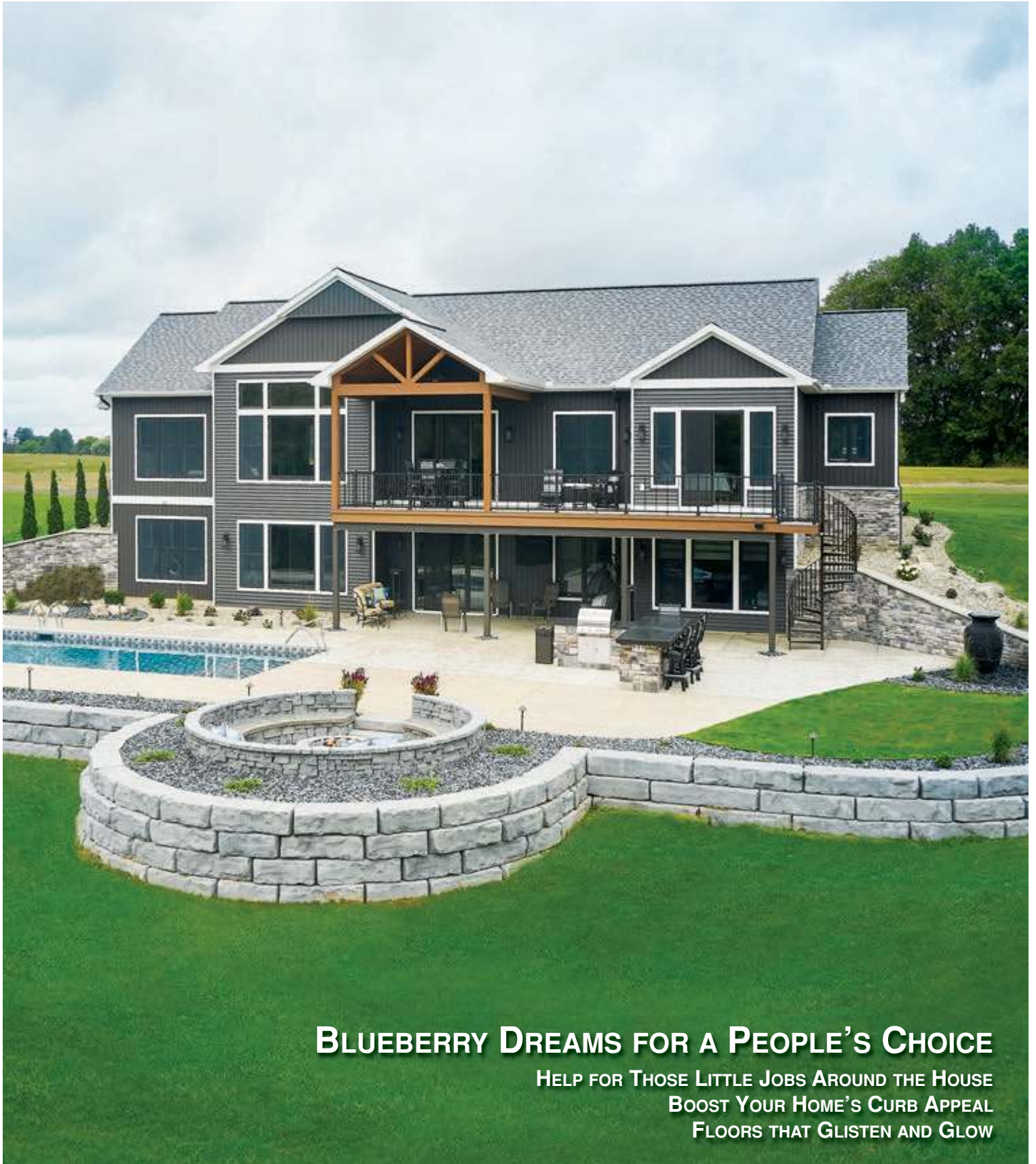


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*Magazine*

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FALL 2022



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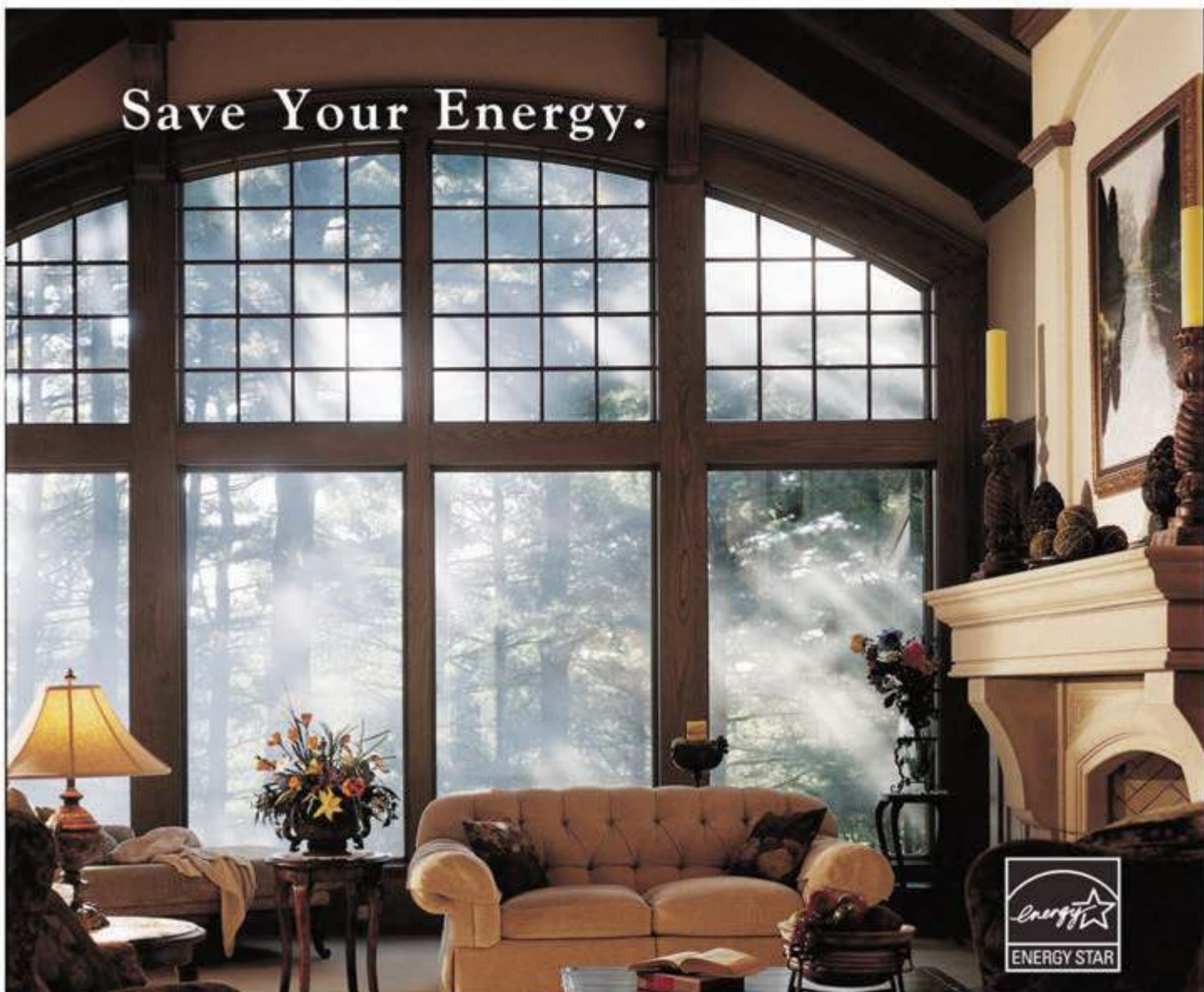
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# Feature Home

( ON THE COVER )

## 16

When Joe and Chantal were ready to build their dream home they decided on Magnuson Build & Design. The design and quality of the home helped win the People's Choice Award during the 2022 Parade of Homes.

