

Kitchen area makeover: Seven steps to transform any room

Parties, like the one D.C. and I hosted last week, have many up-sides: You meet interesting people. You help a cause. And you get a kick in the derriere to do those home improvements you've put off until the return of Halley's Comet.

All to say, for my newly redecorated kitchen eating area, I have the Orlando Philharmonic to thank.

Let me back up. Last December I ended a column with this line: My new philosophy: Care less. Entertain more. You only get now once.

So, when a friend asked me if I would host a party to support our city's philharmonic, a shindig for what turned out to be a mere 70 people in the home my husband and I moved into just three months ago, I could not refuse. I was a victim of the press. My own press.

After my heart stopped fibrillating, I quickly converted panic into productivity, and capitalized on the opportunity to make a dent in our home-improvement list.

The thought of all those cultured people in our home motivated D.C., too, to join me in wrangling a dozen or so suddenly urgent tasks to the ground in just a



AT HOME WITH Marni Jameson

never far from hand. So – ladies, are you listening — when the time is right, and Mars is out of retrograde, and the stock market is up, and the Visa bill hasn't yet come in, and your husband's team is winning, or you're hosting a party, you can spring into action.

As D.C. will confirm, I am always just one green light away from becoming a decorating dervish.

I pulled out my book of lists and consulted with D.C. After some minor negotiations ("Honey, the people coming read my column. We can't leave our puny, 42-inch kitchen table where a 60-inch, round one is clearly called for."), we agreed on which projects to go for.

few short weeks.

Fortunately, just for emergencies like this, I have my home-improvement-to-do list. Actually, my list has lists, one for each room, which I keep in a little book, which is

Finishing the kitchen eating area was clearly a priority, because that's where every party ends up. Plus, this was low-hanging fruit; we were halfway there.

When D.C. and I first toured the Happier Yellow House that became ours last fall, among the many features I loved was the sunny dining area. Though obviously under-decorated, the room had loads of promise. (As I often remind D.C., a room can be furnished but not decorated.)

However, as you and I both know, seeing a room's potential and getting there is like wanting to run a marathon and crossing the finish line. To do either requires energy, determination, motivation and sweat. With a goal in mind, a list in hand, and the party as my finish line, the race was on.

When facing a room, you want to redecorate, follow these seven steps, as we did with our kitchen eating area, and watch your dream room come true:

Start with the end in mind:

Have a vision so you know where you're going before you start. Don't wing it. Then make your to-do list.

Focus on the assets: Look at what the room has going for it and doesn't. Our 10-x-13 eating area had good proportions, great natural light and solid hardwood floors. All important because these are tough to change. It also had handsome plantation shutters and a decent light fixture that needed new shades. We'd need to add color, furniture that fit, softness and texture, art and accessories.

Fix surfaces first: Start from the floor and walls and move in. Before we moved in last November, we refinished the wood floors, taking them from aged yellow oak, to

matte, mid-tone brown. We painted the walls a creamy yellow (SW Belvedere Cream) and hung colorful artwork. We stopped there, stalled on second base, and might have stayed stuck, but for the party.

Figure out furnishings: Before you buy furniture, create a floor plan, use painters' tape to outline where pieces will go and select pieces that are the right scale. Because everything in the room was square, I wanted a round dining table to soften the edges. Given the volume and shape of this room, a 60-inch, round table was the ideal fit.

SEE MARNI, 7H

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District 10, Map 222E, Parcel 60

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The North Woods Subdivision - Eleanor, WV
287.39+/- Acres of Undeveloped Land and 61 Vacant Developed Residential Lots

SUBJECT 1

47.03 Acres at Entrance of North Woods, Lot 219 North Woods Drive -
.39 Acres, Adjoins Subject 2 & Subject 4
District 5, Map 11, Parcel 1

SUBJECT 2

118.67+/- Undeveloped Acres, Access from North Woods Drive / Glenmont
Road, Adjoins Subject 1 & Subject 3, District 12, Map 163, Parcel 29.2

SUBJECT 3

84.35 +/- Undeveloped Acres, Access from North Woods Drive / Luikart Ridge,
Adjoins Subject 2, District 12, Map 174, Parcel 1

SUBJECT 4

5.89 +/- Mostly Developed Acres, Including 3 Developed Residential Lots

240 North Woods Drive - .45 Acre Corner Lot

400 Luikart Ridge - .29 Acre Lot

401 Luikart Ridge - .79 Acre Lot

Adjoins Subject 1, Subject 2, Subject 3 & Subject 5

District 5, Map 11, Parcel 18

SUBJECT 5

82.33 +/- Acres – Aviators Pointe

55 Developed Lots on Luikart & Aviator's Pointe

47.48 Acres in Developed Lots

District 5, Map 12, Parcel 1

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