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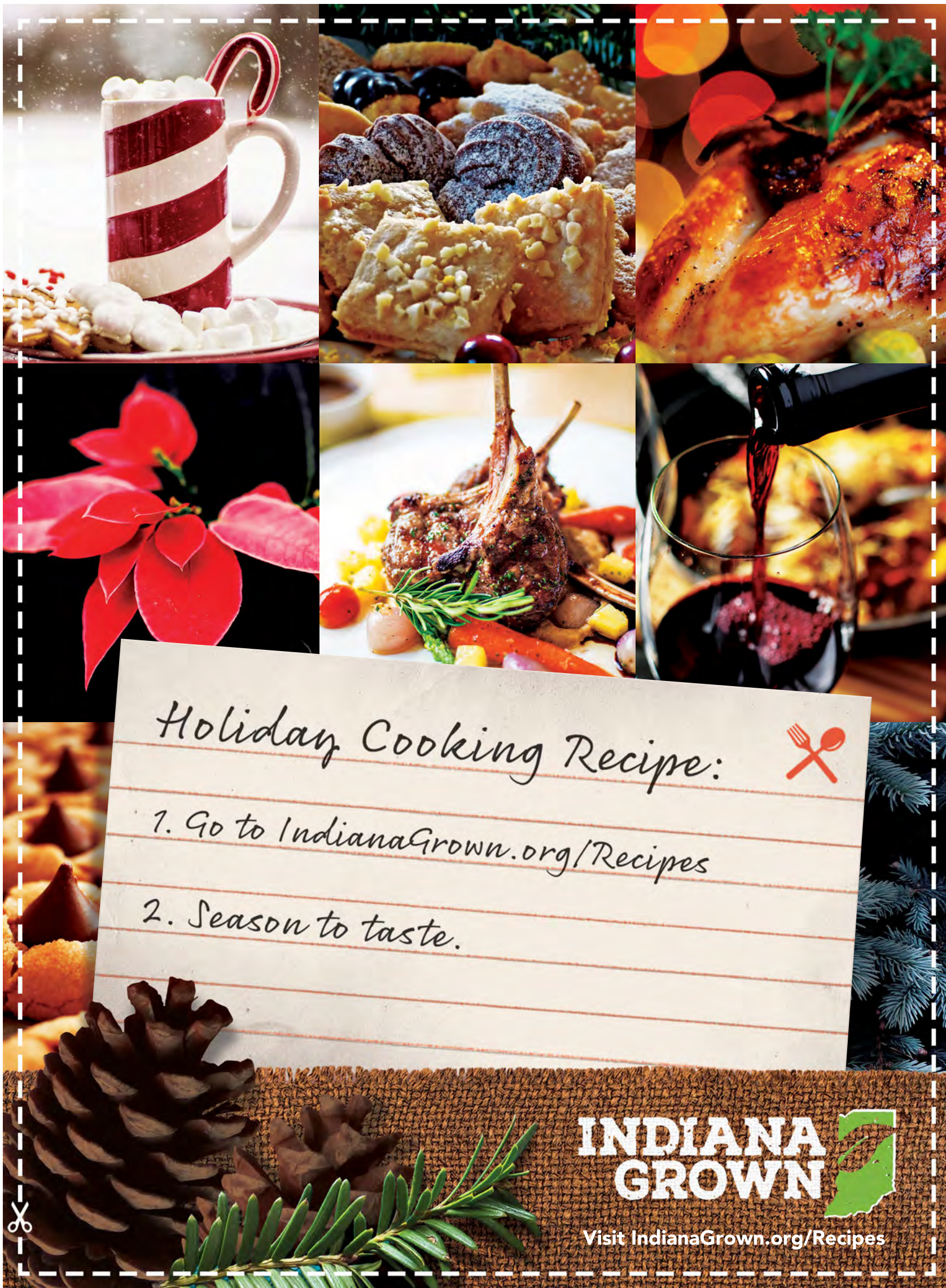
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welcome! from the editor

I am dreaming of a white... winter!

I have always been pro-snow. I know the white stuff brings hazardous road conditions and a myriad of other issues for people, but I simply cannot get over the beauty of it. I love the quiet way it blankets the earth and sparkles in the sun.

As I write this ahead of the deadline for this issue, we just had our first snowfall of the season and my 3-year-old was elated. When she woke up from her nap and saw the snow, she insisted on putting on her snow gear to go out and play. She made snow angels and threw snowballs. She chased our dogs and tackled her dad. I watched through the window with our baby from the warmth of our living room, but my heart was filled with so much joy. These are the moments, the seemingly everyday moments, that make a happy life.