Cover and "Contents" photography by Ashley Avila Photography



## 13

Boost Your Home's Curb Appeal



Celebrate  
Comfort Food

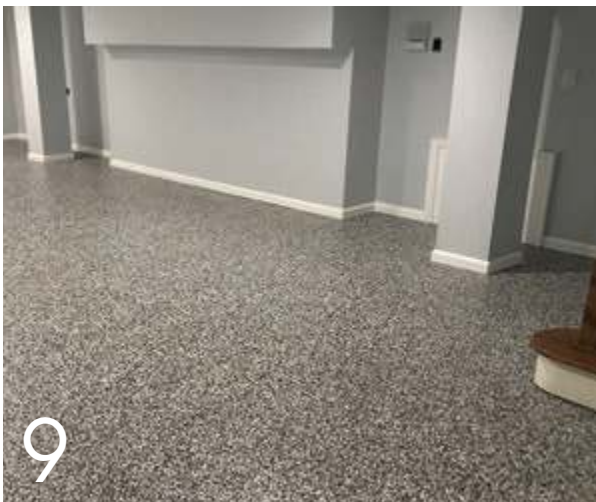
## 7

Butternut Squash Soup



## 25

Help With Little Jobs Around the House



## 9

Epoxy and Polyaspartic Floor Coating



## 28

Pest Control

# CONTENTS

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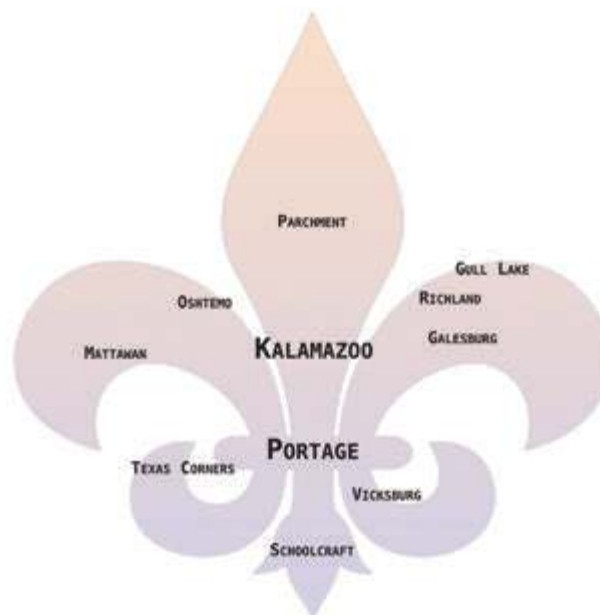
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# Celebrate Comfort Food

