

Organization by design

BY DAINE B. HALLEY



The foyer of an average home is littered with shoes, coats and things that are either coming in or on their way out. We need to have these items conveniently located and functionally stored without ending up with something messy looking. When we put these necessities away, they are not easily accessible and over time creep back into the hall. So what is really the problem and how do we solve it?

It makes sense to have shoes where they are used and in the photo, they are near the front door. This house was particularly challenging, as there is not a closet in the entry or even conveniently close by. Without reconstruction to borrow space from adjacent small rooms the problem seems to be nearly impossible to solve. The added shoe rack solves the problem, however it still takes up space in the tiny entry area.



During a recent renovation the front entry was reinvented making it a welcoming, attractive place. Using custom millwork, we were budget conscious and creative in addressing the requirements of these clients. The result was an attractive, efficient use of space. When the old pony wall and the solid banister were taken out it was replaced with a multi-use built-in for shoes on one side and music and books on the other. On top is a place for plants or pottery.

By borrowing from one part of the budget and using money for a built-in elsewhere and eliminating an extra ban-

ister, we were able to solve a traffic flow concern in the entry and stair landing along with the architectural problem of exposure to the front door while sitting in the living room.

The materials and finish used for the built-in are reflected around the room: the built-in is painted the same as the wall and the tile on top used in the entry flooring and is edged in wood to match the hardwood floors.

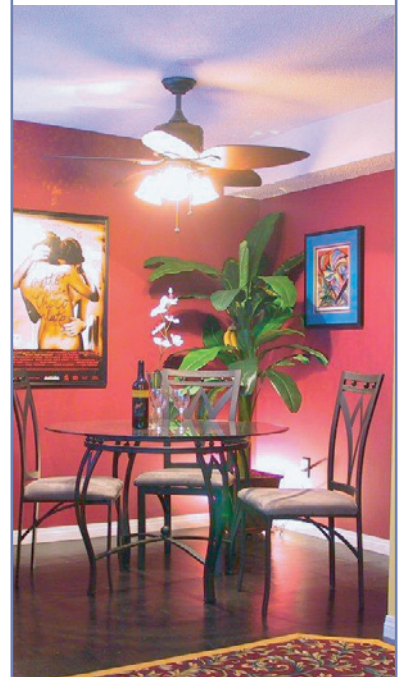
The result is attractive in a way that respects the age of the home, divides the space between entry and the living room, and provides lots of storage in a central location. A quality piece of millwork looks like it has always been there and is functional for years to come. It is an unexpected solution to a common problem that many have in their homes. A little thinking outside of the box gives us the chance to turn a problem into a design feature. The extra detail makes the home special to the people who live there and memorable to the people who visit.

You don't have to spend a lot of money to get great results, with careful planning and quality work, done either by yourself or by skilled professionals, can turn a nagging, unsightly problem into an organized and clever design for you to enjoy.

Daine Halley is principal of Comet Interior Design and a member of Professional Organizers of Canada.



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