



Smart Ideas for Small Living: Finding a Place for Everything

By Lauren Cummings

When we bought our two-bedroom frame home in 2009, we loved that it backed to the woods, was recently renovated and stayed within our price range. With those things at the forefront of our minds, we probably overlooked that we'd be short on storage for our two adult, two kid and two dog family.

In the past three years, we have learned to live smarter in our home using some of the following ideas:

- Mounting shelves above windows or under high hung cabinets in the kitchen to store spices, glassware or other items.
- Having multiple uses for things such as using a cookie rack as an extra shelf inside a kitchen cabinet to create additional levels or a water pitcher for occasional dinner parties doubles as a cooking utensil holder on most nights.
- Using an ottoman with additional storage under the lid to hold blankets.
- Finding a coffee table that kids can build Legos on top of with a shelf under it to store bins filled with Lego bricks or a decorative suitcase can also be used for toy storage.
- When something new is brought into the house (whether it's big or small), look around and consider what can be removed. This strategy can be used to barter with kids too as they crave new items and stop playing with older toys.



Lauren Cummings stands in front of her closet storage solution. Photo credit: Gretchen Schock

Recently, we took the plunge and invested in a custom built Closet America organizational system for our under-the-stairs entryway closet. What once consisted of two shelves and a work bench counter is now three columns of adjustable storage shelves, wire baskets and even a wine rack. Having this new storage solution has helped us see all of the pantry items we have which then ensures we aren't buying duplicates of things simply because we can't see it under the kitchen counter. During the process we were able to look at all of the items we had in that closet and determine if it should stay or perhaps be donated or sold at a yard sale - doing this regularly helps us keep clutter down in our home.

We had a great experience with this locally-owned company, but you could also find solutions at Ikea, Target or other retailers. Take a look at your space with fresh eyes. Consider what you use regularly and keep it easily accessible. Think about things you can rotate in and out of attic or storage spaces as needed so it isn't always in your living space. And if there are items you haven't used in a year, see if someone else could benefit from them.

Maximizing your space and thinking differently about what you use can help you find the perfect place for everything.

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President's Message: We are the Co-op's Caretakers

Greetings from your new President; I've been a member of our Board of Directors for just over a year, and became your President last May. I have lived in GHI with my family since 1977. For much of that time, like many members, I took for granted and was largely unaware of the monumental work that goes into making this organization run. As a recent retiree, I decided it was time to give back to the community, our home where we raised our three kids, and where they are now raising our five grandkids.

What an education I am getting, serving on the Board, about how our cooperative runs -- from daily operations to long-range planning. GHI is a complex operation. We keep tabs on our 1,600 mutually-owned homes, and maintain them in good condition into perpetuity so we can provide quality, affordable housing for all members now and in the future. That is a tall, tall order. And then there are 760 additions, our yards, our common lands and woodlands, our parking areas, our sidewalks, the Parkway apartments ... the list of responsibilities goes on.

We are entering a time of special challenge and special opportunity; our homes are aging, and need improvements. The pioneers who gave birth to our cooperative purchased the homes and lands from the federal government in the early 1950's, demonstrating the strength of their vision, writing bylaws and rules to protect our community and to assure its survival into the future. Now it is our turn to continue that vision, to be true stewards of our unique and historic Greenbelt Homes.

I encourage each of you to participate in this process. We all need to get informed and become mindful caretakers of our wonderful cooperative, and act to assure its bright future for ourselves, our children, and families yet to discover cooperative living. It is important that we continue the hard work to keep GHI healthy and prospering.

Warm regards,
Steve Skolnik
President, Greenbelt Homes, Inc.
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Member Announcements

Renovation Contests: Bathroom Winners & Upcoming Addition Contest



Congratulations to Bathroom Renovation Contest winners: 1st place Richard and Erin Olsen, 2nd place Chris and Angela Stark, 3rd place Elizabeth Jay. Coming soon to GHI's website are photos of all the entries, as well as these winning bathrooms. An album will also be available in the GHI lobby. If you are thinking of remodeling your GHI bathroom, this is a great place to get ideas. Photos of the previous Kitchen Renovation Contest entries are also available.

The Addition Contest begins September 1 and will conclude on October 31, 2014. Look for entry forms on-line, in the September Communicator, or at the GHI office. Prizes will be awarded for frame, brick and block home categories.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the GHI Administration Offices on Hamilton Place, and are open to all GHI members. Dates are subject to change.

August		
1	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
4	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
11	7:00 pm	Member Outreach Committee
11	7:30 pm	Marketing Committee
13	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
14	7:00 pm	Board Meeting
15	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
19	8:30 am	Yard Lines Committee
19	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
20	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
22	12 noon	GHI OFFICE CLOSED*
23	11:00 am	Pre Purchase Orientation
25	7:00 pm	Communication Committee
27	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
28	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
29	--	OFFICE CLOSED*

* Emergency maintenance service is available outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed. Call 301-474-6011.

MEMBER FEEDBACK REQUESTED ON:

PROPOSED REVISION OF GHI RULES: **ALLOWABLE MATERIALS FOR REPLACING THROUGH-WALL AIR CONDITIONERS**

See newsletter insert for more details and how to submit your comments.



GHI encourages open discussion and communication about matters affecting members. **Please be aware, however, that any communication without GHI's logo, a registered trademark, is not from GHI or your Board of Directors.**

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