When I look back on my life, I remember snowy days with my dad. He was the master of snow forts. My childhood home had a relatively big back yard with a fence that somehow always caught the wind just right to create giant snow drifts—the perfect setting for the ultimate fort. We would spend hours digging and carving until we had created a semi-room snow palace (or at least it seemed that way when I was little).

What are some of your favorite winter memories? I would love to hear from you. Email

me at ambouthot@the-papers.com, or message us on Facebook.

We are just a few weeks away from a new decade! As we wrap up 2019 and head into 2020, I look forward to bringing you meaningful content. If you have a feature idea, send it in. We do this for you, after all.

Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Xo,

Amber

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Announcing the passing of Home Living Magazine's Editor-In-Chief

Jeroldine Rae "Jeri" Seely,

79, Milford, died at her home Sunday, Nov. 17.
She was born July 26, 1940, to

Jerry and Kathryn Bushong. She married Durwood "Bud" Seely on Sept. 11, 1960.

She graduated from Milford High School in 1958.

Jeri had worked for The Papers Incorporated since Aug. 7, 1961, and held the position of editor in chief most of her 58 years with the company.

She attended The Christian Church of Milford and was a member of Milford Lions Club, holding numerous positions locally, at the state and even international level. She also has received numerous awards through Lions, the Hoosier State Press Association and the American Legion Auxiliary Golden Press Award in 1984 for America's Best Local Editorial.

She is survived by her husband, Bud, a brother, John and wife Leesa, and two nephews Brandon and Scott.





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Inspiration for Holiday Tablescape

By Lauren Caggiano

What is Christmas without a tablescape that reflects the heart-warming sentiments the season brings? How can you get your party ready? Two local experts offer tips for taking your dining table from drab to festive fab in no time.

Kelley Glaze with Kelley J Interiors said she looks to two main elements to lay the foundation.

In her words: "It's all about height and balance."

For example, if you don't have taller items, put smaller items on a box covered with a tablecloth or napkin. Natural twigs, pinecones and evergreens can make for stunning additions to any table. Metallics are another favorite go-to.

"Add some gold and silver candle holders," she said. "In the center of the table use a fabulous metallic bowl full of fruit or holiday flowers and berries. It's a simple and classy way to naturally bring warmth to your dining space."

Annette Shively with A. Shively & Co. shares her insights into making tablescapes festive. First, she suggests starting with the basics: "To start decorating any table, it always helps to have something to anchor it. Whether it's a vase with florals, lanterns with candles, or a grouping of candlesticks; something significant to establish a focal point."

A table runner is essential to achieving this outcome. "A runner allows you to decorate the center of the table but still leave space for the place settings and food," she said. "It can also add color if needed or simply establish where your decor will go."

Just be sure that it's flat and the appropriate length, she added.

Speaking of measurements, she recommends adding pieces in varying heights to the left and right of the anchor piece. "Usually those items include some sort of candle or lighting so that the tablescape can help set the mood," she said. "Oftentimes the battery-operated candles/votives are the best way to add lighting as they can be set on a timer, and you won't have to worry about forgetting to blow them out."

Color is another element that cannot be overstated. Shively said that gold is

really hot right now, but you shouldn't feel limited. In fact, silver and gold combined can prove to be a stunning combination.

Last, Shively offers some general decorating advice: Pace yourself and enjoy the process.

"It can be exhausting trying to unpack your totes full of décor, and you can get easily overwhelmed with all the other holiday things that need to get accomplished," she said. "If you can set time aside to work on your mantle one day and maybe your front porch the next day, it gives you the opportunity to have fresh eyes, and you won't be exhausted from trying to decorate your entire space."

After you've put in all the hard work, take Shively's advice: "Crank up your Christmas music and enjoy decorating for the holidays!" 🏠



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Photo provided by Kelley J Interiors



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Photo provided by A. Shively & Co.



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Resources:

Kelley J Interiors, Leo, 260.704.2206, kelleyjinteriors.com

A. Shively & Co., Columbia City, 260.503.5181, ashivelyandco.com

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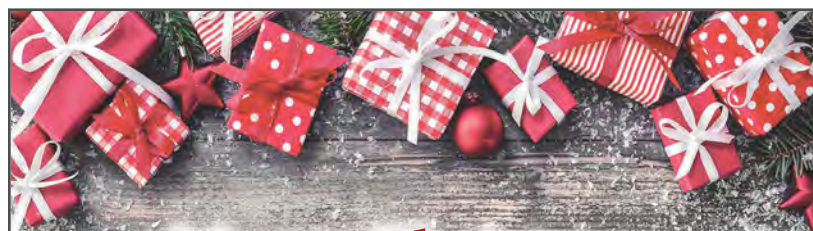
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Guest Rooms

by Jaclyn Youhana Garver

Unless it doubles as an office or other functional space, you likely spend considerably less time in your guest room than you do in other areas of your house. As a result, it's easy to neglect.

