

SUMMER 2013

# OUR COUNTRY HOME

Simple is beautiful

**LIFE IN A  
TINY HOUSE**

**THE SIMPLE JOY  
OF FLOWERS**

**PLANTS TO BEWARE OF**

**LIVING WITH HISTORY:  
A 200-YEAR-OLD HOUSE**

**SUMMER BERRY  
DESSERTS**

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Photo by Jack Kucy

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Photo by Jane Bollinger



Cover photograph:  
Jane Bollinger

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The home a person chooses to live in always tells you something about them—whether they live in a 200-year-old historic home in a picturesque village, or in a 120-square-foot “tiny house” out in the country. (Could you survive in 120 square feet of living space? Or for that matter, could you live in a 200-year-old house with all of the responsibilities and pleasures that come with that decision?) In this issue of **Our County Home** you’ll meet different people who have chosen these two very different options and you’ll get to reflect on the consequences that came with each of their decisions.

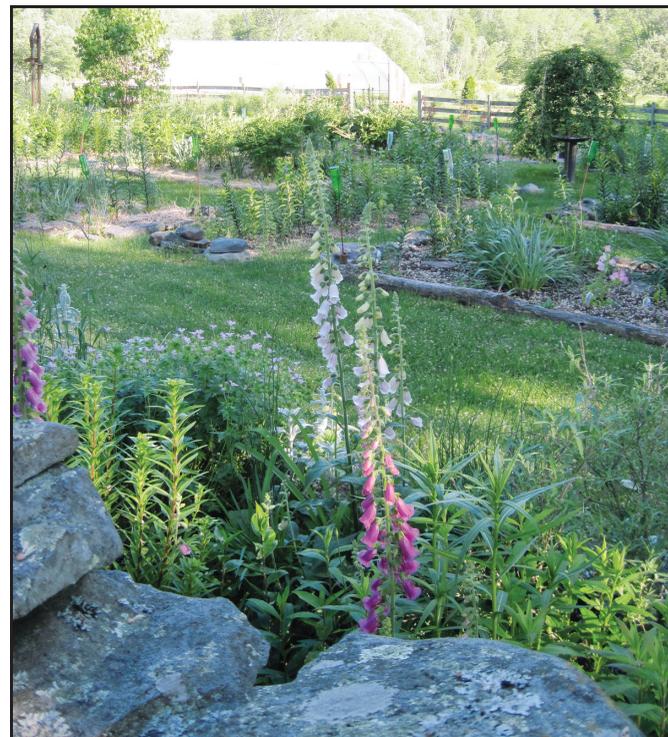
Not everyone, of course, lives in a house. Some people decide to rent an apartment. One particular young person we know, who’s just starting out in the work-a-day world, shares her personal story of the fun and challenges of setting up a first apartment on a miniscule budget. (I ask you, who doesn’t remember their first apartment?)

Here in the Upper Delaware River Valley summer is an all too brief season, perhaps made all the more sweet by the simple treasures Mother Nature offers us—fresh fruits and vegetables, and, of course, flowers. Our Tastemaker in this issue tells how she turned your passion for gardening from a hobby into a fulltime flower business. You’ll get to meet Katharine Brown of Fox Hill Farm Experience, who shares her story as well as some tips for making beautiful flower arrangements.

As for summer fruits, how many different desserts could you make with summer berries? We’ll help you sort out the difference among cobblers, crisps, trifles and more. (Did anybody say clafouti?) Plus we’ll offer you a couple of recipes guaranteed to please your summertime guests.

Here’s wishing you the best summer ever. We hope you put everything you have into this fleetingly short season.

Jane Bollinger  
Section Editor



## OUR COUNTRY HOME

A RIVER REPORTER LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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# Living the simple life

## A house built for one



An interview with “J” by ISABEL BRAVERMAN

**“Imagine no possessions; I wonder if you can”**

**A house that is 10 by 12 feet sits on a piece of land near the Delaware River. Could you do it? Could you live in such a tiny house? That is what J is doing, living in a small dwelling that she renovated and moved on to her land. With the house she moved all her belongings, and soon realized that in order to live in a tiny house you have to downsize.**

**The idea to live there was inspired by someone she was working for, who lived in a tiny house and had others on her property. J fixed them up and decorated them, and realized she could live in a tiny house too. She said, “You don’t need all of these things that the world says you need.” So what do you need? How do you give up your possessions? Read the interview with J at the right.**

**Q:** Tell me about the house

**A:** When you walk in there’s a wood stove and a little kitchenette, and then my bed and then a desk. The peak is ten foot high. It’s shaped like a barn, with a half-octagonal roof. There’s actually a lot of unused space there, but it works out. I put windows in it, and I need to put more windows in it. I had a porch built on the front of it with a roof and recently closed that in. Now that’s my little studio where I can sew and create and make things. The way I look at this project is it can be slow moving, because I want to spend the rest of my life there. It doesn’t have to be perfect right away.

**Q:** How did you learn about building and renovating?

**A:** Oh, I didn’t; I just did it. I learned by doing. Growing up in my bedroom and always being in that one room in that small square footage, I was always rear-



TRR photos by Isabel Braverman

ranging and putting up a shelf or doing those things. It was something that I just did. Now, a drill is my third hand. I’m always fixing up something.

**Q:** Did living in such a small space take any getting used to?

**A:** It was something you would think would be really hard to adjust to. For some reason, it wasn’t. I started staying there in the winter. It was September that I got the dwelling on to the property, so I had to finish renovating and it’s getting cold, it’s fall, next thing you know November rolls around then December, and I’m in there in hard core winter time, freezing. I had electricity running to the property. At the time I didn’t have the wood stove yet. It was so drafty in there, icicles and stuff.

But, I did adjust perfectly fine. It was like no big deal to me. It was just, ‘this is what I’m doing now.’

**Q:** Does it ever get filled up with stuff? How do you deal with storing things?

**A:** With my in and out lifestyle, because I work all the time, I do come home and just plop things down. So it can get crowded very quickly. But for a living I organize and design spaces, so it’s in my nature to be able to easily put things away quickly. When I first moved there, I was like ‘everything I own is going in there.’ And I had collections of vases and a full dish set and it was very quickly that I got rid of everything and gotten myself to the minimal amount of things I need. I have two forks and two spoons and two of everything. I don’t have much stuff; I minimalized.

**Q:** Did that feel freeing?

**A:** Oh yeah, definitely. I built a shed too, because I

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## The ‘tiny house movement’ 101

By JANE BOLLINGER

The Tiny House Movement, sometimes called the Small House Movement, started out as much a social movement as an architectural one, and now it’s gaining even more attention for its low-cost housing options during tough economic times.

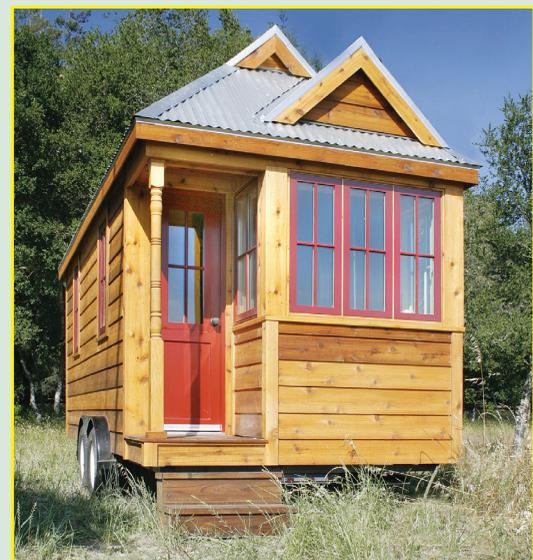
Do the math. You can buy a ready-made tiny house—I found estimates online ranging from \$40,000 to \$60,000—or you can purchase plans on the Internet to build your very own tiny house, usually for under \$25,000. If you can forage building materials, you could do it for even less.

When we talk about tiny houses, generally we

mean those with a floor plan of just a few hundred square feet, up to a maximum of 800 square feet. Compare this to a typical American house that covers 2,500 square feet. You can see why the tiny house costs a lot less. You can also see how living in a tiny house forces its occupant to live a smaller lifestyle.

The movement is about 15 years old. Wikipedia gives credit to Sarah Susanka, author of “Not So Big House,” published in 1998, for helping launch the small house philosophy. It is all about people choosing not only to downsize their living space, but also to simplify their lives in general—no big

*Continued on page 5*



Photos courtesy Tumbleweed Houses  
The typical size of a tiny house rarely exceeds 500 square feet. This model—on wheels—offers 130 square feet of living space.

## LIVING THE SIMPLE LIFE

Continued from page 3

have tools and things I need as well. So I needed to build a separate building for those things, and ended up storing yearbooks and trophies and T-shirts and even my tassel from graduation, all those kinds of things I was saving. I got to the point where I could get rid of those things too. Because it's just a thing; I have that in my head, I'll always remember what that T-shirt looks like; I don't need that shirt sitting in a box. It's very freeing to be like I can just pack up and go any time I need to.

