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FALL 2017



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Feature Home

(ON THE COVER)

16

Sue and Ken's recently built home features several gathering spots in the patio area. On cool evenings a wood burning fireplace is one of the main attractions of this home, built by Roberts Development Group.



13

Window Treatments, so many choices



24

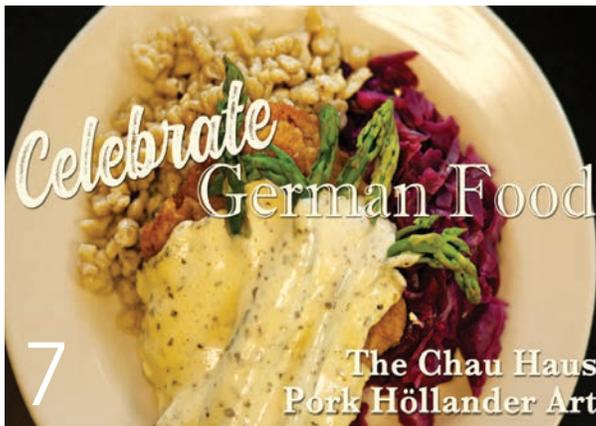
Hire someone to clean your house?



27

Is your Furnace ready?

CONTENTS



7

The Chau Haus
Pork Höllander Art

The Chau Haus Pork Höllander Art



9

Lakeside for Children

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It's all about you, *Kalamazoo*

I came to Kalamazoo as a member of the first freshman class to attend the newly named Western Michigan *University*. As a native of Michigan's Upper Peninsula it was somewhat daunting to realize that the student population that year (about 6,300) was nearly twice the total population of my hometown!

My plan at that time was to earn a teaching degree and then find a job – somewhere.

Many years later, I'm still here. Kalamazoo became my "somewhere," a place with a rich fabric of history, education, and culture providing opportunities in many areas of interest to those born here or who choose to locate here. It is also a place that shares my values and satisfies my needs for entertainment, shopping, volunteer community service, and just plain fun!

My history with Kalamazoo consists of three phases:

- Student phase (5 years) — attending classes and participating in campus activities
- Teaching phase (29 years) — teaching middle school art and music classes
- Retirement phase (26 years) — enjoying a new "retiree" career in the ballet world at Ballet Arts Ensemble (BAE) and WMU – right where I started in 1957

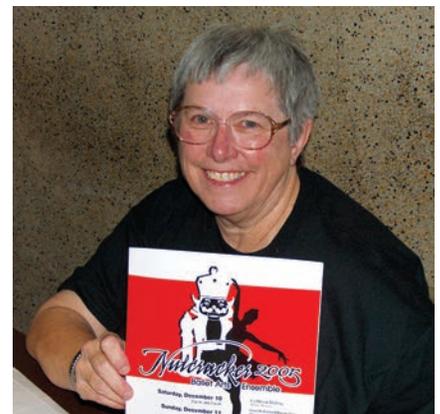
I have fond memories of times, places, and things that happened over the years that will always be reminders of the city which I chose as my own, some of which are . . .

- The first pedestrian downtown mall in the U.S.
- The 1980 tornado
- The Upjohn employee bus
- The Sorority Sing in WMU's old Field House
- The President Kennedy visit
- The Campus School – when it was a school
- The Gilmore Tea Room – with Santa and Mrs. Claus
- The 1967 and 1978 blizzards
- The Community Concerts at Chenery
- The May Cotillion at WMU
- The Schensul's Cafeteria (downtown)
- The Daisy Chain at WMU
- The Checker Cabs
- The Arcadia Golf Course

Who could have known in 1957 that I was choosing not only a college, but a place in which I would be able to live and grow into the person I am today. I am grateful to everyone who made it so, in 1957, as well as to those who have followed in their footsteps.

With apologies to Julius Caesar I say, "I came, I saw, you conquered." Thank you, Kalamazoo!

Dorothy Giovannini
Ballet Accompanist and Accompanist
Coordinator
Dance Department – Western Michigan
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Past President, BAE Board of Directors



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Celebrate German Food

The Chau Haus Pork Höllander Art

Photography by Linda Hoard

If you've never experienced the satisfying comfort of traditional German food, treat yourself to the delicious fare at the German restaurant, the Chau Haus in downtown Kalamazoo. Frankie Heynig is the owner and executive chef, and Frankie's wife, Miranda assists with operations. Frankie has been a chef for 30 years, and has experience in a wide range of cuisine, including German, American Grill, Low Country Cooking, Caribbean-Asian Fusion, and Coastal Seafood. Frankie became interested in German cuisine due to his German ancestry, and the fun and familiar nature of the food. The recipes are surprisingly straightforward, but nuanced in their flavors, and it is these nuances that attracted Chef Frankie to the idea of opening the Chau Haus.

The Chau Haus opened on November 3rd, 2016, and has attracted a following of people from all walks of life. They quickly built a reputation for their fun atmosphere and excellent customer service. Everything is made from scratch, including the pierogi on their now famous Polish nights (every Thursday and Friday night). They are outgrowing their original location though, which sat about 15, if people were willing to sit next to someone they didn't know. So they are moving to their new location at 224 W Michigan Avenue in downtown Kalamazoo, which is scheduled to open on November 3rd, 2017 - the one year anniversary of their original location. The new location features a bigger kitchen, and a larger dining room that can accommodate live music, poetry, book readings, and other cultural events, all while maintaining the quaint atmosphere of the original location. The menu will retain old favorites, and include new surprises, and their catering, delivery, and dessert service will be expanding as well.

Buttermilk Dressing (Prep First)

1 cup Mayonnaise
¼ cup Buttermilk
1 Tsp Cracked black pepper
1 Tsp Oregano
1 Tsp Basil

Mix all dressing ingredients in a container, and blend with a whip until smooth. Set aside.

Schnitzel

4 oz Boneless pork loin (per person)
1 Cup Bread Crumbs
Salt & pepper to taste
1 Cup Flour
1 Egg
1 Tbsp water
Vegetable oil
5 spears of Asparagus (per person)

Cooking the schnitzel requires 3 shallow pans and a large skillet with high sides. Fill the skillet about 1/8th of an inch with vegetable oil. Put the skillet on a stove burner set on medium high to preheat the oil.

While the pan is heating, prep the schnitzel. Cook the asparagus for a few minutes until tender (microwave for two minutes in a covered bowl with a little water to save time if you wish).

