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NARI MILWAUKEE HOSTS 33rd ANNUAL HOME & REMODELING SHOW

At some point, every home requires attention and TLC. It might be new windows to replace old drafty ones. It could be a kitchen remodel to create a better space for entertaining or perhaps it's an addition to accommodate a growing family. Whatever the need, NARI Milwaukee is hosting its fall Home & Remodeling Show to provide ideas, inspiration and qualified resources who can get the job done right. NARI's annual show runs Oct. 13-15 at the Exposition Center at Wisconsin State Fair Park, 8200 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis.

Approximately 100 NARI Milwaukee members will be exhibiting and on hand to answer questions, make recommendations and provide guidance, solutions and creative suggestions. In fact, for 2024 indoor and outdoor projects, now is the time for homeowners to line up trusted, local professionals.

Participating exhibitors at the NARI Milwaukee Home & Remodeling Show run the gamut of remodeling and home improvement services and products - from design/build firms to specialized contractors for all areas of the home, including roofing, gutters, windows, doors, HVAC, electrical and more.

How to Capitalize on Every Inch of Space

Many homes have an area or space that's under-utilized - whether it's a basement, formal dining room, guest bedroom, large foyer, hallway nook

➡ Show Highlights

Tickets for the 2023 NARI Milwaukee Home & Remodeling Show are just \$8 online when purchased in advance. Tickets at the door are \$10 for adults and \$8 for those age 60 and older. Children age 17 and younger and active military, retired military, veterans, first responders and medical personnel (with I.D. at the door) are free.

Parking at State Fair is \$10 and ample street parking is available.

The NARI Milwaukee Home & Remodeling Show runs:

- Friday, Oct. 13, Noon - 8 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 14, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Sunday, Oct. 15, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For more information on the NARI Milwaukee Home & Remodeling Show or to receive a free copy of "Renovate," our consumer magazine and membership directory, visit NARIMilwaukee.org/Shows or call 414-771-4071.

NARI Milwaukee is a 600-member strong organization that represents the best remodeling and home improvement professionals in the area. Since 1961, NARI Milwaukee has been a trusted resource for consumers. The non-profit promotes professionalism, ethical conduct and sound business practices in the remodeling industry and works to educate and inform Milwaukee-area homeowners. Consumers can have peace of mind and confidence when selecting and working with a NARI Milwaukee member.

or an entire garage. This year's Home & Remodeling Show will help homeowners address the age-old problem of wasted space.

HighPoint Design Build Group, a remodeling company that specializes in custom homes and home transformations, and White Rabbit Home Improvement, which specializes in premium garage organization systems, are creating examples to demonstrate how to turn little-used space into a functional place.

"Taking unused space and giving it purpose is what we live for. Tight, challenging spaces can be converted to provide added function or they can be whimsical and fun," says Dave Hoffman,

design partner and creative director for HighPoint Design Build Group. "For example, the space under a staircase can house cubbies and cabinetry to store items or it could be converted into a wine cellar, cozy reading nook or a kid's fort. Whether homeowners have a need or a want, the outcome is the same - maximize potential and improve function."

Inspiration Gallery

This year's show will also include a gallery that features remodeling transformations - from '80s golden oak kitchens that were turned into sleek modern spaces to small and dingy bathrooms that are now spa retreats to neglected yards

that became a beautiful outdoor gathering place for family and friends.

Each of the projects showcased are award winners from NARI Milwaukee's Remodeler of the Year competition.

"The gallery is a fantastic way for homeowners to see the amazing possibilities of what a remodel can accomplish," says Michelle Brown, executive director of NARI Milwaukee. "Our talented NARI members work closely with their clients to identify their needs and create spaces that they'll use and love for years to come."

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Creative Ways to Maximize Space



Sometimes homes have “dead zones” - spaces that, for whatever the reason, are rarely used. It could be an unusual nook or cranny that's been ignored and left vacant, a formal dining room that's collecting dust or a cluttered garage.

Three members of NARI Milwaukee share their ingenious ideas for turning wasted space into almost anything.

Michelle Swier, Allied ASID, Principal Designer, MKE Design Build

MKE Design Build frequently works in converted condos, meaning there are often interesting shapes and spaces to address.

One condo owner had a large column that created a dead zone in an alcove that adjoined the living room and master bedroom.

When the owner began working from home in 2020, he positioned his desk in the space but didn't like seeing his work during off hours. To solve that problem, Swier created a day-to-night solution.

