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PO Box 188 • 206 South Main St. Milford, IN 46542 800.733.4111/Fax 800.886.3796 Editorial, Ext. 2491 • Advertising, Ext. 2362 homeindooroutdoorliving.com

PUBLISHER Ron Baumgartner

rbaumgartner@the-papers.com

PUBLICATION MANAGER Bill Hays

bhays@the-papers.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Deb Patterson

dpatterson@the-papers.com

EXECUTIVE EDITOR Amber Bouthot

ambouthot@the-papers.com

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE Rebecca Boone

rboone@the-papers.com

BUSINESS MANAGER

Carrie Goralczyk cgoralczyk@the-papers.com

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING Kip Schumm

kschumm@the-papers.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNER Mary Lester

mlester@the-papers.com

MARKETING ASSISTANTS Darlene Eichelberger

darlene@the-papers.com

Trina Hoy

thoy@the-papers.com

DIRECTOR OF CIRCULATION Jerry Long

jlong@the-papers.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Stacie Ball, Mary Jane Bogle, Lauren Caggiano, Deborah C. Gerbers, Rod King, Jaclyn Youhana Garver, Cathy Shouse, Barb Sieminski

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welcome! from the editor

Most of my correspondence these days begins with "How are you?" or "How are you holding up?" and ends with "I hope you are staying safe and healthy during these uncertain times." Life has changed dramatically since our last issue was released. We've been under a stay-at-home order for weeks. Many companies have had to adapt to a work-from-home environment, while many more have had to close their doors completely until it is deemed safe to resume business.

It's hard to navigate this new normal. I hope you are finding ways to adapt and be happy. While we are safe at home, many have time to complete things they've long wanted to do — that is one silver lining.



Amber Bouthot

I hope our magazine can be a resource for you. We feature ideas for home décor and remodeling projects, and all of our issues are available on our website for you to browse. I'd love to hear about the projects you are completing. How have you used this time at home?

For the moms out there, your life has likely taken on new complexity—many of you have been put in charge of e-learning or keeping young ones engaged, while also trying to work from home and manage the anxiety associated with a worldwide pandemic. I am in this boat with you. So, I urge you to schedule some me-time to recharge your battery.

Mother's Day is coming up, and I will be asking for a nap. We have some ideas for celebrating Mother's Day at home in this issue, as well as ideas for projects, including designing a swimming pool and patio trends. If you're like me, you've probably lost some sleep lately, so we have a Sleep Hygiene feature to help you get some much-needed rest.

Stay safe and healthy. Take care of yourselves.

