

# Room Revamp

BY PAM KNEPPER

The family room that was once a space with mismatched color and no central theme tying it all together is now a bright, tropical hangout for the Schneider family.

Daughters Elizabeth, 13, and Laura, 10, scoot up to the new coffee tables to draw, make crafts or watch television. They also fight for their favorite spots on the newly covered couch, which is big enough to hold the entire family.

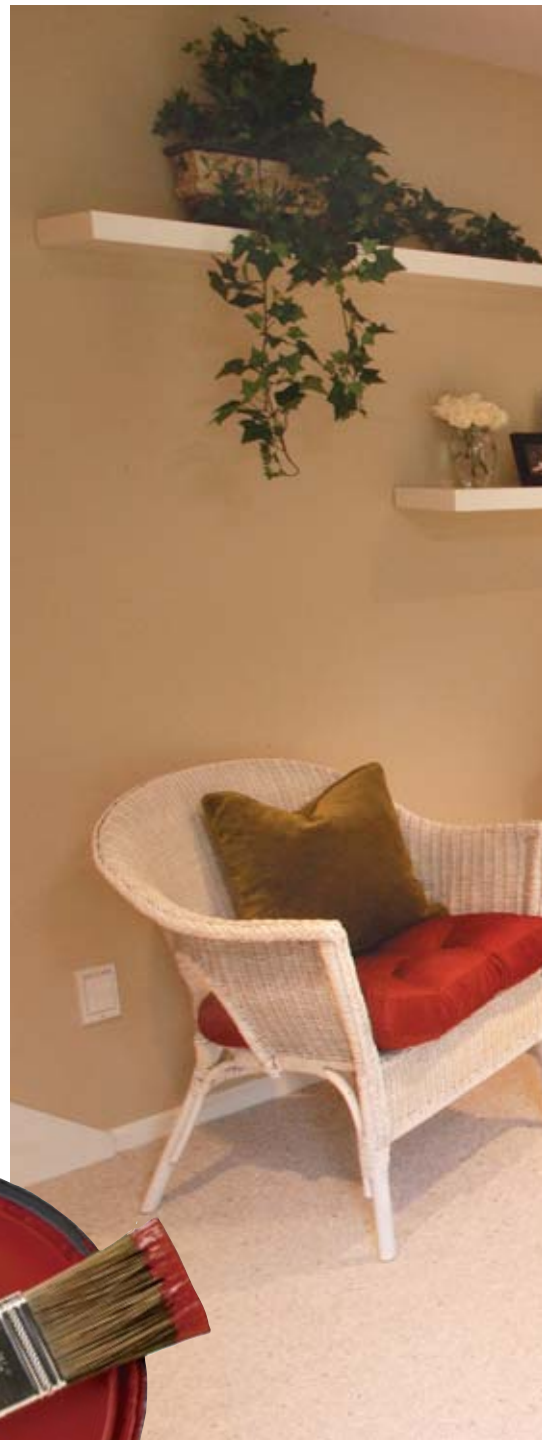
A tropical theme, inspired by the family's desire to bring color and fun into the space, ties the whole room together with tasteful art on the walls and plushy pillows on the couch.

The family loves the new space because it's bright, warm and is a place where they want to be.

"We wanted a room where we could feel comfortable hanging out with each other," says Linda Schneider. "Now the room has a theme, great color on the walls and is organized in such a way that we find it very comfortable."

The dream makeover started more than five months ago when the Schneiders won the *REFLECTIONS* magazine's \$500 room revamp contest.

It's not that the room didn't have potential. It just had a few hurdles to overcome.



LEFT: Interior Designer Bunny Vena and Linda Schneider (l-r) discuss color options.

ABOVE: Creative inspiration, colorful paint and \$500 worth of furniture, art and accessories from stores such as IKEA, Target, JCPenney and Marshall's transformed the family room.



AFTER



BEFORE

LEFT: The Schneider's black couch and stark wall color gave their family room a cold, uninviting feeling.

