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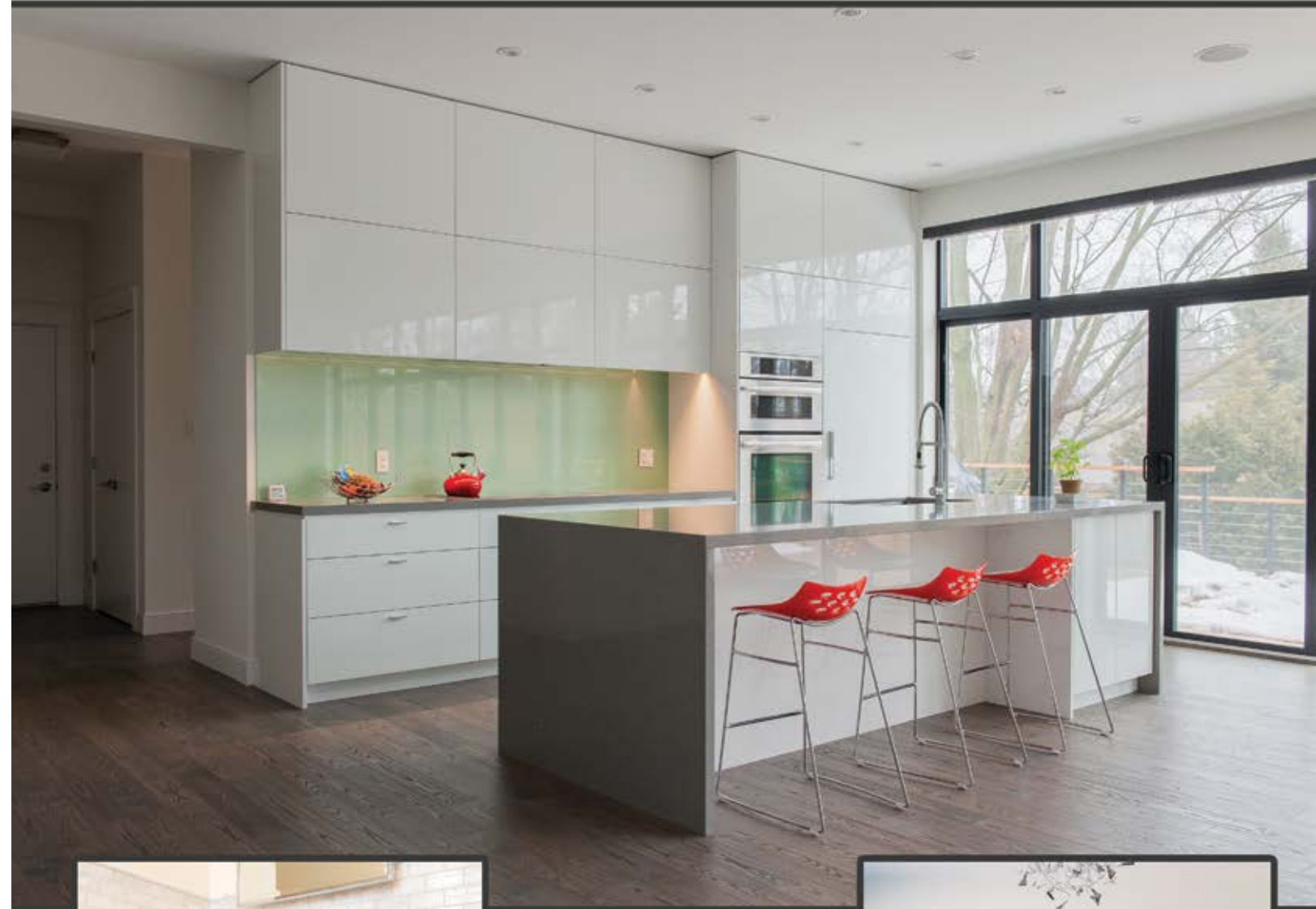
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I DON'T GET TO RICHMOND ROW AS OFTEN AS I'D like but when I do I always come away thinking how pleasant an excursion it was. As luck would have it, in preparing our Spring 2015 issue, I managed a few hours on the Row.

We were there to shoot interior design vignettes and luxury products at Quantum, this issue's Comfort Zone retailer (Page 36). Owner Joseph Branco impressed me with his commitment to local sourcing. During our conversation, I got quite an education on just how much artisanal talent this region offers and I left Quantum thinking, yes, we do need to really get behind our independent retailers and artisans. (Speaking of artisans, I am wearing a gorgeous infinity scarf made from vintage scarves by Mary Downs of Re/United Designs.) We need to get behind local suppliers, as well. All kinds of fabulous products and services are available here in town. There is absolutely no need to go further for them!

On another day, I got talking with Rick Carter, a local contractor who has renovated oh-so-many beautiful homes in this city. Rick grew up here and went into the trades shortly after leaving high school. Over time he built a thriving company, Rick Carter Cabinetry, and now he wants to encourage young people to consider entering the trades. Rick says the industry is desperate for young blood.

"I want to pass on my skills to the next generation," Rick says.