CONTENTS

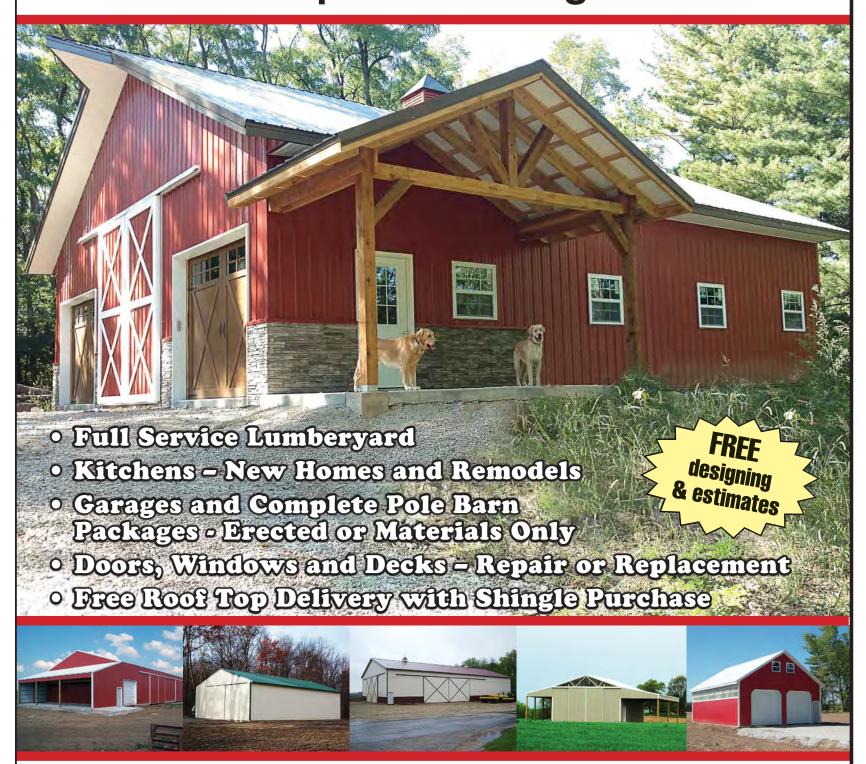
May 2020

Vol. 12 No. 1

trends ~ at HOME ~ trends......6 plant this...... 16 Dark Doors **Hydrangeas** HOME room 8 landscape 17 Trends in Patios Half Bath teatures ~ community ~ event calendar 18 main feature.....10 Creative Mother's Day Gifts main feature...... 12 Spring Town & Country Tour Pool Trends how to 14 daytrips20 Mother's Day at Home A/C Maintenance Tips company spotlight.....21 well being...... 15 Van's Home Center Sleep Hygiene

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By Mary Jane Bogle

After all these weeks at home, many of us are longing for a little change in the landscape. If you desire fresh home décor but don't want to invest too much time or money, the latest trend in interior design may be just what you're looking for. Dark-painted interior doors are hot this season, and now is a great time to update your interior.

Why It's Hot

Colored interior doors provide depth and drama, especially in homes with neutral-colored walls. And with so many homeowners opting for hardwood floors, a pop of color can give rooms a much-needed contrast.

Top Color Choices

According to Kelley Glaze of Kelley J. Interiors, the top color choice for interior doors is a solid black, followed by shades of charcoal or lighter grays.

"Recently, one of my clients wanted black interior doors in her new home, which was a modern farmhouse. She absolutely loves the way they look," said Glaze.

How to Pull It Off

You don't necessarily need to paint every door in the house, but keeping a uniform color on one level maintains consistency. Paint the trim white for even greater contrast. Glaze advises clients to pair their dark interior doors with oil-rubbed bronze hardware, although glass doorknobs are also making a comeback.

"A neutral doorknob," said Glaze, "will complement any changes in light fixtures and add texture to the door."

More adventurous homeowners might even opt for one door with a vibrant hue, such as lime green or bright yellow, to provide an accent

to a powder room or kitchen pantry. Selecting a hue from a colored pot or throw pillow might be the perfect choice for a door leading to a three-season room or patio.

Painting Tips

It's always best to prep doors before painting. If possible, take the door off its hinges and remove the hardware. A light sanding with 180-grit or 220-grit sandpaper will remove dirt and oil and smooth any chipped paint or rough spots. Be sure to wipe down the door after sanding with a damp rag. You can apply paint with a high-quality, yet reasonably priced paintbrush, which you can find at your local paint retailer.

If painting just one door, a quart of paint will do the trick, although you might need a gallon or two for multiple doors. A semi-gloss or satin finish is best, which will go on smoothly and be easy to clean later.

Plan on applying two coats, sanding lightly in between if needed to smooth any imperfections. A high-quality paint, such as a latex-enamel mix, will lie nicely and keep brush strokes from showing. Finally, wait until the paint dries completely before re-hanging the door. Then step back and enjoy all the warmth, depth and drama in your new interior.

Resource:

Kelley J. Interiors, Fort Wayne, 260.704.2206, kelleyjinteriors.com



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By Lauren Caggiano

A half bath doesn't have to mean half the wow factor. In fact there's a lot you can do even with space constraints. Local experts weigh in on how to make the most of this small space.

Carol Boocher, a designer with Windows, Doors & More, said there's a lot you can do on a budget to make your half bath stand out. For example, floating vanities are one hot piece that packs form and function. In her words, "these are cute pieces that don't go all the way

Speaking of function, she said customers are placing tile on the wall. Another hot trend that a lot of homeowners are embracing is Art Deco floral pattern for tile flooring.

As far as color, blue tones are all the rage in interior design in general — half baths included. Think navy and rich royal blues. The Pantone Color of the Year is Classic Blue, so this should come as no surprise.

"The look and color palette of Cambria natural quartz can add another dimension," she said.

Hardware is another area in which homeowners can turn up the volume in this space. Boocher said more people are electing to replace their fixtures with champagne bronze or brushed brass. This pairs well with navy, as it's complementary.

Karen Garner with Wayne Kitchen & Bath said customers have more choices now than ever when it comes to finishes.

"One of the hottest trends is concrete," she said. "Concrete sinks and countertops are very popular right now. The concrete comes in many different colors, shapes and sizes, you can find just about anything to fit in your space and application. Matte black faucets and industrial looking fixtures are very popular, as well, with the trend continuing to grow."

Don't be afraid to embrace the details to draw interest in ways you might not have considered. For example, Garner said changing out hardware, cabinet knobs and door handles can add some visual appeal without shelling out big bucks.



