, four wheelers, golf carts. We're certified to work on Echo, Kubota, Honda, XMark, Koehler, Briggs and Kawasaki. We can work on pretty much anything, across the board."

The staff also takes pride in providing particularly quick turnarounds whenever possible.

*JR Air Cooled is open Monday through Saturday at 9 a.m., and closes at noon on Wednesdays and Saturdays, 5 p.m. all other days. For more information, call 256-761-1714.*



Tucker Webb/The Daily Home

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Gary Hanner/The Daily Home

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Home staff writer

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The business is at 36235 U.S. 231 in Ashville, owned by Bo Paulk, who has operated the business since last June.

“My father-in-law worked part-time here for about 10 years,” he said. “In about 2013, he told me there was an opening here, so I applied and worked here two-and-a-half years as an employee before pursuing the ownership.”

Former owner John Kuykendall still works there.

Paulk said the goal of the business is to provide customers the parts they need but may not be able to find anywhere else.

“We want to fill in the void that the big box retailer leaves empty,” he said. “Our biggest service is providing parts and items customers find hard to get. When they are looking for mobile home improvements, they can find parts here that they can’t get at Lowe’s or Home Depot. There are a lot of places that have gone out of business, and we provide that venue customers can come to and get what they need. Our goal is to provide availability.”

Paulk said the items they sell the most are bathtubs, doors and windows. Everything else is just small electrical or plumbing parts.

“At times, we have had actual home owners come looking for parts they can purchase from us,” he said. “They may run a business out of their home and we do ship parts to houses or older homes.”

Paulk said recently there was a woman from Nashville, who was renovating her condo. “Her garden tub was a certain size and it was unable to get it anywhere else but a mobile home place. We ship parts and supplies nationwide. We try to stay just in the United States, but we have shipped items to Canada and Puerto Rico.”

Ashville Mobile Home Parts is open during the summer from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. During the winter, hours are 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. On Saturdays, hours are 8

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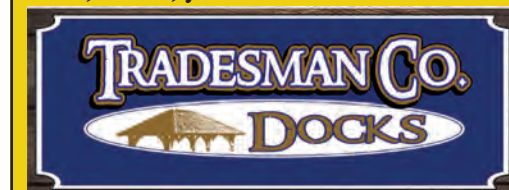
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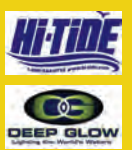
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Elite Docks and Construction serves customers from Lake Logan Martin to Lake Martin. The family-owned business has more than 20 years of experience in the construction.

# Elite Docks and Construction offers variety of outdoor structure services

By LACI BRASWELL  
Home staff writer

Elite Docks and Construction provides a multitude of building and design needs to consumers interested in personalizing their outdoor spaces.

According to owner and manager Bobby Hubbard, the business offers a variety of services and “will design and build just about anything that is outside. We provide quality construction services and can build you a new dock of your wake-making dreams, or we’ll add on that deck or patio to your home that you’ve always been wanting for those summer cookouts.”

Other services include constructing and repairing of boathouses, docks, decks, seawalls, patios, gazebos and boat lifts.

The company also has years of experience in pile driving, which involves building a structure over a body of water.

“Building on the water can be very challenging and time consuming, but it’s always nice to see the finished product,” Hubbard said.

Elite Docks and Construction serves customers from Lake Logan Martin to Lake Martin.

“Our crew will travel up to 60 miles from our headquarters,” said Hubbard, who operates the family-owned business with his two sons, Lance and Dustin. “They really enjoy the work, and it’s something they have been doing with me since they were in high school.”

The family has more than 20 years of experience in the construction business.

“We used to own Custom Docks out of Talladega,” Hubbard said.

“We sold it about two years ago and have been running our own family business instead.”

The owner said his family takes pride in the customer service aspect of their business.

“We are proud of how we treat our customers,” he said. “It is our goal to perform a job like it was for our home. It’s important to treat people the right way.”

