



LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

EDITOR: LISA MONFORTON 235-7428 FAX: 235-7379

WWW.CALGARYHERALD.COM

SATURDAY, JULY 28, 2007

AROUND THE HOUSE

Lean on Me Day

EVENT • Make it Right home reno guru Mike Holmes is back in town next Saturday, and this time he's sharing the stage with country music star Charlie Major.

The free event takes place in the parking lot of Home Depot's Beacon Hill location (11320 Sarcee Trail N.W.; 403 374-3860) starting at 1 p.m. on Aug. 4.

Major will perform songs from his new CD, *Shadows and Light*, while Holmes will speak and answer questions, with an autographing session to follow.

The duo are teaming up to promote Lean on Me Day, in support of The Holmes Foundation. Focused on boosting skilled trades training, along with helping families left impoverished by shoddy contractors, the foundation aims to ensure Canadian home renovation and construction is done right — the first time. For more information, check www.holmesonhomes.com.

— Yvonne Jeffery, for the Calgary Herald

Roche-Bobois opens in city

WHAT'S NEW • Paris-based furniture store Roche-Bobois opened its doors in Calgary in June.

The franchise location retails an eclectic mix of traditional and contemporary pieces and is located at 225 10 Ave. S.W. (call 532-4401) in a 7,000-square-foot space.

The three Roche-Bobois collections featured inside the showroom include Les Contemporains (contemporary), Les Voyages (global with an exotic flair) and Les Provinciales (traditional). Roche-Bobois operates more than 200 stores worldwide.

— Calgary Herald

Small is the new big thing

PRODUCT • With more baby boomers downsizing their digs, small is becoming beautiful. Nowhere is the trend more evident than in kitchens, where manufacturers are creating smaller versions of everything from refrigerators to microwaves that fit neatly in a home's hub when less space is available.

Joining the fray is Perlick, a commercial bar and beverage refrigeration manufacturer. The company has launched a line of luxury undercounter coolers that measure a mere 38 centimetres wide — about the width of a traditional cabinet. The innovative line features a 38-cm beer dispenser and a 38-cm wine reserve, proving you don't need a lot of space to live large. Also available are a 38-cm refrigerator, refrigerated drawer and freezer.

The new models feature stainless steel interiors and full-extension shelves. Doors are available in stainless steel, UV-protected insulated glass or a wood overlay to blend with custom cabinetry.

For more, call 1-800-558-5592 or go to Perlick.com.

— Calgary Herald

ECO-LIVING



Photo illustration by Lana Gwinn, Chicago Tribune

& Lightened & enlightened

Negotiating the path toward a less trash-ful life

KAREN KLAGES
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

She called herself a "garbologist" and she marched into my condo one cold day last November wearing serious scruffy clothes and hauling one serious portable scale that could determine, with mighty accuracy, the precise weight of a banana peel.

Or a tin can. Or a pile of junk mail. This was my day for trash talking, when I strewed an entire week's worth of my garbage (carefully saved and bagged by day) across the floor of my balcony and a straight-talking, no-nonsense Lydia Kuyawa-Dow jumped in with her trusty scale.

She also probed the depths of my refrigerator and kitchen cupboards, examining the contents and saying things like "Do you reuse your Baggies?" and "Where is

your bin for (recycling) plastics? It should be right here by your trash."

Kuyawa-Dow is a waste/recycling consultant. Her visit to my place was the unofficial kickoff to my Year of Living the Green Life — or at least a greener one.

Back in the fall, my co-workers and I deemed this a year of trying to be better Earthlings. Each of us took a particular area of eco-conscious living and is attempting to make it a reality at home.

Waste reduction was my focus. My mission: Cut the amount of trash that comes out of my household.

That being: an average of 725 grams a day, five kilograms a week (not counting 8.3 kg of newspapers, which I recycle, and myriad catalogs; more on the catalogs later).

Kuyawa-Dow came up with those figures after sorting my trash by category out there on the balcony and weighing it dutifully. And she assured me I'm within the norm of (and even better than) my "demographic."

That being: professionals who live alone and don't spend a lot of time at home.

Hard on the planet

Our ilk can produce .9 to

1.1 kg of trash a day, says Kuyawa-Dow, who is a partner at Solid Waste Solutions Corp. in Evanston, Ill., and who normally consults with companies and corporations. She did my personal waste analysis for a small fee and in a nod to our Living the Green Life series. The average American family, she went on to say, can produce 1.8 to 2.7 kg of trash a day.

But here's the kicker: I could cut my waste stream by a whopping 48 per cent, she told me, and do it mainly through better recycling on my part.

What really stirred my curiosity, though, was something she said off the cuff in a conversation that started about garbage and wound its way to one of those musings on how fast and exhausting life has become.

"We're living better," said Kuyawa-Dow, "but we're living harder." Harder on ourselves. Harder on the planet. And with that, something clicked in my head.

This was no longer just about garbage, about besting my 725 grams a day and introducing myself to the recycling cans in the basement of my building. This also was about excess, about the better/harder irony.

To really cut my waste

stream, I needed to change my view of garbage. I needed to consider the excess factor. Does my rubbish hold clues to excesses in my lifestyle that don't belong in a green(er) life?

Disposable society

I started by going through my cabinets and identifying all single-use items. Things I use and toss. Things that muck up the environment. And things that keep me running back to the store for more and more.

I already had had my first epiphany along these lines. Months earlier, I replaced my dry Swiffer mop (for my hardwood floors) with a dry mop that has a removable, machine-washable microfiber head. I bought three extra heads — and my ticket to what felt like a little bit of freedom.

I no longer shop for disposable Swiffer wipes. I don't have to haul them home. I don't have to worry about them being made from a non-woven polymer that doesn't readily biodegrade.

They had become an inconvenient convenience item in my life and a waste stream I no longer wanted to own up to.

I had similar feelings now about plastic water bottles

(the disposable kind) and paper towels. I went through them with amazing speed, which kept me tethered to yet another shopping habit and yet another waste stream.

My greener solutions: a Brita water pitcher and several reusable plastic water bottles.

And: a colour-coded system of kitchen cloths. The green wet rag and green dry towel are used for dishes. The yellow ones are used on counters and surfaces. I now allow myself only one roll of paper towels a week in the kitchen, which, for me, is progress.

Of course, none of this is earth-shattering stuff. But landfills are made of piles of minutia. Paper towels, tissues, napkins are a big deal, Kuyawa-Dow tells me.

"What we're finding — well not finding, it's just a fact — is that dry waste, which is your non-food items, doesn't biodegrade" in a landfill or "it will take a long time," she says. "You've got it next to a plastic bottle which is next to a license plate which is next to a coat which is next to. . . . It's not all paper in its own little paper cell."

SEE LIGHTENED, PAGE G2

samcorea

Marketing your home
for all it's worth™

403-870-8811

www.samluxuryhomes.com

RE/MAX
HOUSE OF REAL ESTATE



Crescent Heights \$998,000

1412 - 2A Street NW Inner city, West Cres. Hts/Rosedale, a Rare find, newer home on large lot (32-ft frontage), much sought after address, 2005 s.f. + dev'd basement, double garage, total of 4 bedrooms + den, huge & vaulted

master suite (22 x 20), hardwood & slate floors, granite counters, custom kitchen, river-rock fireplace, basement finished w/ bedroom, walk-in closet w/ amazing built-ins, games room & wine cellar. Fast possession possible!