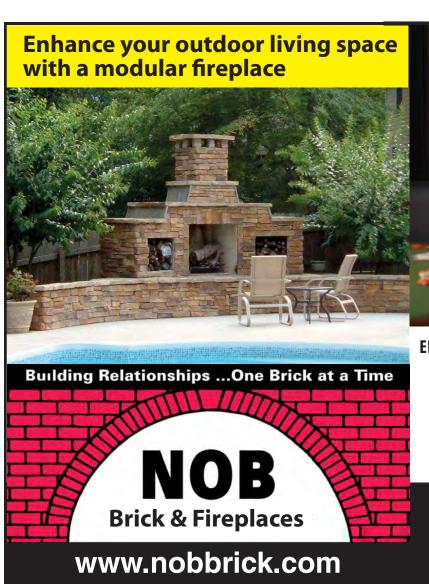
Lighting is another wildcard and can make or break a room. Boocher said lighted mirrors are great for small spaces because they can "open it up." Another practical consideration? Skirted toilets. Boocher said these are popular right now because they look sleek and are easier to

Unsure where to begin? Garner offers some words of advice: "A sink, faucet and toilet — that is all you have in a half bath. You're not working with an entire suite in the half bath. Let this room be your wow bath. Let your imagination run wild and have fun with it!"

Resources:

Wayne Kitchen & Bath Works, Fort Wayne, 260.423.9577, shopwkbw.waynepipe.com

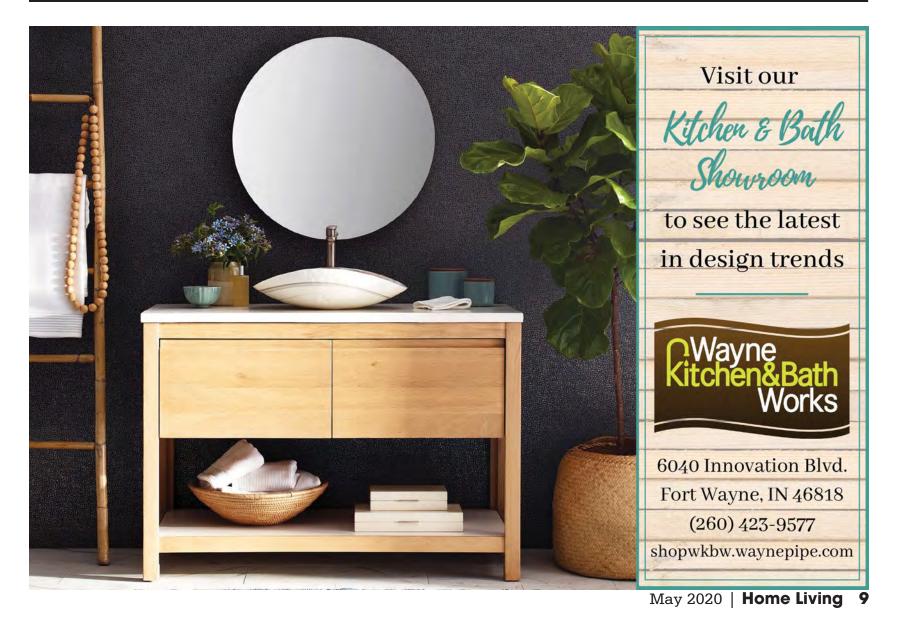
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Creative Mother's Da

By Deborah C. Gerbers





Especially now, in these days of sticking close to home, making or baking goodies for Mother's Day is the perfect thing to do. Grab a Mason jar and layer in the dry ingredients for your favorite cookies, bars or other baked goods. Add a colorful piece of fabric or a ribbon, and attach a handprinted card with the full recipe. Or, make a batch yourself and package it up in a pretty container with a sweet note and the recipe.

Who doesn't love Indiana's famous Hoosier Sugar Cream Pie or homemade spiced fruit butters? The Indiana Grown Initiative (indianagrown.org) has dozens of delicious recipes on its website that use Indiana grown and farmed ingredients, such

as Pecan Bacon Brittle with Indiana Kitchen Bacon, Honeycrisp Apple Bread, Spicy Cheddar Cheese Sausage Balls, Strawberry Salsa and more. Mom will love the thought of a homemade gift—especially one she can snack on and then make again for herself.

Custom gift baskets are also a fun idea for Mother's Day. Arrange Mom's favorite jams or jellies, muffins or crackers, a bottle of her favorite wine, and some fresh flowers in

a basket to deliver to her doorstep. Consider visiting local wineries and bakeries to support small businesses.

