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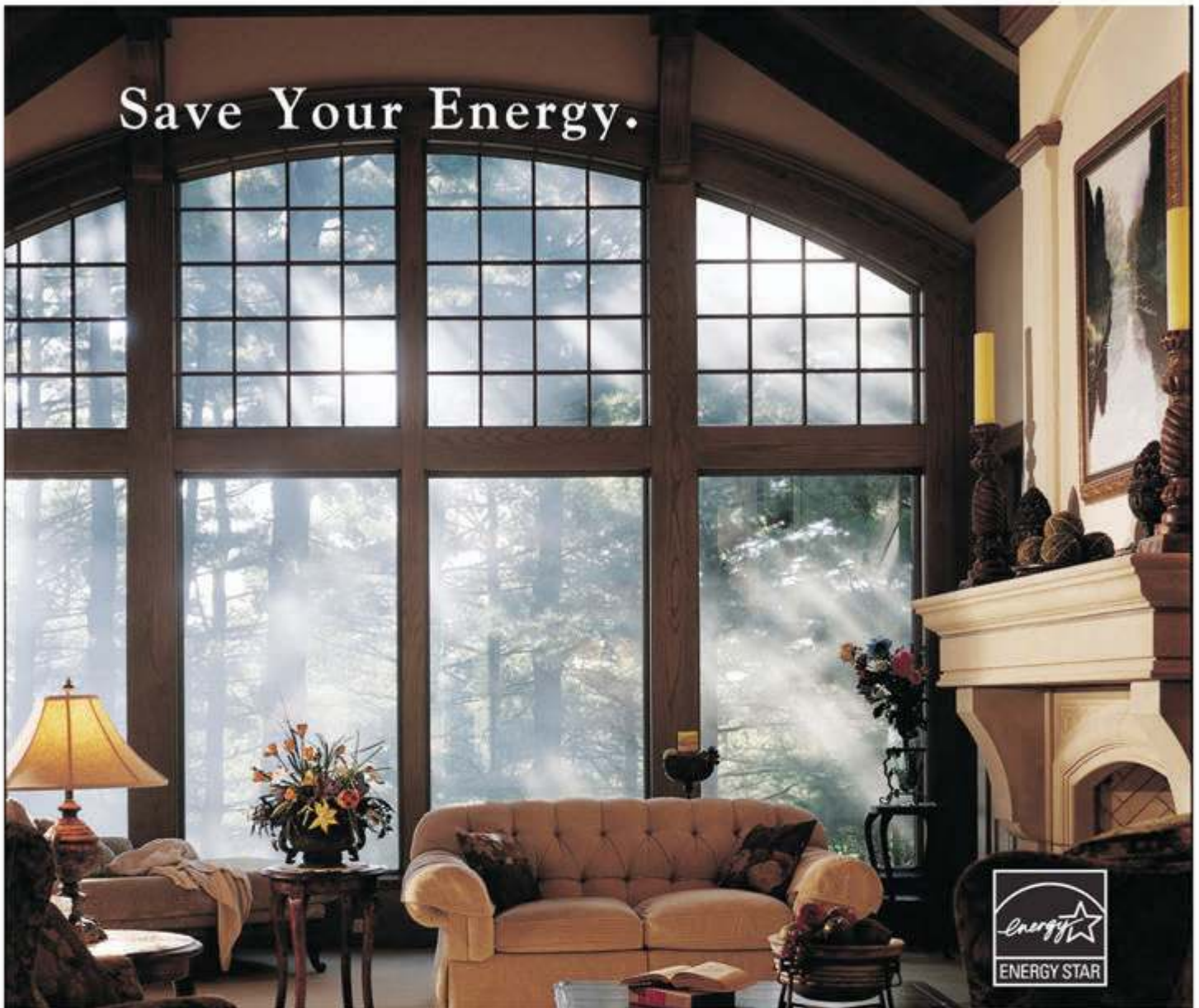
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Feature Home

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Julie and Todd lived in their previous home for 23 years. They had never built a new house. When it was time to build on Austin Lake their friends recommended Steve Roberts, President of Roberts Development Group, Inc. "Steve made the whole experience so positive."



