

STYLISH LIVING IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

# HOME

CAROLINA

## + GARDEN

SPRING 2009

Kerry Griffin's  
whimsical  
house  
on the hill

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# Retro Chic

by Kate O'Connor-Reynolds . photography by David Dietrich

## ASHEVILLE ARCHITECT MARK SINSKY

knows good “bones” when he sees them, and the 1950s “rustic-style bungalow” that he found in the Grove Park area certainly had them. Designed by The Six Associates for Demaree Bess, writer and associate editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*, the house had plenty of potential, much of it untapped.

To bring the home into the modern day, Sinsky engaged Steve Zarnowski of Flat Creek Construction. With an eye towards “green architecture,” they recycled much of the original material within the home, installed larger—but more energy-efficient—Pella windows, and added insulation and a hybrid Bullman heating-and-cooling system.

The family used their time wisely, as well, traveling while the work was in progress. “We had 90 percent of the work done while we were in Europe,” says Sinsky. “Sometimes, it’s easier not being around a remodel day-in and day-out. I knew we would be in good hands.”

As part of the overall renovation, Sinsky envisioned an open family area in the dark outdated living room—a departure from the formality of the mid-century arrangement. This included a home theater system, front and center. “I know you aren’t supposed to have a large TV exposed in your living room, so I added a bar and called it our ‘lounge,’” Sinsky explains. “One of my favorite features of the home is the flat-screen TV and entertainment center by Frank Dosier of Musician’s Workshop.”

The chrome-and-glass bar adds a metropolitan flair to the space, crowned by *The Call*, an evocative, sophisticated oil painting by Asheville artist Michele Mitchell-Ostlund. A flanking home-office nook—with sleek storage and workspace—was created by Jamie Ciolek of Forest Millwork to replace the existing built-in bookshelves. Glass-front cabinets were installed on either side of the

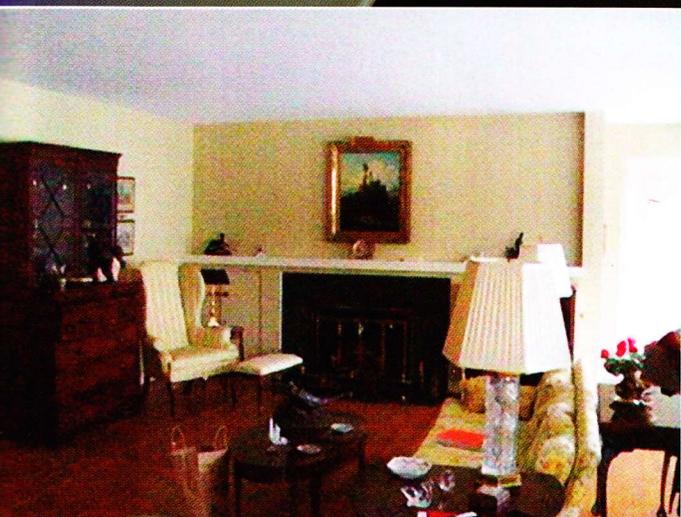


**after**

The futuristic bar and café seating give the renovated space a sense of urban sophistication.

fireplace to house entertainment technology.

The resulting multipurpose room is clean and serene. “Susan Nilsson, ASID did a great job picking out all of the interior and exterior colors,” Sinsky says. “She pulled most of them off of a painting we bought in Paris of the Seine River by Michelle Auboiron.” Working with Atlanta-based designer Michele Pizer, furnishings were chosen to honor the home’s fundamental style, but with a contemporary chic. “[We used] mid-century modern design and elements without ‘beating it to death,’” notes Sinsky. A little bit retro, but totally urbane. □



## ⤴ before

The living room in Mark Sinsky's mid-century bungalow had good lines, but no pizzazz.

## ⤵ after

Defying the notion that living room TVs should be downplayed, the homeowner put the entertainment front and center, added a bar and sculptural café table and reinvented the area as the family's "lounge."