

MONROE ★ COUNTY
HERALD

Spring

*HOME & GARDEN
EDITION*

Monday,
March 27, 2023

Special Section

16 pages

**TOMAH
LUMBER**
111 N. Superior Ave.
(608) 372-2111
tomahlumber.com

For all your

HOME IMPROVEMENT NEEDS

CUSTOM BUILD HOMES | ADDITIONS | KITCHEN & BATH REMODELING | SIDING | WINDOWS | DOORS | ROOFS | GARAGES

The difference is in the details...

Spring planting tips from the professional

By Benny Mailman
Editor

With winter losing its icy grip on our landscape, and temperatures soaring into the 40-degree range, visions of beautifully colored flowers filling the now-feral fields has professional and amateur botanists chomping at the bit. Whether someone dabbles in daisies, daffodils, or dahlias, or whether they are professionals at their botanical endeavors, Spring is the season that sees folks distancing themselves from brashness of winter and cozying up to warmer endeavors, like gardening and flower beds.

The Herald had a chance to sit down with Sparta local, Jason Hauser, who shared his wealth of knowledge on an array of topics, stemming from flower and plant choices; covering landscape and color designs; and digging into soil testing and weed control. Hauser says that for this specific time of year, people should be prepping their soil; finding out what is going on with their soil. If it is super sandy, then they need to amend their soil. People can go to the city maintenance shop, where there are free piles of leaf mulch. “It looks like black dirt, but it is actually composted leaf mulch that has broken down over the years,” Hauser explained. “That is how we get dirt. Basically, the highest percentage of dirt on this planet is from compost. The city does not charge you for it, but they do not want you loading it with a skid loader and taking away dump-truck loads, but if you need a couple buckets to amend your flower beds, that is fine. All American has compost for sale.”

Different yards, different soil

Hauser says that people in Monroe County must understand that not every yard has the same soil. “There



The key to a healthy garden is in the ground. Spring is a time for preparing your soil. Herald photo by Logan Everson.

is a lot of black dirt and a lot of clays, and there a lot of sandier areas, as well,” he told the Herald. “The whole west side of Sparta is basically a sandpit. The Franklin Street areas are hard-packed clay. If you look at the weeds in your yard, they will tell you what’s going on. If you see a lot of dandelions, your land is hungry for calcium, and it is hard packed; it needs to be aerated

and have micro-nutrients introduced into it.”

Hauser said that people can send soil samples into the county ag department, in order to find out exactly what their soil needs to make it stronger and more fertile. He mentioned a few of the more common additions that are needed

‘SPRING’ cont. on pg. 6



Starting seedlings indoors

To ensure a productive harvest, gardeners in northern climates must start certain vegetable seedlings indoors four to eight weeks before the last frost. Here are a few tips for getting a head start on your garden.

- Buy seeds from a reputable seller
- Use a specialized seed-starting mix
- Purchase or reuse containers with proper drainage
- Plant seeds at the depth listed on the seed packet
- Prepare for some losses and plant more seeds than you need
- Water frequently but sparingly to keep the soil moist but not waterlogged
- Use heat mats and tray covers to speed up germination
- Place sprouted seedlings in a sunny location or under grow lights
- Promptly transplant seedlings that outgrow their original pots
- Once the seedlings are big enough, gradually introduce them to outdoor temperatures to get them ready for transplanting

Growing plants from seed takes time and dedication but is extremely rewarding.



Get more done faster.

Z400 Gas powered

**Kubota**

Together we do more.®

Get a great offer on class-leading speed,* ergonomic comfort and the exclusive Hydro-Gear ZT-3600 transmission.

\$0 DOWN 0% APR 48 MONTHS
OR
SAVE \$300

VISIT US TODAY FOR THIS LIMITED-TIME OFFER



PORTLAND IMPLEMENT INC

20 STATE HIGHWAY 33, CASHTON, WI 54619

(608) 654-5976

www.portlandimplement.com

KubotaUSA.com

*Claim is based on speeds published on company websites as of 11/08/2021 for the following 52"- 54" zero-turn models: Gravely Pro-Turn ZX, Scag Patriot, Exmark Radius S Series, Toro Titan HD 2000 Series, Hustler Fastrak SDX, John Deere ZTrak. © Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2023. \$0 Down, 0% A.P.R. financing for 48 months or customer instant rebates of \$300 are available on purchases of new Kubota Z400 Series equipment from participating dealers' in-stock inventory is available to qualified purchasers through Kubota Credit Corporation USA; subject to credit approval. Example: 48 monthly payments of \$20.83 per \$1,000 financed. Some exceptions apply. Offers expire 6/30/23. Terms subject to change. This material is for descriptive purposes only. Kubota disclaims all representations and warranties, express or implied, or any liability from the use of this material. For complete warranty, disclaimer, safety, incentive offer and product information, consult your Dealer or KubotaUSA.com.



