

Bring spring inside and beat the winter blues

REAL DEAL



CARI WALDMAN

While you can't hurry along spring's warm sunshine and dewy rains, you can rid yourself of the winter doldrums with a few decorative touches inside your home.

There are an abundance of simple and affordable ways to add zip to the familiar gray spaces in your home.

Pay Attention To the Light

So, instead of burying your head under the covers and waiting for the birds to chirp, enhance your surroundings and lift your spirits!

"Washing away the winter blues can be as simple as changing shades on a chandelier or lamp," says Gail Crawmer, interior designer at La Belle Provence in downtown Birmingham.

"For \$28, you can instantly add warmth to a room and change the light in your life," says Crawmer, referring to La Belle Provence's eclectic collection of decor elements.

And, how about a dose of bright light in addition to a few decorative pieces to recharge your spirits? Try placing a few natural spectrum light bulbs in strategic places in your home. Like sunshine inside glass, they'll do the trick at \$12.99 at Linens 'N Things.

Let Your Bedroom Bloom

Give your bedroom a summer-cottage feeling with the new Shabby Chic home furnishings and accessories line at Mervyn's California stores. The retailer's tea-stained, floral cotton sheets were among my favorites in the collection, which was designed for easy mixing and matching throughout the home.

For a romantic bed-and-breakfast look, try twisting burgundy or spring rose garlands around your bed frame. The lively garlands can be found at Bed, Bath & Beyond for \$5.99.

For another unexpected change, experiment with them on the mantel in your living room or around the shower rod in your bathroom.

Look underfoot

It's often the last place you look, but sometimes what's beneath you needs more help than any other area of your home.

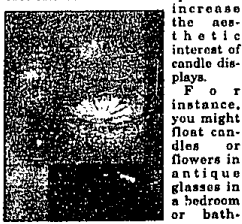
Oriental rugs are in abundance right now at Marshall's stores. They're a classic choice and will bring color and warmth to any room.

I also found great style and affordable prices in rugs at TJ Maxx, Frye One and Home Depot. Look for plush cabbage rose designs, garden vegetable motifs and asymmetrical patterns in luscious pinks or warm caramel tones.

Candlelight Magic

Candles not only bring light, a warm glow and uplifting scents into the home but also act as interesting decorative details for the eye.

When setting out your candles, mix and match shapes, colors and heights. Consider using unusual containers, too. All of these techniques will increase the aesthetic interest of candle displays.



For instance, you might float candles or flowers in antique glasses in a bedroom or bathroom. Also, look for aromatherapy candles. Their invigorating scents and stress-relieving properties will do you good. Besides, they're cheaper than a vacation!

Cari Waldman is free-lance writer and stylist who lives in West Bloomfield. Please send your shopping and style questions to Cari at OERead@aol.com



STAFF PHOTO BY ANA LAGEFELD

Helping out: Connie Koss, manager of the Women's Health Boutique in Lathrup Village, is coordinating local efforts to raise funds for the Dream Fulfillment Fund, which gives victims of breast cancer a chance to fulfill life-long dreams. Old bridal gowns may be donated to the store for the Oregon-based program during the entire month of February. The gowns will be sold on the resale market to fund the program, which has so far granted the wishes of 11 women with breast cancer.

Something old and a dream Dress donation program helps cancer victims

BY KEN VAN STEENKISTE
STAFF WRITER

For Connie Koss, manager of the Women's Health Boutique in Lathrup Village, the idea of improving the lives of breast cancer victims has special significance.

Like many of us, Koss saw both a friend and a family member struggle with the disease.

Thanks to a special project known as the Dream Fulfillment Fund, Koss, along with many women from the metropolitan Detroit area, will get a chance to help victims of breast cancer lead a better quality of life while they are here.

Much like the popular Make-A-Wish Foundation for children with terminal illness, the Dream Fulfillment Fund lets women with breast cancer, a particularly deadly form of the disease, embark on adventures and satisfy life-long dreams.

All this month, the foundation is sponsoring a special event to raise money for the program. The foundation is asking women to donate their wedding gowns — dresses that may just be gathering dust in attics and closets — for resale throughout the country later this year. Sales of the dresses will benefit the Dream Fulfillment Fund.

Koss and the Women's Health Boutique, which sells prosthetics and other products for women who have undergone mastectomy surgery to treat breast cancer, is coordinating local efforts and putting out a call for support.

