

home+  
garden  
**design**

MAGAZINE

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VISUALLY  
TRANQUIL  
SPACE

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SPRING 2008

This month we're launching our glossy magazine version of Home & Garden Design, which will appear twice a year in spring and fall. Our premier issue offers articles on a major home remodel in Mountain View; a landscape that meets the family's need for play space, entertaining and veggie gardening; a dramatic remodel of a Sharon Heights townhouse; a wheelchair-accessible — and gorgeous — kitchen; and how to create a home office that's both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Next month we'll resume our monthly Home & Garden Design section — and look forward to publishing the next magazine in September.

—Carol Blitzer

Associate Editor Carol Blitzer can be e-mailed at [cblitzer@paweekly.com](mailto:cblitzer@paweekly.com).

**On the cover:** Glass stairs dramatically "float" from the landing in this Sharon Heights townhouse, and the center of the home is flooded with light. **Photo by Barbara Boissevain.**

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## NEW KITCHEN MUSHROOMS INTO MAJOR EXPANSION

The new family-style kitchen combines state-of-the-art appliances with cabinets designed to look like finely crafted furniture, and a mossy green granite on the counters and backsplash. The room opens directly onto their garden.

by Ann Bertelsen /  
photos by Dasja Dolan

When Mike and Mary-Ann Ross decided to remodel their 1950s era kitchen, it helped that they knew exactly what they wanted — a family-style kitchen that paid homage to their beautiful garden. It had to be casual, yet elegant enough for entertaining family and friends. And it had to include state-of-the-art appliances and custom cabinets designed to look like finely crafted furniture.

They got everything on their wish list and more — all in just nine weeks.

“We’d lived in the house for 25 years and waited until we could afford to do the remodel properly,” says Mary-Ann, a passionate gardener with a keen appreciation for color and beauty. This proved to be a sound decision, since what began as a kitchen remodel evolved into a new bathroom and landing area leading to a basement family room and laundry.

The project also included new



By removing a wall between the kitchen and old dining room, the family gained plenty of space to create their dream kitchen.

heating and air-conditioning systems, new windows and doors, as well as a new roof. “And we eventually ended up re-stuccoing the exterior,” Mary-Ann says.

The Mountain View couple lives close to downtown, but their newly remodeled home with its buttery stucco exterior and lush garden brimming with carefully selected

perennial flowers conjures up images of a Mediterranean landscape. “Our goal was to bring the outdoors in and get a family-style kitchen that would also serve as our only dining area,” Mary-Ann says.

Although the Rosses didn’t add any additional footage to their 3,000-sq.-ft. home, the new kitchen makes it seem much larger. “We



**The buttery stucco** exterior and lush garden conjures up images of a Mediterranean landscape.



**Above, The ornate iron** gate, which separates a vegetable garden between front and side yards, was made by Mike and Brent Ross. Right, The patio functions as an outdoor room.



removed a wall between the original kitchen and a small dining room that we hardly ever used,” Mike says. They also reconfigured the area immediately adjoining the kitchen to create a new bathroom with an Old-World ambiance, a walk-in pantry with glass doors, and a spacious landing for the basement staircase.

Step inside the new kitchen and you’ll feel like, well ... you’re actually outside because of the large windows that offer picturesque views of the garden and the stunning granite countertops and backsplash — a vibrant shade of mossy green called “Desert Coral.”

Mary-Ann spied the rich green granite in a store in San Jose and she knew she had to have it for her

kitchen. There were only five slabs left, and it was touch and go whether there would be enough for the project, especially since Mary-Ann wanted the stone to cover the entire backsplash between the countertop and cabinets and extend into a greenhouse window.

Fortunately, there was just enough stone for her kitchen.