Arctic Heating Cooling & Metal Fab

Your local heating and cooling company

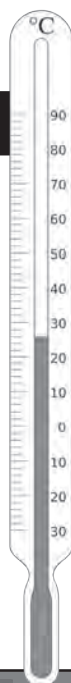
Call for your special offer on an A/C tune up! (608) 374-2333

Call us for all your HEATING and COOLING needs



WE SERVICE ALL MAKES AND MODELS

TEMPSTAR



300 S. Water St. • Sparta, WI 54656 • arcticheatingwi@gmail.com • www.arcticheatcool.com



Patterned accent pillows add character to the classic solid-colored leather sofa. Herald photo by Kyle Evans.

Latest trends in home design and décor

BY KYLE EVANS
Staff Writer

When asked what has changed most in the last five plus years as far as furniture, Lorri Johnson, Interior Designer at Wesco Home in Sparta said, “some furniture is getting smaller scaled, just because of the older generation downsizing moving into smaller homes. Sectionals are still popular but are more for the younger generation, generally.”

“There are lots of textures and different patterns with accents like pillows and chairs, but we don’t see much for patterns and such on the furniture itself,” she said.

Ken Lauritsen is the England Furniture rep for Wesco Home in Sparta. He said, “we’re seeing now in the furniture industry, the companies are going back to the darker colors like grey and brown.”

According to Lauritsen, “the big furniture companies went lighter a couple years ago, due to more money

being readily available and people were happier, in general. Now were kind of going into an unknown area financially in the country which bring more browns and greys.”

“Black is also gaining popularity with some different accent colors like terracotta and teal,” said Lauritsen.

As far as flooring, Johnson said, “the vinyl plank and wood floors, also greys and browns, seem to be the most popular with some accented area rugs.”

“Cellular shades are a very popular window treatment option and people are still using valances and drapery to accent the colors in the room,” she said.

Johnson mentioned, “mostly, it’s the minimalist (neat and tidy) look that people are going for in their homes and bringing things together with different accents.”

At Wesco Home, they offer services of floor planning and designing for those who don’t find themselves knowing what they want.



GREAT QUALITY WORK

100% SATISFACTION
GUARANTEED!

(608) 487-6245

- Tree Removal
- Tree Trimming
- Stump Grinding
- Site Cleanup
- Fully Insured



Skidderdriver548@gmail.com

Ways to make your home more energy efficient

Source: Focus on Energy- Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

You don't have to be a home improvement expert to make some weatherization improvements at your home or business. There are some fairly easy steps all energy consumers can take to help reduce energy use, helping cut costs on their utility bills. Some improvements may also qualify you for cash-back rewards or grants through Focus on Energy or tax credits through the federal energy tax credits program.

Lighting

There are several ways to reduce energy consumption by simply changing how you light your home or business. Turn off lights in rooms not being used, use task lighting instead of lighting an entire room, use solar outdoor lights or use a timer so they will turn off during the day, and use ENERGY STAR® lamps and energy efficient light bulbs.

Information on ENERGY STAR® lighting and incentives in Wisconsin can be found at <https://www.focusonenergy.com/Residential/>.

Appliances and Electronics

Appliances account for a lot of your household's energy consumption. When shopping for appliances, make sure they are ENERGY STAR® certified. Reduce energy consumption in your home by running dishwashers and washing machines only when the load is full. This practice also helps to conserve water.