When asked what he enjoys most about his work, Hubbard replied, “getting to travel to different places and meeting new people every day. There’s always a new challenge.”

He added that boathouses are his favorite projects.

“I really enjoy designing and building boathouses,” he said. “We want to be able to give people their dream home or space.”

Elite Docks will also make repairs to outdoor structures.

“We are experienced with state and local permitting, as well as working with insurance companies in the unfortunate event of insurance replacement due to weather-related losses,” Hubbard said. “We offer in-house and on-site consulting, conceptual layouts, and designs based on your individual site.”

Hubbard said those interested in a potential construction project can call the company at any time for a quote.

Elite Docks and Construction is at 2026 Ashland Highway in Talladega.

For more information, call 256-521-1990 or visit [www.elitedocksandconstruction.com](http://www.elitedocksandconstruction.com).



Submitted Photos

Services offered by Elite Docks and Construction include constructing and repairing boathouses, docks, decks, seawalls, patios, gazebos and boat lifts.



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# Unique antiques for furniture or accents that are made to last

By **KELLI TIPTON**  
Home staff writer

Antiques are a great way to personalize a home while adding functionality. From writing desks to armoires, antique pieces can be used alongside newer furniture to create unique, everyday living spaces.

“For something to be an antique, it has to be 100 years old or older,” said Bev Lowrey, co-owner of Antiques and Uniques in Childersburg. “Anything made in the 1930s to the 1950s is considered to be a vintage piece, and I would call anything made in the 1960s ‘retro,’ but true antique furniture is unique. It was not mass-produced. You won’t see one like yours in your neighbor’s house.”

Lowrey regularly sees customers shopping for antique writing desks, armoires and dressers. Writing desks are a beautiful addition to any home office, and the writing surface can accommodate most laptop computers. A roll top desk or a secretary desk is great for keeping the work area out of sight when it is not in use.

An antique armoire can be converted into a television cabinet. “I tell people to take the original back off instead of cutting holes in it for the wires. That way, if they want to put

the back on it later and use it for an armoire, they can,” she said.

And there’s a trend among younger homeowners to convert antique dressers into bathroom vanities. “This is still a popular idea, and the only thing I would suggest is to make sure you consider the height when choosing one,” she said.

“Some people use antiques as an accent piece,” she said. Buffets, hall trees and book cases make excellent statement pieces. While a large bookcase would easily fill a large space, there are really no rules for displaying antiques. “I have seen in magazines where people are putting large antique pieces in small rooms,” she said.

Lowrey and her husband, Woodie, opened the antique store in Childersburg nearly 13 years ago. “I’ve always appreciated the quality of antiques. The business grew from a hobby. I kept finding nice pieces that I couldn’t pass up,” she said smiling. Their inventory includes American and European antiques.

In the past, she displayed her antiques at Chelsea Antique Mall. She was once located in Sylacauga, but now the business is on Highway 280 East. “The store continues to evolve, but antiques are our first love,” she said. Antiques and Uniques is also an authorized Vera Bradley dealer, and offers Mona B products as well as a selection of new and vintage costume jewelry and vintage glassware.

Although she’s not a licensed appraiser, she has been in the business long enough to know what to look for when buying antique furniture. “First, do your homework. There are plenty of online resources to consult. Then, make sure to deal with a reputable dealer. Look for something that grabs your attention and look at the details of it. Look at the top, bottom, back and the inside of the drawers.

“If the piece is made of mahogany or other expensive wood, you will probably find a different type of wood on the inside, back and bottom of a piece. This is known as secondary wood, and it was cheaper to use it on the places that couldn’t be seen,” she said.

“Look for dovetails and pegs that hold the piece together instead of screws, especially Phillips head screws. They didn’t even have those a hundred years ago, and nothing should be stapled together. Most of the nicer pieces are marked with the maker’s stamp, but not always. I have a Heals and a Louis Phillippe that are stamped. Anything made in Grand Rapids is usually a good buy.

