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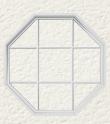
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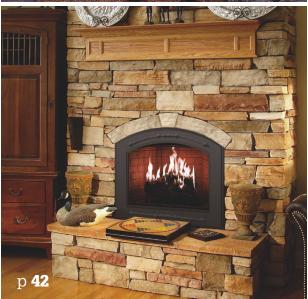
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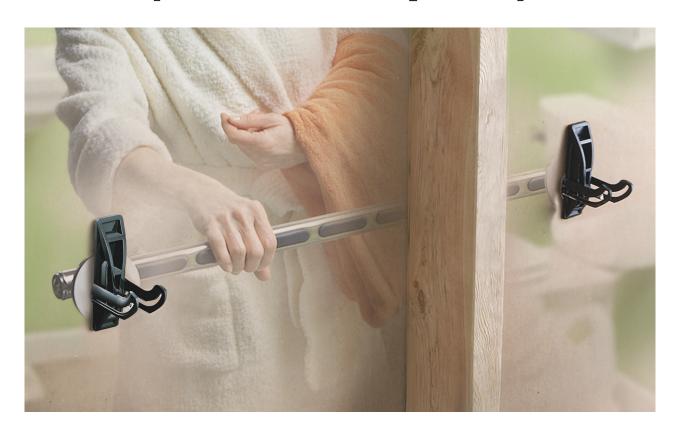
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# **Positively Perfect**

How is your company culture? If you've got happy, productive employees, satisfied customers and feel like every day presents a new opportunity for success, congratulations. If this is not the case at your company, take heart in the fact that you're not alone.



Michael R. Morris Editor in Chief 630/288-8057 michael.morris@reedbusiness.com

There's a lot you can do to change your company culture for the better, and it doesn't require you to hire an expensive consultant or fire your worst employees. You can change your company culture more quickly and easily than you might think.

It all starts with you.

As the leader of your firm, how do you react when the going gets tough? Keeping a positive mental attitude when things aren't going smoothly is important for the owner of a small remodeling firm. Everyone in your company takes their cues from you, and if you can't keep it together under duress, how can you expect your employees to do so?

The success of most professional remodeling firms, I've found, is driven by the personality of the owner. As your company becomes successful and grows, the stress and anxiety it brings can whittle away at your ability to remain the same person who gave birth to and nurtured the climate that allowed for all that success.

When you look in the mirror, what do you see? Is there a positive, confident, self-motivated person staring back

at you? Are you still the type of individual that you yourself would do anything for when the going gets tough?

If not, I suggest you try and change the way you project yourself in your company culture. That image can significantly affect the level of success you achieve in the future.

There are a lot of great ideas and theories about how to adopt a positive mental attitude. One effective tool that's helped me through some difficult times is the use of affirmations. An affirmation is a strong, positive statement that tells your brain that all is well, no matter what negative circumstances the day may bring.

Try this exercise: When you get up in the morning, repeat to yourself 10 times out loud, "Today is going to be a perfect day," or some similar positive statement. Repeat this exercise daily for a week or more. Don't worry that you may not believe it. When your brain receives that positive message, it will have a subliminal impact on your attitude and how you interact with others.

Give it a try, and let me know how it works for you. PR



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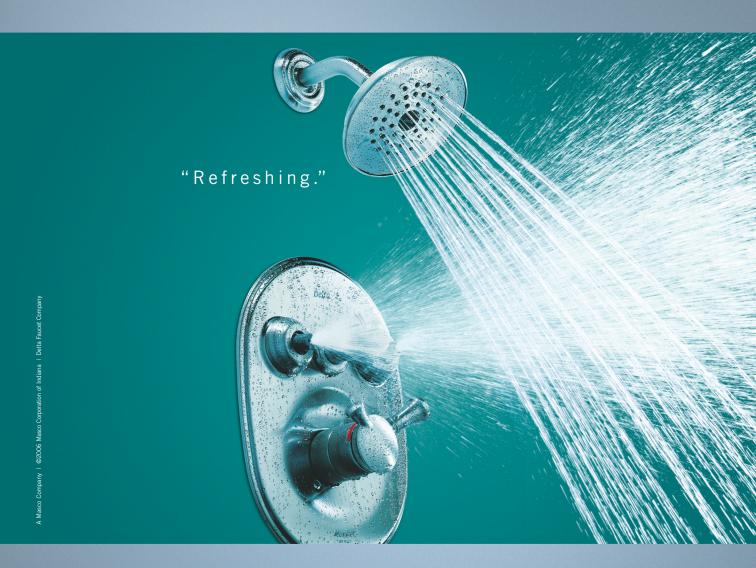
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# Professional Rentables HIP BEST PRACTICES



Doug Dwyer Contributing Editor

# The Power of Respect

We live in a fast-paced society with e-mail, instant messaging, microwaves and hydro mulch. Society keeps speeding up, and often we take on more than we can do.

It is easy to lose sight of some basic truths that never change, like using the words please and thank you. The temptation is to cut short all unnecessary words in our communications because we have such busy lives. The danger of this is that we lose the personal touch, care and relationship connection we all desire as human beings.

When my son was three, we would watch or listen to Barney (you know, the purple dinosaur) and one song that has stuck with me all these years is the one that taught kids to say "please" and "thank you." At first, it got on my nerves, and I thought I'd go crazy if I had to listen to it one more time. But after a while, some if it started to make sense. Why was this so important and why did they sell so many copies of those recordings? Because we want our children to grow up to be respectful of others.

As Stephen R. Covey, author of "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Words can have tremendous power. They can build people up or tear them down.

I have found that truly caring for and being respectful of others causes others to want to help me because I took a little extra time to say please, thank you, or make some other meaningful gesture.

The old saying is that you reap what you sow. If you sow caring, you get it in return. If you sow selfishness, you get

that back in return.

Years ago, my marketing director produced a program for a training event, and the person printing it for her put the wrong company in the content. Let's just say that I was not too happy. But I thought about it, and what could be done? She was already beating herself up over it and had always been a top performer for me and the company. So, we met about it and decided we would make the best of the situation, as well as put a plan

care of the basics of treating people with respect and not giving in to the pressures of performance, looking good or generating profit, we would have a much more enjoyable life and, at the same time, be surprised by the results.

People walk through fire for you and with you if you take the heat for them. Some other "simple kind gestures" that don't cost a lot of time or money include smiling, telling someone something they did right to encourage and build their confidence, stopping to shake someone's hand and say hello, or, like the story I shared, attack the issue, not the person. The latter is much easier said than done, but it will pay off more than a hundred fold if you can remember to keep your cool.

### As the saying goes, "Courtesy costs nothing but can buy things that are priceless."

in place to fix the programs. She knew I wasn't happy and that it made us look bad. But, she was also surprised I didn't overreact or blow up at her. Years later, she told me she really respected me for how I handled the situation, and it's one of the reasons she stayed with the company and felt loyal to me.

This situation was no different than someone working for you who has ordered the wrong product, left something out of the estimate or placed the outlet in the wrong spot in the drawing. These all cost time, emotional energy and money, yet we still have a choice on how to respond.

