

# Creative Living



Monday, May 30, 1988 O&E

(O)IE



organizing  
**Dorothy Lehmkuhl**

## Ease cottage burden

**Q.** We have a family lake cabin which I enjoy, but all those trips cause lots of work. How can I simplify things?

**A.** Those who have cottages, boats, camping, skiing or other frequent "get away" places are truly blessed. Like anything else, however, nothing is perfect. While it's great to get away regularly, facilitating such trips requires careful planning or the effort may not be worth the reward. Here are some tips to ease the burden.

Designate a wardrobe specifically for your vacation spot. Keep as much as possible there or packed in your bags at home; then when it's time to leave again, little repacking remains. When you return, launder or clean out as needed and repack immediately.

Regardless of how tired you are on your arrival there and on your return, involve everyone in the unpacking process right away. The laundry may be delayed until tomorrow, but consider the trip incomplete until every last item is out of sight and returned to its proper place. This requires stamina and self-discipline at an unwelcome time, but otherwise one person may get stuck with the job that could take the whole time to recoup — just in time to leave again.

Keep a separate divider titled "Cottage" (or other appropriate name) in a 3-by-5-inch card file reminder box. The most important item behind this divider is a checklist of items to take each time. As extra reminders come up, drop notes behind that divider. Names and numbers of people in that vicinity, color samples, measurements, or other miscellaneous references can also be collected there. Keeping a reminder box at your cabin with a closing checklist, etc., can also be handy.

Try to transport as little as possible back and forth. If you carry cold food, however, a large cooler is a logical collection place for miscellaneous items to be included next time.

Our cottage sports the sign: "Equal Opportunity Kitchen." Each person is expected to contribute. Youngsters are assigned cleanup duties. Having guests bring their own sheets and towels cuts laundry. Meals are definitely not gourmet. Let nature and the kids do the dirty work and clean up some of the mess. Use paper plates, cups, etc. Mark drinking glasses for reuse and establish holding spots for them. Heartily accept offers from guests to bring prepared food. Eat out as much as you can possibly afford. (This is Mom's outing, too — remember?)

Vacations can be wonderful or not — partly depending on careful planning and a spirit of family cooperation.



designing ways  
**Eve Garvin**

## Shedding more light

**S**PRING is the time of year when one thinks of giving the home a fresh look.

A new shade to a lamp can do the same thing a new hat will do — perk things up.

You can do many things to change the "look" of your lamps. If you have a drum shade, change to a cylinder or empire style. You can add to the height of the lamp by adding a riser. Changing the harp will lower or raise the shade. An important final will add much to a new look. The Lamp Shack on Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield is equipped to take care of all your lighting needs. They have a large variety of lamp shades — parchment to silk plaques.

Koch and Lowry, George Kovacs and Bauer are just a few of the lines they carry. They have a myriad of pharmacy lamps. I find the pharmacy lamp used with a small table in front of it is much more interesting than the lamp table combination.

The Lamp Shack has a custom fixture service. They will design or help you design any lighting fixture. Custom lamp shades is another service they offer.

Elaine Blannon, owner of the Lamp Shack, was associated with the Mel Rykus Lighting Gallery. I'm sure many of you remember the ingenuity of the Rykus designs. Blannon has the same creativity.

For those of you that are wondering what happened to Mel Rykus, he is alive and well and residing in California.

I received a letter from a reader who asked where the Siematic Kitchen can be seen locally.

I first saw the kitchen in Sarasota, but was delighted to learn upon my return of a showroom in the new addition to the Michigan Design Center in Troy. Your designer will be happy to take you there.

Eve Garvin has been an interior designer in the area for many years.

## Light cuisine Illuminating ideas for flattering rooms

**I**T LOOKS like an inquisitive alien. It has three parts: pod-like base, long skinny neck and one unblinking light-emitting eye. Sitting on a table, a high-design halogen lamp is passive and helpful — if a bit snooty.

The new halogen light bulb makes its predecessor, the incandescent bulb invented by Thomas Edison, seem bald and elderly. Because of its adaptable size, halogen has revolutionized lighting design.

But making halogen lamps do tricks is only part of the fun of modern lighting. Today's lighting isn't so much about bulb and fixtures as it is about drama.

The source of light often is hidden, but the effects are breathtaking.

Lighting designers wash home interiors with carefully selected splashes of light — from a living room's soft glow to a workspace's no-nonsense brilliance. But light design, though a subtle art, is a specialized one. It takes a delicate balance of light-blending to make rooms inviting as well as functional.

PART OF the drama of home lighting involves the way it illuminates inhabitants. If you're doing your taxes on the rug or reading, you need a high light level. But if you're enjoying an intimate evening at home, you can use lighting to create a softer effect that flatters everyone in the room.

How intense the light in your house should be depends on whether you are trying to see or be seen. If the mood is romance or simply an

avoidance of harshness, stage lighting experts have tips on using light to enhance your appearance.

"Strong directional lighting is the least flattering," says Dr. Robin Huber, a lecturer in theater arts. If you take a spotlight and aim straight down on a person, it's going to make every indentation on the face stand out.

Huber suggests using multidirectional and diffused lighting (lighting from many different angles) to soften and flatten out facial lines.

"Don't be afraid to use pink bulbs," he advises. "They can be very effective. Pink makes skin look warmer. It gives the illusion of a glow."

You can also paint a wall a warm tone and bounce light off it to keep your skin looking summery. But watch out if you have a blue or green wall. "Avoid bouncing light off a cool color," says Huber. "It might not be as flattering."

According to Huber, one type of fixture that helps create complimentary lighting is the wall sconce. Mounted at eye level, it washes the wall with light.

"IT CREATES A glowing wall with indirect lighting. You come into a room with the walls lit. It creates back lighting, silhouette lighting. The end result is much more flattering."

