


NKBA
Northern California Chapter
FEBRUARY 26TH, 2009
FEBRUARY CHAPTER MEETING RECAP

A HOME REMODEL FOR THE AGES


Harrell Remodeling, Inc.
 Design • Build

Another evening packed with entertainment, networking and information went by on the 26th of February marking the calendar as the first “**Northern California Chapter Meeting**” of 2009. Food and drinks were graciously served by the hosts, **SEGALE BROS.**, lifting spirits of all attendees in this down economy.

The evening started with a few announcements from **Sherry Faure** CKD, CBD President of NKBA No.Ca chapter. After introducing the 2009 board, Sherry asked if any cabinet experts were in the audience who might want to be a part of some focus groups. She read the criteria and asked any interested parties to contact her after the meeting. The six selected participants in each group would be compensated with \$250 for 2 hrs of their time and space. There was a call for donations of a washer and dryer for a “Homeless shelter” in Redwood City.

New members were welcomed and professionals who passed the exams were congratulated. **Shari Steele** encouraged attendees to utilize this time to take exams and get those appellations next to their names. Application deadline is June 19th, for tests between September 16th & 23rd. She urged students to Attend the workshops at Student Career Forum held in San Francisco on March 13th and 14th of 2009.

Lilley Yee CKD, CBD, ASID, CID announced that the Design Competition will be held again this year and the **Design Gala** will be held in January, 2010. Entries are invited and this year high resolution digital photos must be submitted. More information on the competition will be coming up soon on the website.



Kim Northrop, Lilley Yee, Joanne Stage, Leslie de Giere.



Nora Scofield, Priya Chawla, Sari Steele, Charlene Rouspil





L - R: Patsy Zakian-Greenough, Iris Harrell, Donald Segale, Genie Nowicki

The workshop started with the introduction of **Iris Harrell, Genie Nowicki and Patsy Zakian-Greenough**, all of **Harrell Remodeling Inc.** The topic of the meeting was “**Home Remodel for the Ages**”

The guest speakers presented a case study of a home that was designed to be easy on the environment and easy on people with disabilities.



The **Harrell-Benson house** has found its appropriate identity; the one that expresses its user’s lifestyle, perspective, values, and desire for aging in a place they call “home”. After 14 years of living in the 4000sq.ft house that had 10 rooms, one and a half bath and no kitchen at all, the house underwent a long overdue remodel, an emotionally stressful but rewarding procedure that made the house a warm, welcoming, comfortable and accessible home to all.

The project won the **META Platinum Award for Universal Design, the Judge’s Choice Green Award, and the Judge’s Choice for best overall project from NARI.** As the presenters explained, this success was possible only because the clients, designers, fabricators, site managers and all professionals associated with the project worked together as “one unit”.

Client’s perspective - Iris stated that no matter how educated and familiar you are with the construction process, it is always emotionally stressful for the homeowners to live through the remodel.

Designer’s perspective - Genie said that active listening is crucial. Listen and foresee the needs that the clients may not be identifying. It is important to consider issues like genetic

disposition, lifestyle factors, psychological factors, cognitive abilities environmental factors etc. A designer has to wear multiple hats and often act as a marriage counselor!

Listening carefully to the needs of the clients, Genie Nowicki designed a house that is unpretentious and heart warming. She also incorporated Iris's love for Japanese architecture. They call the house in Iris's words "**Japan meets cowgirls!!** Blend of East and West in an eclectic way".

Every inch of space is functional and used by the homeowners. Iris's fear of not being useful, or being physically dependant with age was addressed by using the principles of universal design. By paying attention to small details and incorporating the hobbies and personal aesthetics that Iris and Ann share, Genie created a house that fulfilled the homeowner's desires. All without making it look like a cold sterile medical facility!

The project started with programming, schematics, a lot of detailing and working with specialists for a home automation system, elevator design and installation plus a vacuum system which required much communication and coordination.

The programming revealed that the functions of the house could be rearranged to better suit the needs of every family member. The clients and the designer agreed on excavating under the first floor to gain an additional 440 sq. ft. space rather than increasing the footprint of the building. The excavation involved installing several conveyor belts to pull out the debris without damaging any of the oak trees that were close to the structure. The result is a beautiful space with an enviable walk -in closet and laundry room.

According to Genie, **Universal Design is not just for kitchens and baths.** It extends to the entire house and its **approach.** In fact it is an aspect of green design. For this project a ramp is incorporated with the landscape. It is practically invisible and allows wheel chair users or people with knee problems to enter the house without any effort or assistance.



