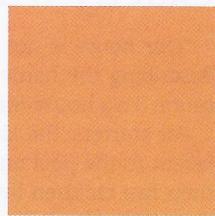
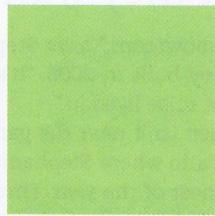
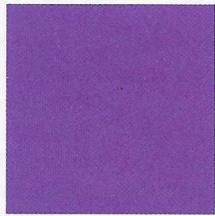


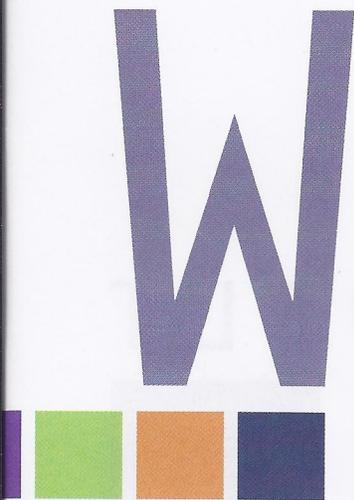


CUSTOM BUILT



Stephanie and Mark Hall's country home was designed for family fun.

BY DIANNA BORSI O'BRIEN
PHOTOS BY DEANNA DIKEMAN



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hen Stephanie and Mark Hall of Mark Hall Cabinetry built their dream home just inside Boone County, they knew exactly what they wanted — and what they didn't want.

"Our house is not a showroom," says Stephanie Hall, describing the home they built in 2006. "It's not a museum; it's a house meant to be lived in."

For starters, the kitchen isn't near the garage; it's adjacent to the pool and patio where Stephanie, Mark and their five children live most of the year. Throughout the house, the focus is on kid-friendly features with easy care, easy-to-keep-clean surfaces and, of course, lots of built-in cabinets.

The result is a home that's spacious yet cozy and welcoming. But as Stephanie notes, it took a lot of work and macaroni and cheese dinners to make the five-bedroom, three-and-a-half bath home a reality.

Today, Mark Hall Cabinetry is well known for custom cabinets, but when Mark and Stephanie opened the business in 1995, they were the only ones on the payroll, with Stephanie as the kitchen designer and Mark as the cabinet maker. Although Mark had worked at other cabinet companies, Stephanie and Mark's new firm didn't have a job under contract until two weeks before they were married that year. Now, the company employs 15 people and has done the cabinetry for more than 4,000 homes since 1995. Projects vary from a bathroom in St. Martin's to entire homes throughout the United States. They've worked on everything from public housing to multimillion-dollar houses.

When they started the three-year planning process for their home, Stephanie and Mark wanted something with lots of storage and bathrooms. At the time, the family of seven was living in Mark's family home on the same property, a 1,200-foot, three-bedroom, one-bath home on the land owned by his father, the late Jack Hall, of Jack Hall Cabinet Company. It was, to say the least, a snug fit.

KITCHEN

Gesturing to the bright and sunny yellow kitchen, Stephanie says, "This is where everyone wants to be."

An art major in college, Stephanie isn't afraid of color, as demonstrated throughout the house. Yet, the yellow doesn't overpower the room; it's balanced by the beauty of the medium-stained, custom cherry cabinets.

The center of the open kitchen is filled with her pride and joy — a massive island, topped with granite, which features a strikingly beautiful asymmetrical pattern, that Stephanie says reflects the natural chaos and beauty of life. The island features stools on one side for quick meals as well as clever, functional cabinets.

The room is alive with textures, too. Here, as in the rest of the house, the wall surfaces are rough-finished plaster, in keeping with the casual California-influenced style of the home. But this rough surface is also kid-friendly; a ding or nick won't show. And the cabinets are durable, too. Stephanie and Mark distressed the surface of the cabinets to make them more family-friendly. In another nod to their children, the microwave is located below counter level so anyone can heat up their own snacks. The kitchen also features one other great amenity: soft closers on all the cabinets. No more slamming doors.

These days, Ashley, 25, and Austin, 21, have their own homes, but Cassie, 16, Sammy, 14, Jack, 10, and their friends still fill the kitchen. And now there's a new crowd of little ones in the kitchen — Mark and Stephanie's four grandchildren.

Above all the cabinets are lighted display cases, which can also function as night lights. Finally, the kitchen features something common to every room in the house: a television. In the kitchen, it's a large-screen television mounted above the kitchen cabinet so it can be seen even from the casual dining space across from the kitchen.

Stephanie laughs as she points out the television, one of 11 in — and out of — the home. Mark, she says, is a bit of a television addict.

Mark good-naturedly confesses to his love of television, especially the one that's on the patio during the summer. That's where he and his friends like to gather to watch football, barbecue, drink beer and even shoot guns once in a while. "It's all about Boone County boys and their toys," he says.

Yet for Mark, the home is more than a house. He calls it his escape, where he can be himself. In fact, he says every time he drives up to the slight rise toward his new home, he's amazed he lives there.