“I wanted something strong and outdoorsy and this granite is perfect,” says Mary-Ann, who likens it to a grassy field. It sets the tone for the entire kitchen, which has a coffered ceiling with recessed lighting, a large center island with a glass hood suspended above it, stainless-steel appliances including a Wolf range, and custom cabinets in a rich cherry wood that matches the cus-

tom dining-room table and chairs that grace one end of the room. The furniture and cabinetry — including an elegant display cabinet — were made by a Los Gatos-based woodworker, Al Orozco. They give the room a stylish touch, as do two small chandeliers suspended over the dining table.

While much of the work was a family affair (Mary-Ann’s two sisters are designers who helped with the interiors and son, Brent, handcrafted the iron stair rail leading to the basement), the couple gives kudos to their contractor, who completed the project in record time.

The couple says their home is still a work in progress. Mike and

*continued on page 9a*

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What began as a kitchen remodel quickly evolved into a new bathroom, with an Old-World ambiance.

*continued from page 7a*

Brent have just completed making and installing an ornate iron gate that separates a vegetable garden between the front and side yards. And Mary-Ann is still fine-tuning her perennial garden featuring lime-green zinnias with apricot begonias interspersed with periwinkle blue and lavender. They've

undertaken all the work in the garden themselves and Mary-Ann says she's close to completing it.

And her kitchen? "When it came to the details, I wanted it to be perfect and I think I got exactly what I wanted," she says. **h+g**

**Resources:**

*Building contractor:* Adrian Kutch, 126 San Antonio Road, Mountain

View, 650-917-9150  
*Custom cabinets/dining table and chairs:* Al Orozco Finest-Woodworking, 17450 Shelburne Way, Los Gatos, 408-354-6463  
*Granite:* Della Maggiore Stone Inc., 87 N 30th St., San Jose, 408-993-0229  
*Interior designers:* June Proceviat Ghiam and Karen Proceviat of KP Designs, Mountain View, 650-960-7042

**Goal of project:**

To create a family-style, eat-in kitchen with a strong relationship to the garden

**Unexpected problems:**

Had to wait three weeks for a building permit

**Year house built:**

1951

**Size of home:**

3,000 sq. ft. on 11,000-sq.-ft. lot

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**The challenge** for landscape architect Julianne Frizzell was to create a space for lawn, vegetables and fruit trees, play space and an outdoor dining area — all complementing the 1935 Andalusian architecture.



# A TOUCH OF Southern Spain

New landscape satisfies long wish list



**A visit to Spain** inspired the Mediterranean garden design, with its formal, rectangular beds and strong axis and counter-axis.



**Vegetables and fruits** are grown in raised brick beds or espaliered along the wall.

by Barbara Wood / photos by  
Norbert von der Groeben

Isabelle and Scott Cole began working with landscape architect Julianne Frizzell to design their family's Palo Alto garden years before they were actually ready to plant anything — they first had to remodel their 1935 Andalusian (think Southern Spain) farmhouse.

Before they began working on the house, however, the Coles had a master plan for their garden in hand. Perhaps that is why their garden manages to serve so many



**Mediterranean elements include** ceramic pots and wrought-iron details. purposes while still remaining the most important thing a garden can be — a pleasant place to spend time.

Isabelle Cole says she gave Frizzell a long wish list of garden features. They include a style complementing the architecture of the home,



**Nestled among the** gravel are stepping-stone surprises.

lawn, vegetables and fruit trees, play places for their two daughters, space to entertain and relax, preservation of mature oaks, plantings to separate the home's corner lot from the street and even a petanque court for a French bowling game played by Isabelle's French relatives.

Frizzell was able to fulfill those and most of their other wishes, and, she says, "I had so much fun doing it."

A visit to Southern Spain inspired Frizzell's design, which includes formal aspects such as rectangular beds and a strong axis and counter-axis leading the eye from one

*continued on page 17a*

## Goal of project:

To create a Mediterranean-style garden to complement the Andalusian farmhouse-style home, with space for relaxing, growing vegetables and flowers, and room for kids to play

## Year house built:

1935

## Size of lot:

12,500 sq. ft.

