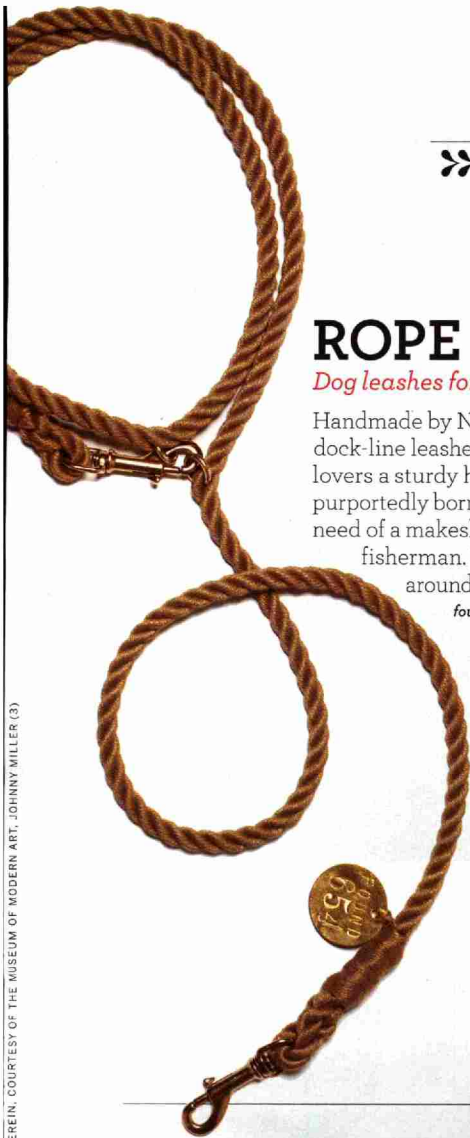


CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: LISA ROMERIN, COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, JOHNNY MILLER (3)



## ROPE TRICKS

*Dog leashes for a very good cause*

Handmade by New England rope crafters, these dock-line leashes from Found My Animal give dog lovers a sturdy hold on their pets. The idea was purportedly born when a resourceful dog owner, in need of a makeshift leash, borrowed rope from a fisherman. Brass clips make it easy to secure around your waist for hands-free walking.

[foundmyanimal.com](http://foundmyanimal.com)

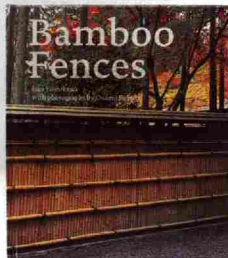


### CHARITY UNLEASHED

Found My Animal gives a portion of its leash profits to the Louis Animal Foundation, which provides foster care for stray dogs and offers free and low-cost spaying and neutering.

**SERENE SURROUNDINGS** Bamboo is now a popular choice for flooring. But in Japan it has been used for centuries to construct fences inspired by those found at Buddhist temples. In *Bamboo Fences*, Isao Yoshikawa leads a tour of these elegant structures. Simply gazing at the photographs may inspire some tranquility of your own.

**BAMBOO FENCES** Princeton Architectural Press



## THE BRIEFING

» Design, gardening, home, collecting, books, events, food, crafts



### FESTIVALS

## BUDDING BEAUTY

You know spring is in full swing when lilacs are in bloom, and parks and gardens around the country hold festivals to celebrate their brief, fragrant run. The Lilac Festival in Rochester, New York, takes place May 8 to 17, with more than 500 varieties on show. Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum toasts its impressive collection on Lilac Sunday, May 10 this year.

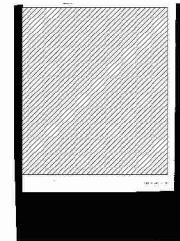
[monroecounty.gov/parks-highland.php](http://monroecounty.gov/parks-highland.php);  
[arboretum.harvard.edu/plants/lilac\\_sunday.html](http://arboretum.harvard.edu/plants/lilac_sunday.html)



## A CUT ABOVE

Form and function are at hand with these Japanese floral shears. Designed by Genichi Sakai, the lightweight coated carbon blades make easy work of outdoor tasks such as pruning and deadheading. Our gardening editors use them for more delicate work, too—such as trimming a few stems to brighten the indoors with a fresh bouquet.