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Blueberry Scones

Photography by Linda Hoard

There's something about the buttery crumble and sweet bursts of juicy blueberries that a well-baked blueberry scone offers. Whether enjoyed as a breakfast indulgence or a mid-day pick-me-up, the scone has long been a beloved staple in the world of pastries, and adding fresh blueberries just takes it up a notch for that summer treat. Select the finest ingredients to master the delicate balance of texture and flavor. Get ready to elevate your baking skills and treat yourself to a delectable homemade delight.

Ingredients:

3 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
2 cups blueberries
1 1/4 cups heavy cream
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat your oven to 400°F.

In a mixing bowl, mix together flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, and salt.

Use clean hands or a pastry cutter to work the butter into the dry mixture until it resembles small peas. Then, add the blueberries and gently stir to ensure even distribution.

Work the butter into the dry mixture until it resembles small peas. Then, add the blueberries and gently stir to ensure even distribution.

Create a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour the whipping cream and vanilla into the well. Using your hands, combine the ingredients until the mixture is moist. Avoid kneading the dough.

Transfer the mixture onto a floured surface and gather the dough together. Divide it into 12 pieces and place them onto a baking sheet.

Bake for approximately 18-25 minutes or until the scones are lightly browned.

Serve with butter, jam, and whipped cream for a delightful treat. Enjoy!

Makes 12 scones.




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Remodeled to Perfection

By Zinta Aistars

Photos courtesy of DeHaan Remodeling Specialists, Inc.

With a challenging housing market, remodeling rather than buying the perfect home is becoming a popular option.

"We had been looking for a new home for a while," says Jessica Wright. "With two active boys—they are ages 5 and 8—we wanted something bigger and with more property, but houses were jumping off the market, so we chose this home with the idea of remodeling it to suit our needs."

Choosing the builders to do the remodel was easy. Jessica and Tony Wright had a family friend in the business, and they had long admired his work—Branden DeHaan, co-owner of DeHaan Remodeling Specialists, Inc., at 2805 West Main in Kalamazoo.

"The Wrights bought a large home in southwest Kalamazoo," DeHaan says. "They had a good idea what they wanted after moving in, then we did all the design work. It was easy to work with their defined ideas. We worked in phases over about four months while they set up a kitchenette in their basement so that they could stay there while we worked."

"The property is on two-and-a-half acres with a pool, so the boys were mostly outside," Wright says. "We brought a mini fridge downstairs and a hot plate, and that's where we stayed and cooked our meals. There's also an extra bedroom downstairs and a bar with dishwasher, so that made it easy. It felt a little like being back in college!"

Upstairs, the kitchen underwent the biggest transformation. Since Jessica Wright loves to cook, her idea of what she wanted and needed in her kitchen was thought out in detail.

"The previous kitchen was very small," she says. "And just a bad setup for cooks. It had a large walk-in pantry but little counterspace."

"We gutted the kitchen to the studs, knocked out walls and took out the walk-in pantry," DeHaan says. "A large beam overhead supported new cabinetry."

"And added windows to brighten up the space," Wright adds. "The walk-in pantry was replaced by floor to ceiling roll-out drawers, so everything I need is at hand. The cabinetry is a dark walnut, clear coated to show its beautiful grain. We have a walnut table we love, so we wanted the cabinetry to match that."

Not one but two islands center the kitchen. One is for food preparation, Wright says, while the other can seat—on matching walnut chairs—family or friends for a casual meal or buffet set-up. A coffee station with inset microwave has been built into one of the cabinets, but Wright says they are not so much coffee drinkers but more about tea and homemade kombucha that her husband Tony prepares.

Both islands have waterfall edges and quartz countertops with matching quartz backsplash. The kitchen also includes a pot filler over the stove for ease and a reverse osmosis water system. Flooring throughout the main floor is luxury vinyl plank for easy cleaning and maintenance. Recessed lighting keeps the kitchen bright along with lighting under the cabinetry.

