Photo by Katy Balon

MY HOMEMADE BUSINESS

Linda Robertson

certified in home staging

When Linda Robertson retired from 32 years of teaching in District 203, she wanted to "do something challenging while still being in charge of my own fate." She volunteered to help a friend with staging a few homes for sale and found out she had a talent for room design. She took a course to become certified in the staging and redesigning field. She then opened her own company, Mighty Neat Square Feet, in May of 2007.

Working from an office in her Naperville home, Linda contacts clients and organizes materials. About 70% of her business involves staging homes on the market. "My role is to change a home into a house," she explains. "I take all the personal fingerprints out of a home. I take out the clutter, the family photos and depersonalize the rooms." She offers different levels of staging depending on the client's wishes.

Robertson also does some redesign work for clients who are "tired of the same old look but don't have a lot of money to spend." She rearranges furniture, adds pieces and is able to transform rooms.

Robertson averages about $75 an hour and usually starts a job with a two hour consultation. A 3,000 square foot home usually takes between 6 and 8 hours to complete. She also has a large inventory of accessories like area rugs, plants, pillow and lamps that a homeowner can rent for two months at a time until the home sells. She receives many clients through referrals from realtors.

Have a great Home-Made Business story to share? If so, tell us at editorial@glancermagazine.com

Design Trends IN THE HOME

by Jessica Gomes, Casa Bella Design Center

Dark brown oak cabinets...hunter green ceramic tiles...wood grained laminate countertops... white appliances with black handles and controls...polished brass faucets...gold and "crystal" chandeliers...burnished gold cabinet hinges...magenta and royal blue wallpaper themes...ALL ARE OUTDATED. Unfortunately, many of these items are still gracing homes today. What should the replacements new look like? The following trends and tips will help homeowners make their next remodeling decisions a snap!

Sticking simply to light or medium maple cabinets is no longer the current trend. There is a push going back toward darker cabinet tones such as ebony on cherry or wenge on oak (yes oak!). Painted color cabinets such as red are being selected as the overall kitchen cabinet color or as punchy accents. Plain white or crème cabinets are definitely on there way back as well. When selecting a cabinet color, homeowners should take into account the trim color throughout the house as well as the flooring color in the kitchen.

Tile and flooring color trends are varied. Light wood flooring is still very popular but darker woods and woods with wilder graining are also being selected. Tiles with a stronger presence of brown and gray undertones instead of gold are very prominent now. When selecting a tile and flooring, homeowners should contrast the flooring and cabinets and keep in mind that darker grout (tans instead of whites) is fabulous!

Countertop selections such as granite and natural stones are still a smart choice. However, the design industry is seeing a push toward tops with less movement and also matte finishes. Tops should contrast with cabinetry to prevent the design from looking boring and the selection should be verified with the flooring color so colors don't clash. When selecting tops, homeowners should remember that darker colors look great but can show fingerprint more easily.

Appliances can be a tricky selection for some. Stainless still is the most prominent choice and will continue to be so (professional appliances are stainless). Some designers are now using colors such as red controls or an entirely yellow range. Companies are also offering new metal finishes such as brushed bronzes but buyer beware. When selecting appliances, homeowners should be careful with trendy colors and metals if they don't rotate appliances often.

Metallic finishes on plumbing, lighting, and hardware should be thought of in combination. The nickel family is still very popular but chrome is coming back. Oil rubbed bronze is very attractive in some homes and brushed golds work well in homes where brasses and golds are prominent in decorations. When selecting metals, homeowners must focus on cohesive metal tones throughout the house.

Wall color selections are the easiest and most fun of all of the above design decisions. Stark color combinations such as black and white with a pop of yellow are great for some spaces. Nature inspired colors derived from the popularity of Green Design are also great for homes and cool tones such as blues and grays are very popular choices. When selecting wall color, homeowners must keep this in the back of their mind...I CAN ALWAYS REPAINT!

Casa Bella Kitchen and Bath Remodelers is located at 15 W Jefferson Avenue, downtown Naperville. This full-service, one- stop-shop for all of your remodeling needs, offers everything from developing a layout for your space, to product selection and managing the installation. Jessica A. Gomes (pictured) a graduate of the Interior Design program at Illinois State University, has been working at Casa Bella for four years and oversees the company's project design and sales. Jessica works directly with clients to design creative solutions that satisfy their needs. Call (886) 619-8862 for more details or visit the showroom today.