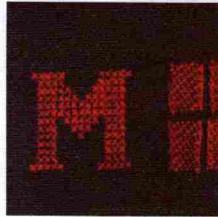
[momastore.org](http://momastore.org)



THE BRIEFING



**FOR THE BIRDS** A favorite in Martha's own backyard, this rugged motion-activated camera makes it possible for bird-watchers to keep an eye on feathered friends while still keeping a respectful distance. (Are your Northern flickers ready for their close-up?) When positioned near a bird feeder, a birdbath, or another popular perch, the BirdCam captures digital pictures and short video clips. [wingscapes.com](http://wingscapes.com)



## WARM spot

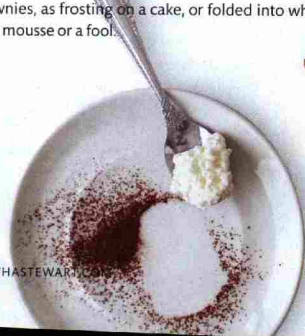
It may be T-shirt weather by day, but come nightfall, brisk temperatures call for the right wrap—lightweight, cozy, and supremely soft. Swans Island has just the one. The artisanal operation in Maine crafts exquisite handwoven blankets, scarves, and other accessories with fibers spun from locally gathered wool. Along with fresh colors and pared-down patterns—solids, stripes, or checks—personalized monogramming is offered for embellishing, say, a baby blanket with a birth date or a scarf with a loved one's initials. [swansislandblankets.com](http://swansislandblankets.com)



## HOT DATES

Only 66 calories apiece, dates are low in fat, cholesterol, and sodium, and they are packed with potassium—making them a quick energy snack. Our favorite source for this delicious fruit is Sonoran Date Palms, in Arizona. [sonorandatepalms.com](http://sonorandatepalms.com)

**OUR TAKES ON DATES:** Slice, pit, and stuff with drained ricotta cheese, and then dust with cocoa powder, pictured. • Blend with milk and ice (or ice cream). • Purée, and use as a sweetener for brownies, as frosting on a cake, or folded into whipped cream for a mousse or a fool.



## TROPICAL FLAIR

With a vast collection of 18th- and 19th-century prints as inspiration, New York découpage artist John Derian has singled out a bold leaf to design these handmade oval glass plates, which come in two sizes (10 by 14 inches and 5 by 7 inches). [johnderian.com](http://johnderian.com)

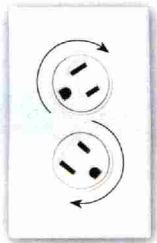
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MARTHA STEWART; COURTESY OF SWANS ISLAND BLANKETS (4); JOHNNY MILLER (3)

THE BRIEFING

## BRIGHT IDEAS

*Household tools get a sleek, smart update.*

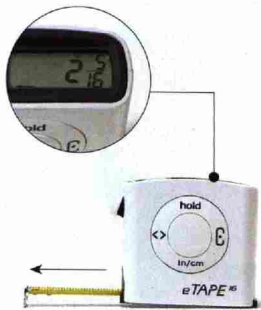
These everyday objects not only look stylish, no matter your décor, but also make life easier, thanks to their improved designs. Wall outlets spin to accommodate bulky plugs, a tape measure digitally records dimensions, and a slender little light-flashlight beams on the moment darkness arrives—or the power goes out.



NO. 1

**ROTATING OUTLET**

Charge your cell phone and laptop at the same source with 360 Electrical's rotating duplex outlet, available in four colors. [360electrical.com](http://360electrical.com)



NO. 2

**DIGITAL MEASURING TAPE**

The eTape takes accurate measurements quickly—in feet and inches or using the metric system—and displays increments of 1/16 inch. [thinkgeek.com](http://thinkgeek.com)



NO. 3

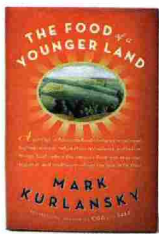
**LED NIGHT LIGHT**

The Sylvania Power Failure Light goes on in the evening, flashes in a blackout, and doubles as a flashlight with a built-in rechargeable battery. [www.sylvania.com](http://www.sylvania.com)