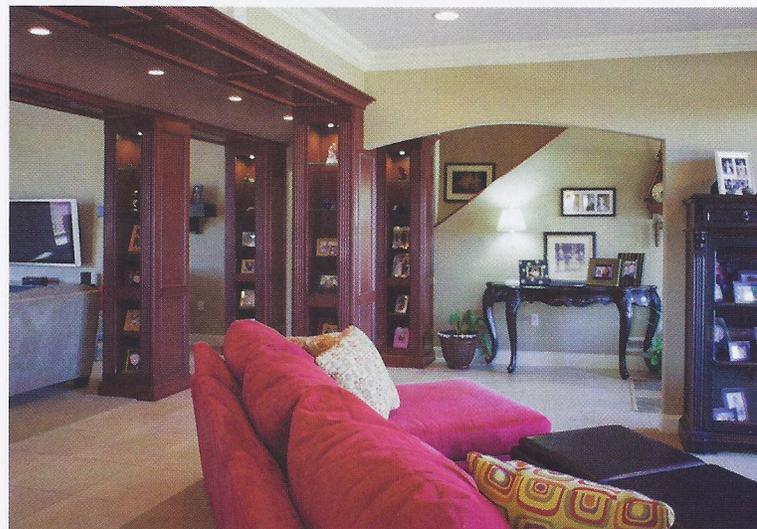
HALLWAY

Another unusual feature is the stunning 8-foot-wide hallway that bisects the house and draws visitors from the garage to the kitchen. Although it features a barrel ceiling and custom-made lighted cabinets, Stephanie's favorite feature is its tile floor, which is easy to keep clean.

"It's covered with wet foot prints all summer," she says, explaining the hallway is a thoroughfare for the children as they make their way from the pool to other parts of the house or even to the acres of woods surrounding the house. Of course, she says with a smile, they wouldn't run around the house to go from the pool to the other side of the home.

Both she and Mark like those footprints. Really. As Mark points out, it won't be long before those footprints will only be memories, and it doesn't sound like he wants to rush it.

But the hallway is more than a conduit for the children. Stephanie keeps the lighted wood column cabinets Mark made filled with bright family keepsakes and photos, which makes the corridor a bright walk down memory lane.





RESOURCE LIST

- CABINETRY:** Mark Hall Cabinetry
- GRANITE COUNTERTOPS:** Central Missouri Countertops
- SLATE BACKSPLASH:** Carpet One Floor & Home
- PORCELAIN TILE:** Carpet One Floor & Home and Dave's Tiling Company
- CARPETING:** Sherwin Williams
- CARPET SQUARES IN CHILDREN'S ROOMS:** FLOR
- HARDWOOD FLOORS:** Laid by Cornerstone Construction of Columbia
- PLUMBING FIXTURES:** Columbia Winnelson Supply
- PLUMBING:** Brian Wear Plumbing
- FRAMING:** Doug Powell and Company
- STONEMASONRY:** Doug Powell and Scott Powell
- DRYVIT (STUCCO):** Rock N River
- HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING:** Accurate Heating & Cooling
- CUSTOM GARAGE DOORS:** Smarr Garage Doors
- LANDSCAPING:** Danny's Landscaping
- PAINTING:** Let's Paint & Precision Painters
- PAINT:** FAB Building Center, Jefferson City
- POOL INSTALLATION:** Fisher Homes & Landmark Builders



OTHER FUN FEATURES

The house looks almost formal from the outside, with its stucco and rock exterior that fits into the mid-Missouri landscape (the style is a nod to time Mark spent living in Los Angeles). But inside, the house is filled with quirky, fun, surprising details.

For starters, the 20-foot-by-20-foot living room features a set of 24-inch square windows near the 24-foot ceiling. "I love to watch the moon through those windows," Stephanie says. Mark, an earlier riser, says he likes to see the sunrise through them. Both of them like seeing the sunsets through their windows. Set out in the country with a mailing address in Rocheport, the home has no need for window coverings. In fact, there is only one window treatment in the entire house: a shade over the bathtub in the master bath.

It's here in the master bath where, again, Stephanie's love of color stands out. The counters are deep dark blue, and the tile in the walk-in shower and around the bathtub and walls is iridescent, shimmering and changes with the light. And yes, there's a television in there, too.

The bath off the hallway from the pool to the kitchen is another explosion of color, this time with a Mexican theme. Here, the walls are even rougher, and Stephanie painted them with swipes of bright colors, which gives the small room depth and pizzazz. Here, they installed a colorful sink and a bright, quirky mirror the Halls bought in Mexico long before they built their home.

Finally, there's one room where Stephanie truly lets her artistic side out. The home includes an art room designed to allow her, her children and grandchildren to make anything their hearts desire, without concerns about making a mess. The denim-colored cabinets hide any paint mishaps, and shallow drawers make it easy to find art supplies. The room even features a washer and dryer, which creates an auxiliary laundry room that saves Stephanie from lugging clothes and linens to the downstairs laundry facilities. The room is washed in light from windows above the plentiful counter space.

The floors throughout the house are easy-to-clean tile, except for some hardwood upstairs and the flooring in the children's rooms, which feature removable square rugs. If something gets spilled on the rug, Stephanie simply pulls up the square, puts it in the washing machine and sticks it back down afterward.

Although they built the home for their children, Stephanie and Mark also realize children grow up, so the house is made to change with them. The upstairs play area will soon become a theater room.

But one thing will never change: The focus at the Hall home is on enjoying the space with friends and family. **CH**