Live far away from Mom and can't visit anytime soon? Purchase a gift card to her favorite shop or restaurant and let her use it whenever her schedule allows.



Gift Ideas for Pampering Her

If it's not possible for an in-person spa day anytime soon, you can still buy a gift certificate to be used at a later date. Print off a menu of services for Mom to pick from to customize her day of pampering.

You can also make up an at-home spa-day care package for Mom to pamper herself. Fill a decorative box or basket with face masks, under-eye gel treatments, scrubs, lotions, manicure/pedicure essentials, bubble bath and maybe even some

dried lavender or rose petals for an extra-special feel.

Online fitness is becoming more popular. If she can't get to the gym for a while, help Mom get set up with a virtual fitness class or yoga instruction. Or purchase an app like Calm for her smart phone, which helps promote relaxation.



Nothing says love for Mother's Day like homemade presents and cards from the kids. Have them draw or paint pictures, make cards, help bake treats and pack up gift baskets. They can also make coupon books for Mom, good for household chores, making dinner, mowing, babysitting, etc.

Photo albums are also a fun family project. Order prints online or print them out yourself and arrange them into albums. Or, compile photos and memories on the computer for a disc of memories that can be mailed to special moms who live far away. Or, make a video compilation from everyone in the family saying their favorite thing about mom or why they're grateful for her. These can be messaged or emailed, as well.



And, Online Shopping Makes it Easy

We all have a bit more time on our hands at home now, so online shopping takes the guesswork out of buying gifts and

delivering them. Websites like uncommongoods.com have a variety of ideas for Mom like puzzles, terrarium candles, birth month flower grow kits, mason jar indoor herb gardens and more. Personalize a gift for mom with a custom coffee mug, framed photo, monogrammed pillows and blankets, personalized jewelry, stationery

and cards from a site like personalizationmall.com. You can upload your own photos to be printed on just about any

This Mother's Day, getting creative about gifts

can help make the day even more special for those amazing women in our lives.







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By Stacie Ball

The last bits of snow have melted, and the frequent rain holds the promise of beautiful blossoms right around the corner. What's next? It's time to cannon-ball right into pool season.

With recent events, maybe you've had some time to daydream about the hot summer days ahead. Nothing feels better on a sweltering day than to float around in your own pool, an icy beverage in hand, the sun's rays nourishing you with energizing vitamin D. Perhaps you're wondering what it would take to make your dream a reality.

"The absolute basics you need for a swimming pool to function is a pump, filter, a type of sanitation and water," Becca Conrad of Hillside Pools explained. "A really popular style of pool is a standard rectangle pool because it can accommodate an automatic pool cover. In Indiana, it is required to have a fence around the pool OR an automatic cover.

'The automatic cover is pretty amazing because it can keep water chemistry balanced, and keep debris out and heat in," she added. "It serves as a winter cover and also as peace of mind for homeowners for any children or animals around the pool when it is closed.'

There are some pretty fancy accessories you can get to make your pool the best in town. If you choose a vinyl liner pool, you have more choices for shape, size and accessories. It's possible to install a tanning ledge, extended steps or benches and slides. Your pool can be decorated with various light features and water features like waterfalls or jumping stones. If you plan to spend all day in the pool, cut out the need to go inside by installing an outdoor kitchen or grill. You can even save yourself the trouble of cleaning your pool every day by installing an automatic pool cleaner.



Things to Consider Before Taking the Plunge

- 1. How will you use your pool today and in the future?
- 2. What is your budget? You don't want to design your dream pool and then realize it is way out of your price range.
- 3. Do you want to use the pool to float? Invest in a non-dive patio pool.
- 4. Will kids be using the pool? Consider a diving board or slide.
- 5. Will you be entertaining a lot? Think about adding a tanning ledge, bench or bar stools.
- 6. What type, size and shape of pool do you want?
- 7. How will you maintain it? You can hire someone or clean it
- 8. How will it affect the value of your home, and is this your forever home?

Resource:

Hillside Pools, Fort Wayne, 260.627.5580, hillsidepoolsonline.com









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Keep your cool: A/C Maintenance Tips

By Lauren Caggiano

Picture this. It's 85 degrees in July and your air conditioning unit just broke. You panic and instantly regret putting off that maintenance appointment earlier in the year. While not a pleasant scenario, this doesn't have to be your reality. You can keep your unit running efficiently for years if you keep some common-sense measures in mind.