Beat 1 egg and 1 tbsp of water in the first shallow pan, mix breadcrumbs, Salt, and Pepper in the second shallow pan, and put the flour in the third shallow pan. Use a meat mallet to flatten the pork loin to about 1/8th inch thick. Cover the pork loin in flour, and shake it gently to remove excess. Then dip both sides of the pork loin in the egg mix, so that both sides are completely coated in egg. Then quickly lay the pork loin in the bread crumb mix so that it is completely covered by a thick coating of the bread crumb mix.

Once the oil has reached cooking temperature, proceed to cook the schnitzel. Place the breaded pork loin in the skillet, and fry until golden brown on each side (meat should be white on inside). Layer asparagus on top, and then cover with buttermilk dressing. Heat on broil until the buttermilk turns slightly golden brown. Serve with favorite sides.

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This year we had 20 dedicated bicycle Riders who traveled over 200 miles. They began their journey the 1st day in Kalamazoo and rode to Grand Rapids. The 2nd day, they traveled from Grand Rapids to Battle Creek on a challenging Century Ride (100 miles). On the last day, they departed Battle Creek, stopping at Ft. Custer National Cemetery to pay their respects to Cpl. Christopher Kelly Willis. They concluded the Ride back in Kalamazoo where the Warrior Ride Reception was held and Kaiden VanSlyke was awarded a future use college scholarship.

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." -John 15:13



providing PFC VanSlyke's son, Kaiden, with a college scholarship intended to cover the entire unmet need of his college tuition and expenses. Please visit our website to learn more about PFC VanSlyke.

2017 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

This year's Willis Foundation Scholarship Recipient is Kaiden VanSlyke, of Bay City, MI. Kaiden's father, PFC Bufford ("Kenny") VanSlyke of the United States Marine Corps, was killed in action in Iraq on February 28, 2007, when Kaiden was just an infant. In lieu of his great sacrifice, the Willis Foundation is



www.willisfoundation.org

Please visit our website to sponsor the 2017 Warrior Ride and to make a difference in Kaiden's life by providing hope for his future!



Lakeside for Children: 110 Years of Caring for Kids in Kalamazoo

By Jeff Palmer

Photography Courtesy of Lakeside for Children

In August 1908, following a year of planning and construction by 25 Kalamazoo area individuals, families, and businesses, Lake Farm for Boys orphanage opened on the shores of Whites Lake in Kalamazoo. Within another year, 14 homeless boys from the community lived onsite, where they attended school and helped tend the surrounding farmland. Donations financed the land purchase, building construction, and the handful of initial employees.

One newspaper account of the time said that the new “sanctuary for destitute and homeless boys ... [was] the first of its kind in Michigan” and one of the few in the whole nation.

Today, more than 120 boys – and girls – live and attend school at Lakeside for Children, located on the same Whites Lake campus. While the farming operation is long gone and the employee headcount now surpasses 145, its reputation as a model for the care of at-risk kids continues, as does a strong community commitment to support it.

“I’ve worked in the juvenile justice and teen residential treatment arena for more than four decades,” said Lakeside for Children CEO Don Nitz. “I can honestly say that the Lakeside campus and the programming that takes place here are second to none. We have a national reputation for success that is due in no small part to the generous support we receive from the Kalamazoo community.”

LAKE FARM TO LAKESIDE

The transition from small mom-and-pop orphanage and farm to large state-of-the-art residential treatment facility for vulnerable kids played out over many years at Lakeside.

The population of boys on campus slowly grew after 1908 and by 1942 numbered 42, ranging in age from six to 16. The average stay was three years. Some were orphans, but others were abused and neglected, or simply came from poor families that could not care for them.

Meanwhile, the campus expanded to meet their needs. A board of directors made up of local citizens purchased more acreage, erected buildings, and hired staff. A trickle of aid from the State of Michigan helped offset expenses, as did the sale of eggs, milk, and crops raised on the campus farm. An annual “letter campaign” begun in 1925 and donations from local benefactors paid for campus improvements and operational expenses.

Board meeting minutes from that era list the first donation from the Kalamazoo Rotary club to a local charitable agency, “the gift of a Ford V8 station wagon from Mrs. Donald Gilmore,” the gift of a new administration building from Mrs. Harold Upjohn, sleds donated by the Kalamazoo Sled Company, “1,500 quarts of fruit and vegetables” and a good



from Ivan A. Kline

CHAIRMAN of the COUNTY SUPERVISORS

"Since I have become somewhat familiar with the work that the Lake Farm is doing for the boys that are there, I feel that it is a work well worth while. One of the things that appeals to me is the real home-like life that the boys have there. The institution is really what the name implies—a farm home. They have their own school so the boys may receive their schooling, and also religious training, the same as any boy in a private home.

Anyone wishing to contribute to the Lake Farm Association can be assured that they are receiving 100 cents on every dollar that is contributed to this fund.

IVAN A. KLINE."

LAKE FARM

— for Boys —



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HEALTHFUL RECREATION

WHITE'S LAKE
(Enter from Oakland Drive)
Kalamazoo, Michigan

crop of alfalfa, corn, wheat, timothy, and orchard grass.

BUT, STATED ONE REPORT, "THE MOST IMPORTANT CROP IS BOYS."

In 1944, an agreement was reached for Lake Farm boys to attend Kalamazoo Public Schools so they would have a better opportunity to grow socially, physically, and mentally.

That same year, Clarence "Pops" Dooley became the Lake Farm director, overseeing a staff of five: groundskeeper, matron, farmer, seamstress, and cook. By the time Dooley retired in 1972, he'd led the institution through a transition from a farming operation and home for orphaned boys to a residential treatment facility for boys – and girls – with mental health and behavior problems and kids who had been abused and neglected.

The number of employees also increased during that time, with many holding academic degrees and certifications more closely aligned with new state requirements for the treatment and care of the changing campus population.

In 1963, Dewing Hall (formerly The Children's Home for Girls on South Westnedge Ave.) merged with Lake Farm for Boys and the new entity became Lakeside Inc. That same year, a capital campaign headed by Kalamazoo businessman and philanthropist Burton Upjohn led to the campus expanding once again. Most notable was the addition of a small gym, an educational building, and several cottage style residence halls where students still live today. Additional upgrades were made possible by single benefactors and by organized capital campaigns in 1972 and 1982.