## Size of home:

4,600 sq. ft.

## Time to complete:

6 months

## Budget:

\$145,000



The floating staircase is made from one piece of solid steel, with glass treads and a stainless-steel rail.

by Carol Blitzer / photos by Barbara Boissevain

Nick walked into the Sharon Heights townhouse, took one look at the black dining-room wallpaper and dangling gold chandelier, and knew he had to have it — as long as he could gut it.

“I never liked townhomes. ... This was going to be a stepping stone,” he says, recalling that he had sold his small Menlo Park house far quicker than he imagined. He had one month to move.

An engineer by train-

ing, Nick likes his lines clean, his surfaces clear and his views broad. He enjoys utilizing every inch of space, while bathing everything in light.

“One of the biggest problems was circulation flow,” architect Brian Peters says. “You had to walk around the atrium.” That space contained a large Japanese maple, rocks and a waterfall, and very effectively cut out light.

*continued on page 14a*



A tranquil seating area (left and below) offers a space to relax — and enjoy the view.

## A CLEAN, WELL-LIGHTED PLACE



Creating a visually tranquil space

A huge kitchen island encases four SubZero refrigerator drawers; while cooking one can take advantage of that view.



The master bathroom (above and below) is reminiscent of a spa, with its double sinks, German fossil stone counter and floor, large side-by-side showers and Duravit tub with chromatherapy.



continued from page 12a

The solution was to capture the atrium space and create a whole new solarium entry, with a floating steel and glass stairwell to the second story, and a wall of glass separating the now tiny atrium.

“I love cross breezes,” Nick adds. And when the doors are open in summer, it gives a very indoor-

outdoor feeling.

A few changes were made to the exterior, including installing large hinged awning windows that flip over for easy cleaning. The homeowners’ association had to approve the flat glass skylights. “Now everyone’s doing it,” Peters says.

In addition to creating a dramatic entry, Peters worked on opening up the downstairs spaces, which were



Many elements are subtle in the remodel, including the heated floor in the guest bathroom, which is on a timer.

pretty fragmented. The kitchen and dining room spaces were swapped, and a half wall removed between the new spaces, making it possible to experience the view while rinsing dishes at the sink.

A huge island contains four

**‘I wanted to make everything disappear, like a canvas, and people should be art.’**

— Nick, *townhouse owner*

SubZero refrigerator drawers, perfect for storing fresh fruits and veggies. Another drawer holds equipment for whipping up a smoothie. Top-of-the-line appliances range from a dual-fuel Wolf range with an infrared grill (hot enough

to sear Ahi tuna) to the Miele Platinum dishwasher and a second full-sized SubZero refrigerator.

Nick incorporated many green elements in his remodel, from use of nontoxic paints to the functional fireplace separating dining and living rooms, and choice of natural stones and wood.

Kitchen cabinets are made from English sycamore; a Douglas fir pillar appears to grow through the Hawaiian mahogany high counter that it supports. The countertop is dark granite. A floor-to-ceiling wine cooler and a pantry behind frosted glass complete the room.

“I use the space every day. ... I love to cook and spend a lot of time

in the kitchen,” Nick says, noting that it made sense to him to devote his resources to kitchen and bathrooms.

The rest of his home is a techie’s dream, with all home electronics and lighting controllable from his laptop (or car). Forget to turn off a light? No problem. Windows are covered by electrically controlled blackout shades.

There’s little furniture, or surfaces to clutter up. “I wanted to make everything disappear, like a canvas, and people should be art,” Nick says. He’s subtly located art in niches, and even the laundry room has self-closing drawers with no wasted corner spaces. A clever drawer under a bathroom sink leaves room to clear the pipes, with storage at each side.

In the guest bedroom, the closet hides a built-in dresser and TV components, as well as a light well for a downstairs skylight. His wireless office features a large closet, with built-in filing cabinets.