To help conserve even more

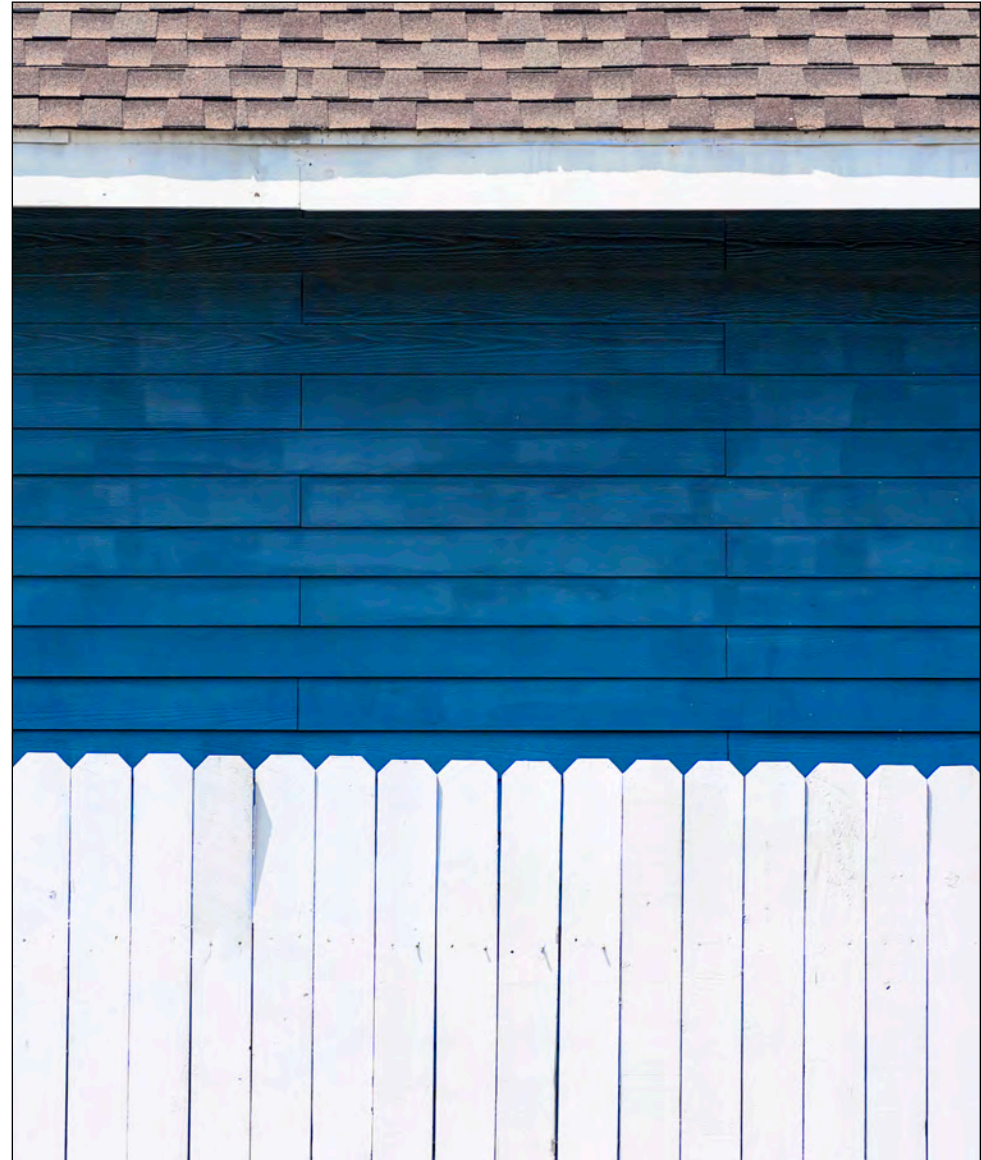
'ENERGY' cont. on pg. 12

3 springtime home improvement projects

Are you thinking about updating your home this spring? If so, these three projects are perfectly suited to the season.

1. Upgrade the landscaping. Spring is the perfect time to upgrade flower beds and walkways or even install a pool or hot tub. Your garden will have time to grow in and you'll be able to enjoy your new outdoor space all summer long.
2. Rebuild or refinish the deck. If your deck has seen better days, this is the ideal time to repair or rebuild it. Consider expanding it to create zones for eating, cooking and relaxing.
3. Replace the siding. If your siding took a beating over the winter, now's the right time to replace it. Choose a quality product and consider using a more modern color. Cool tones like gray, blue and green have been popular in recent years.

Spring is the best time of year to tackle most outdoor projects. Just be sure to get to them before the hotter weather arrives.



What's the best source of heat for your home?

BY KYLE EVANS

Staff Writer

According to Matt Jesski, owner of Artic Heating, Cooling, and Metal Fabrication, the best option for homeowners is Natural gas if they have access to it. Biggest reason being the cost effectiveness over time. He said, "both fuel oil and propane have such volatile markets where the prices change juristically in a short period of time. Natural gas still increases, but not at the same rate, because to increase natural gas prices it must go through federal regulations and such."

Outdoor wood stoves are popular

in the area. Some disadvantages with wood stoves, is you need time to cut wood or you can buy wood from suppliers, you have to stoke the stove every day to keep your house warm. The biggest advantage would be the cost, wood stoves cost quite a bit more up front sometimes, but if you have access to your own wood and can keep a stockpile, then it doesn't really cost anything besides time to maintain.

Fuel oil furnaces are not put in new homes very often anymore, according to Jesski. They have the warmest amount of heat per gallon, but the disadvantages outweigh the advantages in our area.

Disadvantages include the volatile market, loss of square footage in home by needing a tank to hold the fuel oil, the need for a chimney, and the upfront additional cost of a fuel oil furnace is around \$1,500 more.

LP (Liquid Propane) is still in a very volatile market as far as filling your tank, but the upfront cost and low maintenance make this the next best option in our area second to natural gas.

The biggest issue with Natural gas is that it's not available everywhere, mostly in highly saturated areas like cities. The more rural homes mostly turn to propane to heat their homes.

'SPRING'

continued from page 2

to strengthen the soil. "It could need sulphur, calcium, zinc ... Your yard is like your body, it needs a lot of little things to keep it healthy. The same goes for the flowerbeds."

Investigate and take notes

Jason Hauser explained that people need to put in the effort, if they want an amazing display for friends and passersby. "Botanists at any level need to pay attention to amount of sun that gets to the area where they are hoping to grow plants. The sun can be a strong nurturer to some plants, and they need that attention, whereas some plant could be crushed by too much sunlight, and they would rather exist in the shadowy sections of a yard." Hauser stated that if the conditions are not perfect for a flower or plant, no matter how much the caretaker's ambition to see the foliage flourish in their yard, it just will not happen. "It can be a hard pill to swallow, for anyone, but if the situation is not idyllic for a plant, it just won't grow."