Jenny Sanborn of Sanborn's ... For Your Home in Angola shares some simple-to-implement suggestions to assure your guest room is cozy and welcoming the next time you have an out-of-town guest.

Furniture

- Something next to the bed for guests to leave their phone or jewelry. Keep a small dish or basket on the nightstand for additional storage.
- A queen-size bed. Anything smaller is tough if two adults share the bed. Even if the room is small, it's better to take up space with a comfortable bed, since most guest rooms are used primarily for sleeping.



- A small dresser or chest, especially if you want to keep a television in the room. Generally, Sanborn points out, guests don't spend too much time in their room, but if your guest bedroom is in a lake house, for example, the amenity—and the additional storage space—might be appreciated.

Bedding

- Layers. Quilts and throw blankets are the way to go in a guest room, letting guests bundle up if they get cold or select just a thin blanket if they get warm.
- A variety of pillows. Guests' pillow preferences, ranging from extra soft to extra firm, depends on how they sleep: on their back, stomach or side.
- Hybrid mattresses. They let guests adjust the mattress to their individual needs.

Décor and lighting

- Neutral colors. Sanborn recommends keeping the hues in a guest room simple and calming.
- Darkening window treatments. You don't want the sun to wake up your guests.
- Lamps with a nightlight. Accent lamps are also a good idea—anything that can produce soft, not-too-bright lighting.

Creative sleeping solutions


Sometimes, you don't always have the space in your home for a devoted guest room, or perhaps you get large groups of guests at once, and you need to get a little creative with how you sleep everyone. If you don't have the space to give everyone a bed, there are a few other ways to assure your guests have a comfortable night's sleep:

- Futon and sleeper sofas are a great option, especially if you have an office or a den. Choose one with a memory foam mattress, suggests Sanborn—they're more comfortable than traditional innerspring sofa sleepers. She also touts Sanborn's chairs and cocktail ottomans that transform into a twin sleeper.
- Don't knock the benefit of bunk beds, especially if you have a lot of kids staying the night. Sanborn says she has had customers create a bunk room, with four or six sets of bunk beds in a room.
- Day beds and trundle beds are great for a small space, giving comfort during the day and an easy nighttime option. They're easier to use than a futon, and some even offer moveable back rests, according to the blog by Dr. Sofa, a New York City furniture company.
- Blow up mattresses are always an easy-to-use, and store, option, Sanborn says. 🏠

Resource:

Sanborn's ... For Your Home, Angola, 260.665.9799, sanbornsfurniture.com





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Rediscovering RV Living

By Mary Jane Bogle

Nothing says freedom like the open road, and modern RVs can make it easier than ever to explore our great country on an ultimate road trip. Those seeking to head out for extended travel excursions, however, need to keep a few things in mind before hitting the open road.

Type of RV

RVs come in a wide range of sizes and offer a variety of amenities. Today's models include a myriad of modern features, including fully equipped kitchens, private bathrooms, dinettes, and couches or recliner seating, along with modern entertainment systems. Some even offer outdoor kitchens, complete with grills, sinks and refrigerators.

According to Ron Sleeper, owner of The RV Center in Columbia City, the model you choose should reflect your family's needs and preferences.

"Families with children usually gravitate toward bunkhouse floor plans," said Sleeper, "which is a great way to sleep several people without giving up extra living space."

Couples, on the other hand, might opt for less sleeping space in lieu of recliner seating. Others might choose a hybrid model, which offers sleeper sofas and dinettes that convert into beds to accommodate occasional trips with grandchildren or busy teens.

Towing Capacity

Another important factor in selecting an RV is towing capacity.

"It's essential to choose an RV that you can tow comfortably and safely," Sleeper explained. "Customers need to consider payload, towing capacity and weight distribution. RV dealers can help customers choose the right trailer to match the towing vehicle."

Cost

New RVs come in all price points, with the smallest models starting at about \$10,000. Large motor homes, on the other hand, begin at \$100,000 and can cost upwards of \$300,000 or more.

"It all depends on the number of features, quality of finishes and amount of space you desire," said Sleeper.