Meanwhile, a student population that had dipped to as low as 30 in 1968, began to rise, reaching 51 in 1987 and 65 in 1998. To keep pace, a \$6.8 million capital campaign started in 1999 to fund new administrative, treatment, instructional, and residential spaces, as well as The Todd Cultural Center where students can perform and view theatrical and musical programs. These buildings were completed in 2003.

ALONG THE WAY, LAKESIDE INC. BECAME LAKESIDE FOR CHILDREN.

In 2007, the Lakeside for Children board narrowed the cohort of children it serves to 12- to 17-year-olds who have been abused or neglected, have been removed from their homes for their own safety, and, in many cases, have been



adjudicated by the juvenile justice system due to their own offenses.

That same year, the Lakeside board contracted with Sequel Youth Services to operate all campus programs. Sequel is a privately-owned company that develops and operates programs across the country for children and adults with behavioral, emotional, or physical challenges. Its mission is to prepare its clients to lead responsible and fulfilling lives by providing mentoring, education, living skills, and support within a safe, structured, dynamic environment.

Lakeside Academy is Sequel's staff-secure residential program operating on the campus of Lakeside for Children. Staff members help students focus on the confrontation and redirection of negative behavior while recognizing desired, positive behavior.

Lakeside, which is accredited by the Joint Commission as a behavioral health institution, is licensed by the State of Michigan for 124 beds. Fifteen are reserved for girls and a couple are always kept open to accommodate boys or girls who might have nowhere else to go on short notice. About 50 percent of students come from Michigan with a few from Kalamazoo and Southwest Michigan. Others come from nearly a dozen states including California, Washington, Indiana, and Tennessee.

Throughout their Lakeside stay – from 30 days to 18 months, with an average of about 180 days – students are challenged to analyze failures and experience successes in nearly every area of life. They attend school year-round on the Lakeside campus in a charter school authorized by Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services Agency, or KRESA. The charter school has its own independent school board and teachers who teach to State of Michigan mandated educational policies.

"Most students arrive here woefully behind their school-age peers in reading, math, and other scholastic measures," said Lakeside CEO Nitz. "We help them recover lost school credits that will transfer to their home school district, and put them on a path to graduate high school or receive a GED.

"At the same time, we help them get the counseling, role modeling, and other support they need to develop the life skills and self-discipline necessary to lead a successful life. Once they realize they are in a safe supportive environment with a positive peer culture, they really blossom and mature."

According to Nitz, several Lakeside students earn their high school diploma



Lakeside Girls at 2017 Kalamazoo Marathon



Derek Jeter with Lakeside Students

or GED every semester. Numerous students have gone on to community colleges and universities in Michigan and elsewhere.

"It's always a great day when a student dons a cap and gown," he says. "We hold a ceremony and invite their teachers and families, when appropriate. Everyone beams, just as they should."

Nitz says community involvement is also central to a Lakeside student's stay. "Our students volunteer in countless ways in the community throughout the year. They staff water tables at the Kalamazoo Marathon, help the Oshtemo Rotary Club members set up and break down their annual Family Fun Days event, and help with Building Blocks efforts in the nearby Oakland Drive neighborhood, just to name a few."

Lakeside students also go to the movies, the mall, Lake Michigan, and countless other locations, "just like other teenagers," he says. "The only difference is that they are always accompanied by Lakeside staff members."

Lakeside boys now also participate in soccer, basketball, and track and field competitions sanctioned by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. Plans are afoot for Lakeside girls to participate in sanctioned volleyball and/or track and field competitions in 2018.

According to Nitz, Lakeside for Children is attracting attention in Michigan and beyond for the quality of its programs. "We consistently have a waiting list of about 20 students. Plus, we frequently host groups from human services departments and courts across the country who are interested in adding Lakeside to their lists of preferred service providers. Sequel employees are often asked by their industry peers to talk about the 'best practices' programming that takes place here."

Nitz says the Lakeside board and their Sequel partners would also like to increase art, music, and vocational education opportunities for their students. "And we'd like to bring more community members to see our great campus and meet our great students."

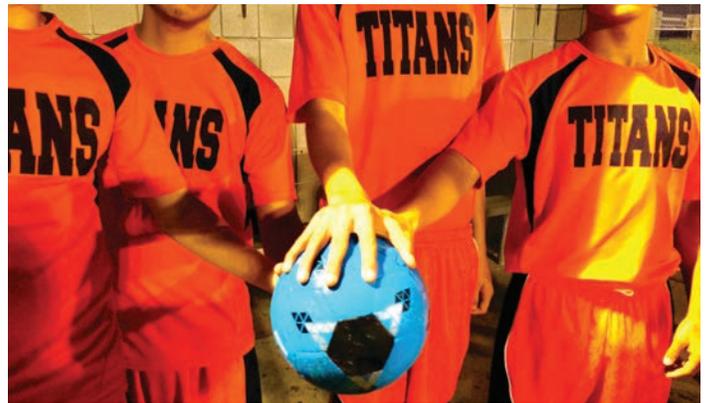
Community support, he says, is central to Lakeside's continued success. He points to the Lakeside Health & Wellness Center that opened in April 2017, as a recent example. The Center houses three interactive classrooms, an all-purpose

room, a locker room, and a gymnasium with a regulation high school court that can accommodate basketball, volleyball, badminton, wrestling and countless other sports, recreational, and wellness activities.

The \$2.3 million building was constructed and appointed through a successful fundraising campaign supported by individual, family, foundation, and corporate donors, nearly all drawn from the Kalamazoo area.

"We are passionate about what we do at Lakeside for Children and delight in providing excellent programs and facilities that make permanent, positive changes in the lives of the boys and girls we serve," said Nitz. "We couldn't have done this for 110 years without the support of equally passionate employees, board members, and community supporters."

Lakeside for Children is located at 3921 Oakland Dr. in Kalamazoo. Arrange a campus tour and learn more about Lakeside by calling (269) 381-4760.



Lakeside Titans Soccer Players, Fall 2016



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Quality Window Treatments More Than an Afterthought

By Zinta Aistars

Photos courtesy of Hunter Douglas

Window treatments can be so much more than adding to the aesthetics of your home. Draperies, blinds, valances, shutters, and other window treatments offer privacy, prevent sun damage, conserve energy, and enhance the value of your home.

Dian Latora, owner of Cork Lane Decorating Center at 1101 East Cork Street in Kalamazoo, has taken note of current trends in window treatments. "We are selling a lot of plantation shutters. Less is more seems to be the rule right now. With shutters, you rarely need anything else. They are a finished look and seem to fit all decorating styles: coastal, country rustic, traditional and modern."