Jason also said not to be wallflower when planning your flowerbed or garden. "If you see a yard with beautiful flowers that you like, stop in and talk with the homeowner, because 99 percent of the time they will be more than happy to answer any of your questions, and I would wager that the chances are good that they will even give you a stem off of one of their plants, to take with you." He went on say that folks are really proud of their flowerbeds because it takes a long time to get them flourishing. "Do not be afraid to walk up to a complete stranger and say, "Wow, that is beautiful, how did you do that?"

On his favorite flower bed in the area, Hauser said that Carlisle's Farm Supply, located at 10196, State Hwy 21, Sparta has a 30-year-old flower bed. "I went out and talked with them about it. There is something continuously blooming out there, all year long. It is quite an amazing piece they have created through the years."



While bees are great for your garden, be aware that they may get 'pollen drunk' and fall asleep in the flower, making for a unpleasant handling later when they are startled awake. Pictured above, a bumblebee is harvesting the pollen from a 'Goldy Double Sunflower'. Herald photo by Logan Everson.

Weeds and chemicals

A common question, at some point (or many points) along the botanical journey, concerns weeds. Hauser had some valuable tips on this subject. "Some people go with weed barriers, and they are awesome, if you buy the right the ones. If you can poke your finger through the weed barrier, it is garbage. If you are going to do all this work, do not skimp out on the weed barrier; go to a landscape center and get a high-quality weed barrier."

On the use of chemicals, Hauser stated that he was a big fan of using chemicals, and that all the buzz on how awful they can be, is simply irrational. "The first thing a person should do is read the warning label. It tells you what you should be wearing when you apply the chemical. If people follow those guidelines, they won't get sick. Roundup Glysophate has no residual whatsoever. I could spray it in your yard, kill all your

grass, come back tomorrow, till it all up and plant new grass; it is a great instant weed killer around your flower bed. You can spray your weeds, kill them, and plant the very next day." Hauser informed the Herald that the chemical sprays are scientifically engineered, and an unimaginable amount of money goes into perfecting them.

Plant for the birds and bees and butterflies

Jason explained that uninvited guests can make a mess of a flowerbed or flower garden. He also offered up some unique advice on keeping those nasty buggers at bay or absent altogether. "Find something that will attract bees to your yard. Bees are predators and will ward off more damaging bugs, like potato beetles. Anytime I plant a garden, I plant a ton of Magnolias in it because they are a bright, vibrant flower that will attract the predator bugs, like bees, thus defending against intruders and

destroyers. It is a natural type of pest control."

Hauser did add some advice about bumblebees. "Do not be afraid of bees in your garden but be careful of the over pollinated bumblebees. I call it being 'pollen drunk,' when they fall asleep in the flower. They get tired after loading up on pollen and fall asleep, making them a startled buzzer when you handle the flower, with stinging being among the possible probabilities."

To attract butterflies, Hauser says to plant blues, reds and yellows. "I know some people may not think about milkweeds, but butterflies love them. If someone is a big butterfly lover, they may entertain the thought of planting milkweeds in their [flower] beds or gardens, on purpose."

To attract hummingbirds, Hauser says to plant bigger-headed flowers.

'SPRING' cont. on pg. 13



4 tips for tidying your home

Have you carefully sorted your belongings down to the essentials, but your home is still a mess? Don't worry! Here are a few tips to help you tidy up.

1. Take advantage of space. Go around your home and look for unused spaces underneath staircases and beds, over cupboards and behind doors. Make the most of this space with hooks, shelves and storage bins.
2. Store seasonal items. For instance, put your camping gear and Christmas decorations in marked bins or bags and store them in your basement or shed. Make sure these items are easily accessible when you need them.

3. Keep frequently used items at hand. It doesn't make sense to stow away items you use several times a day or week. Instead, place them within easy reach or on attractive displays. Keep rarely used products out of sight unless they're particularly decorative.

4. Invest in multifunctional furniture. Convertible furniture, multi-purpose shelving and storage benches or ottomans are perfect for stowing away things in style. Visit your local stores to explore your options.

Consult a specialist in your area for personalized advice on organizing your home.

Love your 1st Mortgage Rate? We do too!

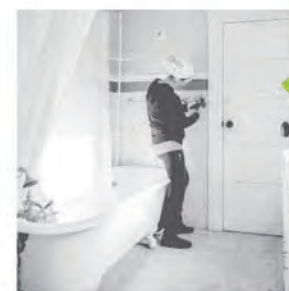
We've made it easy to get a HELOC without touching your 1st Mortgage.



- Borrow what you need, when you need it
- You only pay interest on the funds you use



- In some cases you can borrow up to 95% of your home's appraised value
- Competitive rates and fees make it affordable



- Great for recurring expenses or ongoing projects such as home improvements
- Can also be used for big-ticket purchases like a new vehicle

Apply online at 1stccu.com!

