

At Home

INTERIOR DESIGN ■ DIY ■ GARDENING

Message
Workplace
gift appeals
to many. C5



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Accents

Style with shade

Silhouette® window shades add softness at the window without resorting to elaborate curtains or draperies. The innovative window treatment features adjustable fabric vanes sus-



ended between two sheer fabric panels. They provide a soft-focus view of the exterior as well as a complete range of privacy and light control options.

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Safety tips

The Michigan Humane Society offers the following tips to keep your pets safe during the busy holiday season.

Holiday plants that can be harmful or toxic to your pets include mistletoe, holly, poinsettias, Japanese yew and Jerusalem cherry. So can the bulbs of the amaryllis plant. Contact your veterinarian if your pet is vomiting, lethargic or foaming at the mouth.

Keep pets away from holiday decorations and never leave pets unsupervised around the tree. Tinsel, ribbons and angel hair can cause intestinal blockages if swallowed. Glass balls may be "leached" off the tree and break.

Also, ingested pine needles can puncture your pet's intestines; vacuum around the tree frequently.

Preservatives, aspirin or sugar used to prolong a tree's life may harm your pet if the water is ingested. Aspirin is especially deadly for cats.

Make sure lights and electrical cords are out of reach. Besides the risk of electrocution, the whole tree may topple over.

Keep pets away from ribbons and bows. Cats find them fascinating; however, they are a serious choking hazard.

Make sure pets are secure while you are entertaining. More guests mean more chances for your pet to slip out unnoticed; be sure your pet is wearing a collar and ID tag in case of escape.

Make sure pets aren't forgotten in all the activity, but provide them with a quiet retreat when the festivities get too stressful.

Resist giving your pets fatty foods like gravy and poultry skin, which can cause severe gastrointestinal upset.

Likewise, don't give them poultry or steak bones, which can splinter or lodge in the throat, stomach or intestinal tract.

Chocolate is poisonous to dogs and can even be fatal depending on the animal's size and the amount and type of chocolate ingested. The safest rule of thumb is to keep all chocolate out of your dog's reach.



PHOTOS BY JERRY JOLYMAI (OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC)

It's difficult not to smile when inside Louis and Vicki Papalas' home during the holiday season. Every December, Louis, a retired Ford Motor Co. executive, transforms the couple's West Bloomfield condominium into a magical Christmas kingdom.

Man-made Christmas

His touch makes memories and sublime holiday cheer



The "fun" Christmas tree - one of eight in the home - is trimmed with Elvis and Marilyn Monroe ornaments, as well as those made by Louis and Vicki Papalas' children.

Louis Papalas has visions of sugar plum fairies.

The kind that dance in his living room near the window where, at the moment, a pint-sized Santa and elves are climbing up a tiny red ladder and into a grand piano.

Papalas, a retired Ford executive who you might as well call Mr. Christmas, has fashioned the comical holiday vignette and all the other decorations in his and wife Vicki's West Bloomfield condominium.

By the way, the Santa and elves are climbing out of Poinsettia land; there's a dove of the Christmas plants beneath the piano.

And, by the way, there's a dove of holiday decorations in the Papalas house.

With an estimated 50 boxes of trim, eight Christmas trees - one in every bedroom and bathroom - and self-imposed mandate to adorn every table top, ottoman and raised flat surface in the house, Papalas is

aware that his passion for decking the halls is unusual, if not a bit unhealthy.

"It's obsessive," admits the 56-year-old. "You know that saying, 'less is more?' he asks. "I don't."

When the couple's house burned down several years ago, Papalas transformed their Residence Inn suite into a holiday abode complete with tree, lights, yuletide bedding and Christmas china.

In West Bloomfield, no room, no hallway, no corner goes untouched by the force that wife Vicki calls "Louis' genius."

She bakes the cookies and stands by, refraining from comment as much as possible. "My role is to stay out of his way, shut up and clean up," she jokes. "And, oh, to say it's nice and don't critique in process."

Papalas prefers a little time with his ideas before facing feedback. "I'm not sensitive. I'm obsessive," he insists.

In the end, all is well worth



This holiday, Louis Papalas' spectacular dining room centerpiece, a sparkling melody of gold, silver and green, contains small treasures for his grandchildren to find on Christmas Day.

it, Vicki says, describing this year's Christmas decor as "magical."

Indeed, the Papalas home does have a sublime holiday warmth. And many of the trimmings are meant to appeal to the grandchildren.

On a display by the staircase is an army of slender evergreen candles in tall brass candlesticks. Forging within the maze of wax are brass reindeer. Ah, it's a candlestick forest!

The dining room centerpiece - Papalas' pride and joy - is a menagerie of gold and silver

PLEASE SEE MAN-MADE, C4

STORY BY NICOLE STAFFORD | STAFF WRITER

Holiday collectibles take many forms

BY BRENDA DOMINICK
STAFF WRITER

Canton residents Joe and Georgia Hartluck collect angels and Santa Claus.

"It would probably have to do with my Polish heritage, with St. Nick and all that," Joe said. "I picked up things from around the world; we're travelers."

Joe's personal collection includes about 60 or 70 Santa Clauses. Georgia has 30 to 40 angels, which she displays on top of euphorbia, window sills and china cabinets.

"I just like to decorate," Georgia said. "I have the Thomas Kincade,

Seraphim Angels and Dreamlike Santa Clauses."

The Hartlucks have three children and seven grandchildren and said they like to make sure they include the religious aspect of Christmas into their gathering. On Christmas Day, the children sing *Happy Birthday* to baby Jesus in the Nativity set.

"I guess it's just things we like," Georgia said. "It seems to make the holiday complete. Even though we go to Florida every winter, I still feel I have to put them up."

Every year their Christmas card is from a different part of the world they have visited, including China,

Greece and Italy.

"We take a picture from there and then make it into a Christmas card," Georgia said. "This year is from Japan. The photo is taken in Kyoto, where they had the Festival of Ages. It was taken with four different Japanese warriors wearing period costumes."

The couple took this trip in 2000.

SOUVENIRS

Joyce Weigel of Farmington collects vacation souvenirs and uses them as Christmas ornaments.

PLEASE SEE COLLECTIBLES, C2



Here are some of the bells collected by Deb Wasiloff. She has been collecting bells for 15 years and keeps them on display in a curio cabinet all year.

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