Plantation shutters, made out of wood or faux wood, are a classic, time-tested look for windows, but Latora also sells draperies and blinds. "Simple wrought iron rods and a drapery panel on each end bring style, color and personality to a room. You can layer drapes with blinds underneath for privacy or pull the panels closed by using drapery rings or a grommet top."

When shopping for blinds, Latora warns against opting for the cheapest choice. "All blinds are not equal," Latora says. "When you shop the big box stores and then come to us for pricing, the two do not compare. Our blinds come with a lifetime warranty and the assistance of one of our decorators, who brings the samples to your house, helps you pick out the best type of blind or window treatment for your home, and then measures to ensure an accurate fit."

As Cork Lane Decorating designers visit customers in their homes, they ask questions and listen for customer input to find the window treatment uniquely their own.

"We create window treatments that bring the WOW factor to your room," Latora says. "We help you pull everything together, and if there are any problems later on, we come back. We're very proud of our service reputation."





Jan Guigue of Expressions by Jan, is a mobile service, with Guigue headquartered in South Haven, but visiting homes throughout Southwest Michigan.

"I'm in the third generation for many of my clients. I enjoy the people as much as the work," Guigue says. "In fact, you could say I'm something of a mini-psychologist, learning about my customers and their lifestyles, their wants and needs."

Working with different age groups, Guigue encourages her customers to think not just about the current day, but also long-term use. Recalling a time when she was at home in a wheelchair with a broken ankle, Guigue has an eye for the needs of the elderly or disabled.

"You may not be able to reach cords when you are older," she says. "Some seniors have difficulty using some of today's lift systems for blinds, or they just don't want the new technology of cordless blinds. Quality window treatments can last 10 to 15 years, so it's important to think that far out."

When choosing window treatments, Guigue reminds customers to consider lifestyle, children, pets, and limitations of household members. Other considerations are taking advantage of views while protecting furniture from the sun and maintaining comfortable temperatures inside the home.

Guigue is seeing more requests for woven shades from her customers in natural materials such as bamboo. The minimalist look is in, she says. Screen shades, which filter light while saving on energy costs, are also a popular choice.

Guigue tells her customers to consider not only the look of a window treatment from the inside of the home, but also from the outside. Colors should be coordinated from window to window, as well as the direction of blinds.

"And don't forget the garage windows," she says. "You don't want people seeing your rakes from the road. Adding window treatments for those windows give your home a finished look."

Jessica McGuire is an interior designer at Flair Interiors, originally Draperies on Wheels, at 427 West Cork Street. She is hearing more requests for motorization from her customers.

"Motorized window treatments that can tilt, open and shut remotely are increasingly popular," McGuire says. "Once



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they are installed, you can download a free app, such as the PowerView hub, that works with the wireless internet in your home to 'talk' to the shades and allows you to control them from your phone or iPad. You can program the shades to open/close at certain times every day and even when you are not home."

Motorization, McGuire says, can be as simple as battery-operated and cordless, to fully operable on your computer or smartphone. Costs vary with level of technology and size of window, but usually begin around \$99 per window.

All of these retailers agree that customers should begin with a budget in mind of approximately \$250 per window treatment, although costs vary widely according to a customer's needs and style.

"When building a house, people sometimes forget to budget in the window treatments," McGuire says. "But don't make it an afterthought. Quality blinds can last three times as long as something you buy at a box store. We offer in-home consultations, full-service professional installers, and warranties. We don't charge for our design expertise, but it can save you money in the long run."



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Living room photo by Kristian Walker Photography

A FARMHOUSE REIMAGINED, WITH BLUEBERRIES AND HORSES

By Zolton Cohen

Feature Photography by Zolton Cohen

Sue and Ken, owners of Welcome Home's Fall 2017 Feature Home, have a difficult time making up their minds. When each is asked which room is their favorite in the new home they had built recently in Pavilion Township, both can come up with several candidates.

For Ken, the chief contender is the lower-level library, with its voluminous shelving for books and movies, complete with a rolling ladder. But then he cites the roofed back patio area where the couple and their guests can enjoy a grilled meal made in the outdoor kitchen, and then relax by the wood burning fireplace.

Sue begins with the kitchen, where she spends a lot of time cooking and baking, and rhapsodizes about having adequate space for two people to work there comfortably at the same time. The lower cabinets, all equipped with deep pullout drawers that eliminate stooping to find items on a back shelf, also come up in her conversation. Yet in the next breath she says, "I love my laundry room! I don't know how many women would say their laundry room is their favorite room, but it's so spacious, with great, wide counters and an expanding wooden clothes rack to hang things that don't go in the dryer."

It's not surprising Ken and Sue are head over heels in love with their new place given the many hours they invested

planning and imagining it, and then being able to see all that work bear fruit. Sue says, "Starting out with graph paper, we spent so much time designing it that it felt like a part of us. And then we were here every day during construction so we got to see it coming together piece by piece."

UNDER ALL IS THE LAND

A house needs land to sit on, and Ken and Sue wanted a parcel large enough to accommodate a horse barn. Although neither ride, their youngest daughter, now a sophomore in college, is an equestrian competitor and does volunteer work at the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center in Augusta.

Ken says, "We had been looking at a 30 acre farm field about ten minutes from where we were currently living. But the 200 acres next door to it was also for sale. It had an old house and barn, both in terrible shape, and although I didn't want to look at it initially, we did, and bought it in 2010."

Sue says, "We just fell in love with the property. It's got seven acres of blueberries in a back corner, and ever since we bought it we've been cleaning up the blueberry patch. We've had people tell us that 50 and 60 years ago they remember coming here to pick blueberries."



ABOVE: Long and low, and located on a small rise on the property, the distinctive ranch-style home has a low-maintenance exterior of stone and vinyl shake siding.

RIGHT: Just steps away from the kitchen inside, an outdoor kitchen with a gas grill, sink and refrigerator serves as Sue's domain when meal-time comes around.





Unusual for a modern kitchen, this one doesn't have an island. Rather, a peninsula with seating for four better accommodates traffic flow and multiple people simultaneously working in the space.



Practical deep drawers rather than doors and shelves in the lower cabinets eliminate stooping to retrieve items stored inside. Appropriate to a farmhouse, an apron-front sink anchors the peninsula countertop.