Whichever model you choose, an RV is a great way to explore our great nation, touring beaches, mountains and historical sites from coast to coast. 🏠

Tips for making the trip affordable

- Cook your own meals. Most RVs are equipped with all the amenities of a modern kitchen. Use them.
- Buy a National Parks Pass. Gain entry into over 2,000 federally owned sites across the United States. Depending on where you plan to travel, the \$80 yearly pass can pay for itself quickly.
- Bring books, board games and movies. Pair your love for travel with some of America's greatest pastimes, bringing you hours of fun without overspending.
- Join an RV club. These clubs offer discounts at many retail locations and, even better, offer roadside assistance and discounts on gasoline—a must for frequent highway travelers!
- Consider "boondocking" for part of the trip. Boondocking, or the art of camping without water, electric or sewer hookups, can be a quick, easy and cheap way to get to your final destination without reserving a spot at a campground every night along the way.
- Stay longer at strategic locations. Some campgrounds offer discounts for extended stays, so if you know you want to explore a particular area of the country, plan to stay awhile at a cheaper rate.



Resource:

The RV Center, Columbia City, 260.244.3414, thervcenter.com

Tips and Tricks for Holiday Lighting

By Barb Sieminski

We've prepared some tips and tricks for holiday lighting, so your home will be a beacon worthy of the neighborhood. Remember that safety always comes first, so start out small and have a plan for what lights you want to use.

'Tis the season to let your lights shine!

- ❖ Check for burned-out lights and replace them.
- ❖ The most dreaded part of holiday lights is the untangling. This year, wrap them neatly around cardboard box panels or paper towel tubes for a hassle-free holiday next year.
- ❖ Use a dependable ladder and have someone hold it if necessary.
- ❖ Start at the bottom and work your way up.
- ❖ Decide which type of lights you want to use this year: incandescent, LED, wide-angle LED, globe, net, transparent, RGB LED or ceramic.
- ❖ Use zip ties to tie light strands to railings; they won't leave marks like tape and hooks do.
- ❖ Try using two different bulb sizes on the tree for variety.
- ❖ For a fun (and magical) idea, brighten your hallway ceiling with twinkly lights.
- ❖ Want to press your tomato cages into winter service? Turn them upside down and string them with tiny lights for an exterior holiday tree look.
- ❖ Change from plain light bulbs to colored varieties for a warmer look.
- ❖ Wrap a strand or two of the same color tiny lights around a tree trunk in your yard.
- ❖ You will need heavy-duty extension cords that are UL-listed for outdoors. To avoid overloading, limit your strands to five before plugging into an extension cord.
- ❖ To extend the life of your illumination, take the lights down right after the holidays. Snow, wind, sun and rain can do a number on these delicate lights; the longer they're up, the sooner you'll need to replace them.

Your guests and passers-by will delight in the magic of your cheery holiday illumination. 🏠



Resource:

Jim Brubaker Designs,
Fort Wayne, 260.436.3639,
jimbrubakerdesigns.com

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Make your holiday wreath stand out

By Lauren Caggiano

For many, the making of a holiday wreath is part of the magic of the festive season. How does one make a show-stopping wreath, guaranteed to capture attention? Read on to learn how it's done. The following elements are on-trend for 2019:

Think vertical

Who says a wreath has to hang? Wreaths can add some pizzazz to an entry table or dining area. You can mix and match natural and artificial elements like greens, fruits, flowers, pinecones, etc. Put a candle in the center for a more intimate feeling.

Bring nature indoors

Think lush winter foliage, pinecones, feathers and berries to pull in the beauty of Mother Nature. You can't go wrong with anything that evokes a winter wonderland.

Go vintage

The 1950s were epic when it comes to holiday decor. From vintage bulbs to shiny ornaments, channel Mid-Century Modern glam by fastening a few to your wreath.

Think asymmetrical

This nontraditional look is still having a moment. Whether flowers, greenery or some other element, you can't go wrong with this statement piece.

Go for glitter

Is there ever a bad time for glitter? We think not. Sequins are a staple to make your wreath merry and bright. Use a foam wreath as a blank canvas and you have a recipe for holiday elegance.

Embrace rustic

This look is understated but can pack a mean interior design punch. Pair a burlap ribbon with craft-store wood slices for a cozy, neutral wreath.

Go mad for plaid

Plaid is on-trend from fashion to home decor. An oversized plaid bow perfectly complements any type of wreath.

Be bold

A bold shade of red instantly brings holiday cheer to any front door. Don't be afraid to bring in some serious color to the fold. The same goes for shape. Wreaths don't have to be round. A square one can add the special touch you need.

Celebrate succulents

Mix and match your favorite succulents to turn up the volume on texture. With regular watering and bright light, these hardy plants can live for years.