**Q:** How does it feel to not have any rooms?

**A:** That was the part that I was trying to figure out. Originally my bed was a loft, so I could hang out underneath and have my computer and guitar, and I could paint down there; it was like my mini studio. But, it was too cramped; it was like 'this is not comfortable.' I took the loft bed out last year, and have my bed on the floor and it's just interesting how the space can change with not having multiple rooms. Usually you have a room just for sewing, or just for sleeping or a kitchen, so it is interesting to be able to fit it all in one room and be comfortable with it. And it is just fine.

**Q:** Do you have any future plans for what you want to do with it?

**A:** I do. I really want the self-sustainable thing to happen. I only want to grow enough food for me to live off of. I have a plan of putting in a root cellar. I have this amazing hill behind my building that I want



"Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

—William Morris

to dig out and put a root cellar in there, for canning and storing food, and not have to rely too much on going other places. The wood on the land would be great for making paper, so I can make my own toilet paper. This year I'm looking into making a washing machine that can use rain or creek water and runs by hand. I want to slowly implement those things that don't require you depending on the consumer world.

**Q:** What would you say to someone who wanted to move to a tiny house?

**A:** I would first tell them that they need to hire me to help them to do this. You can email me at prosystemizer@gmail.com. I would tell them it's really good

to have someone there to go through your things, because it's very important to downsize. I didn't have that much stuff as it was, but I moved in there with all of my things. I had a shelf up here with all of my vases on it, and it was so ridiculous. I would coach them on letting go of things and realizing that if you're going to actually live in a tiny home, you have to understand that things are just things, even if they have a sentimental value to them. You need to just bring what you need with you and the things you want to work with. It's been fun figuring it out while I've been living here.

[“J” is the pseudonym for a person who asked to not be named. We respect her request for privacy and have not included the location of her home.]



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# THOMPSON SANITATION

# THE TINY HOUSE MOVEMENT 101

*Continued from page 3*

mortgage, no big energy bill, no big house to clean, no place to acquire and store so much stuff. You get the point. The movement drew people with a social and an environmental conscience and those who wanted to embrace the values of minimalism and simplicity in their lives.

Tiny house designer Jay Shafer, who himself lives in a tiny house (he says that one of the smallest he's ever lived in was just 89 square feet), observes that the hardest thing is the downsizing—deciding what you need and want to keep when you move from your big house into your tiny house. Once you've moved in, everything gets much simpler, he says. As he sees it, "There's freedom in living small."

Some tiny houses are built on a permanent foundation, while others are on wheels for ease of picking up and traveling. Tiny houses have a kitchen, a bathroom, a bedroom and a main area for sitting and hanging out. Most have room for a small washer/dryer combo. Some have a front porch. Commercially available tiny houses are generally very attractive, designed and built by professional architects.

One of the biggest commercial firms is Tumbleweed Tiny House Company. Each house shown on the Tumbleweed website (they have 17 different models) shows multiple photographs—inside and out—plus a floor plan. Tumbleweed's smallest tiny house—it fits on a trailer—measures 11 x 7 feet, with

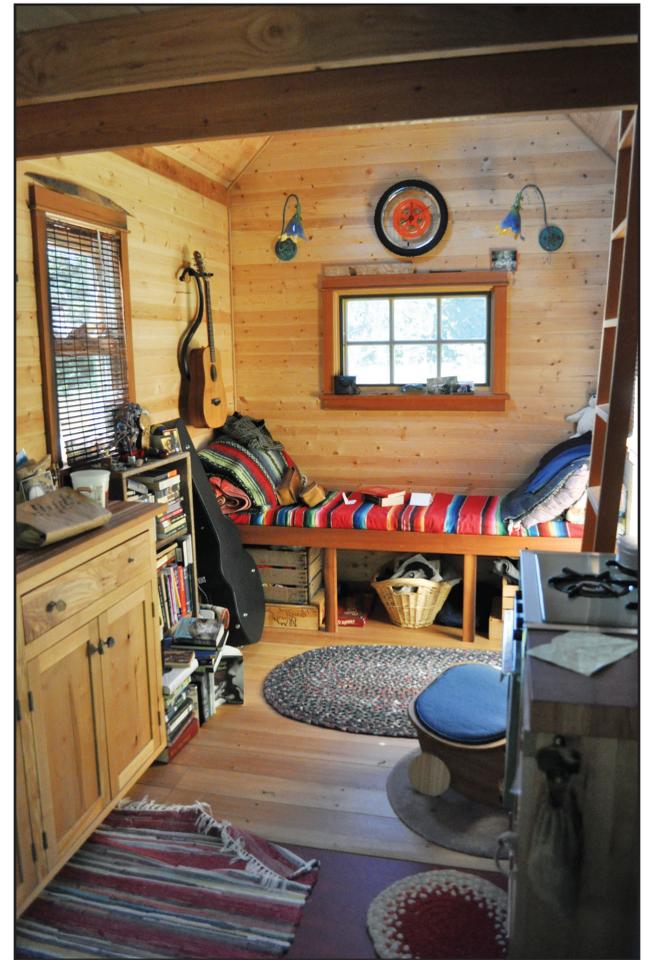
a living space of 73 square feet; their largest offering on a travel trailer is 172 square feet. Tumbleweed's permanent, stationary homes (they call them cottages) start at 261 square feet and go up to a two-story, three-bedroom tiny cottage at 884 square feet.

Not every community welcomes tiny houses, so if you want to build one, be sure you check out local zoning laws and building codes—even health codes. In addition, some housing developments and subdivisions have private covenants that prevent building tiny houses. Finally, some municipalities treat them like travel trailers if they're on wheels. So check out your local rules and regulations.

## Tiny house resources

You could spend all day on the Internet reading the growing number of tiny house websites. Here are some sites you might enjoy perusing:

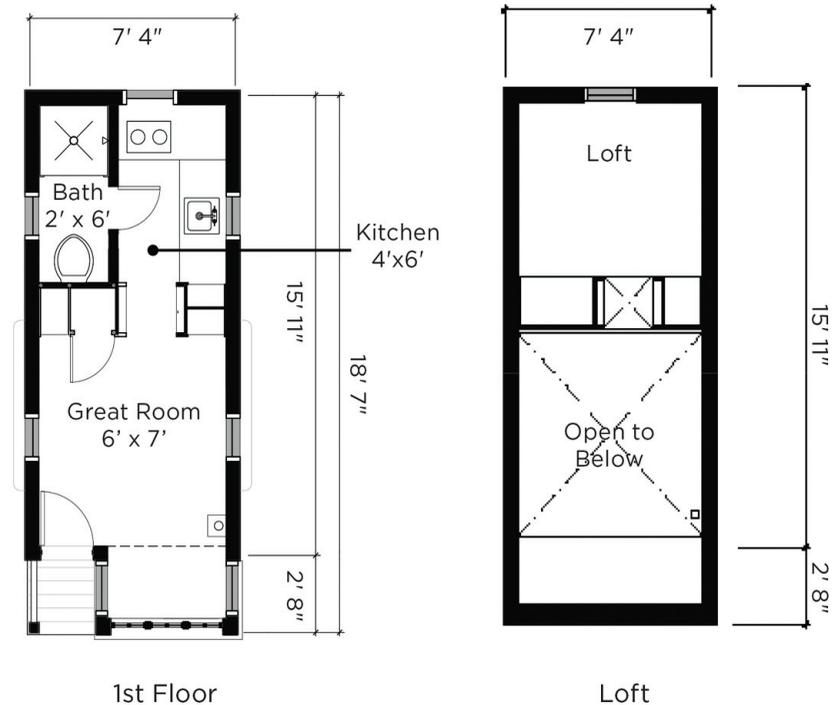
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*Photo by Tammy Strobel via Wikimedia Commons*



## FENCL



*Floor plan provided courtesy of Tumbleweed Tiny House Company*



Contributed photo

**Katharine Brown has been gardening all her life, growing up in Colorado (with its short growing season); later, working in a nursery in New Hampshire; and then, after moving to Oregon Township, Wayne County, PA, turning her yard into a large and ever-expanding flower garden. Her personal passion for growing flowers now flourishes as a successful small business—selling cut flowers; making arrangements and bouquets for all occasions; and offering consulting on garden design, plus helping with installation and construction. It's part of a larger business named Fox Hill Farm Experience, Inc. in which she and her husband, George Brown, raise beef cattle and occasionally welcome tourists to their farm. Katharine's sense of design has made her talents much in demand.**

**Recently, we sat down with Katharine Brown to hear her story and to learn what we could about flowers.**

**An interview with JANE BOLLINGER**

### Personal story

**Q:** How did it come about that you turned your yard over to flowers?

**A:** Ten years ago George and I bought the farm from my father-in-law. It was a complete blank slate—three maple trees, a rundown shack, a garage and a house. That was it. Having gardened all my life—which sounds crazy because I'm from Colorado, where there's a three-month growing season—I thought, now is the chance for me to garden. So, every season, I put in a new bed.

# Tastemaker: Katharine Brown

## From hobbyist to flower professional

One weekend George was out of town, and I purchased a tractor because it was 0% APR financing. Also, I had a neighbor who had manure. For me, those were the key ingredients: a tractor and good manure.

After our two children were born, I took time off from teaching, but I couldn't sit still, and I started doing bouquets from the garden. People started asking me to help with their gardens. Then, I started doing the farmers' market. It just kept building.