1ST COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION
Sparta • West Salem • Tomah



NMLS 411004. All loans subject to credit approval.
Contact a 1st CCU Mortgage Loan Officer for full details.
Membership eligibility required. Federally insured by NCUA.



Spring Has Sprung - **EXTERIOR REMODELING**

Starting small or doing it all, you can enjoy a great looking home, energy savings, low maintenance and convenience. Trust our experienced sales consultants to find just the solution for you and present a firm and final price without fake discounts.



ENTRY DOORS



WINDOWS



PATIO DOORS



PERGOLAS



DECKS



SUNROOMS



SIDING



PATIO COVERS

Windows | Doors | Sunrooms | Screenrooms | Siding | Soffit & Fascia | Decks | Kitchens | Bath Remodels | Flooring



The Board Store Home Improvements, Inc.

524 Copeland Ave | La Crosse, WI 54603

theboardstoreonline.com | 608.530.0770

HOURS: MON - FRI 8-6 SAT 8-4 SUN CLOSED

WI Contractor License #DC059500862 | MN Contractor License #BC039847



Locally Owned
Veteran Owned



Time To Improve Your Home! **INTERIORS**

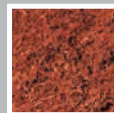
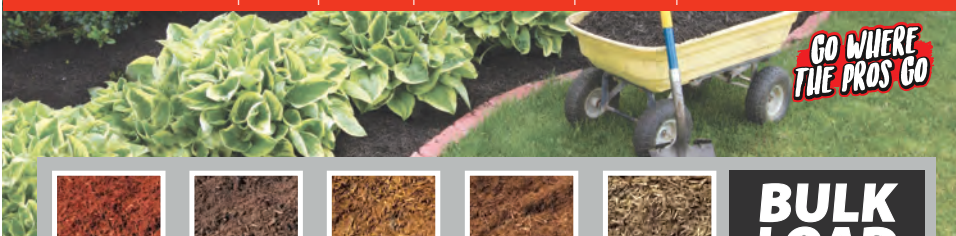
Make your space all you want it to be with the assistance of our design professionals. Enjoy a great remodeling experience with quality products installed quickly and correctly by our team of skilled carpenters, plumbers, and electricians!



Visit Our Showroom To Receive a \$200 Coupon!

LANDSCAPING CENTER

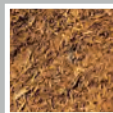
MULCH | ROCK | PAVERS | SAND & DIRT | EDGERS | WALL BLOCK



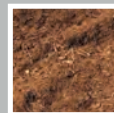
RED
MULCH
\$31.99



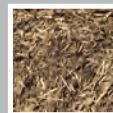
BROWN
MULCH
\$31.99



GOLD
MULCH
\$31.99



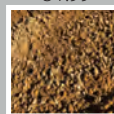
NATURAL
DARK
\$24.49



NATURAL
LIGHT
\$24.49



**BULK
LOAD**
3/4 YARD
* PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE



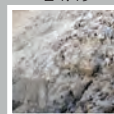
ROAD
GRAVEL
\$34.39



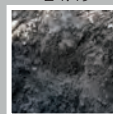
RIVER
ROCK
\$50.99



PEA
GRAVEL
\$35.99



MASON
SAND
\$30.99



BLACK
DIRT
\$34.39



COBBLESTONE
RANDOM
16" PAVER
\$6.09 ea.



WINSTON
WALL BLOCK
12"x6"x16"
\$5.49 ea.



PORTAGE
PATIO STONE
1.75"x16"x21"
\$6.29 ea.



FLAGSTONE
WALL BLOCK
4"x7"x12"
\$6.29 ea.



TANGO
PROJECT BLOCK
4"x6"x12"
\$2.99 ea.

*Prices Subject to Change.

**All American
Doit Center**

AllAmericanDoitCenter.com

TOMAH • 608-374-4200
SPARTA • 608-269-5028
RICHLAND CENTER • 608-649-4300

STORE HOURS

M-F: 7-7
SAT: 8-5
SUN: 9-5

5 mistakes to avoid when cleaning your windows and mirrors

Clean mirrors, windows and glass furniture add instant sparkle to your decor. In your haste to get the shine, you may make mistakes that cause you to double your efforts.