Think simple

Holiday wreaths don't have to be complicated, according to Leslie Kitch with Bruce Ewing Landscaping.

"The biggest trend that we have noticed for this year is a more simple style and look," she said. "We are featuring several sizes and styles of the skinny grapevine wreath with simple holiday decor to make them unique. We also have an unusual gold leaf wreath with a candle holder."

While nontraditional designs may be in vogue, she said you can't go wrong with tried and true looks, as they are still beautiful and timeless. 🏠

Resource:

Bruce Ewing Landscaping, Fort Wayne, 260.432.2785, bruceewinglandscaping.com

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5 Houseplants to beautify your home this winter

By Haiden Steingass

Everything may be turning dreary and gray outside, but that doesn't mean your home needs to follow suit. Placing house plants indoors is a simple way to add a bit of life and color to your rooms with little effort and money. We've outlined our five favorite houseplants that look chic and are easy to care for.

Snake Plant



Snake Plants have long, sturdy green leaves that stick straight up in the air. They are ideal for small, ceramic planters placed bedside or on shelving units. These plants are a hue of emerald green, with a delightful yellow outline on each leaf. To care for snake plants indoors, you need to water it only once a month. They can be placed in nearly any spot around your home—Snake Plants can handle both indirect sunlight and shade.

Succulent



Succulents are one of the trendiest houseplants for any time of year. Placing them in a window sill or atop a coffee table or office desk is an adorable touch that will add to your cozy, winter vibe. You can find succulents at any plant store, as well as most supermarkets. Note: they look great in multiples, and most of them only need a tablespoon of water per month.

Lavender



You may have heard of the health benefits of lavender, from improved mental health to healthier hair and skin. And while many people picture lavender in the form of an essential oil, the lavender plant is something to celebrate, too. It's a full, green plant sprouting gorgeous purple flowers. You'll want to place your lavender plant near a window where it can receive a lot of sun. There is no exact science to watering a lavender plant, but they are drought-tolerant. A good rule of thumb is to water it whenever the soil is dry. 🏡

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Zanzibar Gem

ZZ Plant



No matter where you put your ZZ Plant, it will look straight from Pinterest. The branches sprout up and out, and are covered in small, oval leaves. They are a deep green color with a natural shine. Place ZZ Plants in indirect sunlight, and water once every two weeks.

Spider Plant



The spider plant is one of the best winter houseplants. The leaves sprawl out almost like the head of a palm tree, so it adds a summery touch to your otherwise winterized decor. These plants are a hue of vibrant, grass-green that will liven up any living space. Spider plants look great in a tall, ceramic planter so there is enough height for the leaves to drape over the sides. They need indirect sunlight and water once a week.





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Creative and Fun DIY Outdoor Lighting

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By Stacie Ball

Get your craft on and illuminate your house with these fun outdoor lighting ideas.

Ice Lanterns

1. Fill a small cup with water.
2. Place the cup inside a larger plastic container and fill that container with water.
3. Freeze overnight.
4. Run warm water over the outside of the large plastic container to remove the lantern. Don't worry about cracks. Remove the small plastic cup and insert your tea light or pillar candle.



Glowing Snowballs

1. Cover the outside of an old thrift store globe light with Mod Podge.



2. Put the globe over a large bowl and sprinkle the Diamond Dust over the globe. Lightly pat in place and shake off the excess.
3. Cover with a light coat of clear spray paint.
4. Place twinkle lights inside each globe.
5. Arrange in a large bowl with smaller snowballs and greenery for the finished look.

Mason Jar Lights

1. Make the hangers for the 5 Mason jars by twisting grapevine wire around a pencil to make a ring. Wrap more grapevine wire around the jar and twist to secure. Bring more wire up and over the top of the jar and secure to the ring. Replace the top ring of the jar to keep the hanger from slipping off.



2. Decide how you want the lights to hang from the cast iron swivel hooks (5 hooks).
3. Use burlap ribbon to tie the jars into the correct place.
4. Place white lights (string of 100) into the jars. It may take several tries to get the right combination in each jar and have the plug in the correct spot.
5. Use an extension cord, if needed.

Kid-Friendly Tissue Lantern

1. Cut tissue paper into strips or other shapes.
2. Cover the jar with a thin layer of Mod Podge.
3. Cover the whole jar with tissue and cover each piece with more Mod Podge.
4. Allow to dry for 24 hours.
5. Form a hanger using light floral wire. Add star garland around the rim.
6. Place a tea light or votive inside. 🏠



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Laundry Room Makeover



Before



By Amber Bouthot

Every month, we highlight projects our readers have completed. We want to see your projects and share them within the pages of our magazine. It can be something as simple as a craft project or as large as a home addition. If you did it yourself, it can be featured. Email Amber at ambouthot@the-papers.com.