Now, people call me for bouquets for birthdays and other special occasions. I'm doing more weddings—it's really fun to be part of that couple's happy day.



TRR photo by Jane Bollinger

**At Fox Hill Farm Experience** the Browns raise beef cattle, flowers and more recently have started to host special events and occasions.

Finally, I'm doing quite a bit of garden design.

**Q:** How did the business come about? Did you sit down and write a business plan?

**A:** I did. My husband, George, has a master's degree in business, and he's not one to let me just go off willy-nilly, although I try. We even incorporated—it's Fox Hill Farm Experience, Incorporated now.

**Q:** When you first started your gardens, was there a design plan?

**A:** (Laughing) No. The truth is I would just look at an area and think, "What should I do there?" [At the beginning], I did some very shoddy rock wall jobs; any person who looks at them, they probably think, "Oh, boy. That's a very unfortunate wall." But it does

hold the flower beds in place.

**Q:** In your garden, do you try to follow natural growing practices?

**A:** Yes. One thing that I'm trying to put in practice at the farm is permaculture, and as much as I can in other people's gardens. I never force it on anyone. There's a sense that we need to be thinking beyond just pretty.

**Q:** Do you dry flowers?

**A:** I do, but not too much. I dry straw flowers, which are fun, and I dry alliums—not for the color, but for the shape; I think they're really cool.

**Q:** One thing that I heard about you is that you forage. What do you forage?

**A:** Well, I try not to do anything illegal (laughing), but I love to forage for winterberries. And ferns. I just cut them; I don't dig them up. Wonderful barks that have fallen on the ground. Hemlocks are great, but now they have Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, so you have to watch out. I forage more in the fall and winter. I look around for weird things—not weird, but just different—like the Harry Lauder's Walking Stick,

Continued on page 8



Contributed photo

**Katharine maintains** you can make a flower arrangement in any container. You don't have to have a pretty vase.

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## TASTEMAKER

Continued from page 6

[a shrub] that has crazy, curlicue branches.

### Advice to gardeners

**Q:** What advice do you have for somebody who's planning a garden?

**A:** One thing I say is, "Sit in your house, or on your porch; look out your windows." Where do you enjoy spending time? Those are the areas to develop. A lot of times, people build their gardens hugging the house, where you can't see them if you're sitting inside, and often, the shrubs then eat your house, literally and figuratively. We have six months of growing season here, but we have a long six months of sitting inside looking out.

Gardens can be interesting through more than just one or two seasons.

**Q:** Do you choose a mix of annuals and perennials, do you include shrubs and trees, a little of everything?

**A:** A little of everything is the key. And try to think of things that wildlife would enjoy, too. Like winterberry, for example; it's got a gorgeous berry, but the birds enjoy it, too, and you look at it in winter. That's where I would have changed things; initially, I started out all perennials, and it's gone from that to shrubs and trees that are more a four-season interest, and a lot less maintenance.

**Q:** What recommendations do you have for those who want to teach themselves?

**A:** Reading garden magazines is one

Continued on page 10



Peonies are the featured flower on this day at the mid-week farmers' market in Honesdale. These early bloomers make a real statement in any flower arrangement.

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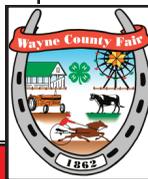
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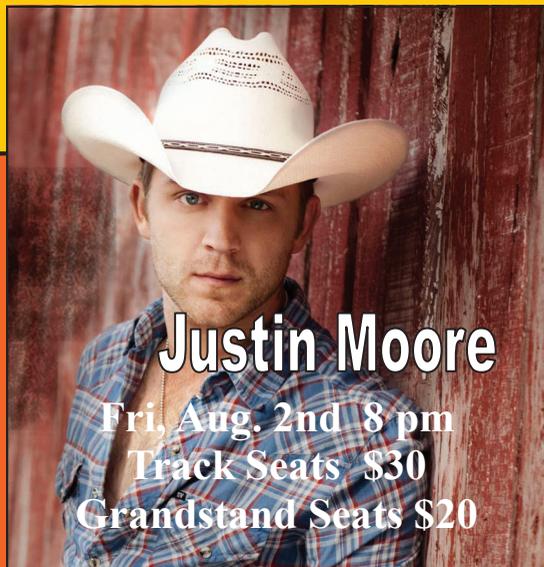
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"Flowers always make people better, happier and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul."

— Luther Burbank

## TASTEMAKER

*Continued from page 8*

way to start. Also, pay attention in someone else's yard. What do you like? Take notes, or take a picture. A lot of times, people will go to Agway, or wherever, and buy [plants] in full bloom, and think, "Oh, this is so pretty." Then, they plant it, and it's never the same because it's not the right space or...

So, really look at things and plan and ask before you put it into practice.

**Q:** Are there plants that are too hard for beginners? Like, "Don't do roses because they're very tricky," or, "Don't do dahlias because you have to dig them up and take them inside in the winter."

**A:** I think my advice is to start container gardening. Do raised beds, whisky barrels, pots everywhere, and just start experimenting. You can do herbs and perennials and even shrubs in containers.

Yes, roses are a little bit more high maintenance; dahlias are a little bit more high maintenance. There are certain ground covers that people buy that look pretty, and you plant it, and it completely takes over. I've lost entire beds to goute weed. So, watch if it says "ground cover."

But, really my advice is just go for it. And before you know it, you're addicted, and you might have to figure out how to make a business out of it because you're spending too much money on plants (laughs), and you realize this can't be a hobby any more.

### **Cut flowers and DIY arrangements**

**Q:** Let's talk about cut flowers. What does bringing cut flowers indoors bring into a home?

**A:** The first thing is bringing color inside your home, and life. You've worked so hard, so now

make it a conversation piece, or that extra at a dinner party, or even if it's just for you. A gorgeous bouquet can be as simple as dandelions or daisies. You can put a bouquet in any container; it doesn't have to be a vase. It can be teapot; it can be a bowl with a frog at the bottom. Use what you have. That makes it kind of an art-work.

**Q:** Are there some fundamental rules for making a more attractive flower arrangement?

**A:** One rule I try to follow, although not always, is to make the height of the arrangement one and a half times the height of the container, to make it really full. Having said that, sometimes you want to do something different. And it looks better to have odd numbers of flowers in a bouquet. Also, I like asymmetrical bouquets. It's not everyone's cup of tea. Some people like that [balanced look].

**Q:** So, the highest point isn't in the middle?

**A:** Exactly! The highest point doesn't have to be in the middle. And let the plants that you're using help dictate that. If you're using peonies, for example, you could do more of a uniform shape, but if you've got delphiniums and peonies and tulips, let them naturally drape; look at the way they are in nature and kind of follow that.

### **Final advice**

**Q:** Do you have favorite flowers?

**A:** Wow, that's a hard one.

**Q:** You just love them all, right?

**A:** (Laughing) It's true. But there are some that, *en masse*, just make more of a statement. And that's another piece of advice; something like a Marguerite Daisy, for example, looks so much better when there's a

*Continued on page 11*



*Contributed photos*

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Perennial peonies make for perennial favorites this time of year, and they're always pretty in pink.

### TASTEMAKER

Continued from page 10

mass of it—a billowing cloud of it. So, instead of one plant, plant five, so there will be plenty to cut to bring inside.

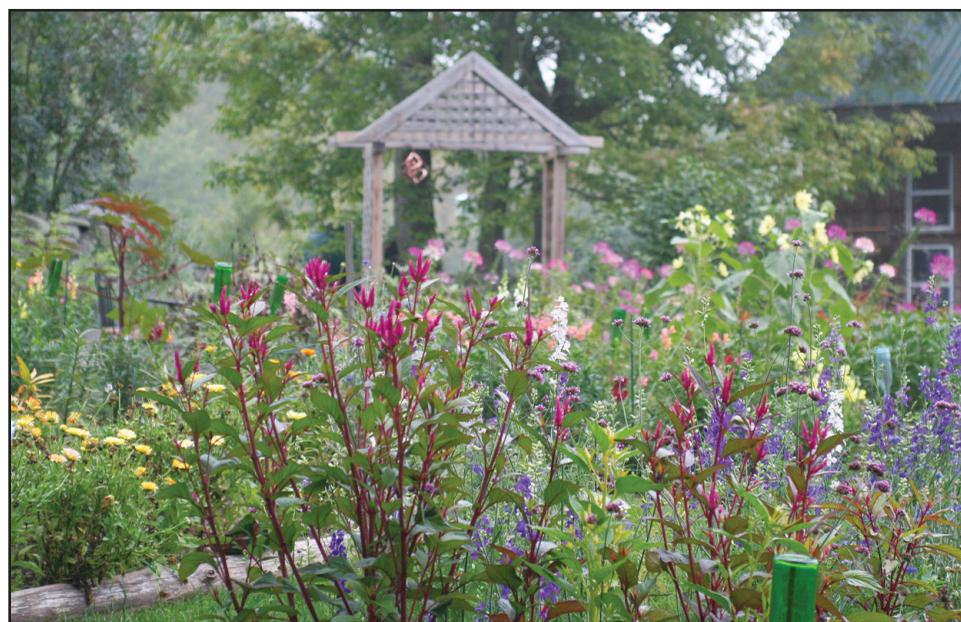
Recently, there's one plant that I really fell in love with. It's called *Rudbeckia maximillian*, and it gets to be seven feet tall. It's this spire jutting out of the garden. So, amongst this drift of daisies and Russian sage and Echinacea, you have this [really tall plant]. It's like you've created this bouquet right there in your garden.