And the blueberry picking business is still a going concern, Sue says. "It's kind of a family thing now. It's the summer job of our college-age daughter, working the U-pick stand. But it's difficult because she's so busy with other commitments, so we open it when we can, but don't hire anyone to staff it. Then sometimes a family member will say, 'OK, I'll do it' and they put a message out on Facebook or whatever and people come and pick. It's a pretty laid-back operation."

After the old house was demolished and the big horse barn with its inside arena went up in 2012, Sue says it was time to consider building a home. "Ken was getting close to retiring and I thought building a house would be a good transition, would keep him busy right after he retired so he wouldn't have too much time on his hands. That's when we decided it was a good time to start."

FINDING A BUILDER

Ken and Sue say, "We had talked to several builders and wanted to find one who would work with us on our design. Our daughter and son-in-law told us about Steve Roberts, from Roberts Development Group, Inc., and said we ought to talk to him. We did, and saw a couple of houses that he built. We loved the quality, and really liked Steve personally. He was open and honest. And when he was here working on the project, doing stuff and listening to us, he was so easy work with."

Ken says, "With my financial background, I'm pretty much on top of that, and there were never any surprises with Steve. We had no issues; none whatsoever, which is incredible because it's a pretty big project, a big house. In fact, that's why we did



ABOVE: Simple yet elegant furniture and a lack of clutter allow the coffered ceiling and other architectural elements to define the formal dining room.

RIGHT: Two of Sue's requirements were to have the laundry room next to the entry door from the garage, and to have a door on it that can be shut in order to isolate it from the rest of the house.





This three-season room off the master bedroom affords views of woods, a wetland area, and Long Lake. Bald eagles nest in tall trees near the back of the house while purple martins keep the mosquito population in check.

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ABOVE: A tray ceiling combines with a calming paint color selection to create a cozy and welcoming master bedroom retreat.

RIGHT: Planning ahead for their future in the home, Sue and Ken specified a no-curb shower in the master bathroom. The Migala Carpet-supplied Zen Bora Wilderness mosaic stone floor, and wall tile made to mimic wood, add color and texture.





A combination reading and music room, equipped with a rolling ladder to allow easy access to upper shelves, contains a turntable on which Ken can play his collection of vinyl albums from the '60's and '70's.



The main lower level gathering area is popular with visiting grandchildren, who like to pop in 'old fashioned' VCR tapes to view on the big screen flat TV. The door on the far wall leads to a game room that has both ping pong and pool table.



A kitchenette in the lower level, along with a full bathroom and spacious bedroom, means guests can have privacy in their own autonomous area during visits that last overnight or longer.

the Parade of Homes. We wouldn't have done it if we hadn't been so taken with Steve. Our tendency would be to not do that because we like our privacy. But he's such a nice guy and a great builder, so we wanted to kind of reward him for what he did for us."

Roberts says he was "born into the business." His father, Dave, 75, was and still is a builder. "I worked for him in high school, then went to college and graduated with a business degree and wanted to get into banking and finance. And then I realized I didn't want to be inside my whole life. I was making good money as a young man doing side jobs, so I worked for my dad for a couple of years."

After he got married and was building a house for him and his wife, a young couple asked if he could build them one as well. He says, "From there I just started building houses. It was a good stepping stone. I've only built a couple of spec houses in 20 odd years; everything else, at the rate of 3-5 homes a year, has been custom."

BUILDING BEGINS

Ken and Sue's homesite had a few challenges, including the long distance from the road when they switched the overhead electrical service to underground. Additionally, the original plan had been for a geothermal heating and cooling system. Roberts says, "But a farmer down the road decided to have a natural gas line installed for a grain dryer, and, fortunately, while we were pulling the permit, we saw that and were able to tap into it. It cost a lot of money to get it back there, but in the long run, 6-7 years, it's going to pay off. We've done a couple of geothermal installations, and we like them: they're a good system. But at the end of the day natural gas is still the better option."

Roberts says Sue and Ken wanted a "country farmhouse kind of look; a long, ranch-type home like you see in Florida sometimes, but not with the flair of the colors; more the traditional white. Sue had been working on the print for a long time. We took that design, met with them and made some minor modifications along the way."

Sue says, "The house we lived in for the previous 25 years was very open, with a large kitchen. We loved that open feel, and because we have ten grandkids and family that all live nearby we needed room for entertaining. We also wanted to have our living space on one floor so we could be prepared for the second part of our lives. I was figuring out how we can be here forever, and how to set that up. No one likes to think about it, but as we get older, what happens if

someone ends up in a wheelchair or on a walker? You just don't know. So in the master bath you just walk into the shower. You don't have to step over anything."

Along those lines, Ken says, "Minimal exterior maintenance with the vinyl shakes and stone, and energy efficiency, were top of mind when we were planning the house. We anticipate doing some traveling during the winter, and the house and barn are hooked up to standby backup generators. It is important to us that if we're gone for several weeks that there is that back up, and it's already come in handy a couple of times in the barn. Steve was really on top of the energy efficiency aspect. He brought a lot of good ideas to the table and we relied on him for a lot of that. He listened to what we wanted and made it happen."

Roberts says, "We have an energy rating done on all of our houses, and this one scaled out very efficiently. We did 2 inches of closed cell foam in the walls with the remainder cellulose. That yields R-27 in the walls and R-50 in the attic. With the foam, our air infiltration rate is getting very good."

As another comfort measure, Roberts ran the heat ducts in the lower level under the floor rather than overhead and then down the walls. He says, "We do zoned forced air heating systems, and if you're coming out of the wall somewhere two feet off the floor, the heat never makes it to the floor. So it costs a little more to put it under the slab, but I think it's a better system. There's going to be some heat radiation from that coming up out of the floor."

The collaboration and good ideas floating around between Sue, Ken and Steve Roberts came together in a sound, practical, beautiful and eminently livable home. Sue says, "Steve was so open to all suggestions, and he said it was a fun project for him too because it was so different from anything he had built before. We changed around and went with things we didn't initially think of, going through the process. So it really was a custom build and we couldn't be more pleased with how it came out and our experience working with Steve." Ken adds, "Steve wanted to build what we wanted to build. That's the best thing you can say about your builder." And there are no equivocations on that point.







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So many reasons to hire someone to clean your house!

