

*Brought to you by*  
**Jill C. Kline & Brenda K. Odenbaugh**

Owners  
Jill: 970-388-2926  
[jill@kandorealty.com](mailto:jill@kandorealty.com)  
Brenda: 970-381-1169  
[brenda@kandorealty.com](mailto:brenda@kandorealty.com)  
[www.kandorealty.com](http://www.kandorealty.com)



**K & O**  
**REALTY, LLC**

P.O. Box 1103  
607 Main St  
Platteville, CO 80651

## HOMEOWNER'S UPDATE

### Keep Your Bedroom Calm and Organized

Your bedroom should be a place to retreat and relax, but life's clutter has a way of sneaking in and stealing your serenity. With a few simple changes, you can turn it into the peaceful place it's meant to be.

#### Clear the Clutter

A messy bedroom can cause stress and contribute to poor sleep quality. Toss dirty laundry in a hamper and put clean clothing in its proper place. Consider under-bed storage or baskets for non-clothing items. Avoid open shelving, as it can create unnecessary visual distractions.

#### Turn off Tech

It's tempting to scroll through a phone or tablet before bed, but the blue light emitted can actually keep your brain awake and stimulated, making it harder to fall asleep. Put aside devices at least one hour before bedtime, and consider leaving them in another room overnight.

#### Refresh Your Rest

The average lifespan for mattresses is 8–10 years. If your mattress is older than that, consider buying a new one. Don't wait for visual signs of decline. An old mattress can cause back pain or make existing pain worse. Over time, a mattress can lose its shape and accumulate buildup that affects its comfort and cleanliness, even with regular care.

#### Evict Equipment

Keep your computer, printer and other office equipment out of the bedroom. The same goes for exercise gear like a yoga mat or treadmill. If your bedroom is the only place you have to store these items, try hiding them behind a room divider so they're out of sight when you need to rest. Your bedroom should be associated with sleep, not mental or physical exertion. Setting boundaries between sleep and daily activities can support a healthier lifestyle.

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**Paint Color Trends for 2025**

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New year, new ... walls? If you're looking to make a change in 2025, a fresh coat of paint offers an easy and affordable way to completely transform the feel of your home.

This year, expect to see a shift from neutral colors to a more natural palette. Recently, cool neutrals have dominated paint trends, but now, many designers are moving toward natural, warm colors and earth tones. Cozy tans, soft yellows and deep browns are becoming more prevalent and can be an excellent choice if you want to keep your home simple and inviting.

If you're looking for something bold, jewel tones have surged in popularity. Make a statement with rich blues, purples and reds that add stunning vibrancy and depth while remaining timeless and comforting.

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## Trend Report: Garage Flooring

Updating your garage with new flooring can dramatically improve its look and functionality. While concrete floors are common and practical, other materials can add some pizzazz to the space and even boost your home's resale value.

In addition to being a safe place to park your vehicle, your garage can also serve as a workspace, a man cave or a she shed. Here are some flooring options to consider after you've determined your budget and how you're going to use the space.

**Concrete stain** adds color to garage floors by penetrating the surface, creating a translucent finish.

**Concrete paint** is a budget-friendly DIY option with various color choices.

**Epoxy coating** comes in several design styles and is tougher than paint.

**Polyaspartic floor coating** is highly durable, low-maintenance and stain-resistant.

**Vinyl flooring** suits non-parking garages with easy cleanup and slip resistance.

Whether you want a heavy-duty finish for parking or a cozy surface for a converted space, there's certainly a garage flooring option to match your vision and needs.

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## Don't Let a Drip Become a Downpour

Leaky plumbing may start as a drip of water, but it can quickly become a drain on your wallet. The following tips can help you identify and fix issues before they become major problems.

- Wrap paper towels around pipes and connections to detect wet spots that may indicate potential leaks.
- Use a wrench to gently tighten loose connections between fittings.
- Apply plumbing putty to temporarily fix leaks, but be sure to wear latex gloves to protect your skin.
- Shut off the water supply and call a plumber to assist with large leaks and other plumbing issues. If left unchecked, water leaks can cause significant and costly damage to your home.

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## Strawberry-Chocolate Yogurt Bark

### Ingredients

3 cups whole milk Greek yogurt  
¼ cup maple syrup  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
1½ cups sliced strawberries  
¼ cup mini semisweet chocolate chips  
Cocoa powder for dusting (optional)

### Directions

Line a half-sheet pan (13x18-inch) with parchment paper. In a medium bowl, stir together yogurt, maple syrup and vanilla. Transfer to pan and spread evenly into a 10x15-inch rectangle. Scatter strawberries on top and sprinkle with chocolate chips. Gently press both into the yogurt



Dust lightly with cocoa powder, if desired. Cut or break bark into about 30 pieces. Let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before serving.

Store leftovers in freezer with parchment paper between layers.



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The Personal Marketing Company  
11541 W. 83rd Terrace  
Lenexa, KS 66214

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