You may be like me; sometimes I complicate things. If we would just take

My recommendation is to slow down just a little to make sure you are implementing the basic "Laws of Respect." This will produce positive momentum for your company now and in the future. The basic idea is to uncomplicate the business of remodeling and to simplify and profit. As the saying goes, "Courtesy costs nothing but can buy things that are priceless." **PR** 

Doug Dwyer is president and chief stewarding officer of DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen by Worldwide, one of the nation's largest remodeling franchises. He can be reached at doug.dwyer@dwyergroup.com.



For more Best Practices. visit www.ProRemodeler.com/ bestpractices

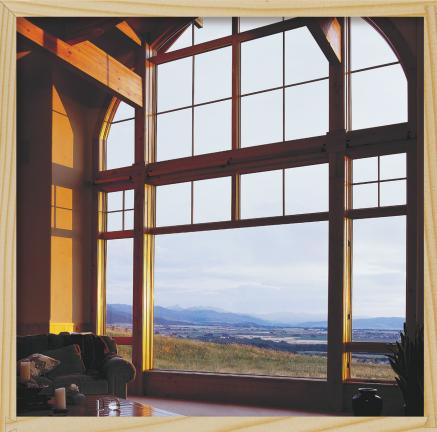
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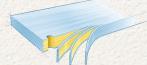


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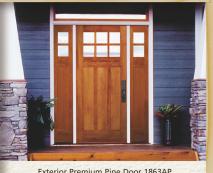


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2006 Best of the Best Design Award winners illustrate how to take advantage of the high-end market

**With baby boomers** continuing to fuel growth in the residential remodeling market, it's no wonder their penchant for high-end luxuries, amenities and design details have come shining through in this year's winning Best of the Best Design Awards projects. This year's award winning projects - more so than any previous year – exhibit the type of upscale flair boomers require in their homes. Large additions, luxurious kitchens and baths, high-tech basement remodels and amenity-filled outdoor living projects were

The more than 180 entries – in 18 categories - were judged on four criteria: construction quality, visual appeal, effective space planning, and functionality. Kitchens dominated in number of entries, followed by additions and whole-house remodels.

the most notable trends.

Sixty two award winners emerged, including 11 Platinum Awards and one Best of the Best Award, honoring our judges' choice for the project of the year.

#### 2006 Best of the Best **Design Award Judges** Dan Griffin,

Griffin & Associates David McNulty, McNulty Design Group Michael Menn, **Design Construction** Concepts

#### 2007 Entries **Being Accepted**

To enter a project in our 2007 Best of the Best Design Awards program, log on to www.proremodeler.com/ designawards.



# from the Past

## Exterior renovation returns historical home to its roots

By Ann Matesi Contributing Editor

#### **EXTERIOR**

Remodeler and architect: Feinmann Inc., Arlington, Mass.

**Using a treasured set** of original architectural plans for their century-old Victorian home as their guide, the owners of this Newton, Mass., home realized their long-held dream of returning the exterior façade of the house to its past distinctive charm and character. The end result was not only a residence that serves as a showpiece for its community, but is also more energy-efficient and low-maintenance.



Rather than create an exact copy of the original façade, the restoration process used authentic Victorian details such as brackets and panels; ribbon boards at different levels; and custom molding accents. The team paid special attention to re-establishing the correct design and visual weight for the porch and deck balustrade. After photos: John Horner Photography

Extensively remodeled nearly 40 years earlier, the home's clapboard siding had been covered with stucco, its outdoor porches altered, and its charming gingerbread detailing long gone. The previous owner had even replaced all of the traditional double-hung windows with flat, uninsulated, industrial-style window panels.

#### **Client history**

Over the years, Feinmann worked with the clients on several interior remodeling projects, including a recent addition to the back of their home. In that project, Feinmann updated the kitchen, enlarged the dining room and added a sunroom. "As we worked with them they expressed their strong intention of eventually restoring the home's Victorian-style exterior," says certified remodeler Peter Feinmann. "Keeping this objective in mind, the rear addition was designed to complement their future plans for the home rather than to match its current appearance."

The much-anticipated exterior renovation project that began in 2005 included the front and two side elevations. "We were fortunate that the owners had the hand-drawn plans for the home in their possession," says Feinmann, "because having the ability to refer back to the original sketches for a house this age is extremely unusual. This helped us to visualize what the old façade really looked like."

Although the sketches were a tremendous help in setting the design goals for the project, they also made it more challenging, he says. "Essentially this project turned out to be a reproduction of the theme of the home rather than an exact replication of it," Feinmann said. "We had to address the budget that we were working with, and matching all of its original specifications would have been cost-prohibitive for the client."

#### **Protocol check**

Prior to the start of the project, the remodeler had to submit the design for the proposed renovation to the local historical board for approval. "They were thrilled," says project manager Rick Cutler. "When they compared the new plans to the original ones they could hardly see any difference at all. At first they thought that we had just re-drawn them."

Recapturing the style of the front of the home was the most difficult part of the project, Cutler says. "The last remodel really destroyed the look of the home," Cutler says. "It had a Swiss chalet appearance. We had to do a fair amount of demolition just to get to the point of where we could start the restoration process."

The exterior now features a combination of materials that include natural red cedar shake shingles, custom-made brackets, porch posts, medallions, brick and natural stone. Achieving the right look for the new porch railings also



The home's low-maintenance exterior features decorative urethane millwork from Fypon and insulated simulated divided sash windows from Marvin.

proved to be a major challenge, says Feinmann.

Local homes of similar age provided a helpful reference point for the redesign. "We spent a lot of time touring the area to get ideas for what we thought would look best in terms of re-establishing the original style," says Cutler.

High-efficiency insulated windows were used to replace all of the existing ones. "Fortunately, we could see from the original drawings that the window locations had been left intact, so we were able to save a lot of time and expense by avoiding major framing changes," Feinmann says.

The remodel also addressed upgrading the home's existing insulation deficiency. Blown-in insulation was added through all the exterior walls and spray-in-place soft foam insulation was incorporated into the attic.

"One of the most remarkable things," says Cutler, "was that although this was a remodeling project that specifically addressed the exterior of the home, it had a huge impact on the livability of the interior living spaces as well."

#### Design/Build advantage

This type of project demonstrates the benefits of running a design/build firm. "We maintain a staff of architects and designers who work very closely with our project managers," says Feinmann. "This permits us to manage the tension between the design and construction elements of a project - the tug and pull, as I call it. Because everyone is all part of the same company, they play well together. It is the element of recognizing the collaborative effort, which is very important, that makes a project like this one work."

## Polishing a Gold Coast Gem

#### WHOLE HOUSE OVER \$500,000

Remodeler and architect: Orren Pickell Remodeling Group, Lincolnshire, Ill.

hen it came to recapturing the original interior character of this turn-of-the-century Chicago graystone, architect Jason DeBaker, discovered he could start with a blank slate.

The exterior of the building, which the client intended to sell after remodeling, featured an architecturally significant and well-preserved façade. The interior of the fourlevel home, however, had been remodeled in the 1970s with most of its original detailing long since removed.

