

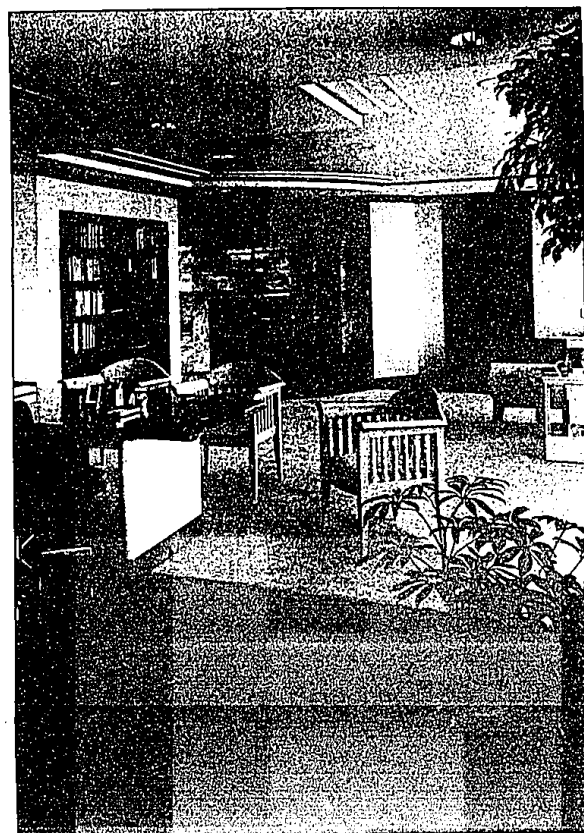
Creative Living



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Weight Watchers: a new look



BALTHAZAR KORAB

A corner of Florino Mark's office, which has the feminine but still executive look. It is done in soft shades of gray, pink and white with darker accents. The layered ceiling and fireplace give it a very sculptured look.



BALTHAZAR KORAB

Lower level hallway illustrates the many ways light and openness were brought to the lower level, which actually has no windows.

By Corinne Abett
Staff writer

ONE OF the most interesting design challenges in the new Weight Watchers headquarters building, 28555 Orchard Lake, Farmington Hills, was the lower level.

That's not counting the overall image, which an interior architectural design firm such as Pazzi Inc., working with corporate and professional clients, is always concerned with.

The Birmingham firm, headed by Dennis Pazzi worked with Florino Mark, Weight Watchers founder and president, and her staff to turn the 30,000 square feet of office and meeting space into an attractive blend of formal and informal areas, from the business offices to meeting rooms for clients.

Pazzi said, "Florino defined very succinctly what she wanted. It had to be oriented to people."

Pazzi and his entire staff (it's always a team effort) were in on the project from the beginning, doing the space planning and the design for the interior, setting up budgets and working with the contractor.

One of the "givens" the designers had to contend with was that there were no windows on the lower level.

Michael A. Ostrowski, director of design for Pazzi Inc. said, "Most of the clerical work and offices are on the lower level, so it had to be productive. And they wanted it to have natural light. So we created the illusion of natural light."

A hall on the lower level runs more than 150 feet. Serious, innovative planning turned what might have been a variation on the Detroit to Windsor tunnel into a corridor that feels like a streetscape.

There are skylights with softly diffused light behind them in the layered ceiling to give visual delineation. The walls, covered in gray Zollicoon, have a textural quality. They vary from 5 1/4 to 8 feet in width and follow a pleasantly unpredictable, elongated, shallow, serpentine line. There are insets of glass brick, wider at the top to lead the eye upward.

Scones in the hall and throughout the building provide more diffused

light. Panels of clear glass near the hallway ceiling let light into the offices almost as windows would on an upper level.

An interior stairway, strongly recommended by Pazzi Inc., is not only extremely functional, but provides a vertical corridor of light and involvement between the levels. Glass brick sections in the walls and open railings contribute to the feeling of spaciousness.

"Again," said Ostrowski, "we wanted to create the illusion of exterior space with light coming from beyond."

There are no sharp edges or jarring colors obvious anywhere in the building. It is all gentle curves and rounded edges, shades of gray, mauve, burgundy, off-white with striking accents.

Along the way in many of the halls and offices, the visitor will come upon a colorful work of art, often by a local artist such as Marilyn Spencer, Bertha Cohen or Barbara Keldan. A large landscape by Richard Kozlow of Birmingham dominates the entry area and a painting from his playful "Zafig Lady" series hangs in one of the offices.