"There's a stainless-steel surface behind the gas stove for easier cleaning," Wright says. "Our walnut table is now in the dining room."

The kitchen complete, DeHaan also remodeled what was once the laundry room into a new mud room with hooks for coats and towels, painted cabinetry for storage. A door now leads directly to the pool, and a 4' by 4' dog shower allows for a quick clean of the family pup before entering the rest of the home.

"The laundry room is now off our master bedroom,"



Branden and Jordan DeHaan
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Wright says. "We had three closets in there, so one was converted into the laundry room. Tiled that and added floating shelves."

The biggest change to the primary bedroom was the complete remodel of the adjoining bathroom.

"The primary bathroom used to have this old school jet tub," Wright recalls. "And just a small shower. We wanted something simple and easy to clean, and the less grout, the better."

With the tub removed, DeHaan built a 8' by 4' shower with extra large tiles for less grout to keep clean. A linear drain runs alongside the shower so that there is no need for a door. A recessed area in the wall along the length of the shower allows for soaps and shampoo bottles, whatever the homeowner may want to keep handy. A rain shower head adds to the luxury along with handheld shower attachments.

"The boys have showers in another bathroom, but they keep coming into our shower, because we all like it so much," Wright smiles.

The bathroom also includes double vanities, LED-lit mirrors, undermount sinks, quartz countertops, and cherry cabinetry. The water closet has its own closed-off space and window.

Other projects were replacing the fireplace in the living room with a gas fireplace with a quartz tile surround and steel mantel to reflect heat. Walnut cabinetry completes an entertainment center.

"The walnut cabinets in the living room are flush with the wall, so that enlarged our space in the living room," Wright says.

When it was time to move back upstairs from their temporary stay in the basement of the home, the Wrights added in some changes for the basement. The old bar was removed, and new flooring put in.

"We had new cabinets built in there and added a sub-zero beverage refrigerator," she says.

The now remodeled home, Wright says, is likely their "forever home," remodeled to suit the Wright family.

"It was great working with DeHaan Remodeling," Wright says. "Even though we have a friend connection, we did get several quotes for the job before we chose them. They do exactly what they say they will do, and they do it well."





Before Calling the Pro: Natural Ways to Prevent Pests

By Zinta Aistars

Picking up the phone and calling the local exterminator to control various pests in and around your home is always an option—but it can be costly. Try some home remedies first. A do-it-yourself option can be just as effective and save you big bucks.

Pests can be any creature—insect or animal—that you don't want in your home or garden. Ants, termites, spiders, mice, squirrels and other rodents, the list is long. Spring and summer are the seasons that pests tend to show up most, although all seasons can present problems.

While some insects can be beneficial in your yard, others are undesirable. Insecticides can destroy both good and bad, while home remedies can prevent killing beneficial insects—such as honeybees—while deterring those you don't want nearby. Be sure to also think about pets and children when applying any kind of pest remedy. Birds in your surroundings feed on insects and may ingest something poisonous.

The first thing to do is to look for those entryways and seal them. Insects and small rodents such as mice need only the tiniest entries to invade your home. Use caulk or expanding foam insulation to close any gaps along windows and floors or to fill in any cracks. Pay attention to the gaps surrounding electrical lines and pipes. Check screens for any needed repairs. Weather stripping around windows and doors may need to be replaced for a tighter seal. Install wire mesh, hardware cloth, or wire cages around chimney openings and vents to keep out rodents and nesting birds. Attach sturdy steel or aluminum thresholds under exterior doors.

Pests invade homes mostly because they are looking for food. Eliminate food sources to discourage pests. Keep indoor trash in a covered bin that closes firmly. Compost bins outdoors should also have a lid. Clean trash receptacles and pet food bowls regularly. Vacuum up any food crumbs and don't leave dirty dishes in the sink overnight. Be strategic about where you place your bird feeders, which can offer a preferred food source away from areas where you don't want those pests to go. Squirrels and chipmunks love those feeders!