Michael Coe with Fire & Ice Heating/Cooling has seen it all in his 40 years in the business. He said when it comes to ensuring smooth sailing for hot weather, it helps to think ahead. For one, plan for and budget for an annual tune-up.

"Like the radiator in your car, A/C units can get plugged up," he said. "The summer months in the Midwest often mean cottonwood seeds and grass clippings, which can clog the unit."

Speaking of organic material, it's best to keep the nearby grass short and remove fallen leaves and twigs from the unit regularly. Doing this can help prevent it from getting clogged by such debris.

As far as the tune-up, this isn't the occasion to do-it-yourself. Coe cautions against this, because although cost-effective up front, you can do more damage than good. You can end up pushing dirt further into the unit and creating a bigger problem. So, hire a reputable company to handle it and you can rest assured it's done right the first time.

Still, there are things you can do to maintain the unit. For example, an air filter is your home's first line of defense against allergens and unwanted guests. To ensure both your home's air supply and your air conditioner remain as clean as possible, replace the HVAC filter at least once every three months. The hotter summer months may merit a monthly changeout, especially if you're prone to suffering from seasonal allergies.

Speaking of heat, you may be tempted to crank up the air when it's hotter-than-you-know what out there. However, by drastically changing the temperature and frequently adjusting the thermostat, you could be putting more stress on your air conditioner than you realize. According to Coe, it could result in "premature failure."

If this is a concern in your household, you might look to technology for some help. Installing a smart thermostat means you can set it and forget it. If you need a few different temperature zones in your home to accommodate everyone, zoning systems could be the ideal solution to satisfy both comfort and efficiency.

Last, consider this simple yet effective tip. If you want to help keep your cooling system in tip-top shape, open all of the registers in your home and make sure that the air can freely circulate. Large furniture and rugs can obstruct air flow, so be sure the layout of the room takes the location of the vents into account.

Bottom line: A little bit of prevention goes a long way. If you follow these recommendations, Coe said you could get up to 15 years out of a unit. When in doubt, seek an expert for maintenance and repair and you won't regret it.

Resource:

Fire & Ice HVAC, Fort Wayne, 260.424.6260, fireandicehvac.com

Good Sleep Hygiene Can Get You the Sleep of Your Dreams



By Mary Jane Bogle

For many adults, deep, restful slumber can be quite elusive, especially in our high-stress, fast-paced world. Ironically, that's just when we need sleep the most. Studies show that a good night's rest keeps us energized and alert, improves memory, reduces stress and can even help prevent disease or aid in weight loss.

If a good night's sleep seems beyond your grasp, you might need to change your sleep hygiene — the habits during the day and evening that affect the amount (and quality) of

Of course, there's no need to lose sleep worrying about sleep hygiene. Just follow these 10 tips to finally get the sleep of your dreams:



- 1. Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day — even on weekends — sets up a natural rhythm that will trigger good rest when you need it most.
- 2. Avoid naps. Too much sleep during the day can disrupt your body's sleep-wake schedule and make it tough to fall into a deep sleep at night.
- 3. Create an environment conducive to sleep. Keeping your bedroom cool, dark and quiet will help you fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer.
- 4. Exercise regularly. Studies show that good, healthy exercise can optimize sleep, as long as you don't exercise too close to your bedtime.
- 5. Avoid controlled substances. Obviously, if you want a good night's sleep, you should limit your caffeine intake, especially in the afternoon and evening. But other substances, such as alcohol, nicotine and even chocolate, can impact your sleep, too. It's best to avoid them close to bedtime if you want quality sleep at night.
- 6. Shut down those devices. It may be hard, but limiting your exposure to bright lights, especially screens, can play a major role in triggering the sleep mechanism in your brain. That's why it's best to dim the lights and turn off all devices at least 30-60 minutes before bed.
- 7. Get some sunlight. While it might seem counterintuitive, exposure to sunlight during the day actually establishes a healthy sleep-wake cycle. Bright sunlight in the morning will help your body respond to the dark, cool environment in your bedroom at night.
- 8. Balance your fluid intake. Drinking lots of water is a great way to flush toxins from your system and help you sleep better. Just don't drink it too close to bedtime, or you'll disrupt your sleep cycles with multiple trips to the bathroom.
- 9. Avoid large meals. Eating earlier in the evening, with a light, healthy snack before bed, will help you avoid heartburn and keep your body from the large effort it takes to digest and metabolize your food.
- 10. Establish a relaxing routine. Read a book, take a soak bath or do some light stretching before bed. Quiet, relaxing music helps, too.

Above all, keep your bedroom reserved for sleep. If you find yourself tossing and turning, leave the room for a short time and return when your body gets tired.



