

Little by Little: Try making before buying

– Julie Schafer, Sustainable Marshfield Committee, January 2013

This year, I am going to use my head and my hands to create some of the things which, ten years ago, I would not have thought twice about buying new at a store.

- ✓ Continue to make a general purpose cleaner that works wonderfully for most daily cleaning. Were I of the accounting type, I could tell you how much money I have saved in the past few years since I switched from buying spray bottles of ready-made cleaners to making my own with a few common ingredients and a reusable spray bottle.
- ✓ Make my own laundry detergent. I tried making laundry detergent last year, but must have misread the recipe as I ended up with a chunk of soap in the washer instead of clean clothes. This time it will work.
- ✓ Give life to old lumber and old commercial green house panels in the form of a new greenhouse.
- ✓ Repurpose the trees we had to cut down by making them into bookshelves for the living room.
- ✓ Crochet an area rug using second-hand material, scraps saved from other projects, old shirts, etc.
- ✓ Turn old tin cans into useful household items – since I am switching from liquid back to bar soap, I need 2 soap dishes to contain those slippery chunks of cleanness.
- ✓ Finish the curtains for the porch, again using scraps and second-hand material. I made some last summer for the kitchen, dining and living rooms but ran into canning season before I could finish the porch.

We are smart, capable people. Given a little determination and ingenuity, I believe we can provide for our homes, families and even community by utilizing materials already available. Creating will be a journey; things may not be complete in the swipe of a credit card. But, like most journeys, each piece will have its own story to tell.