

HOMES

Design and Selection Center aims to educate homeowners with remodeling plans

■ Foster Remodeling Solutions to host educational open house on April 22

BY JOHN BYRD
SPECIAL TO THE FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

Foster Remodeling Solutions will launch its new 3,270-square-foot Home Design and Selection Center in Lorton with an open house on Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The event will include seminars on a variety of topics ranging from "Kitchen and Bath Design" to "How to Plan a Successful Remodeling" to steps for introducing aging-in-place modifications into the home. Seminar presenters are recognized experts in their respective specialties. Representatives from top manufacturers will also be on hand to answer questions about specific products, appliances and emerging technologies. Several manufacturers will also be contributing new products as raffle items.

Visitors can arrive as early as 10 a.m. and freely browse the newly-expanded Design and Selection Center, which offers over 3,000 square feet of display space. Current and leading-edge building materials, home improvement products and Smart House devices are featured. Chef-prepared hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be served throughout the day.

There will be several full-sized kitchen and bathroom designs on view, vignettes featuring cabinets, vanities, flooring and lighting – even a full-sized outdoor



PHOTOS BY SUZY FOSTER

Remodeler David Foster (left) talks with a homeowner browsing in the recently-opened Design and Selection Center, which is holding an open house on April 22 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The 3,270-square-foot Lorton showroom – one of the largest home improvement product expositions in Northern Virginia – is part of a recent expansion of Foster Remodeling Solutions. The open house will feature three seminars, access to representatives from major home improvement product manufacturers, a raffle and chef-prepared hors d'oeuvres.

courtyard which spotlights breakthrough materials and styles being applied to roofing and siding.

The open house will also be a forum for conferring with experts affiliated with some of the nation's leading building products manufacturers, and to meet with a home improvement finance specialist.

"Our goal is to make it easy for attendees to find answers to an array of home improvement questions in a single day," says David Foster, who has operated Foster Remodeling Solution for over 34 years. "We encourage attendees to come prepared with questions, drawings and photos – and to bring interested friends and neighbors. All of the offerings are free

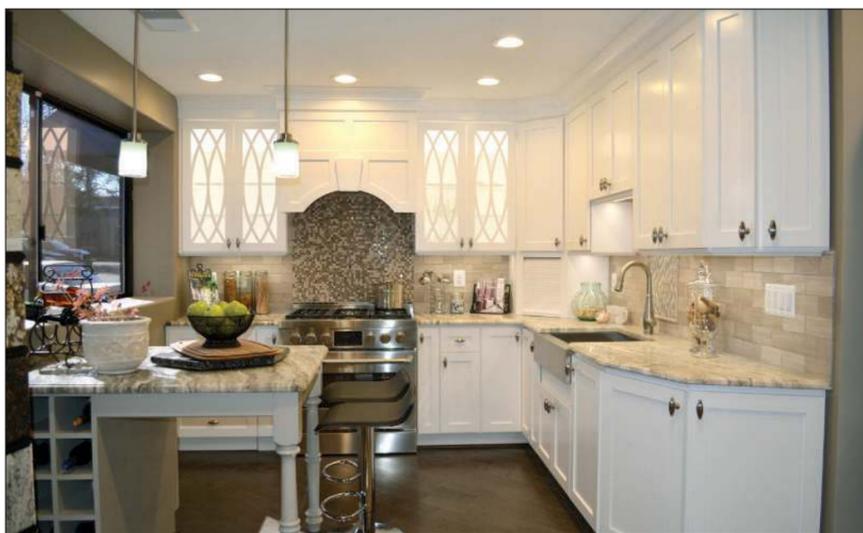
and open to the public."

Design and selection

The new show room is 30 percent larger than its predecessor. The company has also expanded its offices to 9,400 square feet, allocating more space for staff technical training and conferences with vendors. There are three design consultation rooms that allow homeowners to review in-progress design details of a home improvement on a flat screen television.

"Home improvement is a very dynamic industry," Foster observes. "You have to stay ahead of changing technologies and evolving practices. We're expand-

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Three full-size kitchen displays are now on view in the Lorton showroom.



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HOMES

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ing on methods for bringing ideas to homeowners that have already proven successful.”

“The larger showroom and growing list of workshops is appreciably an organic response to the demand for useful information we encounter every day,” he adds. “But this open house will be more of an exposition than we’ve offered in the past; we’re building what we’ve learned about local homeowner interests.”

The three one-hour seminars will be held at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. so that interested parties can attend all three without conflict.

• Design consultant **Sean McLarty**, a veteran remodeler with 33 years of professional experience, will provide critical tips on “Kitchen and Bathroom Remodeling” at 11 a.m.;

• **Dory Clemens**, a space planning specialist, will conduct a seminar at 1 p.m. on aging-in-place applications. The session will focus on how to assess which modifications to your home are most appropriate for short-term and foreseeable needs;

• At 3 p.m., **Chris Arnold** – whose 25 years of remodeling experience embraces every facet of the industry – will discuss “How to

Plan a Successful Remodel”, including best options for financing a project.