## Butternut Squash Soup

Photography by Linda Hoard

Fall is in the air and we look forward to comfort food. One of the best ways to enjoy the season is by making warm and comforting soups. This soup recipe is easy as well as healthy and nutritious. The ingredients are easy to find and may already be in your kitchen. It's so good and simple, you'll want to make this over and over!

### Ingredients:

- 1 butternut squash, about 2-3 lbs., roasted
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, plus some for roasted squash
- 1 large sweet onion
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 3/4 cup celery, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 cups vegetable broth

### Roast the butternut squash:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Cut the squash in half and scoop out the seeds. Drizzle with olive oil and salt and pepper. Place cut-side down on a parchment lined baking sheet. Bake until fork tender, about 45 minutes to an hour for a medium-sized squash.

### Directions:

Heat olive oil in a large pot on medium heat. Add chopped onion, garlic and salt. Sauté for about 5 minutes until soft.

Add the chopped carrots, celery, ground black pepper, and ground nutmeg and stir for a minute to give it time to absorb all the flavors. Add the vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes until the vegetables are soft. Add the roasted butternut squash and stir. Remove from the heat and pour the soup into a blender or use an immersion blender. Blend until smooth.

Garnish with pumpkin seeds, fresh sage, or try a seasoned peppercorn mix.

Jorden and Brandon DeHaan  
with their father, DRS founder,  
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# Floors That Glisten and Glow

By Zinta Aistars

Whether by muddy boots or pet tracks or hot tires, there are floors in and around the home that take more than the usual everyday beating. These may also be floors that get splashed and splattered with water or gasoline and oil spills.

"The floor of a garage or a basement or a man cave is perfect for epoxy flooring," says Chad Sisco, president and owner of H & H Painting Company at 1788 North Westnedge Avenue in Kalamazoo. "As is the pavement around a pool that can get wet and slippery."

Epoxy floor coating, Sisco says, is a general term for a wide variety of floor coating systems that can be specifically tailored to provide the appearance and level of performance desired. The coating is a mix of polymer resins and hardeners that can create a smooth, shiny surface and is stain, bacteria and germ resistant, making it easy to clean. While do-it-yourself kits are available, Sisco recommends hiring a professional to apply.

"It comes down to prep," he says. "If you haven't prepped your floor properly, the coating won't apply correctly, and you'll end up having to do it again or hire a professional to clean it up. To prep the floor, you would need equipment like a grinder and a blaster to create that abrasive surface for the coating to adhere but not damage your concrete floor in the process. A typical prep would be the diamond grind method which makes the concrete floor porous so that the epoxy coatings can adhere to it."

Sisco does not recommend a process called acid-etching unless the area is low traffic and used only for foot traffic. The acid can damage the cement in the floor and will not work for prepping the surface if the concrete was sealed.

To apply an epoxy coating to your floor requires several steps and several coatings over a three- to four-day time span

for each coat to cure, Sisco explains. The more coats, the more durable.

"Although we do have a faster cure option available, too, than the traditional three days, applying three coats in one day," he says.

The first step is to examine the floor for any issues such as water leaks, cracks, or chips. All of these must be addressed and repaired before applying the epoxy coating—including distressing any previous epoxy coating so that a new coating can be applied.

Next, a primer coat is applied, followed by an intermediate or broadcast coat. The broadcast coat contains epoxy resin and





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silica, quartz aggregates or other color flakes that then fill in any low spots on the floor and create a smooth and shiny finish—or a lightly textured one if that is the customer’s desire.

“When that’s dry, we vacuum up the loose bits and then apply a clear coat over that,” Sisco says. “The thicker, the more resistant to abrasion and chemical spills. Spilling antifreeze or gasoline can discolor and damage other flooring, but epoxy can resist that. Once cured, the epoxy floor can also resist the heat from tires when you park a vehicle you’ve just been driving.”

Around a pool the process differs slightly, Sisco says, as making the surface must be non-slippery.

“We can add glass bead or another anti-slip additive to the topcoat to resist slipping when wet,” he says. “And we can do that in the garage, too, if the customer wishes so that you don’t slip on winter ice, for instance. It may not be as easy to clean as a smooth surface, but it is equally durable. We recommend a foam squeegee to clean.”

One aspect of epoxy flooring that a customer may consider is referred to as a flexibility rating. A more brittle coating may crack more easily, while a more flexible coating resists cracking.