**Q:** Is the planting zone [here] different?

**A:** When I first moved here, it was zone four, and now we can get away with zone five almost, thanks to global warming, not!

**Q:** How do you keep the critters out?

**A:** A dog helps. We're always outside, so that also scares them away. And I have been known to shoot a woodchuck. We've never had much of a problem with rabbits, but I have a cat now that's becoming a good hunter. You can still have a pretty garden. You just have to do deer resistance. There's nothing totally deer-proof [though] as everyone who lives around here knows. It's a nightmare for everybody.



Katharine's garden is a riot of color at the height of summer.

Contributed photo



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# Custodians of history

## Living in a 200-year-old house

By NANCY DYMOND

“Have you noticed any ghosts?” seems like a fair question to put to the residents of a house that has spent 200 years providing shelter and comfort to a veritable pageant of generations. Eight years ago, John and Dawn Harvey fell in love with and purchased the historical Wilmot House, also known as the Solomon Moore House, on Old Wayne Street in Bethany, PA. The house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to its fame as the birthplace of David Wilmot, author of the Wilmot Proviso, a document that is widely credited with being the forerunner of the 13th Amendment. (See: [legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Wilmot+Proviso](http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Wilmot+Proviso))

“John loves the history of this house,” Dawn explains. “I love the architecture, the way it feels connected to the past.”

The flagstone front steps; the fieldstone foundation; original handmade windows of Bethany Glass, tiny bubbles and waves observable in the windowpanes; and the stonework flowerbeds all conspire to create that connection to the past. Master car-

penter John Gustin built the house in 1811 for Solomon Moore, who added a single-story addition for his store and the borough's first post office. In 1814, Randall and Mary Wilmot bought the house from Moore and lived there for several years.

The dark red, wood-sided house, with its handsome, black shutters, sits on one acre of lawn, which expands into the back yard past a roofed porch and beds of flowering bulbs and perennials. Beyond the period-style garage/studio, erected by previous owner Alex Baker, the lawn gently rolls to the forest's edge. The original stone (dug) well is still on the property, complete with roof, rope and bucket. The well covering was rebuilt to match pictures from the 1930s.

“Actually, this well came in very handy when we had the hurricane and had no power and, of course, no water,” said John.

As we round the house to enter the front door, the Harveys' gray cat poses beneath a carved and painted wooden sign above an entrance to the cellar, the house's original kitchen. “The Old Abolitionist” announces the sign, a pointed reference to its most famously

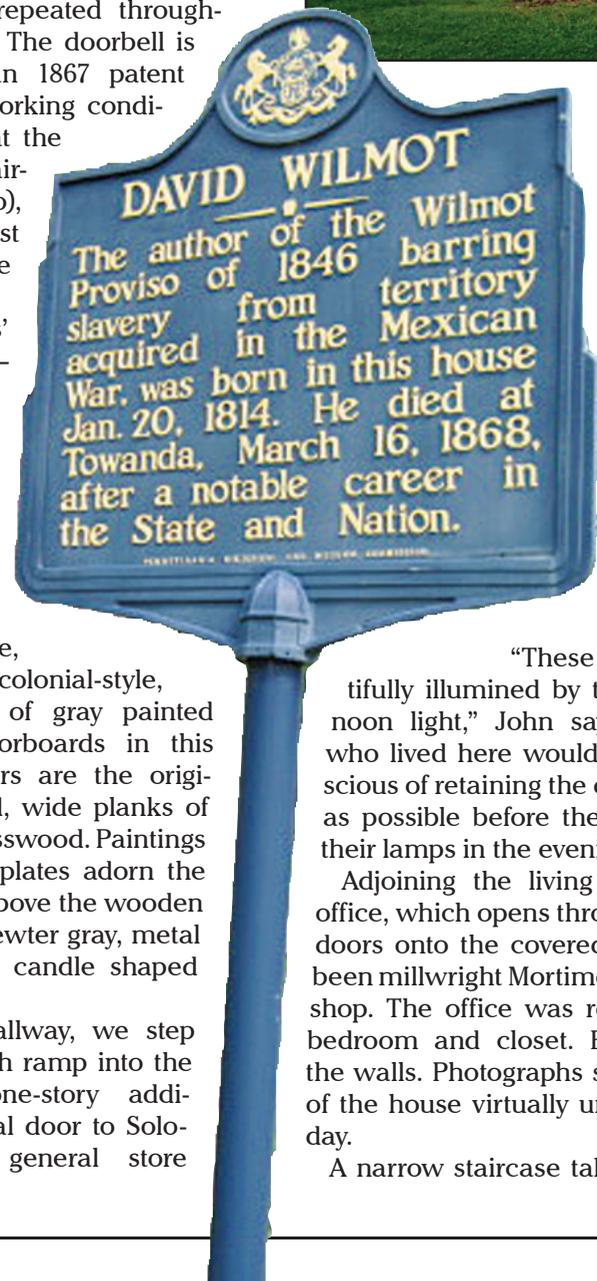
honored, previous historical resident. Now dubbed “The Pub” by the Harveys, it currently serves as a meeting place for John's book club.

The front entrance is a comfortable distance from the road and a short distance away from a hitching post—a tall, headstone-shaped rock with a metal ring attached. “It has been said,” offers Dawn, “that when the five daughters of a previous owner were growing up, you might see five horses tied to this ring at one time, all prospective suitors coming to visit.”

The dentil molding above the solid wood door is repeated throughout the interior. The doorbell is marked with an 1867 patent and is still in working condition. Glancing at the ascending staircase (one of two), we enter the first room on the right.

The Harveys' dining room—the original family's living room—features the fanciest molding in the house and a shallow, European-style red brick fireplace, framed by a colonial-style, carved mantel of gray painted wood. The floorboards in this room and others are the original tight-grained, wide planks of chestnut and basswood. Paintings and decorative plates adorn the painted walls. Above the wooden table hangs a pewter gray, metal chandelier with candle shaped electric bulbs.

Across the hallway, we step down a two-inch ramp into the pine-floored, one-story addition. The original door to Solomon Moore's general store



was sealed off years ago, and the room has become a comfortable living room. The original fireplace is now gas. Dawn comments, “In between seasons, we heat the house using only this stove and the stove in the kitchen.”

“These rooms are beautifully illuminated by the natural afternoon light,” John says. “The people who lived here would have been conscious of retaining the day's light as long as possible before they'd have to light their lamps in the evening.”

Adjoining the living room is John's office, which opens through glass-paned doors onto the covered porch that had been millwright Mortimer E. Lavo's workshop. The office was renovated from a bedroom and closet. Bookshelves line the walls. Photographs show the outside of the house virtually unchanged to this day.

A narrow staircase takes us to the loft



Photo contributed by Bethany Historical Society

The original house was built for Solomon Moore in 1811 and purchased by the Wilmot family in 1814.



Photos by David B. Soete

**John and Dawn Harvey** stand in front of the historic Wilmot House in Bethany, PA.

area of the addition, housing a small spare room and larger guestroom. Before we leave the loft, John draws our attention to a child's scrawled picture of George Washington. The image drawn on bare wall is framed by molding nailed around it during the 1995 renovations. John reads the caption to us, "Bethany Jan 1 George Washington," and adds, "We just honor and protect it. Who knows what the true story on that is? It could have been little David's."

The upstairs loft area is separate from the upstairs main area, so we descend the narrow staircase and climb the main stairway to the bedrooms above. This staircase has beautifully crafted rails and banisters of Honduran mahogany, ending at a wide hallway.

Both bedrooms feature wide plank wood floors, and the bathroom (formerly the sewing room) has a clawfoot tub. An unusual feature of the bedrooms is their spacious closets. Most houses of this period had small or no closets, using wooden wardrobes instead.

Artworks abound. Dawn opens the door of a cabinet that sits under a window in the hallway to display the hidden radiator. The attractive radiator covers were crafted by previous owner Alex Baker.

John and Dawn agree that the house is comfortably warm in winter, due mostly to

the insulation added during the major renovation. Since the Bethany Glass windows are single pane, the Harveys use temporary storm windows for extra protection against cold.

We head down to the back of the house, where the Harveys have their kitchen, originally the dining room. Though the kitchen retains a colonial feel, with its large fireplace, plank floors and original windows, it has modern appliances. A bathroom has replaced the old pantry, which has moved into one of the closets beside the fireplace. The other closet is home to the refrigerator. "I like the history, but there's nothing like modern wiring and plumbing," says Dawn.

Once more we descend. This time, we feel the air grow colder, and I am reminded again of spectres and spirits. Almost entirely underground, the field-stone cellar was the original kitchen. A large meat hook hangs threateningly from the ceiling. "Tall people have to be careful," John warns, with a smile. "The Pub" is furnished with comfortable chairs, where people can gather casually before the large stone fireplace that extends into the room.

