



*Great Ideas
Come in
Small Packages*

Creating your “Forever” Home

One of the realities of the past two years is that many people feel like they have less disposable income for upgrading, remodeling and decorating their homes. Contractors, architects and designers have seen sharp declines in their businesses while their clients hold onto their money and wait for the nation’s economy to improve. Yet smart homeowners are planning to enjoy the home they have and make adaptations that will allow them the freedom and independence they are accustomed to in the years to come. This year over 30 million baby boomers become 60 years of age; and they are realizing that the home they are in may well be the one they live in through their 70’s and 80’s. There is no need to wait for the economy to turn around if you are investing in quality of life over the long haul. Now is the ideal time to evaluate the changes in your lifestyle and make alterations in your house that will benefit your family for years to come.

Does the home have a separate space for visiting grandchildren to play and sleep that doesn’t disrupt the entire household? A spare bedroom can be repurposed with smaller scale furniture and storage for toys. Invest in furniture that is formaldehyde free (avoid melamine wrapped pressed board construction) and select paints with a low V.O.C. rating so as to insure good air quality in the room. Replacing carpet with linoleum, cork, engineered wood or tile will decrease the allergenic aspects of the interior of the home.

How about hobbies? A room with a well-lit worktable, storage cubbies and pegboards for materials will add immensely to the enjoyment of creative projects. Cabinets with pull out drawers and specialized storage compartments free up floor space. The work surface can have adjustable height legs to accommodate someone in a wheel chair as well as a child. There are also remotely controlled lifts to raise and lower cabinets and sinks with a touch of a button. These devices enable disabled persons to continue pursuing their crafts as they age.

Some people are getting ready to down size at this time in their life. Getting rid of moldy old books, duplicate kitchen accessories and clothes you no longer wear frees up valuable storage space and creates a clutter free environment. Built-in furniture is invaluable when floor space is at a premium. If you are changing doorways, consider replacing a swinging door with a pocket door to gain 3 ft. of floor space.



*Great Ideas
Come in
Small Packages*

Finally, make sure there is at least one level entrance to your home. Whether you are using a walker or pushing a baby buggy, the convenience and safety of a level entry can't be beat.

**Written by Jean Cary, a certified green building professional, and
owner of Jean Cary Interiors.
call Jean Cary at: 650-593-9622 or
email: jeancary@earthlink.net**