“Different applications have different flexibility ratings,” Sisco says. “If you are looking for a waterproof application, such

as around a pool or in a basement that might flood, you’ll want a higher flexibility rating.”

#### CLEAR OPTIONS

Another option to epoxy flooring, says Kelly Vance, office manager at Premier Concrete Coating on 116 South Centreville in Sturgis, Michigan, is a polyaspartic coating. A polyaspartic concrete coating is another name for aliphatic polyurea, which is a hybrid material consisting of ester and other materials, originally developed to coat metal bridges.

“We use it to coat concrete flooring due to its durability and moisture resistance,” Vance says. “It’s a high-quality coating that is oil- and stain-resistant and cures faster than epoxy. We can apply it usually in one day, but we recommend not walking on it for at least five to six hours and not parking heavy vehicles on it for 24 hours. Customers use it in garages, around pools, on patios or in a basement.”

Vance describes a six-step process that involves prepping the floor, base coating, applying chips to add color and designs, scraping the chips, and finally applying the UV-protective clear coat. As with epoxy coatings, different finishes are available with custom color schemes and designs. Non-slip finishes are available for areas such as surrounding pools.

“Another advantage is that a polyaspartic coating can last longer and are four times stronger than epoxy,” Vance says. “It is formulated for its incredible adhesive qualities.”

If applying to a surface that has had an epoxy coating applied in the past, the team at Premier Concrete Coating can sand that down, then vacuum and apply a solvent before applying the new coating.

“We guarantee the results with a lifetime warranty, and the flooring should last you for decades,” Vance says.

Both H & H Painting Company and Premier Concrete Coating offer free quotes in the Southwest Michigan area.



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## Boost Your Home's Curb Appeal

By Barbara Fisher

Curb appeal. Just how attractive is the exterior of our home from the street? We've all heard the term nose blind for odors and most of us have highly developed skills in blocking out unpleasant household features we haven't addressed. Is it time to walk out to the street and take a look at what others are seeing?

Many of us have undertaken do-it-yourself projects to enhance the curb appeal of our homes. Perhaps we change our porch décor with the seasons? Window boxes can add some immediate color and panache. We've seen the immediate impact of painting a door and adding some new door hardware or updating exterior light fixtures. Replacing the numbers on the house can create a subtle or bold statement. But, we'll leave do-it-yourself projects and landscaping for another discussion. For many exterior home improvement projects it's time to call in a professional.

A first step to most improvements is planning. Scott Pennings, President, Pennings & Sons, suggests taking a step back to view your house with fresh eyes. "What would stand out to someone walking up for the first time? Where is the peeling paint, cracked window, or other unsightly items on the front of the house that you overlook because you've seen it so many times?" All homes require regular maintenance and there are efficiencies to be gained by incorporating home improvements at the same time maintenance is done. Pennings asks, "Are you near the end of the life on your roof or siding or windows; start with that and see what things can be done to

not just replace them as they are but do it in a way that will add some character or charm to the home in the process. If you are due for a re-roof, can you add or change the overhang as part of the re-roof to improve the overall appearance. If the windows are due for replacement is there something you can change in the window grill design or the window trim detail to dress it up." Pennings went on to say that "improving curb appeal can impact the feel of your entire neighborhood. It promotes the feeling that the neighborhood is taken care of and can inspire others to maintain their surrounding property better as well".

Need some ideas to stimulate the planning process? Upgrading a garage door can add not only new features in smart home technology but also make an instant impact on the façade of the home: color, hardware, windows (those that let natural light in or "fake" windows that look absolutely real but aren't). Could porch steps use a makeover? What about the railing? Would expanding the porch add additional functionality as well as curb appeal? If the front door is in need of replacing or upgrading, a new door can add an instant difference (as does upgrading door hardware). What about sidelights? Siding choices now span not only vibrant and traditional colors, but also styles. A whole article could be written about siding. Does one stick with the traditional lap siding or board and batten, shakes, beaded? Then there is siding that it intended to not look at all like siding. While the siding is being replaced, it's an ideal time to put in replacement

Todd Modderman    Nate Modderman

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windows or change window opening sizes or shape. Homeowners may want to consider a blend of home exteriors and add stonework to the existing exterior.

Stonework can add lasting color and stunning impact to a home. J & N Stone, Inc., out of Wakarusa, Indiana, makes and installs their own manufactured stone using natural stone in their molding process to create a product that looks like the genuine article. From large round stones with a split face texture that is ideal for a lake cottage, to rectangular styles to a blend of styles to create a linear look, homeowners are likely to find the color and style to match the look they are seeking. Cassandra Gayton, J & N Stone, notes that remodeling with quality stonework provides an 80-90% return in value plus adds to the overall aesthetics of the home. Little or no maintenance is required and sealing isn't recommended. For areas where moss could be an issue, power washing or a light scrub might be needed. Gayton notes that installation is easy on existing landscaping.

