



**ALL THAT GLITTERS**  
Local designers serve up  
some table-top inspiration  
See Page G3

# LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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

WWW.CALGARYHERALD.COM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2007

## AROUND THE HOUSE

**CALGARY HERALD .com**  
**ONLINE FEATURES**

Two professional gift-wrappers show you how it's done

### Learn to wrap like a pro

**ONLINE** • If you're all thumbs when it comes to wrapping gifts, we can help.

Log onto CalgaryHerald.com and click on Editor's Picks to watch a three-part video of two professional present wrappers from Somebody Else's Time.

If you're not ready to wrap today, the video will remain online until the end of December.

— Calgary Herald

### Making eco-resolutions

**CONTEST** • We know the eco-sins out there... milk cartons furtively stashed in the trash instead of the recycling bin, trips to the corner store by car rather than on foot or bike. Even (horrors!) using plastic bags from the grocery store because you forgot to take your own.

Is there hope for you? Of course, there is! Find salvation (and prizes!) by resolving to do better for the planet in 2008.

Submit your eco-resolutions (and why you're making them) via e-mail by the end of the day Dec. 14 to lifeathomecomment@theherald.ca nwest.com with "eco-resolutions" in the subject line. We'll select four of the best entries to feature on Dec. 29 — the perfect time to turn the page on an imperfect past. The four winners will receive a selection of prizes to reward their "green-ness."

Need some inspiration? Check out the Green Guide at calgaryherald.com for tips to help you reduce the impact your lifestyle has on the planet, from green cleaning to eco-friendly computer recycling.

— Calgary Herald

### Designer relaunches website

**DESIGN** • Fans of designer and television personality Kimberley Seldon can catch up with the latest news, from upcoming events, to current design projects, to her new blog, at the redesigned website, kimberleyseldon.com.

Upcoming events include Design Express Provence, when you can visit the lavender capital of France in June on a five-day getaway with Seldon as tour guide, and the Designer Market, which brings a European-style market to Toronto's Distillery district in May, with antiques, fabrics, collectibles, art and giftware.

— Calgary Herald

# DECK THE HALLS WITH THE PROS

Decorating 'elves' get homeowners into holiday spirit



Peacock feathers and berries add a lavish touch.



The mantel is decked out in berries, greenery and a stand for cards.



An eclectic mix of ornaments, including miniature birdhouses, adorn the tree.



Top hats were added to the light fixture in the dining room for a festive look.

**CINDY STEPHEN**  
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

If the mere thought of decking the halls and trimming the tree makes you feel like crying in your egg nog, you're not alone. Many women dread this season of merry making simply because it's a lot of work that is not particularly joyful.

"I can remember my mother saying that she hated Christ-

mas. On Boxing Day it was like, Christmas is over, let's take down the tree. And now, I completely understand. Women do everything," says Karen MacPherson, a busy mother of two who now has a professional designer decorate her home.

"Those tree-trimming parties you hear about? Those are only in Norman Rockwell paintings. Kids hang three ornaments and they're through. The rest is up to mom. Last year, Jerry came

in and did everything and it was done," says MacPherson, referring to Jerry Chong, a highly sought after Calgary interior designer who added Christmas decorating as a bonus for his clients seven years ago.

"It allows me to be creative in a more whimsical way. It's not so permanent — I can afford to take chances," says Chong, who draws from a personal inventory of decorations he's

collected over the past 20 years.

He decorates about a dozen homes, many over 3,000 square feet and creates spectacular front door arrangements for 20 clients.

Chong hires interior design students as assistants and begins decking the halls right after Halloween, because many of his clients begin their holiday entertaining mid-November.

SEE PROS, PAGE G2

Photos, Gavin Young, Calgary Herald  
**Jerry Chong decorates about a dozen homes for clients at Christmas, including this Briar Hill abode elegantly done up for the holidays.**



## Holidays and the single man

Decorating and gift buying services help manage the season

**YVONNE JEFFERY**  
CALGARY HERALD

A funny thing happened when Sarah Franklin and Michelle Podulsky donated time from their company Somebody Else's Time to some charity events. They expected their concierge-style services — organizing, interior design, decorating and shopping — to appeal to women, but it was often men who were buying time, especially when it came to decorating their homes for Christmas.

"They might have family or girlfriends coming by for the holidays and they don't want it to look like they've never moved out of their bachelor-pad phase," explains Franklin. "You also have men who are a couple of years out of graduating and getting their first job, and they want something nice. Or they're divorcing and they're finding themselves on their own and they've lost that feminine side."

Michelle Lavoie — who owns A Man's Home, specializing in redesign and redecorating for men — sees similar trends. "We do carry the traditions, as women. We have almost a responsibility for it, but men love Christmas too — it brings the little boy out in every single man. Whether or not they go to the effort of doing it for themselves is another question, but once it's done, they love it."

Men who are entertaining for business and those who share custody of their children might need the house decorated, she says, even if they don't have the time or desire to do it themselves.

So how does Lavoie approach guiding the male of the species through the Christmas season?

"For some people it's what fits into their current esthetic or current design," she explains.

SEE SERVICES, PAGE G2



CanWest News Service  
**Don't have the time or inclination to decorate? Hire someone to do it for you.**

samcorea

Marketing your home for all it's worth™

403-870-8811

www.samsluxuryhomes.com

RE/MAX  
HOUSE OF REAL ESTATE



**Springbank Hill, \$650,000**  
14 Springbluff Blvd. SW  
Stylish home with developed walkout bsmt, almost 3000 sf of luxurious living space, high ceilings hardwood & travertine floors, 3+1 bedrooms & den, walkout w/ media room, games room, wet bar.



**Crescent Heights, \$899,000**  
1412 - 2A Street NW  
Walk to downtown! 2000 sf + developed bsmt, new home, traditional architecture & charm, 3+1 bedrooms & den, inlaid slate & hardwood floors, granite counter, deluxe walk-in, dbl garage.



**Signature Pk, \$950,000**  
36 Signature Point, SW  
3200 sf home on big 54 x 110-ft lot with south backyard, 3 bedrooms + den, all 3 bedrooms have a walk-in closet, luxurious master suite with sitting room & fireplace, quiet cul-de-sac.



**Bowness, \$1,395,000**  
2 Bowbank Crescent, NW  
Luxurious newer home with river access! 3200 sf + developed basement, 4 car garage, beautiful river views, exceptional master bedroom, feels like a European country home but just minutes to downtown.



**Strathcona, \$1,795,000**  
63 Strathridge Gardens, SW  
On the ravine, 3700 sf + developed walkout, clean lines, sleek, urban style 2-storey, heated porcelain floors, expansive windows w/ ravine views, chef's kitchen w/ professional appliances, 3+1 bdrms.