Mark's large, first floor office, Pazzi said, "Looks feminine, looks executive." It has light marble fireplace in one corner and the floor is part gray carpeting and part marble. The furnishings are in shades of gray, pink, off-white and mauve. Behind her desk is a striking white wall relief by Frank Gallo. Mark's appreciation of art, sculpture and sculptural form is clearly in evidence here and throughout the building. This area, too, has the layered ceiling.

Pazzi Inc. designers are also responsible for the elegant black granite table, edged in natural light wood in the conference room. The other colors used in this room are plum, mauve and gray.

Sandra Berlin, secretary-treasurer of Weight Watchers, agreed with Pazzi that one of the biggest challenges (outside of the lower level streetscape), is "creating the image."

For Weight Watchers, the message from the new environment is sleek, refined, welcoming and upbeat.



BALTHAZAR KORAB

The lobby has a pleasant hospitable, yet upbeat look. The layered ceiling, wall scones, comfortable furniture and greenery combine forces to create an overall feeling of "Welcome."

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A First Property Community



designing
ways

Eve
Garvin

HERE ARE design centers in major cities around the country. The Galleria in San Francisco is one that I get to frequently as I have children who live there.

The building itself is unusual. It is four stories high with a gallery on each floor that overlooks the main lobby.

There is food service, both buffet and table, on the various floors, and the food is delicious. There are music and cocktails in the main lobby.

I have found that the design centers across the country reflect the environment of that area, and each has its own flavor. In California, there is a distinct difference between the San Francisco and the Los Angeles look.

IN SAN FRANCISCO, we see a charming ambience, more traditional furnishings, curtains and draperies that are special — much attention paid to detail. Shutters are popular — very little is seen of vertical blinds.

We see a resurgence of country French here. As I have mentioned in a previous column, I have always enjoyed that period, and today it goes very well with contemporary living, what is called a soft contemporary look.

I saw country French in San Francisco five years ago. It has taken us all of this time to catch up to them.

In the Troy Design Center, we have a showroom that makes me think of San Francisco. Gardner Powers is the showroom. They have one-of-a-kind accessories and antiques.

Furniture featured there is made in Mexico, sent to the United States where it is finished then hand decorated. The wooden animals, mirror frames and library steps are carved and decorated by the artist David Ross. They have bedspreads and matching pillows, shams and neck rolls made of white lace.

Eve Garvin is a Southfield resident who has been in the interior design field in the area for many years. She welcomes questions and comments from readers. These should be directed to her in care of this newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

organizing



Dorothy
Lehmkuhl

Q. My desk is a mess, but every time I start to organize it I find so many action items that I end up making telephone calls and writing letters instead of finishing the clean-out.

A. You have touched on one of the more difficult aspects of staying organized. It may be of some consolation to know that millions of others are just like you.

Whether you are cleaning out your desk, the garage or cleaning house, the same three simple rules apply:

• **BE PREPARED.** Like the Boy Scouts, bring to your work site everything you'll need to avoid needless supply "trips." For your desk, you may need an oversized wastebasket, extra files and perhaps some storage boxes or containers to move items elsewhere.

• **DO ONLY WHAT YOU SET OUT TO DO.** (This is obviously where your breakdown occurs.) If you intend to organize your desk, then organize your desk — nothing else. Establish a To Do list and Action files according to priority. You may want to color code these action files using red, for instance, for "that" must-do item, blue for "shoulds" and green for "coulds." As you find things to do, list and/or file them accordingly.

Resist the temptation to call or write others until the job at hand is complete. Realize your To Dos haven't been done up to now and waiting just a few minutes longer won't make a significant difference.

• **DON'T LEAVE UNTIL YOU ARE DONE.** Of course, you will find items that must be delivered somewhere else, but resist the temptation to take them there now. Instead, place them in a file, stack or box — even in the doorway of the room — and collect everything there to be delivered elsewhere. Pretend there are bars on your door and only when your desk is completely organized will the gate open. Then make all your deliveries at once.

Choose an organizing time when you will have the fewest interruptions. If you must attend to the needs of others, do so as quickly as possible and then resume focusing on the clean-out immediately.

If the job is momentous, then break it down into units. Do one or two stacks or drawers at a specific time each day until the whole task is complete. Or set aside 15, 30 minutes or an hour each day until you finish.

Allowing distractions is a sure way to fail. As with anything else, organizing your activities around your goals and focusing on them without allowing diversions is the only way to succeed.