Professional Builder

GET MORE OUT OF MODEST SQUARE FOOTAGE
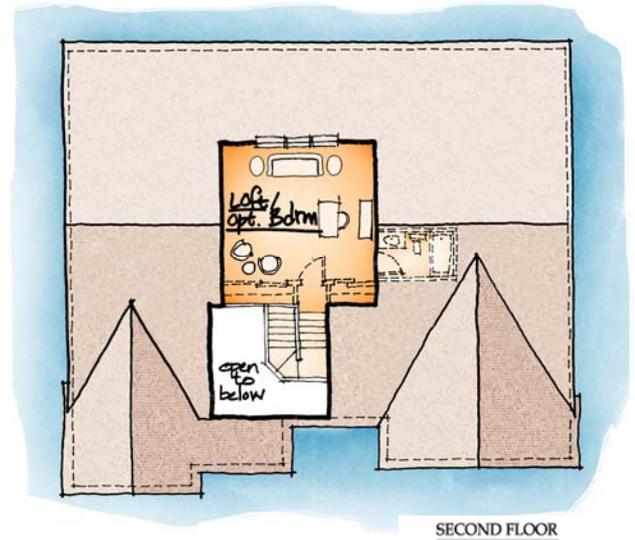**By Susan Bady, Senior Editor, Design -- 4/1/2009**

Professional Builder's Senior Editor, Susan Bady, talked to six professional architects on how to make the most of 2,200 square feet or less. Here are eight profiles:

The Dunwallis
CHERYL A. O'BRIEN
C. O'Brien Architects, Inc.
Bala Cynwyd, Pa., *designer*

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

Specs: 2,180 square feet; single-family detached; two stories; two bedrooms with option for third; two bathrooms

What makes it work: Lots of storage including front and rear coat closets, broom closet, linen closet and pantry; first-floor master; large island kitchen and family room; formal dining room but no living room; screened porch; open-rail stair; windows that draw light into the center of the home.

In Cheryl O'Brien's words: "In small-home plans, I always try to keep the staircase in the center. It minimizes wasted space on the second floor."
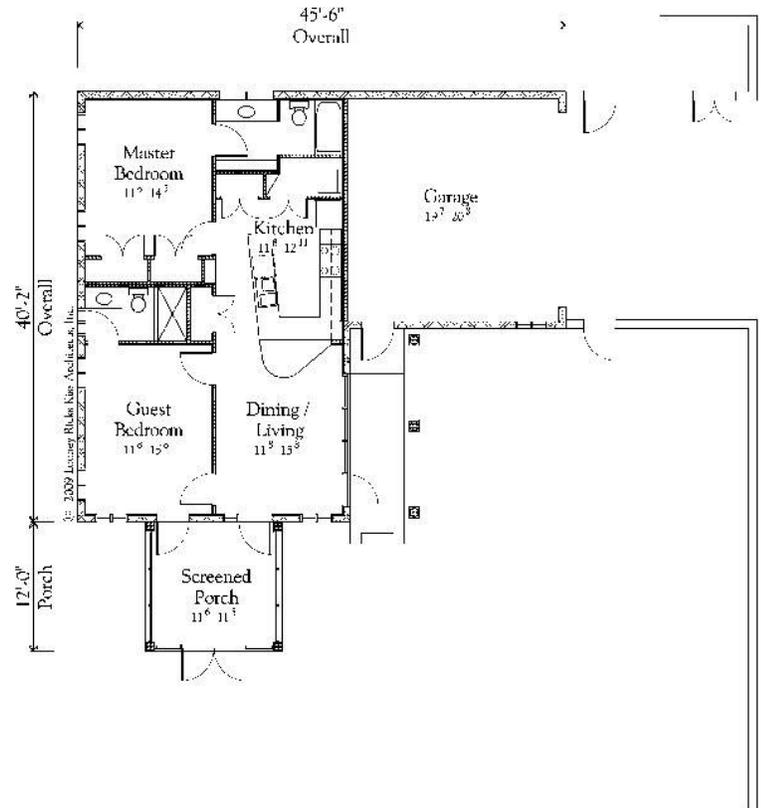
Russell Residence
DARRELL RUSSELL
Looney Ricks Kiss Architects
Rosemary Beach, Fla., *designer/builder*

SPECS: 1,007-square-foot detached carriage home; one story; two bedrooms; two bathrooms

WHAT MAKES IT WORK:
Screened porch; 10-foot ceilings; multiple windows; 10-foot-tall storage unit in master bath; two-car garage with attic for additional storage. Russell recently removed the breakfast bar in the kitchen to create a dining room that seats eight. He also turned the master bedroom into a sitting room and uses the guest bedroom as the master bedroom. As more evidence of the plan's flexibility, he points out that the wall between the guest bedroom and dining room can be removed to create a larger living space.

