

IN THE PINK

Local paint possibilities look rosy in 2011

BY MONICA M. WALK
Special to The Reporter

Décor and fashion experts are predicting we'll be "in the pink" this year, surrounding ourselves in a color associated with health, happiness and contentment.

In fact, a vibrant pink called "Honeysuckle" is the color of the year for 2011, according to Pantone LLC, a leading color authority for more than 50 years and a wholly owned subsidiary of X-Rite Incorporated, a global leader in color science and technology.

"In times of stress we need something to lift our spirits. Honeysuckle is a captivating, stimulating color that gets the adrenaline

going—perfect to ward off the blues," explained Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute®, in a company press release. Color theorists at the Institute describe Honeysuckle as "encouraging" and "uplifting"—an antidote to daily challenges and exhaustion.

National Influence

While cans of pink aren't yet flying off shelves, local paint experts do expect to see an uptick in requests for that shade.

"If you see it on clothing, they will be in for it," said paint specialist Tom Pickart, who has been mixing pigments and offering color advice at Kitz & Pfeil True Value for 30 years.

He grew up in his father's paint business, Pickart Paint, located on Fond du Lac's Main Street in the 1960s.

"We'll see it in children's clothing first," he said.

The pink paint trend may also first leap from children's fashion to children's rooms. Pickart noted that bright lime green and muted turquoise have been popular both on children and in their rooms for several seasons.

Decorative painter and color consultation professional Mindy Leitner may be brushing on the begin-



Kitz & Pfeil True Value Hardware paint manager Tom Pickart fans out paint samples at his counter last week. THE REPORTER PHOTO BY PATRICK FLOOD

slightly less sheer. Lower sheen paints like flat, eggshell and satin make wall surface imperfections less noticeable, Pickart said.

Local ceilings also are following the national trend toward color. While Leitner still sees many white ceilings, both Woller and Pickart report clients more often choose a flat sheen in a lightened shade of the wall color. Keeping wall and ceiling tones similar is another method of injecting warmth into a room.

Inspiration, Perspiration

Thanks to technology, paint retailers can color-match any item that inspires a client. Pickart noted that color spectrometers used in paint matching have their roots in technology created by NASA to see the colors of planets. The devices measure depths and then transpose those measurements into color.

And inspiration items need only be about the size of a dime for the color-match technology to work. But, any item can be brought in for matching, from clothing, cushions and bedspreads, to tractor seats and items from nature. Paint professionals also tend to have exceptionally good color-mixing abilities, and sometimes find themselves tweaking the computer-generated color results.

Once matched, paint retailers keep client's color codes cached in their computer systems, meaning the color can easily be replicated again and again.

And while matching a color has become easy, getting it onto a surface still requires some effort. Once a paint color is selected, remember Pickart's painting advice to achieve professional results: "People need to understand they need clean, dry, dull surfaces. Prep work is 90 percent of the job in any paint work."

Freelance writer Monica M. Walk was raised in a Wisconsin family dedicated to the building trades. Decorating inspiration for her first apartment came from a pink Princess phone—and shades of pink have been featured in every home since.

PAINT TRENDS COVER MORE THAN COLOR

New items on the paint market garnering consumer attention are available locally:

■ Krylon Glowz luminous paint glows in the dark for up to six hours.

■ Dry Erase paint by RustOleum makes any surface a writing surface.

■ Chalkboard paint by RustOleum now comes in 13 additional colors beyond the traditional black and green.

■ Magnetic primer by RustOleum allows the creation of a magnetic surface almost anywhere.

■ Countertop Coating by RustOleum makes it possible to renew laminate countertops, cabinets and furniture.

(These Krylon and Rustoleum products are available at Kitz & Pfeil True Value, among other retailers.)

Area businesses also feature some designer-name paints, including Pottery Barn colors at Integrity Glass & Paint. They also carry a range of chalkboard, metallic and faux finishes.

Homeowners looking to refresh alu-

minum siding also will find that local paint suppliers now have a wide — almost unlimited — palette to choose from when painting siding and gutters.

Paint colors are no longer limited to the original siding colors produced by the manufacturer. Exterior color trends are featuring deep and bold colors.

Contact local suppliers for complete listings and details of available products.

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ning of the trend.

"Bright colors are very popular in children's rooms," she said, "especially on accent walls. I am doing one that is close to the Pantone color of the year right now."

She noted a local home trend over the past year that focused heavily on interior paint colors in dark browns, sky blue and turquoise—a blue connoting both escape and well-being, and that happened to be the Pantone annual pick for 2010.

Pantone, however, isn't the only company making color predictions, and other colors are expected to make strong showings. A citrusy lime is hailed by Glidden and a vintage wine is the leading pick from Benjamin Moore.

Individualism is the real trend, according to

Lisa Woller, who co-owns Integrity Glass and Paint with her spouse, Jim.

"When people come home, they need to feel comfortable," Woller said. "You have to do colors you love, because you have to live with it."

If selecting color feels difficult, paint professionals and decorators can provide guidance. Woller has another tip: "Open your closet." Generally, the colors people wear are the same colors they will enjoy in their surroundings.

Local Preference

Local paint professionals do report some specific area trends.

"We like warm colors here—it's cold," said Pickart, noting that most interior painting also is done during the cold,

snow-bound months. The recent downturn in the economy also created an upturn in interior painting as a low-cost way to give a home a new look, or to ready it for sale.

"Our most commonly used color card has neutrals...taupes, tans, warm golds. But reds—especially warmer brown-reds—are popular. We also do purples a lot. A merlot and a mocha are gorgeous together."

"People do like neutrals, but that doesn't have to be boring," said Woller, agreeing that neutral tones dominate in the home-sales market. "Neutral taupes are very popular, and can have a warm or a cool undertone. They may do neutral with one accent wall. It's not hard to change one wall. People are not painting white."

Leitner, who brushes on base paint for clients as well as advising on colors and offering decorative painting, confirms, "Rich neutrals remain a staple here: golds, bronzy, warm taupes...along with accent walls with a pop of saturated color. People are trying to warm up the feeling in their homes."

She notes that grays have been moving up in popularity in the last year or so. But, she doesn't see cool shades of gray sticking as a trend, since those tones do not help homeowners achieve a feeling of warmth in their space.

Paint sold in the Fond du Lac area definitely trends toward one popular finish, all three experts agree: eggshell. Similar in sheen to a satin, Leitner describes eggshell as more durable and