The best thing about the master

bedroom is the view, which ranges from the Dumbarton Bridge to Twin Peaks in San Francisco. “I have allergies and I don’t want fabrics all over the house,” Nick says, pointing to his electric roll-up shades that block both light and heat in summer.

But the master bathroom is worthy of a spa, with its large double sinks, German fossil stone counter and floor with tumbled-onyx back-splash, walk-in closet, Duravit tub with chromatherapy (that sends out different colors to balance energy), as well as a champagne bubbler and jets. The tub is filled to a pre-set temperature from well-located faucets, and a hand-held rinsing wand can be pulled out from the side.

The walk-in shower is really two side-by-side showers, one offering a full-body experience with five shower heads, and the other a gentler rainfall. All shampoos are hidden behind a wall, but the Bay view is visible from the shower.

All the colors in Nick’s home are muted, with interest coming from

textures in the wood and stone. His goal upon entering his home is to feel “serene and tranquil, not a lot of stuff jumping at you. *That* you don’t get tired of.” **h+g**

#### Resources:

*Architect:* Brian Peters, AIA, Redwood City; 650-366-5120

#### Goal of project/ design challenge:

Add more light, open up floor plan, more dramatic interior

#### Unexpected problems/ hidden costs:

12 shower heads demanded three tankless water heaters, all linked by computer

#### Year house built:

1983

#### Size of home:

Before, about 2,600 sf; after almost 2,900 sf

#### Time to complete:

About 18 months



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continued from page 11a

end of the garden to the other, water elements, large potted plants and a paved courtyard.

The Spanish elements were given a local flavor, however. For example, Isabelle chose to use randomly colored rectangle-cut Connecticut bluestone pavers for the terraces, not naturally shaped local stone. The tiles around the large fountain are subtly colored, not vivid like Spanish tiles. A grouping of potted gardenias is inspired by European orangeries, where citrus fruits were grown in massive pots for a winter move into a glass house. The Coles' garden was too shady for citrus, so Frizzell used the gardenias, which have glossy leaves similar to citrus and a wonderful scent.

The formality is relaxed, however, by the plants used and the incorporation of the rest of the Coles' wish list. A few plant varieties are used in numbers to allow for easy maintenance and a sense of simplicity and calm that guests often comment on. Instead of concentrating on flowers, the plants feature a variety of foliage colors and textures and scents to provide year-around interest.

The two Cole daughters, ages 12 and 9, use the garden as their playground. A trampoline is tucked into one corner, hardly noticed unless shrieks of joy are coming from it. In summer the girls sometimes set up a tent in the rear yard, and each has her favorite vegetables growing in the raised beds just outside the garden gate. An oversized swing hangs from a mature oak tree. They can lounge on the terrace or play soccer on the lawn.

"I like the flower beds and I like the swing and the fountain," 9-year-old Emma says. Scott Cole likes to read in the mornings on the larger terrace, which is used for outdoor dining and entertaining as well as hanging out, and Scott and Isabelle both enjoy working in the garden. They also have gardeners come in once a week.

The exterior garden on the corner lot contains a wide range of flowing shrubs, trees, groundcovers and flowering perennials. The plantings separate the house from the street, provide an exuberant welcome, and require less water and maintenance than a lawn would. Two flowering cherry trees flank the front door to welcome guests; a small grove of birches are planted close to a similar grove on the adjoining property. Camellias provide late winter and spring flowers, while Boston ivy softens the stucco face of the house in the summer before it provides a splash of fall color.

The garden, which was completed in April 2005, is "a true collaboration" between the owners and the designer, says Frizzell. **h+g**

### Resources:

**Landscape architect:** Julianne Frizzell, Palo Alto, 650-325-0905

**Landscape maintenance:** Rick Lopez Landscapes, Redwood City, 650-368-7949

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**A curved, limestone-topped** island takes center stage, but a lowered counter — and slightly wider distances between — offers wheelchair-accessible workspace.