There are things about this house

*Continued on page 14*

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## CUSTODIANS OF HISTORY

*Continued from page 13*

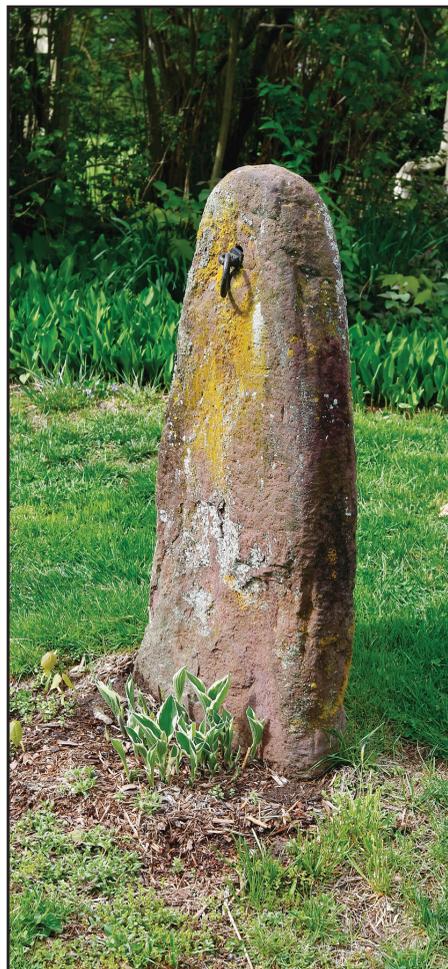
that took some getting used to, the Harveys admit, but most of them are great. There is privacy in the house. "Here, if the TV is on and you don't want to hear it," says Dawn, "you close the door. Also, we have a real sense of community on this street, which is wonderful, but if we want to feel like we live in the country, we go out back. We really like having both."

What advice would they give to someone who is considering purchasing a historical house? John answers. "I would say first step would be getting Zeke Boyle to restore it. He did a masterful job of preserving the historical characteristics and yet upgrading the house to make it livable. Here, we feel that we're custodians—that we've been given something that it's our job to care for and upgrade carefully."

Dawn's attitude is that a house should not be a museum. "I don't want to feel that my kids have to not touch anything when they come here.

"Ghosts? No, no ghosts." They both shake their heads. "You might think there would be, but no."

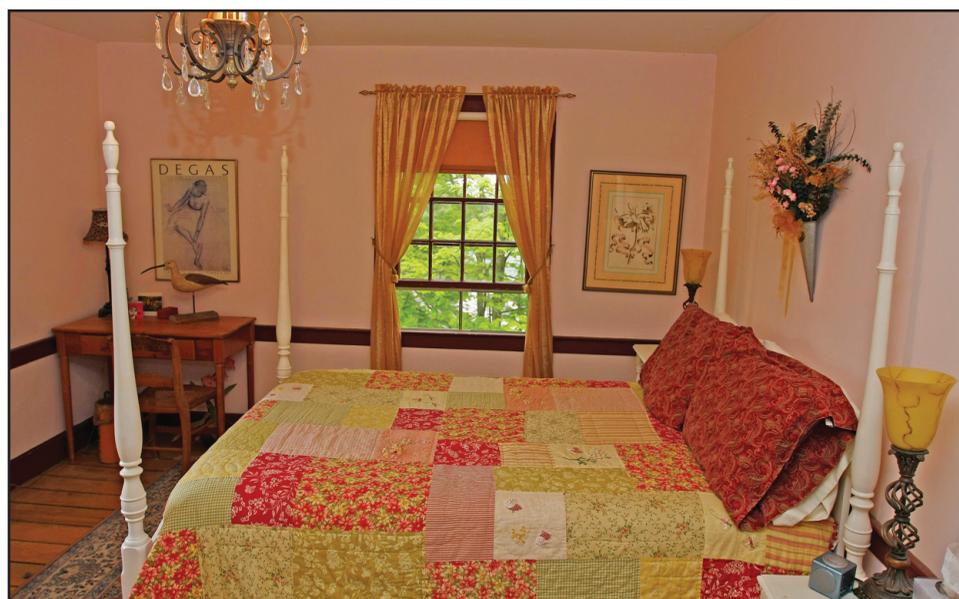
Sorry, but I'm not convinced.



**This is the old hitching post** where guests could tie up their horses.



**The dining room today**, with its traditional furniture, suits the feeling of the historic Wilmot House.



**An upstairs bedroom** shows a four-poster bed.



**John Harvey draws water** from the old well. It comes in handy when the electricity goes out.



**The sun pours into the Harvey's living room**, making for a cheerful atmosphere in this historic house in Bethany, PA.

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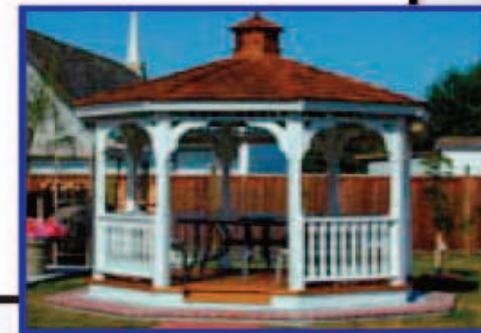
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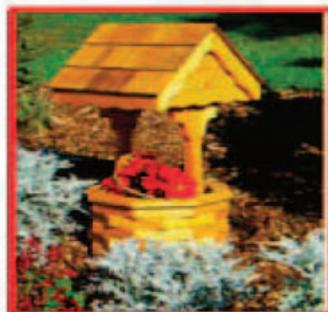
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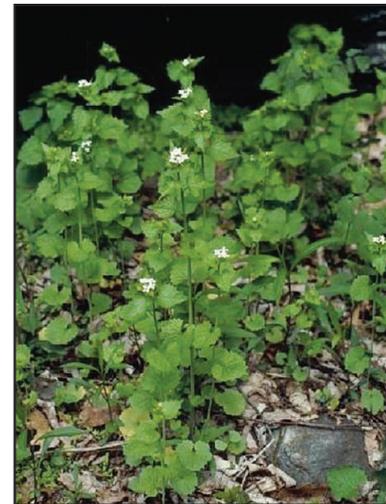
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**Water chestnut is an annual aquatic plant** with a submerged stem up to 15 feet long and a rosette of floating leaves. The fruit is a "nutlet" with four barbed spines that are very sharp.



**Autumn olive is a deciduous shrub** that can grow up to 20 feet tall. The leaves have a very distinct, silvery covering on their underside.



**Garlic mustard is a biennial herb**, one of the first to come up in the spring. Growing up to four feet tall, it's a common invader of roadsides and forests.



**Japanese Barberry is a deciduous shrub** that can grow up to eight feet tall. Being highly shade tolerant, this plant can easily displace native herbs and shrubs in the forest.

By LINDA DROLLINGER

NARROWSBURG, NY — Non-native plants sometimes behave badly; when they do, it's no laughing matter. Bad behavior by non-native plants can include insensitivity to the needs of surrounding native plants and animals (as evidenced by blooming earlier and later than its neighbors and by creeping vines that deprive competitors of sunlight), blind ambition (deep, widespread root systems and/or extensive stem and vine systems that crowd out and stragulate plant competitors), and blatant aggression toward all other living entities (bleeding water and nutrients from soil and emitting toxins that compromise or kill plants, animals and even humans). Whatever their modus operandi, the ultimate result is habitat dominance at the expense of other plant and animal species. These villains are known collectively as invasive plant species.

The federal government defines invasive species (both plant and animal varieties) as "a non-native species whose introduction does, or is likely to, cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human, animal or plant health." [Executive Order 13112, 1999] These spe-

# Plants behaving badly

*Love that 'ornamental' plant? Not so fast, please*

cies have the ability to displace or eradicate native species, to alter fire regimes, to damage infrastructure and to threaten human livelihoods. Whenever any invasive species is allowed to proliferate unchecked, the consequences are life threatening. Here's why: The invader reduces ecosystem biodiversity, which in turn, wreaks havoc with food chains and food webs. An illustration would be any invasive plant that chokes out the grasses and low bushes on which small herbivores (rabbits, groundhogs) feed. As small herbivores are displaced because their food sources have dried up, carnivores that feed on them (owls, eagles, foxes, bears and wolves) also are at risk because their food sources are not available. How immediate is this problem? Before salt cedar (an invasive tree known for extracting minerals and water from the soil) began its spread in the mid-20th century, 100 acres of land could support 150 species of wildlife. After salt cedar's unchecked spread, the same acreage could support four species only.

**Origins**  
Where did the invaders come from and how did they get here? They came to North America from all over the

world. Some were introduced inadvertently, arriving as seed and spore stow-aways. Others were imported deliberately by immigrants seeking to recreate the farms, gardens, products and vistas of their homelands. If all non-native plants were invasive, life as we know it would have ceased before now. Most non-native plants are not invasive and adapt well to their new environments, causing little or no damage to ecosystems. Some co-exist harmoniously for generations, becoming invasive only after climate, growing season or land development conditions alter significantly. Although biologists and botanists admit that it's difficult to predict with absolute certainty which non-native plants will become invasive, they have identified hallmarks common to most invasive plant species. These include: climatic pre-adaptation; early and frequent production of copious amounts of seed; effective seed dispersal mechanisms; lack of highly specific pollinator requirements; and effective means of vegetative spread. In other words, these plants have developed versatile, highly efficient methods of rapid growth and propagation.