Architectural changes shy of complete remodels are also on the table. Add dormers to add height and lines to the exterior of the house (with the added benefit of introducing more natural light into the interior). Altering the size of the dormers to better suit the design of the house is another option. Constructing a small room or expanding an existing room to reduce a "box" shaped house adds instant impact. Creating an overhang over the porch and altering the roofline in the immediate area can make a big impact while keeping guests and packages dry. And don't forget the impact of the exterior trim in the overall appeal of the home. Lastly, adding designer gutters is visually appealing and functional.

Homeowners can infuse showstopper features to the exterior of their homes and it all starts by standing on the curb!





# *Blueberry Dreams and Strawberry Fields for a People's Choice Award Home*

By Zinta Aistars

Feature Photography by Jim Schuon Photography

Cover Photography by Ashley Avila Photography

If you hear the name Leduc and chances are, if you are a local, you can taste blueberries at the mere sound of the name. Or maybe that berry dream coming to mind is of a strawberry shortcake, covered in fresh strawberries.

The Leduc family has farmed for 68 years in Paw Paw, Michigan, growing blueberries and strawberries, and for many local families, making the pilgrimage to the fields and picking berries in the summer sun has been an annual tradition.

"I ran that farm for 40 years, until we sold it recently," said Joe Leduc. "And I still farm—I'm only semi-retired. My wife, Chantal, and I were ready to build our dream home. We have been going to the Parade of Homes for the past seven years, and we thought it was time to build a home for ourselves that would be a family hub, a place for the kids and grandkids to gather for the holidays and hang out on those summer weekends at the pool."

Not far from the family berry farm, Leduc had bought acreage with an eye for the future. He bought it 22 years ago, and the dream of the perfect home gradually took shape in the Leducs' minds. The plot was nearly 100 acres with 20 set aside for the home they would build and 38 acres across the street to ensure privacy and the remainder for farming.

"As Chantal and I toured the Parades, we realized that every time we liked a home, it seemed to be built by the same builder," Leduc said. "The style matched ours and the level of quality was above that of many others."

That builder was Jim Roberts Construction, and Jim Roberts began working on blueprints for the Leducs in 2021.

"Jim was my stepfather, and I worked for him for many years," said Eric Magnuson. "Then Jim passed away and the business came to me. I inherited eight projects he had been working on, including this one for the Leducs."

As the new owner, Magnuson renamed the business Magnuson Build & Design. He looked through the projects his stepfather had left still unfinished—and he found the blueprints for the Leduc house.

"I took my ideas on the project to the Leducs and gave them the opportunity to decide if they wanted to stay with me or find another builder," Magnuson said.

"We decided to stay with Eric," Leduc said. "It was basically the same builder, and we wanted that superior quality we had seen in the Parades."

The project once again underway, the home began to take shape. A ranch with a fully built-out basement with walkout,





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A photograph of a living room interior. The room features a beige sectional sofa with blue and white patterned pillows. Two blue armchairs are positioned in the foreground. A large, patterned rug covers the floor. In the background, there is a fireplace with a wood-grain mantel and a glass display cabinet.



three bedrooms and three-and-a-half baths, and a three-car garage, the house measured approximately 4,800 square feet.

"It's spacious without wasted space," Leduc said. "We worked off one of the plans we had seen in the Parade and modified it to our needs. We asked for wider hallways and roomier bathrooms to accommodate elderly people in our family—or ourselves down the road—so that anyone using a walker or wheelchair can move about without any pinch points."

The exterior of the home has a mix of vertical and horizontal siding along with a three-foot high ledge of cultured stone. Entering the home, the eye immediately travels to the wall of windows overlooking the wooded acreage and pond. A beamed 10-foot ceiling leads the eye to a stone electric fireplace surrounded by built-in shelving.

"The Leducs chose French Oak hardwood floors in their main room, and the bathrooms are tiled, but the downstairs—the basement level—is carpeted," Magnuson said. "Other areas are luxury vinyl."

Because the home is built in a rural area, it is heated by propane, but the builder added a heat pump to maximize heat efficiency. Cellulose insulation was blown into the roof for insulation and noise reduction, and spray foam into the walls.

"Green construction is always a consideration," Leduc said. "We exceeded all the energy ratings. We have several propane tanks on the property for the farm outbuildings, so energy usage is important."

"As we finish the build, we use a blower door test, sealing the home and blowing air through, to make sure we are as energy efficient as possible," Magnuson added.

The kitchen is centered by a nine-foot island with seating, quartz countertops, a double oven, and extra wide refrigerator. A second kitchen is on the lower floor that makes food preparation easy for outdoor gatherings around the pool and firepit.

"Great for potluck dinner family gatherings," Leduc said. "We knew what we wanted after 37 years in our previous home. The overall feeling we wanted in this home was of warm comfort in the country. That's why we chose earthy colors, nothing drastic, neutral grays."

Landscaping was done by Sandstone Creation in Kalamazoo.

"We found that the ground here was rockier than we expected, and Sandstone Creation worked with that," Leduc said. "They built a retaining wall around the pool and added a fountain to the pond."

Leduc said that his advice to those pondering a custom build is not to wait.

"Prices have been higher lately, but if you wait for the perfect time to build, you'll never build," he said.

