

AT HOME

Feng shui brings design harmony to Alexandria home

By Merlisa Lawrence Corbett
Special to *The Examiner*

It was feng shui from concept to completion for interior designer Sherry B. Ways as she guided a young Alexandria couple toward a delightfully harmonious home. Soothing shades of blue, gray, sage

and beige flow through the interior, which was designed with the homeowners' energy, intent and lifestyle in mind.

"Feng shui is about creating positive energy, the right chi, within a space," said Ways, a principal with Design Scheme Interiors of Savage, Md. She studied various schools of

feng shui and incorporated them, along with other Eastern philosophies, in her approach.

"It was my idea," the wife, who didn't want to be named, said. "I had done some research but wanted someone to help us with the layout and flow of the house."

Ways began by guiding the cou-

ple through an intention ceremony. This process meant entering each room and stating the intention and purpose for the space. They burned sage and chanted — the wife said her husband, a Navy officer, was skeptical at first.

"My husband has been a good sport," she said. "The ceremony got us all on the same page."

The primary intent was to create a home that feels inviting to friends and serves as an oasis to the couple. They removed walls on the main floor to open the space and then quadrupled the number of windows, inviting in more sunlight.

The color scheme was based on personal feng shui readings performed by Ways. The husband, a Yin Wood type, needed more water, which was represented by blue to enhance his energy.

"Wood is stimulated by water," Ways said. The wife possessed more of a fire element and benefited from water.

"If left up to me, all the walls would have been red or orange," the wife acknowledged. "These colors really bring a sense of calm and balance."

Each of the chosen colors is painted on a wall in the home. They are repeated in tiny rectangular tiles, from Architectural Ceramics, arranged in a geometric pattern and mounted around the fireplace. The result is a reflective, shimmering work of art.

Ways designed window treatments, but the owners opted out because they love the view of their wooded backyard.

"Usually feng shui requires window coverings," Ways said. "But part of feng shui is about bringing elements of nature into the house, and the windows certainly do that."

Circles, which represent unity, infinity and completion in feng shui, appear in various forms throughout the home. The light fixture above the dining table is an assortment of rings grouped in a mirror bowl chandelier

Get the feng shui feel

- 1. Start fresh.** Clear a space, and before redesigning, consider the purpose for the space.
- 2. Clear clutter** that can block positive chi.
- 3. Add a water feature,** such as a fountain, a symbol of flowing abundance.
- 4. Supply good lighting** and air quality, essential for enhancing chi.
- 5. Incorporate the five elements of feng shui:** water, wood, metal, earth and fire.

SOURCE: SHERRY WAYS, DESIGNER



ANDREW HARNIK/EXAMINER

with brass detailing. Wooden accent tables and lamp shades replicate the circular pattern. All the furniture has rounded edges, alleviating any "poison arrows" that interfere with positive chi, Ways said.

A Daphne sofa in taupe chenille-like fabric with a micro-maze pattern is flanked by two sets of chairs. On one side are comfy accent chairs in micro-suede, complemented by dainty round satin teal pillows. On the other are two chairs with Indonesian-inspired carved mahogany frames.

The entire project, which included designing a nursery and master bedroom, took only six weeks to finish. Ways contributes part of the speedy completion to hiring a contractor who also studied feng shui.

"My biggest concern with feng shui was whether we could find the types of things, such as furniture, we liked in a style that fit," the wife said. "I love the flow of the house and [my husband's] very happy with the outcome. We want people to come into the house and feel relaxed. We want the focus to be on the person and not the furniture."

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Thursday Feb. 11th and Wednesday Feb. 24th, from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm

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You'll learn about the latest kitchen and bath design trends; the three levels of remodeling (cosmetic, "pull and replace" and custom); setting a timeframe for project completion; how to live through a remodeling project; and setting a realistic budget for each room.

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Whether it's reconfiguring existing space or adding new, this seminar will address creative ways to make your home work better for you and your family. The experts will discuss basements, in-law suites, home offices, exercise rooms, play rooms, creative storage ideas and more. Less can be more when it comes to the space in your home. Educate yourself on how to best maximize your home before spending a dime on your remodeling project.

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