



Basement Transformation

From catchall to gathering place

BY DIANNA BORSI O'BRIEN
PHOTOS BY DEANNA DIKEMAN



A stone gas fireplace provides real warmth as well as the rustic feel the Metzses wanted. The lodge-look is reinforced by Craftsman-like wood details in all cabinetry, including the entertainment center, built-in desks and cabinets in the his-and-her office space and kitchen. The Craftsman theme is reflected in the style of the sconces above the mantel and on the wall opposite the television.





The kitchen area features an oversized island, perfect for friends to gather around or for a family dinner. Opening up the staircase created a more spacious feel, and an abundance of ceiling lights banishes any basement feel to the room. The Craftsman-style pendant lights over the island make it feel homier.

Today, Gail and John Metz’s basement is a cozy gathering place for them and their two children, Blake, 12, and Grant, 8, complete with a kitchen, living room with a fireplace and his-and-her offices. It’s hard to believe this Colorado-lodge-like room was carved out of open storage space that once looked like a warehouse, with metal posts, concrete floors, unfinished walls and stacks of boxes and stray items, ranging from multiple Christmas trees to inherited odds and ends.

“Now it’s our favorite place in the house,” John Metz says. “It’s a place for the kids and us to spend time in as a family”

In 2007, John and Gail decided they wanted to convert their basement into a retreat area where each of them could pursue their own interests yet still spend time together. Now, Gail can be in the kitchen while still enjoying John’s company as he watches television, and both of them keep in touch with the children as they do their homework.

The couple also wanted to provide their children with a place to play as well as somewhere they could spend time with their friends and hang out. The plan seems to have worked; both children have hosted sleepovers in the space. They sleep in the living room area, snack downstairs and enjoy the television and Wii. The space also works as an entertainment center for Gail, a State Farm administrative services supervisor, and John, a Columbia firefighter, and their friends. One recent weekend, they had 15 to 20 friends over for a dinner and get-together.

In 2007, the Metzses asked Angela Holloway and Kerry Bramon of Kerry Bramon Remodeling & Design to bring their vision to life. Holloway and Bramon say the first step in a renovation is always to understand the family and what they want.

“They are real people people,” Bramon says, noting the family focus on the space.

Today, the entire family loves the downstairs area. “We get ready for work or school upstairs, but we spend the rest of our time down here,” Gail says. **CH**



ABOVE: The kitchen area is center stage, close to the living room and the office area, where the children can do their homework with Gail and John nearby. The kitchen space features hardwood floors for easy cleanup, which makes it perfect for entertaining and family fun.