

## BOOKS

## Life's little instructions, Japanese-style

By JOY TIPPING  
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*Urawaza* is one of those delightful little books that you can tuck into your pocket, flitting through it page by page or at random, always finding surprising, useful tidbits.

*Urawaza* is a Japanese word for secret lifestyle tricks, a concept that became

increasingly useful post-World War II, when everyone was looking for ways to do more with less — less money, less space, fewer products such as food and cleaning supplies.

As author Lisa Katayama points out, there's "a certain 'Wow!' factor to knowing that you have an organic, quirky cure for just about any ailment or household accident." She even provides space for readers to record their own



### Urawaza

Secret Everyday Tips and Tricks From Japan

Lisa Katayama  
(Chronicle Books, \$14.95)

moments of *urawaza*.

The book includes sections on health, amazing your friends (how to hit high notes in karaoke or make a baby stop crying), beauty, household chores and the great outdoors.

Some tips are so simple that you'll say "Ohhhh, of course," feeling silly you never thought of that before, such as the author's advice on safely picking up teency, invisible shards of broken glass: Press a few slices of regular bread over the danger zones; the bread will pick up the glass.

For hiccups: "Open your mouth wide and touch one end of a cotton swab or the eraser end of a pencil to the back of your throat. For a second, you'll feel like gagging, and your hiccups will stop." Hallelujah! I tried it, and it worked. Immediately.

And haven't we all needed this one? How to restore a shrunken sweater to its original size: Immerse the sweater in a solution of water and hair conditioner for half an hour, and watch it magically expand to its original size. Ms. Katayama explains that woolen apparel shrinks when water gets between the fibers and causes them to tangle. Hair conditioner untangles the fibers, just like it does your gnarly early-morning hair.

This is a book you'll be fiendishly proud of having discovered before all your friends do. You might want to give copies as gifts — or just keep the secrets to yourself, smiling enigmatically when they wonder how you *do* all those things.

## HOME CALENDAR

**HOLIDAY TEA WITH FLORENCE De DAMPIERRE:** Designer, furniture historian and author of *French Chic: The Art of Decorating Houses* will speak. Event includes three-course menu with tea, champagne and complimentary valet parking. 2:30 Wednesday, Arlington Hall at Lee Park, 3333 Turtle Creek Blvd. \$65. For tickets, call 214-521-2003.

**WINTER WONDERLAND:** Audie Murphy/American Cotton Museum showcases miniature Victorian village and collection of Santa figures and ornaments. Tuesday until Jan. 20. 600 Interstate 30 East in Greenville. \$5 for adults, \$3 seniors and \$1 for students. 903-450-4502.

**HOME TOUR:** Annual Terrell Christmas tour features six homes. 4 to 8 p.m. Dec. 6. \$15. For home addresses and more information, 972-563-3154.

**MEDITERRANEAN SHOWHOUSE:** Tours of the \$15 million manse are available through Dec. 14. 5020 Elm Hollow Drive. Advance tickets \$15, \$18 at door. 1-866-309-5509. www.luxeshowhome.com. Buy tickets at www.jld.net.

**HOLIDAY NUTCRACKERS:** The Dallas Arboretum's holiday celebration features a display of more than 200 nutcrackers in the historic DeGolyer Estate. For a list of festival activities, see www.dallasarboretum.org. General admission \$8, \$7 seniors, \$5 children. 8525 Garland Road. 214-515-6500.

**DESIGN SEMINARS:** Free, but reservations are requested.

■ Home for the holidays, at area Robb & Stucky locations: 11 a.m. Thursday, 7240 N. Dallas Parkway, Plano. 972-403-3063; 11 a.m. Friday, NorthPark Center, 214-360-3200. 11 a.m. Saturday, 301 State St., Southlake Town Square. 817-410-3630.

**IN-STORE CLINICS:** Home Depot offers do-it-yourself seminars including:  
■ Energy workshops: 10 a.m. today  
■ Tiling floors and walls: 11 a.m. today  
■ Prepare your home for being away: 1 p.m. today  
■ Holiday storage solutions: 1 p.m. Sunday  
Call the store to reserve a seat, or register online at www.homedepotclinics.com.

Submit information at least 14 days before the Saturday publication date to home@dallasnews.com.

## LOCAL TALENT

## Vanity plates

Collector carves out a business niche with vintage platters bearing initials

By BRITTANY EDWARDS  
Special Contributor  
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After more than a dozen years working for companies such as Pier 1 Imports and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, Kelly Wilson decided to take a break to be a full-time mom. But it didn't take long after swapping spreadsheets for staying home that the Beaumont native needed a creative outlet.

Already owning a small-scale furniture operation dubbed Kelly Wilson Antiques, the avid collector decided to take a bite out of tabletop and fold it into the business, too. For the past three years, she's been embellishing vintage plates and platters sourced from local antiques dealers and the occasional trip to England.