“The feet of the furniture can tell you about the time period it was made in. I have some pieces with claw and ball feet that are rare,” she said. Claw and ball feet were introduced in the 1700s. “And make sure the piece is sturdy. The main thing is to ask questions and do your homework,” she said.

Antique furniture is sturdy and made well. “If you have it, use it. It will last. Any little marks or scratches will give it character,” she said.

Lowrey welcomes antique hunters to visit Antiques and Uniques. “I will help in any way I can. I have friends who are in the business, and I have resources. If I can’t find an answer to a question, I know where to look for it,” she said.

Submitted photo

Bev Lowrey and her husband, Woodie, opened the antique store in Childersburg nearly 13 years ago. The business grew from a hobby. Their inventory includes American and European antiques.



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Antique furniture is sturdy and made well. If you have it, use it. It will last. Any little marks or scratches will give it character.

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The Daily Home

# Spring Home & Garden

## Proper care can ensure a beautiful lawn

By Catherine Abernathy  
Special to The Daily Home

They say the grass is always greener ... with proper lawn care.

As spring approaches, Talladega and St. Clair county residents are making plans to get their lawns ready for a season of new growth. With the transition into warmer weather, there are lawn care maintenance tips to keep in mind for optimal results for a beautiful lawn.

"We mainly grow the four warm season grasses, which are Centipede, St. Augustine, Zoysia and Bermuda in Alabama," said Ellen Huckabay, a regional horticulture agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. "The warm season grasses actively growing during the hot summer months, drastically reduce their growth in the cooler spring and fall, and stop growing altogether in the winter (but they're not dead, just dormant)."

If you are planning to sow seeds or purchase sod, it's important to consider the best time to do so. Alabama has a relatively warm climate year-round but unpredictable winter weather can unexpectedly and severely damage the warm season grasses.

"If it was my money and my yard, I'd wait until mid- to late April before I laid sod or planted any seed," said Huckabay.

Managing weed growth is another key factor to maintaining lawn health. Proper lawn care practices like mowing, irrigating and proper fertilization will help reduce weed growth, but in some instances herbicide may be necessary.

"The most effective chemical weed control is with the use of pre-emergent herbicides, which means the herbicide is applied before weed seeds germinate in the spring, summer and fall," said Huckabay. "Unfortunately, most people wait until the weeds are too large to be controlled with an herbicide. When that is the case, the best thing to do is to prevent the weeds from going to seed either by mowing or hand-pulling, make a note of what weeds you have, and be prepared to use a pre-emergent product the following year in the appropriate season."

Getting the timing right is another necessary part of lawn care. A pre-emergent herbicide should be applied in February and then you should wait to fertilize the soil until May. Over-watering and -fertilizing turf too early in the spring can lead to problems for your turf down the road. Warm season grasses only require one inch of water per week, whether from a sprinkler or rain, according to Huckabay.

When making plans for your lawn, it's important not to get overwhelmed. There are many resources at your disposal to help you achieve a lawn you can be proud of.

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## 2017 Annual Meeting

Coosa Pines Federal Credit Union's Annual Meeting will be held on **Monday, March 27, 2017, at the Limbaugh Community Center in Childersburg.** Social half-hour will begin at 6:30 pm, and meeting will begin promptly at 7:00 pm. The past year will be reviewed as well as our plans for continued growth in the next year. **Pam Huff from WBMA ABC 33/40 will be our guest speaker.** Each attendee will receive a goody bag, and Coosa Pines FCU members will be eligible to win door prizes. Take advantage of this opportunity to meet our board of directors, employees, and fellow members.