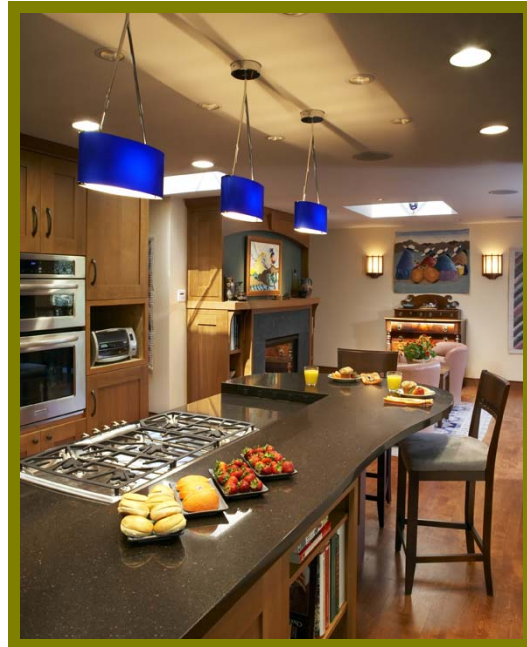
The entrance being at grade level allows for a smooth transition; Entry door is wide, has sidelights, skylights & leaded glass. The extended covered porch houses phantom glass doors six

feet ahead of the front door. This allows cross ventilation and plenty of light to filter in when the front door is open.

The elevator allows easy access to all floors. It's much easier to install than one might think. In this case, the elevator is 4'X 6', has a phone installed and is self contained so it does not require an additional mechanical room. However one has to keep in mind the hidden costs involved, such as cost of tear down, framing, electrical, concrete etc.

The three **bathrooms** in this home were designed to be highly functional, sustainable and accessible. The bathrooms feature curb-less roll-in showers, "adult height" toilets and roll-under vanities.

The upstairs guest bathroom has an adjustable height counter with an electronic motor (supported by solar panels). Wider doors and smooth flooring transitions allow for comfort and easy access from room to room. For additional comfort, the bathrooms feature showers with hydronic heated benches and heated floors that are timer controlled. Nuheat has recently introduced a product that is safe for wet area installation. Accessible hand held shower controls are also used in these bathrooms. The cabinetry is made from FSC certified wood and is formaldehyde free. All paints used are either low or no VOC. Simple, clean lines support the Asian and Craftsman feeling of this design.



The **kitchen** has dual work stations; clear traffic flow and wide aisles allow multiple cooks to function smoothly. All appliances are Energy Star rated. Black Caesar Stone counter tops with radiant heat are used. The base is furred out to get 27" deep counter tops. Heat mesh is laid directly between the cabinet deck and the counter top. The homeowners prefer to keep the heat low so the difference is like touching a laminate vs. granite during winters. Since the clients fell in love with the blue pendant lights that did not have a suitable beam spread, Genie, added extra layers of light to improve the task lighting. Dimmable fluorescent lights were added to comply with

title 24 criteria. FSC certified cherry cabinets from Segale Bros. complements the beauty of this kitchen and contributes to the green and universal design features of the home.

Another spectacular feature of this home is the **Great room** ceiling grids. The previous design of the house had large spaces but not much detailing. To add visual and psychological comfort per human scale, wooden grids with art glass inserts were added to drop down the ceiling. The grids are suspended approximately 18" from the ceiling but do not block any light from clerestory windows. To the contrary, they provide indirect light that bounces up, off ceiling, and directs light into the room. With six different patterns on each grid, the ceiling grabs all the attention. Steel plates were installed into the ceiling to hang the grid, parts of which were assembled on the site. These grids hang approximately 18" from the ceiling and are ensured to be strongly attached and earthquake proof. In fact the glass panels are laminated and stay in place if they crack.

The **home office** features storage closets with flipper doors that are lockable to secure files. Lumicor doors with reed inserts add to the beauty of the space. The **craft room** too has plenty of storage to accommodate craft supplies and a Murphy bed that allows room to double up as a guest room. The **guest room** is carpeted with a special underlay pad that prevents out off - gassing. The designer felt it was a good option for people with auditory problems.

Last but not the least; the **laundry room** has Zodiaq counter tops with heat. The heated counter helps in evaporating moisture from the room and allows clothes to dry faster. Besides, it is also the favorite spot for the pet cat to sleep on. All cabinetry is laminated. A stainless steel sink, and a dishwasher from before the remodel are re-used within this space. Amtico flooring which is good for the back is used.

Skylights are used through out the house to have all spaces filled with natural light. 54 photo-voltaic solar panels that provide at least 90% of the electrical load are installed on the roof. Several fire places through out the house provide zoned heating to avoid wasting energy in spaces that are not used.

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Photographs courtesy:
Project pictures – Harrell Remodeling Inc.
Chapter Meeting pictures – Sherry Faure & Sanchali Srivastava