Take a look at our Home and Renovator feature on Page 18 to see just how much a keener could learn from working with Rick.

Speaking of the next generation, meet Martin and Kerri Jesko, this issue's Feature homeowners (Page 30). The young couple is now living in the third home they've transformed with their unique flair for blending rustic and minimal styles. Martin, a custom cabinetmaker, studied math in university but then decided he'd enjoy carpentry more. And, voilà, we get to enjoy his beautiful work while he advances a thriving career in the trades!

If you know any young people you think might have the potential for a career in the skilled trades – and carpentry is but one of many – be sure to encourage their interest. For inspiration, show them a copy of OUR HOMES London and Middlesex and let them know there are plenty of people close by who'd be happy to help them get started.

In the meantime, enjoy spring and enjoy your home!

Mary Hatt, *Managing Editor*
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contents

spring



14

departments

- 8 EDITOR'S NOTE
- 12 PUBLISHER'S NOTE
- 14 STYLE PICKS
Moving Outdoors
- 36 COMFORT ZONE
A London Favourite
- 40 PEOPLE
Fresh And Clean
- 44 HOME RESOURCE DIRECTORY
- 46 FINISHING TOUCH
Pantone Colour Of The Year: Marsala

features

- 18 HOME & RENOVATOR
Old North Roots
- 26 ORGANIZING
Decluttering Know-How
- 30 FEATURE HOME
Martin Jesko's Personal Space
- 28 GOOD TASTE
Healthful Herb Drinks

ON THE COVER

Tasty treats (Hey Cupcake!) delight the Jesko boys. Story, Page 30. Photography By Jason Hartog.

36



18



46



30

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THIS IS A SPECIAL ISSUE FOR OUR HOMES LONDON and Middlesex County. Spring 2015 marks our fourth anniversary and the start of our best year yet!

After such a long and harsh winter, it's so nice to have warmth, colour, and sunshine around us and this Spring issue reflects that renewal in so many ways.

Our focus now, and over the next four years, is to continue to treat you to beautiful homes and engaging articles about people and places in your neighbourhood.

We're also committed to providing our advertising partners with the very best value in London and Middlesex County. Our advertisers allow us to publish this beautiful magazine, and we would like to say a whole-hearted thank you to everyone for your loyalty and patronage over these past four years.

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P.S. We had many beautiful cover choices this issue. Here are some others we considered. Enjoy!



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PHOTOGRAPHY JACKIE NOBLE



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Continued on page 16



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After a lifetime of travelling the world and several years living on Canada's West Coast, this couple decided it was time to put down roots. A large network of friends drew them back to the Forest City, where they have created their forever home in London's Old North neighbourhood.

"I am ready to nest," the homeowner says. At an age when most might look to downsize to the convenience of a condominium or apartment life, this dog-loving couple chose to design a home renovation that will allow them to age in place. "This is my eighteenth move, so it was important to get it right," the homeowner says, adding "I want to go out of this house toes first. We know how important it is for people to be able to stay in their house for as long as possible, so we tried to think ahead." *Continued on page 20*



PUTTING DOWN roots

STORY **NICOLE LAIDLER**
 PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**
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ABOVE: The owners made sure their renovation included plenty of wall space in the kitchen and sunroom for treasured pieces. **TOP RIGHT:** Three generations under one roof, L-R: Whimsy, her daughter, Flirt and Flirt's daughter, Floozie. **RIGHT:** Art and antiques gathered during years of travel fill the home. **OPPOSITE TOP:** The eclectic dining room decor means the room is as comfortable for a pizza night as it is for a formal feast. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** Georgian Bay's sparkling waters in Margarethe Vanderpas's three-panel image welcome visitors. The foyer also features a side table from Warehouse 74 Vintage Industrial Home Furnishings in Lucan, and wide-plank ash floors that continue throughout the home.





LEFT: The owners kept their new kitchen largely free of uppers thanks to an ample pantry cupboard located elsewhere in the room. **TOP LEFT:** The cheerful room incorporates leaded waterfall glass-front cupboards with a pair of doors painted in hen images that the owners brought from a former home. **TOP RIGHT:** Contractor Rick Carter designed and built the table-style island. **OPPOSITE:** The owners say Carter's crowning achievement in their renovation was the built-in wall unit he created for their many books and collectibles. Here and elsewhere there are plenty of seating options for the book-crazy couple who, happily, have been getting used to the frequent comment, "This house is so soothing and peaceful."



Built in 1951, the 3,000 sq. ft. four-bedroom home underwent extensive renovations by **Rick Carter Cabinetry** to create the comfortable and practical living space that greets visitors today. "They bought the home because it had good bones, but the interior had very dated finishes," says Carter, a self-described "old-school tradesman," who has been running his own business for almost 40 years. "As a tradesman, you have to be price conscious but you also have to be very quality-oriented because you want to develop a loyal clientele," he notes. His company had renovated an old farmhouse for this couple many years before, and he was delighted to help them realize their vision once again.

