

Suburban Life

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Living with style

Selecting the right color scheme will personalize your home

By Richard Lech
staff writer

DRESS YOUR home as you dress yourself.

That's the advice of Wood Caldwell, style and color coordinator for the Sears Home Fashions Group.

"People certainly know how they feel about how they dress, and they should project that onto their home, because it really is the same process, only bigger," Caldwell said.

If a color looks good on someone it will look good around them in their home, Caldwell said. For instance, if a lavender dress nets a woman compliments, she should consider decorating her home in different shades of lavender, he said.

"That is the one color you should have in your home, because that is a color that makes you look good, a color that goes well with your skin tone."

CALDWELL, WHOSE custom-style offerings are featured at every Sears store throughout the nation, is based at the corporation's world headquarters in Chicago. He was at Sears' Livonia Mall store recently to conduct a home-decorating clinic.

Caldwell told clinic participants that selecting the right color scheme is the first step in decorating a home. Making the right choices from the more-than-a-rainbow of colors available today can help personalize your home.

"There's a world of color today. For example, you've never seen as many color towels as are available today. That's because people are expressing themselves, and they want their own color that's right for them."

Too many colors may spoil a room, though. Four or five colors will throw a room out of balance, Caldwell said. Instead, he advises limiting the selection to no more than three colors — a major color with supporting and accenting colors.

To select the colors, Caldwell suggests using a color wheel, which features the various major colors and their different shades. The wheel's "spokes" connect colors that complement each other. Off-whites could be included in any color scheme because all off-whites incorporate some color.

THE COLORS may be selected according to a monochromatic, complementary, split complementary or neutral color scheme.

The monochromatic scheme makes use of variations of a single color, such as light, deep and dark. For instance, a room might have light blue walls, a dark blue rug and lighter blue curtains.

A complementary scheme uses colors that are directly across each other on the color wheel. These are go-together colors such as the red and green of Christmas or yellow and purple of Easter.

But your house doesn't have to look like a Christmas tree or Easter egg.

"Instead of taking red and green, take a pale rose and mint green, or a pale rose and a light green."

The most used color scheme today is the split complementary, Caldwell said. This scheme pairs a color with two colors that are opposite it on the color wheel. A red-orange, for instance, might be used with greens and blues, or peach with rose and aqua.

The neutral scheme makes use of such colors as chocolate, caramel, putty, ebony and the various shades of gray. These are the colors of tranquility and repose — just right for the home, Caldwell said.

"It's very comfortable. In today's very busy world we try to design our homes as sort of quiet respites."

ADHERING TO a certain color scheme will make a room seem balanced and attractive, Caldwell said. "If you're really into decorating you could even choose your wine based not on which one tastes best but what looks



ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

Wood Caldwell, style and color coordinator for Sears Home Fashions Group, designs room displays such as this American Country style living room for Sears stores across the nation.

good on the table," Caldwell said, drawing laughter from the audience.

After selecting a color scheme, the next step is to choose a style. Here, too, the style of clothes you wear should affect your choice, Caldwell said.

A classic dresser may want traditional home styling. A romantic might favor laces and satins. A modern dresser might prefer the streamlined patterns of contemporary design. The casual, blue-jeans-and-sneakers type

might go for the American or French country look.

"Country today is the most important style in home fashions. It features simplicity in decorative accessories."

IF ALL THIS seems like more design decision-making than you have time for, Caldwell points out that major retailers have come up with collections to take some of the work out of design selection. The collections feature wall-papers, curtains, furniture, carpeting and other accessories in a certain style, such as country French.

"It's to make your job easier when you're decorating at home. You can walk to the furniture department, lamp department, curtain department and find things that coordinate together."

When redecorating, few people can afford to toss all the old furniture to make way for the new, and Caldwell said there's no need to, anyway. An old piece should be compatible with the new, but it doesn't have to match, he said.

"It's kind of exciting if they don't. Then that piece creates its own special area within the room, creates its own interest. Everything doesn't blend together, and you notice the different pieces of furniture."

The unmatched piece can become the focal point, and every room needs a focal point — something that catches a visitor's eye first, he said. Some focal points he listed include a fireplace, a china cabinet used as a living-room bookcase, or an unusual window treatment, such as wooden or vertical blinds.

Paying close attention to style and color can give a room a whole new identity, he said.

"You can take some room, paint it different colors, use different wall hangings, a different window treatment, and get a whole different mood. It's very easy to change a room when you move into your own room."

"You're only restricted by your imagination."



FRICK SMITH

Susan Snider launched her first business venture last spring with a pink stork, a blue stork and a clown that announce births and birthdays when set up on a front lawn.

7-foot stork announces baby's birth

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

Susan Snider started her first business venture because she happened to see a seven-foot wooden stork standing on a lawn announcing that a new baby had arrived. Closer inspection revealed the baby's name, weight and birth date.

"I was so intrigued with this and thought it was such a nice way to let people know your baby had been born I was compelled to track it down," Snider said of the out-sized birth announcement she had spotted while on vacation last summer in North Carolina. "Then I had to think about it all winter long."

The thinking about it has since placed a stork dressed in blue, a stork dressed in pink, and most re-

cently a multicolored seven-foot-tall clown for birthday party announcements on suburban lawns.

The North Carolinian who started "Stork News" is sticking with storks for her business venture, but Snider said she devised the clown herself and is already thinking about figures to announce graduations, or anniversaries or any other celebration.

"I never thought of myself as an artist, more of a copier. But with the help of a neighbor and a jig saw and a little bit of practice in calligraphy a client can have just about anything they want written on the figures," she said.

THE STORKS and the clown are permanent weather-proof figures devised with one detachable piece of

wood. The detachable piece is the baby-bundle on the stork and one of the balloons in the cluster of balloons the clown is holding which carries the personalized announcement. After rental of the entire figure the client keeps the detachable personalized piece as a memento which is suitable for hanging.

Snider loaned out her first stork in May. She had an order for her clown before it was completed from a woman who wanted it standing on the front lawn when her husband came home from work on his birthday.

"It never occurred to me that I would be making one of these as a gag gift for an adult. I thought I was going to be writing something like 'Bobby is 3' and instead I think I've

gotten more orders from adults who want some silliness for grandpa," she said.

The storks and the clown have been Snider's best advertisements. She left some flyers in doctors' offices and hospital maternity waiting rooms last spring, but most of her clients have come by word of mouth.

Snider said when she spotted that first stork it was at a time when "I was thinking about doing something more with my time: going back to school, getting a job, something, now that all the boys are in school. I had done some cake decorating, and I guess this appealed to me because I'm still in the party business."

The Farmington Hills resident can be reached at 858-4318.

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