



## SAVVY HOST

Are you ready for the 'radical honesty' movement?

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## LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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## AROUND THE HOUSE



## It's hip to be square — and unbreakable

**PRODUCT** • Fragile it's not, and that's what some of us need when it comes to our dishes.

Corelle, that durable chip-, scratch- and stain-resistant tableware, however, has also become hip. And the hip shape for plates these days, is square.

It's introduced a whole new collection of 10 place settings with a contemporary bent.

In addition to its national top sellers Simple Lines and Pretty Pink, there's also the Japanese inspired Blue Diamonds and the more colourful ethnic-inspired Bamako.

A set includes 16 pieces, four of each 10 1/4 inch dinner plates, 8 3/4 inch lunch plates, 22-oz soup/cereal bowls and 12-oz porcelain mugs. Their available at major retailers for \$59.99.

— Calgary Herald

## 'Labour talks' best before marriage

**SURVEY** • A heads-up for future brides: You might want to have "the talk" with your guy before walking down the aisle.

A new study supports a commonly held belief that married men fall short in the housework department. The study, published in the Journal of Family Issues, looked at more than 17,000 people in 28 countries. Married men, the study found, reported doing less housework than live-in boyfriends. This was true even among couples with an egalitarian view on gender.

Study co-author Shannon Davis said this seems to suggest that the institution of marriage changes the division of labour.

"Marriage as an institution seems to have a traditionalizing effect on couples," she said, "even couples who see men and women as equal." To read the entire study, go to [jfi.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/28/9/1246](http://jfi.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/28/9/1246)

— McClatchy Newspapers

## Digital decor

**PAINTING** • Experiment with 3,700 wall colours in a room — without ever using a brush. Behr gives you the Paint Your Place digital imaging tool to do it.

To use the program, upload your room images from your digital camera. Then you can preview colours that help you make decorating decisions for that particular area. You can also order colour swatches and 8-ounce paint samples for home delivery. How-to and help-demos are also available. No CD is necessary because you do it all online. Visit [www.behr.com](http://www.behr.com) to pay a \$4.95 US annual fee for unlimited uploads.

— McClatchy Newspapers



Lorraine Hjalte, Calgary Herald  
**Barry Olsen** was one of the winners of our Life At Home contest looking for men who demonstrate unlimited household initiative. He was nominated by his three-year-old son Erik.

# 'Do-something' guys

Out of the dozens of e-mails we received, three guys stood out as the ones with unlimited household initiative

LISA KADANE  
CALGARY HERALD

**R**ona had it wrong. Canadian men aren't the "knuckle-dragging near-dethals" Peter Regan accused the big box retailer of portraying them as in a television commercial that aired this past spring.

Clearly, Rona ad execs hadn't visited Calgary, where do-something dads and handy household husbands abound. The Rona ad hoopla — made famous because Regan, a single dad in Calgary, complained convincingly about the ad, which is no longer airing — inspired the Herald to run a contest looking for "do-something guys": men with unlimited household initiative.

So enormous was the response to our contest, it was hard to choose just three deserving winners. To illustrate — examples of several nominees who didn't make the cut:

Sean Blair delivered his and

wife Melanie's twins by himself at home, making him the first "mid-husband" in Calgary. Robert Faulder makes beautiful furniture for wife Janice, from coffee tables to liquor cabinets. Judy Tiede wrote an eloquent poem about her man Mel:

"Put up pictures,  
scrub the biffy —  
Make it sparkle in a jiffy!  
Decorate rooms,  
saw and nail —  
He'll get it done, never fail."

The poem went on and on, as did our entries.

Which made us wonder: why does the stereotype of the "lazy husband" exist in the first place?

"This is a long-standing media stereotype," says Rebecca Sullivan, a University of Calgary professor who specializes in gender and popular culture.

"It's very common in the sitcoms."

Think Homer from The Simpsons, Ray from Everybody Loves Raymond and Jim from Accord-

ing to Jim. Inept doofuses all.

Sullivan says sitcoms use stock stereotypes for easy jokes because they only have 22 minutes to move the story along. TV ads only have 30 seconds to get their point across, so such stereotypes abound.

"Generally speaking, advertising tries to be as uncontroversial and as generic and mainstream as possible to attract the most buyers, so they go for the safe joke," says Sullivan.

"And what happens is standards change and people get tired of these stereotypes, but it takes a long, long time. So it's no surprise that Rona was caught unawares. How were they supposed to know that they were going to be the last straw?"

It might not have been the proverbial straw if Regan hadn't taken a stand, standing up for do-something guys around town.

Read on to find out what it takes to go above and beyond the call of household duty.

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**WINNER**  
**Barry Olsen**  
Age: 37

**Occupation:** Substitute teacher and home contractor for friends and family

**Nominated by:** Son Erik, 3

**Why he won:** Not only does Olsen take Erik and the family dog Boomer to the dog park every Saturday morning so his wife Lisa can go shopping or sleep in, he vacuums, and cleans the kitchen floor.

"The most amazing thing," wrote Erik, "is the fact that he manages to do this while still having time to create the ensuite and walk-in closet of my mom's dreams."

Not content to rest after designing the yard for Erik — complete with a basketball/hockey area — this father-mentored and self-taught jack-of-all-trades is currently adding 600 square feet of living space to the family's northwest Calgary home. When completed it will include the aforementioned ensuite and closet (that will be bigger than Erik's bedroom!), plus a toy room for his son.

"I'm doing everything except the cement work," says Olsen, who also volunteers for the Dalhousie Community Association and the Calgary Senior Men's Basketball Association.

"The drawback is, when you get this busy, there's always a project on the go."

Although, he admits he doesn't know what he'd do without a project (what's TV?).

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63 Somervale Park, SW \$299,000

Townhouse with single attached garage, close to transit & shopping. 1137 s.f. 2-storey w/ 2 big bedrooms, developed bsmt, 2 full baths, backing greenbelt.



#633, 910 Centre Avenue, NE \$349,900

Super inner city loc'n, steps to trendy shops/restaurants & walk to DT! Top floor, 720 s.f. overlooking courtyard, 2 bedrooms & den area, 11 ft ceilings, indoor parking.



33 Aspen Stone View, SW \$699,000

Almost 2700 s.f. on a quiet cul-de-sac, 1 house from the park! 3 bedrooms & den, formal living & dining + main floor family room + bonus room, granite counters.



1630 Strathcona Drive, SW \$899,000

Super loc'n in Spring Haven, backing onto the park, 2-stry w/ walkout bsmt, 3600 s.f. of total living space, 3 + 1 bedrooms, designed w/ entertaining in mind.



70 Strathlea Crescent, SW \$950,000

This is a 6 bdrm house! 2800 s.f. 2-storey w/ nanny suite developed down, over 4100 s.f., 4 + 2 bedrooms, maple kitchen w/ granite, terrific built-ins thru-out.