

# Soothing spa space helps a woman through illness

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By Bridget A. Otto, The Oregonian

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Photos by Beth Nakamura/The Oregonian

Terri Hoffmann worried that green walls would be too dark, but designer Sharon Olsen convinced her the color would be soothing.

WOODBURN -- Terri Hoffmann had to make some changes to the second bathroom in her home. It wasn't just the outdated cosmetics -- pink tiles, linoleum floor, oak-trimmed vanity, poor lighting, prefab tub and shower. It was more critical than that.

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Tall, with a quick wit, ready smile and twinkling eyes, Hoffmann and her husband, John, moved to this single-story house on two acres six years ago. They came from West Linn, where they had raised their son, Mark, and daughter, Kate, in a large, three-story house, found friends and roots in the community and in lacrosse. And it's where Hoffmann had successfully battled the soft-tissue sarcoma that attacked her abdominal muscles 12 years ago. Standing in her kitchen, looking out over the koi pond in the front yard, Hoffmann -- along with longtime friend, confidant and interior designer Sharon Olsen -- shared with me what happened next.

"I had a recurrence six years ago; cost me the rest of my abdominal muscles, and I thought I would end up in a wheelchair pretty fast. ... So we found this little place."

Beth Nakamura/The Oregonian



Homeowner, Terri Hoffmann (right) enlisted friend, and interior designer Sharon Olsen to turn a guest bathroom into a more user-friendly, serene space. After a second cancer surgery and after settling into the home for a couple of years, Hoffmann tackled reworking the bathroom just off the home's kitchen/great room. "I wanted everything to be ready for me to be in a chair," she says. "At the time, I figured I had a year before it came back." Hoffmann's first instinct was to pop a skylight into the narrow, dark bathroom. But the house has a tile roof, and she was not going to turn this into some uberexpensive project. "I wanted to do it on the cheap," says the former educator.

Olsen stepped in; suggesting that Hoffmann embrace the spa like serenity darkness can produce. "I thought the color I wanted would turn it into a cave," Hoffmann says about the green walls, "but Sharon said, 'No. It will be restful.' "

Olsen also considered Hoffmann's need for a soaking tub -- a tub she could get in and out of easily. "A lot of this had to do with your physical abilities, and to get some relief from the spasms you had," Olsen reminds her. Hoffmann, who was given virtually no hope of surviving her second bout of cancer, has proved that wrong, and -- knock on wood -- the cancer has not returned. The sanctuary of her new bathroom has been a big blessing in her recovery, and she seasons her every sentence with thanks and praise to those who worked on the project.

She says she budgeted \$5,000 for the remodel, which went down to the studs. But because of the generosity of John Wysock, an artisan in Wilsonville, and Robert Campbell, who laid all the tile, she spent much less. She thinks if the workers had charged her the going rate, the project would have cost \$7,000 or \$8,000. "Just a great space," she says, standing in the doorway. "I think it's good."

-- *Bridget A. Otto*; [bridgetotto@news.oregonian.com](mailto:bridgetotto@news.oregonian.com)

#### **WHAT THEY DID**

- The subdued walls and gray-blue porcelain-tile floor accented with tumbled slate give the small space a serene feel. The same tiles cover the tub skirt and the backsplash, enveloping the tub.
- A deep vessel sink sits on a Brazilian cherry table made by John Wysock.
- On the wall opposite the sink, a stylized ladder serves as a towel rack.

#### **CONTACTS**

**Interior design:** Sharon Olsen, Designer's Edge, 503-317-9814, [designersedge2@msn.com](mailto:designersedge2@msn.com)

**Demolition, tile setting and medicine cabinet:** Robert Campbell, Robert Campbell Construction, 503-720-7037

**Brazilian cherry vanity:** John Wysock, 503-427-0040

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