

# RENAISSANCE

D E S I G N C O N S U L T A T I O N S

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Volume 11

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[WWW.RDESIGNCONSULTATIONS.COM](http://WWW.RDESIGNCONSULTATIONS.COM)



PROVIDING INDEPENDENT  
& INNOVATIVE DECORATING  
SOLUTIONS (WITHOUT ANY  
"SELLING" ORIENTATION)  
SINCE 1992...

I WORK FOR YOU ~ NOT "THE STORE."

## Build-it-Yourself Dream Home

Well, among the other "hats" I've worn in my life, I can now add the title of Owner/Builder to the roster. Yup, after a decidedly arduous path, the house my husband Thomas and I designed has finally come to fruition, and we moved in the end of February (during the worst snowstorm of the season, quite the "housewarming!")

Thankfully, having designed the house ourselves (and then handed off detailed scale renderings to an engineer for design of the foundation and roof systems); there was not even one "change order" during the build itself.

In fact, it was so-o wonderful to be able to design the house around existing furniture I planned to use in addition to planned-for acquisitions. Not only did I know where each item was to be placed on moving day, but everything fits and functions beautifully as a result of the careful planning that was done on the front end, before a shovel of dirt was ever turned.

So, that was an upside, as was the knowledge gained from any number of books my husband and I read before commencing on this "Adventure in Construction Land."

Having now been through the entire process (including obtaining three easements, drilling a well, obtaining P&M, and obtaining a county variance), I want to pass along some of what I've learned for those of you considering a build or remodel of your own (whether or not you choose to serve as your own General Contractor which was the role I assumed on our project).

So here's a roundup of my best tips:

♦ **Do yourself a favor and be certain to actually check references on your contractor** - The State of California oversees the legality of the construction industry and you



*My new residence, under construction summer, 2006*

*(continued on back page)*

# "DECORATING INSURANCE" FOR YOUR NEXT PROJECT

If you're getting ready to pay the kind of \$\$\$ necessary to decorate, redecorate, or remodel and will subsequently be living with your choices FOR YEARS thereafter...a 1-hour design consultation will provide you with the unbiased professional advice you need *before* you begin that next project.

Remember, I do **NO** selling whatsoever ~ I work strictly FOR YOU, *not* "the store." I will, therefore, give you my honest evaluation and also provide the technical expertise gleaned from 20 years as a decorating professional to **eliminate the guesswork and SAVE you money -- not to mention ⌚ and FRUSTRATION !!**

How does a consult "work"? Well, after we set an appointment date, I encourage you to set aside a sheet of paper and begin to write down your decorating/purchasing questions as you think of them. That way, during the consult, we'll cover all the questions YOU want to address and use our time together as effectively as possible. We can focus on one room, or the whole house -- YOU decide. I also suggest you take notes during our meeting to refer back to later (especially important *before* you head out to shop).

I simply call it  
"decorating insurance"....

You'll call it *peace of mind.*

## OTHER SERVICES INCLUDE:

- ◆ Project management services
- ◆ Shopping for you or with you (including extending "trade discounts" when available)
- ◆ Rearranging your existing furnishings and artwork
- ◆ Space planning for home or office (including 2D and 3D scale drawings and wall elevations)

## FEES:

See Website - prices vary by location and task:  
[www.RDesignConsultations.com/fees.htm](http://www.RDesignConsultations.com/fees.htm)

**50% discount for on-site purchasing assistance (i.e. shopping for or with you)**

Call TODAY to schedule your in-home or in-office consult (commercial design services also available).

**530.362.1339**

REFERRALS APPRECIATED

# Green Choices...

Back in the day, Kermit was right...it wasn't easy being green. But fast forward to 2007 and the advent of earth-friendly choices are increasing and more readily available than ever before. Here are a few innovative eco products turned up by my own research. Perhaps you'd like to incorporate one or more into an upcoming project at your residence or business:

**American Clay** - natural, healthy-breathing clay mixed with recycled and reclaimed aggregates, and vibrant natural pigments is offered in 30+ colors (custom colors available) to create hand-troweled textured walls. Ready-to-mix formulation and 3 different finishes to choose from.

[www.AmericanClay.com](http://www.AmericanClay.com)

**Recycled paper countertops** - Paperstone composite countertops (and other brands). Made from post consumer recycled paper content, harder than wood, bonded with a 100% water-based resin system, strong, durable, and hygienic, stain and heat resistant, not hard enough to dull knives, yet dense enough to resist slice marks. *Handsome!*

[www.PaperStoneProducts.com](http://www.PaperStoneProducts.com)

**Cotton building insulation** - Would you believe recycled jeans make a fabulous insulating material? While it does cost appx. 50% more than fiberglass insulation, environmental engineers say this recycled, natural product is worth it to remove toxins and carcinogens from the air, which both trigger asthma and allergies. And, hey, you can install it yourself (soft to the touch!). Made in the USA too.

Available thru retailers of green building materials or try  
[www.SoundAway.com](http://www.SoundAway.com)

**Marmoleum flooring** - made of renewable materials (predominately linseed oil), soft under foot, great sound absorption properties. It's also VOC-free which means there's no off-gassing -- important for folks with environmental sensitivity issues.

[www.TheMarmoleumStore.com](http://www.TheMarmoleumStore.com)

**Mold-proof sheetrock** - This unique new "paperless" sheetrock designed to prevent mold....called DensArmor it's manufactured by Georgia-Pacific.

[www.StopFeedingMold.com](http://www.StopFeedingMold.com)

## .....

# WANT TO READ MORE...?



Visit the LIBRARY on my website for archived newsletters in addition to other articles on a wide range of home improvement related topics including color trends, etc.