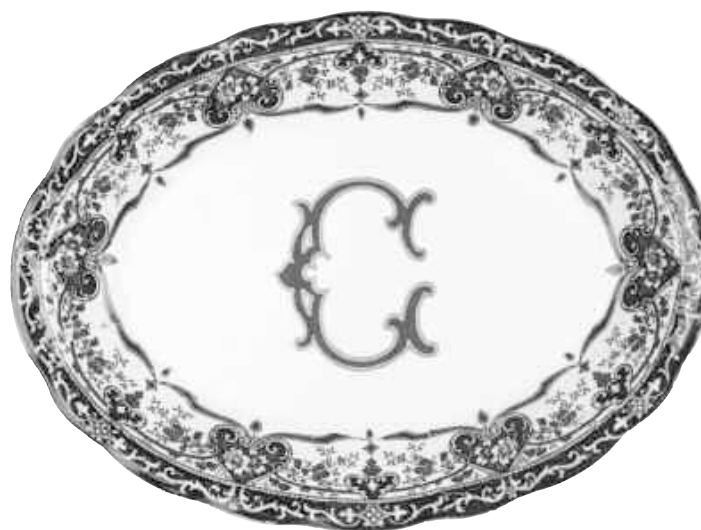
"I love starting with something old and classic that other generations have enjoyed," she says. "I give it a new spin for a new generation."

First, customers choose a piece of china from her collection — blue and white Flow styles are her favorite. Then, they select a single uppercase letter for Ms. Wilson to paint in classic Victorian font on paper. Afterward she cuts it out and applies it to the dish with a special adhesive process.

Given the fragility of decoupage, the pieces are not for use, only display. Prices range from \$48 to \$110 depending on size; some extra large pieces go for \$150 or more.

"I have been tickled and excited to see my business get this far," says Ms. Wilson. "As far as the future goes, I'd love to see it grow and become a success. But I don't want to be in Neiman's... I always want it to be my thing, my vision."

Brittany Edwards is a Dallas freelance writer.



Kelly Wilson Antiques are available at the Forestwood Antique Mall, 5333 Forest Lane; 972-661-0001. Pre-made items can also be purchased online at kellywilsonantiques.com.

For custom orders, e-mail kelly.b.wilson@sbcglobal.net.

## SHOPPING

## One-of-a-kind dining

Normally, the only thing personal served at the kitchen table is grandmother's secret recipes. With Rust Designs, they don't have to be the only private matters dished out at dinner anymore.

Owner and artist Jessica Rust personalizes all of the Midwest label's white ceramic pieces — plates, mugs, bowls and serving trays — by hand. Some of her whimsically modern designs include a family tree, pair of love birds, children's toys and people and pet silhouettes.

Depending on the design, she adds custom details to each order, ranging from names, birth announcements and anniversary dates to cute phrases such as "David and Emily sitting in a tree." Some of her designs are themed, including the new holiday tree and bunny collections as well as the wedding "Love Bug" design, which boasts a vintage VW Beetle and the date of the couple's nuptials.

Other styles are less literal, such as the "Tree Birch" that has sweet sayings (hearts with love notes



If customized plates suit your Christmas list, Rust Designs is accepting orders through Dec. 10 for Christmas delivery.

scribbled inside) carved into willow tree trunks and branches. The new "Birds on a Wire" design has subtle inscriptions dancing along wispy telephone wires.

Brittany Edwards

### Customize yours

All orders are custom, so expect a four- to six-week turnaround time. Prices start at \$55 for a single dinner plate (\$165 for the standard four-piece set); mug sets are \$58, dessert-plate sets are \$85; and platters range from \$80 to \$110 each.

Completely custom designs start at \$175; requests are accepted at info@rustdesigns.com.

The Gypsy Wagon (5211 Bonita Ave., 214-370-8010) carries several pieces and can order the entire collection. Visit www.rustdesigns.com.

## HINTS FROM HELOISE

KING FEATURES SYNDICATE

**Dear Heloise:** I read about the canvas shoe bag used in the shower for shampoo, etc. My husband has a shoe bag hanging on the back of the door to his workshop. He puts cans and bottles like wasp spray, car-cleaning items, etc., in his.

Mine is on the back of the door to my craft room, where I store items such as bottles of various craft glues, glue guns, hole punches and even all my scissors and pinking shears. The things used often are right at hand for quick retrieval, and putting them back is a snap. No longer do we have to hunt through shelves or drawers for the small things we use often.

Linda in Arkansas

**Dear Heloise:** I have found a way to avoid paying the high prices the airports charge for bottled water that you must purchase on the other side of security. I pack an empty water bottle in my carry-on — it goes through security just fine. Then I stop at the first drinking fountain I come to and fill up my water bottle.

Nancy in Ohio



**Dear Nancy:** I do the same, but now carry a sturdy, plastic, reusable sports bottle. It's bright yellow, and I don't leave it behind by mistake.

Speaking of travel hints, here's another one, from Hana in Hawaii: "I can't say enough about the benefits of using bra extenders when traveling. Whenever I have a night flight and it's time to sleep, I just hook on the extender. I can still wear my bra, but it's looser by about 3 inches in the back and definitely more comfortable. Bra extenders can be found in the notions section of most fabric stores."

Heloise

**Dear Heloise:** When I get a paint mixed, I ask for an extra label with the formula. I save a small jar for touch-ups and put the extra label on it. This saves me from having to take up space saving an empty can.

When I want to duplicate the paint if I move or use the color again, I have the mix formula immediately available. The label could also be kept in a book for future reference.

Debbie in Texas

**Dear Heloise:** I saw this hint at my house and thought my wife had a neat idea. After she runs the dryer, she puts the used dryer fabric-softener sheet in a facial-tissue cube box that sits on a shelf near the dryer in the laundry room. She then uses these leftovers to clean the dryer vent of lint.

Lee, via e-mail

**Dear Heloise:** Here are two more safety things to do before you go on a trip:

If you live alone, call the newspaper and have it stopped one or two days before you leave, to be sure it is stopped. Stop your mail, too.

Martha in New Mexico

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