



SWEET DREAMS

Repose like a queen
in a canopy bed

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LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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AROUND THE HOUSE

Is your faucet a fossil?

DECOR • If you think that faucets are simply there to deliver water, it's time to check out a showroom near you. Price Pfister says faucets can be functional works of art, and can make or break your kitchen and bathroom style.

If it's time to replace that dinosaur-aged faucet, here are four trends to keep in mind:

- Pull-out faucets with high-arc spouts
- Unique finishes such as dark bronze (Price Pfister says that Canadians tend to prefer the warm, soft look of rustic finishes and earth tones)
- Minimalism, in single-handle, side-mount faucets with sleek, simple designs
- Ecologically sound faucets that offer water-conserving designs

Check out the newest faucets at pricepfister.com.
— Calgary Herald

Return home to colour

DECOR • Benjamin Moore has come up with three top colour palettes for 2008, and they're all about "returning home," the paint retailer says — putting comfort, serenity and organization at the heart of the home environment.

Within each of the following palettes you'll find two different colour combinations — one that conveys energy and another that offers a more relaxed mood:

- Modern Tranquility offers a respite from modern-day stress in colours such as latte, cream froth and seaside sand.
- Organic Comfort features ways to bring nature into your home through hues of plains, misted fern and hemp seed.
- Pure Opulence provides a profusion of styles and colours, including Cherokee brick, Aegean teal and black raspberry.

Check out the colours online at benjaminmoore.ca or pick up the Colours for Your Home 2008 card at your local Benjamin Moore retailer.
— Calgary Herald

Leap into green electricity

ENVIRONMENT • Bullfrog Power arrived on the Alberta electricity scene last June, offering another way to be eco-friendly. (Bullfrog sources all of its electricity from clean, renewable "made-in-Alberta" wind power.)

To celebrate 2008 as a leap year, the company offers these tips to help you reduce your power use:

- Turn off the lights when you're not in the room. Do the same for appliances.
- Switch to energy-efficient lighting such as compact fluorescent or LED lights. Use dimmers with other lighting.
- Retrofit your home — consider an energy audit to identify areas where you're losing energy.

For more information, visit bullfrogpower.com.
— Calgary Herald



PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

TODAY: What have we done?
NEXT WEEK: The kitchen and dining room take shape.
FEB. 9: Reviving the living room, a mouldy little den and adding a second bathroom

Former Calgary Herald writers Lin Connery and her husband Allan moved to Pictou, N.S., last year. They bought a 150-year-old house sight-unseen, moved in and rolled up their sleeves. For the next three weeks, Lin will write about their renovation odyssey.

This Old SALT-BOX house

Uneven floors and a crumbling foundation greeted the Connerys when they arrived on the front step



LIN CONNERY
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

My husband and I started with a simple plan: cash in our Calgary duplex, buy a fabulously cheap house in Nova Scotia, fix it up and lead a low-pressure life.

Sounds easy if you say it fast. The story has a happy ending, but it was a struggle to get there.

Working on our getaway plan, we kept running across other Calgarians who'd already made the same move, and more who were thinking about it.

A designer mentioned a client who had bought a stretch of sandy beach in Prince Edward Island. A lawyer had friends who had transplanted their young family to quieter, gentler Saint John, N.B. — a small city with a natural resource boom of its own.

Others who hadn't bought were at least looking. At a hospital, a cluster of nurses were enthusiastically comparing MLS online bargains they had spotted in Nova Scotia. A businesswoman, thinking about investment possibilities and a summer home, asked us to recommend a realtor. Recently, a Halifax

newspaper ran a story about a geophysicist who'd made the move a year before us. She sold her Calgary home, bought 40 hectares of spectacular Highlands wilderness on Cape Breton Island and now enjoys a quiet life in a yurt in the woods.

Allan and I toyed with the idea of building a cabin on six hectares of land on the Bay of Fundy, but decided that town life would suit us better.

Pictou, N.S., looked ideal for us, and so it has proved to be. Still a working seaport, it's an attractive and historically significant hillside town, with Victorian stone buildings

and some fine old homes that wouldn't be out of place in Mount Royal.

Conveniences like a post office, drug stores, library and restaurants are a short walk from our home, and a Sobeys supermarket is a five-minute drive. We easily found a family doctor in town. Big-box stores and the regional hospital are in New Glasgow, 15 minutes away.

The ferry to P.E.I. is a five-minute drive, and Halifax is 100 minutes away on four-lane divided highways.

There's a sandy beach nearby on the Northumberland Strait, offering

the warmest waters north of the Carolinas.

Not to boast, but every time it snows here, all the streets and sidewalks are cleared repeatedly until the snow stops.

As for the house, we were drawn to its simple, classic style — salt-boxy and symmetrical. It was 2,200 sq. ft. over two-and-a-half storeys, with three bedrooms and one bathroom. We paid \$35,000, and in closing the deal, we made every mistake you could imagine.

First, we bought it sight unseen, relying on the pictures in the MLS online listing and a couple of phone calls to the real-

tor. (Our advice is: don't do that).

We knew that people had lived in the house until very recently, so, we reasoned, how bad could it be? Surprisingly bad, as it turned out. Cheap for a reason, said my husband.

On possession day in October 2006, standing on the front step we could smell mildew and rotting timber before the door opened.

The floor on the main level was warped — humped in the kitchen, and sagging down 10 centimetres to one corner of the living room.

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Courtesy, Lin Connery
Clockwise from top:
• The source of the lumpy, twisted floors on the main floor. Every time failing supporting beams would sag, somebody would put a prop underneath to stop the floor from dropping into the crawlspace.
• The price was right, and the underlying boxy, symmetrical style of the house had appeal.
• The fireplace was painted and hidden under lath and plaster walls.
• Hand-cut stones in the rear foundation wall were coming apart on the outside, and inside, they were sagging.



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Banff Trail, \$559,000

3212 Cochrane Road, NW, 1,042 SF bungalow. Close to U of C, across from elementary school & walking distance to William Aberhart High School. Excellent investment home — rented at \$1400/month. Quiet, mature neighborhood, quick commute to DT.



Strathcona, \$799,000

70 Strathlea Cres, SW. Ideal for large or extended family, Stylish 2,816 sf, 4 + 2 bdrm home with dev'd basement, total of 4100 sf of living space, great set up for a nanny, full service wet bar in bmst, close to park, shopping, Westside Rec, quick commute to DT.



Killarney, \$850,000

3020 — 27th Street, SW, New home, sophisticated & open infill, 1,994 SF + developed basement. near 17th Avenue & DT. 3+1 bedroom, large vaulted master w/ fireplace, balcony & rain shower ensuite, Hardwood flooring, granite counters, wet bar, over 2800 SF.



West Springs, \$1,050,000

121 West Springs Place, SW, Super location, cul-se-sac, large pie lot, siding a park! Upgraded 2,541 SF + developed walkout, 3+1 bedrooms, study with built-in desk, tiger-wood floors, heated slate floors, master bdrm w/ ultra-tub, fireplace & veranda overlooking park.



Elbow Valley, \$1,695,000

123 Elbow Ridge Bluffs, An amazing home, 3,061 SF bungalow + fully developed walkout, oversized 4 car garage, heated driveway, 6 fireplaces, 3 "master" bdrms each with a full ensuite & walk-in, main bedroom w/ huge walk-in closet & private laundry.