## RECLAIMING INDEPENDENCE

### Remodel makes home wheelchair-accessible

by Susan Golovin /  
photos by Barak Yedidia

Perhaps the most compelling reason for the retired couple to remodel their 1959 Palo Alto Eichler, where they had lived since 1976, was to make it user-friendly for the wife. She is now confined to a wheelchair to help stem a degenerative disc problem.

However, the house had never been updated. “We wanted to bring in more light and open the place up,” the husband says. “We also wanted to increase energy efficiency.

“We didn’t change the footprint, but we took the house down to the studs,” he says. The resulting floor

plan consists of an open living room, dining room and kitchen, with the kitchen comprising the “foot” of the now L-shaped room. The bedrooms and office line one side of the home and are accessed off a wide corridor.

“I wanted an accessible kitchen that didn’t look accessible,” the wife says. This is accomplished by having the standard height (36-inch) custom-designed, curved, limestone-topped island take center stage. The lower (29-inch) workspace counter that runs along one wall is wheelchair compatible in that it features under-counter room (toe kicks) so the chair can be pulled in close to task.

The architect, Richard Morrison, designed the kitchen using Alno cabinetry from European Kitchen Design in Palo Alto. He alternated the multi-coated laminates of red, pale yellow and cherry to create a Mondrian-like pattern.

“The standard distance between counters is 3 feet, 9 inches to 4 feet,” Morrison says. “I made it a hair more generous for turning radius.”

Frequently used items are stored in easy pull drawers. A semi-circular Lazy Susan pulls out, as does a mini-pantry and garbage can. An above-counter appliance garage was fabricated with shortened height.

The sink sits in the 29-inch-high



**A wall of** double-paned windows overlooks the backyard.



**Whimsical pendants** light the Mondrian-like cabinets, which are faced in red, yellow and cherry.

counter and the window is directly above it. The Fisher-Paykel dishwasher next to the sink is small, but was chosen because it is a drawer and thus eliminates bending.

Both the Thermador flush cook top and the low-positioned, side opening Gaggenau oven are easy to access. A strategically placed microwave is built into the taller island. The side-by-side refrigerator doors do not pose a problem.

“All of the light switches are at my height,” the wife points out. The lighting, from Galaxy Lighting in San Jose, includes pendants and whimsical spots that resemble Murano glass.

A birch floor unites the public spaces and makes for easy traction. “We found out that there was no dampness so they could just glue the floor directly to the concrete,” the husband says. This is an advantage in an Eichler, since a floating floor would create a gap between the floor and the radiant-heating pipes. “Notice that there are no rugs,” the wife says.

A wall of double-paned windows now overlooks the back garden. Solar hot water and solar electric

are similarly energy saving.

“I like the nice credit we get against our electricity,” the husband says. The update included a retrofit for earthquakes.

“We bought all the living room and dining room furniture at the Design Mart of Silicon Valley in San Jose,” says the husband. The red and yellow theme is used throughout, and the retro-modern style recalls the original Eichler era.

“The couple was open to the idea of having fun and this lent itself to using a more interesting palette,” Morrison says.

In the master bathroom there is a low, pedestal sink with a mirror overhead that tilts. “For years I couldn’t look in the mirror,” the wife says. The narrow tub has a wide shelf, which allows for easy transfer and also provides storage underneath. The roll-in shower is lip-less and ample, and the floors are not slippery.

“Smaller tiles are better,” the wife says. Grab bars are strategically placed.

The toilet is within standard height. “You don’t want it too low,” the wife says, adding that that

would actually impede access.

All doorways are wide enough to accommodate the wheelchair, and where not required for privacy or esthetics, doors are eliminated. A folding door in the laundry room is easy to open.