“We built an all-in-one piece for him. We fashioned a beautiful bar cabinet for nighttime use and during the day it converts into a desk thanks to clever drawers and hidden pull outs,” says Swier. “We also used lighting to accentuate the column and by doing that turned it into a



MKE Design Build converted a neglected alcove into a showcase space that now houses a built-in bar, which turns into a home office during the day.

signature architectural element.”

Another condo had a large corner tub in the master bathroom that was being used to collect laundry. The homeowner wanted more organizational space so Swier removed the tub and in its place built a fully enclosed closet with shelving at different heights to accommodate laundry and other essentials.

“The master bath was in really good shape so we simply tucked this amazing closet in between the shower and vanity and gave our client four times more laundry space,” says Swier.

Attics can also be tapped. Swier recently worked with a couple in Bay View to turn their unfinished attic into a complete living area. The home had a tall, steep roofline so there was plenty of room to work with.

The attic now boasts two bedrooms with a full master suite, adjoining bathroom, living area and kitchenette. Skylights were added to flood the space with natural daylight.

“This couple almost doubled their square footage and now their main living space is upstairs. They use their first floor when they go to work,” says Swier.

Jenny Voss, Lead Designer, Riemer Remodel

Voss has a great deal of experience maximizing a limited amount of space since she also designs

tiny homes for Riemer Remodel's sister company, Utopian Villas.

“In tiny homes, we use lofts to take advantage of every single inch that's available,” says Voss.

The loft concept can also apply to traditional homes. Homes that have vaulted ceilings can put that space to good use by adding a loft to create an upper bedroom or home office.

The exposed area underneath the staircase is another goldmine that's often overlooked.

“We can easily convert that neglected nook to accommodate a washer and dryer, desk or turn it into a well-organized storage zone. Really, there are so many possibilities,” says Voss. “On-demand water heaters are great space savers and can go under the stairs to free up other valuable real estate in the basement.”

Voss says she's even built a small bar under the stairs of a tiny home.

Underutilized closets are another place to repurpose space. For families who need an extra bathroom, a closet can be converted into a powder room and, depending on the size, might even be able to accommodate a corner shower.

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A Kitchen Made for Entertaining

Thanksgiving, Christmas, birthdays, graduation parties and casual get togethers with family and friends. There are a plethora of occasions when having a kitchen that's designed for entertaining makes the entire event easier to host and more enjoyable for all.

"It's almost always true that everyone ends up in the kitchen," says Dave Hoffman, design partner and creative director for HighPoint Design Build Group and a member of NARI Milwaukee. "Having a space that's been carefully thought through and laid out to accommodate numerous people in a variety of ways is essential."

Hoffman and two other designers who are members of NARI Milwaukee share their thoughts on the elements that make a kitchen perfect for hosting.

"Homeowners considering a remodel, should ask themselves a few questions. What do they like about their kitchen? What don't they like about it and how would they like to use it in the future?," says Nicole Raffensperger, CKBR, owner and lead designer with Design Tech Remodeling. "After that, it's time to look for a design partner who will listen to their needs and wants and develop a plan that accomplishes what they're looking for."



HighPoint Design Build Group transformed this kitchen into the perfect space for entertaining and everyday life. A large island and nearby dining table give family and guests lots of places to gather.



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It All Begins with a Layout

While the layout phase of a remodel may not be the most exciting part for homeowners, it is the road map for the entire project.

When creating a layout, designers must take into account a wide range of items. Where will food prep, cooking and eating take place? Where should the appliances, cabinetry and sinks be positioned? How does traffic flow?

"Layout is the first thing to look at because it's not just about making a pretty kitchen. We must make it functionally convenient for everyone," says Marie Owens, a designer with Callen.

These days, designers have a variety of tools at their disposal to create three-dimensional (3D) floor plans. 3D renderings and virtual walk throughs allow homeowners to have a better understanding of how the space is arranged and how it will look.

With a realistic picture in mind, homeowners can envision their activities in the room. What does the morning routine look like for themselves and their children? At night, how would dinner prep and meals happen? When hosting, where would guests gather and where would people eat?

Based on those scenarios, homeowners can provide feedback and adjustments can be made.

Islands and Peninsulas

Thanks to their versatility and multi-functional nature, islands and peninsulas have become almost standard in many of today's kitchens.

