

Northwest

QUARTERLY.COM

The Quality Lifestyle/Business Magazine & Integrated Web Resource

Fall 2013 🦉 \$4.95



FOX VALLEY GHOSTS AND GANGSTERS

Tall Tales and Hidden Haunts

WHERE THE ARTS ABOUND
Crystal Lake's Dole Mansion

AMERICA'S FIRST INTERSTATE
Lincoln Highway at 100

ELGIN'S NEW DYNAMO
ESO Director's Musical Vision

MANUFACTURED IN CHICAGOLAND

NORTHWEST QUARTERLY'S 5TH ANNUAL GUIDE TO COLLEGES

BEST REGIONAL GUIDES TO DINING, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD: The Best of Life in McHenry, Kane, NW Cook & Lake Counties

Join Us in Supporting Locally Owned, Outstanding Businesses in Our Region

Home Furnishings & Interiors

Something New, Something Old, Something Painted, Something Bold



Tone-on-tone area rugs, available at Strawflower Shop, are a popular and simple trend that can change the feel of an entire room.

By Paul Anthony Arco, senior staff writer

As the old saying goes, there's more than one way to crack an egg, and the same holds true when it comes to tweaking your home decor. Fall is a great time to redecorate, and a variety of creative professionals can offer just the advice you need. That might mean adding vivid colors, introducing a gorgeous rug or unearthing a quirky antique. When it comes to making changes, the best advice from experts is, "Buy what you like."

Rugs by Design

Whether it's an area rug or a beautiful floral arrangement, there are no boundaries when it comes to creative home décor.

The Strawflower Shop, 210 W. State St., Geneva, is a boutique furniture store that offers numerous home accessories along with interior design services. The store carries floor coverings, furniture and accessories, but its specialty is creating vivid floral arrangements and dramatic room settings.

"We help the customer make something that no one else has – it becomes their own signature item," says Mike Haas, who has owned the business with his wife, Susan, for more than 30 years.

"Color is the big thing in our industry right now," he adds. "The Midwest is tuned in to earth tones – brown, burgundy, gray and ivory. It's my job to make sure that on any project we do, color is the focus that makes the rooms feel vibrant."

That includes rugs – a must for any renovation project. Haas says the preference of choice these days is tone-on-tone pieces, to coordinate with the room's furniture. There are different designs for different decor, but the most popular color combinations are charcoal gray and brown.

"Rugs really ground a room," he says. "We use them to protect wood floors, and to stop the echoes in the dining and living rooms, as well as the front entrance halls and staircases. Hand-knotted rugs are more expensive than machine-made rugs, but if you surround them with a quality sofa and chairs, it really changes the feel of the room."

The Strawflower Shop also offers custom-designed floral arrangements. "Customers will bring in photos, along with a swatch of drapes, and we can work off that to make a beautiful arrangement for the entrance hall, dining room or living room table," Haas says.



Accent pieces, such as these autumn-themed bowls and decorative picture frames at Out of the Box, are an affordable way to refresh your home.

job loss, health issue or divorce. A gift of home decor is twofold. It can brighten up a home, and speaks of a personal friendship that says, 'I'm thinking of you.'

Looking for a great seasonal addition? Consider an assortment of candles, including pumpkin and cinnamon scented.

"They give the entire home a pleasant aroma," Batson says. "Candleholders and serving pieces are also a must, especially for when family comes for a visit."

Other popular gift items are table clocks – small timepieces that are ideal on a nightstand or bathroom counter.

"This is an interesting trend," Batson says. "You would think that in this technology-driven world we live in, people wouldn't have a need for an analog clock. But that's not the case."

Out of the Box also carries a variety of art by regional and national artists, such as Kelly Rae Roberts from Portland, Ore.

"Art appeals to different people for different reasons," Batson says. "It's a cool thing to introduce the work of new artists. A nice piece of art can go a long way in helping to shape a room."

Batson enjoys helping patrons in finding just the right item.

"The best part of our business is sending happy customers out the door, eager to give their home decor gifts to a special loved one," she adds. "People will never stop giving gifts. Not only are these items ideal as gifts, but they're great to buy for yourself."

Subjective Art

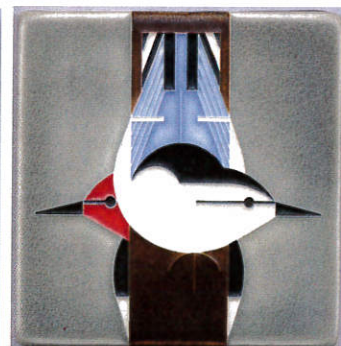
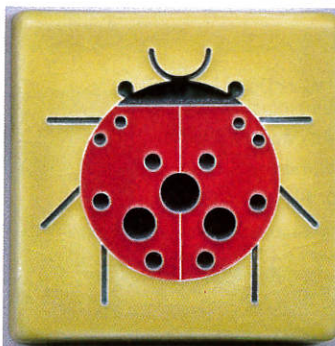
A visible way to cheer up a room is by adding artwork.

"Art is subjective," says Sharon Liberman, owner of Verve on Third, 227 S. Third Street, Geneva. "You can build a room around nice pieces of artwork."

Liberman and husband Jeff opened this colorful art gallery a decade ago. After traveling together for more than 30 years, the couple wanted to create a business showcasing their passion for visual art.