Has one of those squirrels moved into your attic? Scurrying and scratching sounds can be a giveaway that you have a squatter, living rent-free, in your attic or exterior walls. Again, look for entryways and seal them. Openings along rooflines or missing fascia boards or crumbling bricks can be a welcome mat inviting them in. Once inside, squirrels may store their food, build nests, and chew through boards and even electrical wiring, leading to extensive damage. To discourage squirrels from entering your home, trim back tree limbs from your roofline, place birdfeeders at a distance, and replace any rotting wood or shingles.

Once the squirrels have gained entry, however, you may use loud noise to discourage them from remaining. Yes, shout! Bang fists against the areas where you hear them, play loud music and leave it on, or try placing ultrasonic noise machines near that hurt their little ears. Bright lights annoy them, so leave that attic light on, and their noses cannot bear apple cider vinegar-soaked rags stinking things up around them. Live traps can work, too. If you detect a nest of baby squirrels, you may have to wait until the babies are out before using some of these measures or you may end up with decaying animals inside walls.

Encourage natural predators such as bats or birds that eat unwanted bugs by building bat houses nearby, providing fresh water sources, and planting shrubs and trees for nesting sites. Planting flowers such as alyssum can bring in beneficial insects. Native plants and wildflowers can be an attractive and effective deterrent. Many gardeners will plant rows of marigolds around their gardens to discourage detrimental bugs such as nematodes, whiteflies, hornworms, and mosquitoes.

Natural solutions found in most any kitchen will safely keep out ants and other pests. White vinegar diluted with water and with a splash of peppermint or eucalyptus oil can deter bugs without harming human residents. The solution serves to clean away the scented trail ants leave for other ants to follow. Spray one part vinegar with three parts water around places where bugs enter. Onions keep away spiders, while a bowl of apple cider vinegar, covered with plastic with small holes punched in it, will attract fruit flies.



They will slip in but won't be able to get out. And don't toss out those used coffee grounds—scattering those around the edges of your home or garden will work as a boundary against pests and send mosquitoes buzzing in another direction. Banana peels worked into your garden soil add nutrients while scaring away aphids. Place tiny bags of cloves near spots where you see ladybugs accumulate.

Mosquitoes can ruin a summer evening. Remove any water collection near your home. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water and require as small an amount as you might find in an upturned bottle cap. Look for any areas where water may collect and dump it. Running water is fine—you may wish to introduce a small fountain in that pretty pond. Adding a fan to your outdoor space makes their flying route to buzz in your ear difficult to navigate. Many essential oil mixtures are pleasant for your nose while driving the mosquitoes away—try cinnamon, eucalyptus, lavender, peppermint, chamomile, cedarwood, rosemary, or tea tree. Many stores will sell citronella candles, but they have not proved to be very effective.

Not all creepy crawlies in your garden are foes. The opossum is an unsung hero you don't want to scare away. A single opossum can eat as many as 5,000 ticks in your yard, helping to control Lyme disease. These creatures are meticulously clean and well-groomed while munching on cockroaches, carrion, rats, snakes, and rotting fruit. They contribute to a healthy ecosystem by assisting in pollinating plants and dispersing seeds. Keep lids on trash bins tightly closed to keep these marsupials—and raccoons—out of places where they are not welcome, while permitting them to work like vacuums in your nighttime backyard.

When all else fails, the professional exterminators will always be available to clean and spray and prevent and eliminate—but trying these ecologically-friendly measures on your own may just do the trick to keeping your home pest-free safely and inexpensively.



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Oasis in the Storm

By Zinta Aistars

Feature Photography by Jim Schuon Photography

Julie and Todd Ream had just moved into their new home on Austin Lake in Portage when the tornado came through. It was early May, and there were, in fact, two tornadoes. Homes were destroyed, trees uprooted, power outages left and right, but their house stood strong.

"Just the power had gone out," Julie Ream says. "But the Generac generator had not yet been hooked up."

Not a problem, says Steve Roberts, president of Roberts Development Group, Inc., in Mattawan. He put in a call to Country Lane Electric in Gobles, and it didn't take long for them to show up and get the new generator running. Power was restored.