*Everyone is invited, and we look forward to seeing you at this event!*



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# It's the season for spring flowers

By **MOLLY LAWRENCE**  
Special to The Daily Home

Warm weather and sunny skies are quickly approaching, and the time is nearing to prepare for spring plants, flowers and gardens. With a wide variety of beautiful plants and flowers soon to be in season, it can be difficult to choose which ones to plant in your garden.

Plants in season during spring and early summer can vary depending on where you live in Alabama. Different flowers that are in season this time of year vary from annuals, biennials, perennials and ornamental grasses.

Allyson Shabel, an urban regional agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, said there are several spring perennials that are easy to grow in central Alabama.

"I personally like perennials because you only have to plant them once and they return every year," Shabel said. "The only drawback is their flowering season is shorter than with annuals."

According to Shabel, spring perennials that are easy to grow include:

- Cranesbill geranium: Has large purple flowers that cover the plant in spring. It works well in the front of beds to soften edges or along a wall where it can spill over.
- Columbine (Aquilegia canadensis): A native perennial that has abundant blooms in the spring. It grows to about two feet tall and is topped with pink, white, purple or yellow flowers. It works well in open areas. Its seeds germinate easily, and it can fill an empty bed in only a few years.
- Woodland phlox (Phlox divaricata, also wild sweet William): Has clusters of pale blue flowers that shoot up to about 8 inches tall. These plants work well under deciduous trees, where they will get some shade in the hot summer months.

Use it in the front of a flowerbed or as a border.



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Gary Carter stands in front of an aisle of assorted hardware at Carters Hardware in Munford. Carter says the store was one of the first businesses in the Talladega County community.

## Carter's Hardware and Auto Parts continues to provide service to Munford community

By LACI BRASWELL  
Home staff writer

Since early in the past century, local residents have been able to find what they need for home improvement projects at Carter's Hardware and Auto Parts store in Munford.

"Carter's has been around for about 100 years," Gary Carter, the third-generation owner and operator said proudly. "It was one of the first businesses in our small town."

The store was once Munford's general store and sold a multitude of amenities. Presently, it offers a variety of more specific items that include construction materials and equipment, auto parts and home repair improvement products.

"Our biggest sellers are probably our plumbing tools and supplies," he said, noting that his store offers several special services.

"We can fill up customers' propane tanks that a lot use for nearby camping," he said. "The shop will also sharpen saws for those that need it."

Despite the challenges of competition from larger retailers, Carter believes the family business is still going strong for multiple reasons.

"It's convenient for starters," he said. "Most people do not want to drive 20 miles north or south to purchase simple home improvement tools, which they could need



Tucker Webb/The Daily Home

The store was once the Munford's general store and sold a multitude of amenities. Presently, it offers a variety of more specific items that include construction materials and equipment, auto parts, and home repair improvement products.

right away."

Carter added that familiarity and building a customer base has also helped the business have longevity. "Our customers know what we sell, where it is and who we are."

The store is also a promi-

nent voice in the community, sponsoring various community and school events during the year.

Currently, Carter's is gearing up for its busiest time of the year -- spring. "We sell multiple lawnmower parts and have sold a vari-

ety of lawnmowers in the past. Business really picks up when people start cutting their grass."

When asked what he enjoys most about running the store, Carter responded, "The people. I have got to know a lot of them over the

years."

Carter's is at 43123 Alabama Highway 21 in Munford. The hardware store is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.



Tucker Webb/The Daily Home

Carter's is at 43123 Alabama Highway 21 in Munford.



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# Get the look and feel of hardwood flooring without the hefty cost

By **KELLI TIPTON**  
Home staff writer

When it comes to flooring, Luxury Vinyl Plank is one of the hottest trends for 2017. It mimics the look and feel of hardwood floors and is made in a wide variety of colors and textures. LVP is a cost-friendly, durable, alternative way to get the look of hardwood without the hefty price tag.

While some trends take a while to trickle down to Southern states, this trend was anticipated by Tommy Davis, owner of Davis Carpet in Waldo. "I noticed the demand increasing about a year ago, so I bought some of it, and I have it in stock," he said.

