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For the Week of April 18, 2021

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DIRECTIONS: I-64 West, Exit 40, left at light on Teays Valley Road, left on Rocky Step Road, right into Cobblestone (gated) Subdivision.

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ADUs are hot properties — and now often legal, too

LAST WEEK, I wrote about a young family who, like many others reacting to the pandemic's fallout, fled their condo and life in the big city for a larger home in the suburbs.

They are among the fortunate. Their jobs let them work remotely and they had the resources.

While a city exodus is indeed one of many pandemic-driven housing trends, at the other end of the spectrum are millions whose living arrangements were upended due to job loss, closed college dorms, fear of nursing homes or a need to live near loved ones. Those motives fueled another trend: the rise of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (which I inaccurately called Accessible Dwelling Unit last week. Sorry about that).

Also known as granny flats, casitas, guest houses, pool homes or caretaker quarters, ADUs are, by definition, second, smaller homes on the same property as a main house. They can be separate from the house or attached, but they will have a kitchen, bathroom and an outside entrance.

"It has to be a fully functioning little house where someone can prepare basic food and shower," said architect Mary Maydan, of Palo Alto, California, who has designed five finished ADUs and has four on the drawing board at her firm, Maydan Architects. Many will also have separate utility lines and a dedicated parking place.

Though such living quarters have been around for almost as long as homes themselves, what has changed is that ADUs are hot properties today, and that cities are relaxing rules so more are allowed, say real estate experts.

"This change is happening across the country," said Corina Rollins, a real estate appraiser who teaches real estate principles and economics at the College of Marin County. "In New York, where I grew up, it was common, but not



AT HOME WITH
Marni Jameson

legal, to turn a basement into a secondary living unit and rent it out. What we're seeing today isn't much different from those bootleg rentals, only now they're more often legal."

Largely in response to the pandemic, cities have begun to relax rules that used to bar ADUs, especially in expensive housing markets that have limited inventory.

"What we're seeing is a recognition that ADUs are important components of housing," Rollins said.

"A year ago, almost no one knew what an ADU was," Maydan said. "Now everyone does. They are popping up everywhere, helping with the home shortage and providing that instant extra space families have needed."

Before last year, only about 10% of her residential clients wanted to include an ADU in their home plans; today, that number is over 50%, said Maydan, who built an ADU on her property in 2004 for her parents to live in.

"California had a lot of rules back then that made it difficult. But not anymore. The pandemic has definitely changed the way we are building homes."

Besides offering more independent living space for aging parents or boomerang kids, ADUs can also

be revenue producing rentals, or make great home offices and gyms. For some, they offer a sort of decompression space, a place to go to get out of the house, which we've all needed this past year.

Whatever the purpose, an ADU's beauty lies in the fact that it is separate but near.

"The legalization of ADUs will continue, because they help us offer more efficient housing without the stigma of your neighbor saying he's going to turn you in," Rollins added.

If you're interested in creating one where you live, here's what to know, so your ADU doesn't stand for Another Dumb Undertaking:

- *Check first.* Although ADUs are gaining favor among cities, be sure to ask your zoning department about restrictions in your area.

- "Don't go by what your friend tells you he did," Rollins said. "You need to check with your city."

- *Know your options.* Those looking to add an ADU can either con-

SEE **MARNI, 3H**

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MARNI

FROM PAGE 2H

vert existing space like a garage, attic or basement, or build a new structure.

Traditional construction (called stick built) is one option, but putting up a prefabricated ADU is also popular. Prefab ADUs come in sections assembled offsite, so go up faster and cost less. However, because they aren't custom, they don't always go with the main house's architecture.

A third option just coming to the market is the 3D-printed ADU, which I can't even fathom.

- *Tie it to the house.* Maydan encourages homeowners to make sure the ADU doesn't look like an afterthought, even if it is. Connect it visually to the main house through architectural design or even by just adding stepping

stones between the houses.

