

original home



Universal design features, including a zero clearance shower entrance, allow easy access.

During the four months remodelers built an addition onto our house, I was working at home. From my office window, I could see the contractor and his adult son carrying supplies and equipment onto the site. I admired the reliable rhythm of their days. They arrived promptly for an 8:00 a.m. start time, took a late-morning lunch break, and started cleanup in the early evening. In between, they clambered up ladders higher than I wanted to watch, carefully dismantled 100-year-old floorboards,



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TDS Custom Construction transformed this 1970s home into a modern, open space by removing walls and adding windows.

Step Inside the Remodeling Process

By Yvette Jones

arranged for subcontractors to saw through a 10" thick cement basement foundation, and nailed fresh pine boards into place for new walls.

Under my husband's guidance, our children checked the daily progress and learned about all the connections inside our walls; support beams, heating ducts, wiring, and plumbing took on important new roles as we watched our kitchen come to life. We stopped taking convenience for granted, and marveled as the workers created our new living space. It was natural to connect with builders who conferred with us almost daily, and managed to take our ideas from paper sketches to finished walls, ceilings, and floors. They listened when my daughter suggested we match a new window to another in our home, and they allowed time for my other daughter to choose wallpaper and fixtures.

Remodelers understand well the way simple changes can affect lives. After living in a home for several years, our

needs change, and perhaps it becomes more difficult to get up the stairs or get in and out of the bathtub. By incorporating universal design features, you can update your home to improve safety and accessibility. **Tony Trapp Remodeling and Repairs** recently completed a project for a couple who wanted to remain in their home, but needed better access for bathing. The new bathroom incorporates generous floor space, a lower tub, and a zero-clearance walk-in shower so the homeowners can remain in their home safely and comfortably.

Remodeling professionals also "get" our connections to our homes. When Kim Nelson and Jason Grosz purchased Kim's childhood home from her parents, she looked forward to reconnecting with childhood roots. While they cherished the neighborhood and the vintage 1972 home, the couple also wanted to design a home that reflected their taste and lifestyle. The primary objective was to do away with walls separating smaller rooms, and provide an unencumbered



A custom barn-door-style sliding door has acrylic inserts and opens to an art studio off the living room.

floor plan flooded with natural light. By carefully removing load-bearing walls and inserting flush beams, **TDS Custom Construction** created a kitchen, dining, and living room space that matches the couple's creative sensibilities and sparkles with sunlight.

The newly remodeled living space also features two uniquely designed assets: a mudroom entry from the attached garage that boasts a shower space specifically for the dogs in the family, and an art studio created within a former bedroom, which benefits from a custom barn-door-style sliding door.

TDS president Sam Breidenbach points to a dramatic improvement in indoor air quality as another wonderful advantage gained with this remodeling project. His firm specializes in home performance issues and as the demolition progressed, it became apparent that some of the building materials used in the seventies probably exacerbated allergy symptoms Kim experienced. Particleboard used under the wall-to-wall carpeting contained formaldehyde, and replacing the worn particleboard with new plywood improved the indoor air noticeably. The **TDS Custom Construction** team also discovered a small crawl space open to bare ground, which caused excessive moisture

conditions and rotting wood, just right for mold growth. By installing a vapor barrier and insulation, they were able to resolve the problem. The use of non-toxic finishes and materials throughout the home contributes to healthier air quality, which allows people and pets in the house to breathe more easily.

When Leslie Christensen and her boyfriend moved into their home, built in 1958, they knew they wanted to remodel the kitchen and happily returned to **Tony Trapp Remodeling and Repairs** with whom they'd worked on an earlier home. "Tony is easy to work with and we can really trust him," Leslie says.