For entertaining purposes, they are a perfect place for a spread. Friends can gather around for drinks and snacks or an entire buffet-style meal can be laid out.

"Whether they're big or small, islands provide a natural socializing spot for guests," says Owens. "They allow you to prep and cook while engaging with your guests, and they serve as a buffer to keep people in the communal area instead of drifting into the work zone."

Islands and peninsulas can also accommodate a variety of convenient elements, including a prep sink, pull-out trash and recycling bins and a drawer microwave that can be housed in an undercounter cabinet.

Plus, they can be configured in a variety of shapes (rectangle or square), sizes (oversized, large, medium or small) and heights (table, counter or bar).

"Sometimes we create a two-tiered island so small children and older adults can sit comfortably at table height instead of having to climb onto taller chairs or stools," says Raffensperger.

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Beverage Stations

The first order of business when entertaining is usually offering guests a beverage. However, for large gatherings, serving guests individually can sometimes overwhelm the host.

A beverage station within the kitchen or in a nearby great room helps ease that stress.

“Having a place where people can serve themselves makes entertaining so much easier,” says Raffensperger. “Beverage station options range from a wet or dry bar to a sleek beverage fridge or a counter that’s topped with open shelving that’s stocked with glasses and spirits.”

A separate beverage area also eliminates the congestion that can occur around the refrigerator if guests have to head there for something to drink.

Dining Area

The location of a dining table is another key consideration for a kitchen that’s built for entertaining.

“We oftentimes expand the footprint of the kitchen and anchor everything off of the dining area,” says Hoffman. “We like to group interior dining close to the kitchen so there’s an easy path from the food prep area to the place where everyone is gathering to eat.”

Once again, a nearby island or peninsula can be utilized. They can serve as a staging area for dishes, act as a buffet or they can be used as the spot to rest items once they’ve been passed around the table.

Color and Adornments

Finally, entertaining kitchens should incorporate elements that establish a mood and “wow” guests.

The past few years, more homeowners have been adding color in bold ways. They are moving away from a single color of cabinetry and are instead opting for a two-toned cabi-

netry look. For the perimeter cabinets, they might select darker base cabinetry and top that with lighter uppers. For example, a gray or navy-blue cabinet below could be paired with a white or cream cabinet above.

For those who are really looking to make a statement, there’s the option of a three-tone color palette. The island can stand out by adding a darker or bold-colored base that’s different than the surrounding cabinetry.

Lighting is also a significant consideration for an entertaining kitchen.

“Pendant lights placed above an island or peninsula add visual interest to a room,” says Owens. “From natural materials to geometric designs to gorgeous glass, there are so many options so homeowners can make almost any design statement they’d like.”

In addition to pendants, dimmable undercabinet lighting allows homeowners to adjust the brightness for task lighting when they’re prepping or to provide a soft glow in the room.

Finishes are another staple that shouldn’t be overlooked.

“Selecting a fun backsplash with bold patterns or colors can really liven up a space,” says Raffensperger. “Cabinetry hardware adds a layer of intrigue to a room. You can mix and match different knobs, pulls and handles throughout the space.”

Alternative Kitchen Concepts

While open concept delivers a lot of advantages for entertaining and everyday life, for some homes it’s just not a viable option. Other times, homeowners would rather keep their cooking and prep space separate from the socializing and serving area.

In those instances, designers tap into their experience and creativity.

Owens recently remodeled her own kitchen



Design Tech Remodeling created a contemporary, open-concept kitchen that’s ideal for entertaining. The space includes a wet bar with a built-in beverage fridge so guests can help themselves to drinks.

and, instead of using an open concept, she reconfigured the space.

“Among other things, we added a pocket door, which greatly improved the traffic pattern and eliminated the ‘stuck’ area,” says Owens. “I think

it’s important for homeowners to realize there are many different ways to create a kitchen that’s perfect for entertaining. An open concept is just one layout but there are many others that can accomplish the same thing.”



Marie Owens from Callen designed this kitchen that features, three-toned cabinetry and bold wallpaper that catches the eye.

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Erica Schaad, Designer,
White Rabbit Home Improvement

A garage is another place that's loaded with potential.

“If homeowners list some of their specific needs, an updated garage can help fill those,” says Schaad. “For example, do you need storage for sports equipment? Do you like to garden or do you need 'overflow' space when you entertain? A garage can help with all of those things.”

