HOME April 6 and 9, 2008 Check Us Out! 2008 Home Improvement Online At www.paynesvillearea.com **April 6 and 9, 2008**

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2008 Home Improvement



Harlan and Kathy Schoenherr purchased this 1950s ranch-style house on Co. Rd. 181 in the fall of 2003 and started remodeling it in 2004. They continue to have remodeling plans and ideas for their home.

Couple remodels 1950s country ranch house

By Michael Jacobson

Harlan saw potential in the house at first sight, while Kathy wasn't so sure. The Schoenherrs saw the house on Co. Rd. 181 was for sale while driving by the lake. "It was random," said Harlan. "I just happened to drive by and see it was for sale."

Having lived in town for 22 years, and then moving away briefly, they considered this house plus another one north of town. That house was finished, which Kathy liked, and would have been ready to live in, as is. "We would have just moved in, but that would have been too easy," said Harlan.

They liked the location (near the lake and near to town). "I've walked to town just to mall a letter," said Kathy. "I liked the location and the trees," added Harlan. "I've always wanted a mature-tree lot."

and wild turkeys - at their residence in Paynesville ing to get it accomplished.'

Township. "We've seen more wildlife in 30 days here than what we saw in 22 years in town," said Harlan.

Before they bought the house, they had a builder friend check it out: "It's a house with good bones," he told them about the fine construction used to build it in the 1950s.

It also had had all the wiring replaced. "That kind of impressed me," said Harlan. "I was glad that was

The Schoenherrs moved into the house around Thanksgiving 2003, they planned a remodeling project throughout the winter of 2004, and they started remodeling in the spring of 2004.

Harlan is very visual and knows when he likes a look. "He sees ideas, and he likes it," said Kathy. As soon as he saw the house, he had plans for improving adding an extra garage, and adding an 8-foot by 12-foot it. "I don't have to think about it," said Harlan of his They've seen all kinds of wildlife - deer, raccoons, remodeling ideas. "Then I'm like a dog on a bone try-

Harlan already had ideas for it. "He was already talking about changing the floor plan," said Kathy.

Their house – built in the 1950s – was inspired by the prairie designs of Frank Lloyd Wright with a lowswept look, brick on the front, and massive overhangs, said Harlan. (They actually found the original blueprints for the house in a closet, including doodlings by a contractor's children.)

They wanted some specific improvements that were part of that remodeling project: adding a pilloried entryway, replacing the brick and residing the house, replacing the windows and doors (for better insulation), adding insulation, taking off the three rently serves as a sitting area; installed cherry lamilayers of shingles from the roof and reshingling it, addition to the back.

Basically, they turned the house from a three-bedroom, one-bathroom home into a two-bedroom, two-

Even when viewing the house during a showing, bathroom home. They added that addition to the back and then used this space and joined two existing bedrooms to create a master bedroom suite with a new bathroom.

There wasn't a shower in the house, so they added one to the existing bathroom and another one in the master bathroom.

Harlan saw the possibility to create this master bedroom suite immediately. With the addition, they turned two bedrooms into the master bedroom, also closing off the old hallway to one of the bedrooms. They built a walk-in closet in the master bedroom; created a corner for a hot tub (eventually), which curnate in the bathroom; and added a tile shower (with Harlan doing the tile). The door to the stool room used to be the door to one of the bedrooms, and the small room with the stool used to be the hallway lead-