For one homeowner, Maydan retrofitted a prefab ADU to better integrate it architecturally with the main house.

- *Make it multipurpose.* The beauty of a well-conceived ADU is that you can build it and find, as your life flows along, the ADU serves different needs, Rollins said. "What serves as your home office today may become a house for your child as he or she transitions from college to career, and later for your aging parents, and, after that, it might become an income-producing rental."

- *Move in yourself.* ADUs can help aging homeowners who don't want to move or sell their homes. If they move into the ADU on their property, they can rent out the main house to a family who needs the space. This lets the owners age in place and get a little income.

- *Know your market.* While

some studies have shown that homes with ADUs have been selling far faster during the pandemic than homes without and that these dwellings have added a nice bump to the selling price, whether you will recoup your investment depends on many variables, said Rollins.

The initial cost and quality, visual appeal, ability to be an income property and the demand in your area all factor in.

Marni Jameson is the author of six home and lifestyle books, including "Downsizing the Family Home – What to Save, What to Let Go" and "Downsizing the Blended Home – When Two Households Become One," and, coming in June, "What to Do With Everything You Own to Leave the Legacy You Want." You may reach her at www.marnijameson.com.



A Room of One's Own The pandemic has pushed the demand for Accessory Dwelling Units, or ADUs, like this one in Palo Alto, California, designed by Maydan Architects. They fill an increased need for affordable housing or a separate home office. Fortunately, more city and state regulations are allowing them. *Photograph by Dave Edwards*

AUCTION

6PM AT THE PROPERTY
TUESDAY, APRIL 27

931 WOODSIDE DRIVE
SAINT ALBANS, WV, 25177



Property sold as-is. Any & all inspections should be completed prior to the auction. Home will be opened at 5 p.m. for walk throughs prior to the auction. A non-refundable 10% buyers premium is due from purchaser at the conclusion of the auction. Should an acceptable offer come in on the property 48 hours prior to the auction, auction will be canceled. Purchaser is responsible for all debris removal.



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CENTRAL

How ergonomic tools can help gardeners

Gardening is a rewarding activity that has been found to provide a host of benefits beyond ensuring readily available access to fresh fruits, vegetables and awe-inspiring blooms.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says many gardening tasks qualify as light to moderate exercise, which means raking the leaves and cutting the grass can be just as beneficial as cardiovascular activities like brisk walking or jogging. In addition, a 2017 study published in the journal Preventive Medicine Reports found that gardening can help aging men and women offset age-related weight gain. And the health benefits of gardening go

beyond the physical. In 2014, a systematic review of randomized controlled trials published in Complementary Therapies in Medicine concluded that horticultural therapy may be an effective treatment for people with dementia.

Gardeners have a host of tools at their disposal to help turn their lawns and gardens into awe-inspiring landscapes. Among those options are ergonomic tools. Ergonomic tools can benefit gardeners of all ages, but they may prove especially valuable for aging men and women.

Ergonomic gardening tools are designed to ensure that using them has as little effect on the

body as possible. Ergonomic tools align with how a person naturally moves his or her body, which can reduce the likelihood that gardeners will suffer any strains or sprains while gardening or experience any aches and pains after a day spent tending to their landscapes.

The West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities notes that gardeners will know they have chosen the right ergonomic gardening tool for the job when they do not have to adapt the tool. Ergonomic tools should match gardeners' heights, fit their grip and feel comfortable when in use.

Ergonomic gardening tools are

designed in a way that can reduce stress on the body while performing various tasks. Gardeners know that aches and pains can add up after a day spent kneeling in the garden, raking soil and carrying supplies from a shed or garage around the property. But the WVUCED notes that ergonomic tools do more than just reduce gardeners' risk of injury.

Ergonomic tools increase efficiency. Wasted motions are less likely when using ergonomic tools. That can improve efficiency in the garden, allowing gardeners to get more done in the same amount of time. And because ergonomic tools are designed to work with the body, gardeners

likely won't need to take breaks due to aches and pains, which also makes it easier to be more efficient when working in the garden.

