

# Brighten your home without spending a lot

By MARY CAROL GARRITY  
SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

If you're singing the winter blues, it's time to lift your spirits by giving your home a new spark with tantalizing, terrific textiles.

Try one of these projects that require just five yards of fabric, giving your home a great look for a minimal investment.

## Spice up sofa with new pillows

Sick and tired of your sofa? Freshen it up with new accent pillows. It takes just a few yards of fabric to recover your existing pillow forms and get a whole new look.

Right now, timeless fabrics like plaids, soft linen blends and florals are all the rage. But don't confine yourself to just one pattern or pillow shape.

Mix three to four patterns and several shapes to give your sofa lots of visual interest.

Try this look: Center a larger rectangle pillow on the back of the sofa. Then nestle square accent pillows against the sofa's arms. Be sure to make a few

extra pillows to toss on side chairs to create continuity in the room.

Give your new pillows a customized look by using a host of interesting trims. How about ribbon-covered buttons? Or brush fringes? I love mini-flanges.

One final bit of advice: Don't forget to put a zipper in each pillow cover so you can slip it off for laundering.

If you can't sew worth a lick, never fear: You can dress up pillow forms simply by securing a yard or two of fabric into place with a few cleverly placed folds and tucks. Use lightweight fabrics for this trick.

## Add drama to table with tremendous linens

Give your table some kick by crafting one-of-a-kind table linens. Create a square table topper, then lay it on the diagonal at the center of your table.

If you want more texture, crisscross two table runners. If you don't sew, no problem. Just iron the raw edges under and no one will be able to tell the difference.

If you already have a tablecloth you love, make some zippy

new napkins that bring out its colors or accent your dishes.

Don't be afraid to introduce bold fabrics with large prints and startling colors. One of my favorite napkin and table-topper duos featured strong patterns in hot pink and black.

Pair this creative combination with black transferware dishes, and you've got a tabletop that's die for.

## Brighten your windows

My favorite window treatment is the versatile and timeless fabric panel. Panels are so simple yet so sophisticated.

Find some fabric that steals your heart and accents your room's colors, then stitch up some panels.

If you already have panels you love, freshen them up a bit by creating a topper with a complementary fabric draped over the curtain rod.

For one of the best window treatments you've ever seen, you don't even have to know how to thread a needle.

Select yards of a yummy fabric like damask and toss one end over the curtain rod.

Pull the end down and around

the front of the fabric panel, securing it in back with large safety pins.

If you'd like to give your kitchen window a splash of color, create a playful valance. If you don't sew, use the fold-and-iron technique to create a hem or use a fabric adhesive tape, then secure the curtains to the rod with some darling clip rings.

## Change a chair

Have a side chair that's looking kind of shabby? Transform its look by making a slipcover for just the seat cushion. Or, change the appearance of your dining-room chairs by either redoing the upholstered seat cushions or creating skirted slipcovers to rest over the existing seat.

My dining-room chairs are covered in black leather, but you'd never know it because I dress them up with fabric slipcovers. Right now they are covered in a blue and cream print that pulls out the blue in the walls.

Mary Carol Garrity is the proprietor of home furnishings stores in Atchison, Kan., and is the author of several best-selling books on home decorating.



Mixing pillows of different shapes, sizes and patterns can dramatically change the mood of your sofa. It's a low-cost way to change your decor.

## • Club

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1)

two Great Pyrenees Mountain dogs who have never once put their paws on my shoulders and marched me to the kitchen."

The article also noted that this prescription drug also can produce some unfortunate side effects in our beloved canine friends, including loose stools, diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy and loss of appetite.

But this article was a two-WATT piece, since it added that Slenrol is "not for dog owners." "The FDA discourages the drug's use in humans and lists a litany of side effects should anyone ignore that advice."

WATT No. 3: I know I'm treading on thin ice here, but insurance policies contain huge WATs. I have a conspiracy theory that I haven't been able to

prove, only because I can't seem to find the words health-insurance policy in the original Biblical Greek text.

John Chapter 2 and Matthew 21:12 state that Jesus, in his righteous anger, turned over the tables of the moneychangers that were in the temple courts.

Here is my theory: On those tables lay the first, original health-insurance policy. When Jesus saw it, he thought "What are they thinking?" And that's when he turned the tables over.

Now remember, this is just a highly unproved, speculative theory.

Last week I received a glossy, full-color print postcard from my health-insurance company warning me about the dangers of antibiotic over-use and how I should instruct my doctor that I do not want antibiotics because they don't kill viruses, etc.

Here is the letter I haven't sent: My dearest insurance company, From your letter I can see that

we have commonality. We both want to save money. Therefore, I want to give you one, free cost-cutting tip that will instantly reduce your marketing budget and subsequently, you will not have to increase insurance premiums again this year.

Do not mail out antibiotics-warning postcards to a family of five that hasn't taken any antibiotics in more than 25 years, except for one temporary stint. My three children have collectively lived 39 years without one antibiotic. But thank you for your great concern about our family's overuse of antibiotics.

I anticipate with great joy a lower insurance premium. Thanks again.

Now back to my thankful journal.

Janet Hommel Mangas, the third of seven children, grew up on the east side of Greenwood. She now resides in the Center Grove area with her husband and three daughters.

## • Seniors

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1)

Wesley Center. The facility has increased interest in daily exercise among residents and staff, said part-time physical therapist assistant Becky Kaiser.



CAMPBELL

The center has a constant stream of residents working out on strength and cardiovascular machines, she said.

Kay Findley, who has lived at the community for two years, said she feels healthier since beginning an exercise routine. She does water aerobics twice a week and works out at the wellness center four days a week.

Paul Bencike was used to physical activity from his work in a factory. After he retired, he didn't exercise and had to have an angioplasty.

Now he can be found on the treadmill every day.

The retirement center also keeps minds and hands active with art and ceramic rooms, book clubs, cultural events and travel.

Gardeners who miss digging in the dirt can take advantage of the greenhouse.

A computer lab is planned, and the pool is to be expanded, although an exact time frame is not certain.

"We want to provide options and choices for the residents," Van Deman said.

Statistic show that people live longer in retirement centers, he said.

"They get better nutrition, health care, exercise and socializing," he said.

Seniors have changed in the past 50 years, Van Deman said. They are more active and want to be involved.

Some hold part-time jobs, and about 150 residents do volunteer work at the retirement facility and in the community as tutors, at the Lord's Cupboard and in other capacities.

Seniors also like to have fun, he said. On New Year's Eve, they enjoyed a chocolate fountain and played board games.

Seniors also accept change more than people give them credit for, he said, citing as an example the alligator and buffalo specials served at lunch.

The community's best advertisers are residents, Van Deman said.

"We have had more than a 50-year span of three generations here," he said.

Van Deman wants to end misconceptions people have about the community.

It is not a nursing home, he said, and residents don't have to turn over their assets to live there.

Joy Campbell, who lived in southern Indiana and had an active life before retirement, chose Franklin United Methodist Community because her aunt lived there.

She has lived on the grounds for 16 years, first in a home, then an apartment.

"For this time of my life, I'm glad I'm here," Campbell said.

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