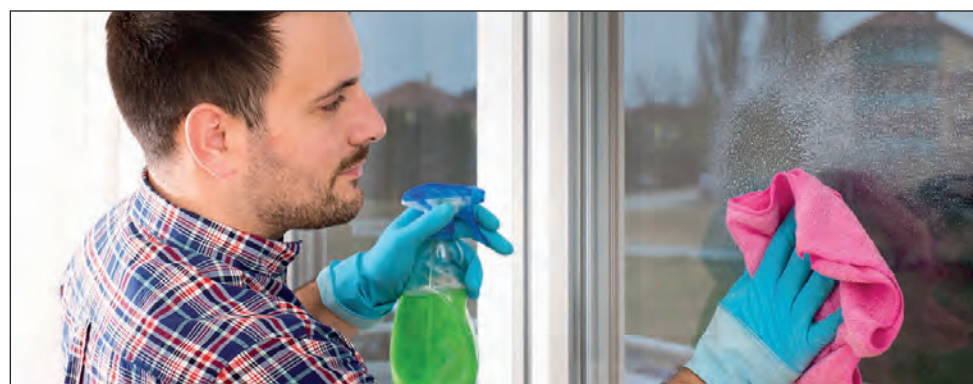
1. Cleaning when the weather or lighting is bad, like freezing rain or glaring sun
2. Neglecting to dust surrounding spaces, like mirror frames, before cleaning

3. Using a poor-quality cleaner

4. Drying surfaces with a non-absorbent or lint-covered cloth

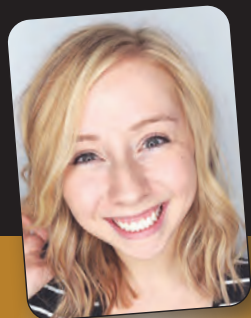
5. Forgetting to wipe the squeegee after each pass

Purchase the best cleaning products and accessories at your local stores. You could also try hiring a cleaning pro for dazzling results.



Countertops at Wesco!

EVERYTHING FROM HIGH DEFINITION
LAMINATE TO CAMBRIA QUARTZ - EVEN VANITY TOPS!



Tell them
Peyton sent
you!



C A M B R I A®

Bring this ad in and get a FREE
Under mount sink with your Cambria Purchase!



WESCO HOME

furniture . appliances . flooring

HOURS:

Monday – Wed. 8am–6pm

Thursday 8am–7pm • Friday 8am–6pm

Saturday 8am–5pm • Sunday 11am–4pm

**301 E. Oak Street,
Sparta, WI 54656
(608) 269-2115
shopwesco.com**

Ready, set, declutter

Tackling spring cleaning without first decluttering a few rooms, drawers, or cupboards can be futile. Is this task worth the effort? The answer is a resounding yes. Getting rid of unnecessary things gives you, among other things, an incredible feeling of lightness and well-being. Here are a few tips on how to make this chore go smoothly.

Many find that sorting through their belongings brings up various emotions. Can you relate? To lighten the emotional load, start with items with little or no sentimental value, such as leftover renovation materials or take-out containers that can go in the recycling bin.

Once you've done this, sort through other items. When deciding if you should keep something, ask yourself if it's useful. If you haven't used it in over a year, it's not essential. If you're reluctant to part with an expensive item, remember that you can sell it to someone else who can give it a new life.

If you have several duplicates of nearly identical items, keep only one or two (the least worn, for example). If you've been hoarding clothes that no longer fit, be realistic. Sell them if they're in good shape or donate them to an organization that helps needy people.

After decluttering, reward yourself with a relaxing massage or meal out.



Spring cleaning: 5 fabric care tips

While spring cleaning your home, don't forget about textiles. Here are a few tips for cleaning your quilts, bedspreads, curtains, cushions, duvet covers and more.

1. Before putting any textiles in the washing machine, shake out all the dust and debris or vacuum them. This will make cleaning more effective.
2. Metal accessories such as zippers can damage delicate fabrics. Don't take any chances! Wash your delicates in a separate load. Also, place particularly fragile fabrics, like lace, in a mesh laundry bag.

3. Use a mild detergent, and don't use bleach, which can discolour your fabrics.

4. Wash your fabrics in cold water on the delicate or normal cycle. Follow the care instructions on the label whenever possible.

5. The drying method you use depends on the fabric type. You can generally use the dryer for heavy-duty textiles. However, hang other materials to air dry before steaming or ironing them.

If you have any items with special cleaning needs, bring them to your local dry cleaner.

Birthday SALE

April 5 -8
10 a.m.-5 p.m.

We feature seasonal and vintage Décor, garden art, crafted and new items perfect for the home and gift giving!

20% OFF STOREWIDE

Celebrate with us and enjoy our

Open Wed.- Sat. 10AM - 5PM

Follow us on Facebook

House Warmings LLC
Vintage Décor, Crafted & New

1522 Commercial Street Bangor, WI (608) 486-4046

TAX REFUND Sale

Get more for your money
Got your tax refund back?

SAVE BIG!

Mattresses
Furniture
Coffee Pods
Silk Flowers
Everyday Items
ALL ON SALE

J&R Variety LLC

1006 Superior Ave., Tomah, WI 54660
OPEN: Tuesday-Friday 9am-5pm
Saturday 9am-3pm
(608) 374-3404

How to clean your walls without damaging the paint

Washing painted walls can be tricky and requires special care. Follow these steps to avoid marring the paint or leaving unsightly scuffs.



Do you have high walls that are nearly impossible to reach? Use a telescopic mop or hire a professional cleaner.