“It’s sensational,” the wife says. “Sometimes I forget how lucky I am.” **h+g**

### Resources:

*Architect/interior designer:* Richard Morrison, Menlo Park, 650-321-3729

### Goal of project:

Update Eichler and make it user-friendly for wheelchair access

### Unexpected problem:

Used more expensive laminate cabinetry to avoid delays

### Year house built:

1959

### Size of project:

2,160 sq ft (includes garage, which was converted into storage/extra sleeping area)

### Time to complete:

7 months

## Michael Aram Lotus Pond Collection

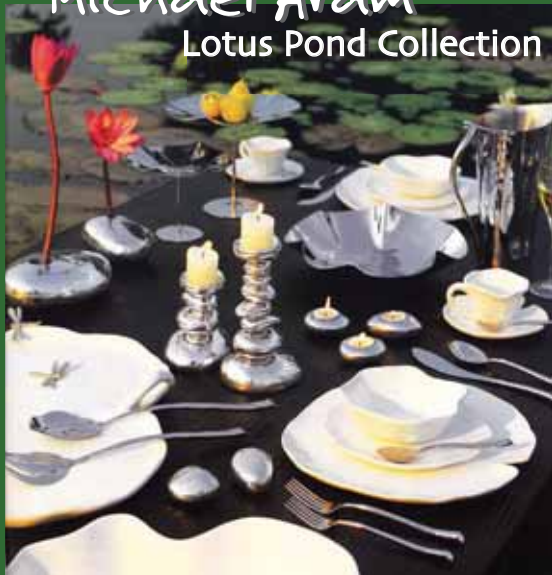


Table setting as  
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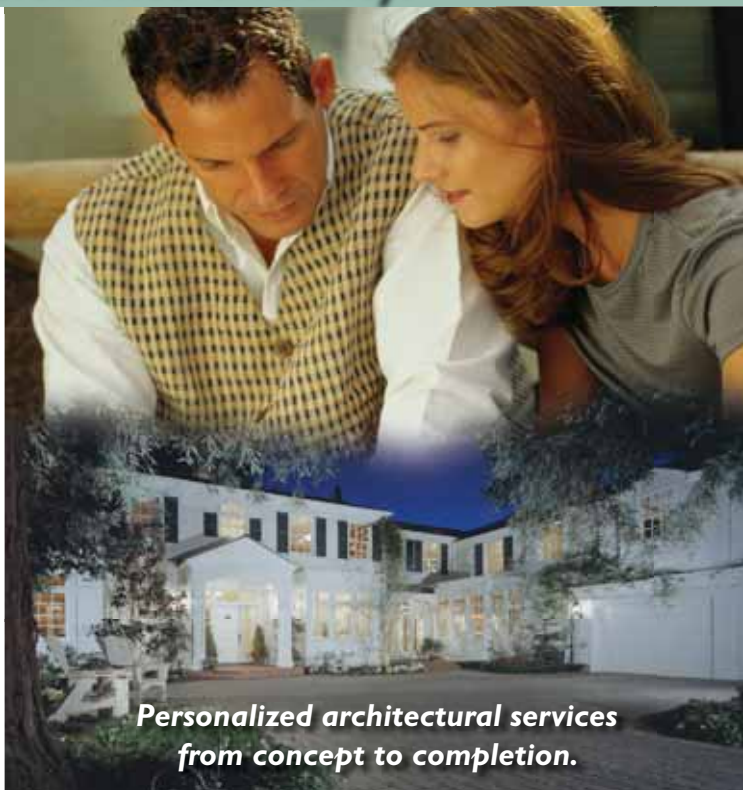
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# Real Solutions

Home offices:  
First consider how you work best



by Risë Krag

Whether you are working from your home, are trying to juggle a busy school and family schedule or need space for your charitable and volunteer efforts, it is important to create a separate, functional work place in your residence.

There are many impediments to making this a place where you can efficiently get work done. They can range from the amount of space available, the location in the home or the systems in place to create a functional space. It may even depend on *not* sharing this space with other family members.

Basic requirements of a good workspace are office tools: the right equipment, adequate desk space, ergonomic seating and sufficient, controlled lighting. For many, the overall aesthetics may be very important to the enjoyment of the space.