**Identification**

Why has dramatic proliferation of invasive plants gone undetected for so long? Biologist Jamie Myers of the National Park Service in Milanville, PA says simply, "For the most part, the public doesn't recognize invasive plants when it sees them." Few Americans today, even those who have long resided in rural areas, are as familiar with local flora as were their agrarian ancestors. And that, Myers says, is what must change before the tide turns in the battle to contain invasive plants. To that end, federal agencies are partnering with private nonprofit conservation organizations to educate Americans about invasive plants, the conditions that foster their proliferation, and the means to manage and eradicate them. The NPS plans to conduct workshops this summer aimed at teaching the public how to identify, manage and eradicate invasive land and aquatic plant species.

**Spread**

Myers stresses that river valleys are potential hotbeds for invasive species because they provide conditions ideal for invasive spread. Water, wind, soil, birds, animals and humans all do their part to disseminate seeds, spores and

roots. But, Myers says, humans are by far the worst culprits. Not only are they more numerous than other agents, but they also travel farther and faster and cause more environmental disturbance wherever they go. Disturbed soil is the best medium for invasive plants.

**Prevention**

Prevention is the first line of defense in any management program. Invasive species should not be planted knowingly. Surprisingly, some invaders are available from nurseries—Japanese barberry, purple loosestrife and Japanese honeysuckle among them. To guard against deliberate planting, consumers should be able to identify invaders by both name and appearance; additionally, Myers urges consumers to obtain their plants from native plant providers, plant swaps and nurseries that grow their plants from seeds or cuttings.

**Management/Eradication**

Methods for management and eradication of invaders vary in accordance with the individual species' methods of propagation. Options include manual removal (hand weeding), machine removal (mowing, weed whacking), herbicides, grazing (sheep and goats will eat anything edible down to and



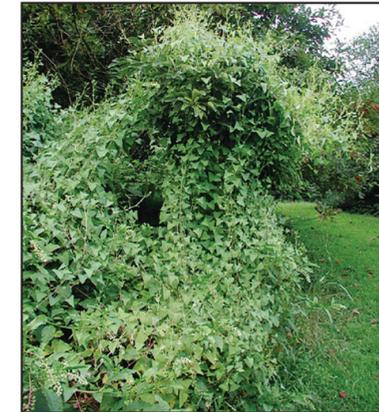
**Japanese hops are an annual climbing vine** having five-lobed leaves and stems with tiny barbs. This plant easily can be confused with wild cucumber.



**Multiflora rose is a perennial shrub** that produces fragrant, white flowers in May. This plant is a problem in abandoned agricultural fields and unplowed lands.



**Purple loosestrife was brought over from Europe** in the early 1800s as an ornamental plant and as a medicinal herb. Loosestrife is now found in all contiguous states (except Florida) and in all Canadian provinces. Purple Loosestrife has stiff, four-sided stems; linear shaped leaves with smooth edges; and rose-purple-colored flowers that form in a long spike.



**Mile-a-minute weed is a prickly, branching, annual vine** that germinates in early spring, usually in April or May, in the mid-Atlantic region. Vines grow rapidly, climbing over other plants, and attain lengths of six meters or more. Flowers are inconspicuous, and iridescent blueberry-like achenes are produced, beginning in mid-summer and continuing until the plants are killed by frost in the fall.

*[Special thanks to Jamie Myers and the NPS for service above and beyond the call of duty. Jamie has considerable experience combating invasive plant species growing along the Upper Delaware, specifically Japanese knotweed and purple loosestrife. Providing guidance and resources to private property owners and community groups alike, Jamie has served on the steering committee for the Delaware River Invasive Plant Partnership and, more recently, on the executive committee for the Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership.]*

**Information Resources**

- [www.juneauinvasives.org/docs/Making%20Knotweed%20Paper.pdf](http://www.juneauinvasives.org/docs/Making%20Knotweed%20Paper.pdf)
- Japanese knotweed papermaking**  
[ag.udel.edu/enwc/research/biocontrol/mileamminute.htm](http://ag.udel.edu/enwc/research/biocontrol/mileamminute.htm)
- mile-a-minute plant facts**  
[www.ipcnys.org](http://www.ipcnys.org)
- Invasive Plant Council of New York State**  
[www.bugwood.org/](http://www.bugwood.org/)
- ecosystem health facts**  
[www.nyis.info/?action=prism\\_partners](http://www.nyis.info/?action=prism_partners)
- Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management**  
[www.eddmaps.org/ipane/](http://www.eddmaps.org/ipane/)
- Invasive Plant Atlas of New England**  
[catskillinvasives.com/](http://catskillinvasives.com/)
- Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership**  
[www.invasive.org/](http://www.invasive.org/)

**Japanese Knotweed Squares Recipe**

Note: Knotweed stalks should be harvested in early April when they are approximately six to eight inches tall.

**Bottom crust:**

- 1 cup flour
- 1/3 cup confectioner's sugar
- 1/3 cup butter (cold)

**Filling:**

- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp allspice
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg
- 3 firmly-packed cups of Japanese knotweed stalks, peeled and sliced

Preheat oven to 350° F.

**For the crust:**

Pulverize crust ingredients until they resemble coarse crumbs. Press crust ingredients into bottom of baking pan and bake for 12 minutes.

**For the filling:**

Place all filling ingredients except knotweed into a bowl and mix together. Stir in knotweed pieces. Pour mixture over warm crust and spread evenly. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.

Enjoy! You've done the local ecosystem a good turn!



*Contributed photos*

Japanese knotweed has hollow, bamboo-like stems; green, broadly egg-shaped leaves; and greenish white flowers in slender fingerlike clusters where the leaves meet the branches. It can grow to be up to 10 feet tall. Knotweed is native of eastern Asia and was introduced to North America in the late 1800s as an ornamental plant.

[Note: This recipe comes from "Wildman" Steve Brill, author of "Identifying and Harvesting Edible and Medicinal Plants in Wild (and Not So Wild) Places," which explains how to identify and forage for edible or medicinal plants; and "The Wild Vegetarian Cookbook: A Forager's Culinary Guide," a 500-recipe wild and natural foods cookbook. In 2011, Brill released an iPhone app called Wild Edibles with Wildman Steve Brill; it gives information on 150 common North American plants. He also created an Android version of his mobile app that features edible plant photos and recipes. See: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve\\_Brill](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Brill)]

**Information Resources**

- Invasive plant identification photos**  
[www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/misc/ip/ip\\_field\\_guide.pdf](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/misc/ip/ip_field_guide.pdf)
- excellent field guide**  
[plants.usda.gov/java/noxious?rptType=State&statefips=42](http://plants.usda.gov/java/noxious?rptType=State&statefips=42)
- Pennsylvania noxious weed list**  
[www.nps.gov/ner/photosmultimedia/photogallery.htm?id=1D067F23-155D-451F-67E71318793B705A](http://www.nps.gov/ner/photosmultimedia/photogallery.htm?id=1D067F23-155D-451F-67E71318793B705A)
- local plants & photos for identification**  
[bringingnaturehome.net/](http://bringingnaturehome.net/)
- Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants (Updated and Expanded, 2009) by Douglas Tallamy**  
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# The first apartment

## *How to decorate on the cheap*

By ISABEL BRAVERMAN

There's a first for everything, and recently I encountered one of my firsts—the first apartment (as an “adult”). I moved from my family's home to a two-bedroom apartment on Main Street in Narrowsburg with my boyfriend. We were excited to have our own space and be able to fill it with whatever we wanted. And thus the decorating process began.

Being a young professional (or “yo pro” as it's called), and not having the bank account of a seasoned worker, money was the main factor in choosing our furniture, dishes and everything else. With limited funds, we first looked for free items. Luckily, we were met with generous donations from friends, family and co-workers. Our other options were thrift stores and looking into our families' storage. We scoured Tim's family's barn and found old tables, chairs and other odd heirlooms, like a World War II era first-aid kit and an original Burroughs adding machine. We went through my dad's shop that housed all kinds of treasures from my grandpa's old house—furniture, dish sets, lamps and more—and picked out things my mom didn't want to sell.

Then, we made a trip to Honesdale to check out the Salvation Army and our friends' thrift store A Picker's Find. At Salvation Army we bought a \$10 coffee table and \$25 couch. Score! At A Picker's Find we picked up some old cooking utensils and plates.

In the depths of the store I was happy to find two paintings of ballet dancers in cool Victorian looking picture frames. (Perhaps I should say that I have been a life-long ballet student.) This began our “art collection” and I jokingly added a portrait of Patrick Swayze to it that I found at a yard sale in Port Jervis for \$1. (The owner was sad to see it go, but said she must part with it after his death). There was a town-wide yard sale going on that day that my brother and I checked out, calling it “yard sailing.” I also found a microwave for \$5 that looks like it belongs on a space ship, and some giant mugs.