"The emphasis for this project was to bring the interior of the home back to the historic style and flavor that it deserved," says DeBaker, lead architect for Orren Pickell Remodeling Group, of Lincolnshire, Ill. "Initially we spent a lot of time on research and toured homes in the area that we knew were either original or had been restored."

The program the design/build firm defined for the renovation of the 8,000-square-foot residence maintained a classic interior style on the main floor, which would include formal living and dining rooms at the front and private family spaces such as the kitchen and family room at the rear. The team dedicated the second floor to the master retreat, which includes a fireplace, luxurious bath and private library as well as the bedroom. Three bedrooms, a play room and two full baths are included on the uppermost floor. The home's garden level features a guest suite, a glass-walled wine cellar and tasting area and a billiards room.

"This was a unique situation for a remodel because it was not like working with a conventional homeowner who is living in the house," says DeBaker. Oren Pickell selected nearly all of the materials selections which were very upscale but deliberately neutral, DeBaker says.

Updating the home in terms of state-of-the-art wiring, accommodating contemporary plumbing fixtures, and adding low-voltage lighting were challenges, says DeBaker. They avoided breaking into walls wherever possible. For example, custom-designed cabinetry was used to conceal the brain boxes and high-tech components for the media center in the main-floor family room.

"Because this home was not designed for a specific client," says DeBaker "we deliberately tried not to over-customize it so that a buyer could bring their own flavor to it later on."





Painted millwork throughout the main floor contributes to a formal ambiance. The entry foyer features a limestone floor and a combination wood and wroughtiron staircase banister. A skylight in the top-floor recreation room provides a unique view of the city.

Photography by Linda Oyama Bryan Photography

## Craftsman's **Touch**

Remodeler and residential designer: Stone Pillar Remodeling, Redmond, Wash.

lassic craftsman details with a northwestern twist transformed the exterior of this high-profile, 35-year-old hillside ranch from bland to beautiful.

The new look to the Bellevue, Wash... home includes brand new front and rear porch entries, barrel vaulted archways supported by stone-sheathed battered columns, cedar lap siding and energy-efficient windows.

"What really struck me about this project is that it was a very bold renovation," says remodeler Patty Gordon, who partners Stone Pillar Remodeling, a design/ build firm located in Redmond, Wash., with husband, Paul. "Now the home has an interesting park lodge appearance that is really stunning."

The goals of the exterior remodel were threefold: to increase the entry impact of the home's flat and featureless street facade: to add a deck off the front-oriented master suite, which is the only room in the house that has a view of the nearby mountains; and to develop outdoor living space in the back yard that would permit the homeowner to enjoy her extensive gardens.

"It was really important to accomplish a symmetry between these three elements and get away from the linear look of the original style," says Gordon. "We did this by repeating the same shape of the barrel vaults on both the front and rear elevations and using a curved railing on the new deck."

On the front of the home, the master suite's existing aluminum windows were replaced with two sets of French doors. The new deck is large enough to accommodate outdoor furniture. The original stairway leading to the main entry was retained but the porch was



Cultured stone from Eldorado Stone accents the new front entrance, which features a custom-designed, mahogany door and an oval side window. "With its barrel vaulted ceiling, the new porch now feels like its own separate room," says Gordon. After photos by Krogstad Photography





enclosed and extended forward to meet the existing lower section of the

Gordon is quick to attribute much of the success of the project to her client, who, she says, was very involved in the design process. "She has a background in art and, even though she

had no architectural experience, she did a wonderful job of making sure that everything went together well. Her ability to made decisions sped the process. The finished product is a remarkable reflection of her personality."



# **Quality Addition**

#### ADDITION OVER \$100,000

Remodeler and architect: Carnemark Systems & Design, Bethesda, Md.

ombining well-thought-out design changes with common sense value engineering principles, design/build remodeler Carnemark Systems & Design transformed this dated salt box home into a Craftsman-style residence that is as distinctive architecturally as it is accommodating of living space for the family that lives there.

The clients had four main goals, says company president and certified remodeler, Jonas Carnemark of the Bethesda, Md.-based firm. These included updating the front of the Falls Church, Va., home, creating an additional bedroom for their growing family, adding a screened porch and establishing a better flow for the indoor living space. "We were able to accomplish all of this and even get them one more bedroom than they had anticipated and still stay within our budget."

The design reconfigured the home's traditional Cape Cod roofline to eliminate a pair of street-facing dormers that restricted room size and ceiling height in the secondfloor bedrooms. The new exterior features a pair of distinctive gables connected by a shed dormer that brings in light and increases available living space upstairs. Other changes on the front elevation include a new entry and foyer; cedar shake shingle detailing; and horizontal clapboard siding. A 950-square-foot side addition provides the



The original colonial-style interior trim, including the fireplace mantel, were replaced with craftsman details. The tile surround for the fireplace was inspired by an arts and crafts color palette. The home's windows and exterior doors (top left) were replaced to boost energy efficiency. Lowmaintenance exterior features include copper detailing, ipe decking, fiber cement siding from James Hardie Building Products and cellular PVC millwork from Azek Trimboards.

After photos by Maxwell MacKenzie



owners with space for a library and their highly-prized three-season porch on the main floor and two more bedrooms upstairs.

The 52-year-old home already had

a rear addition that included a family room downstairs and a master suite above it that his clients loved. "But the spaciousness of the addition was not in keeping with the character of the rest of the house," says Carnemark. "We wanted to increase the sense of openness throughout the home to match the space at the back."

To accomplish this, the formal dining room was extended slightly into the side yard and reoriented to offer a better traffic pattern from the front entry into the kitchen, says Carnemark. "It also gave them much more dining space."

"In the end we achieved exactly what the client wanted," says Carnemark. "The home feels much more spacious inside but is not overwhelming in scale from the street."

# The Better, **Greater Outdoors**

#### **OUTDOOR LIVING**

Remodeler and designer: Marrokal Construction Co., San Diego, Calif.

emodeler John Davies only added 938 square feet of covered outdoor space to an already roomy, 7,800-square-foot southern California residence, but this luxuriously appointed alfresco addition has changed the way the homeowners entertain.

"The client really wanted an outdoor cooking area near the pool deck and spa that he could use with his children



or close friends," says Davies, director of design for the design/build firm, Marrokal Construction in San Diego. "It immediately became one of his favorite entertaining areas."

The new year-round space includes a full kitchen, a large gas fireplace, multiple seating areas, exterior commercial-grade heaters, dimmable layered lighting and even a discretely located clothes dryer to offer a warm towel after a dip in the pool.

The homeowner spared no expense in outfitting the pavilion with high-end finishes, including spending more than \$16,000 on Verde fire granite slab for the countertops. The ceiling coffers are reflected in the scored pattern on the stained concrete decking of the space.

