

Careful Planning Results in Spectacular Renovation

One of the worst problems of renovating is the dust and disruption the work causes. No matter how careful you are, dirt and grime finds its way everywhere. They don't call it "divorce dust" for nothing!

John and Barb Towers (not their real names) recently found a way to avoid the

divorce dust problem when they added a family room to their 35-year-old backsplit. Their solution was to do most of the work outside the house - on the roof over the garage. All the major carpentry work was completed on the outside before they broke through the wall to connect the family room to an upstairs hall.

"Anyone who is considering an addition should make sure they don't break into the house until they have to," says John. "It makes life a lot easier."

Although the job took two months to complete, the disruption inside the house was minimal - and the end result is spectacular.

The new family room features a cathedral ceiling with skylights. A wall of windows overlooking the street is framed by built-in oak shelving. The room has a zero-clearance fireplace with marble facing, which was salvaged from a demolished office building. The high cathedral ceiling left room over a closet for a small loft, which is accented by a custom brass bar rail. From this unique perch, the Towers' children watch television. Another unexpected bonus was the creation of storage space over the living room.

Adding a room over a garage poses special heating and ventilation problems for builders and renovators, but in the Towers' case, everything went smoothly. To make sure the room had proper ventilation, an extra cold air duct was installed. Ducting for heating and air conditioning was installed under the floor of the new room.

Fiberglas Pink Insulation was used in the floor to achieve an insulation value of R-40, and Fiberglas Pink Batts were installed in the walls and in the cathedral ceiling. The insulation, combined with triple-paned windows, makes the room cosy and warm all winter. In summer months, the air conditioning can be switched on, or the skylights opened to create a delightful cool retreat.

The Towers' home is located just down the street from a park, a popular spot for

photographers to shoot wedding photos in the summer. Inevitably, exuberant wedding parties celebrate as they drive past the house by blowing their car horns long and loud. Yet in the insulated family room, John says they barely hear the commotion.

The renovation became necessary when John and Barb had their third child, and a decision of whether to move or renovate had to be made. They liked their neighbourhood, and with real estate prices escalating, John said the decision to stay was easy.

John enjoyed the renovating process and had a good relationship with his general contractor. John admits he may have supervised the work a little closer than the tradespeople would have liked.

"I'm not one of those guys who says, 'There's the work, go to it,' and then leaves for

the day," says John. "I like to watch what's going on." More than just watch, however, John took an active role in the work. He took two weeks off from his executive job to personally install the built-in shelving and finish the wood trim. Although he enjoyed doing the work, he says he took the time off so the job could be completed quickly, again to keep the disruption to the family at a minimum.

The carefully planned renovation had only one unpleasant surprise - John and his builder couldn't find new roof shingles to match the originals, and eventually had to reshingle the entire roof. John spared no expense in this renovation - the total cost of the addition was about \$40,000. But with the rising costs of real estate, John figures they made the right decision in renovating their home and staying put.

Arson alarm

Insurance Bureau of Canada recommends that you follow these steps to protect your property against fire-bugs and vandals:

- take many of the same steps to discourage the arsonist that you would to discourage a burglar;
 - always make your home look occupied;
 - keep your home and surrounding buildings secure at all times;
 - get rid of rubbish - it's the arsonist's kindling;
 - if you have a Block Parents or Neighbourhood Watch organization, add arson to your watch;
 - install smoke alarms and other fire safety equipment; familiarize your family with fire safety procedures;
 - educate your children about the facts of arson and encourage your neighbours to do the same;
 - if an arson epidemic hits your neighbourhood, organize a community arson task force and discuss the problem with your fire department;
 - report all suspicious incidents.
- The Insurance Crime Prevention Bureau, supported by the Canadian general insurance industry to prevent and investigate all types of insurance crime, and the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs sponsor Arson Alarm, a national awareness program designed to help the fight against arson.
- You, too, can help by ensuring that you are not a target.



John and Barb Towers share their spectacular new family room with Shane, Kelly and Michael. A quiet, comfortable environment was created by surrounding the room with high levels of Fiberglas Pink Insulation in the floor, walls and cathedral ceiling.



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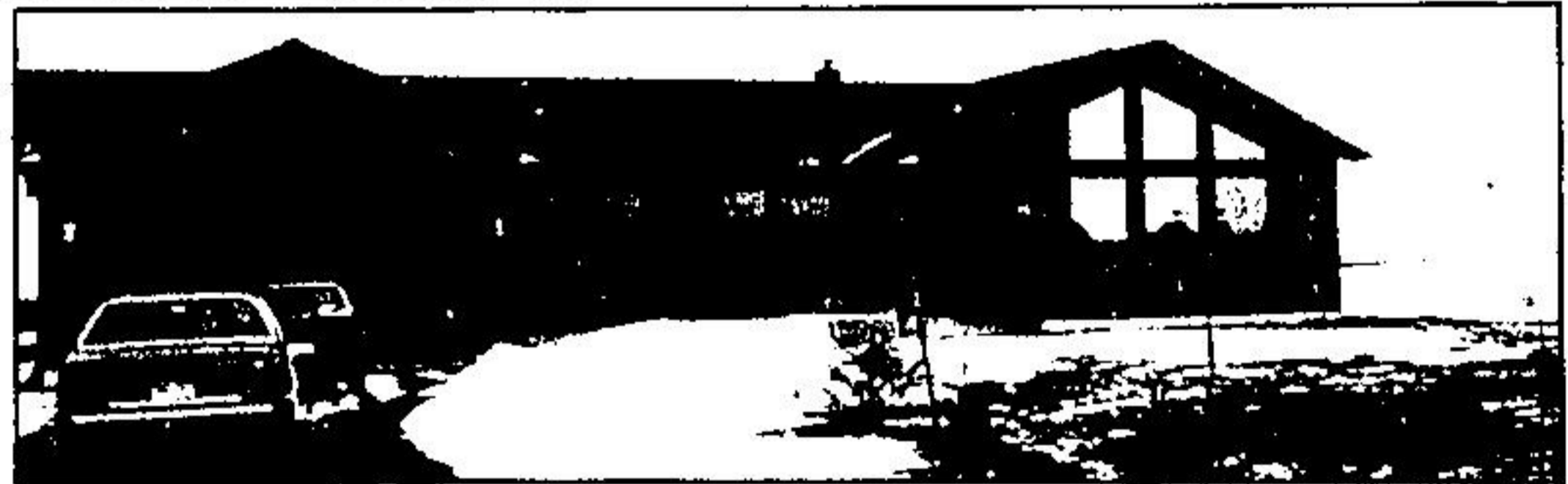


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