For families living in an older home, there's usually not a dedicated mudroom. However, a garage can fit that purpose perfectly.

A well-organized garage with wall systems and overhead racks can keep kids' sports equipment nearby the car for easy loading and unloading. Plus, it's a great way to have a 'drop zone' when there's not room for one inside.

Sometimes homeowners are looking for a little extra space when they entertain. In that case, cabinetry is the way to go.

Durable and attractive cabinetry gives the garage a finished look that changes it from a storage place to something more.

“We can install base cabinets and top them with a fun, decorative counter to give the homeowner a place to serve drinks or snacks. The counter can even be used as a buffet,” says Schaad. “Adding a fridge in the garage and flanking it with cabinetry gives it a finished look and helps reduce overcrowding in the kitchen or other areas of the house. The options are really almost endless.”



Utilizing cabinetry, shelving and racks can bring much-needed compartmentalization to a garage.

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Preparing Your Home for Winter

When the days start to cool off, that's the sign it's time to conduct fall and winter home maintenance.

According to Randy Miller, MCR, UDCP, owner of Allrite Home & Remodeling and president of NARI Milwaukee, one of the first things to do is a visual inspection inside and out.

Roof, Gutters, AC and More

"You want to walk around your home's exterior and look for things like cracks in the siding, loose caulk around windows and the condition of your roof," says Miller.

Signs that a roof is aging include missing or torn shingles, granules in the gutters and roof streaks. Granules coming off shingles may not seem like a big deal to homeowners, however, it is a warning that the shingles are breaking down. The worst-case scenario of putting off an aging roof is that water gets under the shingles and damages the attic and travels down into ceilings and walls.

In most cases, water is detrimental to a home. Homeowners should keep in mind the goal is to always direct water away from the house.

To that end, landscaping around the house should be sloped away from the foundation to help reduce or eliminate water seeping into the

basement. Next, look up to the gutters that run along the roof. Notice if there's any sagging or cracks. When it rains, walk outside to make sure there aren't leaks. Then, check to make sure downspouts extend at least four to six feet away from the house and into the yard.

"Gutters and downspouts are extremely important since they pull and direct water and moisture away from the roof and home," says Tod Colbert, president of Weather Tight. "A properly operating gutter system protects a home from water damage and helps prevent the growth of mold and mildew on a home's exterior."

Each fall and spring, gutters and downspouts should be cleaned to remove debris. In addition, any tree branches that touch or are close to gutters should be trimmed so they're not dropping leaves, needles or acorns into the system.

While trimming, plants, bushes and trees that surround an air conditioning unit or the exterior PVC furnace vent pipe should also be cut back to keep the area clear.

David Nason, owner of Best Inspections, LLC and president of the Wisconsin Association of Home Inspectors, recommends touching up paint and caulk on a home's exterior seasonally.

"Exterior caulk prevents water from getting behind your siding, underneath windows and into your home so it's important to remove and replace old or cracking caulk," says Nason. "For those with wood siding or trim, if you notice spots where the bare wood is exposed or paint is peeling, scrape, prime and paint those areas to protect your home."

Many Wisconsinites were taught to completely wrap their air conditioning units with a tarp to protect them during the winter.

Bill Brink, owner of Kettle Moraine Heating and Cooling, advises against that.

"If you completely encase your unit, you're creating a cozy place right next to your house for mice to nest and it's not far for them to travel to get inside your home," says Brink. "Instead, I recommend using a 'beanie' type of cover that goes on top to keep leaves, sticks and other debris from getting in."

The outside dryer vent and louvers should be inspected at least once a year and leaves and lint should be removed. Once that's done, head inside to clean out the vent to avoid a potential fire hazard and improve drying time. For families and those with pets, this cleaning should be done every six months.

Last but not least, check the outside (and inside) stairway railings to make sure they're secure and haven't come loose. A shaky railing can lead to a slip or fall and that's no good during the cold winter months.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Daylight savings is a good time to check the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and install new ones.

"There should be a minimum of one smoke and carbon monoxide detector on each level of the home and that includes the basement," says Nason. "In fact, new homes have detectors in each bedroom."

Nason also suggests homeowners check their GFCI (ground-fault circuit interrupter) receptacles monthly since they can wear out. GFCIs protect people from electrical shock and are a small white or red button that's located between the two outlets.

At the end of the day, while owning a home requires some work, there are a multitude of NARI professionals who are available to help homeowners easily maintain and update their place.



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