Their original plan – to open up the kitchen and sunroom by relocating the stairway to the basement and replacing the home's flooring, windows and trim – soon grew in scope when Carter discovered that the electrical wiring needed to be replaced. They hired **Renco Electrical Contractors** to handle that job. Carter and the homeowners reasoned that, while they were at it, they should replace the trim and interior doors. "In the end, this really added to the wow factor of the renovation," the homeowner says.

The couple moved to their cottage for six months while the work was being completed, staying in contact with Carter by email and checking in on the project every two weeks. Today, the house is a gracious blend of modern finishes and traditional charm that reflects the couple's personal history and taste.

"The heart of the home is always the kitchen, so I wanted it to flow and be an open space," says the homeowner, sitting at a custom-built butcher-block table by Rick Carter Cabinetry.

With the basement staircase now relocated, the kitchen and adjoining sunroom provide a large, flexible space for entertaining or relaxation. New french doors, by **Cameron Window and Door Inc.**, lead to the garden and bathe the room in natural light, even during the winter months.

As art lovers, the couple wanted plenty of wall space, even in the kitchen. The efficient design and new cabinetry – as well as the addition of a walk-in pantry tucked away in the hall – provide ample storage and leave plenty of room to display the couple's collection.

Many beloved pieces have moved with their owners, including a set of kitchen cupboard doors painted with whimsical chickens by artist Peter Costello.

"I've moved those cupboards from our farm to the West Coast and back," says the homeowner. The off-white, shaker-style cabinets complement the grey, garnet-speckled granite counter tops from **Classic Granite and Marble Ltd.** Hardwood ash flooring, from **Huron Flooring Ltd.**, gives the kitchen a relaxed, country-feel and is used throughout the ground floor.

The sunroom, furnished with pieces collected over the years, is a favourite spot for reading. A striking painting of red horses by Florida artist Holly Manneck provides a visual focal point and a splash of bright colour against the walls, painted a tranquil Sesame by Benjamin Moore.

The home's formal dining room is located at the front of the house. Thanks to an eclectic mix of antiques – including a dining room table dating from 1840s Quebec – the space feels anything but stuffy.

"I often think about how many people wrote cheques, did their homework or wrote love letters at this table," the homeowner says. "It's very rustic and quite beat up, but I think it has so much character."

The room is painted a serene shade of Blue Grass by Benjamin Moore, a colour that continues throughout the ground floor. As avid readers, the couple needed a space for their extensive book collection. A

Continued on page 22



large, previously unfinished room at the back of the house provided the perfect solution. After adding electricity, insulation, new windows and flooring, the room is now an elegant library overlooking the back garden.

The wall-to-wall bookshelf, custom-made by Rick Carter Cabinetry, is a showcase of design and function. "This is a great example of the exquisite work Rick does, he's a real craftsman," the homeowner says.

Constructed out of maple and painted a striking red, the 17-foot long and nine-foot high unit looks like one piece but is actually 16 separate pieces joined by hidden fasteners, Carter explains.

The ground-floor master bedroom is located just off the library – a practical spot for a couple hoping to stay put for many years to come. The couple decided to steal space from an enormous en suite bathroom to create room for the kitchen pantry and an expanded main-floor powder room. The master bath is, however, still large enough to accommodate a spacious walk-in shower and plenty of storage.

Moving the washer and dryer from the basement to a main-floor mudroom located off the garage was another decision guided by practicality and foresight.

Three charming bedrooms and another bathroom are ready to welcome visitors upstairs.

"This is a very personal home," notes the homeowner. "It's a mish-mash. It's evolved. Everything has come from a different place and a different time in our lives. Nothing goes together, but it works for us." **OH**



TOP LEFT: The master bedroom is conveniently located on the main floor and furnished with antiques. **ABOVE:** Carter cut the size of the master bathroom in order to add a main-floor powder room on the other side of the wall. The space is roomy nonetheless and pleasingly mixes functionality with decorative finishes like the mirror and sconces above the sink. **LEFT:** The renovation added a spacious hallway to connect the kitchen and sunroom to the library.