(+ see client testimonials on site too)

[www.RDesignConsultations.com/library.htm](http://www.RDesignConsultations.com/library.htm)

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# Accent Lighting

354 Idaho Maryland Road, Grass Valley (located just off the 49 Fwy. in the Home Center)  
 Phone 530.477.5483 Toll Free 866.372.LITE (5483) Fax: 530.477.6125  
 Store Hours: Mon - Fri 8-5 Sat 9-4  
 www.AccentLight.com



**W**hen needing the lighting for my own new home, I shopped extensively online, even purchasing a pair of leaded glass pendant lights via an online merchant. But when the items arrived they were NOT as pictured -- instead of red/amber toned glass it was blue/green -- not exactly a minor difference! So while I still shopped online thereafter to help cull thru the hundreds of choices (try [www.LightingUniverse.com](http://www.LightingUniverse.com) for a particularly brilliant screening tool -- shop by style, finish, metal color, etc. to see items that *precisely* match your criteria)...I instead subsequently purchased ALL the lighting for my entire home through Accent Lighting. Sharon was particularly helpful. They have a catalogue room with oodles of mfg. binders -- but, for me, I found the online pre-shopping armed me with specific lighting lines I'd already found and that helped expedite the overall process immeasurably.

In terms of pricing, I think they've hit on a great arrangement -- namely one-size-fits-all discounting so you obtain the same pricing as us contractors/designers. And they handled all the muss/fuss of ordering including handling a return for an item for me which brings up another valuable tip I'd like to pass along. First, **DO** order just one of any multiple fixtures you're considering to ensure you like the actual item as you will mostly be ordering from catalogue photographs. And, secondly, **DO** open/inspect everything *before* it leaves the store. That's how we discovered that one of my sconces was broken in half even though there was **NO** apparent damage whatsoever to the carton. Lastly, they also did a brilliant job of "adjusting" the finish on two of my pendant lights as I wanted a blacker finish -- and they only charged \$10 per lamp, *whadda bargain!* If you go to Accent Lighting **ask for Sharon** and mention that I sent you (although anyone on their nice staff will be equally helpful). Hope this shopping lead has been illuminating for you...<wink>

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## A few of the **DISCOUNTS** available for my clients:

- To-the-trade flooring showroom** ..... 40%
- premium carpet, 20% off hardwood + tile
- Thomasville furniture**..... 40%
- Pottery World**.....20%
- Sierra Tile & Stone** ..... (appx.) 20-25%
- Ballard Designs** ..... (up to) 20%
- Magic Carpet** (imported rugs).....20%
- Restoration Hardware** ..... 10%

**DISCOUNT POLICY:** Minimum purchasing assistance fee of fifteen minutes applies per vendor. Non on-site purchasing assistance including online or catalogue vendors priced at **regular** hourly rate.

## *In Memoriam*

My beloved husband of 8 years, **Thomas Kehrlein**, lost his 2-yr. cancer battle in late June.



Thomas was the love of my life and my partner in every way -- including working tirelessly and selflessly on our new house during his illness. We had great faith and believed that the alternative medicines we found following his traditional treatment would ultimately save his life; although it turned out a genetic condition we learned of too late thwarted our efforts and hopes.

He is irreplaceable and without equal, and is sorely missed.

I honor his valiant spirit, his inspiring grace, adorable humor, and amazing courage throughout his long and painful ordeal. He wanted the house he built for me to serve as a legacy, and it does so every day, m'Love...

~ Give a Gift Certificate for a consult ~

(continued from pg. 1)

can check the status of a contractor's license (including ensuring that they're appropriately bonded) online @: [www2.cslb.ca.gov](http://www2.cslb.ca.gov). But, equally important, ask for phone numbers of previous clients and then CALL and see what their actual experiences were in dealing with someone you're considering hiring. Also it's important to obtain signed Lien Waivers back from your contractor(s) as each completes their portion of the project and is paid in full.

Space planning is a must -- I've worked with numerous clients after the fact who didn't address furniture (et al.) size and placement until the house was already framed (*which is just too late in the process!*).

◆ **Plan, plan, plan.** You simply *can't* do "too much" planning. And pay close attention to how your rooms will flow into one another and select your colors, flooring, and wall materials accordingly. Be careful too of "bullnose" walls which will make changing paint colors at corner intersections dicey.

◆ **Let the sunshine in.** Unless diminished light is a preference of yours -- check the depth of your overhangs and overall window positioning *at the actual build site* to ensure that you too will instead enjoy a sun-filled home.

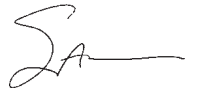
◆ **Space planning is a must** -- I've worked with numerous clients after the fact who didn't address HVAC, furniture, cabinet, and fixture sizes and placement until the house was already framed (*which is just too late in the process!*).

◆ **Add your own special touches:** things like a pass-thru window from the kitchen to the dining room, in-wall ironing board, custom-designed transoms - perhaps using antique glass or custom frosted panels, etc. -- whatever your choice/taste, let your new space fully reflect your own unique sense of style. This is the chance to create the opposite of the cookie-cutter look for your home! I added all of these plus custom designed tiles for two rooms, etc.

◆ **Rob a bank.** Naw, but you'll wish you had by the time the project is finished! There just doesn't seem to be any way around all the unexpected elements that pop up and eat away at your otherwise well-planned budget. Simply put, prearrange for more funds than you think necessary to avoid the unplea\$ant \$urpri\$es inevitably associated with the "joy of construction."

Cheers, happy nesting, and wishing you joyful holidays ~

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DESIGN CONSULTATIONS

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*20 years interior design experience*  
*Now serving Nevada & Placer counties*

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