"Things are stabilizing," Magnuson said. "Come on in and talk to us. Some of our clients come with just a basic idea of what they want and maybe an idea of the square footage. Others have prints in hand. We will be open and honest with you, and we can help you develop your ideas. We may not be the least expensive, but we do offer superior quality."

Other homeowners apparently agree. During the 2022 Parade of Homes, the Leduc home, completed in August 2022, was voted the winner of the People's Choice Award.



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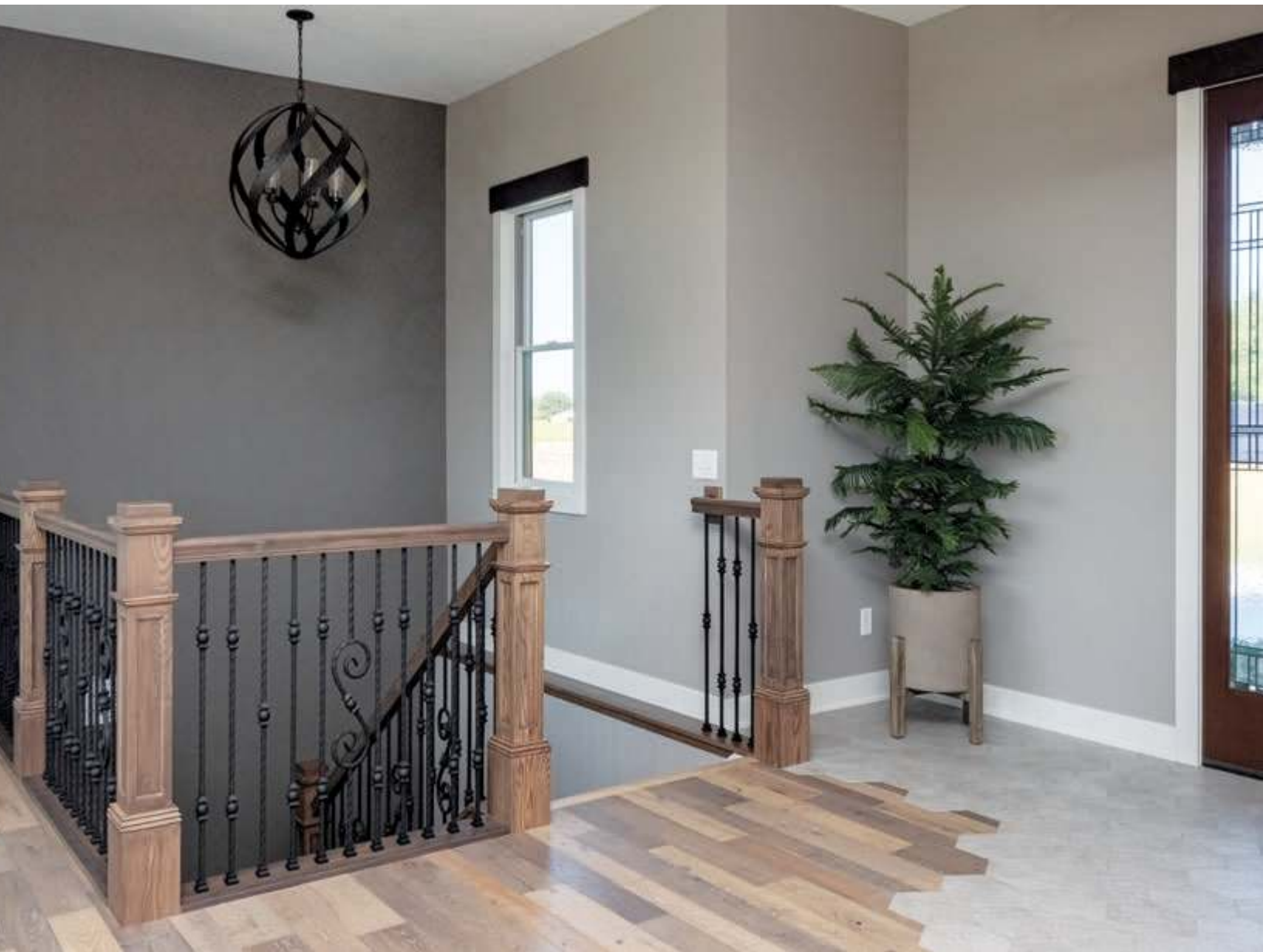
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BUILDING CHARACTER INTO HOMES



## Help for Those Little and Not-so-little Jobs Around the House

By Zinta Aistars

**N**eed a light bulb changed? They will do it. Need a bathroom renovated? Sure. Maybe a new deck built? Done.

From the small to the bigger jobs, handyman services are a growing business as fewer and fewer people seem to have the time or skills—or desire—to do those jobs themselves.

“We are a licensed builder, so we do most everything a homeowner might need,” says Michael Tilley, owner of Mr. Handyman at 2836 West Main, serving counties from Kalamazoo to St. Joseph and every place between. “What we don’t do is electric and plumbing, because that requires a different license.”