Then came the free stuff. Eileen from the office gave me a coffee pot (after a few groggy mornings *sans* coffee), a crock pot and a tub-full of kitchenware from her friend. Another co-worker, Jane, gave me a colorful mat that we put by our front door to put shoes on. My boyfriend's mom took us shopping

*Continued on page 20*



The multi-colored sponge-painted walls were already there when we moved in. Not exactly our first choice of wall color.



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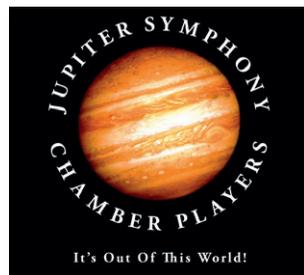
*"Every once in a while, there emerges a young performer who shows the promise of uniqueness. Such a one is Allen Yueh, who, turned in a performance marked by outstanding technique and maturity of interpretation... Remember his name."*  
- The Times Herald Record



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Tuesday, Aug. 6, 8 pm

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Thursday, Aug. 8, 8 pm

"Evening of Chamber Music"  
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This project is made possible with funds from the 2013 Decentralization Program, administered by Delaware Valley Arts Alliance

## THE FIRST APARTMENT

*Continued from page 18*

at Bed, Bath and Beyond to decorate our bathroom, and I picked out a cool silver and white shower curtain with a matching bath mat, as well as a stainless steel garbage can and toothbrush holder.

She also generously gave us window curtains, in a whimsical shimmery blue color for the bedroom. Our neighbor gave us a small round wicker table and two chairs for our kitchen, and an air conditioner.

After keeping our clothes in suitcases for way too long, we took the dresser from my old room, and one from my parents. However, it wasn't enough to hold my overflowing wardrobe, so I took a trunk that I used for storage to use as a makeshift dresser. The extra bedroom is the music room and there is also a piano in the living room. (It came with the apartment.)

However, all of these things came at different times. When we first moved in, we had a bed and the couch. And it was enough. It was an interesting feeling, to live somewhere that doesn't feel like home yet, that would take getting used to. It made me question, what makes a home? Is it what you put in it? Or who is in it? As the Edward Sharpe song goes, "Home is whenever I'm with you." And though we didn't have many things, we had each other.

We spent the first night filling the fridge with the only thing we had, apple juice, and making grilled cheese and tomato soup for dinner, and then sitting in silence to take it all in.



Our "art collection" is eclectic, to say the least.

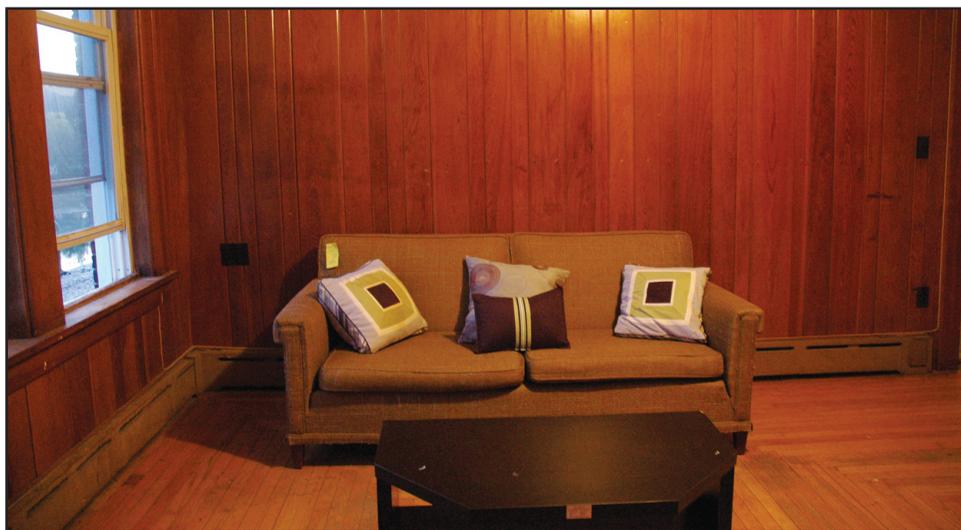
*TRR photos by Isabel Braverman*



On our first night in our first apartment we admired our first refrigerator.



The roomy kitchen allowed us to give our first party and serve Mexican food for Cinco de Mayo.



This sofa was a real steal at \$25 from The Salvation Army store, and it's not so bad in the comfort department either.

## Tips for thrifty decorating

### Reduce:

Moving is the perfect opportunity to go through your things and sort out what you really want, and get rid of things you don't. Moving into a new place gives you a clean slate, so go in with few possessions and an open mind.

### Re-use:

Look through your storage or family and friends' storage to find things they don't use anymore. Also, make a list of what you need and ask them if they have anything lying around. You'll find that they'll be happy to help (and to get rid of things).

### Recycle:

Thrift stores, pawn shops, yard sales, Craigslist, EBay and other websites are great resources. There are even Facebook groups like Sullivan Swap and Wayne County PA Totally Free Stuff where users post photos of items they are selling or giving away and you arrange to meet them to pick it up. Also, when clearing out your own things, remember to donate them, give them away or sell.

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L A Z B O Y

# A dessert by any other name...

*It's a buckle. No, it's a trifle. No, it's a clafouti.*

The choices for what to do with summer berries are endless. How to choose? Having some definitions might help to get you started. Most (though not all) of these are baked desserts. A number of them are quite old fashioned, but they are so simple that you might consider giving one or two a try.

## **Cobblers and Crumbles**

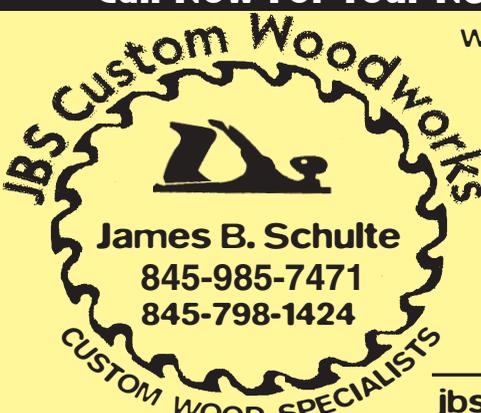
A cobbler starts with fruit on the bottom that is topped by a crust, usually a baking-powder biscuit dough dropped in clumps; this gives it a "cobbled" appearance when baked. Sometimes a cobbler has a batter or piecrust top. The British call a cobbler a crumble; it originated during World War II food rationing. The topping is made of butter, flour, brown sugar and sometimes oats, mixed together so that it resembles breadcrumbs. Care must be taken to balance the correct amount of crumble with the fruit or else the juicy fruit filling may seep through and spoil the crust. Crumble was traditionally served with custard, but today it is generally served with ice cream.



*Continued on page 24*

*photo by Wikimedia Commons*

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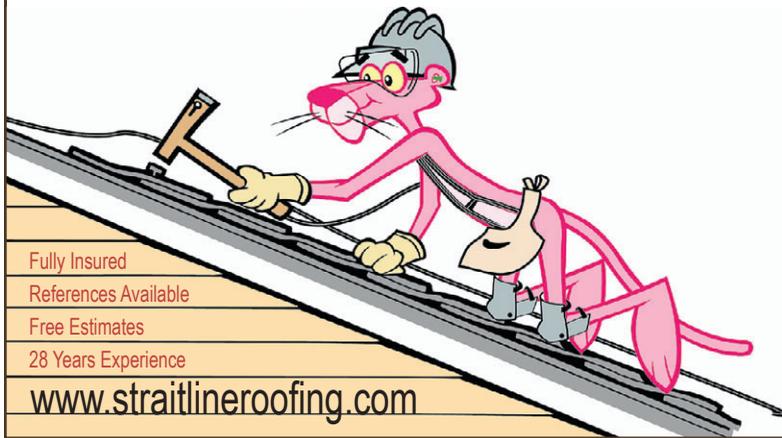
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**Cherry clafouti**, a large puffy pancake, is a traditional French dessert, and so easy to make.

## A DESSERT BY ANY OTHER NAME

*Continued from page 22*

### **Pandowdy**

A pandowdy features a piecrust topping, which is baked until the crust starts to brown. Then, the pastry is broken or cut up (“dowdied”) and pressed back into the fruit, and the dish is returned to the oven to finish baking.

This truly American dessert dates to the mid-19th century. Traditionally, the fruit was sweetened with molasses or maple syrup.

### **Grunt or Slump**

A grunt or a slump resembles a

cobbler, but it is steamed on top of the stove (often in a cast-iron skillet) instead of being baked. The finished dessert resembles dumplings because the “drop biscuits” do not brown like an oven-baked cobbler. Supposedly, the “grunt” is the sound the fruit makes as it stews.

### **Crisp**

A crisp is a casual, baked fruit dessert where the fruit is topped with a “rubbed” mixture of softened (not

*Continued on page 26*



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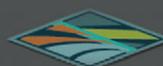
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## A DESSERT BY ANY OTHER NAME

*Continued from page 24*

melted) butter, sugar, flour and sometimes nuts. Alternatives to flour include breadcrumbs, cookie crumbs, graham cracker crumbs, stale cake crumbs or even corn flakes. This is a modern dessert; the earliest reference to apple crisp in print occurs in 1924.