5- What did you like best about the undertaking?

How bright the room became. I actually removed a screen in the large window (the window does open, but we never open it). It totally brightened up the room and inspired me hang some Devil's Ivy in front of the now sunny window.

6- What was the most challenging aspect?

I hate how it looks like a bomb went off while you're cleaning and organizing a room. Since it's better to take everything out and then organize, our adjacent kitchen was a huge mess of piles for about a week while we sorted, cleaned and painted this room.

7- Where did you source the materials?

"On the Rocks" paint from Sherwin Williams
Kuggis and Knagglig boxes and Trones shoe storage cabinets from IKEA
Wall hook and rug from Hobby Lobby
Plant, macramé plant hanger, and magnetic fridge calendar from Amazon.com 🏠



Before



This month's Reader DIY comes from Rebekah Whirledge. She recently revamped her laundry room from a catch-all space, to a well-organized and highly functional space.

1- What was your inspiration for the project?

This was the only room in the house that we had not painted after 5 years of living in our home. We had put up shelving for extra storage right away and I knew taking those down and then painting would be a process, so I procrastinated. However, it's often the first room someone walks into since it leads to our back door and deck. I was always embarrassed by how ugly and messy it was.

2- How long did it take from start to finish?

About a week.

3- Was it easier or harder than you anticipated?

Overall, it didn't take as long as I thought it would. However, it took five coats of primer and paint to cover the blue trim. I wasn't expecting it to be that hard to get rid of it. I was considering replacing the nasty utility sink, but I decided to try to clean it up and not add more plastic to our landfills. I used Bar Keeper's Friend and a scrub brush that attached to my power drill, and while it doesn't look brand new, it looks so much better. I also used that brush plus Mrs. Meyer soap to scrub the old vinyl flooring.

4- What was the total cost of the project?

About \$350 for new storage containers and decor, plus about \$60 in paint and supplies. However, I sold all of the old storage bins and baskets, plus a dresser that was in the room (not pictured) for about \$100 on Facebook Marketplace.

December

By Ray Balogh

Botanical Conservatory

- Sunday, Dec. 1, "Christmas Connections" holiday exhibit (through Jan. 5), regular admission
- Sunday, Dec. 1, "Garden in Lights" (through Jan. 5), regular admission
- Thursday, Dec. 5, "Harmony at the Conservatory," 6 p.m.-7 p.m., \$1
- Saturday, Dec. 7, Breakfast with Santa, 9 a.m.-10 a.m., children under 2 free with adult admission, register by Tuesday, Nov. 26
- Saturday, Dec. 7, 14, 21, Santa and the Reindeer, noon-4 p.m., regular admission
- Wednesday, Dec. 11, Conservatory Member Holiday Night, 5 p.m.-8 p.m., open house with 20% discount in gift shop
- Thursday, Dec. 12, and Saturday, Dec. 14, "Evergreen Centerpiece" workshop, 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Thursday, 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Saturday, \$34/session
- Friday, Dec. 13, "Paint Something Sweet" workshop, \$16
- Sunday, Dec. 15, Suzuki Strings holiday concert, 2 p.m.-2:45 p.m., regular admission Adults \$5, children (3-17) \$3, children (2 and under) free. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Thursday, noon-4 p.m. Sunday, Botanical Conservatory, 1100 S. Calhoun St., Fort Wayne. 260.427.6440, botanicalconservatory.org.

Embassy Theatre

- Wednesday, Nov. 27, to Wednesday, Dec. 4, "Festival of Trees," visit fwembassytheatre.org/festival-of-trees to sponsor a tree
 - Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 7-8, Nutcracker at the Embassy, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday, \$30/\$24/\$18
 - Tuesday, Dec. 10, Straight No Chaser, 7:30 p.m., \$36.50
 - Tuesday, Dec. 17, Cirque Dreams Holiday, 7:30 p.m., \$70/\$50/\$35
 - Sunday, Dec. 22, "Sing! An Irish Christmas," 7:30 p.m., \$59/\$49/\$34/\$24
- Fort Wayne Embassy Theatre, 125 W. Jefferson Blvd., Fort Wayne. 800.745.3000, fwembassytheatre.org.

Memorial Coliseum

- Friday and Saturday, Dec. 6-7, Le Chic Holiday Market, 5 p.m.-9 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, \$5, free kids 12 and under
 - Friday, Dec. 13, "PJ Masks Live! Save the Day" musical, 6 p.m., \$59.50/\$49.50/\$39.50/\$29.50
- Parking \$6 main lot, \$10 preferred lot. Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, 4000 Parnell Ave., Fort Wayne. 260.482.9502, memorialcoliseum.com.

