



Performance fabrics are ideal for bright, sunny spots in the home or office because they prevent fading. [CONTRIBUTED PHOTO]

## PERFORMANCE FABRIC *is all the rage*

Story by **Marie Feltz**

Performance fabrics, for use in the home as well as outdoors, were especially prominent as we toured the Fall International Home Furnishings Market at High Point, North Carolina. They were so much in the spotlight that there was even a “Performance Fabric Playground” at which visitors to the market could test clean a variety of fabrics that had been spotted with red wine, orange soda, chocolate milk, coffee, balsamic vinegar salad dressing, crayons, markers or lipstick.

Outdoor furniture is now getting more of an indoor upholstered look to give homeowners more variety in selections. Showrooms were also showing power options with outdoor pieces.

In one showroom, we saw how their all-fiber cushion construction allows moisture to drain through, preventing mold and mildew, and sits beautifully in the frame using a seat construction technique that provides long-life and sag-resistant support.



Choosing a white sofa that's covered in a performance fabric makes it easier to use in a living room or family room setting. [CONTRIBUTED PHOTO]

### Moving indoors

In another showroom, a manufacturer of fine upholstered furniture told us that 19 of their 25 top-selling fabrics are performance fabrics. To add emphasis to that point, they even arranged for our group to have a special demonstration of a brand new performance fabric called Inside Out, described as being “the first all-in-one performance fabric that can satisfy all of your needs and withstand the elements, both inside and outside.”

So why the push to develop performance fabrics for indoor use?

Eating areas are an obvious place performance fabrics can be especially appreciated. One might be hesitant to use white fabric on counter seats unless you know those frequent spills could be cleaned without staining.

There are far more reasons, though, for considering performance fabrics. You might want an upholstered piece that can withstand glaring sun for placement by a window. You might want a light colored piece in a room that will be frequented by children. Family rooms for active households could be another place you would want to explore using a performance fabric.

Don't forget pets. Just because you have a dog or cat doesn't mean you can't still have beautiful custom-designed fine upholstered furniture.

### What does “performance” really mean?

There are usually five factors when fabric performance is discussed.

Durability has a standardized measure called “double rubs.” The fabric is tested with a machine that rubs a certain kind of heavy canvas in a back-and-forth motion. Each back-and-forth is known as a double rub. The fabric is usually rated as:

**Light Duty:** 3,000-9,000 double rubs. This fabric will only last one to three years before showing noticeable signs of wear.

**Medium Duty:** 9,000-15,000 double rubs. This fabric grade is considered fairly durable and may offer a more cost-effective option for families on a budget. It is still strong enough to be recommended for use in family rooms.

**Heavy Duty:** 15,000-plus double rubs.

These materials are ideal for busy homes that have pets and children. This is a minimum to be considered heavy duty performance. Most are rated more than 50,000 double rubs.

A salesperson who is claiming a certain number of double rubs for a fabric should be able to show documentation from a testing lab.

### What else to look for:

#### Cleaning instructions should be clear:

Can it be cleaned with water? Can you use bleach? Or will you need a solvent? Check to see if it's stain-, liquid- and solid-resistant.

**Outdoor use:** For this, you will want to know about its resistance to fading, mildew or odor.

**Sustainability:** Some will want to know if it's PFC-free, has recycled content, natural fiber content, or whether it is certifiable green in some way.

The key is to be knowledgeable. Or, use a knowledgeable design professional to help you choose the right performance fabric for your home. **LEL**



Performance fabric is a must if you are going to use white seats in an eating area. [CONTRIBUTED PHOTO]



This conversational configuration is actually upholstered for outdoor use. [CONTRIBUTED PHOTO]

*“The best thing to hold onto in life is each other.”*

— AUDREY HEPBURN, ACTRESS



**Karen Beardsley** visits an advertising exhibit with a lot of history at Gannon University's Schuster Theater. She is the media relations manager at UPMC. **page 17**



**Liz Allen**, a retired newspaper editor, learns how to make lace. She was tickled to learn that the macramé Christmas ornaments she learned to make in a craft class circa 1975 are actually a form of lace-making. **page 50**



**Melissa Erickson** shares some suggestions on how to choose ring insurance. She also covers wedding traditions and trends. She is a writer and copy editor for Gatehouse Media. **pages 39, 44, 48**



**Marie Feltz** shared what she learned about new home furnishings and fabrics during the recent International Home Furnishings Market at High Point, North Carolina. She is an award-winning designer with more than 30 years of experience. She owns Decorating Den Interiors of Meadville and also serves the Erie area. **page 12**



**Trill Dreistadt** gets the drift on where we can all find sleigh rides this winter. Dreistadt is a retired journalism teacher who is now a freelance writer and editor. **page 58**



**Jennie Geisler** shares her fabulous recipe for Stuffed Pepper Soup. She is the resident foodie at the Erie Times-News and has shared recipes she makes at home for more than 16 years. **page 22**



**Jack Hanrahan** found a great display of holiday lights in Millcreek Township. He is an award-winning photojournalist at the Erie Times-News and GoErie. **page 66**



**Steve Orbanek** meets two Waterford natives who opened a brewery in Millvale, Pa. Orbanek and he tells us about some fun bachelor party ideas that include Buffalo chicken wings and more. Orbanek is a marketing communications specialist at Penn State Behrend. **page 18, 40**



**Pam Parker** catches up with Cassandra Garrison, who appeared on the first bridal issue of Lake Erie LifeStyle in January 2010. Parker looks at some of the wedding trends and interviews brides who had summer and winter weddings. Parker is the editor of Lake Erie LifeStyle, Her Times and House to Home at the Erie Times-News. **page 10, 24, 28, 30**



**Jennifer Smith** shares that her family recently added an elevator and adapted the lighting and plumbing in her home to accommodate her son and his new power wheelchair. She is freelance writer who has lived in her North East home since 2000. **page 15**

## Celebrate!

Compiled by **Pam Parker**

Happy New Year!  
It's not just the month to start anew or establish a resolution. It's also:

- National Bath Safety Month
- National Blood Donor Month
- National Braille Literacy Month
- National Hobby Month
- Hot Tea Month
- National Oatmeal Month
- National Mentoring Month
- National Slow Cooking Month
- National Soup Month

And there are some pretty great days to celebrate:

- Jan. 4:** National Spaghetti Day
- Jan. 8:** Bubble Bath Day
- Jan. 10:** Bittersweet Chocolate Day
- Jan. 10:** Houseplant Appreciation Day
- Jan. 15:** National Hat Day
- Jan. 17:** Ditch New Year's Resolutions Day
- Jan. 18:** Winnie the Pooh Day — the birthday of Winnie's author A.A. Milne
- Jan. 19:** National Popcorn Day
- Jan. 20:** National Cheese Lover's Day
- Jan. 21:** Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday (celebrated on the third Monday)
- Jan. 22:** National Blonde Brownie Day
- Jan. 23:** National Pie Day
- Jan. 27:** Chocolate Cake Day
- Jan. 29:** National Puzzle Day



According to [NationaDayCalendarDay.com](http://NationaDayCalendarDay.com), working on a jigsaw puzzle makes us use both sides of our brain, and that can improve memory, cognitive function and problem-solving skills. And don't forget crossword puzzles, Sudoku, word searches and other puzzles. [SHUTTERSTOCK.COM]

## COMING IN FEBRUARY

*Here comes our food issue. We have a lot of healthy eating ideas, but we won't miss a chance to talk about splurging, too.*