

# 805

LIVING

## Home + Garden





# Pulse

TRACKING THE BEAT OF THE 805



Room ensembles and decorative accents at Summerland's new Field + Fort offer home design inspiration.



## ON A NESTING QUEST

Recently opened in Summerland, new lifestyle store **Field + Fort** ([fieldandfort.com](http://fieldandfort.com)) houses an eclectic selection of one-of-a-kind vintage and antique furnishings, found objects, kitchen and bath goods, bedding, artisan foods, gifts, and garden items. A variety of design services are also available. The store's café, Feast, offers an all-day menu of dishes highlighting local ingredients as well as fresh baked goods.

Co-owners Kyle Irwin (who previously owned local home and garden boutique Botanik) and Susie Bechtel have collaborated on numerous design projects. "Following the devastating Thomas fire and subsequent debris flow, we were inspired by the need of our resilient local communities to recover, rebuild, and thrive once again," says Bechtel. "We wanted to create a place to gather, nourish, and inspire—a real destination retail experience." —*Nancy Ransohoff*

# GARDEN PLOTS

Two recently released books aim to celebrate and galvanize the gardening ambitions of 805-region residents.

**Private Gardens of Santa Barbara: The Art of Outdoor Living** (Gibbs Smith, 2020) by landscape designer Margie Grace of Grace Design Associates ([gracedesignassociates.com](http://gracedesignassociates.com)), offers an intimate look at 18 distinctive gardens set on the grounds of large estates, modest homes, and surf retreats, including Grace's own secret garden, which she affectionately dubs "Lotusland South," after her storied Montecito neighbor.



In her new coffee table book (left), landscape designer Margie Grace showcases environmentally conscious gardens featuring plants that thrive in the 805.



"Coffee table books for me can be a three-minute vacation that refreshes," says Grace, who hopes her new book will offer just that to readers. With beautiful photography by Holly Lepere, the book is also packed with inspiration and takeaways for sustainable home garden designs with all-important water-conscious, maintenance-friendly, and fire-safety priorities in mind.

"We are starved for beauty in nature," says Grace. "If we can get a little dose every day, we just feel better."

For those with big garden dreams and small spaces in which to realize them, **Small Garden Style: A Design Guide for Outdoor Rooms and Containers** (Ten Speed Press, 2020) may prove to be an invaluable resource. "We couldn't find a garden-meets-design book," says Santa Barbara-based writer Jennifer Blaise Kramer, who co-authored the realistic take on fashioning gardens with Isa Hendry Eaton of Isa Bird Landscape Design ([isabird.com](http://isabird.com)).



With their guide (far left), co-authors Jennifer Blaise Kramer and Isa Hendry Eaton aim to help readers create compact plant-enhanced settings infused with personal style.

The book starts with a fun quiz to help readers determine their small-garden style. "Everyone deserves to have a little garden in their home," says Eaton. "Why not make it something that really feels like you by bringing your individual aesthetic?"

The variety of ways to bring your own unique style to your garden are lovingly documented by local photographer Leela Cyd. "We really wanted it to be fun and inspirational but also very practical and useful," says Eaton. "A container is a miniature garden; it's the best place to start."

—Leslie Dinaberg





## PUTTING HOMES IN GOOD HANDS

Homeowners looking for trusted professionals to help with a home repair or renovation may be interested to hear that a new online service can lead the way. After renovating and flipping more than 350 homes, local real estate investor Paul Dashevsky was looking for his next project when he came to a realization. “The most brutal part of my own experience doing hundreds of remodels was working with contractors,” says

Dashevsky “and I did this professionally. I started doing my homework and realized it must be really hard for the homeowner that does this every 10 years.” This prompted him to co-found **GreatBuildz** ([greatbuildz.com](http://greatbuildz.com)), an online concierge service connecting homeowners with home-repair and -improvement professionals.

“The best experiences come from a referral,” says co-founder Jon Grispul, Dashevsky’s nephew. “People typically start online. What we do is take this a few steps further.”

Free to homeowners, GreatBuildz currently provides services in Los Angeles County, the Conejo Valley, and parts of Ventura County, using a 10-step vetting process that includes interviews, background and reference checks, and verification of contractor licenses. Once homeowners submit project information, a GreatBuildz concierge reaches out to learn more about their renovation needs and then matches them with up to three approved contractors available in the area. The concierge stays involved throughout the project because, Grispul says, “We always want to ensure the contractor is doing the work promised and that our clients are fully satisfied.”

Looking to facilitate good experiences among homeowners who embark on remodels, Jon Grispul and Paul Dashevsky (at left, left to right) co-founded GreatBuildz concierge service.



## 50 YEARS’ WORTH OF SAVING THE EARTH

April 22 is Earth Day, and this year marks the 50th anniversary of the event and of the nonprofit **Community Environmental Council** (CEC; [cecsb.org](http://cecsb.org)), whose mission is to identify, advocate for, and raise awareness about environmental issues in the Santa Barbara region. The organization will host the 2020 Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival at Alameda Park July 10 through 12. In the meantime, CEC partnership council member Kristin Hogue offers these earth-friendly tips for everyday living.



- Try to avoid food waste. Shop thoughtfully, eat leftovers, and organize your refrigerator to prompt the consumption of food before it spoils and before buying more.
- Eat from lower on the food chain. Plant-focused diets are planet-friendly.
- Buy recycled paper products. Supersoft toilet paper gets its softness from old trees. Buying recycled varieties saves trees.
- Unplug phone chargers and small appliances such as blenders, mixers, hair dryers, and curling irons when not in use. They draw electricity when plugged in.
- Avoid plastic packaging whenever possible. China and other countries no longer accept most plastic waste from food products for recycling, so it ends up in landfills.
- Carbonate water with a home carbonator. Producing and transporting bottled sparkling water is energy intensive.
- Grow herbs, fruits, and veggies at home in a yard or window box. —N.R.



## SOW SMART

Getting ready to play in the dirt this spring? **The Plant Good Seed Company** ([plantgoodseed.com](http://plantgoodseed.com)) offers a large assortment of certified organic vegetable, flower, and herb seeds, including improved rare and heirloom varieties.

“Connecting plants and people, that’s really what it’s about for me,” says co-founder and owner Quin Shakra,

whose business offers hundreds of unique seeds sourced from farmland they steward in Ojai.

“I believe we’re making some really unique agricultural contributions to this region,” says Shakra, who started the business as an organic farm in 2011 but soon realized that there wasn’t a garden-based small-scale organic seed company in the area. “It turned out that we had stumbled upon a niche that nobody else was covering here,” she says.

The seeds can be purchased seasonally at Ojai Certified Farmers’ Market and many retail stores throughout the 805 area as well as from the company’s website, which also provides free, charmingly illustrated seasonal planting calendars designed to aid customers’ planting and planning decisions for every crop in the catalog

—L.D.