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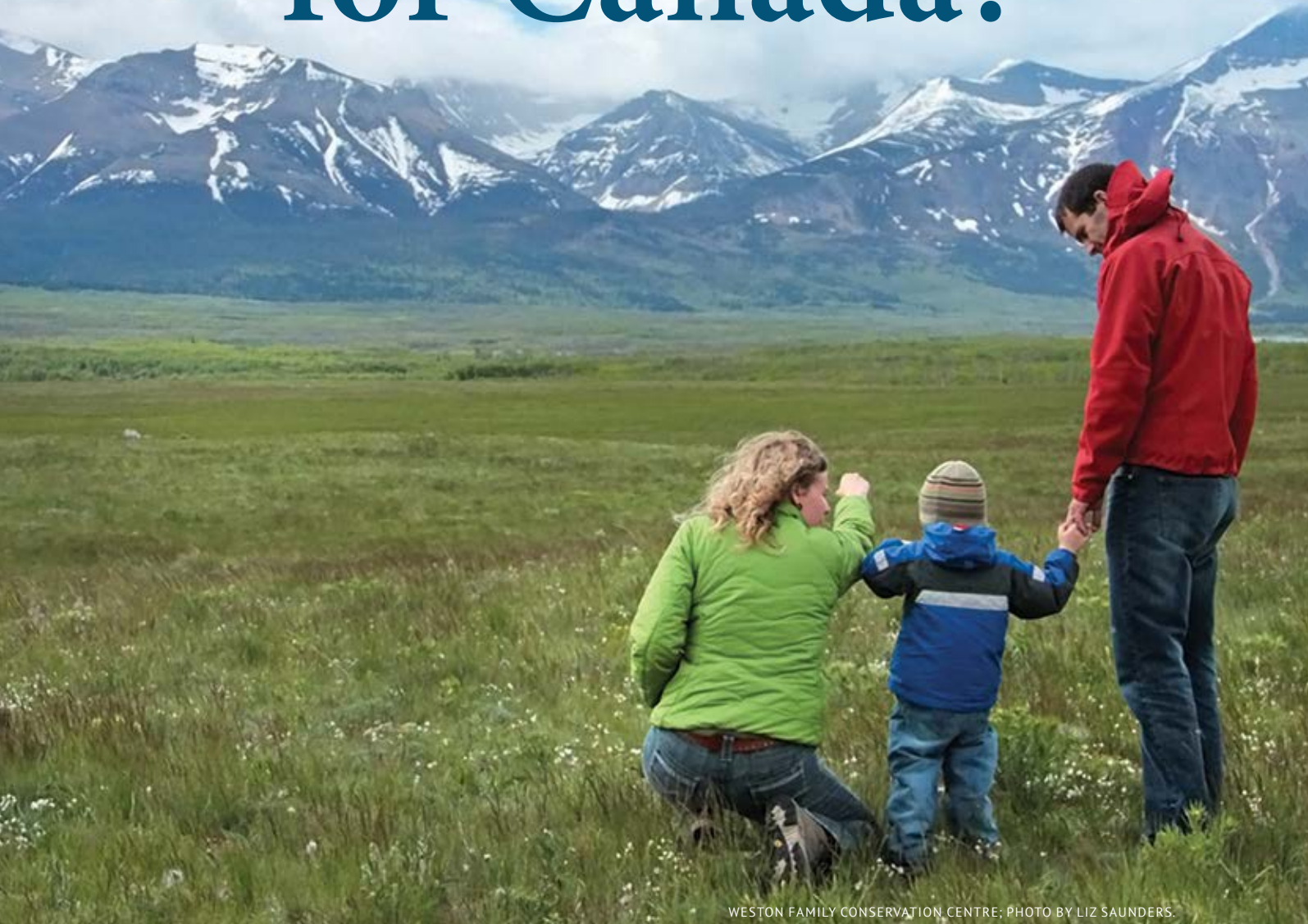
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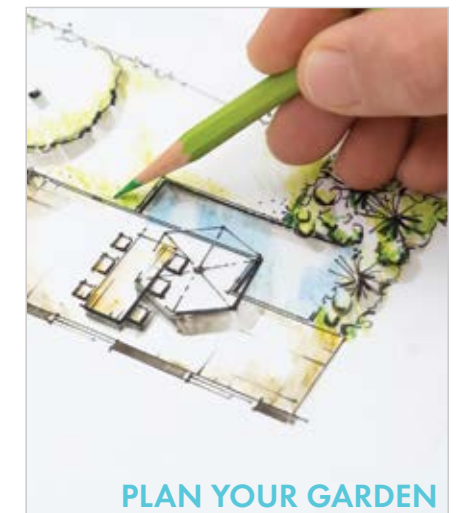
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THE LUXURY OF LESS

Living a decluttered life in a streamlined, simplified house sounds easy. Why is it so difficult?

It is generally true that “outer order contributes to inner calm,” as Gretchen Rubin writes in her bestselling book *The Happiness Project*. Massive decluttering is likely to leave you feeling lighter. Your first step should be getting rid of things, and then there will be less to organize.

Choose experiences over material goods. Get familiar with your stuff and your spending habits. Experientialists are not against spending, not even against stuff, but they are against having too much of the wrong stuff. Making sure your possessions play a healthy role in your life and knowing exactly what you own leads to the following question: Do my things give me experiences and make me happy, or are they creating debt, stress and unhappiness?

“Have nothing in your home that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful.”

– William Morris

One way of finding out what you need is to put everything you are unsure about in a box or garbage bag. Over the next month, take out items as you need them. By the end of the month, you will know what you don't use because it will still be in the box. Your next step is doing it for six months.

Start anywhere – do any small thing to train the brain that change is coming. Once you are in the mindset to declutter, the following steps will help you get started:

One of the easiest methods to subscribe to is the four-box method:

- Decide which room you are starting on and line up boxes in the following categories: keep, sell, charity, trash. Place each item from every room into one of the four categories. Some rooms will take hours, and others will take days. But the technique and principles remain the same.
- Consider each item individually. Be ruthless and if you can't be, make sure someone is helping you that can question everything

you decide to keep. Whatever is in the keep pile, look at it a second time.

- Pick up one item at a time and make an instant decision – when was the last time you used this? If you haven't used it in a few months (six months at the longest), get rid of it, excluding seasonal clothes, of course.