Ergonomic tools increase gardeners' capabilities. The WVUCED notes that principles behind ergonomics keep gardeners using the tools in natural positions. That means gardeners won't lose power to bending and twisting, enabling them to do more in the garden than they might be able to do when using non-ergonomic tools.

Gardening is a rewarding and beneficial activity. The right ergonomic tools for the job can enhance those benefits and make gardening even more enjoyable.

HD-451001

RE Open HOUSES

Open Houses Sunday, April 18, 2021



3114 Evergreen Road, Fraziers Bottom
\$485,000
 2:00-4:00 PM

1 owner home 1 story 4 bed & 2.5 baths. Newer kitchen appliances, Hardwood throughout, FP, 5th bedroom used as playroom. 24.99 acres, riding ring & above ground pool!!! 1st American Home warranty w/upgrade & septic \$680 included. Barn in photo is the neighbors. Floored attic full length of house for storage. 4 wheeler trails on property & a whole house generator conveys. DIRECTIONS: Fraziers Bottom on Rt 817 to Staves Branch Rd to Evergreen

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5305 Big Tyler Rd, Unit 10, Cross Lanes
\$99,000
 1:00-4:00 PM

Completely renovated brick town-home. 2 spacious bedrooms, 1 1/2 renovated bathrooms, new kitchen cabinets and countertops, all new flooring, all new light fixtures, large walk-up attic storage.

DIRECTIONS: Across the street from the Cross Lanes post office.

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FOR SALE BY OWNER



211 Sheridan Circle, Charleston
\$239,000
 2:00-4:00 PM

South Hills area, front of the hill with beautiful views of the city in the much-desired GW school district. New kitchen cabinets, granite countertops, SS appliances, washer & dryer, HVAC unit, hot water tank, & a 12-15-year-old roof. Updated baths & beautiful hardwood floors. 5 bedrooms & 2 1/2 baths, plus a finished basement. Must see!

DIRECTIONS: Corridor G / 119-S to right on Cantley Drive, quick right on Fort Hill Drive, continue to T - then left on McKenley, quick right on Sheridan to house on left.

RE/MAX **RE/MAX**
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 1556 Kanawha Blvd., E • Charleston, WV 25311

Marlein Habash
 304-610-4523

Jim Weiler - Broker



5405 Staunton Ave SE, Charleston
\$168,000
 2:00-4:00 PM

All brick ranch home in Kanawha City - 3 Bedrooms, 2 full baths. beautiful hardwood floors, tile flooring in what could be a 4th bedroom or lower level rec room, updated modern kitchen and bathrooms, many updates in recent years incl light fixtures, roof, windows, and landscaping. One car garage, extra parking pad, and a fenced yard.

DIRECTIONS: Maccorkle Ave in Kanawha City. Left on 54th St, Right on Staunton Ave.

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Exterior lighting can add ambiance to a property

The value of the right lighting in a home is undeniable. Lighting can instantly transform a room and create the ambiance homeowners are looking to establish. Though it might be mostly seen as a way to create mood inside a home, lighting also can do much for lawns and gardens.

Backyards have come a long way over the last several decades. Once reserved as play areas for children and stomping grounds for the family dog, backyards have become oases for homeowners and their families. Outdoor living areas are wildly popular, and no such area is complete without exterior lighting. In fact, a recent report from the National Association of Home Builders



found that 85 percent of home buyers want exterior lighting, making it the second most desired outdoor feature (patios topped that list).

Exterior lighting can have a dramatic effect on landscaping, and estimates from the online financial resource Kiplinger.com suggest such lighting is inexpen-

sive, with installation averaging roughly \$67 per fixture.

When installing exterior lighting around their landscapes, homeowners can keep various tips in mind to create a relaxing, awe-inspiring mood on their properties at night.