You may have a current workspace that is not working for you. A fresh approach is to consider how you work best: Do you prefer a quiet space? Do you like to spread out? Are you primarily using a computer? What are your storage needs? Do you plan on sharing a space? Would you work best with a view of the garden, or do you like isolation or a dark room?

After selecting a space that meets those needs, it is helpful to make a detailed layout of your new office area. It may be part of a room or



Risë Krag

**Before:** Clearly things are out of control, with no place to even locate a work surface. After, With built-in upper storage along the wall and a peninsular desk, room is created for up to three people to work.

a rearrangement of your current space. Assessing storage needs is the key to a neat, uncluttered office.

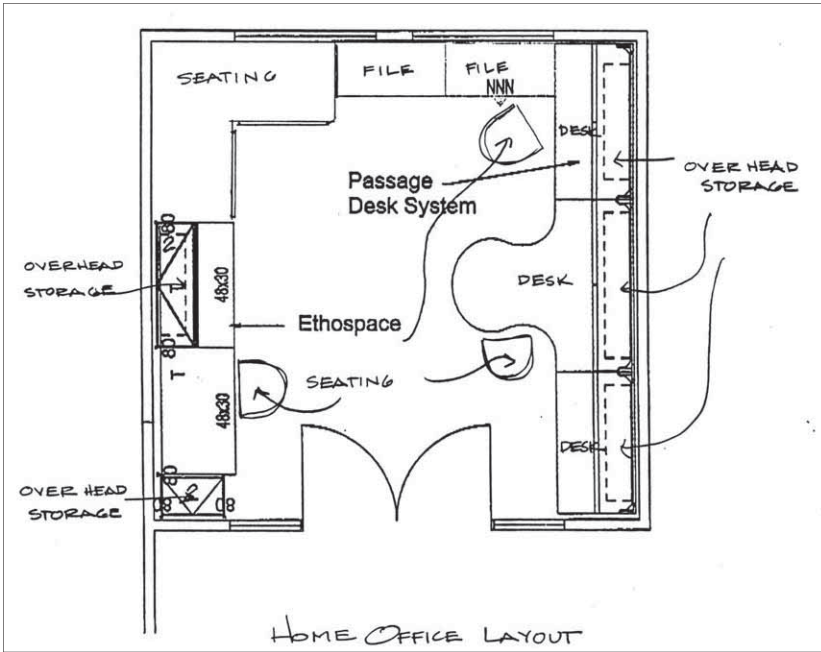
If you don't have enough floor space, consider the wall space. The most valuable space is within arm's reach. Peripherals, less-used files and office supplies can be stored in

the closet.

Often, more than one person will share a computer. Leaving room for two chairs to sit side-by-side to view a monitor is important.

The anticipated time spent in a workspace is also a key to good

*continued on next page*



tograph and a splash of color on an accent wall may also add to the ambience.

Lighting is very important. A dimmed background and a desk task light improve visibility and relaxes the eyes. Window glare may contribute to eyestrain. Having your desk perpendicular to a window, or using a window shade or blind that can change the direction of the light is helpful.

While laptops have given us greater freedom to work anywhere, there is still need for a dedicated space to manage and organize your workflow. Creating a comfortable, inviting, functional environment may be an incentive to spend more efficient time in your home office. **h+g**

Risë Krag

In addition to overhead storage, the floor plan indicates file cabinets and a seating area.

*continued from previous page*

design. Ergonomic considerations include adjustable chairs and work surfaces, adjustable keyboard trays, monitor arms, etc.

I like to include a desk at standing height, if possible, such as a small drafting table. If there is enough room, a lounge chair is another way to give your spine a rest.

Music, a favorite painting or pho-

*Risë Krag, ASID, associate AIA, IESGG, is founder of RKI Interior Design, a full-service interior-design firm. She can be reached at 650-854-9090 or risekraginc.com. Design problems can be sent directly to risekraginc@yahoo.com.*



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