Deal With Each Box

- **Keep Pile:** if you decide to keep it, organize it before you put it away, keeping similar items together. You might have scattered notebooks and stationary – keep it all together in a nice-looking container in the office area of your home.
- **Sell pile:** List it immediately on Kijiji or Craigslist and keep it separate from the remaining items to sort so you aren't tempted to keep it. List it for a reasonable price with a photo, description and measurements so it sells quickly.
- **Charity Pile:** Donate as much as possible. Most charities are willing to pick up large pieces, otherwise load up the car and deliver as soon as you can to keep things moving. If you hold onto an item too long, there might be a temptation to keep it.
- **Trash Pile:** Papers often fall into this category. For anything you can use for tax purposes, the general rule of thumb in Canada is to save pertinent financial records for seven years.

Henry David Thoreau, everyone's favourite 19th-century hut-dwelling minimalist expressed the sense that owning things constitutes a spiritual burden. He advocated simplicity; not throwing out so much as not acquiring them in the first place. **OH**



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STORY **SHELBY HILSON**

RE-FRESH-MINT

When we read about the world's healthiest foods, the focus is often on fruits and vegetables, but fresh herbs offer some of the highest medicinal benefits and are, quite frankly, delicious!

One such herb, which brings our spring gardens to life with its sweet, fresh scent, is mint. Scientifically known as *Mentha*, mint has more than two dozen species and hundreds of varieties.

Mint is somewhat of an overachiever in the natural health world with a list of benefits that is long and impressive. It contains an antioxidant known as rosmarinic acid, which has anti-inflammatory properties and has been studied for its effectiveness in relieving seasonal allergies. It also acts as a natural decongestant, helps ease sore throats, aids upset stomachs and indigestion, speeds the digestion process, relieves nausea and headaches, and is a natural stimulant, which

can give you a boost and help you focus when you're feeling depressed, anxious, fatigued or sluggish. We also know that mint helps to freshen our breath and gives many products, like toothpaste, their refreshing flavour.

So, how can we incorporate this beneficial and refreshing spring herb into our daily lives? Simple... add it to your drinks.

Fresh mint can enhance the quality and taste of so many refreshments. Add it to your water to help with nausea or fatigue, or simply to enjoy its wonderful flavour. Toss in a lemon wedge and getting your eight glasses a day won't feel like a chore anymore.

Give your guests a taste of spring with one of these simple, pretty and refreshing drinks:

With the addition of ginger and raw honey, this tasty drink boasts even more health benefits and is a wonderful solution for upset stomach and indigestion.

MINT & GINGER LEMONADE

Makes 4 servings

- ½ cup chopped fresh mint leaves
- ½ cup chopped fresh ginger
- ⅓ cup raw honey
- 2 cups boiling water
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1 ½ cups cold water

- Combine mint, ginger and honey in a bowl. Add boiling water. Let steep for half hour. Strain into juice jug, extracting as much liquid as possible. Add lemon juice and cold water. Pour over ice and garnish with mint leaves and lemon slices.



This powerhouse smoothie is hearty enough to replace a meal and a great way to start the day or give you that afternoon pick-me-up.

MINT SUPERFOOD SMOOTHIE

Makes one 16 oz serving

- 1 cup almond or coconut milk
- 8-10 leaves fresh mint (try chocolate mint variety)
- 1 frozen banana
- ½ cup spinach
- 1 tbsp cacao nibs
- 1 tbsp hemp seeds
- 2 medjool dates, pitted
- 1 scoop protein powder
- ½ cup ice

- Add all ingredients to a high-powered blender and blend until smooth. Serve immediately. **OH**



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SPACIOUS AND SERENE

STORY **MARY HATT**
PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**
FOOD STYLING **HEY CUPCAKE!**

Martin and Kerri Jesko are hip and modern, so the young couple kind of surprised themselves by falling for a home built 40 years ago. Besides, when the house first came on the real estate market in 2012, Kerri was in no mood to move. They had just finished full-scale renovations to a home in a popular London neighbourhood where she was looking forward to raising their two boys.



Martin, however, couldn't resist the unique structure of his new find, a 1970s contemporary surrounded by woods, just west of the city. When its price tag finally dropped into their range, he set about talking his wife into taking on another project.

The home's contemporary cedar-clad exterior had made a favourable first impression on both Martin and Kerri.

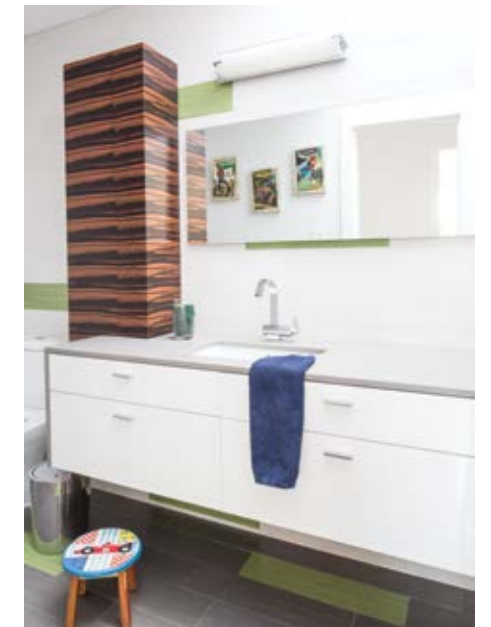
"We loved its architecture, shape and cool lines," Martin says.

