



April 24, 2009

## Room with view feeds 14, too

### Wyoming empty-nesters create family party space

*By Jenny Callison  
Enquirer contributor*

When Jim and Judy Herd decided to build an addition to the 1960s home they've owned since 1978, they assembled a tried-and-true team for the project. The Herds supplied the vision, plans and construction were done by EGC Construction of Newport, and the interior design was the work of Trish Weeks.

Weeks has provided design assistance for the couple over the past 25 years. EGC, with which Jim Herd has a business relationship, was the contractor for an upstairs renovation 10 years ago. This time around, the project was led by Brian Frost and overseen by Paul Jasper.

"This was a team project, even during the construction," Weeks says. "I could suggest things; tweak their ideas, and they would understand."

"Nothing was unimportant," says Judy of the team's attention to even tiny details.

The new space, a roughly square room at the back of the house, contains a large and open kitchen whose rear wall is almost entirely windows. This cheery expanse, furnished with a loveseat, antique rocker and side table made from a treadle sewing machine stand, is an ideal spot from which Jim and Judy can enjoy the view of their tree-fringed back yard.

The Herds' three sons are grown. They now have families of their own who enjoy descending on the family home in Wyoming on holidays and other special occasions.

"Now there are 14 of us," Judy says. "We all love to cook. We wanted a place where we could cook and eat on family holidays and have plenty of room to sit."

The new, white-painted custom cabinets line one wall, with the stove at the midpoint. Facing the stove is a small island, providing additional work space. Another longer island wraps around and defines the kitchen proper and contains the sink. The inner side of this island is for food preparation; the outer, fitted with stools, serves as informal dining space. All the countertops are made of a tawny granite, while the wall surface between upper and lower cabinets is white ceramic tile, with a floral design set into the backsplash.

A small kitchen table set against the kitchen's far wall provides more casual eating space.

The challenge, in any addition, is to make the new room blend with the existing house, both inside and out. Careful brickwork on the exterior keeps the addition from looking like one.

Ensuring flow on the inside was a more complex process, involving a complete revamping of spaces. In place of the old kitchen the Herds now have a pantry, glass-fronted china cabinet and laundry room. The central hallway had to be reconfigured to connect the front entrance with the new kitchen area. The doorway leading from kitchen to dining room was moved.

To make the family room harmonize spatially and visually with the adjacent new kitchen, it received a complete redo, including having a partial wall removed. A larger window and new recessed lighting freshen up this room and make its "light quotient" similar to that of the sunny new kitchen. White-painted custom casework includes ceiling beams, shelving that flanks the stone fireplace on the end wall, a granite-topped bar and trim around windows and doorways.

"We replaced the carpet in here with new hardwood floor to match the addition," Jim says.

Blending new space with old is accomplished through the décor as well. Weeks made extensive use of what Judy calls her "signature colors": pink, green and yellow. These colors are used in the upholstery fabrics and window treatments in both family room and kitchen as well as in accent pieces throughout. To re-cover walls in the hallway and dining room that had been reworked in the renovation, Weeks found soft yellow wallpaper in the same shade as that on the living room walls, papered 15 years ago.

As much as possible, existing furniture was repurposed - sometimes with new paint or fabric - for the new space. A section of countertop from the old kitchen proved perfect for the new laundry room.

Through design, Weeks also managed to make the new space reflect the tastes of both her clients.

"She blended my love of flowers with Jim's wildlife prints, and my love of porcelain with Jim's ducks," says Judy, pointing to her porcelain collection in the new built-in china cabinet, and evidence of Jim's enthusiasms on display in the family room. "People tell us, 'This looks like you.' "

*E-mail [jcallison@zoomtown.com](mailto:jcallison@zoomtown.com)*

---