1. Gently remove dust and cobwebs with a vacuum cleaner or duster.
2. Place old towels along the baseboards to absorb excess water.
3. Wash the walls with a sponge or mop, working from top to bottom. Gently scrub away stains as needed. Water alone is usually sufficient for surface dirt, but you may need to use a mild detergent for stubborn stains.
4. Dry the cleaned and rinsed surfaces with a fresh cloth.

The darker the paint colour and the more matte the finish, the less scrubbing you should do.

'ENERGY'

continued from page 6

energy, turn off electronics, such as computers, radios, and televisions when you are not using them.

You can learn more about ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances or electronics by visiting the ENERGY STAR® website. Wisconsin residents can verify whether their purchase is eligible for a Focus on Energy cash-back reward at <https://www.focusonenergy.com/Residential/>.

Insulation

Because heating and cooling costs make up a large part of your energy bill, insulating is one of the most practical things you can do to maximize your home's efficiency. Insulation reduces drafts and keeps temperatures more constant. The most important areas to insulate are the attic, floors, and walls.

Caulking and Weather-stripping

In addition to inadequate insulation,

air leaks are among the largest sources of energy loss. It pays to seal leaks with caulking and weather-stripping materials. Air leaks are most often found around windows, doors, outlets, plumbing or through the floors, and exterior walls. Most home-improvement stores offer assistance in determining the best way to caulk and weather strip.

Windows

You can also lose a lot of heat through your home or business' windows. You can reduce energy loss and improve comfort by replacing your windows if they have cracks in the panes, if the frames are damaged, if the wood is rotten, or if there's missing caulking. Replacing windows may be a costly investment upfront, but the energy you save over the several years to follow will be measurable. You can also install storm windows. A lower-cost alternative is to tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames.

KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

YOUR HOMETOWN HAULER

MDS

MODERN DISPOSAL SYSTEMS

SPARTA, WI



Benefits of grow-bag gardening

Want to grow your food but are short on space? Grow bags could be the solution. They're perfect for gardening on a deck, patio or stoop.

- They're customizable. Grow bags come in various sizes, so you can find ones small or large enough for anything you want to grow. Choosing bags made of strong, breathable fabrics like polypropylene is best.
- They can't be overwatered. Unlike plastic pots, these bags won't receive more water than they need because the excess runs off through the holes in the fabric. If you tend to be heavy-handed as a gardener, they're perfect – you don't run the risk of drowning your plants.
- They promote healthy growth. In traditional pots, plants can become root bound, leading to stunted growth. This doesn't happen with grow bags. When the roots reach the outside of the bag, they're exposed to air. This air contact causes the root to stop growing. Instead, new roots begin to form on the plant, leading to lush growth.

If you're ready to try grow bags, visit a nearby garden store to find everything you need.

'SPRING'

continued from page 6

Hauser says that we are blessed to live in this area, based solely on the abundant availability of beautiful flowers and plants. "In this area, we have Amish green houses, and it can be a fun way to spend a day, just driving around with friends and looking at all of the flowers. There are also many church groups with fundraisers, who raise their money by selling plants; a great way and a cheap way to get plants."

Favorites and beware

As one would expect from someone, with so much knowledge on this subject, Hauser has some favorites, as well as some warnings. "I really like the 4 o'clock flower," Hauser stated. "Every day, at 4 p.m., it fully opens up, showing you how awesome it is. Then, at night, it closes up, until the same time the next day. I love it."

On the warning side, Hauser said to make sure you read up on anything you want growing in your yard. "People should stay away from Lily of the Valley. The root system grows like a carpet. It is very intrusive and will spread like wildfire. Bamboo, is similar in that respect, but can be even more damaging, including structural damage to homes and pipes."

Hauser knows that there are varying degrees of effort that people want to put into their yards. "For people that do not want the continuous effort of gardens and beds, there are cool designs that

can be achieved through rocks and colored mulch. With mulch, think about what color will add the most to your home. Red mulch loses its color faster than anything, and gold holds up well—usually a couple of years. Dark browns will turn lighter from sun fade, but you can always revitalize it with color spray."

Jason says that a great habit to implement each year is taking a photo of your home, fully including the yard. Then take that photo with you, when shopping for plants and flowers. That way, you can visually see what will work best for your house, cutting out some of the guess work. He also mentioned that Sparta Floral is a great resource for plant questions. They love sharing information on plants and plant care.

Hauser often helps people, at no cost, simply because he loves helping people reach their vision of an aesthetically pleasing garden or flower bed. He said that folks that are fascinated by the flowery endeavor, should really think about joining the Sparta Garden Club, or any club. "That is another great place to get free plants and advice," said Hauser. "They are constantly working together and exchanging ideas, as well as plants."

In closing, Hauser said, "I just want help people to have a beautiful yard that they can be happy, and they can come home to it, every night, at the end of a long day."

Jason can be reached at 608-633-5431, or email him at jasonh1062@gmail.com with any questions. Of his passion for foliage, Jason said, "I can't not talk about it."



