

cover story

Learning from winters of the past

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MAKENZIE WHITTLE • The Bulletin

Central Oregon has a habit of throwing every kind of weather at its residents within the same month, sometimes on the same day. But winter can be the worst of it with snowstorms dumping hefty accumulations, then temperatures warm up to melt it all only to freeze overnight. Whether it's your first winter or your 15th here are a couple of simple projects to keep you toasty till spring.

CANDLE WAX AND EGG CARTON FIRESTARTERS

If you're lucky (or unlucky depending on how you look at it) enough to have a wood-burning stove in your house, this is one of the best ways to get your fire roaring in no time, often without having to use kindling.

Materials

Egg cartons
Candle wax
Small saucepan/pot that will not be used again for food

Dryer lint (optional)

Directions

Save up your old egg cartons and any leftover candles you've got in your house (this is also a great use of those random scented candles someone gifted you that have been collecting dust in your closet).

First, remove the candle wax from any jar or container. This can be done by pouring boiling water in the container and allowing the melted wax to collect at the top of the water. When the water cools and the wax hardens simply remove the wax and set it aside. You can now use the empty containers for storage or simply recycle if appropriate.

In the saucepan or pot, heat the wax and candles together over low heat until they

melt, do not boil.

Carefully pour the wax into the individual cups, filling them about halfway. Add pieces of dryer lint to each wax cup if desired.

Let the wax cool then cut into two or three cup-sections.

Place it in your woodstove with the firestarter wedged between two pieces of wood or in a tight opening, and light.

These are also great to take camping to start a campfire easily.

TERRA COTTA POT HEATER

If your home office is a little chilly these days and you don't want to crank up your heater and therefore your electric bill, this little tea light heat source may keep your fingers from freezing on your keyboard.

No, it won't heat your whole room, but it can keep your immediate desk area a little less cold.

Materials

2 clay pots, one smaller than the other
2 to 3 small bricks, heat resistant tiles, flat rocks or small tea light holders (these are your base)

1 trivet or heat resistant flat stone
3 to 4 tea light candles

Directions

Make sure the pot is clean and dry if you're bringing it in from outside.

Arrange your base materials on top of the trivet in a way so the smaller pot can be placed upside down on top of them and still fit the large pot as well. Be sure to allow space for airflow.

Arrange the candles in the center and light them.

Place the smaller pot, upside-down over



A terra cotta pot heater. Three tealight candles are lit underneath two, nested terra cotta pots on top of a kitchen trivet. Three glass tealight holders hold up the pots.

the candles then the larger one on top.

It takes a little while for the heat to begin to radiate from the pot.

Use caution when removing the pot and the stones as the residual heat lingers on the stones for quite some time after the candles have been extinguished.

Never leave the heater unattended or in a closed area and always use it with caution and at your own risk.

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A finished candle wax and egg carton firestarter.

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