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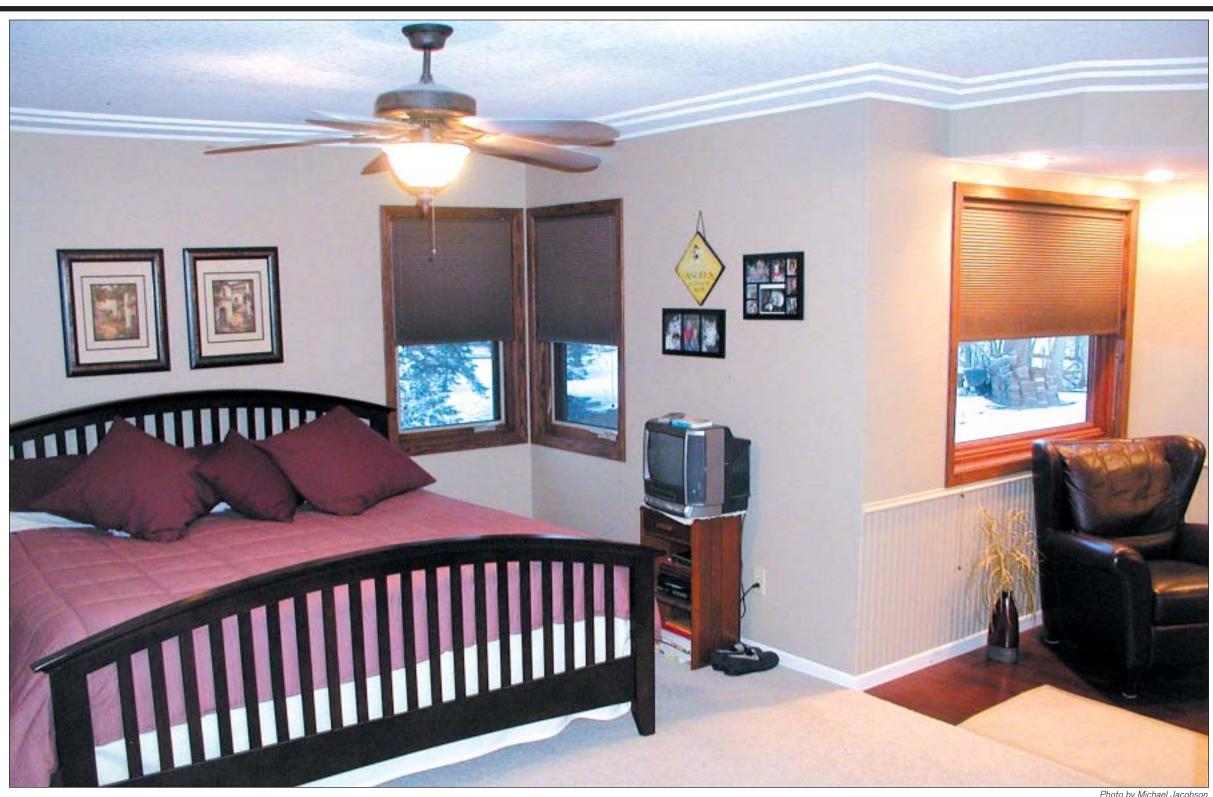


Photo by Michael Jacobson

The Schoenherrs added an 8-foot by 12-foot addition (where their bed is located) and turned two bedrooms in the house into a master bedroom suite with a sitting area (shown), bathroom, and walk-in closet.

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ing into that bedroom. Intentionally, they placed a heat duck at the base of their bathroom vanity. "It's awesome," said Kathy. "You stand there, and it warms

A unique feature of their bedroom is the racetrack ceiling, which traces the perimeter of the ceiling with contours of the same shape, something they had seen at a home show. When painting the room, Harlan found his three-quarters-inch tape matched the race- Harlan to use as a workshop; added a gable-end on the track look so well that he left that part white to match the ceiling and enhance the racetrack effect.

getting new house ideas from a variety of sources. The best ideas, according to Harlan, come from the most expensive houses. Then the challenge is to find

an affordable way to use these ideas in your house.

For the front of their house, they saw a pilloried entryway that they liked at a million-dollar house on Green Lake by Spicer. They even took the idea of red in the peak and used it, too.

They took off the old brick from the front; added an inch and a half of insulation on the house to improve its warmth and energy efficiency; installed a new furnace and added central air; built a 26' by 28' detached double garage, which is insulated and heated for existing garage: reshingled the roof; resided the house in cedar; and added new brick to the front of the The Schoenherrs enjoy going to trade shows and house. Harlan said he is happy with how the front looks. The brick is classic, neither gaudy nor trendy.