Patti Evans
REAL ESTATE

1524 Commercial St.

Bangor, WI 54614

608.792.3664

pattikevans@gmail.com



Patti Evans, Owner



The hardest part about growing carrots is harvesting without breaking them. Herald photo by Logan Everson.

4 foolproof vegetables for first-time gardeners

- 1. Carrots** are hardy and grow well in cool conditions. They can be harvested in late July for baby carrots or after the first frost for large, sweet-tasting ones. Orange varieties are the most reliable growers.
- 2. Lettuce** tolerates shade better than other vegetables and grows fast. You can enjoy a weekly harvest all summer long when sown in succession. There are also plenty of varieties, including romaine, iceberg, butterhead and Batavia.
- 3. Radishes** grow fast and tolerate cool weather. These low-maintenance plants can be grown in small gardens and make great gap fillers. As a bonus, their strong odour tends to deter pests.
- 4. Bush beans** germinate quickly and aren't susceptible to many diseases. Moreover, a small patch of bush beans can yield an impressive amount of produce — up to one pound per plant! Bush beans also return nitrogen to the soil to keep your garden healthy.

Your premier source for...

- 🏠 kitchens
- 🏠 vanities
- 🏠 showers
- 🏠 bars
- 🏠 fireplaces
- 🏠 outdoor entertainment areas

Call us today for
a complimentary
consultation
& estimate

608-634-2040



**Countertops
by Design** EST.
2003

Commercial & residential services

1483 State Hwy. 27 North / Westby, WI 54667

CONSTRUCTION LOAN SPECIAL FOR A LIMITED TIME!



SAVE UP TO

\$1,150 OFF*
CLOSING COSTS



KRISTI ROUSH
608.374.1145
NMLS #1432592



WENDY WRIGHT
608.372.7555
NMLS #457234



BankFirst

www.bankfirst.com

MEMBER FDIC | EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

Limited time offer and is subject to change at any time. Wisconsin owner-occupied residential properties only. Qualified borrowers must have an active Bank First checking account. Borrowers may receive \$750.00 off construction loan closing costs and \$400.00 off end loan closing costs.

Expert tips for maintaining your flooring

Have you finished most of your spring cleaning but haven't washed your floors? Here are a few tips for maintaining your flooring without damaging it.

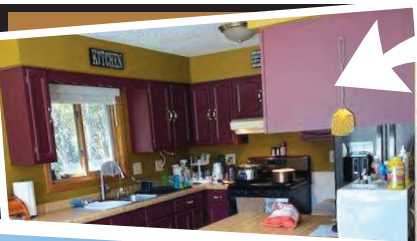
- **Ceramic tiles.** Clean the grout lines with a product specifically designed for this purpose. After letting the product soak in, scrub the grout with a clean brush or cloth and rinse. You can easily clean the surface of the tiles with a mixture of water and white vinegar.

- **Vinyl.** This popular material is easy to care for and will look new for years. Gently mop the floor with a vinyl cleaner to remove grime. Then, rinse with clean water and let dry.

- **Floating floor.** This type of flooring is practical and attractive but vulnerable to moisture. Therefore, avoid soaking it with water when washing it. Purchase a product designed for floating floors.

- **Hardwood.** Restore the shine of this elegant material with an environmentally friendly, no-rinse cleaner. That way, you won't leave behind streaks or residue. Avoid using scouring pads and other aggressive tools to remove stains. These items could damage the floor's finish.

Visit local stores to find products and accessories to make your floors shine.



Is your kitchen dated, dingy, and cluttered?

How about an update?



Now at our new location!
2343 Riley Road in Sparta

Quality CRAFTSMANSHIP AT AN Affordable PRICE



**Ken's Custom
Cabinets**

• Kitchen Cabinets
• Bath Vanities
• Quartz, Granite &
Laminate Countertops

2343 Riley Rd. • Sparta, WI 54656
608-487-5367
www.kenscustomcabinets.net



Spring HOME FLOORING IDEAS



THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO GET NEW FLOORING AND LEON COUNTRY FLOORS IS A GREAT PLACE TO GET THAT NEW FLOORING

- **WITH THE LOWEST CASH AND CARRY PRICES**
- **A VAST IN STOCK SELECTION OF THE BRAND NAMES YOU WANT**
- **FREE IN-HOME MEASUREMENTS**
- **FREE ESTIMATES**
- **UP TO THREE YEARS FINANCING**
- **GREAT SELECTION OF AREA RUGS!**
INCLUDING WOVEN AND BRAIDED RUGS

COME SEE THE HUNDREDS OF DIFFERENT STYLES, PATTERNS AND SIZES



You Deserve The Best & The Best Is At

Leon Country

 **Floors & More Inc.**

Hwy. 27, Leon, WI • (608) 269-LEON (5366)
leoncountryfloors.com



AND MORE

Mon.-Fri. 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Sat. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. • Sun. Closed



**WE'RE A
FAMILY-OWNED
BUSINESS, WITH
PERSONAL
SERVICE**