- *Consider uplights.* Uplights are installed in the ground and direct light up at a tree, focusing on its trunk or canopy. This creates a dramatic effect that makes it possible to enjoy majestic trees at night just like you might when spending time in the yard during the day.

- *Focus on trees.* Many homeowners already have exterior

lighting lining their walkways and patios, but focusing on trees can create an entirely different look. Though it's possible to install exterior tree lighting on your own, landscaping professionals with lighting experience know which fixtures will pair most effectively with the trees around your property and how to arrange them for maximum effect.

- *Opt for warm light.* Warm white light creates an inviting feel around the property. The exterior lighting experts at Utah Lights acknowledge that choice of lighting is up to homeowners but also note that, in situations with lower levels of ambient light, such as in exterior lights around a property,

people typically prefer warmer light. That's because warm light tends to be easier on the eyes and directs attention to the features of the landscape, which is many homeowners' goal when installing exterior lighting in their yards.

- *Utilize a timer.* Modern exterior lighting timers make it easier than ever to control the lights outside a home. Many such timers even adjust for the changing seasons and the shifting hours of daylight. That means homeowners shouldn't have to tinker with the timer once it's set.

Exterior lighting can add significant appeal to a property without breaking the bank.

RD-451000



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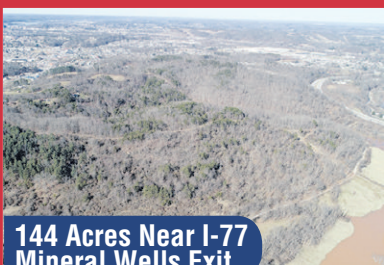
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1118 MONTROSE DRIVE, SOUTH CHARLESTON
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***All Auctions through the end of May will have Online Bidding Available visit www.joerpyleauctions.com**

- Tue. April 20th – South Charleston - Commercial Building in the Heart of S. Charleston
- Thu. April 22nd – Charleston - Two Story House Being Sold to The Highest Bidder
- Tue. April 27th – Huntington - 8-Unit Apartment Building & Tri-Plex
- Wed. April 28th – South Charleston - Lovely Tri-Level Home in South Charleston
- Thu. April 29th – Glenville - Prime Commercial Lot in Glenville
- Tue. May 4th – Clay - Versatile Commercial Building in Clay
- Thu. May 6th – South Charleston - Spacious Duplex – 2 Bedroom Units
- Tue. May 11th – St. Albans - 3 Bedroom on the River
- Thu. May 13th – Louisa, KY - Move-in Ready Ranch on a Corner Lot
- Mon. May 17th – Huntington - Two Professional Office Suites in Huntington
- Thu. May 20th – Huntington - 5 Huntington Area Properties - Residential & Commercial
- Thu. May 20th – Huntington - 18 Huntington-Area Bank Owned Properties
- Thu. May 27th – Summersville - Fully Remodeled 3 Bedroom Sold to the Highest Bidder

ONLINE ONLY

- Mon. April 19th – St. Albans - Spring Gun & Ammo Auction - Day 2 of 2
- Tue. April 20th – Barboursville - 1979 Triumph Bonneville 750 Motorcycle Sells To the Highest Bidder!
- Wed. April 21st – South Charleston - Online Only Doll Auction
- Thu. April 22nd – Beckley - Former Church Being Sold to the Highest Bidder
- Thu. April 22nd – Scott Depot – 4 Bedroom Sold to the Highest Bidder
- Thu. April 22nd – Horner - 75+ Acres - Hunting Ground with Marketable Timber
- Thu. May 6th – Huntington - Nice Home with Garage in Huntington
- Tue. May 11th – Huntington – 11 Properties – Residential & Commercial
- Thu. May 13th – Charleston - Honda Four-Wheeler, Alumacraft Boat with Trailer and Much More!
- Tue. May 25th – Huntington - Lot with Garage Selling to the Highest Bidder

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House of the Week

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2.5 BATHS



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HD-451004



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