"That's how it went," Ream says. "Steve made the whole experience so positive. Todd and I—we've been married for 31 years—had never built a home before, so it was a new experience. But we soon saw that Steve and his group would put a lot of care into their work, and it shows."

Friends who already lived on Austin Lake had recommended the Roberts Development Group to the Reams. The Reams were ready to move from their much larger home—about 7,000 square feet—on Kleinstuck Preserve to something smaller now that their son and daughter had left the nest. When a woman driving through the neighborhood slipped a note into their mailbox that she was interested in buying their home, it seemed serendipity.

"We had been there for 23 years," Ream says. "It was

time to downsize. We wanted something smaller and more open, and Steve helped us with a design for this 4,800-square-foot home on Austin Lake. There was another home there they had built, and our friends had always admired it, as did we."

The Roberts Development Group broke ground in April 2023. The split-level home has living space on three levels.

"We constructed the home to have good visuals of the lake," Roberts says. "As with most waterfront lots, it is fairly narrow, so the only issues we had with this build was to align grades between street and lake levels."

When the build began, it was not on an empty lot. A previous house had been there since the 1950s, which had to be demolished and cleared away. Any talk of remodeling that structure for the Reams was short-lived.

The new home is in a dark gray, monochromatic tone with board and batten siding for three levels—main, upper and lower. Upon entry, one walks into the light and airy great room with a prominent area for Julie Ream's prize possession—a 1899 Steinway grand piano.

"It was a birthday present," Ream smiles. "I have degrees in music although I don't play professionally. I play trumpet and vocals, too, but the piano is my number one instrument and needed this space."

A few ideas for the home design were changed





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during the process. First asking for high cathedral ceilings, the Reams revised to 12-foot ceilings after discussion with Roberts.

"We realized that would be easier for lighting, and now I actually prefer these ceilings," she says.

Also on the main floor are the kitchen, dining room, and a bedroom with bathroom.

"The bedroom on the main floor was initially going to be the primary, but then the Reams decided to have that on the upper floor for an even better lakeside view," Roberts says. "So I guess you could call this one on the main floor the secondary primary."

A large deck with hot tub is an invitation to take in the view leading from the great and dining rooms.

"And there will be a chandelier hanging in the entryway," Ream adds. "We are waiting for that to arrive from Seth Parks Designs in New York. These are custom-made hand-blown glass chandeliers, and the glass will be in light blue, white, light gray, and clear colors."

The kitchen has custom-built and underlit white cabinetry, a 4' by 10' island, Riverstone quartz countertops, and a walk-in pantry. The double-oven range was imported from Italy with a hood from France.

"The pantry reaches nearly up to the ceiling, so it has a moving ladder," Ream says. "Todd wanted the lights under the cabinetry as an extra touch."

It is not the only place lights glow. Steps with a steel-and-cable handrail lead to the upper floor, each step lighted.

"There's a remote to control the lights," she says. "They change colors, but we usually choose the blue."

The owners' suite—the primary bedroom—is on the upper floor. Its bathroom, just like the one below, has heated floors and body sprays in the showers. The primary has gold fixtures with the entire wall tiled.

"No tub," Reams says. "We prefer a shower, but there is a tub in the bonus bathroom downstairs."

On the lower floor are two more bedrooms, bathroom, workout room, recreation room, wine cellar, and a sauna.

"The wine cellar has space for about 300 bottles, so we have to work on that," Ream laughs. "There are etched glass doors there so you can view the wine. The sauna is next to the workout room, of course."

Another space is available over the garage—space that could become available as a play area for those future grandchildren or a possible extra bedroom. Flooring throughout the home is ash hardwood.

"I love the look of ash," Ream says. "It has this beachy knottiness. We were kind of anti-contemporary in our previous home, but here, on the lake, we have taken a 180. It suits this home."

The family English bulldog got a space of its own, too—a dog shower in the mud room. Something for everyone is the rule.