Inside, however, was another story and another reason for Kerri's initial reluctance to

Continued on page 32

OPPOSITE: The family room is the home's go-to refuge, with comfortable, fireside seating and a built-in bar on one wall fitted with a trough sink for chilling drinks and spalted wood storage cabinets. **FAR LEFT:** Bright white makes a perfect backdrop for plated food like the whimsical cake from Hey Cupcake! **LEFT:** Clean lines and warm wood accents continue in the mudroom. **BELOW:** Working at the kitchen sink is a pleasure when taking in wooded views through the big-scale picture window. The clutter-free space is visually pleasing as well, thanks to plenty of storage drawers and cabinets.





ABOVE LEFT: Martin custom-fitted his boys' rooms with lots of closet space, storage and built-in desks and beds. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The big striped-wood cabinet in the boys' bathroom adds a funky touch. **FAR LEFT:** The stairwell features a wall of gallery-size proportions for showing off statement art by Martin's friend, Matt Durant. **LEFT:** Kerri's cosy office, with stylish storage designed by Martin, is also on the upper level. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The living room, tucked into one side of the main level, blends rustic finishes - notably the brick fireplace surround, beamed ceiling and mantel - with contemporary decor. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Another intriguing Durant creation graces the dining room. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Decorative, free-flying birds were applied to the wall by Martin and the boys. The family uses their dining table most frequently to play board games like Clue.

buy the property. It was dark and dated, with heavy drapes blocking magnificent views of the landscape.

In the end, Martin, who owns **Martin Jesko Custom Cabinetry**, convinced her he could work magic on the 4,000 sq. ft. interior.

The goal was to bring natural light into the home and improve flow between the main level's principal living areas. Martin loaded design plans for the reno onto his computer, making it easy to fiddle around with the dimensions of spaces he wanted to change. The Jeskos then replaced time-worn structural features and finishes to maximize the artistic impact of their home's original angles and sunken living spaces.

Kosmos Electric put in a new electrical system and old tile flooring was replaced with grey-stained rustic maple (supplied by **BreezeWood Floors** and installed by Martin). The dreary original panelling was ripped out and **DiCola Interiors Ltd.** installed new drywall. The walls were painted American White and accented by Basic Blue on the kitchen ceiling, both colours are by Benjamin Moore.

Getting rid of those heavy drapes was a top priority. In fact, they ended up replacing all windows to reclaim what they consider one of their home's prize features, its connection to the outdoors. Since completion of the six-month renovation, the step-down dining room

that opens off the entryway welcomes visitors with sight lines to the lovely woods behind the house. The live-edge, lustrous wood dining table and large-scale painting on distressed wood, by Matt Durant, warm the room while the chandelier (**Living Lighting**) echoes the contemporary-style dining chairs.

To the right of the foyer is a cosy sunken living room. It's become a favourite hideaway for Kerri and her friends, with casual seating surrounding a brick wood-burning fireplace. Going left from the foyer, one arrives in the spacious new kitchen and family room, which opens through sliding glass doors (**Gentek Building Products**) to

a back deck at one end. Not surprisingly, this part of the house, with a big-screen TV and a fireplace that Martin re-styled and retrofitted from wood burning to gas, is command central for most family activities. It is also a party zone when the Jeskos entertain.

"I wanted a floating island in the kitchen," Martin says of the statement-piece look he achieved by using special lighting to separate the quartz counter top from the base of the island. **Bernardo Group Ltd.** supplied counter surfaces in the kitchen and throughout the home.

The contemporary work space also features a sleek sink and faucet from **London Bath Centre**, and German-made Hettich hardware

Continued on page 34



TOP LEFT: Like elsewhere in the home, the master bedroom combines woody touches with modern lines. **TOP RIGHT:** A sliding barn door separates the master from the spacious en suite bath and commode-style toilet. **ABOVE:** A well-organized, windowed walk-in closet, formerly a tiny bedroom, completes the master suite.

supplied by **Commonwealth Plywood Co. Ltd.** The stove and refrigerator, fully integrated behind high-gloss white cabinetry, were supplied by **Goemans Appliances** as were two built-in dishwashers, known as dish drawers, by New Zealand-based manufacturer Fisher & Paykel.

“At first, I really missed having a stainless fridge because that is where I could put up things the kids drew,” Kerri says. “But now, I wouldn’t change a thing. I just love the clean look of this kitchen!”

Martin and **Mark Deren** of **Mark Deren Custom Metal Design** designed a new stairway to the upper level (**Heritage Stair & Railing Co. Ltd.**), finished off in glass and metal. Major renovations continued upstairs with Martin and his crew tearing out seven poky bedrooms and replacing them with a spacious master suite plus bedrooms and a bathroom for the boys.