Huber advises investing in good indirect lighting sources such as sconces, torchieres and spotlights, which can be directed against walls. A torchiere is a standing lamp in

which the light source is aimed upward.

The professor of theater arts also suggests buying switches that can dim or brighten light sources.

"It's worth every bit of your money to get fixtures that either have internal dimmers or to buy dimmers for them. That's the only way you can select the right intensity for all times with diffused light."

Low voltage track lighting has been around for over 20 years but its popularity surged during the last five years. It offers a concentrated, narrow lighting pattern ideal for focusing on a room's special features.

Track or recessed accent lighting can range from a narrow pencil beam directed at a specific object to a broad spotlight washing over an entire wall.

Use it to create special effects. Spotlight wall hangings and art objects. Place a floor "can" light so it shines into the branches of a ficus or potted palm.

Spotlights work magic in small dark spaces. They splash rooms with natural light, making them warm, bright and inviting. Have a dark, stuffy attic you'd like to transform? A skylight may be the answer.

It doesn't matter if you have a sloped or flat roof, thick roofing tiles or asphalt shingles.

The number of skylight designs and features have been going through the roof, along with skylight sales.

**NEW ON THE MARKET** are fully assembled, ready-to-use skylights

that reduce installation time and human error. And there's an attic over the room you want to light, a contractor or carpenter can install a light shaft. It will direct daylight from the rooftop skylight into the location you desire.

The right lighting displays a new bathroom at its best and also adds to its safety and convenience.

Convert all bathroom fixtures to fluorescent to improve the room's lighting quality and reduce electricity costs.

"For applying makeup or shaving, two lamps or fixtures at about eye level, 36 to 40 inches apart, will evenly light both sides of your face," says Changing Times magazine. "This arrangement is more flattering than the light over the mirror in most bathrooms."

A halogen bulb consumes approximately half the power of incandescent light and can last seven times as long. It will produce a crisp white light more sunlike than any other type of artificial lighting.

Without a big bulb to house, halogen track lights bob and away with light, making them to come from little more than a stretch of wire. A slender, reedlike halogen torchiere can provide enough power to wash a room with high-noonlike brightness.

Sound too good to be true? OK, here are the disadvantages of halogen: It's expensive (at least at first — in the long run, it's economical); the bulbs get — ouch! — hot. Even if the bulbs are cool, handle halogen with care: the oil from your fingertips can destroy the bulb.

## Factors in healthy lawn development

There are five major factors in the development of a healthy, beautiful lawn: mowing, watering, soil, species of turfgrass and weed control.

### MOWING

An average lawn of 8,000-10,000 square feet needs about 40 hours of maintenance a year, according to Professional Lawn Care Association experts, much of it mowing and trimming.

Mowing is a significant shock to turfgrass, so stress must be minimized.

Don't cut grass too low. The higher the grass, the deeper and stronger the grass roots. Heights of 2-3 inches, especially in drought and heat, are better than 1-1 1/4 inches. By raising cutting height 1/4 of an inch, the ability of grass to perform photosynthesis is increased. That 1/4-inch means an extra 300 square feet of leaf surface for every 1,000 square feet of lawn.

Mower blades must be sharp. Grass should be sliced neatly, not shredded. Reel mowers cut a uniform height because of their horizontal cutter-bar design. However, most homeowners use rotary mowers.

The whirling blades of rotary mowers must be kept sharp or some grass will be bent over. When the grass is bent over, the height will be irregular after mowing. Sharpen and balance blades in the spring and one or two times more a season. Change

### weeder's guide

#### Earl Aronson

directions each time you mow, especially with rotary mowers.

Don't catch and remove too many clippings. If grass is mown while very long, you may have little choice but to catch or to rake. Keep in mind that it's important to prevent clumps from smothering grass. Timely mowing can eliminate the need to remove clippings.

One plant of Kentucky bluegrass can produce 3 feet of growth in an average season; that's 5 tons of clippings per acre in a year. These clippings provide one extra fertilization a year when left in place after every mowing to decay naturally and to nourish the soil.

Timely mowing eliminates the need to rake during midseason. This preserves the herbicide barrier in

the soil, designed to control crab grass.

Don't mow in unfavorable weather. Mowing in rain, dew or dense fog can leave grass clumps or uneven patches. Mowing in hot, dry weather, on the other hand, is stressful to grass. Mow high and water deeply.

### WATERING

Watering plus rainfall should total 1-2 inches a week. Water deeply into the grass root zone. Avoid lighter amounts or more frequent waterings because such practice improperly trains grass roots to remain near the surface when they dry out.

Maintain a regular watering program all season. Watering in the morning is better than at night because it discourages diseases. Watering soon after mowing is good if there isn't enough rainfall.

### SOIL

A healthy lawn needs correct soil conditions to compete with weeds. If you haven't had your soil analyzed for years, it's a good idea to check soil pH and nutrient conditions.

Send a soil sample to your state university extension office or ask a

professional lawn service to make arrangements. Sandy soil lets water percolate below the root zone too quickly; clay soil restricts water availability by letting it run off or evaporate.

Apply proper amounts of nutrients at the correct time. Loosen compacted soil.

### SPECIES OF TURFGRASS

Know your species of turfgrass. A 10,000-square-foot lawn has about 8 million grass plants. Each square inch of lawn has about six grass plants.

New species are developed each year, so a 10-year-old lawn probably is out-of-date, especially if it is composed mostly of one turfgrass species.

For a copy of Earl Aronson's "AP Guide to House Plants," send \$1.50 to House Plants, AP News-Features, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020. Any questions about gardening problems must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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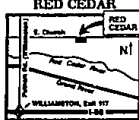
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