They also completed the landscaping in the front, including 30 loads of fill, trimming trees, and planting

"(For) every mature tree, you should plant another one because they're not going to last forever."

Inside, in addition to creating the master bedroom suite, they remodeled the other bathroom, adding a shower and changing the 1950s lime green decor; took out the carpet in the dining room and living room and the linoleum in the kitchen, installing a teak floor in the dining room and kitchen and new carpet in the living room; sheetrocked the ceiling throughout the main in the center of the room. (The laminate countertop floor, also spraying and texturing it; added a wood strip removed from the peninsula for the stove fit perfectly towards the top of the dining room walls (which they saw at a house show), creating a break between the white ceiling and colored walls; and removed the win-kitchen cabinets. "I hate these so much I'm going to dow on the west wall in the living room.

Some of the biggest changes, though, were in the kitchen, which they found to be dysfunctional. Kitchens

new ones. "We're still planting trees," said Kathy. typically have a nice triangle between the sink, stove, and refrigerator, but the old kitchen had a separate stovetop and oven, which was located in the wall on the far side of the room. "It was so user unfriendly," said Kathy of the old layout. "It was terrible."

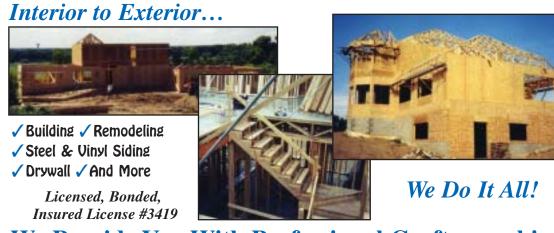
So they removed the oven, which was all by itself, and in the alcove they created a wine serving area with a wine rack, glasses, and small counter. Then they added a new stove and oven in a new peninsula in the alcove.

Harlan wanted to start from scratch with the tear them all up and throw them out," he recalled.

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Throughout their house, the Schoenherrs installed new doors and windows, such as this one in the living room. They also recarpeted this room and removed a window on the west (far) wall.

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"Then I figured out how much it was going to cost. We came up with a different plan."

They decided to keep the birch cupboards, though visitors might think that they are new. They painted the body of the cupboards library brown, to match some of Kathy's decor, and then Harlan built new oak doors for them.

They also added wainscoting along the long wall in the kitchen; cut down the cupboards above the old refrigerator to make space for a new stainless steel refrigerator (and Harlan turned these cupboards into another open wine rack); cut an arch above kitchen sink (to match arches in the wine rack above the frig sink (to match arches in the wine rack above the frig and in the alcove); replaced the old formica (which always great tomorrow," he added. "You have to be used to have gold stars but was so old that it looked all white); added five lights in the ceiling; and replaced the flooring beneath the sink.

ing their home themselves, including painting, tiling Valley, is more practical. "For me, it's got to work," the bathroom, installing the teak floor, and helping the contractors. "It just snowballed into the next thing and the next and the next," said Harlan of their proj-

They still would like to finish the basement (adding a bedroom and a bathroom), would like to have a fireplace in the living room, get a new stainless steel microwave in the kitchen and hang it beneath the cupboards, possibly add a dishwasher (Kathy would like one but is leery of the cabinets she would lose), and finish landscaping in the back yard.

They describe their remodeling schedule as being on a 25-year plan. "I don't think you ever get done ready to adapt and change."

said Kathy. "For me," added Harlan, "it's got to look right."

In remodeling, they learn from mistakes. Harlan used six coats of paint to find the right color for the kitchen (including painting the room twice in one night when the first color had an unwanted greenish tint). They painted the wainscoting in kitchen three times before deciding it should be the same color as the kitchen walls, just a different texture.

"I guess I just know what I like and want," said Harlan. "I think I do anyway.'

