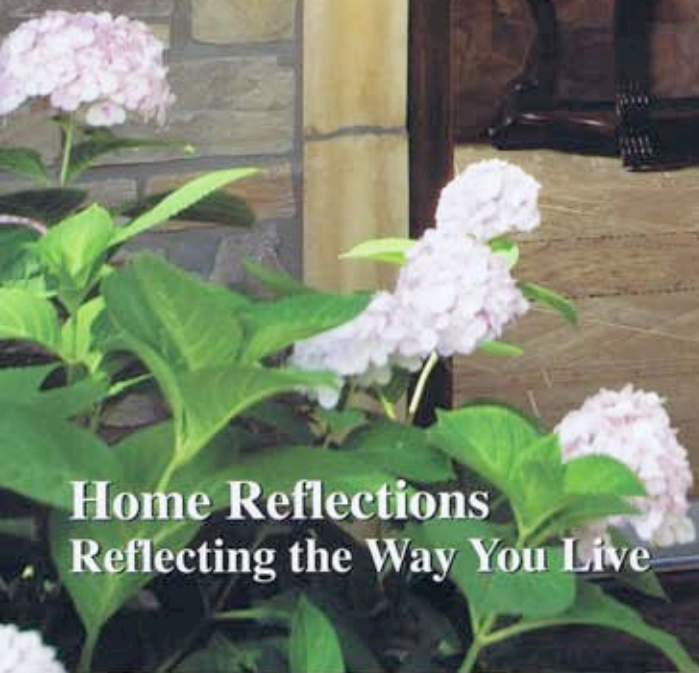


# THE BUILDER'S JOURNAL™

Twin Cities Edition



Home Reflections  
Reflecting the Way You Live





The antiqued painted cabinetry of the kitchen and quartz countertops are complimented by the knotty alder buffet and range hood, both displaying the distinctive Roman arch reflected throughout the home.

## Home Reflections Reflecting the Way You Live

By Kelly Borup

Finding a great contractor is a challenging task that usually requires searching a variety of areas in the local building market. One does not usually think of corporate America or a local singing group as breeding grounds for a great contractor, but then one has not met Teresa Elsbernd, owner of Home Reflections. Teresa began her adult life by pursuing a masters degree in music and went on to become a member of the Minnesota Opera Chorus and The Dale Warland Singers. Her creative

extracurriculars were the opposite of her day-time experience in corporate America as a sales person for a major insurance broker. This yin and yang of creativity and structure pulled at both sides of Teresa. That pull, of two opposite careers, became destiny in 1993 when at age 37 she experienced building her own home on six acres in Medina.

The entire home was designed, by Teresa, around an antique pool table.

Art, beauty, lines, aesthetics, rules, regulations, and time and budget man-

agement all blended into one amazing project and—the calling of a lifetime. Under the mentoring wing of a contractor best known for his work with the java-filled chain Caribou Coffee, building became a passion that the songstress didn't know she had. She learned the basics of the trade from her mentor and began the process to become a licensed contractor. Her first professional job came from a visit to the bank where she once caroled at Christmas-time. Teresa looked into finding the necessary loans

*"We both appreciate all the hard work and effort you put into making our addition come together by the deadline. You are fabulous at your job, and we just couldn't be happier."*

*—Linda H.*



The spacious, living room, highlighted by a stone fireplace and walnut floors, overlooks the private wooded lot.

to begin her own company when the bank manager remembered her, and inquired into what she was doing. As it turns out, her new endeavor struck a chord with the bank manager who referred her to her first remodeling job, thus launching Home Reflections.

That first job in 1993 has turned into ten remodel projects a year and a new home every year and a half. Going on fourteen years in this business, Teresa is not the biggest contractor in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area, but that's because she chooses to have it that way. She likes to take a hands-on approach to each of her construction projects, and limits herself to only about four projects at a time to ensure each one gets her full, personal attention. It is not uncommon to see her out at the job site several days a week or walking through a showroom with her clients as they pick out countertops and flooring. She firmly believes in personalized service, walking her clients through each step of the process.

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The cozy library nook adjacent to the kitchen, provides a quiet spot for a relaxing cup of coffee, while giving a glimpse into the Old-World styled living room.



A small and cramped area became a gorgeous kitchen when a wall was removed and the area was remodeled.



