



Renovating a Home, Empowering a Life

Modifications to a Leawood Home Help a Family Cope with Tragedy

Article Katherine Bontrager | Photography Brian Turner

They people behind the volunteer efforts included:

- Bruce Barnett at Daltile
- Dick Shepherd at Towncraft Wood Products
- David de la Fuente at Fountain Glass
- Michael Fuhrman at Schutte Lumber Co.
- Joe Neenan at Neenan Company
- Pat McGee and Wayne Schmidt at SBH & Associations and AKW
- Scott Sellers at Graniteworks and Kenny's Tile
- Jeff Christoferson at Sherwin Williams
- Matt Pace at First Pace Flooring and Master Craft Flooring Co.

August 8, 2010 was slated to be a beautiful day; Tom Roberts and his friends were headed back to Leawood after enjoying the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. They were looking forward to a gorgeous ride and a happy return home. The day took a devastating turn, however.

“For reasons I’m still not aware of,” Tom says, “I went off a back country road at 70 miles an hour. I suffered a broken back, eight broken ribs, a broken clavicle, a fractured left arm and severe internal bleeding. My injuries were far too serious for the local hospital to handle, so I was transported to Regional West Medical Center in Scottsbluff, Neb. for surgery and was in an induced comma for four weeks.”

While Tom can remember little of the accident, it is believed a bee sting caused him to veer off the road. His horrific injuries left him paralyzed from the chest down. After his surgery, he was sent to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln and remained there until mid-December.

His wife, Pam was anxious to get him home, but their house was ill-equipped to handle Tom’s wheelchair. There was so much to be done—but it all seemed insurmountable as Pam worked to maintain her own job and focus on Tom’s health.

News of Tom’s accident moved quickly between neighbors and friends. Debbie Hartzler, an occupational therapist with LifeWise Renovations, heard about the Roberts’ story through a friend, Julie Boresow, at a Blue Valley back-to-school night. The Roberts’ needs seemed a perfect fit for the company, which specializes in modifying homes so people can remain in them, despite changes in health and age.

“LifeWise Renovations is a division of Wineteer, Inc., a residential remodeling company that began doing business in 1988 with my father, Mike Dodd, at the helm,” says Katy Dodd, director of business development. “However, over the years, my mom, Kathy, who’s a healthcare professional, consistently heard, ‘I want to remain in my home as I get older.’ Yet most of the homes were not set up for that transition, causing many to move to nursing homes. With the market crash of 2007 and subsequent homebuilding industry slump, Mike decided to reinvent the company and start a new division called LifeWise Renovations. In this new model, both the remodeling and healthcare piece was brought under one roof to provide a more holistic service and approach for the client.”

“The uniqueness of LifeWise Renovations comes from having Occupational Therapists on staff,” says Hartzler.



| GivingBack |

Large porcelain floor tiles replaced the carpeting, and matching tiles were added to the walls. A new divided vanity, one side with sloping skirt front and lowered height for wheelchair access.



“This project enabled us to put our clinical strengths together with our service hearts.”

The company’s tagline, “Remodel for Life,” truly captures the essence of what they sought to demonstrate to the Roberts’ family.

After contacting the therapy team at Madonna Rehab to check on Tom’s progress, Debbie conducted an evaluation of the Roberts’ home in order to decide what modifications would be needed for Tom to comfortably function there while maintaining his sense of independence. There were a number of factors already in the couple’s favor, including the master suite being on the main floor, hardwood flooring through much of the house and an attached two-car garage. The master suite was carpeted however, and much of the house would not accommodate Tom’s wheelchair.

The first step the Lifewise Renovations team undertook was to provide easy access to the inside of the house. Given the space in the garage, they were able to construct a ramp that provided entry to the home, while keeping Tom and others out of the elements. The doorframe was also expanded to provide ample access.