### **Brown Betty**

A Brown Betty is a traditional American dessert made from fruit and sweetened crumbs. It consists of a baked fruit pudding, where buttered breadcrumbs or cracker crumbs are layered in with sweetened, spiced fruit, with the top layer ending with crumbs. It is usually served with a lemon sauce or whipped cream. The dish was first mentioned in print in 1864. Apple Brown Betty was one of the favorite desserts of Ronald and Nancy Reagan in the White House.

### **Buckle**

A buckle inverts everything by having a rich yellow cake batter on the bottom and the fruit on top. As it bakes, the fruit sinks to the bottom and the cake rises around the fruit, causing it to “buckle.”

### **Clafouti**

Clafouti is a custard-like French dessert traditionally made with tart cherries, though other fruits can be used, such as berries, plums or apples. A thick batter, similar to a pancake batter, is poured over the cherries and baked.



**Slightly stale white bread** makes the “crust”—top, bottom and all around—in this no-bake English dessert filled with lightly stewed fruit.

### **Summer Pudding**

Summer fruit pudding is a British dessert made with sliced white bread (it helps if the bread is somewhat stale) and stewed fruit with its juice. Left to soak overnight, this dessert is unmolded by turning out onto a plate. The dessert was popular in the late 19th to the early 20th century.

### **Trifle**

Trifle is a dessert dish made by alternating layers of thick custard, fruit, sponge cake, fruit juice or jelly and whipped cream. The earliest known reference was published in 1596; an egg-based custard was introduced 60 years later.

*Continued on page 28*

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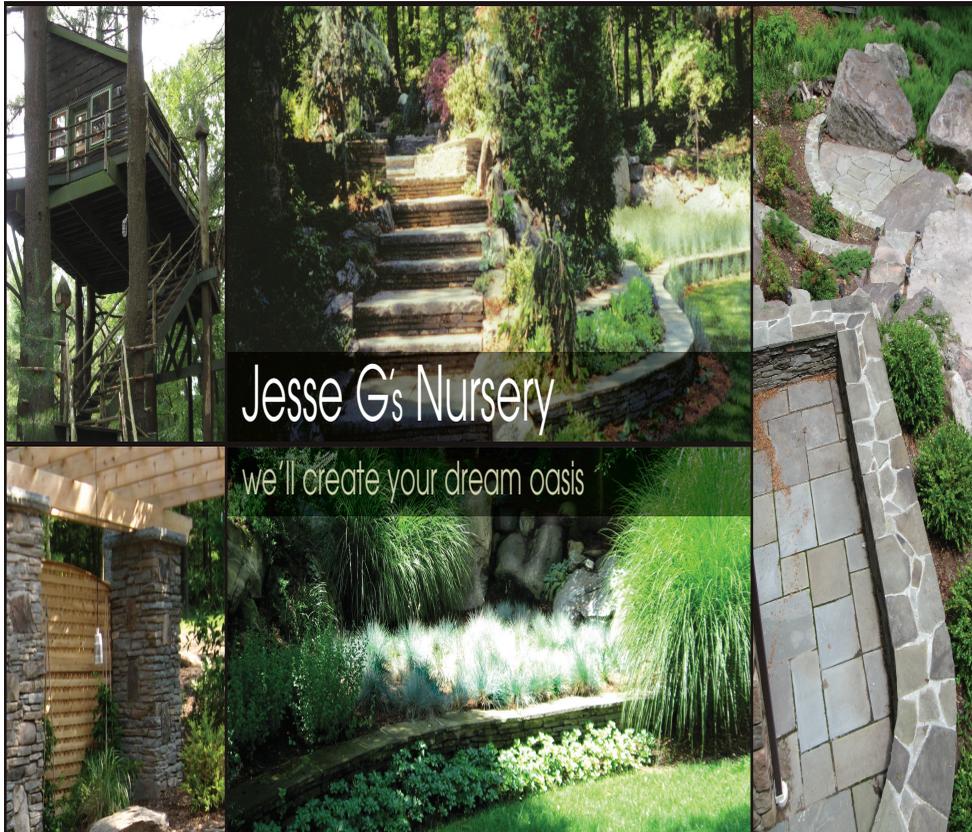
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## A DESSERT BY ANY OTHER NAME

Continued from page 26

### Recipes

#### Clafouti

(Serves 4 to 6)

1 pound cherries, whole (traditionally, these do not have to be pitted)

1/4 cup flour

1/3 cup sugar

A pinch of salt

4 eggs + 2 yolks

2½ cups milk

2 Tbsp brandy (optional)

Butter a baking dish and scatter cherries in the dish. Mix the remaining ingredients (as for pancakes—it will be a thin batter) with flour, sugar, salt, eggs, extra yolks and milk. Strain the batter over the cherries and leave to sit for 30 minutes. Bake at 375° F. for 40 to 45 minutes or until the pudding is puffed and brown. Let it cool until just warm; it will sink slightly. Sprinkle with brandy if you desire, and then with confectioners' sugar. Serve.

Continued on page 30



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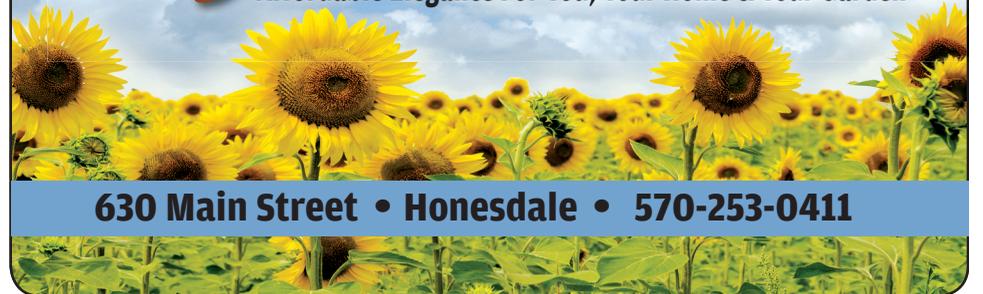
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## A DESSERT BY ANY OTHER NAME

Continued from page 28

### Blackberry Brown Betty

6 cups washed fresh blackberries  
 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon  
 Grated rind and juice of 1/2 large  
 lemon  
 2 heaping cups of coarse, fresh  
 breadcrumbs  
 1/3 cup butter, melted  
 Butter a deep 7- by 9-inch oven dish.  
 Preheat oven to 350° F. Mix berries, brown

sugar, cinnamon, lemon rind and juice.  
 Pour half the berries into the prepared  
 dish. Toss bread crumbs with melted butter  
 and spread half over the berries. Top with  
 the rest of the berries and then with the  
 rest of the breadcrumbs. Bake 30 minutes,  
 then cover lightly with foil and bake an  
 additional 15 minutes until berries bubble.  
 Serve warm with cream or ice cream.



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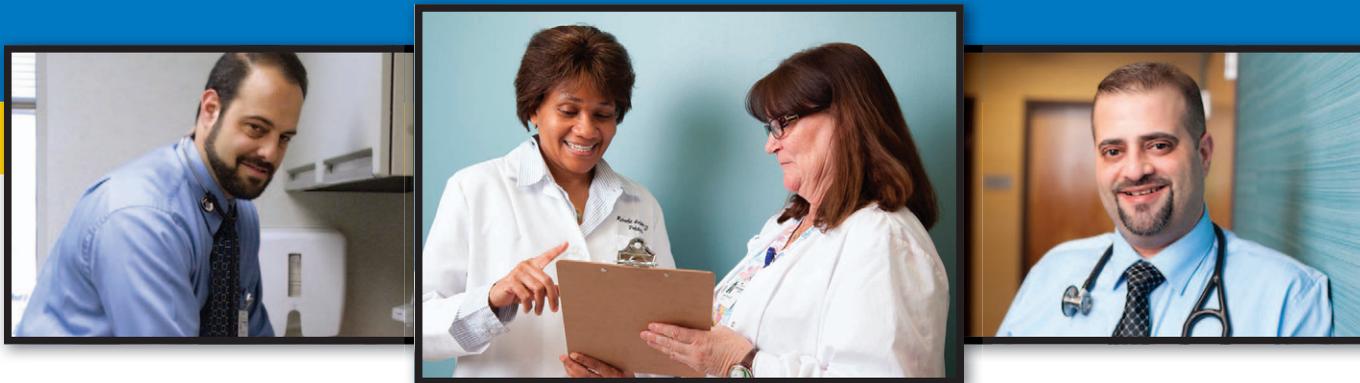
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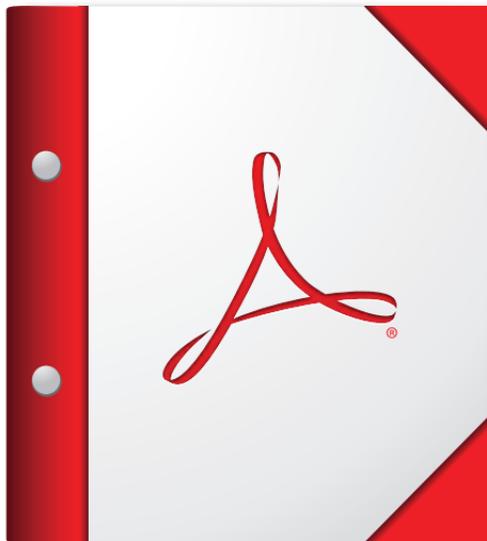


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