And everyone involved is grateful. Roberts notes what a pleasure it was to work with the Reams.

"Julie regularly brought baked goods to all our workers," he says. "It made the guys feel appreciated."

Ream nods. "It was a great experience. We started with a builder who then became a friend."







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The Gilmore Car Museum

By Barbara Fisher

Photo courtesy of the Gilmore Car Museum

The Gilmore Car Museum is one of the area's "must see" attractions. Telling the history of America through the automobile, the Gilmore Car Museum offers unique and some surprising experiences, even for those who don't consider themselves car enthusiasts.

For instance, did you know that guests may take a ride in a vintage car? Rides are offered Tuesday through Friday between the hours of 11:00 am and 3:00 pm (May through September) on a first-come, first-served basis. Donations are gladly accepted. The ride fleet varies per day and includes cars such as a 1931 Ford Model A Phaeton, a 1964 Checker Taxi and a 1967 Pontiac GTO. Did you know there's an opportunity to drive an authentic Model T Ford accompanied by an experienced instructor? The cost for this experience includes admission to the Historic Museum for the day as well as a number of other benefits. A unique gift idea for that hard to shop for person.

But let's back up. In the early 1960s, Donald S. Gilmore (then Chairman of the Upjohn Company) began collecting vintage automobiles. One of the vehicles was a 1920 Pierce Arrow, the restoration of which (at his home) lit a passion which led to his collection growing and the need for space in which to house it. Genevieve Gilmore, his wife, is credited with the idea of turning her husband's growing, one-of-a-kind collection into a museum on 90 acres of land in Hickory Corners. They established a non-profit foundation and opened the museum to the public on July 31, 1966 displaying 35 cars. The Gilmore Car Museum continued to grow and is now North America's largest auto museum with over 190,000 square feet of exhibit space and 400 vehicles on display. The Historic Campus (open April 1 – November 30) features numerous vintage structures including a restored 1941 diner (the Blue Moon), a recreated 1930s Shell Station, recreated dealerships

(including a Franklin dealership from around 1918) and far more. The Campus also houses eight collections such as the Classic Car Club of America Museum (open year round), the H.H. Franklin Collection, Model A Ford Museum (open year round) and the Museum of the Horseless Carriage.

The oldest car on exhibit? An 1899 Locomobile Steam Car. Guests can view 100 vintage pedal cars and the Museum houses one of the largest displays (over 1,500 items) of automotive mascots and name badges in North America. The Carriage House, was Donald Gilmore's first display gallery. This location houses a replica of the Wright Bros Wright Flyer. Used in the filming of Disney's 1967 feature film, guests may experience the Gnome-Mobile on a larger than life movie set, the set and car personal gifts to Mr. Gilmore from Walt Disney himself. This building also houses a bar which is open during car shows and events.

Guests will want to visit the "Are We There Yet" exhibit which runs through March 2025. The exhibit sports 13 vehicles to take guests on a trip down memory lane. Upon entry to the exhibit you'll see Clark Griswold's Family Truckster from the 1983 comedy National Lampoon's Vacation. Does anyone remember sitting in the rear of the family station wagon facing oncoming traffic and making faces at the people in the car behind? Or thinking nothing of parents tossing a crib mattress in the backseat for the kids to stake out their territory and announce "he's on my side!" amidst queries of "are we there yet?" starting 15 minutes into a cross county trip?

The Green Book exhibit offers a look at a period that predates the Civil Rights era. Although roads and highways were open for all to use, doing so was not the same for people of color. The Green Book provided guidance for African Americans to find safe locations to sleep, eat, shop and purchase gas.



Have you heard about the popular Wednesday Night Cruise-Ins? There's no charge to bring your collector car (classics, muscle, antique, special interest, hot rods, etc.) to the Cruise-In. Weather permitting, the Cruise-In runs from 5:00 – 8:00 pm, May through September. Cruise-Ins are open to the public. The Blue Moon Diner, The Grill (closed in inclement weather) and the Gilmore Bar are all open to serve guests; however, all other Museum Buildings are closed during this time. Don't forget to capture a photo in front the replica 1930's Shell station with its display of memorabilia from the days when gas was 18 cents a gallon and teens, using their parents' car, could pool the pennies and nickels they scraped out of their pockets and from under the seats to cruise for another hour!