Not to fear. If Mr. Handyman can’t cover it, check with their umbrella company—Neighborly.com—to find a long list of services under names such as Mr. Electric, Mr. Rooter Plumbing, Five Star Painting, Molly Maid, Glass Doctor, on and on. The umbrella company has locations nationwide and in Canada and sports an app for customer convenience.

“We have 18 service verticals,” Tilley says. “One place and you can get everything you need. And yes, we will change that light bulb for you.”

Mr. Handyman sends out their contractors in recognizable uniforms for customer safety. Contractors can repair or install ceiling fans, drywall, countertops, doors, faucets, garage doors, grout, gutters, steps, tiling, windows and screens. They will

assemble furniture, bicycles, bed frames, grills, and fences. They can install or repair cabinetry, built-in shelving, and crown molding.

If your home or deck could use a power washing, or your dryer vent is clogged with lint, they are there for you. Hang curtains or install blinds, put in new windows or repair the ones already in place, adding window shutters or weatherproofing, call and Mr. Handyman will lend a hand and clean up when they are done.

“When stuff, breaks, we fix it,” Tilley says. “Interior or exterior. We are fully insured and bonded, and we offer you a 12-month warranty on all our work.”

Although supply lines during the pandemic slowed, increasing wait time for materials, Tilley says wait times are starting to improve for most items.

“Storm windows, however, are one of those items that can still take some time if we don’t have something in stock,” he says. “They can take 8 to 14 weeks to arrive, so it’s good to plan ahead.”

As for cost for such services, Tilley says Mr. Handyman is not the cheapest one might find.

“And we don’t want to be,” he says. “We aim to be the best, and the best materials and service can cost a bit more.”

Mr. Handyman can be reached at 269.580.8363.



## INTERCHANGEABLE TEAM MEMBERS TO HANDLE EVERY JOB

Pennings & Sons has been a Kalamazoo fixture for about 50 years, a family-run business known for custom-built, quality homes, many of which have been featured in numerous Parade of Homes and won awards for their custom designs.

Meeting the needs of their homeowner customers for repairs and maintenance, the business added a division originally known as Pennings Project Pro in 2004 but rebranded

as Pennings Handyman in 2012 for clarity as the division continued to grow.

The handyman division was formed to do the smaller repairs and installation jobs that homeowners so often need as homes age or simply as customers desire to make changes and improvements.

"That's what makes us unique," says Scott Pennings, president and co-owner. "While Pennings Handyman is a separate division with a dedicated staff, we can still share people between the two divisions as everyone is

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trained for home construction to repair work on the smaller jobs."

Pennings Handyman includes electrical and plumbing work on its list of handyman jobs that they cover. They will do the smallest jobs, such as changing a light bulb or installing a smoke detector, on up to larger projects such as building decks and outdoor kitchens or remodeling bathrooms.

The handyman division offers upgrading services for electric circuitry, cabinetry, drywall patch and repair, finishing basements, door and window installation and repair, painting and caulking, tiling and wood flooring. They will hang your artwork, remove wallpaper, and improve accessibility for the elderly and people with disabilities. Crews can build outdoor sheds and do landscaping work. They install staircases, add porches to front entryways and build home offices. It would be difficult to name a job the Pennings Handyman cannot do.

"We are a versatile team," says Steve Moxley, marketing manager. "We are not an emergency service, however. Lead times for bigger jobs can typically be six to eight weeks. Smaller jobs we can often do in one day. It all depends on the materials needed—there are some items that can take up to 20 weeks to arrive."

Pennings Handyman offers two project pricing options. A project estimator can come to a client's home to prepare a detailed, fixed-price proposal when a job may be more expansive than a one-day project. The proposal gives the client the ability to budget for the project before it begins and to plan ahead if it is a larger one. Or, a project specialist completes the job and the client is invoiced for time and labor and materials.

"That option is great for our repeat customers who want a quick turnaround on a job and already know the quality of our work," Moxley says.

Pennings Handyman can be reached at 269.372.1930 or visit their office at 5829 West KL Avenue in Kalamazoo.



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## Saying Goodbye to Unwelcome House Guests

By Zinta Aistars

No, we are not talking about your in-laws. They are actually pretty nice, admit it. We are talking about those undesirable furry guests, the ones that buzz around your windows, the ones that sneak through the tiniest holes in your floorboards and screens, the ones that make a racket in your attic or burrow tunnels through the walls.

"We use a system called IPM, or integrated pest management, which is an environmentally-friendly system of pest control," says Taylor Hughes, director of business operations at Pest Pros in Kalamazoo. IPM focuses on prevention, Hughes explains, and uses pesticides only as needed.

As a starting point, Pest Pros will come in and identify where and what and how your home is being invaded by pests. They look for how those pests are finding entry and block access.

IPM methods for preventing pests include:

- Reducing clutter
- Sealing areas where pests enter the building
- Removing trash and overgrown vegetation
- Maintaining clean dining and food storage areas
- Installing pest barriers
- Removing standing water
- Educating building occupants on IPM

Pest control is the next step, and that can be done by trapping and with physical removal of pests, a heat or cold treatment, and pesticide or insecticide application if necessary. Reducing pesticide application has the goal of protecting human health as well as household pets while saving on costs for customers.