Manufacturer and vendor participation

Top-tier vendors and manufacturers participating in the Design Center have increased substantially in recent years.

Ferguson Enterprises, one of the largest wholesalers of such as bathroom fixture brands as Kohler, Moen and Mirabelle will have a representative on hand to answer questions and discuss trends and innovations.

Chris Clark of **NVB Mortgage** will help attendees assess current financing options.

A representation from **DNB Wireless**, a Florida company that specializes in Smart House technologies, will offer demonstrations on home systems management that can be operated via a Smartphone app. **DNB Wireless**, a certified dealer for Control4 Home automation systems, recently established an office in the Design Center.

“While younger people readily embrace Smart technologies, we’re finding more people over 60 getting educated in this newer area of home improvement because they recognize the value these conveniences can bring to their lives,” Foster notes.

Smart devices, which are in-

creasingly manageable via a Smartphone, can be programmed to control everything from house lights to HVAC to security systems.

“The front door bell can activate an audio/video system that allows a homeowner to see and talk to whoever is at the front door – even when they’re not in the house”, the remodeler says. “This can be a significant boon to personal safety and comfort.”

Break-through applications, however, are by no means limited to the electronics arena, Foster points out.

For instance: **Luxury Vinyl Plank (LVP)** looks like wood, but is less expensive and much easier to replace. Optional cork or foam backing makes walking easier.

Ink-jet printing now being applied to **porcelain tile** has greatly expanded the aesthetic possibilities of this durable flooring material. Shades can range from “high-gloss” to “textured.” This has significantly augmented the interior designer’s palette.

Quartz is gradually becoming more popular than granite, marble or natural stone for counter surface applications. It is low maintenance and offers a variety of colors, tones and shades.

Further, texturing techniques such as “brushing” now lend visual distinction to **traditional**

hardwoods; ceramic-infusion, when applied, has resulted in floors that last longer.

Raffle

Several recently-introduced home improvement products are being offered as raffle prizes. **Ferguson** is donating a **Moxie showerhead** with wireless speaker that plays music in the shower via Bluetooth technology; **DNB Wireless** will provide a **Sonos Connect Wireless Amp** for streaming music and a free custom installation for a flat screen TV of up to 65 inches; **Appliance Connection** has contributed a **KitchenAid Mixer**.

“Attendees only have to drop their raffle tickets in bowls designated for the prizes they are most interested in,” Foster explains. “Winners will be notified even if they don’t stay for the entire event.”

“We find it’s important to help homeowners make informed decisions,” Foster says. “But we hope this will also be an enjoyable and festive day for everyone.”

Interested parties can register for the showroom opening and for individual seminars online at www.fosterremodeling.com, or by calling (703) 350-1371.

John Byrd has been writing about home improvement for 30 years. He can be reached at (703)715-8006, www.HomeFrontsNews.com or byrdmatx@gmail.com.

High resale value projects you can tackle in a weekend

By MEGAN WILD

“There’s no place like home,” as the old saying goes. That’s especially true when it comes to an investment.

You live in and love your home, but there might come a time when you have to leave it. And when that time comes, you’ll want to get as much money as you can for your property so you can move onward – and upward.

In order to increase your abode’s value, you might think you have to put in a ton of time, effort and money, but that’s not entirely true. Instead, you can take on weekend projects over time to spruce the place up so when it’s time to sell, you have a completely updated property that’ll end up selling itself.

Ready to get to work? Roll up your sleeves and start on one of the following five weekend projects.

1. Repaint your kitchen cabinets

When it comes to smart investment in your home, the kitchen is one of the best places to start. Buyers expect kitchens to be updated. Stone countertops, stainless appliances and sleek flooring all make a space

feel modern. Obviously, these changes require a lot of money and, sometimes, a lot of time. That’s why you can tackle it in bits and start first with your cabinets.

Old wooden cabinets with equally dated hardware – think oak doors with shiny brass handles – don’t require a complete gut job. Instead, spend a weekend repainting them a more neutral hue. Finish the project off with new metallic knobs and pulls to complete the modernized look.

2. Make the eye go up with crown molding

Most homes have roughly the same ceiling heights, but there’s a little trick to make yours look bigger – crown molding. Yes, that white line at the top of your painted walls will draw eyes upward, making the room appear airier than it may very well be.

The project is easy enough to complete, too. You might not be able to install molding throughout your entire home over a single weekend, but you can certainly tackle the project on a room-by-room basis. Again, start with the spaces likely to draw in the most moolah:

- Kitchens
- Bathrooms
- Living spaces
- Master bedrooms

These tend to be the make-or-break rooms when it comes to a big purchase. Crown molding adds a bit of detail, and a feeling of luxury that’ll certainly add to the bottom line.

3. Boost curb appeal – and backyard bonuses

No one will come in your home unless the first impression is stunning. Another DIY project should be a landscape overhaul of your front yard. It can be something as simple as adding a path of pavers to your front yard or sprucing up your

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Content is provided by:



Contact Javen House or Kim House for more information:

Javen House
javen.house@gmail.com
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