

THE MAGAZINE FOR SOUTHERN ELEGANCE

SPRING 2

CHARLOTTE PLACE

\$5.95 www.charlotteplace.com

LUCY and COMPANY

Interior Design for Children

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WHIMSICAL AND TALENTED

As much as children's personalities differ and change, their bedrooms seem to mirror their stage of life. The styles they like, and the items that surround them create a personal atmosphere that is safe, fun and esteem building.

Nine-year-old horse lover Mary Corbin of Myers Park received a surprise room makeover from her parents for Christmas, 2005. Kim Dwyer, interior designer for Lucy and Company, received free reign to design a unique space to match Mary's outgoing personality and active lifestyle.

"I believe in betting the kids involved in the design process at the beginning," says Kim. At their first meeting Mary looked through fabric books, identifying the colors and patterns she liked. Narrowing things down, the style emerged, and a pink and orange palette formed the basis of the scheme. "Her style was varied. She chose some florals and some contemporary elements," notes Kim.

Because of the time involved in painting, that part of the room makeover was not a surprise. Kevin Keim, husband of owner Beth Keim, does all the painting for Lucy and Company. While Mary was at school, Kevin came in and painted the orange, bright pink and white stripes.

The challenge for this room was how to display the many award ribbons and trophies Mary earns for horseback riding. Kim solved this challenge by creating a display space in the playroom and hallway.



The real surprise for Mary came just before Christmas when Lucy and Company pulled together all of the items chosen to incorporate in the finished room. They revived the original two twin beds by hand painting them white as a contrast to the bright walls. Topping the beds are washable, hand-painted, comforters with a circular tie-died look. With matching

pillows, these coordinate wonderfully with the wall stripes.

The window area includes a white wood built in window seat with storage drawers below topped with new coordinating fabric seat cushions and pillows. White wood blinds and a box pleated valance with pink and orange trim finish the window area. Kim came across an old desk perfect for the space and had it custom painted by Lucy and Company with a multi-colored block pattern painted on the top.

A contemporary ceramic lamp base with a fabric drum shade provides ample lighting. Above the desk, Kim designated a space for photos and notes using a metal magnetic board with a polka dot painted wood frame.

Two additional windows flanking the desk are finished with matching box pleated valances each with a floral cotton drapery panel from the fabric Mary chose initially. A new white wood nightstand and full dresser complete the room. Above the dresser three pieces of framed artwork hand made by Lucy and Company include colorful raised wooden horses tying in Mary's affection for horses. Floating

shelves and open display boxes on the wall provide places for other personal things.

"This client was incredibly easy to work with. Just having the ability to pull the room together all at one time made the project exciting," says Kim. When Mary came home from school and received her surprise it was the icing on the cake. "She loves it."



WO-FOLD INCREASE

About half way through her second pregnancy, Susan Schneider and her husband John, who live in the Historic District of Concord, learned they would be having twins. When the time came to plan the nursery, Susan contacted Beth Keim, owner of Lucy and Company, who had designed the room for first child, Victoria.

"I had read about Beth and her store in the newspaper before I was even pregnant with my first child. I was so wowed by the pictures of the nursery she had done for her daughter Lucy that I cut the article out and saved it in case I ever got pregnant. I had a great experience with her on Victoria's room so of course I called her as soon as I found out I was pregnant again," says Susan.

During a visit to the showroom, Beth suggested the turquoise and lime green color combination for a boy and a girl. It seemed that many fabrics and accessories went with those colors. To add weight to the room, black and white were combined with the colors. "I wanted something very unique that would work for a boy and girl—not too feminine and not too masculine. I didn't want the nursery to look like everyone else's," shares Susan. The room design originated with a turquoise, green, black and white striped area rug which was placed on a white loop carpet with black tips. The turquoise was pulled from the area rug for the wall colors.