Thanks to advancements in design and manufacturing, LVP is nearly impossible to differentiate from hardwood floors. "You can actually see and feel the grain in the floor, and it looks like real wood. I have it in three colors, but I can order any color a customer chooses," he said.

His inventory includes LVP by Naturelle, Project Flor, and Shaw. All have a durable non-porous wear surface that makes them virtually waterproof and easy to clean. For this reason, LVP is suitable for every room in the house, even the bathroom and kitchen. "It holds up real good. There's a 10- to 15-year residential warranty, depending on the grade. But for residential use, you can't beat it."

Luxury Vinyl flooring is also available in tiles that look like stone, ceramic, travertine or marble. LVT is also trending this year. "I believe the planks are outselling the tiles right now, but both are a good investment

for anyone who wants to have new flooring in their home, especially if you have those old linoleum floors. They are out of date," Davis said.

He recommends professional installation, but he supplies the necessary supplies for do-it-yourselfers. "You just lay it like wood, so you don't have two joints together. I like the 'glue down' method rather than the 'snap together' method. If you snap it together, and it's not glued down, if you have a water leak, the water will get up under it, and you will have to take the floor up to dry. If not, you'll get mold and mildew under it. With the glue down method I use, water can't get up under it," he said.

LVP is also easier to repair than vinyl sheet flooring. "With planks, if you have a damaged one, you can just take that one up and replace it. With sheet vinyl, if you get a tear in it, you have to replace the whole floor," he said.

"And there are those who still prefer carpet in their bedrooms only. They don't want to get up and put their feet on a cold floor. We have the latest in carpet colors and designs. We still sell a lot of Berber carpet."

*Davis Carpet Service is at 59400 Alabama Highway 77. The showroom offers hundreds of samples of carpet, vinyl and hardwood flooring and supplies to install and maintain them.*

*For more information on products and services offered by Davis Carpet Service, call 256-362-5636.*



Tucker Webb/The Daily Home

**Davis Carpet Service is at 59400 Alabama Highway 77. The showroom offers hundreds of samples of carpet, vinyl and hardwood flooring, and supplies to install and maintain them.**



## Local feed and farm store offers supplies and good advice

By **DENISE SINCLAIR**  
Home staff writer

Ashley Cabaniss has been in the feed and farm supply business for nearly 20 years.

His store, Cabaniss Feed and Farm Supply, is at 1301 Quarry Road in Sylacauga. He has been at this location for four years. Cabaniss and one employee operate the store.

The store offers everything you need for gardening, farming, lawn care and more.

Cabaniss supplies horse, cattle and pet feed, fencing materials, farm implements, pine and wheat straw, Cotton State buildings, Bushwacker bush hogs, fuel tanks, animal health supplies, garden vegetables for planting, garden seeds, herbs, fertilizer, insecticides and deer mixes.

He said customers have started getting their lawns ready for spring and are buying feed and weed eradicator in preparation for the year.

"They are also getting their gardens ready to plant. We have Bonnie plants, vegetable seeds, fertilizer and more," he said.

Cabaniss said he often gets questions about what and how to plant vegetables or flowers. He tells his customers what they need to grow a garden.

He encourages them to select a site for their garden, plant at the



Denise Sinclair/The Daily Home

**Cabaniss Feed and Farm Supply offers everything you need for gardening, farming, lawn care and more.**

correct time, use the right amount of fertilizer, use varieties of plants that are adapted to the Alabama weather and control pests.

All these items from seeds to plants to weed control, fertilizer and insect control can be found at his feed and supply store.

He has been involved with agri-

culture all his life. He lives in the Fayetteville community.

*Cabaniss Feed and Farm Supply is open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Wednesdays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.; and Saturdays, 8 a.m.-noon.*

*The store telephone number is 256-249-3090 or 256-401-3200.*

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