

SCRIBBLES...POSSIBILITIES...& DISCOVERIES



"Have nothing in your home that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

-William Morris, 19th century architect

Spring cleaning is more than a time for banishing dust from hard-to-reach places and flinging open the windows for some fresh air. It's a great time to really look at our homes after the long winter months. When we have been "holed up" we tend to overlook the little things... an outdated lamp shade, a frayed rug, a chipped vase or overstuffed book shelves. So if you are in a fury of deep scouring and discarding what you don't need, like I am, take stock of those renovation projects you may have put off- new window treatments for the living room, fresh paint in the kitchen and updated bedding in the kids' bedrooms - have they outgrown their Cinderella or Spider Man quilts? Me... I need to paint the exterior of my home, add a trellis in my backyard and find the perfect accessory for my dining room table, buffet and nightstands (too many books piled high).

We all know the areas of our homes that get the hardest use such as the family room carpeting, the family's favorite TV chair or sofa or even the mudroom bench where everyone just throws stuff! It is always important to make time not only for major renovations but for smaller updates as well to keep our homes fresh and looking their best. I actually think smaller updates are a bit more difficult to seamlessly integrate with your existing furnishings, but we have the expertise and creativity to pull it all together.

Let us know if you need help with your to-do list in the coming months whether it is big or small. Those of you have worked with us know that by the end of a project we have had great experiences, have become good friends and developed a lot of trust. Let's have fun doing some spring updating together! > *photo courtesy of: tameyourmindmonkey.com*

Sincerely,



what's **in** what's *out*

WHAT'S IN - is really OUT! Outside that is!



1. Cement Furniture A beautiful complement to all natural surroundings, concrete furniture fits right in to any outdoor arena. Concrete is durable and because it is a mixed product, it has unlimited design capabilities and we love the textural element it adds. The one negative... it is VERY heavy to move. However, a real positive- it can stay outside year around even in the winter and if you are short on storage, even better as the perfect choice. I have a cement console table that I use to serve from on my patio and can't imagine outdoor entertaining without it! Cement furniture is also great indoors as well...

2. Lattice Motif Lattice is a framework of diagonally crossed pieces. The geometry of lattice lends itself to both a classic traditional interior as well as a contemporary space. Look for the lattice motif in area rugs, screens, fabrics, trellises, wallpaper and chair backs!

3. Darker Hued Exterior Trim Pick a dramatic paint color for your trim to contrast with the rest of the exterior of your house. Quickly change the look of your front elevation... paint your front door, side doors and or your garage door(s). Choose a color that reflects your personal style and creativity. We love deep grays as they complement almost any exterior color. While vacationing on North Captiva, FL I saw a pink house with bright red trim. Loved it- not sure if the neighbors did though!

4. Water or Pond Element For a true stress reliever and a bit of magic, add a water element to your garden. I love the gurgling or bubbling sound! Create your own unique backyard escape -select a water fountain or dig a pond and enhance your exterior space.

5. Lawns Are Gone- Almost What's taking the place of traditional green grass? Native groundcovers, perennials, grasses and more hardscape space! Get creative with your landscape so you have less to mow and water. And of course, less dandelions to pull! I hate seeing a beautiful green lawn with yellow dandelions throughout. Just be mindful of our natural resources.

6. Outdoor Patio Lighting Create the perfect summer ambience with outdoor lighting. Use large lanterns with candles (better yet, we recommend battery powered candles) for intimate settings. Place them everywhere- group them on tables or clump them together on your patio floor. String "holiday" lights in trees or under your patio umbrella(s), but not red, green or blue, instead try softer, pastel shades and white. If you have a pergola or canopy, adding strings of lights and paper lanterns will create a festive look! And don't forget the traditional tiki torches! While not new, they are a go-to for any outdoor space.

7. Fire Pit The best thing about a fire pit here in the Midwest is that it prolongs your nights outside well into the fall and at this time of year when we are anxious to be outside. It can even jumpstart our spring evenings by a few weeks! Fire pits are great for snuggling, keeping mosquitoes at bay and how about for making s'mores? My favorite easy-peasy who can resist outdoor dessert!

> clockwise photos courtesy of: Benjamin Moore, Concrete Studio, HGTV.com, Jeff Lewis, HGTV.com, dcarch.blogspot.com, Ancient Mosaic Studios, Torana Carpets, Oslo Industries

sweet
tip

The Drinks Are On Us

Our sweet tip this issue is to have a fun, sizzling summer outside! After being so pent up this winter, we felt sharing a recipe for a sizzlin' cooler (did I just say cooler?) was just what you might need... Mix up this grapefruit margarita and head out to your patio or front porch. The directions are easy - stir, serve and get the party started!