Luckily, their friend talked them out of steel siding on this house, knowing Harlan would want to change the color. While steel siding is easier to maintain,

Harlan, the parts manager at Ted's RV Land in with their first project being to reside it. Then they Paynesville, said he is very concerned about appear-started landscaping, building porches and decks, Harlan and Kathy did much of the work remodel- ance and is fussy. Kathy, who works at BI in Eden adding another room, etc. They turned that basic 24

by 42' ranch house dramatically. "We changed that house so much that it was not even the same house,' said Harlan. A neighbor, returning after several years, during which time they had completed numerous remodeling projects, thought that the house had been torn down and replaced and could not believe it was the same house, explained Kathy.

At their old house in town, they even built a garage, based on the design of a covered bridge that Harlan saw at Disney World. Harlan, who has always loved woodworking, started building things for their house by constructing a corner china closet for Kathy 20 vears ago, based on the dimensions and picture of one she liked from the JC Penney catalog.

These days, with building material costs increasing, their ideas for quality and appearance are bal-They started remodeling at their house in town anced by what they can afford. "I've got a ton of plans," said Harlan. "I've got more plans than money." Money is a limiting factor when it comes to

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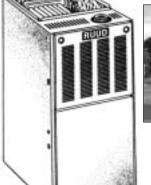


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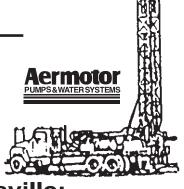
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The old kitchen layout was impractical, so the Schoenherrs added the peninsula (with a range and oven), installed teak flooring, and added a new refrigerator. Harlan built new doors to reface the kitchen cabinets.



The oven was located in the long wall in the kitchen, which Harlan and Kathy Schoenherr decided to turn into an alcove for wine serving. As with all decisions in their remodeling process, they collaborated in the design: Kathy suggesting an alcove and Harlan then suggesting a wine serving spot.

SCHOENHERRS – from page 4C

home improvements, agreed Kathy. "That holds him back," she said.

"You just have to think of more economical ways to do it," said Harlan.

They take time to distill their home improvement ideas. They discuss them, sleep on them, argue the pros and cons, save for it, and in the end the project turns out better. Harlan also gets building tips from a contractor friend, as well as picking the brain of other contractors who have worked on their houses over the years.

The wine alcove in the kitchen is an example of their collaborative process: Kathy suggested using it as a serving area, and Harlan suggested making it a wine rack and cutting the top into an arch, and Kathy suggested using the formica from the stove.

You always hear that houses with too much personality are hard to sell, but Kathy finds that "sometimes it's that personality that makes it sellable." Their house in town, she noted, had granite floors that were

'You always want to improve things and make them better," added Kathy about continually making home improvements.

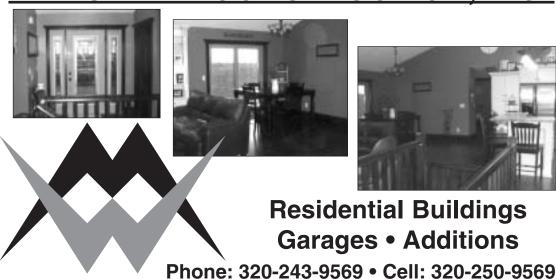
Asked when he would finish his home remodeling, Harlan responded: "Never. Never. Never. I don think I'll ever be done."

"He'll die," said Kathy, "and have one more project



This is how the house - built in the 1950s - looked when the Schoenherrs purchased it in 2003. They were drawn to the lot, location, and potential of the house.

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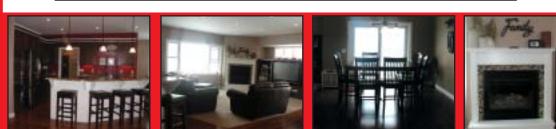
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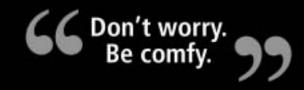
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