RIGHT: A large treadmill dominated one wall of the family room and an exercise ball and purple chair took up unnecessary space.



BEFORE

Walls of white and lavender surrounded the room and gave it a cold, sterile feeling. Unused furniture and items dotted the room, including a purple chair and child's piano. A large treadmill dominated one wall of the room and an exercise ball took up unnecessary space.

The oak entertainment center (complete with 1970s speakers and turntable) was in need of a good cleaning. The fireplace served as a spot to display mismatched pictures and knick-knacks. No theme or colors tied the elements together. Instead, unattractive walls, unappealing furniture and clutter prevailed.

Then in walked interior designer Bunny Vena of Northwest Creative Design Company and professional remodeler Dan Reeb of Aldan Fine Home Building armed with a multitude of home décor solutions.

"When I first saw the Schneider's family room I knew we needed to add some color to bring warmth to the space and introduce some new elements that would tie the whole room together," says Bunny.

Out went the purple chair, child's piano, exercise ball and treadmill. (Linda relocated the treadmill to a spare bedroom, which worked out better for everyone.) In came a new slipcover for the couch, a white wicker chair, white wicker coffee tables, tropical pillows and artwork.

"A room always needs to have anchor pieces to create balance and scale," says Bunny. "In the Schneider's room, the main anchor piece was the couch. Since the couch is black, I wanted to brighten it up to give a softer and lighter feel to the room. So rather than buying a new

couch, I decided to disguise the existing couch with a neutral-colored slip cover."

Since a family room is intended to be a place where people gather, Bunny wanted to create a space within the room that would encourage conversation.

"Before the revamp, the room was set up as a place where people would come to watch TV and do nothing else," says Bunny. "I wanted to change the overall use of the room."

She accomplished this task by bringing in a new wicker chair and coffee tables.

"All of these pieces can easily be moved around and placed in such a way that encourages people to sit and talk to one another," says Bunny. "Plus, they can also be used in other parts of the Schneider's house, which makes them versatile."

Bunny says when redoing any room you always want to keep the same design style throughout the house for flow purposes. You want color and pieces that relate and complement each other. Linda's kitchen has a lot of white in it, so the white wicker chair and coffee tables can also

be used in that space, along with the family room.

To make the room seem larger than it really is, Bunny brought in a black-framed mirror and hung it over the fireplace. The mismatched pictures were removed from the mantle and replaced with vases beaming with silk tropical flowers. And for an additional touch, tea lights and a silk fern were added to dress up the front of the fireplace.

Dan covered three walls with a neutral beige paint,



ABOVE: Linda and Grant Schneider and daughters Elizabeth and Laura (l-r) love their new family room. It is now a place where they feel comfortable relaxing with family and friends.



LEFT: The Schneider's oak entertainment center (complete with 1970s speakers and turntable) was in need of a good overhaul.

RIGHT: Linda Schneider enhanced the overall look of the entertainment center by applying a high-quality wood cleaner and accenting it with a vase and candelabra.



and a brick red coated the accent wall to bring warmth to the room.

"After the walls were painted, I couldn't believe how the room changed in appearance," says Linda. "It always amazes me what a little paint can do for a room."

Linda enhanced the overall look of the entertainment center by applying a high-quality wood cleaner and placing a vase of her own as well as a candelabra on the top of the center.

Along the wall where the treadmill used to sit, Linda's husband Grant installed shelves to display family photos and silk ivy plants.

Wanting to use a few pieces from the original room in a better way, Bunny moved an old antique table from one side of the room to the other and dressed it up with a beautiful bouquet of silk flowers. As for lighting, the family's attractive goose lamp now serves any reader who sits in the new wicker chair.

Bunny says one of the biggest challenges of the makeover was keeping everything within the \$500 budget. A stickler for value and style, she says it took some time to find the right pieces that would tie the room together and not take her over budget.