A custom-designed, beveled vanity highlights the unique angles of this bathroom while giving a glimpse of the adjoining bedroom and balcony.

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What makes Home Reflections' projects stand out above the others? It starts with the profile Teresa completes with each new construction or remodeling project. Finding out about her client's passions, hobbies, their work and their families is essential to every project whether new construction or remodeling. "I try to get inside the heads of the people living in the space and find out how they need it to function. Like my logo tagline says, I want their home to *reflect the way they live.*" says Teresa. Whether a person is an avid golfer that needs the back closet to have extra room for a golf bag, or a person who loves to scrapbook and needs lots of storage and extra counter space, it's important to

Home Reflections that a home works for the people living there. Finding out how her clients go about their daily lives is essential to any building or remodeling project that Teresa completes.

When clients choose Home Reflections they receive a partnership. Each client gets the same level of attention to detail whether they are having a new custom home built or remodeling a small bathroom. Teresa's partnership with her clients starts in the design phase. She helps translate their dreams into plans that are both feasible and creative. Sometimes the dreams are too big for the budget. Then she works to make sure her clients get as close to their dream home as their budget allows, by offering creative solutions. She

***"We want to send you a whole-hearted thank you and expression of our appreciation to you for making our ultimate dream home a reality. We are extremely pleased."***

***-Jim and Nancy J.***



A closet-sized bathroom was transformed into a luxurious bathroom suite.



knows the importance of getting the job done on time, within the budget and with minimal disruption to the daily lives of her clients. According to Teresa, a home should reflect the needs, lifestyle and tastes of its owner. Maintaining the design integrity of a home is paramount so that the line between the old and the new is seamless. Whether building a dream home from the ground up, adding onto an existing home, or remodeling the current space, Home Reflections strives to build the "custom home that reflects the way you live." The goal is to provide each client with a space that they wouldn't change even if given the chance to do it all over again.

The architects, designers and subcontractors that are chosen also believe in the partnership of the building process and share the high standards that Home Reflections demands. Each home is constructed using the highest quality of materials from local companies. Good

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The Roman arches prevalent throughout the home, add grace and elegance to the master bath.



This European-style villa combines the charm of yesterday with all of the amenities of today.

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communication with subcontractors is very important to ensure the building process is a success. Teresa Elsbernd is a builder with an eye for the finishing touches that will make each home unique.



Distinctive features like this concrete basin are evident through the home.

Teresa's niche has focused primarily on working with homeowners, either in building a new custom home or remodeling their existing one. But she has greatly enjoyed the couple of times she has had the opportunity to build a spec home such as the one featured in this article. It is her first entry in the Fall Showcase Parade of Homes. She enjoyed building this custom upper-bracket home, she says because, "It gave me the chance to put all my own tastes and style into a home." She created an old world feel to the home with finishes designed to thrill the senses. From a hand-crafted concrete sink in the powder room, to a peek through area in the alder library niche of the kitchen, each detail is a visual note woven into a beautiful melody that is a home created by this composer.

The obvious item that has not been mentioned here is that Teresa is, in fact, a woman contractor. A rare find indeed, but you will not find her gender stated on her list of laurels. "I don't like to play the gender card," she says. Her uniqueness far surpasses the need to use it to be successful in this male-dominated building business. The only role it may play in her business is that she enjoys going beyond

the actual construction side of a project and using her sense of design to help clients with the aesthetic look and feel of their home. Having her own business and in-home office is a plus in that this busy woman gets to spend more time with her husband, Jerry, who teaches voice lessons in their in-home studio, and lovely four-year-old daughter, Maggie. She even finds time to fit in a small part-time job as Musical Coordinator for the West Campus of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church.

In her words Teresa had "a bout" of breast cancer three years ago and that "bout" made life, time, and family a little more precious. So whether it's working at what she loves or spending time with her family, life has truly shaped up into something spectacular for the once insurance-selling songstress. Teresa is able to help her customers turn their surroundings and homes into something truly magnificent.

If you would like more information from Teresa Elsbernd, General Contractor of Home Reflections log onto [www.homereflectionsinc.com](http://www.homereflectionsinc.com). She is also available at 952.473.5173 or via email at [teresa@homereflectionsinc.com](mailto:teresa@homereflectionsinc.com).

**TBJ**