When the twins Samuel and Julia Schneider were born the nursery was ready with two round white wood four poster cribs which stand out dramatically against the rich turquoise walls. The bumpers and dust ruffles in the babies' cribs complement each other with black and white polka dots and stripes for Samuel and black and white flowers and stripes for Julia. The windows behind the cribs are dressed with custom drapery panels manufactured by seaming together horizontal strips of green and turquoise fabric trimmed with black ric rac. The panels hang on white wood rings and poles. A black oversized dresser provides ample space for clothing for two and a matching hutch above it displays the infant's photos and collectibles. Between the cribs Beth placed an antique cabinet that she painted turquoise and lime green, which Susan says is unique and interesting.

A quiet corner contains an overstuffed chair and ottoman in green fabric with white piping. A pillow from the drapery fabric with a black button sits on the chair tying the two sides of the room together. A white wood pedestal table and a black lamp with a fabric shade enhance the setting.

Accessories and art of the most unusual kind give the character and charm to the nursery. A metal three dimensional tin sculpture of a frog and a turtle adds cheer, and Beth added her personal touch with two wood growth charts she made herself and mounted on the wall. "I did request the growth charts—Beth did one for Victoria's room that is just precious. Victoria loves getting measured and having us mark it on the chart. The ones she did for the babies are just beautiful," says Susan. Samuels has raised wooden hand painted bugs and dragonflies on a vine and Julia's has raised flowers and a vine where the height markings are painted.

Susan is very impressed with Beth's ideas and abilities. "She is one of the most creative people I've ever met, I trust her and give her a lot of creative license in the design of the rooms she's done for me, and she's never disappointed me. My experience with Beth on both nurseries has been very positive. I am reminded again and again how happy and cheerful yet calming the room is. It is very sophisticated and will carry the babies as they grow into toddlers. I think it was a great investment, and I know as my babies grow older, they will appreciate it as well," she says.



CLASSIC AND CUSTOM

Three-year-old Jack from the Dilworth area in Charlotte is silly and energetic, according to his mom. He has a "larger than life" personality and at the same time is sweet and thoughtful she said. Jack may not be thinking about design or functionality of a bedroom yet, but the bedroom space created for him will grow with him as he changes and matures.

Jack's parents Jed and Becky Guenther hired Beth to establish a color scheme for their home and to begin designing rooms, after seeing her work at the Dilworth Home Tour. Not wanting your average "out of the catalog" look for Jack's room, Becky requested some sports theme be incorporated but allowed Beth to "just run with it." "I had seen other rooms Beth had done, and I knew whatever she came up with would be so cute," says Becky.

Beth based the colors for Jack's room on the color scheme she established for the rest of the home and began the design with an area rug. A Company C. black bordered wool rug with a blue, red, green and gold square design determined the Benjamin Moore gold base paint color for the walls. Matching colors were pulled from the rug for hand-painted varied width stripes on the walls. Black twin beaded board beds anchor the room. Vertical striped cotton fabrics from Duralee make bed pillows and the flat drapery panels hanging on wood rings and rods.

Lucy and Company built two pine wooden toy boxes and stained them to match the dresser. Blue edging was painted on to match the wall stripe color. Raised wood letters are painted in black and white polka dots adding style.

*Not wanting your average
"out of the catalog" look.*

A red canvas club chair with white piping adds dimension and comfort. The custom artwork by Lucy and Company carries through a sports motif using three different raised wood balls. Hand-painted black cubed book shelves get the books off the ground and above the pine dresser. Two blue ceramic base lamps have hand-painted shades to complement the timeless look.

This is a very custom room according to Beth. "Jack is a typical boy, and the Guenthers trusted me to figure it out. I didn't have to work around a lot of items, and I based the entire design on the rug. The plus was the room was not too expensive, which was just great," Beth explains. "His room is very bright and colorful which totally fits his personality," Becky concurs.

Beth continued this color scheme into Jack's bathroom and into his ten-month-old baby brother's nursery. "We used similar colors and fabrics to tie the two rooms together," says Becky. Beth did the boys' playroom as well using bright and cheery colors", according to Becky. "She totally transformed our drab basement into a fun room, and she only has two more rooms left in our home before it's all done." *

Lucy and Company is located in the Dilworth area of Charlotte at 1009 East Boulevard. Open Tuesday through Friday 10-5 and Saturday 11-3. Call 704.342.6655 or visit their website at info.lucyandcompany.com.