The team paid careful attention to the addition's orientation on the lot, says Davies, as well as to how it would aesthetically fit with of the rest of the house. Connected directly to a smaller, existing covered porch that overlooks the pool terrace, the new structure features the same stucco finish,





The new outdoor room includes its own high-end kitchen and grill area, dining space and conversation area with a fireplace (top). The ceiling features detailed millwork that frames the coffers in the faux marble ceiling. The design/build team positioned the exterior columns and archways to block the view of other homes from inside the new pavilion (bottom). After photos by Gail Owens Photography

trim detail, and roof tile as those used on the main house. Says Davies: "We were very careful to make sure that the integration of the two spaces appears to be seamless."

Other key considerations included keeping the view of the surrounding mountains from the interior rooms, maximizing the prevailing daily breezes, and minimizing sun and rain exposure.

"Permitting was a big concern for us with this project because the home is located in a canyon next to a large conservation area," he says. "This means that it is in a firehazard zone." Fireproofing the structure, including adding a sprinkler system, was particularly important. The addition also had to pass a review by the local planning authority.

Adds Davies: "The homeowner says that he is now the envy of his neighbors."

# Their Own **Private Circus**

#### KITCHEN OVER \$100,000

Interior designer: Bauer Interior Design, San Francisco, Calif.

General contractor: John Sullivan, San Francisco, Calif.

A piece of artwork of a circus scene inspired interior designer Lou Ann Bauer's clients to crave a kitchen full of color and energy -that's not too cutesy or childlike. Handing over a great deal of trust, the homeowners let Bauer use a whimsical mix of colors, shapes and finishes to transform their conventional and ho-hum kitchen into a unique space that is equally functional.

"One of the most rewarding elements of this whole project was the trust level that they put in me to implement their vision," Bauer says. "They really permitted me to be very creative and did not micro-manage the project on their end. It was all about communication and listening to what the client wanted and taking it from there."

Bauer created a very detailed set of working drawings for the project that involved relocating a walk-in pantry and laundry room as well as transforming the tray ceiling into a more dramatic vaulted one. Her design includes a new island, a separate eating area and custom cabinets that feature a combination of

cherry, maple, paint-grade surfaces and 12 different types of hardware. A multi-color backsplash of diamond-shaped ceramic tile accents Brazilian blue granite counters.

"She really did her research," says general contractor John Sullivan, "and was very design specific. It really made a complicated job like this one a whole lot easier."

Bauer advises reexamining materials and how they come together to add character to a space. "Cabinets don't always have to match, for example," she says. "A project does not have to be as wild as this one, but by mixing things up you can get interesting results."

One of the benefits of such a unique project, says Bauer,





Block-style windows and cherry cabinets accent the custom-crafted stainless steel range hood, which dramatizes the kitchen's volume ceiling. A single piece of yellow slump glass serves as a backsplash behind the range. Cabinets have different finishes; in some cases, a single piece has multiple finishes. The white oak floor features a bold inlay pattern. Pendant lights resemble spun

cotton candy. After photos by David Duncan Livingston



is how it can be used to inspire everyone from the client to the designer to the trades. "People just get excited when they are working on something different,"

she says. "You are re-capturing their attention and this can be a great way to get their very best efforts."

"Projects don't come along like this often," agrees Sullivan. "I really had a great time doing it."

# **Illuminating Ideas** for New Kitchen

KITCHEN \$51,000 - \$100,000

Remodeler and architect: Forward Designers & Builders, Ann Arbor, Mich.

rchitect and remodeler Jef Forward says that he let conventional design constraints go when it came to remodeling the dark, dreary kitchen in this 62-year-old bungalow in Ann Arbor, Mich. His clients loved their home too much to move on to a brighter future somewhere else.

"They love this house and its location," says Forward, referring to his self-employed clients who both work from home. The problem was that the original kitchen was not conducive to their other passion – entertaining.

The homeowners wanted a larger, more functional kitchen with more seating space, more natural light and better outdoor views, he says - and adding to the house wasn't an option. Forward's solution included removing a divider wall between the kitchen and the breakfast nook; reorganizing the cooking center; redefining primary and secondary storage requirements; and capitalizing on every

opportunity to bring natural light into the new space.

One of his most interesting techniques for bringing additional light and circulation into the space was the creation of a custom-built pass-



through furniture hutch that serves not only as a physical divider between the kitchen and formal dining room but is uniquely functional for each space. On its kitchen side, the hutch includes a built-in microwave, while on the dining room side, it conceals a flat screen TV. The hutch also includes plenty of storage space, electrical switch controls and glass pass-through cabinets that permit light to filter between the two rooms. The design allowed the owners to gain 12 inches of usable space in the kitchen.

The end result is a spectacular transformation of a dated, compartmented space into a completely reorganized and cheerful cottage-style kitchen that features four distinct zones - cooking center, gathering space, wine tasting area, and service entry - in a single room. Even more incredible is that all of this was accomplished within the existing





Color variation in the cabinetry, including red and green for those in the kitchen and black for the room divider hutch, defines the separate zones in the new space. Beyond the wine-tasting island, which contains a built-in chiller, the library-style cookbook rack provides extra storage in formerly underutilized space. Forward used every opportunity to bring natural light into the new kitchen, including a window above the range hood that vents out the side wall. After photos by Gary Easter Photographics

perimeter of the original kitchen.

"There are lots of very interesting layers to this kitchen," says Forward. His favorite element? "I really love the subtle transition from the dining room into the kitchen created by the hutch. It turned out to be a really unique design solution to a challenging project."

# **Fairy Tale Finish**

#### KITCHEN \$51,000 - \$100,000

Residential designer: Stimmel Consulting Group,

Ambler, Pa.

General contractor: Emerald Designs, West Chester, Pa.

reating a new kitchen for this turn-of-the century Victorian castle provided residential designer David Stimmel with one of his most interesting and challenging projects to date, he says. He had to design a functional entertaining space that complemented the home's original architecture yet included modern, top-of-the-line appliances and finishes; it also had to reflect the style and color theme of a sample of toile wallpaper his client had cherished for years.

The wallpaper inspired the color scheme of the kitchen's custom cabinetry, tile details and trim, says Stimmel, who's Ambler, Pa.-based remodeling company specializes in custom kitchen and bath design, supply and installation. Working closely with the homeowner, period architectural elements were researched and selected to incorporate into the kitchen's large island, fireplace mantel range hood and furniture-style cabinetry. A custom cabinet fabrication shop treated every element, including highly detailed applied moldings that came from three suppliers, in the same finish for continuity.

Although the cabinets were designed to reflect the history of the home, the construction included innovative features such as a pair of pull-out storage pillars that form the legs of the range hood.

One of the first things Stimmel addressed at the outset of the project was how to increase the size of the home's original kitchen which, at approximately 300 square feet, did not meet the homeowner's living and entertaining needs.

"We actually blew out the walls in several adjoining rooms in order to create a single large area for the kitchen," he says. This increased the size of the working space by an additional 137 square feet. "During the deconstruction stage we uncovered one of the home's original structural beams in the ceiling which we saved." Three custom beams that mimic the original were fabricated and incorporated into the new ceiling to create its distinctive Country French-style coffers.