The store, located at 26812 Southfield Road, is a local drop-off point for the gowns. Employees at the store will collect the gowns, as well as, veils throughout February before wrapping them and shipping them off to Portland.

At the Women's Health Boutique more than 30 gowns have already been donated.

However, Koss and other employees at the store are eager to bring in more. "This is a way to make one final happy memory" for breast cancer victims, said

Koss.

The project is run by the Portland, Oregon-based non-profit group Making Memories Breast Cancer Foundation. It was founded in 1998. The organization's first wish fulfillment project came last summer when it organized a family reunion for a Georgia woman. So far the group, which is staffed entirely by volunteers, has fulfilled 11 wishes.

The gowns that Koss takes in should fetch between \$150 and \$300 on the resale market after being cleaned and repaired as necessary. Sales will be held in major cities throughout the United States in late spring, although one in the Detroit area has not been scheduled, Koss said.

Making Memories founder Fran Hansen said she first got the idea for the Dream Fulfillment Fund after a bout with breast cancer three years ago.

In trying to find other breast cancer victims for support, Hansen became aware of the disease's devastating effects on the lives of its victims and their families.

"I found that most of the women were financially needy because the cancer had drained all their resources and their ability to work. It just broke my heart. I thought 'there's got to be a way to help these ladies,'" said Hansen, who owned a chain of bridal boutiques at the time.

The answer came to her in a late-night revelation.

"It just came to me in the middle of the night. I thought it was a good idea because it also helps women who can't afford a new gown," she said, adding the organization is still looking for more sponsors, particularly corporations who will underwrite the Dream Fulfillment Fund.

For more information on Making Memories and the Dream Fulfillment Fund, call (503) 282-3955. To contact the Women's Health Boutique, call (248) 652-0606. Gowns may be dropped off at the store 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Extended hours can be arranged by contacting the store ahead of time.

Retail, style and special store events are listed in this calendar. Please send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax: (248) 644-1314. Information must be received by 5 p.m. Monday for publication the following Sunday.
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

VALENTINE JEWELRY SHOW
Neiman Marcus, the Somerset Collection in Troy, hosts a special showing of jewelry by David Yurman in celebration of Valentine's Day through Feb. 14, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Designer Jewelry, first floor. For more information, call (248) 643-3300.

PUPPET SHOW
Wonderland Mall in Livonia presents Father Millennium's Zero Show, produced by the Heiken Puppets, Food Court. Shows start at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. For more information, call (734) 622-4100.

DINOSAUR SHOW
Livonia Mall, at Seven Mile and Middlebelt roads, presents "Mystery of the Lost Dinosaur" for children and their families, throughout the mall. For additional information, call (248) 478-1160.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

KAREN NEWMAN APPEARANCE
Local talent and celebrity Karen Newman visits Hudson's Lakeside location in Sterling Heights to sign autographs and talk with shoppers, 2:30 p.m., Men's Department.

WARM AND FUZZY STORIES
Borders Books & Music, 30995 Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills, hosts a special story-telling session for kids, age 4 through 8, 2 p.m. For more information, call (248) 737-0004.

DOLL FASHION SHOW
The "We Love Barbie" doll fashion show returns to the Plymouth Cultural Center, 625 Farmer Road in Plymouth. The show features vintage, collectible and custom-designed Barbies and accessories, 11 p.m.-4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for kids age 4 through 12. For information call, (734) 453-2110.

MEN'S AND HOME FASHION SHOW

Hudson's will show off its new Men's and Home store at Lakeside Mall in Sterling Heights with a fashion show. See the latest looks, from blazers to bedding. The event will be hosted by Karen Newman, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17

ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOW

Westland Shopping Center, 3500 W. Warren, is offering a wide variety of arts and crafts with the theme "made in America." The show will run during regular mall hours and feature professional artisans' wares, including paintings, stained glass, wood crafts, jewelry and needlepoint, through Feb. 20. For information, call (734) 425-5001.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18

PRETZEL-ROLLING CONTEST

Auntie Anne's pretzel shop at Great Lakes Crossing mall in Auburn Hills holds a pretzel-rolling contest for kids. Participants will receive prizes and favors, 4:30-6:15 p.m. For more information, call the mall at (248) 454-5010.