

cover story



Traditional look: The rich cherry wood paneling and deep leather chairs speak of tradition in the Alberti's library in Orchard Lake, left.



Cozy retreat: The Hillers of Franklin were looking for quiet room with fireplace for their library retreat here.

The library: A room with a male touch

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
Staff Writer

It's a man thing.
At least that's the experience of interior designers Linda Cotter and Laure Burt of the Curiosity Shop in Franklin. When they design a home's interior, the women are most interested in the kitchen and the men supervise the design of the library.
"A lot of times if it's for a home, you're talking a man's library or office," said Cotter, who said she doesn't like stereotypes but ... "You have one of two directions. Either he wants it to look like an office or he wants it to function as an office but look like a library."
Cotter and Burt say they have designed a "zillion" libraries and it has become a specialty for them.
Libraries come in a variety of styles from sleek contemporary with laminated furniture and sophisticated computer consoles to the far more popular country, French and English styles, with built-in, ceiling-high bookcases.
"If you said 'library' to a lot of people—probably the traditional English paneled library comes to mind," Cotter said. "The library is the room that the masculine person in the household is involved with. People don't think about libraries in feminine terms."
Baronial libraries with paneled walls, stone fireplaces, leather bound books, rich tapestry hangings and a suit of armor or two are not easily accommodated in a modern home, but Cotter and Burt help homeowners suggest these legendary literary rooms with deftly selected touches.
In addition the modern library often must accommodate the latest office and entertainment equipment.
"The first thing we do—all designers do—is find out the function and the form they

(the client) want it to take," said Cotter. "You can't go anywhere until you have those things established. Once established, you have that part of the puzzle. Then they tell you the size of the area. Designers get you to identify what you want. There's really not all that many ways to go. You're leading them down a road they're already going."
For Marge and Jim Hiller of Franklin a change in one room led to changes elsewhere.
"We used to have a pool table in the living room and decided to move it to the basement," said Marge Hiller. "The library had been a TV room, but we put a big screen TV in the living room; that left the library a library."
Marge, who makes most of the family decorating decisions (with input from her husband), had a definite view.
"We wanted to make the library into a quiet room sitting by the fire, but we also had to get a computer in there. Linda worked it all out and redid the living room with the big screen TV and more book shelves."
Kay Alberti of Orchard Lake said her husband wanted a place for his gun case, bookshelves and a television.
"Basically this is my husband's room. He picked out his own desk. He wants a leather chair. He wanted it to be functional," she said.
Alberti chose a rich cherry wood to give the room a traditional look. She also had solid doors replaced with sliding glass doors between the library and living room to provide a view of the lake.
For the Hillers, the library is a quiet retreat, and for the Albertis, the library is a multifunctional room. The word library often means different things to different people.
"Is the library more home office or for

entertainment," Burt said.
The answer to that question will lead the designers to selecting furniture and equipment that fits those needs. Hekman Co. designs furniture specifically for home library/offices. One piece of furniture, for instance, looks like a handsome piece of furniture and when unfolded it reveals space for a printer, computer, fax and other necessities for the modern business person.
Though many people have a room specifically designated as a library or den, some people tuck their library/office into a dining room or bedroom by using one of these convenient consoles.
Another reason that the library is often the man's domain is that it houses such adult toys as big screen televisions and stereo systems. Burt said many clients want their speakers arranged just so, something that has become a lot easier with the advent of mini-speakers like those made by Bose. Cotter said these can often be masked by silk plants or fabric.
Another technical consideration is lighting.
"Lighting is important. You can have ceiling lighting, but most people are comfortable with a light over the shoulder," Cotter said. "Lamps are much warmer. You need a minimum 75 watt bulb."
Warmth is a primary consideration; literally and figuratively. Fireplaces are an important component in many home libraries. But it's a certain cozy feeling that many homeowners are most interested in achieving.
"More often than not there is a room that they have in mind for this," said Cotter. "You think of quiet, enclosed, somewhere to get away from the hubbub."
Cotter and Burt bought the Curiosity Shop 17 years ago and specialize in upscale home interior designs.

On the cover: A jungle striped rug and knotty pine paneling create a retreat for the Hiller of Franklin. Photo by Bill Hansen.

KEEP WARM THIS WINTER

with these furnace specials from KAST!

LENNOX

FREE ESTIMATES

- 80% Efficient
- A/C Prepack
- Electronic Ignition
- Multi-Speed Blower
- Five Year Parts/Labor
- 90% Efficient
- No Chimney Required
- A/C Prepack
- Multi-Speed Blower
- Five Year Parts/Labor

Call Today for Sale Prices!

<p>COUPON</p> <p>Receive one FREE with the Purchase of a New Furnace!</p> <p>• Air Guard • Humidifier • Programmable Thermostat</p> <p>Electronic Air Cleaner</p> <p>\$349.00</p> <p>EXPIRES 1/31/97</p>	<p>COUPON</p> <p>General 104x Humidifier</p> <p>\$239.00</p> <p>EXPIRES 1/31/97</p>
<p>COUPON</p> <p>Furnace Clean and Check</p> <p>Complete Inspection</p> <p>\$39.95</p> <p>EXPIRES 1/31/97</p>	

KAST

Heating & Cooling

FARMINGTON 478-3838
PONTIAC 338-6666
BLOOMFIELD