Keeping with the century-old character of the home, integrated appliances were used wherever possible. This includes a high-end refrigerator from Sub-Zero and twin dishwasher drawers from Fisher & Paykel Appliances, which are disguised as part of a free-standing buffet in the butler's pantry.





The new kitchen features a granite-topped island that includes a sink and seating for four. A mantel hood frames a periodstyle tile backsplash above a stainless steel Wolf range. Indirect lighting fixtures illuminate the crystal vases that flank the mantle. Bottom drawers of the plate rack china cabinets conceal pullout warming drawers. The butler's pantry features the same detailed cabinetry as the kitchen, and a limestone countertop matches the floor. After photos by Charles Meacham

# **Innovative Ideas Help Tight Space**

#### KITCHEN UNDER \$50,000

Remodeler and designer: Michael Nash Custom Kitchens, Fairfax, Va.

dding storage, seating and cooking features in a kitchen as restricted as this townhouse in Alexandria, Va., was no simple task, says Sonny Nazemian, president of Michael Nash Custom Kitchens. But ultimately, the Fairfax, Va.-based remodeler worked

design "magic," transforming this long, narrow space with a single window into a multifunctional work center that accommodates guests and has plenty of natural

Nazemian's clients, who entertain frequently, had decided their old kitchen woefully lacked storage and food prep options



and looked outdated. "But they absolutely loved their home and its location, so they chose to remodel the space rather than to move," he says. "I've been in this business for 24 years and have redesigned countless

kitchens. This, I think, was one of the most challenging projects that I've faced yet because of its space limitations."

The team began by recovering space from dead areas first, says Nazemian. Cabinets that provide more practical pull-out storage replaced an underused closet. A new wider island offers room for integrated appliances such as a drop-in gas cooktop and built-in microwave without sacrificing valuable counter or cabinet storage on the perimeter walls.

Finally, a sliding glass door was incorporated into an area that had previously been bare walls at the far end of the kitchen. In the same location, a custom-built table with a matching storage bench provides seating for six.



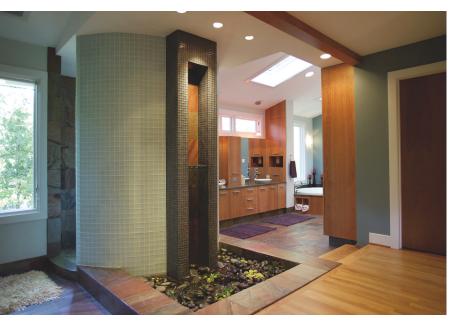


The Dacor drop-in cooktop in the island features a telescoping downdraft with a vent through ductwork that was installed between the floor joists. New wood flooring in the kitchen matches that used throughout the main floor and has no threshold to interrupt the transition between the spaces. After photos by Severn Design

Opposite this, an entertainment center holds family photos and conceals a television.

Nazemian addressed his client's desire for a more upscale ambiance by selecting high-end cherry cabinetry with glass doors and shelves; interior accent lighting; and built-in accessories complemented by dark granite counters and a tumbled marble backsplash.

The new design adds 73 percent more storage space to the kitchen as well as seating, says Nazemian. "The homeowners are thrilled with their new kitchen because it meets all of their needs. They also enjoy a better view of the outdoors and improved access to their backyard deck."





## **Natural Wonder**

**BATH OVER \$30,000** 

Remodeler and architect: Landis Construction Corp., Washington, D.C.

dramatic, glass-tiled curvilinear wall, accented by a floor-to-ceiling water feature rather than a conventional doorway, marks the transition from the bedroom into the new master bath in this 42-year-old residence in Potomac, Md. This open design permits the soothing sound of water spilling onto a pool of rocks and the bathroom's unique blend of contemporary and rustic finishes to be shared with the bedroom as well, lending the totally remodeled owner's retreat the soothing, Zenlike ambiance the homeowner desired.

"She wanted the bathroom to feel as though it was out-

The walk-through shower features slate walls, a granite seat and a river rock floor with starlight LED lighting in the ceiling. The outer shower wall houses the water feature. The new dressing area includes in-floor electric heating zones and two counter-mounted sinks atop a granite slab. After photos by Yerko H. Pallominy

doors," says remodeler and architect Chris Landis, co-owner of Landis Construction Corp., the Washington, D.C.-based design/ build firm responsible for the project. "In this case, we had a client who was looking for something out of the ordinary, and fortunately, she was committed to spending what she needed to in order to achieve those results."

The entire project, which included a complete reconfiguration of the master bedroom as well as a 10-foot by 40-foot addition that contains the new bathroom, cost approximately \$150,000. The original bathroom became a central walk-in closet that separates the newly located bedroom from its own private study. The new bathroom includes a circular tub, a dual-basin vanity and a stunning walk-through shower. The combination of skylights, transom windows above the vanity and a translucent window in the shower floods the entire space with natural light without sacrificing privacy. A separate HVAC zone in the addition controls excess humidity.

Landis' director of design, Armin Bondoc, served as lead designer for this project. One of the biggest challenges of the

open design was to make sense of the flow between all of the spaces. The backdrop for the water feature, for example, serves as the interior perimeter wall of the shower and separates the water closet from the dressing and bathing zones.

Bondoc also selected the upscale but unusual combination of finish materials that were used in the master bath, which included cherry, glass tile, slate, granite and



stone. "Initially my client was worried about how all of these materials would look together," he says, "Sometimes, it just comes down to trusting the vision of the designer until they can see the finished product."

## **Sweet Café**

#### COMMERCIAL REMODEL

Remodeler: Kaiser Building Co., Cranbury, N.J. Interior designers: Jerry Reilly, Halo Farm, Lawrence, N.J.

he sterile space once belonged to a celluar phone store. Now it's a charming old-style ice cream and pastry parlor that gives reason for celebration in a newly re-developed section of downtown Princeton, N.J., an area that resembles old-style Williamsburg.

Located in a mixed-use urban area that combines retail space with residential apartments within walking distance of Princeton University, the sweet treat shop – a product of Kaiser Building and interior

design firm Halo Farm - is one of several in the area, each with its own unique theme and menu, owned by the Halo Farm micro-dairy. This shop, appropriately called Halo Fete, was completed in January 2005 and designed to reflect the style and character of a French café.

"This client does something out of the ordinary for each one of its stores and sets an appropriately high budget in order to support that," says Michael Kaiser, head of Kaiser Building in Cranbury, N.J. The project had a budget of approximately \$140,000. "It is this type of very detailed and unusual commercial project that is our specialty."

One of the most challenging elements of the remodel, says Kaiser, became ensuring all materials would comply with health department standards because it's a retail space where food would be served.

The design for the gourmet ice cream patisserie called for high-end finishes selected to contribute a charming and rustic European flavor to the customer seating area as well as to the service counter and display cases. Materials, such as the Italian Carrera marble countertops and floor are intended to wear over time for added patina. Shiplapped pine plank paneling used for the wainscoting on the walls features a hand-rubbed gold glaze finish and has a red Venetian plaster above it.