IPM methods have also been shown to reduce allergies and asthma among children and adults when used to treat pests. Rodents and insects can bring allergens and diseases inside homes, and IPM methods have reduced these effects.

"We treat anything from squirrels and raccoons and other rodents to mosquito control," says Maria Sorrentino, president

of Pest Pros. "Cockroaches, ants, stinging insects, bed bugs, ear wigs, we do it all. Termites can be a frequent concern for homeowners, and we handle that by using a baiting program to take down the colony. Or we make holes around the home's perimeter and fill those with a liquid used to exterminate them. We kill the queen so that they don't reproduce and return."

Pest Pros work not only with the homeowners for termite control but also with real estate agents, as home inspections normally include testing for the insect because of the harm it can do to wood structures. While benefiting the environment by breaking down dead wood and returning it to the soil, termites are destructive to buildings, costing an estimated \$5 billion in damages and repairs to homes annually.

"The guarantees we offer depend on the pest," Sorrentino adds. "For most, we have a one-year warranty, although for smaller pests, such as ants and mosquitoes, we have a 90-day guarantee."



Another area of pride for the Pest Pros staff, Sorrentino says, is the company's involvement with the community.

"We pride ourselves on our relationships in the community," she says. "It's a big part of how we do business. We are your local service serving Kalamazoo, Calhoun, and Barry counties, and our staff often volunteers at various events and with nonprofits here—because this is our home, too."

Pest Pros can be reached at 269.775.4104.

#### LEAVE YOUR HOME SMELLING LIKE A ROSE

"Fall is peak season for many pests as they seek out a place to winter, but there really is no better season than any other for pest control," says Mark VanderWerp, manager of education and training at Rose Pest Solutions.

VanderWerp is based at Rose Pest Solutions headquarters in Troy, Michigan, but the company has locations around the state and beyond, including greater Kalamazoo and surrounding areas with an estimated 330 employees.

"The business is named after a man named Solomon Rose who started out in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1860," VanderWerp says. "He sold rat bait, but so many people wanted to know how to use it that in the 1930's he expanded it to include that service and the business eventually expanded into Michigan and Indiana and throughout the Midwest."

Rose Pest Solutions also uses the IPM method with a first step of eliminating any possible access point or source for pests before considering the use of pesticides.

"We are so far gone from those 1950's days of toxic pesticides," VanderWerp says. "We do employ pesticides, if necessary, but today they are mostly water, used as a carrier, and you would have to fall into a vat of it to have any effect on you. Even so, we ask customers to allow for a day after a treatment before re-entering the home. That's pretty much it. The bait

containers we use are tamper-resistant so that children and pets can't get into them."

When a homeowner thinks about prevention, VanderWerp says, he or she should think about what would make it hard to create a cozy space.

"Think about those food sources that might attract pests," he says. "Eliminate trash sources. If you have pets, clean out their spaces daily. With mice and other rodents, eliminate the entry points, look at your doors and screens and make sure everything is secure. All a mouse needs is an opening the size of your pinky."

Signs of mice infestations include droppings, small nests of household materials or twigs and grass, or gnaw markings on furniture or food containers. One might also notice the sound of tiny scurrying feet, especially in the quiet of night. They can bring disease into the home or cause damage such as chewing on electrical wires.

Rose Pest Control offers a home service program that covers pest control for 12 months for one annual fee.

"Our home service program includes pre-scheduled interior and exterior services over a 12-month period," VanderWerp says. "If additional visits are needed, we will come out at no charge to you—it's part of our guarantee."

Rose Pest Solutions offers pest control for mice and other rodents, wildlife, stinging insects, ticks and fleas, bed bugs and other insects, ants, and termites. They can be reached at 800.966.7673.





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## INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

|                               |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Cork Lane Decorating          | 18         |
| DeHaan Remodeling Specialists | 8          |
| Elenbaas Hardwood             | 12         |
| The Furnace Guy               | 8          |
| Hannapel                      | 3          |
| Hoogstraten Builders          | 12         |
| Home Builders Association     | 31         |
| J&J Glass                     | 12         |
| JB Printing                   | 12, 27, 29 |
| Kitchen & Bath Unlimited      | 26         |
| Linda Hoard Photography       | 30         |
| Metzger's Heating & Cooling   | 27         |
| Migala Carpet One             | 6          |
| Modderman Builders, LLC       | 14         |
| Nieboer Heating & Cooling     | 14         |
| Pennings & Sons               | 24         |
| Premier Concrete Coatings     | 10         |
| Sackett's Flooring Solutions  | 2          |
| Sandstone Creation            | 20         |
| Senior Care Partners P.A.C.E. | 8          |
| Spartan Insulation            | 26         |
| TMR Builders                  | 32         |
| Vlietstra Bros. Pools & Spas  | 14         |
| Wenke Flooring & Design       | 22         |



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