

Remodel? *In This Economy?* Absolutely!

While it may seem prudent to hold off on a home improvement project given the current state of our economy, there are actually a number of reasons why now is a great time to remodel. Although the real estate market dropped an average of 7% nationally in 2008, home improvement projects dropped by only 3.86% and continue to be seen as good investments, according to *Remodeling Magazine's* "2008-2009 Cost vs. Value Report." Certain projects return more money than others, but it's a safe bet that improving your home's exterior, roofing, kitchen, bathroom, or basement will ultimately increase its value.

Proving you can't place too much emphasis on curb appeal when it comes to upgrading your home, exterior renovations in our area brought in the highest returns in 2008. Siding replacement recouped 86.7% of costs, wood deck additions 81.8%, and vinyl window replacements 79.2%. Inside, kitchen remodels saw the



biggest payoff (79.5%), followed by basement remodels (72.9%) and attic bedroom projects (73.8%).

What does all this mean for you? If you're not thrilled with your house and are thinking of moving, you may want to reconsider for now. In a down real estate market, it can make sense to sit tight and

rework your home into one that's more spacious, relaxing, and functional. And, even in a down market, it's always a good idea to sustain the value of your home with proper repairs and maintenance.

In tough economic times, people often wonder how to be smart—and safe—with their investments. What better way to invest than in your own home? Remodeling gives you instant returns now, in the comfort and convenience of having the home you always wanted, and later returns in recovered costs when the time comes to sell. Don't let a slowed economy keep you from making the most of the place where you spend so much of your life.

Best Home Investments

Interior	\$ Recouped
Kitchen remodels	79.5%
Basement remodels	72.9%
Attic bedroom	73.8%
Exterior	
Siding replacement	86.7%
Deck additions	81.8%
New vinyl window	79.2%



Source: *Remodeling Magazine's* "2008-2009 Cost vs. Value Report"

A Gardener's Dream

"The only fantasy I've ever had was to have a greenhouse," says Joy Adler, an avid gardener who recently acquired a Master Gardener certification. Having worked with Jerry Liu since the late 1970s on minor projects for her Bethesda home, Joy recently approached him with her greenhouse idea. Jerry, who's father managed greenhouses, explained the pitfalls that come with them, namely mold and heating issues. "Because he was so knowledgeable, I was persuaded to do a room with enough glass and light in it to serve the same purpose," says Joy.

Our crew built an extension onto the existing home, giving Joy and her husband Ira a glassed-in garden room on the main level and a large master bath above it. The original was a 1960s bathroom, explains Joy, and "if one of us wanted to use the sink, the other had to go out into the hall." Our designer, Sharon Poole decided to wrap an L shape onto the house that permitted us to use two



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existing exterior walls and attach to an existing heating system. Because the upstairs was recessed from the downstairs, the difference permitted us to create a roof of skylights to let in even more of the light Joy desired.

"We're delighted with the results," Joy says. "In fact, it changed the way we live in the house because we live in that garden room now. We even put a kitchen table in there."

"What I really appreciate about

DG Liu," she continues, "apart from the fact that I can trust the work, is that if something isn't immediately right, I can trust it will be fixed without argument. There is always someone you can communicate intelligently with, whether it's Jerry, a lead carpenter, or someone else you can call and speak to. There's always someone who gets it."

Have a dream for your home? Tell us about it! **Call 1-866-99DGLIU**



STAFF PROFILE

Meet Matt Dihel

Matt Dihel, a part of our trim crew for nearly a year now, came to us after working for himself as a trim custom carpenter for the last seven years. Matt has worked throughout the Potomac area on mostly high-end projects, remodeling homes and building commercial establishments, including mill-work installations.

Transitioning from working for himself to working for DG Liu contractor, he says, was an easy task. "It's a very nice company to work for. I really enjoy the people and it seems to be a good crew. Jerry definitely takes very good care of us."

What does he love most about his job? "I love doing the custom work—kitchen installs, custom woodworking, anything dealing with fine wood products."

Call the Handymen: 1-866-99dgLiu

Why risk your safety and lose your weekends doing those fix-up jobs best left to a pro? We will do the job right and help you keep your home in top condition.



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