Serves One So Double, Triple or Quadruple Accordingly

- 1 1/2oz. clear Tequila
- 1 Tablespoon of sugar
- Juice of 1/2 a lime
- 3 oz. fresh squeezed grapefruit juice (or prepared)
- 1/2 oz. (splash) orange liquor
- 1 oz. club soda

> photo courtesy of: blog.foodnetwork.com

FABU FABRIC



NATURAL FIBERS & TEXTURES

Natural fibers = natural elegance! Trends in pattern and texture are still revolving around natural themes - stark branch motifs, wood, bamboo and cork designs. Natural linen and linen blends are still dominating the marketplace while wool, flannel, jute, burlap and other natural textures vie for top billing!

A nod to the past - newer fabrics are imitating crochet and macramé! What goes around comes around.

Natural textiles are produced from plant and animal fibers - most of which are used to make clothing as well as to decorate our living spaces. Plant fibers include cotton, jute, flax, sisal and hemp, to name a few. Animal fibers primarily include hairs and wools taken from sheep, goat, alpaca and horse. Cotton dominates textile production while the specialty fibers such as cashmere are produced in smaller quantities and are considered luxury textiles.

> clockwise photos courtesy of: Schumacher, Christian Astugwevielle, Opuzen, Kravet, Opuzen



LIGHT ON A FAVORITE

The Double Lounge Chair

Double your pleasure! Double your fun!

The outdoor double lounger - who can resist? Share the seat with a friend, child or spouse to enjoy the sun, conversation and scenery. Add a canopy and panels for privacy, to shade you from the sun and to create a deterrent to the birds flying overhead.

Make sure to include a double lounge chair on your patio or deck along with other seating as it is perfect for additional seating when having a crowd.

Of course, if you need a break from "too much closeness" on your double chaise, head to the pool or beach with a floating cork chaise - just for one!



>clockwise photos courtesy of Daniel Michalik, Addison House, IRISFurniture.com, Modani

At Sweet Peas Design we always have our eyes (and hands) on the ball. Here's an update on our comings and goings.



GRACIOUS HOUSE SHOWHOUSE

I am thrilled to announce the debut of a fabulous new showhouse in the Chicago area: the Gracious House, Designer Showhouse running September 10th to September 30th in the North Center/West Lakeview neighborhood.

My Sweet Peas Design team is one of 10 Chicago-area design firms who will create a room for this charming three-level, brick brownstone.

Gracious House is a non-profit organization whose mission is raising awareness of epidemic poverty, neglect, and abuses of numerous children throughout America. The organization, which is lead by a group of Chicago Interior Designers working along with design industry professionals, will conceive and produce Designer Showhouse Projects on a biannual basis. The projects will be a means of financially supporting the efforts of organizations who work directly with families and abused children by administering family education, help, and preventive solutions leading to healthier children and nurturing environments.

The Gracious House projects will be platforms for the broader interior and architectural design industry to present innovative concepts and ideas in the context of the home as a beautiful, safe, healing, and nurturing environment.

Along with the biannual Lake Forest Showhouse, scheduled for 2015, the Gracious House Showhouse is going to be a must-do event for anyone interested in beautiful design. My team has already visited the property and we have started developing some exciting ideas for the dramatic, two-story family room we have been assigned. Watch for updates here as work progresses!



HEADLINES....

NS magazine editor Elaine Doremus found another idea to love from Sweet Peas Design - a teeny-tiny drinks table, appropriately shaped like a peanut and large enough for a beverage and a small bowl of, well, nuts of course! Look for the article in the current issue of NS, on newsstands now or [click here for article](#). We have found a good home for a couple of these adorable tables.

GET THE LOOK



The Front Porch- what a comeback!

Now that it is spring and you are getting outside more, have you noticed on your neighborhood walks that many "tear downs" have been replaced with houses that have front porches? The front porch is no longer a "thing of the past".

Remember Gladys Kravits on the 1970's era TV show Bewitched? She was the neighborhood busy body and she would have been even more of a Miss Know It All if her home had a front porch. A front porch adds curb appeal to say nothing of adding valuable space for entertaining, people watching (ala Gladys), dining el fresco, drinking a glass of wine or a cold beer and making new friends. Let's face it - it's THE place to socialize and visit. Why sit in your backyard when you can sit on your front porch and watch all the activity. A known fact, people feel more connected in neighborhoods that have revived the front porch craze.

Aesthetically, the front porch adds character and curb appeal to what might otherwise be a rather boring front elevation. Make it your "own" by adding a hanging swing, comfy porch furniture, planters heaped with flowers, outdoor fans and lights, a rocker or two or even area rugs.

Now, if only you could keep those uninvited guests from imposing - the pesky mosquitoes, bees and ants- your time outside would be perfect.

> clockwise photos courtesy of: Covington Design Build, Tim Barber LTD Architecture & Interior Design, Rethink Design Studio, Melville Thomas Architects Inc.

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