Spring is a time for vibrant blooms in various hues of pink, red, purple, lavender, pastel blue, vanilla and even green, enticing the gardeners among us to plant, plant, plant.

One of the most colorful shrubs is the hydrangea, which comes in a brilliant array of hues. Most hydrangeas do not offer a scent except for the rare Hydrangea angustipetala, 'MonLongShou' which has large white-and-chartreuse lacecaps, and blooms in late spring. This special shrub has a scent similar to jasmine and will perfume your whole yard.

Four diverse types of hydrangeas are grown in the United States: Oakleaf, Bigleaf, Panicle and Smooth. Popular shrubs include French Hydrangea, Mophead Hydrangea, Lacecap Hydrangea, Endless Summer Hydrangea, Peegee Hydrangea, Blue Hydrangea and Pink Hydrangea. Paint your yard with different-tinted shouts of this gleeful shrub.

Hydrangeas need a low soil pH, which can be obtained by adding sulfur or peat moss to the dirt; this is also a good way to control the color of some types. All-purpose Miracle-Gro fertilizer is an excellent choice for these shrubs, which are easy to grow even for the novice gardener. They can reach up to 15 feet in height and grow best in hardiness Zones 3 to 7 as perennials. The best time to plant is in the fall, followed by early spring, and you'll have even better results if you plant in early morning or late afternoon. Keep them watered well until established; a good rule is to water one inch weekly.

Deadheading will keep your plants blooming into autumn, but you don't have to wait for the blooms to wilt; they make outstanding cut flowers. Create a brilliant spray to brighten a friend's buffet.

Hydrangeas do best in warm morning sun rather than the afternoon's heat. Plant them in a sheltered area with sunny mornings and shady afternoons, preferably on the north or south side of your home. Avoid planting right under trees. Too much sun exposure could cause leaf burning and even ruin the blooms. Consider mixing in an abundance of compost to improve soil quality.

Dig holes 2 feet wider than the root ball and create a slight mound, which helps increase water drainage away from the base of the plant.

Want propagation? Bigleaf and Panicle hydrangeas are best propagated through layering in early to mid-summer – here's how:

• Dig a small trench near your plant.

• Give it time and the branch will form its own

- Bend a branch down to the trench so it touches the soil in the middle of the branch six to twelve inches of branch should extend past the trench.
- Make scratches in the bark where the branch touches the trench soil.
- After filling in the trench, place a paver or similar weight on top.
- root system, ready for transplanting to a new location.

 Finally, sit back and await the glorious colors that make your summer sing in riotous blooms.



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By Cathy Shouse

There's something extra special about having an outdoor space that is just steps away, even as close as your back door. Patios are especially flexible and have many options for extending your home environment.

Whether you are new to patios, have one you would like to improve upon, or are simply in the early stages of building a home, we've got you covered. Like so many home projects, analyzing your needs, considering your possible options, and creating a detailed plan will serve you well. Todd Hoy, General Manager with Rose Brick, Hardscapes and Fireplaces, has answers to your most pressing questions on the subject of patios.

Are you seeing any patio trends for new houses? If so, what are the covering materials, designs, etc.?

Most homeowners are keeping it fairly simple with knee walls, concrete pavers, a fire pit and maybe a fireplace. Maybe a 15x20 area. There are several designs and colors to choose from. People are accenting patios with borders to give a more defined look. The greys and grey earth tones are a growing trend currently. Basic firepits (could be gas or wood) are a growing trend.

What if someone wants to spruce up an existing patio? Is there something fresh and maybe affordable?

There are concrete overlay pavers that can be installed over existing cement patios. Maybe put in a firepit and a seating wall (knee wall). There are very affordable options.

What if someone has an unlimited budget? What's a fantasy patio?

You could go crazy by using water features, pergolas, outdoor heaters, multi levels of paver decks, lighting packages, pizza ovens, total outdoor kitchens that include fridge, built-in grill and smoker, cabinets, trash compactor, ice maker and storage galore. You could add on outdoor large screen TV, hot tub or even plan it around a pool. The sky is the limit.

Are there mistakes people make? Do you suggest they get professional advice?

I would definitely use a professional, as there are several things that could cause issues down the road. The most common mistake is not getting a solid base in prior to laying the pavers. With Indiana's freeze/thaw cycles, movement is an issue.

Resource:

Rose Brick, Fort Wayne, 260.373.1919, rosebrick.com

Do you have a checklist people should use? What about maintenance?