"When you are redoing a room, \$500 isn't a lot to work with. But it can be done with great results," says Bunny. "You need to learn not to buy cheap items because you are on a budget. Make every dollar count by not impulse buying and prioritize where your money is going."

Even before the paint dried, the family was using the room for everything from family pizza movie night to sleepovers. Elizabeth is thinking about inviting a few friends over for a slumber party.

"The room is so cool now," says Elizabeth. "It is definitely a place where I want to go with my friends and have a good time."

Laura is also thinking about having her friends over for a sleepover, and Linda plans to host her monthly Bunko group in the space she was once not interested in sharing because of its cold feel.

In fact, the whole family finds excuses to go hang out in the room now. Laura plays with her dolls and watches movies, and Grant does his stretching and catches up on the latest sports game.

"We all are so happy with the results," Linda says. "Before the room was so cold and uninviting, but now it is truly a place where we feel comfortable relaxing with our friends and family."



## ROOM MAKEOVER WITH FLAIR

Wednesday, Oct. 26, 10-11:30 a.m.

If you have a room that needs to be made over, then this is your chance. Bunny Vena (right), interior designer of Northwest Creative Design Company, will teach you the design principles you will need to know to turn any room from blah to hurrah! Bring pictures of the room you would like to make over to the workshop at the Bellevue Club. The cost is \$40 per person. To reserve, call 688-3384, e-mail [social@bellevueclub.com](mailto:social@bellevueclub.com) or visit <https://members.bellevueclub.com>.

# How can an Interior Designer help?



If the idea of creating a new look for your home—whether it's an 11-room house or a studio apartment—seems like a daunting task, then maybe calling on an experienced interior designer can help.

An interior designer is your guide through the many opportunities available to you in the worlds of furniture, appliances, fabrics, wall coverings, kitchens and baths, lighting, flooring ... the list goes on and on. It is a maze of manufacturers, artists, craftspeople, retailers and many others who, when creatively brought together, can make the world of difference in what your home can turn out to be.

An interior designer can act as an advisor to help you discover and/or solidify the style you want for your home; assist you in creating a space that fits your lifestyle; communicate the "big picture" as well as the details of your project; help you set realistic expectations of the project, regarding your look, budget and timeline; and help create an overall plan to see the project through.

As a resource, an interior designer can present you with innovative design ideas; offer a bank of resources to get the job done; make a wealth of knowledge available to you; and serve as an experienced project manager and troubleshooter.

An experienced interior designer can also act as your budget manager and help you optimize your funds. He or she can save you money and time by purchasing products for you, sometimes passing on special discounts and offer a variety of payment options for services.

So if you are interested in creating a new look for your home, don't waste another minute. Contact an interior designer and discover the many ways they can help you transform any room in your house into a thing of beauty.

TOTAL COST of Room Revamp:  
**\$500**  
 [includes \$39 sales tax]



TWO WALL SHELVES\*  
 \$30  
 TWO SILK IVY PLANTS\*  
 \$10  
 IKEA

TWO ART FRAMES  
 \$40  
 TWO PRINTS  
 \$25  
 Aaron Brothers

SLIP COVER  
 \$102  
 JCPenney

TWO PILLOWS  
 FOR COUCH  
 \$24  
 JCPenney

TWO COFFEE  
 TABLES  
 \$100  
 WICKER CHAIR\*  
 \$50  
 IKEA



**Family** Grant, Linda, Elizabeth and  
Laura Schneider

**Project** Transform a nondescript  
family room into a warm and inviting spot  
for everyone to hang out in.

**Interior Designer** Bunny Vena,  
Northwest Creative Design Company, Bellevue

**Painter** Dan Reeb, Aldan Fine Home  
Building, Redmond

**Duration** One month

**Cost** \$500

SILK FERN  
\$10  
IKEA

TWO FLOWER  
VASES  
\$15  
Target

TEN TEA  
LIGHTS  
\$5  
IKEA

MIRROR  
\$50  
Marshall's