The beamed ceiling is actually suspended from the building's structural framing, creating a chase for concealing HVAC, plumbing, piping and wiring runs. The rough-sawn beams themselves were recycled from a barn in Lancaster, Pa. Drywall panels between the beams were faux finished



Halo Fete's mosaic marble floor is very unique for a commercial space, says Kaiser. "This is something that you typically see done only as an accent in high-end residential work." After photos by Janet Paxton Photos



The back bar and service counter were custom built to fit the space and showcase the display freezers that contain the shop's edibles.

to simulate real plaster work, says Kaiser. "These custom touches really made this project extraordinary."



WHOLE-HOUSE OVER \$500,000 Bowers Design Build Inc., McLean, Va.



WHOLE-HOUSE \$251,000 - \$500,000 Byrd Development, Woodland Hills, Calif.



**REBUILD ON EXISTING FOUNDATION** Remodeler: Prestige Custom Builders Inc., Seattle Architect: TCA Architecture Planning, Seattle



WHOLE-HOUSE UNDER \$250,000 The Lykos Group, Naples, Fla.



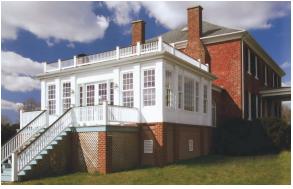
**OUTDOOR LIVING** Teakwood Builders Inc., Saratoga Springs, N.Y.



ADDITION OVER \$100,000 Architect: Architectural Resource, Ann Arbor, Mich. Remodeler: Custom Design-Build, Ann Arbor, Mich.



ADDITION UNDER \$100,000 Curb Appeal Renovations Inc., Keller, Texas



CONSERVATORY/SUNROOM HomeMasons, Inc., Manakin-Sabot, Va.



FINISHED BASEMENT Teakwood Builders Inc., Saratoga Springs, N.Y.



FINISHED BASEMENT Wright Street Design Group, Ann Arbor, Mich.



**INTERIOR REMODEL** Marrokal Construction Company, San Diego



KITCHEN OVER \$100,000 Carnemark Systems & Design Inc., Bethesda, Md.



KITCHEN OVER \$100,000

Remodeler: Plath & Company Inc., San Rafael, Calif. Architect: Andrew Skurman Architects, San Francisco



KITCHEN OVER \$100,000

Silent Rivers Inc., Des Moines, Iowa



KITCHEN \$51,000 - \$100,000

Prestige Custom Builders Inc., Seattle



KITCHEN \$51,000 - \$100,000

Stimmel Constulting Group Inc., Ambler, Pa.



KITCHEN \$51,000 - \$100,000

Remodeler: VanBerg Construction Inc., San Diego Architect: Michael DeLuca and Associates, Santee, Calif.



KITCHEN UNDER \$50,000

Marrokal Construction Company, San Diego



**BATH OVER \$30,000** Carnemark Systems & Design Inc., Bethesda, Md.



**BATH OVER \$30,000** Carnemark Systems & Design Inc., Bethesda, Md.



**BATH UNDER \$30,000** The Bainbridge Crew, Charlotte, N.C.



**COMMERCIAL REMODEL** New England Design & Remodeling, Northborough, Mass.



WHOLE-HOUSE OVER \$500,000 Landis Construction Corp., Washington, D.C.



WHOLE-HOUSE \$251,000 - \$500,000 HighCraft Builders, Fort Collins, Colo.



WHOLE-HOUSE UNDER \$250,000 Lellbach Builders, Warrenville, Ill.



CONSERVATORY/SUNROOM Remodeler: Lehner Brunton Remodelers, Warrenville, Ill. Architect: Hofman Architects, Shorewood, Wis.



ADDITION OVER \$100,000 Remodeler: Plath & Company Inc., San Rafael, Calif. Architect: ED2 International, San Francisco



**INTERIOR REMODEL** Landis Construction Corp., Washington, D.C.

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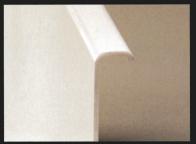


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FINISHED BASEMENT BDS Remodeling Services LLC, Chester, N.J.



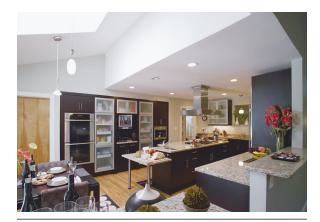
FINISHED BASEMENT Carnemark Systems & Design Inc., Bethesda, Md.



FINISHED BASEMENT College City Remodeling Inc., Lakeville, Minn.



KITCHEN OVER \$100,000 Architect: Architectural Resource, Ann Arbor, Mich. Remodeler: Custom Design-Build, Ann Arbor, Mich.



KITCHEN OVER \$100,000 Landis Construction Corp., Washington, D.C.



KITCHEN \$51,000 - \$100,000 SawHorse Inc., Atlanta



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KITCHEN UNDER \$50,000 Michael Nash Custom Kitchens Inc., Fairfax, Va.



**BATH OVER \$30,000** College City Remodeling Inc., Lakeville, Minn.

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WHOLE-HOUSE OVER \$500,000 VB Contractors Inc., Virginia Beach, Va.



WHOLE-HOUSE \$251,000 - \$500,000 Orfield Design & Construction Inc., St. Louis Park, Minn.



WHOLE-HOUSE UNDER \$250,000 Anderson Moore Builders, Winston Salem, N.C.



WHOLE-HOUSE \$251,000 - \$500,000 Remodeler: Pollard Construction Company Inc., River Forest, III. Architect: Gary Steiner Architects, Oak Park, Ill.



**INSURANCE RESTORATION - RESIDENTIAL** College City Remodeling Inc., Lakeville, Minn.



**OUTDOOR LIVING** The Bainbridge Crew, Charlotte, N.C.



ADDITION OVER \$100,000 The Bainbridge Crew, Charlotte, N.C.



ADDITION OVER \$100,000 SawHorse Inc., Atlanta



FINISHED BASEMENT Orren Pickell Remodeling Group, Lincolnshire, Ill.



CONSERVATORY/SUNROOM Architect: Architectural Resource, Ann Arbor, Mich. Remodeler: Custom Design-Build, Ann Arbor, Mich.



**EXTERIOR** 

Ronald L. Dimon Construction Co. Inc., Fayetteville, N.Y.



INTERIOR REMODEL

Remodeler: Stone Pillar Remodeling Inc.,

Redmond, Wash.

Architect: Nelson Architecture, Medina, Wash.



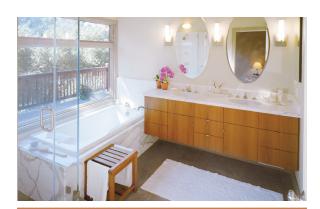
KITCHEN OVER \$100,000

Orfield Design & Construction Inc., St. Louis Park, Minn.



KITCHEN \$51,000 - \$100,000

The Bainbridge Crew, Charlotte, N.C.



**BATH OVER \$30,000** 

Remodeler: Alward Construction Co., Berkeley, Calif.

Architect: **Design Studio**, Berkeley, Calif.



**BATH OVER \$30,000** 

The Bainbridge Crew, Charlotte, N.C.