Honeywell Center

- "Throwback Tuesdays" movies, 7 p.m., Dec. 3, "It's a Wonderful Life"; Dec. 10, "The Polar Express"; Dec. 17, "White Christmas"; \$2
 - Friday and Saturday, Dec. 6-7, Madrigal Dinner Theater, 6 p.m., \$47
 - Thursday, Dec. 12, Home Free Dive Bar Christmas Tour, 7:30 p.m., \$70/\$40/\$29
 - Saturday, Dec. 14, Oak Ridge Boy Christmas Show, 7:30 p.m., \$75/\$54/\$45/\$35
 - Sunday, Dec. 15, The Wizards in Winter, 7:30 p.m., \$75/\$25
 - Wednesday, Dec. 18, Fort Wayne Philharmonic Holiday Pops, 7:30 p.m., \$18
 - Thursday, Dec. 19, Mannheim Steamroller, 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., \$65/\$52/\$38
 - Friday, Dec. 20, "A Very Electric Christmas," 7:30 p.m., \$35/\$18/\$10
 - Saturday, Dec. 21, Point of Grace with Aaron Shust and Mallery Hope, 7:30 p.m., \$55/\$35/\$25
- Ford Theater, Honeywell Center, 275 W. Market St., Wabash. 260.563.1102, honeywellcenter.org.

Niswonger Performing Arts Center

- Sunday, Dec. 1, Christmas with The Swingles, 3 p.m., \$40/\$30/\$20
 - Saturday, Dec. 7, "Twas the Night Before Christmas," 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., \$45/\$40/\$35/\$30/\$25/\$20
 - Sunday, Dec. 15, The Midtown Men Holiday Hits, 7:30 p.m., \$65/\$55/\$45
 - Friday, Dec. 20, David Phelps: "It Must Be Christmas," 7:30 p.m., \$45/\$35/\$25
 - Saturday, Dec. 21, Lonestar and Phil Vassar Holiday and Hits Tour, 7:30 p.m., \$75/\$70/\$65/\$60/\$50/\$45
- Niswonger Performing Arts Center, 10700 SR 118, Van Wert. 419.238.6722, npacvw.org.

Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 5-8, 12-15, 19-22, 26-29 SHIPSEWANA: "Shipshewana's Lights of Joy"

Drive-thru light experience featuring more than 2 million LED lights in mile-long display of various light scenes. \$15/car 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Thursday and Sunday, \$20/car 6 p.m.-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, throughout town. 260.768.4129 shipshewanaslightsofjoy.com.

Nov. 29-Dec. 15 FORT WAYNE: Festival of Gingerbread

9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday, The History Center, 302 E. Berry St. 260.426.2882, fwhistorycenter.com.

Nov. 30-Dec. 1 FORT WAYNE: Christmas in the Park

Fun, family friendly indoor/outdoor festival featuring "Do You See What I See?" walk-thru complete with live animals. Free admission. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Franke Park, 3411 Sherman Blvd. 260.447.9437.

1 DECATUR: Flea Market

Nearly 100 indoor vendors, hot food available. Sponsored by the Adams County Coin Club. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday, Riverside Center, 231 E. Monroe St. (Highway 224 East). Contact Carla at 260.517.8182, facebook.com/decaturingianafleamarket.

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December Books

By Steve Penhollow

December is a time for family and friends. It is a time for entertaining in your home and making guests feel welcome.

Here are two books that should help you in those endeavors.



Inspire Your Home: Easy Affordable Ideas to Make Every Room Glamorous

By Farah Merhi

Tiller Press \$35

ISBN-10: 1982131241

ISBN-13: 978-1982131241

Farah Merhi is a Grand Rapids-based interior designer who built up a half a million followers on Instagram with her decorating advice.

Now she has released a book of practical decorating tips. The book combines personal stories with gentle and graspable guidance.

"The ultimate goal is to make your house a beautiful home for you to enjoy that reflects your personality," Merhi told CBS News. "This is why I call it a guide and not a rule book. When it comes to your home, there are no rules. It's what makes you happy on the inside. I walk the reader through every room and how to style it and furnish and feel at peace when they walk through the door at the end of a stressful day. Your home is your sanctuary and it's where you relax at the end of the day."



Taste of Home Handmade Christmas

By Taste of Home

Reader's Digest/Taste of Home \$14.99

ISBN-10: 1617658642

ISBN-13: 978-1617658648

Taste of Home magazine has released its annual compendium of Christmas decorating and celebrating ideas.