In addition to the Cruise-Ins, the Museum hosts other events. For instance, coming on July 19-20 is the Celebration of the Brass IV. Offered by the Museum of the Horseless Carriage, check out pre-1916 era vehicles on display and take in the car show, swap meet, vintage fashion show, and numerous on-site activities, followed by two and a half days of touring Michigan's scenic country roads. Then on August 3, it's the Red Barns Spectacular put on by the Kalamazoo Antique Auto Restorers Club. More than 1,500 show vehicles (all 25 years or older) including cars, trucks, commercial vehicles, military vehicles and fire trucks will dot the show field with areas for antique campers, cars for sale and vintage bicycles. There will also be over 380 swap meet vendors onsite. Tickets for the July 19 and August 3 events may be purchased online.

In addition to the seasonal Blue Moon Diner, the Heritage Café is open year round. What's a trip without the opportunity to purchase a souvenir? The Museum Gift Shop is just the place to do that while onsite; purchases may also be made online though the Museum website.

Unlike many like venues, the Museum is camera friendly and taking photos is encouraged in all buildings and galleries. Through November 30, the Museum is open 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday through Friday and 9:00 am until 6:00 pm on the weekend. Winter hours (December 1 – March 1) are 10:00 am through 5:00 pm. Says Brian Hunt, Creative Director, "the Gilmore Car Museum is a great stop on any West Michigan road trip."

The Gilmore Car Museum is 20 minutes from I-94 and US-131 in Hickory Corners (6865 West Hickory Road). Admission is \$20 for adults and seniors, veterans (with ID) are \$18 and youth (11-17) are \$12. There is no charge for children 10 and under. Active military (with ID) are admitted at no charge. Memberships are available. For more information about the Gilmore Car Museum and what it has to offer please visit gilmorecarmuseum.org.





Planning the Perfect Event

By Zinta Aistars

Photos courtesy of Rentalex

It begins to take shape in your imagination—the perfect event. A wedding, a party, a celebration with family and friends. Or it may be a corporate event. What to do first? Where to begin?

“You should know the date of your event and the number of guests you plan to invite,” says Tia Sursely, inventory manager at Rentalex, 903 East Vine Street in Kalamazoo. “The rest we can finagle!”

Rentalex is a family-owned business, established more than two decades ago to serve Southwest Michigan’s party rental needs. Whatever the wants and wishes of the host, Rentalex likely has it—chairs, tables, linens, tents and canopies, lighting, heaters, décor, tableware, glassware, games and inflatables, arches and dance floors, audio video equipment, and more.

“Do talk to us as soon as you know date and count,” Sursely says. “How booked we are depends on the time of year. June, for instance, is the most popular event month, but in general, we get busy from May through October, because that is when we can do indoor as well as outdoor events.”

Sursely says Rentalex can organize a one-person party—and yes, there is such a thing, and why not—to an event for 400 people. Three to six months ahead is the preferred time span to plan an event if it falls in June, their busiest month.

“We do site visits if you have your venue chosen to check for obstacles,” Sursely says. “For outdoor events, we look for low-hanging trees, utilities, power lines, that sort of thing.”

Tables are available in several sizes—40”, 60”, or 72” in size, along with taller cocktail tables for the standing party, or shorter banquet tables, farm tables for the popular barn

events that are currently trending, and even an 8-foot-wide King’s Table for the special guest that likes his or her extra room for a royal spread.

“Then there is the Oktoberfest table,” Sursely smiles. “It has that wood-grain, rustic look, used without a tablecloth.”

