

Garage makeover winner party

What started as a windy, rainy day turned into a sunny backdrop for a four-hour event celebrating the part of a home a man can truly claim as is his own — the garage.

The inaugural Garage Party hosted by Garage Outfitters, the Record-Eagle, Ace Hardware and Plain Jane - Cleaning Expert recently took place at the Outfitters' Chum's Corners shop.

It was once said by someone not at all famous that "walking into a garage is just like walking into someone's head. He or she organizes the way they think."

If that statement holds true, then most of us have attention deficit disorder.

This is especially true for Don Kelly from Traverse City, winner of this year's first Garage Makeover con-

test.

"I have a bunch of projects in piles in my garage — things I started, but just never finished," said Kelly.

As the winner of the makeover, Kelly and his wife won't need to look at those half-completed projects any more.

Through donated time and products from Garage Outfitters and Ace Hardware, Kelly will have his garage overhauled, organized and outfitted to meet the needs of his family. As an added bonus, the Kelly family will also be getting a total housecleaning from Plain Jane - Cleaning Expert.

The road — or driveway — to the grand prize was not a short one. For three months, entries were taken; Aug. 11, 15 semi-finalists were randomly drawn. Then the real work began.



"After we drew the final 15, we visited each garage to interview the family to understand and inventory their interests and organizational needs," said Dan

Hansen, garage makeover representative and garage party planner for Garage Outfitters. "We saw some of the worst garages in north-



Record-Eagle photos

Don Kelly from Traverse City is the proud winner of this year's first Garage Makeover contest. Through donated time and products from Garage Outfitters and Ace Hardware, Kelly will have his garage overhauled, organized and outfitted to meet the needs of his family.

Don because his garage had the most potential."

The makeover will take place this month and the Kellys can't wait to get started.

See the before and after pictures of the Kellys garage makeover in the next edition of Home & Garden, inside the Record-Eagle on Tuesday, October 11.

Garage floor finishes range from practical to modular plastic

BY JAMES AND MORRIS CAREY
The Associated Press

It began with Henry Ford and the Model T.

Ford needed a place to park his horseless carriage. Thus, the garage, as we know it, was born.

What started as a simple shed to protect the early automobile has become the latest must-have extension for today's with-it, up-to-the-minute home. And we do mean "extension."

While one-car garages now are somewhat rare, and two-car garages are the norm, three-car models are on the rise. One of every five new homes now has space for three cars. Also on the increase are four-, five- and even six-car garages. These new attached parking structures often also harbor toys (boats, jet skis and ATVs), equipment (including riding mowers and snow-blowers), tools and a complete workshop.

And just as garage size is on the rise, so, too, is appearance. More people look into your garage than any other room in your home. Thus, old-style wooden work benches, makeshift shelving and stud-clad interiors have given way to fully finished walls and ceilings (including paint), clutter-concealing stylish floor-to-ceiling modular storage systems and sleek multitask work surfaces used for everything from sweating copper to daily computing.

Although wall-to-wall carpet has yet to make its way

into most garages, a raw concrete floor is quickly becoming a thing of the past. A finished floor improves the garage's appearance and preserves the integrity of the concrete. And by making drips and spills easy to clean up, it also prevents a garage from looking like an Indy 500 pit stop. In snow country a floor finish prevents concrete deterioration from salt and other chemicals used to melt snow.

Paint is an affordable and useful means of finishing a garage floor. There are three basic types of paint for concrete — latex, oil and epoxy.

Of the three, latex is by far the most widely used. It has excellent adhesion properties, allows water vapor to escape (prohibiting delamination), and is the most user-friendly to apply since it cleans up with water. Most latex concrete floor paints are designed to be applied directly to raw concrete. The first coat serves as a primer, the second offers a full, uniform finish.

Oil-base paints offer a harder, shinier finish. Unlike latex, oil-base porch paint should be applied over a coat of oil-base concrete or masonry filler-primer. Application is similar to latex, but mineral spirits are used for cleanup. Thin the primer slightly using mineral spirits. This will enhance the penetration and improve the bond. Once dry, the finish coat can be applied.

Epoxy or epoxy-

polyurethane paints are the most durable and longest lasting. They are pricier and substantially more difficult to apply. Epoxy paints generally consist of two separate products which, when combined, create a chemical reaction that results in an above-average bond and an abrasion-resistant finish. Epoxy floor finishes are available in a host of solid colors or randomly seeded decorative variegated color chips, and can include an integral nonskid finish.

Unfortunately, no matter the quality of the paint, how good the surface preparation or how well the paint was applied, latex and oil paints will usually peel when subjected to hot automobile tires. And although epoxy paint forms a bond with concrete, a moist slab and hot tires can be an incompatible combination.

Vinyl mats and epoxy and plastic floor tiles have made

their way onto the scene and are receiving acclaim for their ability to provide all of the benefits of a painted floor with none of the drawbacks (except that they can be pricier and, depending upon your skill level, might require professional installation).

A vinyl floor mat is hard to beat when it comes to price and ease of installation. Grease stains and cracks on a garage floor can be made to disappear in about 30 seconds with a vinyl floor mat. The mat does not require adhesive and is rolled out into the space. Vinyl mats come in a host of sizes and colors and can be cut to fit or overlap, depending upon the size of the garage. Some mats are designed with an integral grooved surface that will easily shed water.

If you want to be the envy of your neighborhood and you have the budget, consider modular plastic interlock-

ing floor tile or a quartz-based floor tile. Both can be installed by the do-it-yourselfer, although the modular plastic system is less complex.

The modular plastic flooring system consists of individual tiles that snap together to cover all or part of a garage floor. Though moisture can seep between the individual tiles, the system "floats" atop the concrete floor, and the underside of the tiles have a honeycomb construction so as not to inhibit the natural fall built into most garage floors. The plastic system is sturdy, impact- and stain-resistant and is available in a host of colors.

If you want a bit of European influence in your garage, consider tile. You can be a real trendsetter by installing a new quartz-based garage floor tile. These systems claim to offer the same chemical-, impact-

and stain-resistance as roll-on or towel-on polymer floorings, but are significantly less likely to experience blistering that results from hydrostatic pressure.

As with other types of tile, quartz-based garage tiles are individually set in thin-set mortar and the joints are finished with a trowel applied grout. However, like the floor tile, the grout consists of a porous, quartz-based material that allows moisture to escape — and keeps a secure bond. Each 12 by 12 tile has a cushion back (for impact-resistance) and a tough skid-resistant surface for low maintenance and durability.

More information on garage floor finishes can be found at the following Web sites:

- www.theultimategarage.com
- www.bltilc.com
- www.racedeck.com
- www.garage-tile.com

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