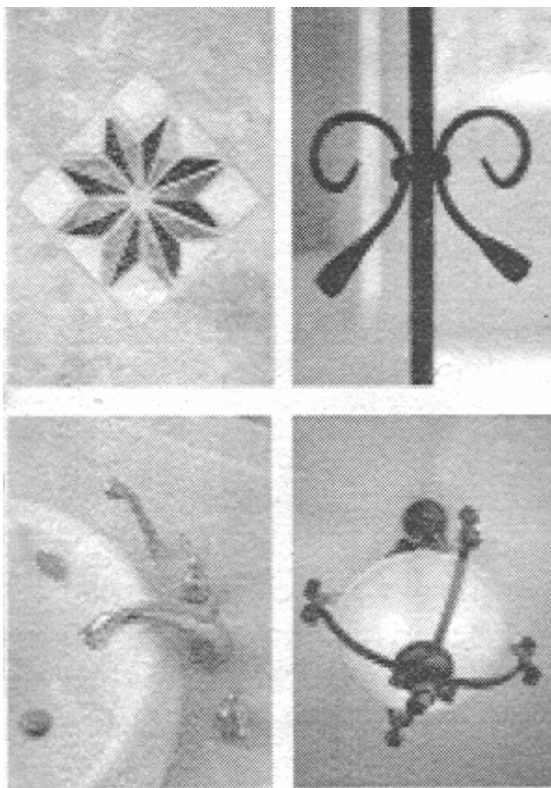


Designing (And Building) Couples

Homearama always offers unbelievable building and decorating feats – but this year, you won't believe your eyes: Three couples built three homes – and they're still talking.

BY CATHERINE DORSEY • PHOTOS BY KATHY KEENEY

HOMEARAMA veterans Lana O'Meara and Jerry Edmonds of Designs of Distinction have won awards for past designs. Their Homearama design, a transitional 3,700 square foot home called Heron's Watch, is topped with the couple's signature heron weathervane and includes many stunning light fixtures, luxurious amenities such as a Mahogany pergola with spa, speakers in every room, and detailed trim work throughout.



Jerry was already a certified building designer when he and Lana were married 17 years ago. Lana, an educator and family counselor, was contemplating a job change, and starting a business together seemed like a good idea. At first, Jerry was in charge of the process “from the framing until the roof was on,” says Lana, “but over time the lines have changed dramatically.” Lana has taken charge of the increasingly demanding administrative chores, as well as working with clients to choose colors, finishes, and fixtures.

Lana cannot imagine building without Jerry. “It’s a demanding business — it would be very difficult to be a lone builder. Jerry and I have each other to help take care

of emergencies, put out [proverbial] fires, unexpected problems.” Jerry concurs. “We use each other’s strengths and weaknesses: that’s how we’ve evolved to where we are. We know which of us is better equipped for a job.”

“We had some reservations about working together,” Jerry admits. “We wondered, are we going to be able to separate business from personal or will we just wind up hating each other?”

The answer? After 12 years of sharing a business with Lana, Jerry states emphatically, “I have absolutely no regrets. I can’t think of anyone I’d rather have as my partner in business, or in life.” ■