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Wet Area Wallboard	U.S. Gypsum
Wiring Devices	Leviton/Decora
Miscellaneous	Winner
Hand Tools	Stanley
Power Tools	DeWalt
Trucks	Ford
Vans	Ford
National Lending Firm	Wells Fargo

# Best in

Professional Remodeler's Best in Class Winners Say Quality is No. 1

By Nick Bajzek Products Editor

**Professional Remodeler's** 2006 Best in Class Survey asked top remodelers in the residential and commercial sectors to rate the qualities that attract them and keep them with a manufacturer and their products.

Though most of the respondents named products from top manufacturers, our survey showed that the appeal's not all in the name. Our survey found quality (43.4 percent) was overwhelmingly named as most important with remodelers when it came to choosing a product. Second on the list: customer service (17 percent). The category includes product support and

knowledgeable sales people. Excellent product selections came in a close third, with 15.6 percent of the responses. Rounding out the top five are all related to elements of customer service, such as product availability (14.2 percent) and, at number five, prices (12.5 percent).



Our survey also revealed some interesting regional differences about the remodeling industry. The Northeast, for example, installs slightly more skylights than in the sun-drenched Western states or in the South. However, less than half of the remodelers (44.6 precent) surveyed in the chilly Northeast report installing fireplaces. And the survey showed remodelers in the Midwest are more likely to work on small-scale jobs

# Class Winners



#### **Best in Class Statistics -Professional Remodeler**

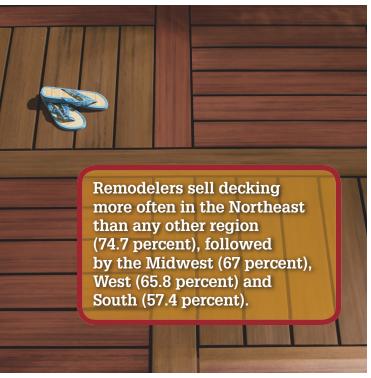
We asked remodelers to rate the qualities that make manufacturers best overall. Here's how they ranked the top 20 attributes:

best overall. Here's now they ranked the top 20 dtanbates.				
Rank	Quality	% Response		
1.	Quality Products	43.4%		
2.	Customer Service	17.0%		
3.	Wide/Great Selection/Product Line	15.6%		
4.	Product Availability	14.2%		
5.	Great/Good Prices	12.5%		
6.	Great Product Support	8.7%		
7.	Good Advertising	7.3%		
8.	Excellent Warranty Service	7.3%		
9.	Good Service	6.2%		
10.	No Problems	5.9%		
11.	Consistency	5.9%		
12.	Dependable/Reliable	4.9%		
13.	Name Recognition	4.9%		
14.	Well Built Products	4.5%		
15.	Timely Shipping/Delivery	4.5%		
16.	Appearance	4.2%		
17.	Good Literature	3.8%		
18.	Durable/Long Lasting	3.5%		
19.	Great Follow-Up	3.1%		
20.	Easy To Install Products	3.1%		

than any other region in the country.

Remodelers surveyed ran the gamut of company sizes and specialties. We used their responses to compile a list of the products most often mentioned, and out of that list emerged the winners of the 2006 Best in Class Survey. PR

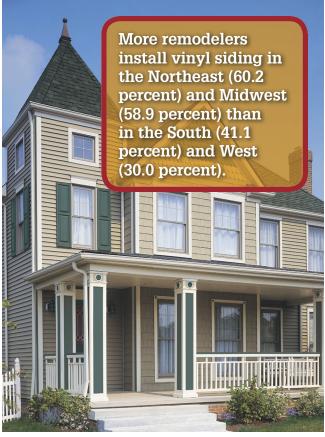








Remodeling firms in the Midwest claimed the smallest job sizes on average. Only 16 percent of Midwest remodelers' projects checked in at more than \$100,000. Firms in the South led the nation with 35.7 percent of their jobs over \$100,000.



Manufactured stone products have caught on more quickly in the West (53.9 percent) than any other region. The South has been slowest to accept this product category; just 34.1 percent of firms use these products.



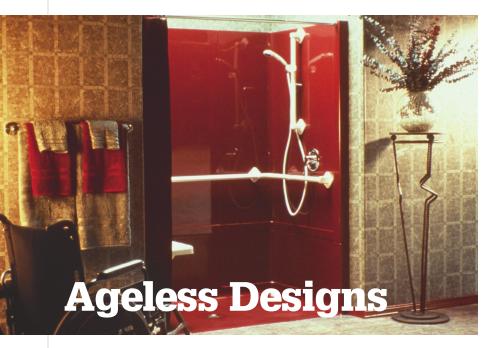


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# Remodelers reach new markets with Aging-in-Place techniques

By Scott T. Shepherd **PATH Partners** 

onnect these dots: Aging-inplace remodeling is the fastest growing segment of the residential remodeling industry. About 20 percent of the U.S. population will be elderly by 2030, and in 50 years, the percentage of retirees will more than double, according to Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies.

NAHB estimates the market could reach the \$20 billion to \$25 billion range as the population ages. And a survey by the AARP reveals that 89 percent of people 55 and older want to stay in their homes as long as possible, in contrast to many retirees in the previous generation, who chose to relocate to sunny Florida.

Installing a curbless shower entry allows easier access to customers with less mobility.

Clearly, a large market is waiting for remodelers who learn how to cater to an aging clientele. But the beauty of aging-in-place design is that it isn't just for the elderly: it also improves the living space of the young, the disabled and even people in the prime of their lives.

"It has become a multi-dimensional market," says Dan Bawden, president of Legal Eagle Contractors in Bellaire, Texas. "We do a lot of add-ons for older clients remodeling their own homes. But when I meet with baby boomers and tell them about aging-in-place techniques, they start thinking about their homes for the long-term, too."

"As a result, we've seen a steady increase in all of our business," says Bawden. "Pretty much all of our projects now include some aging-in-place features."

#### Features for any budget

Further good news about this market: it's relatively easy to service. A few well-thought-out changes can make a big difference in the quality of life. And aging-in-place methods usually don't cost much or anything at all. In fact, many aging-in-place features just require a little extra planning.

Here are some upgrades to consider: Lighting and Visuals

Good lighting and bright color schemes are crucial to home safety for anyone with impaired vision. But brighter light bulbs won't solve the problem because the elderly are more sensitive to glare.

To compensate, consider the effect of lighting placement, assuring that fixtures provide balanced, consistent lighting throughout a room. This reduces the glare and reduces the amount of shadow. Focus additional light on areas that need it most, such as doorways and stairwells, to offer greater security.

While you're at it, achieve adequate lighting through energy-efficient lighting and passive solar design. These measures serve seniors and residents on fixed incomes by minimizing monthly energy bills.

#### Handles, Switches and Outlets

For small hands or clients suffering from arthritis, turning a knob can be a significant chore. Easy-grip handles and hardware throughout the home can make life easier for young and old.

Replace traditional light switches with rocker-style or touch switches with large flat panels. To make light and fan switches, thermostats and other environmental controls more accessible, place them no higher than 48 inches from the floor. Also place electrical outlets 15 inches from the floor.