By Barbara Fisher

Photos courtesy of Tessa Cleaning Services

We've heard the warnings about germs lurking in our homes that make us want to scrub our counters, microwave our sponges and attack our bathrooms with bleach and a toothbrush. Or we leave the house hoping we aren't in an accident that would require anyone having to let the dog out while we're in the emergency room lest they see the state in which we left the house. Maybe it's our year to host the family gathering and we're suddenly moved to attack delinquent cleaning projects as if there might be a white glove test as part of the festivities. Perhaps a medical condition is impacting our ability to manage the household.

Whatever the reason, a professional cleaning service will make your house dazzle and free up precious time. And who wouldn't know what to do with more time? Top on many lists would be spending quality time with family and friends. We could add some balance to our lives by pursuing a hobby, improving our health by having time to exercise, or tending to other household matters that shout for our attention. We could reduce that persistent buzz of stress when we know our house is a mess but feel powerless to make improvements. Allergy sufferers have added requirements for cleanliness to keep symptoms at bay. Perhaps our parents need assistance and supporting them would come at the expense of tending to our own household. Moving is an exciting time but creates its own set of stressors when our home or the home of a relative needs a deep top-to-bottom clean before it's put on the market. Sometime we just need a break. And let's face it, some of us just

don't like to clean or don't do it all that well. In short, a professional cleaning service can represent a practical solution to a myriad of needs.

Just as there are a myriad of reasons to consider a cleaning service, there is a wealth of professional cleaning services in the greater Kalamazoo area from which to choose. Services range from those that offer disaster restoration (water, smoke, fire) to specific periodic services (windows, carpet and upholstery cleaning, deep top-to-bottom cleaning) to regular residential cleaning and organizing services. Most companies offer a combination of services. There are even companies who offer packing and staging services for real estate sales or can provide help with hoarding. If you need professional cleaning services, there is a company that can provide the service you need.

Jeannie and Terry Henderson bring over 30 years of business and service-oriented experience to Jeannie & Co., a professional cleaning service they purchased about 18 months ago. "Our services are designed by the needs of our customers. How can we help you have more time to do more of what's important to you?" says Jeannie Henderson. "We customize your cleaning service to fit your needs not a cookie-cutter cleaning checklist." Monthly, bi-weekly or weekly services could include sanitizing the kitchen and refrigerator, sweeping, mopping, dusting, sanitizing bathrooms, bedrooms, laundering bedding and remaking the bed, doing the laundry and tidying up. If organization and decluttering is needed, say

no more. There are companies who will clean your closets, drawers, cupboards, garage, basement, office, laundry room and storage areas. The list is long and could make us dizzy just contemplating what we've been missing. "A cleaning service gift certificate can make a thoughtful and unique gift," adds Henderson. "think a wedding, new baby, housewarming, showers, illness or other occasion."

Are you wondering about affordability? Customized cleaning plans are flexible and affordable for even tight budgets. Tessa Ndlovu and her sister and partner, Tobi Ndlovu, started Tessa Cleaning Services four years ago because they are passionate about cleaning and making a difference in people's lives. "Our customers enjoy a full premium service at competitive budget-specific pricing tailored to saving our customers money. We stand behind everything we say and do, and thoroughly clean every room based on your customized cleaning plan."

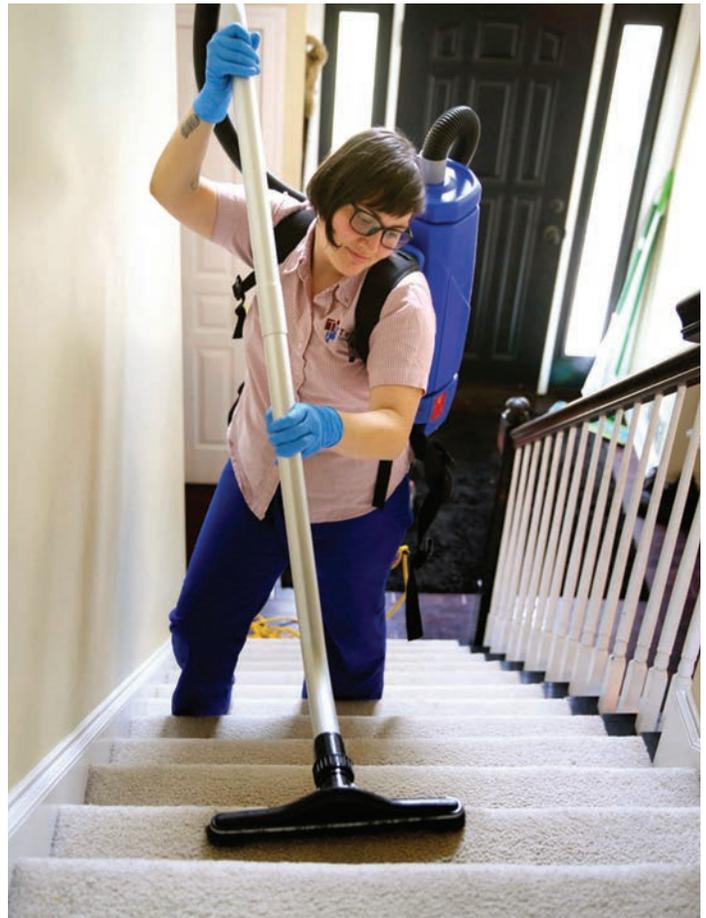
If you're thinking about a cleaning service there are several considerations to explore when making your selection. Put social media and online reviews to work, check out websites and ask for references. Word of mouth from friends and colleagues is a great way to learn about available services. Look for a company that will perform a complimentary in-home assessment that results in a written fixed-rate cost for a written cleaning plan that meets your specific wants and needs. Does the company use careful screening processes to ensure only top quality staff will be in your home? Does the company perform criminal background checks and drug screening? Make sure the company, if not the actual staff, are bonded and insured. How are staff trained and services monitored? For example, Jeannie & Co. staff is trained using a specific cleaning system to ensure a consistent, high quality service. An employee's first assignment at Tessa Cleaning Services is to clean the business office to make sure the employee is a good fit with the team and provides high quality cleaning.

If "green cleaning" is important to you, then ask about the types of products that will be used to clean your home. If you have pets, make sure the potential provider loves pets and discuss any desired specialized cleaning that might result from having pets. "Look for a company that pays its staff an hourly wage so they're in no hurry to earn extra commissions by being fast," says Clayton Lyczynski II of ServiceMaster of Kalamazoo, "the emphasis should be on quality service at a competitive rate;



servicing the customer's needs and treating the customer as staff would want their grandmother treated." ServiceMaster of Kalamazoo is a locally owned franchise that has served Kalamazoo since 1953, under the same ownership since 1981. While they don't provide ongoing residential cleaning services, they do provide specialty services such as disaster restoration, hoarding and cigarette smoke abatement, deep cleaning and the periodic services listed earlier.