EXHIBITIONS  
**FABRIC OF HISTORY**

Everything old is new again, as quilting comes to life in a pair of museum shows. Stunning early-20th-century Amish quilts with a surprisingly modern bent, above, are on display in *Constructed Color*, at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. And at the Shelburne Museum, in Vermont, you'll find a quieter but equally important exhibit, *Piecing Together the Past—10 works by Florence Peto*, a mid-20th-century quilting star. Says curator Jean Burks, "Her goal was to show that this form of folk art is as historically meaningful as the written word." [textilemuseum.org](http://textilemuseum.org); [shelburnemuseum.org](http://shelburnemuseum.org)



**WHAT AMERICA ATE** Take a bite out of history with this 1930s time capsule. The compendium revives regional rarities such as Montana fried beaver tail and Indiana pork cake. Just leave room for Mississippi molasses pie.

**THE FOOD OF A YOUNGER LAND**  
*Riverhead*

## SPRING cheer

These pert glass tumblers make charming gifts for Mother's Day and are versatile players throughout the home. The handblown glass pieces, designed by Rhode Island artisan Laura Kramer, are three inches tall and come in more than a dozen luscious colors. Use them as small vases to hold flowers or for cocktails at a spring luncheon, or fit them with votive candles to cast a colorful glow. [lbkstudio.com](http://lbkstudio.com)



SEE GUIDE FOR INFORMATION AND SOURCES

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF 360 ELECTRICAL; JOHNNY MILLER (3); COURTESY OF THE TEXTILE MUSEUM; JOHNNY MILLER (2)

## The Briefing

**PAGE 31** Medium LEASH, \$54, from Found My Animal, 917-406-1239 or foundmyanimal.com. Special thanks to Matthew Axe for use of his dog, Rusty, who was rescued by WTCARES (wtcares.org), a volunteer service of the Welsh Terrier Club of America. Isao Yoshikawa and Osamu Suzuki, **BAMBOO FENCES** (Princeton Architectural Press, 2009; \$40). Plant SHEARS, \$38, by Genichi Sakai, from MoMA Store, 800-447-6662 or momastore.org.

**PAGE 32** BIRDCAM (WSCA01), \$159 to \$249, from Wingscapes, 888-811-9464 or wingscapes.com. THROW BLANKET in Solid Indigo, \$475 (monogramming, \$90 for the first 6 characters), from Swan's Island Blankets, 888-526-9526 or swansislandblankets.com. Jumbo USDA-certified-organic Medjool DATES, \$5 to \$7 for a 1 lb. box, from Sonoran Date Palms, 602-738-9832 or sonorandatepalms.com. OVAL DÉCOUPAGE TRAYS: 10"-by-14" frond, \$145, and 5"-by-7" fern leaf, \$62, from John Derian, 212-677-3917 or johnderian.com.

**PAGE 34** 360 Electrical ROTATING OUTLET, \$8.99, from Cable Organizer, 866-222-0030 or cableorganizer.com. DIGITAL MEASURING TAPE (#9D77), \$24.99, from Think Geek, 888-854-4335 or thinkgeek.com. POWER-FAILURE LIGHT (2nd generation) (#72170), \$12.99, from Sylvania, 800-544-4828 or www.sylvania.com. CONSTRUCTED COLOR: AMISH QUILTS exhibition, at the Textile Museum, through September 6, 202-667-0441 or textilemuseum.org. PIECING TOGETHER THE PAST: THE QUILTS OF FLORENCE PETO exhibition, at the Shelburne Museum, May 17 to October 25, 802-985-3346 or shelburnemuseum.org. Mark Kurlansky, **THE FOOD OF A YOUNGER LAND** (Riverhead, 2009; \$27.95). **HAND-BLOWN GLASS TUMBLERS**, Twist Series in Opaque Turquoise, Mix, and Opaque Celadon, \$40 each, from LBK Studio, 401-345-8082 or lbkstudio.com.