Along with date and number of guests, the host should also have a budget in mind. Have a clear idea of what you hope to achieve with your event. Define your purpose and your goals and build the event around them. When selecting a venue, consider capacity, accessibility—will any of your guests have special requirements—and if you wish to hire catering services. Planning food and beverages, keep in mind any special dietary needs your guests may have. Check that your venue accommodates those food and beverage needs. Consider options for entertainment—music, or performance artists of different kinds, for example. Hiring a photographer and videographer may also be an addition to your plans. All of these options will affect your overall event budget.

“And then think out of the box,” Sursely adds. “We have a large showroom of all that we offer, so I recommend the event host come in and view what we have. Maybe a disco ball? You may want to have games, such as cornhole bean bag games. We offer a large selection of dishes and linens in more than 90 colors and also specialty fabrics. Come in and browse the showroom for ideas.”

It is always a good idea to have contingency planning as well. For outdoor events especially, think about variations in weather and prepare for those last-minute changes. Think about technical challenges that might come up—equipment that might get lost or misplaced or simply not operate correctly. Have a backup system in place and



test your equipment before the event begins. If a performer is in the plans, consider options should that performer have to cancel for some reason.

"We do many, many sit-down events, but that is not all," Sursely says. "Every rental business specializes in something. We specialize in AV equipment more than most."

Rentalex offers a selection of projectors, microphones with or without stands, handheld or pinned to lapels, and screens, speakers, and podiums. They are prepared for private parties as well as corporate gatherings.

Guiding guests in, signage is available to ensure everyone knows where to park vehicles and where to go to find whatever the guest may need. Boards are available to add writing that can be wiped off easily as well as floor or tabletop easels and stands for various signs. Portable signs with lettering can be set up roadside.

When temperatures cool, hangers and garment racks are available to hang up outer attire. A red carpet may unroll to guide guests alongside a red velvet roped stanchion to where a stage can be set up for entertainment.

Once in and with roaring appetites, guests can find popcorn machines, hot dog steamers, cotton candy machines, snow cone and slush puppy machines, pizza and pretzel warmers, and more.

Let the fun begin: not only bean bag games and bounce houses are available, but also dunk tanks, lottery drums, fog machines, wheel of chance, mini golf games, and more.

"We realize that your event says a lot about you, and we are trained to work with you to make your corporate event, wedding, graduation or any kind of party unforgettable, regardless of size or budget," says Sursely. "We will work within your budget and price fairly, from basic to high premium options to create an event to remember that everyone will enjoy."

Once the event is over, depending on whether it was a ticketed event, a private party, or a corporate meeting, you may wish to send out thank you notes. Assess guest and hired staff feedback that may be of use for any improvements for your next event. Above all, don't forget to have a great time!



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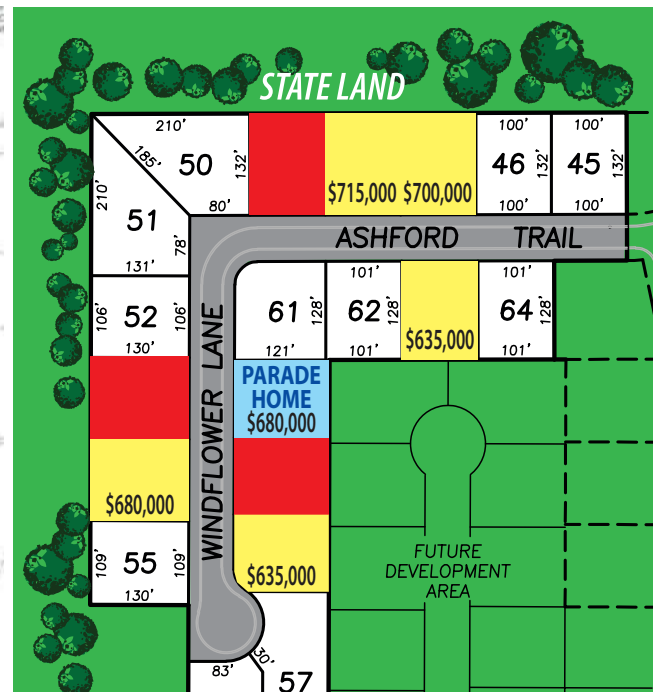
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