Basically, have a budget number going in. The supplier or land-scaper can then give you options you can choose from that fit your budget. At Rose Brick, Hardscapes and Fireplaces, we have a dedicated professional to answer all your questions and displays for your reference. If your project gets installed properly, you will have little to zero maintenance.





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In each issue, we provide a list of community events. Due to the CDC recommendations to stop the spread of the coronavirus, many May events have been cancelled, postponed or rescheduled. Please check the websites of our community partners for details specific to their venues and events.

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Decatur Flea Market, 260.517.8182, facebook.com/decaturindianafleamarket

Eichhorn Jewlery, 260.724.2621, eichhornjewelry.com

Embassy Theatre, 800.745.3000, fwembassytheatre.org

Fort Wayne Parks and Recs, 260.427.6017 or fortwayneparks.org

Fort Wayne Museum of Art, 260.422.6467, fwmoa.org

Harlan United Methodist Church, 260.657.5364

The History Center, 260.426.2882, fwhistorycenter.com

Honeywell Center, 260.563.1102, honeywellcenter.org

Little River Wetlands, 260.478.2515, lrwp.org

Memorial Coliseum, 260.482.9502, memorialcoliseum.com

Shipshewana Blue Gate Theatre, 888.447.4725, thebluegate.com

Stroede Center for the Arts, 419.784.3401, defiancearts.org

Swinney Homestead, 260.747.1501, settlersinc.org

Tapestry, pfw.edu/tapestry

Wabash Marketplace, 260.563.0975, wabashmarketplace.org



Spring Tour May 30 & 31 and June 6 & 7

By: Beth Johnson, HBA of Fort Wayne Executive Director

We've all been spending some extra time within the four walls we call home since the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic hit our community. Through this hardship, the community has continued to build one another up by supporting local restaurants, thanking our healthcare and other members of the essential workforce, and reconnecting with loved ones.

If you've been dreaming of a new home with an open concept design, a larger yard, a view of the lake or feel you have simply outgrown your current home, the members of the HBA have been working tirelessly during the pandemic to build that dream into a reality.

The Home Builders Association of Fort Wayne is happy to present the FREE 2020 Town & Country New Home Tour the weekends of May 30-31 and June 6-7 from noon to five each day. We hope you will join us by visiting 30 homes and six villas with select in-home vendors or find your perfect lot in two featured subdivisions. With various price points and floor plans, the tour is sure to please.

Get details on all the entries by visiting www.hbafortwayne.com/ tour, follow our Facebook page for posts on all the homes and updates on safety measures, pick up a printed guide from our sponsor locations or racks inside Kroger, Scott's, Save-A-Lot and Walgreens stores. The guide will also be distributed in The Journal Gazette on May 24.

Be assured the HBA will comply with all Executive Orders and safety measures concerning COVID-19 during our Town & Country New Home Tour. All of us at the HBA wish you and your family health and hope as we endure these unprecedented times as a community.

Homes & Villas by Participating Builders:

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- Delagrange Homes, LLC
- Granite Ridge Builders, Inc.
- Heller Homes
- Lancia Homes
- Majestic Homes
- Matt Lancia Signature Homes, LLC
- MBN Properties
- Olthof Homes (open Saturday's only)
- Preston Allen Homes, LLC
- Prime Homes FW, Inc.
- Quality Crafted Homes, Inc.
- Slattery Builders, Inc.
- Star Homes by Delagrange & Richhart, Inc.
- Timberlin Homes, LLC
- Windsor Homes

Subdivision Developers:

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Other species can be cut to order.

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By Jaclyn Youhana Garver

This year, children across the country are going to have to get a little creative for Mother's Day. Shelter-in-place rules make it kind of tough for a nice, leisurely brunch. Or even a hug.



Ouarantine can get lonely, though, which means 2020 is an especially important year for celebrating the moms or mother figures in your life. Luckily, there are still plenty of ways to spend time with and honor her. It's about going back to basics—with a few modern twists.

Breakfast in Bed

If you're quarantined with your mother, 2020 is the perfect Mother's Day to bring her breakfast in bed with all the fixings. May we recommend waffles with a buffet of topping options—raspberries, her favorite syrup, a dollop of whipped cream—and maybe a mimosa? To switch it up, substitute the orange juice with mango or peach.

Flowers

If your mom lives in Fort Wayne, plenty of local flower shops are still delivering, including Armstrong Flowers (ArmstrongFlower.com), Lopshire Flowers (LopshireFlowers.com) and Flowers of Canterbury (FlowersOfCanterbury.com).