Special features in the kids’ bathroom include the high-gloss white vanity paired with the striped, ebony veneer storage cupboard. Dad also built gorgeous wood shelves and beds in their rooms, adding comfy

rustic elements to the Jesko’s minimalist style. In fact, Martin created standout wood features throughout the home, his favourite being the walnut finishes, and Kerry’s the spalted maple in the mudroom.

The master suite, featuring soaring ceilings and a stunning light fixture from **Guildwood Lighting & Fireside**, opens to a spa-like bathroom with a huge double shower, a soaker tub and a toilet cleverly hidden inside a bench (London Bath). A former tiny bedroom was turned into a walk-in closet off the master.

Above the garage is a work-out room that connects to the rest of the upstairs through a compact office that Martin built for Kerri, a graphic designer specializing in custom wedding invitations. He kitted her cheerful space in spalted beech wood shelving and a built-in desk.

Their renovations are, for the most part, behind them, and the Jeskos are now in agreement: moving here was the right call. Fortunately, Martin assures his wife they are here to stay.

“I’m tired of renovating my own homes,” he says. “Now it’s time for the family.” **OH**

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LITTLE BIG STORE

PHOTOGRAPHY JACKIE NOBLE



Joseph Branco



THE PLACE: In the words of founder Joseph Branco, **Quantum Furnishings + Design** is the little store that carries a lot. And, he adds, in bringing this pleasant abundance to the people of London he has always had a simple wish: that anyone coming into the store will feel good about being here. That must be happening since Quantum has been on Richmond Row for 15 years. Yet in today's online world, in-store customer experience matters more than ever, Joseph explains. It's why he and designer Adam Mackowiac are about to turn one side of Quantum into a sophisticated design centre, Quantum Verdi, featuring a display kitchen, fabric by the yard, flooring samples plus a model wine cellar and in-home cigar room. Joseph is proud that much of what he carries is made in Canada if not in London. "I'm over the moon about the way Canadian manufacturers are designing furniture now," he says. Quantum's Canadian lines include Dinec, Marcantonio Designs and Van Gogh Designs, to name a few.

THE STYLE: You'll be welcomed by the pleasant strains of classical music, and clean transitional furnishings and

Continued on page 38

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accessories grouped in vignettes. The store is casual, with displays, lamps and art work lining brick walls and unique ceiling fixtures contributing to a soft, modern vibe. Looking for a gift? Consider luxurious bath products by Lothantique or a whimsical outdoor accessory. Need a new chair? Don't leave without trying Dutaillier's Canadian-made Italian leather recliner, exclusive to Quantum. If you would like to discuss a project, Joseph and his team are always on hand or, if you prefer, an in-home consultation can be easily arranged. Helping people one-on-one, from the smallest of purchases to planning an entire home, is what Joseph loves most about Quantum. "This is the energy that keeps us going," he says. "My personal gratification comes from knowing I've been able to help someone bring a vision to reality."

WHAT'S HOT: Trending are medium to lighter wood finishes for floors and furniture. Concrete counters and coffee tables are huge.

SPECIAL MENTION: "If I could, I would source everything in my store locally and feature only one-of-a-kind pieces. I believe in uniqueness."

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PHOTOGRAPHY JACKIE NOBLE

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Pro Tips? Clean your windows in the shade and dry them with your ENJO for a clean and streak-free shine. The ENJO Plus Line Duo Glove is multi-purpose, ideal for your three Ws: wood, windows and walls.



SYLVIE ROTH

Sylvie's Interior Design

What areas of the house usually need the most tidying up between seasons? As the weather changes, the entranceway needs to become quickly functional with items for spring. Keep your things in a wire basket for a clean, minimalist look. They will be easy to find, too.

Do you have any "editing" advice when it comes to de-cluttering? Let's start the season by letting go of ordinary items. How about displaying and wearing only your favourites?

What decorative touches can be added to household organization? I recommend a good-quality rolling rack with your most beautiful pieces, or a series of hooks on the wall for your accessories. They look great and are easily reached.

Continued on page 42



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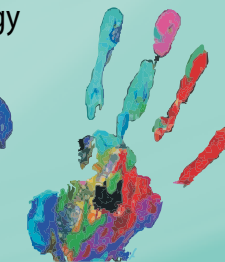
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Special Advice? Put in a fresh bag and filter before you start your spring cleaning. Check your brush roll and belt, as well. If they're clogged or worn, your machine can't do its job properly.

Personal Favourites? BEAM's central vacuum system or a Miele canister with deep-cleaning power hand.



KAREN BLANCHARD
Natural Paws Pantry

How often should doggie get groomed? For curly coats, every four to six weeks. For a double coat, once in both spring and summer. Be sure to start off the season with a fresh groom that includes a nail trim. It seems everyone wants their dog groomed these days, so book ahead!

What products do you recommend for the home groomer? I prefer shampoos that are as natural as possible, such as ones with an aloe and oatmeal base. I like Tropiclean shampoos.

What other services do you offer? If you want to clean your house without the dog around, we have doggie daycare, Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. – 6 p.m., in a large climate-controlled indoor play zone as well as an outdoor space. Like the grooming, availability is limited so book ahead!