Verve on Third emphasizes color and the unique vision of 160 artists. It sells everything from hand-painted furniture to flying fairies and hand-blown glass, representing lines such as Sticks, Motawi Tileworks and StoryPeople. Each original work of art is handmade in the United States, many from right here in the Midwest.

Liberman shies away from Caribbean or tropical colors. Instead, she prefers rich or elegant tones like burgundy. "Everything is colorful," she says. "Whether it's a frame, wall color or a funky clock in the kitchen, every room in the house can use a pop of color. The key is finding pieces that make you smile and feel happy."



These Motawi Tiles, made in Michigan and sold at Verve on Third, add charm and color to any room in the home.

Liberman cautions to consider the wall size and furniture weight when choosing art. Any piece should feel balanced to your eye. "It doesn't have to match, but it has to flow from room to room," she says. "If it flows, it doesn't matter what the colors are. Art doesn't have to match furniture, but it's important to strike a balance."

Some people walk into Verve on Third looking for a specific piece, while others come in search of inspiration. There are no rules when it comes to art.

"Art is different from anything else," Liberman says. "It has to speak to you, and it has to fit in your home. Sometimes, customers walk in and have to have it, or sometimes they go home and think about it. Art is unique that way."

For children's rooms, Liberman recommends adding fun, vibrant and inspirational pieces. But when the kids are grown and out of the house, that's the time to experiment. Focus on the details, and switch up art when you're bored with it.

"Empty nesters can try different things because they can," she says. "For example, consider buying a funky mirror for the bathroom, just to change things up. Most people have lived with a certain look for years. Don't be afraid to try something different."

American Made

Your home decor doesn't have to come from a foreign country. In fact, your best route may be American-made products, says Deborah Leydig, whose store, Norton's U.S.A., 400 Lageschulte St., Barrington, is all about American goods.

This general store has it all – cookware, table linens, candles, cutlery – anything to add the right touch of elegance. There are garden accessories like birdhouses and wind chimes, display signs and patriotic decor. As for American-made lighting or furniture, Leydig is one source who can help you to locate it.

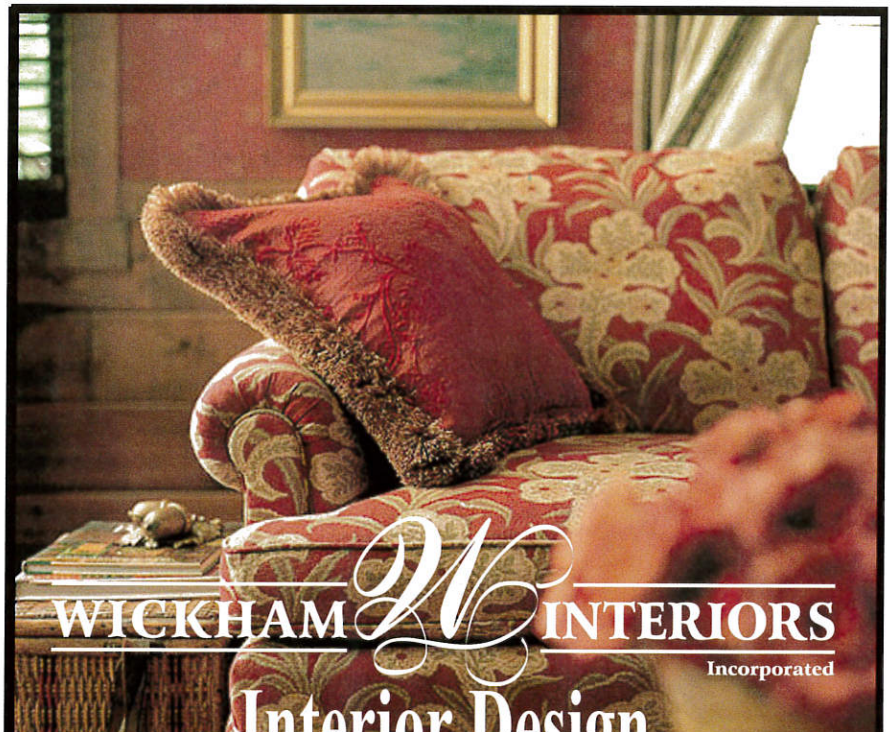
Norton's appeals to a variety of customers, from neighborhood children to out-of-town shoppers. Some come in armed with ideas from magazines, sending Leydig on a search to find American-made versions, no matter how big or small.

"We give our customers ideas on how to improve their decor, or just simple ideas on how to decorate that pumpkin during Halloween," she says.

One of the top lines that Norton's carries is Pendleton Woolen Mills bed blankets and throws. "If you're looking for a gorgeous accent pillow to enhance a bed or sofa, why not make it an American-made throw?" Leydig says. "Not enough things are made here in America. We're dependent



Pendleton Woolen Mills blankets, a home accent available at Norton's USA.



Interior Design
New Creative Design & Style

Window Treatments
Complete Room Design
Furniture & Accessories

Wickham Interiors
Everything Beautiful for Home

67 N. Williams St., Historic Downtown Crystal Lake, IL CALL TODAY 815-455-6202



Furniture Lamps Pictures Accessories Florals Gifts