Skype brunch

Some local restaurants are open for pickup or delivery during Indiana's shelter-in-place ruling, including breakfast and brunch favorites like Cosmos' St. Joe Road location, Cindy's Diner, Lakeside Cafe and Dash-In. Place your order—and hers—and make a date to dine together.

Game night

Skype or Zoom for an extended family game night, and hop over to cardgames.io to find 36 games you can play online, including Yahtzee, Crazy Eights, Euchre and Spades.







Go to the movies

OK, when we say "go" to the movies, we mean in your family room. Pick a favorite flick of mom's that she's seen a hundred times (or a new one), synchronize your watches, hop on FaceTime and watch the movie together.

Luckily, motherhood is a pretty popular topic in Hollywood. If you need title inspiration, Cosmopolitan shared 20 suggestions to Netflix and (literally) chill with your family. We like Greta Gerwig's "Little Women," "Freaky Friday" (original or Lindsay Lohan remake), "The Parent Trap" (original or Lindsay Lohan remake) and "The Incredibles."

Quarantine care packages

What are your mom's favorite things to do? Is she a reader? A coffee lover? A seamstress? A puzzle queen? A gardener? Hobbies are vital during sheltering-in-place, and a care package of her favorite things is a great way to say both "I love you" and "I know you're super bored and hope these can help."

Check out the personalized options on Shutterfly, and customize anything from decks of cards and coffee mugs (be sure to include a pound of local beans from Coffee with Friends or Old Crown) to pillows (to cuddle up with while she's cracking open that book) and puzzles.

home center

SALES SPECIALIST—Brittany Parker and her husband, Dustin, are part of the sales team at Van's Home Center in Auburn where customers can browse the huge furniture showroom and choose from a wide array of appliances and floor coverings.

by Rod King

With 57,000 square feet under roof at Van's Home Center in Auburn, the husband and wife sales team of Brittany and Dustin Parker get plenty of exercise. Between the main furniture showroom, the appliance center, floor covering room and warehouse, they walk several miles every day.

Van's Home Center **Brittany and Dustin Parker**

As Brittany put it, "we don't mind the extra steps because we love working here. Van's is a real family business. Owner Doug Dick and his family are very generous; they really care about the employees and make us feel like family. In fact, my kids, Penelope, 5, and Pippa, 3, call Doug's mother, Mary Lou, grandma.

"Van's is the epitome of a family business. Doug, the current owner, is the son of Van and Mary Lou, founders of the business they started in 1973. Both of them are still active at Van's on a part-time basis. Doug's sons, Evan and Max, are merchandising and operations managers, respectively, and his sister, Julie, is sales manager. A cousin, Lance Brodock, manages flooring installations and a nephew, Drew, is on the delivery team. A goddaughter, Brittany Brouer, is marketing director, and there are a couple husband and wife teams, including us, and a daughter and son-in-law, as well. Family is a big deal at Van's,"

"You can imagine what the dinner conversations are like between Dustin and me. They always seem to come around to a 'got to have' mattress or some new refrigerator or range feature or a large flooring project. Time flies when I'm at work and when I'm not, I actually feel like I'm missing out on something," she added.

Van's, located west of Auburn, is the largest one-stop home center in Northeast Indiana. The store is perhaps best known for its huge, brightly lit, comfortably arranged furniture showroom. The word locally is that if you can't find it at Van's, it probably can't be found.

"Every day, more and more people from the Fort Wayne and surrounding areas visit Van's for the first time," said Brittany. "Their response is always the same. They had no idea a store like this was located in Auburn. I think it's amazing that this family business that started as a small TV sales and repair shop in Angola has grown into this large home center, delivering hundreds of pieces of furniture, mattresses, appliances and flooring products."

The Parkers are both from Albion and graduates of Central Noble High School. Dustin went to Joliet Junior College to play basketball and Brittany to IPFW in Fort Wayne.

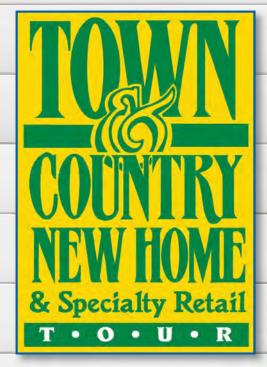
"I followed him to Illinois and got an accounting degree while he got an associate degree," she said.

Brittany and Dustin Parker

Van's Home Center, Auburn, 260.927.8267, vanshomecenter.com



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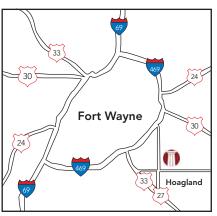




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