They envisioned a kitchen that opened nicely to the dining area and the large



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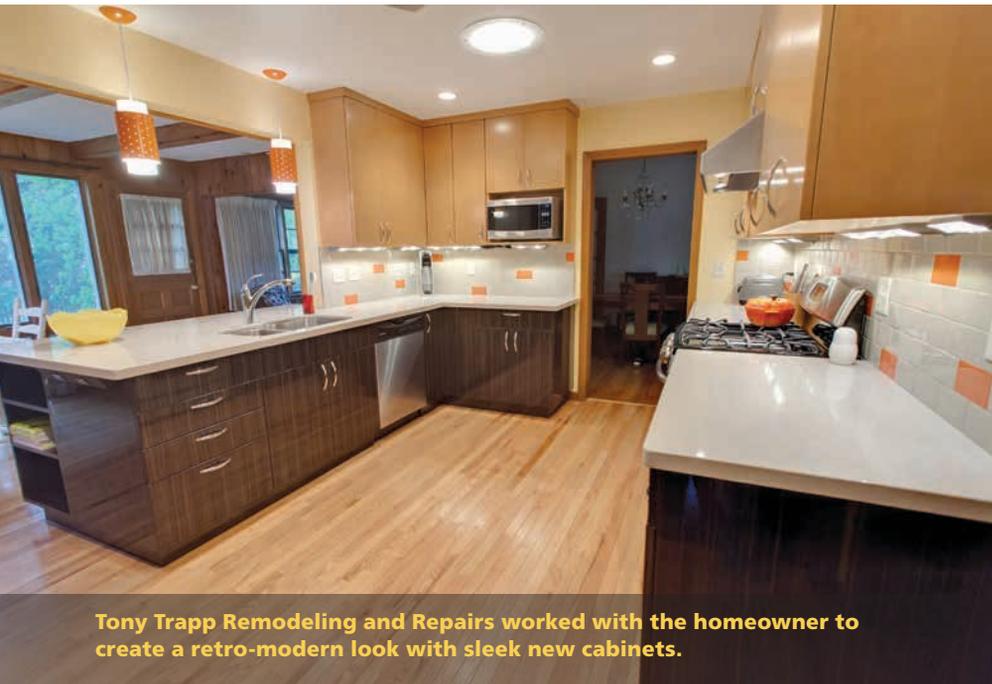
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windows overlooking the yard. They also yearned for design elements that echoed their mid-century modern style. Working closely with the remodeling team, they came up with a more functional layout that improves the kitchen's workflow, and adds needed storage space. Solutube light fixtures allow natural light to shine down on sleek cabinetry and stainless appliances for a retro modern appeal. Personal touches include a tiled backsplash accented with the same warm orange found in 50s-style pendants hanging over the counter.



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Tony Trapp Remodeling and Repairs worked with the homeowner to create a retro-modern look with sleek new cabinets.

Partway into the process they experienced the first winter in their new home and discovered an ice dam problem. Tony quickly recommended a Focus on Energy assessment which indicated the need for an energy retrofit. By improving airflow, insulating, and sealing the home, his team removed the threat of ice dams, lowered their heating bills and improved their comfort.

Most families appreciate the opportunity to play an active role in creating their own living space and watch the process unfold. Skilled remodeler professionals welcome your input and work in tandem with you. As Travis

Larson from Design Electric says, "We specialize in remodeling rather than new construction because we value the client interaction."

You might start by noticing how dim your living room is most afternoons, or lamenting about your kitchen's lack of counter space. Maybe your family size calls for another bedroom, or you dream of a spot for a grand piano. However you get there, the experience of remodeling gives you direct exposure to the design-build process, and allows you to form unexpected bonds with the talented tradespeople working on your home.

Yvette Jones is President of designCraft Advertising, whose Park Street headquarters is undergoing its own remodeling transformation. Photographs provided by NARI.



The following NARI subcontractors were involved in one or more of the projects mentioned in this article. Each offers supplies and services specialized for remodeling projects, which often tend to be more intricate than new construction jobs.

- Benjamin Plumbing, Inc.
- Brighter Concepts Ltd.
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- Cabinet Masters, Inc.
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