

Fall 2009 Newsletter

A Group Effort Pays Off

DG Liu Contractor recently had the chance to work on a true collaborative project with designer Wendy Danziger* and Steve and Lolly Toll of Bethesda, Maryland. The Tolls wanted a small morning room added onto their bedroom—a cozy space to read or watch TV, and still feel connected to the outdoors. “We just wanted an extension of our bedroom, another sitting area,” says Lolly, “and we wanted all windows, with lots of light coming in.”

“I needed someone really solid and responsible for this job,” Wendy says. “That’s why I referred DG Liu Contractor to the Tolls. I knew we could do this thing.”

We set to work tackling several initial challenges. First, the architectural features had to be seamless with the house design. We needed to match the existing custom stucco, arched windows, and copper roofing outside, and the textiles, marble counters, and hardwood flooring inside.

The foundation also presented problems. Since the backyard slopes away from the house, we had to lay down extensive fill dirt in which to place the foundation. The flagstone patio between the new addition and existing family room offered inadequate support and, as it had settled, was channeling water into the area where we would add on. Keeping the Toll’s budget in mind, we designed a new foundation to re-support the patio, and had masons carefully correct the

flagstones without having to re-lay all of them.

Wendy participated in the floor planning to ensure adequate space for furniture, treatments for the large windows on three walls, and enough wall space for artwork. The result is a cheerful, quiet room for two, where the couple can look out over the patio and pond in their backyard.

“They did a great job,” Lolly says. “It looks like it’s part of the house

and was always there. The whole addition is very solidly built. Mike Mackison (our project manager) was just fantastic. He was always there when we needed him.”

Although Lolly admits the project was not cheap, it was “within the realm of what contractors cost,” she says. “They did everything they said they were going to do. I would absolutely recommend DG Liu Contractor to anyone.”



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* Wendy Danziger is senior owner of Wendy Danziger Designs (www.danzigerdesign.com).

Flexibility Helps Shape an Addition

Carolyn Carlson had always wanted a screened-in porch on her North Potomac home. When the deck out back began to collapse, she and her husband Ken decided the time was right. "We either had to repair it or do something more creative," Ken says, "and we thought this was the time to do the porch."

The Carlsons remembered that a neighbor had used DG Liu Contractor to build a porch several years ago, and had been very pleased with the results. The couple met with Dale Kramer, our sales and project designer, to plan out a quality deck that was attractive, safe, and code compliant, but still affordable.

"The first presentation was above our budget," Carolyn says. "But we were able to whittle away

at costs by using less expensive materials and eliminating some extras."

The flexibility of both the Carlsons and our staff resulted in a plan that worked for everyone. "We went through several redesigns with Dale," Ken recalls, "and that was impressive that he would sit down and say, 'What are you hoping to do here?'. Eventually, we came up with a project that was affordable and very attractive."

The final product incorporated many personal touches, including a specially designed metal roof that not only fit into the house's architecture, but brought back memories for Carolyn of hearing the sound of rain overhead. Now the couple finds they use the space even more than they'd planned.. "It's like having another room on our house that we can utilize eight or nine months a year," Ken says. "Even now (November) we're using it. We sat out there the other night and had a glass of wine. This room increases the livability of our home, and we've loved having it this summer."

The Carlsons give kudos to our crew for professionalism and positive attitudes, in spite of rain delays and a few unforeseen problems. "It was a pleasure to work with your staff," Carolyn says. "And we will gladly recommend you to our friends. This addition has changed our life. We're more than pleased...we're thrilled!"



Before



After

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STAFF PROFILE

Meet Lance Kramer

It's not often a company can say it's been involved with an employee for nearly his whole life, but that's been our privilege in the case of Lance Kramer. Lance is the son of Dale Kramer, our sales and project designer and, for better or worse, he's been hanging around our crew since he was a toddler. "It was like being in a big, happy family," Lance recalls. "We all get along great and look out for each other. We have a good time."

As a teenager, Lance worked for us in the summers, then joined our crew as a full-time carpenter in 2002. He likes the variety involved in his job. "I love meeting different people and working in different places," he says. When asked where would he like to be next, he quickly responds, "In charge!"

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