The chapters this year are devoted to décor, homemade jewelry, homemade gifts, incorporating nature into your celebrations, homemade cards, etc. All recipe ingredients and craft materials are inexpensive, everyday items. 🏠



1-31 SHIPSHEWANA: "Christmas in Shipshewana"

Light parade, tree lighting ceremony, "Shipshewana's Lights of Joy" drive-thru light display, chocolate day, kids day, Santa visit. Free admission except for drive-thru light display. Saturday and Sunday, townwide. 866.631.9675, shipshewana.com.

6 AUBURN: First Friday: "Guys Night Out"

Late night shopping, live entertainment, local culinary delights, locally crafted beverages, more. Free admission. 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Friday, downtown. 260.333.0883.

6 WABASH: First Friday

Live entertainment, food, kid's activities, shopping, evening specials and more. Free admission. 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Friday, downtown. 260.563.0975, wabashmarketplace.org.

6-7 FORT WAYNE: "At Home with the Swinney Sisters" Christmas Tea

Visit the Historic Swinney Homestead decorated in Victorian Christmas grandeur and visit the Gift Shoppe. Enjoy a cup of syllabub, tasty savories, sweets, tea. The Hearthstone Ensemble will provide music of the season. \$25/person. 2 p.m. Friday, 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturday, 1424 W. Jefferson Blvd. 260.747.1229, settlersinc.org.

7 MONROEVILLE: Holiday Magic

Santa and Mrs. Claus, craft show, kids' activity table, cookie decorating, cookie walk, ugly sweater contest, complimentary coffee and hot chocolate. Trolley shuttle every 20 minutes. Free admission, lunch items available for sale. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, town park pavilion and Monroeville United Methodist Church. Shawn Norris (260) 413-0366, monroevillein.com.

7, 14, 21 FORT WAYNE: South Side Farmers Market

100 stands featuring produce, hand-crafted items, antiques, fresh baked goods, eggs, local honey, hormone-free pork and chicken. Master gardeners on hand to answer questions. Free admission. 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, 3300 Warsaw St. 260.456.8255 or 260.244.3288, southsidefarmersmarket.com.

10 FORT WAYNE: Holiday Concert

Fort Wayne Area Community Band will perform classic holiday works like, "All I Want for Christmas is You," "I Saw Three Ships," "Sleigh Ride," 16th century carols, medleys. \$8 adults, \$7 seniors, free for Purdue students with ID. Free parking. Downbeat at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, John and Ruth Rhinehart Music Center, Purdue Fort Wayne campus, 2101 Coliseum Blvd. E. 🏠



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Allen County Christmas Bureau

By Barb Sieminski

Jane Surbeck, president of the Allen County Christmas Bureau, wants area families to experience the Christmas of their dreams.

"Everyone deserves that at least once in his or her lifetime," said Surbeck.

Surbeck, who has been with the non-profit organization for 22 years, has been instrumental in directing the gifting for the Adopt-a-Family program that has been so popular in our community. It provides a means for others to open their hearts and wallets for those in need during the holidays.

This year, the Bureau has 360 families that have been adopted, and according to Surbeck, there are businesses, churches, individuals and schools whose outstretched hands support the gifting endeavors this year and every year.

After getting the name of a family in need from case managers at specific social service agencies, a giver or donor can:

1. Provide a complete Christmas Day meal of canned and packaged food and a gift certificate for them to purchase their own meat and produce.



2. Provide some staple items for the family's pantry and some personal hygiene items.
3. Purchase one new outfit of clothing for each family member and gift-wrap it.
4. Purchase one new toy / gift for each infant, child and teen and gift-wrap it.
5. Meet the special needs of family if requested.
6. Provide used clothing and household items as long as they are decent.

"Depending on the code which you are assigned, your family's gifts will be due at our warehouse between 9:00 a.m. and noon on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, December 9, 10 and 11," said Surbeck. "Once you have committed to adopt, we will send the family information and all instructions, including our location this year."

Surbeck vividly remembers when she was much younger and had a little girl but no money for Christmas gifts for her.

"I used my green stamps to get her two small toys, and when I went to pay, they asked me for tax because the stamps did not cover tax," she said. "I did not have a single dime so I put the toys back. When I returned home, I realized I could dig through the chair and couch cushions of my little apartment and lo and behold, I found almost \$3 in change. That was in 1971 and my baby had the Christmas of a lifetime. Every year it gets better and better knowing that our families would have nothing if not for our generous adopters. It is such a warm feeling knowing you have helped someone have a Christmas of a lifetime."



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