#### Windows and Doors

Wider doorways can have a big impact on accessibility, and in remodeling, it's particularly easy. If you are changing a door anyway, it just makes sense to widen the entryway, usually to 36 inches.





Simple changes such as elevating dishwashers 6 to 8 inches off the floor and installing grab bars in the shower are particularly appealing to elderly clients.

For people of all ages, there are advantages to having at least one nostep entry into the home. Not only does it allow for easier wheelchair access, it's also a valuable route for anyone carrying heavy bags - or toddlers.

For windows, choose easy-to-operate hardware for opening and closing. If possible, install lower windows or taller windows with lower sill height.

#### Kitchen and Bath

In the bathroom, the simplest upgrade is installing a grab bar in the shower or tub. This is particularly easy if you are replacing the shower or tub anyway. Other options include replacing shower door tracks, which restrict movement in and out of the tub, with a trackless system. Install a curbless or roll-in entry to allow easier access for customers with less mobility, although this design is a bit more expensive than a basic shower.

In the kitchen, adjustable cabinet systems allow greater access to storage areas and more under-counter kneespace for people who need to be seated. A less expensive and versatile option is pullout shelves, which provide a similar benefit.

Place countertops at varying heights throughout the kitchen to create workspace for people of different height.

Side-by-side refrigerators and stoves with front-mounted controls provide easier access. Place the microwave or wall oven 31 inches off the floor. Elevate the dishwasher 6 to 8 inches off the floor, and make it accessible from both the right and left sides.

#### One step beyond

To learn aging-in-place techniques, NAHB offers a certification (see sidebar), as do many local builder associations. These are a great place to start.

To meet a client's special needs, however. Bawden often confers with a medical professional. This person can meet with clients to discuss health and safety issues, and then go into the home to do an in-depth inspection.

"Sometimes clients are more comfortable talking about private issues with medical professionals, and they can also give a fuller assessment of the home," Bawden says. "They can get the client thinking a little more long term about

#### Get the Know How

he NAHB Remodelers Council, in collaboration with AARP, NAHB Research Center, and NAHB Seniors Housing Council, developed a program to help builders and remodelers learn aging-in-place design. NAHB's Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) designation program has three parts: techniques for working with and marketing to older adults, specific home modification measures, and business management skills. Learn more at http:// www.nahbregistration.com/category.aspx?sectionID=686.

Other aging-in-place resources:

ToolBase: Accessible Housing http://www.toolbase.org/ToolbaseResources/level3.aspx?BucketI D=5&CategoryID=27

Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH):

"Homes for Everyone: Universal Design Principles in Practice" http://www.pathnet.org/ sp.asp?id=9045

Professional Remodeler: "Aging in Place Opportunities" http://www.housingzone.com/ article/CA6330207.html?text=aging

themselves and their home."

This is not only to the client's benefit, but the remodeler's as well. When Bawden consults a medical professional, the project work typically expands. PR

Scott T. Shepherd writes about better building practices on behalf of the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH). PATH is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Learn more at www.pathnet.org.



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#### Loggerhead

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708/671-9034 www.loggerheadtools.com Circle 126 or go to http://pr.ims. ca/5222-126



#### Milwaukee

The V28 lithium-ion series from Milwaukee is a line of 28-volt cordless power tools that includes a 1-inch rotary hammer, right angle drill, metal circular saw and job site radio. The battery technology is suited for high-amp drawing applications and provides 4 volts per battery cell and an estimated 3 amp hours work life per charge.

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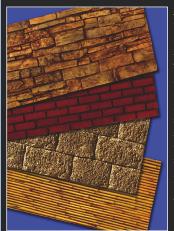
#### Stanley

The IntelliSensor Pro Metal Stud Sensor from Stanley features a metal mode for detection of both steel and copper pipes through drywall and other common wall materials. The sensor has a multi-mode LED panel for general detection and for depth indication ranging from 1/2 to 1-inches.

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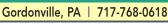
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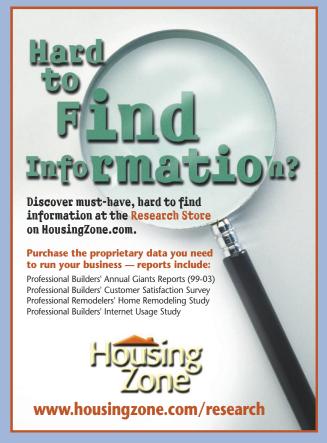
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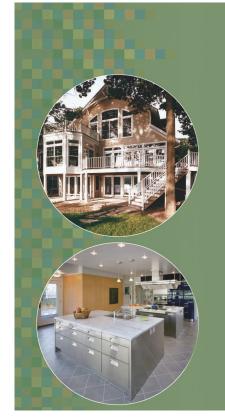
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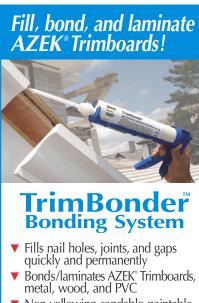
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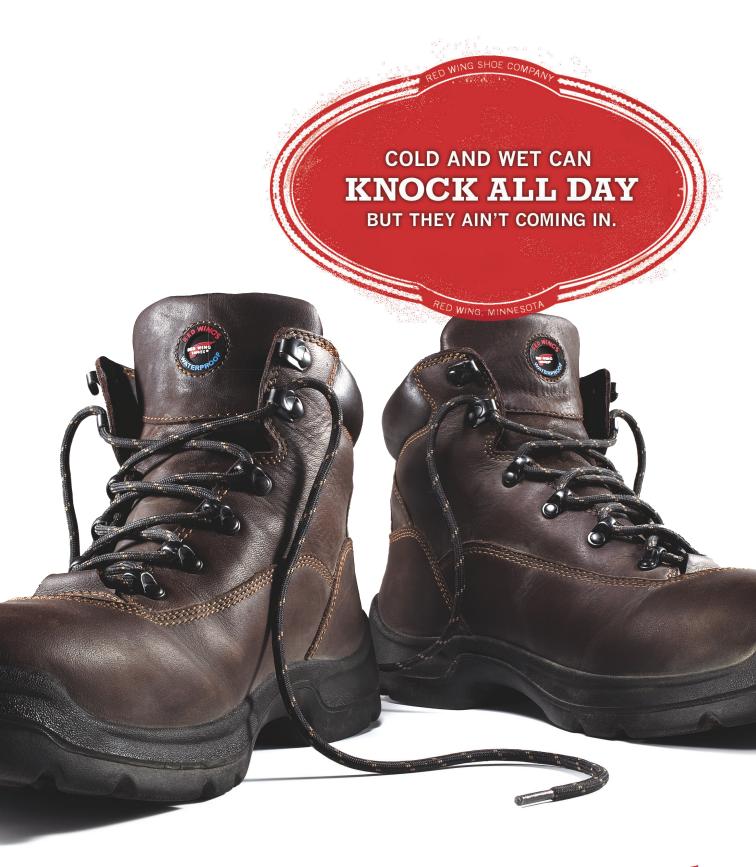
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