The company next tackled the greatest challenge in the house: the master bathroom. The existing bathroom, with its walk-in closet, separate water closet and shower, Jacuzzi bathtub and double vanity was gutted entirely.

According to Lifewise Renovations’ blog of the project, “One closet was re-framed for new built-in cabinetry, and the walk-in closet was re-framed with a larger cased opening. There was no exhaust fan in the old bathroom, so a new externally-vented unit was appropriately placed. A new comfort-height toilet was installed with strategically placed grab bars. The old water closet was re-framed to create a new barrier-free shower.”

Large porcelain floor tiles replaced the carpeting, and matching tiles were added to the walls. A new divided vanity was installed with one side designed with a sloping skirt front and lowered height for wheelchair access. The granite countertops were fabricated to compliment the porcelain tile before the finishing touches were added.

The master bedroom had hardwood flooring installed that breathed new life into their existing furniture, while making all the difference in Tom’s ability to maneuver around the master suite.

Football and the Holidays are Here!

Is Your House Ready To Host?

Due to high demand for pre-holiday installs, offer extended to 11/30/11

Pandora, iTunes, SiriusXM, TuneIn Radio, and more
Save \$500 with a Custom 4-Room Music System
Only \$2495 Installed!!!

Call Today For A FREE In-Home Consultation

Hurry!!! Offer now ends 11/30/11

NW **NaturallyWired**
Electronic Systems Contractor

913-385-9926
www.naturally-wired.com
16100 Foster, Overland Park, KS

Audio/Video · Security · Home Automation · Networking · Communications



The entire project required only 13 working days to complete, but totaled more than 400 man hours. LifeWise Renovations was grateful and humbled by the assistance it received from a number of local businessmen and companies in the endeavor, all of whom donated materials to help a family they didn't even know.

"Even though we're a start-up, in reality we're a 24-year-old company," explains

owner Mike Dodd. "Taking on a project like this from a fiscal and logistical perspective was not too difficult given our network. What really allowed us to evolve into a healthcare business model from the construction business was our experience in managing and performing projects."

As Katy is quick to point out, giving back is at the heart of the new company. "We knew this was the right thing to do. We know what a strain it

Tom and Pam couldn't be more thankful for the way fate intervened and led LifeWise Renovations to their Leawood home.

puts on a family when such a catastrophic event happens. Families are in shock and often are cash-strapped from mounting medical bills. We have strong relationships with amazing strategic alliance partners that allow for us to do something worthy like this."

Tom and Pam couldn't be more thankful for the way fate intervened and led LifeWise Renovations to their Leawood home.

"It was a blessing that our names fell in their laps," Pam says. "It was by chance, and it was just incredible that they came into our lives when they did."

For Tom, the renovation helped enable him to return home, heal and move on with life.

"I had seen floor plans, but as I was in Lincoln, I really didn't have much interaction with the project. I just relied on their knowledge, since they do this for a living. Admittedly, I was a little nervous. What I didn't want was the sterile, antiseptic bathrooms I'd just left at Madonna Rehab. But when I got home I thought, 'This is gorgeous! I wish we had done this before the accident!'" LL

HEIDI HARMAN

H2O
ORTHODONTICS

Only orthodontists receive an extra 2-3 years of specialized education beyond dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth

Call today for a FREE consultation!

78-BRACE

- Orthodontic specialist for all ages
- Initial screenings should begin at age 7
- Invisalign-braceless treatment options
- Many payment options available
- Most insurance plans accepted

Offices serving Leawood, Overland Park, Olathe & more!

www.H2Orthodontics.com

913-782-7223

Wine Cellars & Design

Before

Complete, LLC specializes in wine rooms and cellars.

We have a specialized team well equipped to handle the design, plan, and construction of your specific room.

After

Call today for a consultation

(913) 238-0206 KS
(816) 916-4323 MO

Complete, LLC

Develop • Construct • Renovate

3D design and consultation

www.CompleteLLC.net

info@completellc.net