

A Room of One's Own—Again

DG Liu Contractor has had its share of repeat business over the years, but we're exceptionally proud of our work on Monica and Mike Cimino's townhouse in Montgomery Village, MD. We completed our first renovation for the family several years ago by updating the basement and kitchen, removing a dining room wall, and building a custom cabinet to serve as a divider. But the crowning touch, according to Monica, was adding a wall of windows off the family room, installing a skylight, and extending the space. "It's only a small extension," she says, "just seven by about 15 feet. But it totally changed our enjoyment and use of the house."

The Ciminos struck up a relationship with our designer, Sharon Poole, during this initial project, and ended up using her to landscape their backyard. Sharon installed a tucked-away, screened gazebo, and artfully planted greenery that blooms year round. "She was already so simpatico with what we were doing on the inside," Monica says, "it was like she knew how to continue that outside."

Our next project for the Ciminos started with an upstairs laundry area, but expanded into a bedroom renovation. Since it was already a large bedroom with a walk-in closet, we

reconfigured the space to accommodate a dressing room. Now, while the couple still has a spacious room, they also enjoy built-in shelves, hanging drawers, and a new vanity and sink. In the bathroom, we used linen closet space to incorporate a beautiful walk-in shower and sink. And to add unique lighting, we installed a daylighting device—a tube placed in the roof that collects and redirects light where it's needed.

This spring, we'll replace windows and the front door of the home. But Monica isn't ready to stop there. Future plans include updating her mother's bedroom and powder room. "Later, when my son's bedroom becomes mine, I want to make it into a studio," she says. "I'm a wannabe calligrapher. This will be the 'room of my own' that Virginia Woolf said every woman should have."

The Ciminos came to us by way of the Montgomery Village Foundation, an architectural review board that assesses planned building modifications to determine if they are in compliance with established criteria or community standards. Judy White, architectural standards administrator for the Foundation, has had a longstanding relationship with our company, and gives us kudos for consistently submitting drawings to the review board before we draw up

blueprints. "Not everyone will do that," she says. "Many companies don't want to go through the concept only phase. But DG Liu does. If they have a question even before they have a concept, they'll call the office and ask if this is something we think would even be worth the effort. That's why it's such a pleasure to work with them."

The Ciminos seemed to enjoy the



experience as well, and Monica especially notes a fondness for working with Dale Kramer, our sales and project designer. "What could be a horror show, Dale makes a pleasure," she says. "Dale has a very reassuring, confident air, with not a touch of arrogance. People need comforting behaviors in this process, and he provides it."

"Obviously we're thrilled with the results," she says.

"Renovations of this type and the products we chose are not inexpensive. But this will be our home for many years, we hope. I only want the best I can afford and have it done the best. **I don't want any worries. And that's what we get with DG Liu.**"



Tax Credit Deadline

Tax credits are still available for home improvements that increase energy efficiency, generate power, or harness geothermal heating and cooling. Eligible improvements include qualified insulation, windows, exterior doors, skylights, roofing, HVAC improvements, and others. To find out more, visit: www.energystar.gov and click on "Tax Credits for Energy Efficiency."

Lead Paint Abatement Law

Next month, a new law will take effect requiring home improvement contractors to be EPA certified and to follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. Therefore, beginning in April 2010, the EPA recommends homeowners ask to see their contractor's certification before beginning any renovation projects.

Three crew members of DG Liu have recently received this certification by completing an EPA Renovation Worker class. This means they can test for lead in areas they are renovating and, if lead is determined to be present, they will remove and dispose of it in accordance with procedures established by the EPA.

Banned since 1978, lead-based paint has been a major source of lead poisoning for children and can also affect adults. Recent estimates show that more than 80 percent of U.S. homes built before 1978—or about 64 million—contain lead paint. For more information, visit <http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renovation.htm>.

Rebuilding Together

Each April, DG Liu Contractor provides volunteers, skills, and resources to Rebuilding Together of Montgomery County, a volunteer organization that works in partnership with the community to address the needs of low-income homeowners. Your donations are greatly needed. Please visit <http://www.rebuildingtogethermc.org> and click on "Donate Online" to help with this worthy cause.

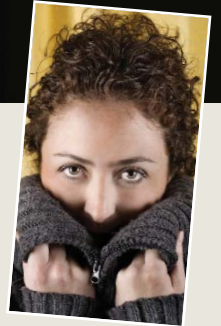


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STAFF PROFILE



Meet Lead Carpenter Eric Renner

Some jobs require a bit of detective work, and Eric Renner, DG Liu's lead carpenter, is happy to oblige. Revamping an older house often requires Renner to uncover what's been done before, sometimes with surprising results. "I'm always finding things that previous builders have done that weren't correct," he says, "like walls that aren't square, and so forth. I like searching out those hidden things you need to address as you renovate."

Renner has been a valued member of our team for the past five years, and mostly enjoys his work in the field, especially when it unveils what most of us would never see. "You always run into old things hidden in a house," he says, "so the challenge is to fix them, or to make things work with what's there."

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