Lastly, get a sense for the level of passion that the company will offer when providing your service. You'll want to hear comments like "we don't like to do things halfway here, we're all in" (ServiceMaster of Kalamazoo); "we want people with service hearts who derive satisfaction from a job well-done" (Jeannie & Co.); and "we are passionate about making a positive difference in people's lives" (Tessa Cleaning Services). Everyone was in agreement that they'll do the cleaning; no cleaning up before the service arrives!



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Is Your Furnace Ready?

By Chris Killian

Homeowners would be wise to make sure their furnace is in tip-top shape prior to the first bout of chilly weather.

While area heating and cooling experts say routine maintenance or repairs are best done before the temperatures turn colder, you can do much of the work yourself and not have to break the bank while doing it.

"Think of your furnace as your daily driver," says Phil McIntyre, owner of The Furnace Guy. "You just want to make sure it works. There may not be much glory in it, and a lot of people forget about maintaining their furnaces. But they sure take notice when they don't work."

The first and perhaps most obvious item to replace three to four times annually is the air filter, which can run anywhere from \$5 to as much as \$50 for higher end units. Other easy maintenance items include changing the battery in your thermostat, cleaning any debris from the blower, making sure heat registers are in the open position and making sure the thermostat is set to the heat position.

McIntyre recommends having your furnace professionally serviced every two years if it's ten years old or less, and every year if the unit is more than a decade old. A properly maintained furnace should last 20 years or more, he says.

During a professional service, a technician should check the flame sensor, burners, blower motor, gas pressure, volts and amp draws on the blower motor and do a combustion analysis,



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McIntyre says. On average, this runs around \$100 or so.

"I have run into a lot of people who put off repairs and say, 'I'll just wait until it breaks,'" he says. "That's not wise, because you know when it's going to break? In the middle of January, and that's not going to be fun. Breakdowns are always unscheduled."

"Over time, the combustion process creates a hard film on a furnace's burners, causing gas to not fully ignite and reducing efficiency," says Jim Penny, co-owner of Metzger's Heating and Cooling. "A properly running furnace can save a homeowner hundreds of dollars a year over an inefficient one," he says. "You end up getting more flue gas escaping than heat in your home," Penny says. "An incomplete burn is literally just throwing money away."

Penny recommends checking the combustion chamber for cracks, removing clutter from around the unit, cleaning and lubricating the blower, removing soot, dirt, corrosion and debris from the furnace, and sealing any open areas between the furnace and the main ducts.

Making sure you have fresh batteries in your carbon monoxide (CO) detector should also be top on the list before cranking up your furnace. The odorless, colorless gas – a byproduct of incomplete combustion – can cause flu-like symptoms and confusion, or, at high enough concentrations, death.

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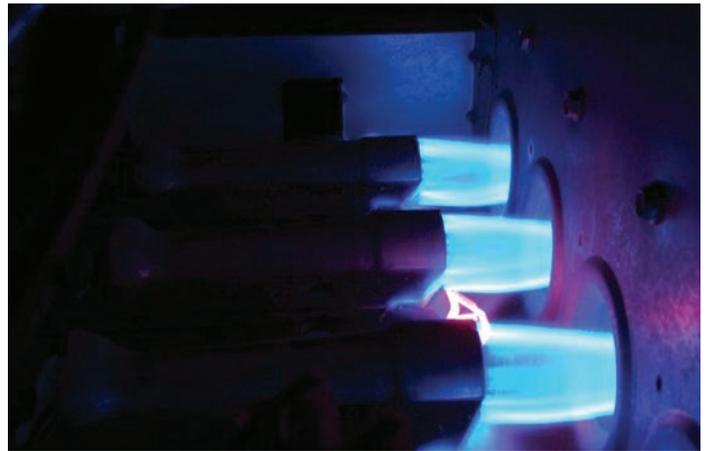
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of CO, which are vented to the outside air. But older, inefficient and poorly-maintained units can produce deadly amounts, according to the Chimney Safety Institute of America. These leaks are primarily found in a cracked combustion chamber, which is why it's so important to check it and make repairs immediately if any fissures are found.

Many furnaces have humidifiers, and Luke Vanderhill, co-owner of Nieboer Heating & Cooling, says it's important to change the water panel on the humidifier every year in addition to cleaning off any scale or debris on the unit. "If you have hard water, things eventually are going to clog," he says. "You want to make sure your entire heating system is operating as efficiently as possible. It will ensure a warm winter and save you money in the long run."

If your furnace has fresh air intake and exhaust pipes exposed to the elements, make sure they are free from leaves, twigs or other debris, so the unit can breathe properly, Vanderhill adds.

McIntyre offers another helpful tip to get the most out of your furnace this winter: if you have ceiling fans in your home, switch the blade direction to have the air flowing up during the winter. This ensures more even heating of a room and, in turn, can mean your furnace doesn't have to work as hard.



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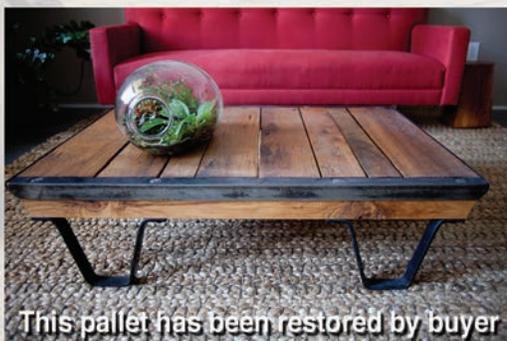
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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Abode Building Center	32
BrioLife Photography	30
Catholic Schools of Greater Kalamazoo	28
Cork Lane Decorating Center	14
DeHaan Remodeling Specialists	15
Expressions by Jan	15
The Furnace Guy	29
Hannapel Home Center	3
Home Builders Association	20
Industrial Antique Pallets	30
Infusion by Etna	6
JB Printing	29
Metzger's Heating & Cooling	28
Migala Carpet One	2
Pennings & Sons	12
Roberts Development Group	23
Pam Roberts - Berkshire Hathaway	10 23
Vlietstra Bros. Pools & Spas	8
Christopher Kelly Willis Foundation	8

