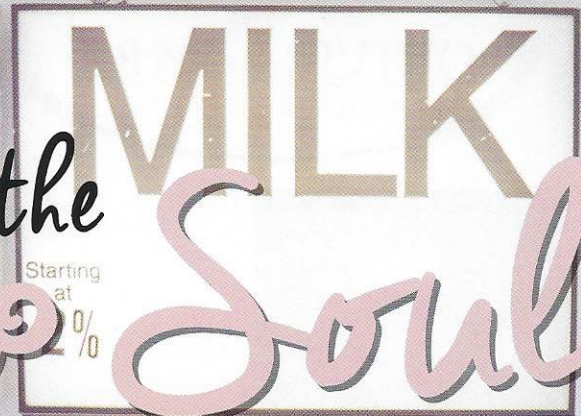


A Room that Nourishes the Mind & Soul



REMODEL BLENDS CONTEMPORARY FLAIR WITH RICH HISTORY

ARTICLE KATHERINE BONTRAGER | PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL FORESTER

When Meggan Newland and Jon Henry moved into their home in Old Leawood, they faced a unique challenge in a narrow room—with quite a storied history.

“The room was originally the office of the late scholar Rabbi Morris Margolies,” Newland recalls. “It was wall-to-wall books; a vast private collection of texts in eight different languages; the collection was renowned in his family and congregation. His daughter, Malka, wrote a great article about the library and the hidden gems there, such as a dinner pamphlet from an event with President Truman. Malka has moved to New York, but we’ve kept in touch.”

When a member of Margolies’ congregation redid the house, he converted the office into a guest room, removing all the bookshelves and adding a few windows.

“I appreciated the windows but wanted to be true to the spirit of the home,” Newland continues. “Wanting my own space, and also inspired by Malka’s stories of her father, I hoped to retain some of the spirit of the home and rebuild an office.”

So Meggan and Jon turned to Amy Thurston, who is both a neighbor and the owner of a home styling and design business. Thurston specializes in imbuing a room with purpose, utilizing owners’ distinctive tastes and much-loved objects.

“The biggest challenge was the shape of the room,” says Thurston. “It’s both long and narrow, so I created an office and bedroom with a sitting room in between, to divide the space. Placing plants on the bench helped insulate the bed from the rest of the office. I love the contrast of the modern décor amidst the rich history of the room.”



This room leads to the client's garden where she goes to zen out. The plants create a natural barrier to insulate the bed from the rest of the room. The molded plastic bench was found at Mission Mall Antiques.



Since this is client's girl cave/lady lair - whatever you want to call it - we used all her own art mixed in with some vintage art from her mom, grandmother and a great grandmother plus other sentimental pieces. The chairs were found at Urban Mining and recovered in the best emerald velvet we could find. Green is the accent color since the client likes to garden. The lamp is an Etsy find.



A stag horn fern warms up the desk.

CONTINUED >

Yet it's the wall of family art that remains Meggan's favorite focal point. "My mom did a watercolor of bottles in high school, as did I, and they're both there. There's a picture my grandmother painted, portraits by my husband's great grandmother, and a number of sketches from different phases of my life. And there's an original Associated Press photograph from a 1958 football game: Army verses my alma mater, Notre Dame."

A close second favorite point is the lighting—both natural and MILK illuminated.

The room now serves as Meggan's serene escape. "I read, drink good red wine, and am generally left to my own peace. My reading is mostly of the digital realm, but the art on the walls and pictures of my kids hopefully give it the warmth and comfort it once had. If I'm lucky, the walls will impart upon us some of Rabbi Morris' wisdom. Plus, I step outside the door to my vegetable garden. It couldn't be better."

For more information on Amy Thurston's design work, visit Amy-Thurston.com.

We used tones of white in different textures to make the room feel inviting and added wood elements with plants to warm up the space.