JANICE & JENNA SLATER
Fred & Bessie's Mercantile

What is special about chalk and mineral paints or milk paints? Janice: They are super easy to work with and mistakes are not possible. If you don't like the result just sand the surface and repaint.

Friendly advice? Jenna: Find a piece that interests you then add a coat of milk paint or chalk and mineral paint for character. Acrylic paint is best for non-wood finishes. Janice: The brands say no prep is necessary but a light sanding never hurts. Use a good-quality brush, as well.

Can this kind of paint go on outdoor furniture? Janice: Yes, but if you use a chalk and mineral paint or a milk paint, be sure to apply a polyurethane top coat for durability. If using acrylic paint, no top coat is necessary. **OH**

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ARVA APPLIANCE CENTRE Page 39

ARTISTS/ART GALLERIES

MARGARETHE VANDERPAS Page 23

AUDIO VIDEO/HOME AUTOMATION

OMEGA AUDIO VIDEO Page 27

AWNINGS

LONDON AWNINGS Page 41

BALCONIES & RAILINGS

GLASS CANADA LIMITED Page 13, 15

BUILDERS/CUSTOM HOMES

GENTRAC HOMES Page 27

SIFTON PROPERTIES LTD. Page 48

BUILDING SUPPLIES

COPP'S BUILDALL Page 6

COUNTERTOPS/GRANITE & STONE

BERNARDO GROUP LTD. Page 37

CUSTOM CABINETRY

GCW CUSTOM KITCHENS & CABINETRY INC. Page 37, 45

JENNINGS FURNITURE & DESIGN Page 12

MARTIN JESKO CUSTOM CABINETRY Page 7

MÖBELHAUS FURNITURE & CABINETRY Page 39

RICK CARTER CABINETRY Page 23

SYLVIE'S INTERIOR DESIGN Page 23

DECKING/FENCING

FORM A FENCE Page 43

FLOORING

BERNARDO GROUP LTD. Page 37

BREEZEWOOD FLOORS Page 37

FOOD/DRINK/CATERING

HEY, CUPCAKE! Page 29, 45

STEEL GRILL CATERING Page 29

HOME ACCENTS/COLLECTIBLES/DECOR/FURNITURE

AUSTIN & TAYLOR HOME FURNISHINGS Page 11

FRED & BESSIE'S MERCANTILE Page 27, 45

JENNINGS FURNITURE & DESIGN Page 12

MODERN LIVING LONDON - EQ3 Page 35

QUANTUM FURNISHINGS & DESIGN Page 23

REDECOR CONSIGNMENT Page 47

STAN PORTLEY'S Page 41

SYLVIE'S INTERIOR DESIGN Page 23

TRULY WOOD FURNITURE Page 15

HOME IMPROVEMENTS/RENOVATIONS

DUO BUILDING LIMITED Page 2

GENTRAC HOMES Page 27

PATON BROS. LTD. Page 3

HOT TUBS/SPAS/SAUNAS/POOLS

BEACHCOMBER HOT TUBS Page 6

FOREST CITY POOL & PATIO Page 5

INTERIOR DESIGN

SYLVIE'S INTERIOR DESIGN Page 23

KITCHEN & BATH

BERNARDO GROUP LTD. Page 37

COPP'S BUILDALL Page 6

DUO BUILDING LIMITED Page 2

GCW CUSTOM KITCHENS & CABINETRY INC. Page 37, 45

GLASS CANADA LIMITED Page 13, 15

JENNINGS FURNITURE & DESIGN Page 12

LONDON BATH CENTRE Page 35

MARTIN JESKO CUSTOM CABINETRY Page 7

MÖBELHAUS FURNITURE & CABINETRY Page 39

PATON BROS. LTD. Page 3

RICK CARTER CABINETRY Page 23

SYLVIE'S INTERIOR DESIGN Page 23

LANDSCAPING/LAWN & GARDEN

V & P'S TOPSOIL & LANDSCAPE SUPPLIES Page 13

LIGHTING

LIVING LIGHTING Page 37

OMEGA AUDIO VIDEO Page 27

MILLWORK/TRIM/MOULDING

COPP'S BUILDALL Page 6

NEW HOME COMMUNITIES

MACGREGOR ENTERPRISES -

INVERLYN LAKE ESTATES Page 17

SIFTON PROPERTIES LTD. Page 48

OUTDOOR STRUCTURES

FOREST CITY POOL & PATIO Page 5

PAINTING & DECORATING

CREATIVE TRENDS PAINTING Page 11, 45

FRED & BESSIE'S MERCANTILE Page 27, 45

PAINTING, PRIMING, BLASTING & STAINING

CUSTOM SODA PREP & PAINT Page 27

THE PAINT & WOODCARE CO. Page 37

PET SERVICES

NATURAL PAWS PANTRY Page 29

REAL ESTATE

AGENT REALTY Page 4

CLAIRWOOD REAL ESTATE Page 9

SPECIAL ASSOCIATIONS

NATURE CONSERVANCY CANADA Page 24

WINDOWS & DOORS

COPP'S BUILDALL Page 6

GLASS CANADA LIMITED Page 13, 15

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