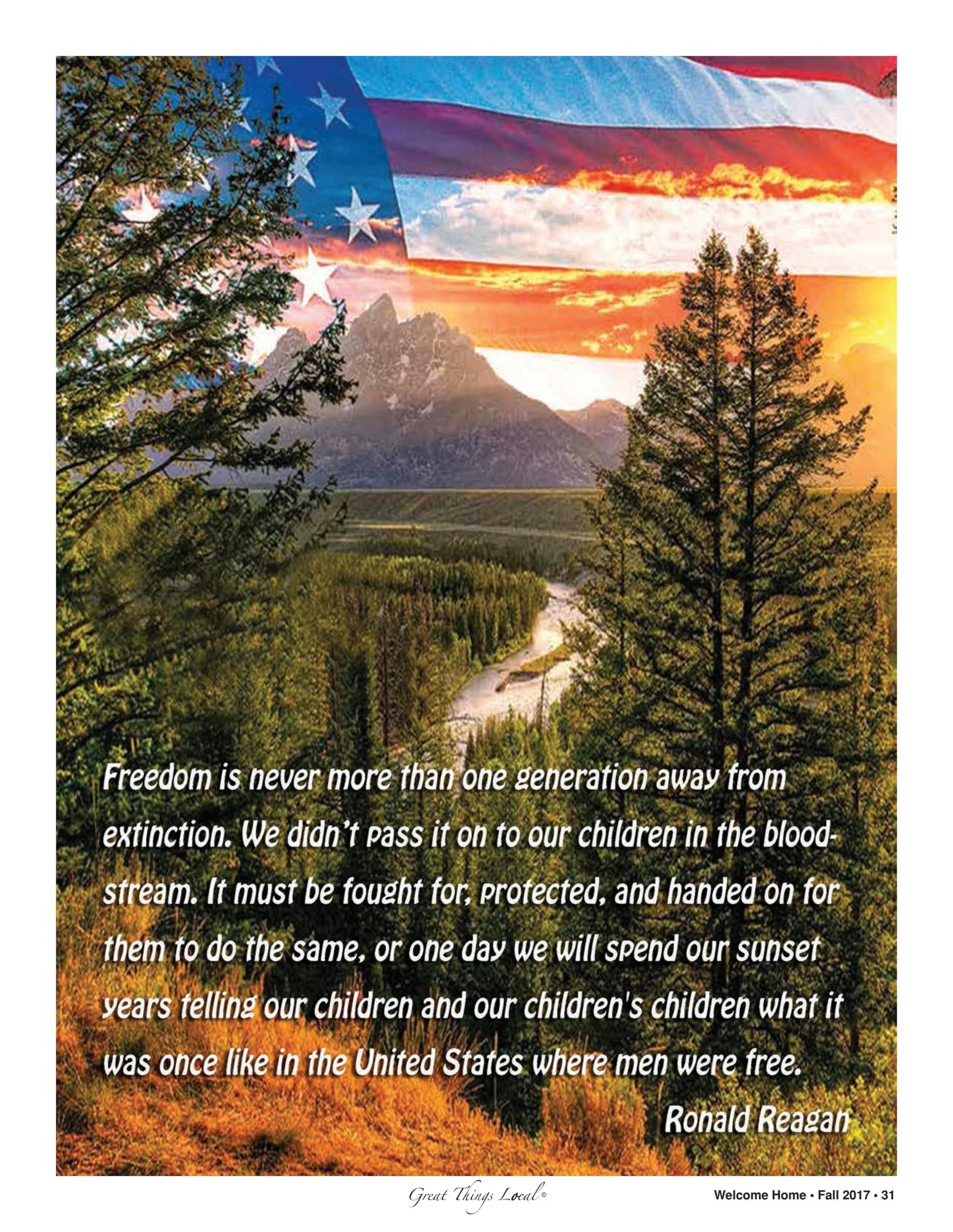
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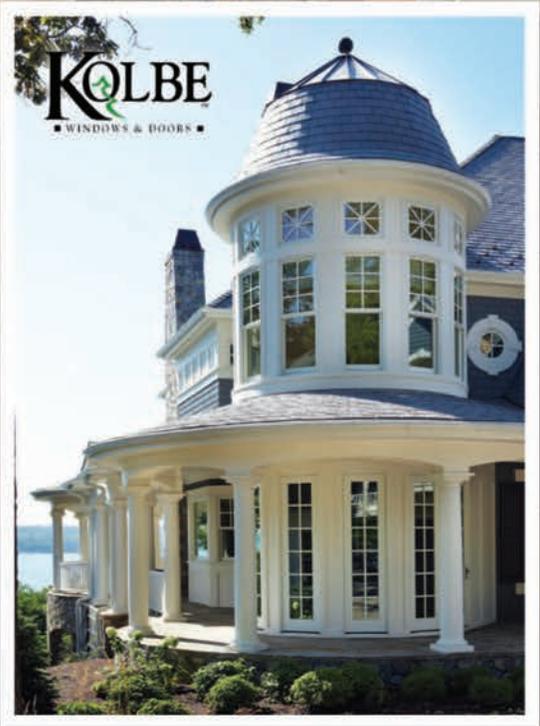
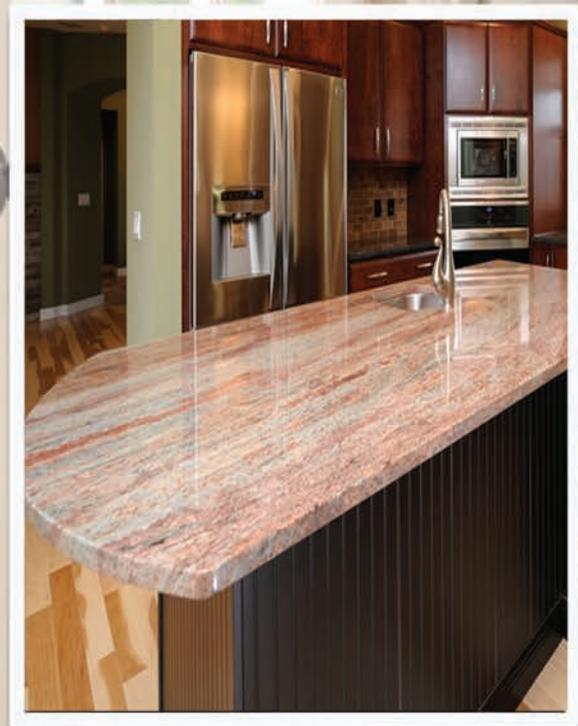


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