First Floor Plan

Plan D, Green Street Mews, Downingtown, Pa.

TOM BARTON

Barton Partners

Norristown, Pa., *designer*

Progressive Housing Ventures, Malvern, Pa.,
builder

FIRST FLOOR PLAN   SECOND FLOOR PLAN   THIRD FLOOR PLAN   FOURTH FLOOR PLAN

SPECS: 1,756-square-foot Townhome; three stories above garage; three bedrooms; 21/2 bathrooms

WHAT MAKES IT WORK: Back-to-back design fits two units in space typically allocated to one, but rooms don't feel narrow; each home has its own front door and porch for "row house" look; alley loaded, two-car tandem garage; window wall and private deck off great room; third floor bonus room.

The Plumrose
ROSS CHAPIN
Ross Chapin Architects
Langley, Wash., *designer*

SPECS: 1,635 square feet; single-family detached; two stories; two bedrooms; two bathrooms

First Floor

Second Floor

WHAT MAKES IT WORK: Main-floor
master bedroom; front and rear sections can easily be "flopped;" many variations possible with second-floor layout, including hobby room, guest room and playroom; dining room wrapped in windows; closets tucked under second-floor eaves; extra-deep stair landing for window seat and bookshelves.

The Emerson
ANNE OLSON

Olson Architecture

Niwot, Colo., *designer*

Wonderland Homes, Lafayette, Colo., *builder*

SPECS: 1,300-square-foot detached home; one story with optional lower level; two bedrooms; two bathrooms

MAIN LEVEL FLOOR PLAN
HIS AND HER OFFICE OPTION
1,311 S.F.

F2009112274/34/03

WHAT MAKES IT WORK: Lots of options, including his-and-her home offices, master sitting room and lower level with recreation room, wet bar and guest bedroom/bath; drop zone near garage entrance; passageway between master closet and laundry room; alley-loaded, two-car garage.
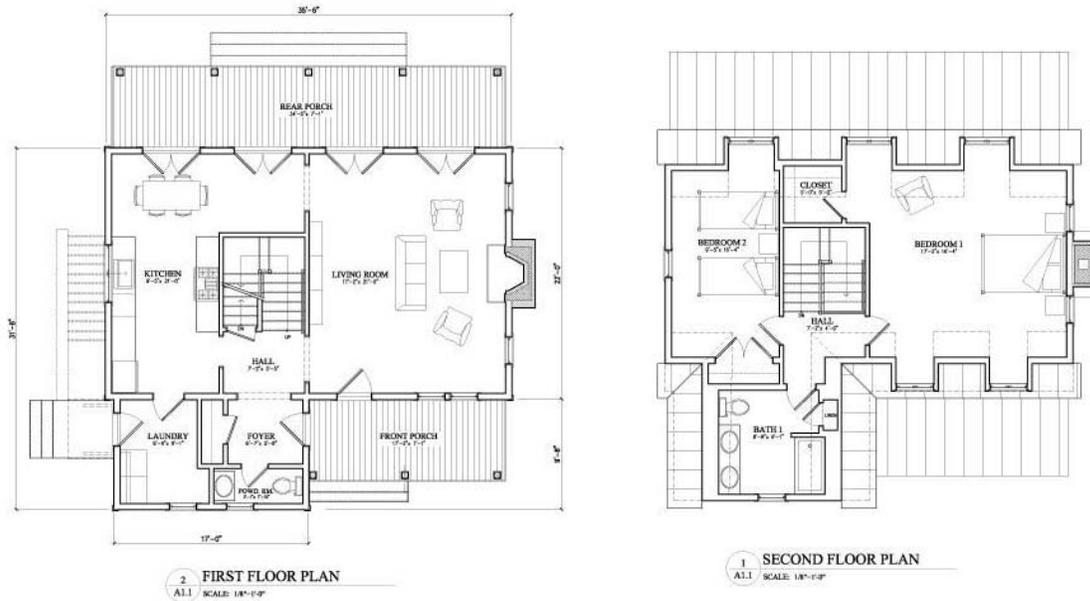
The Joiner
RUSSELL VERSACI

Russell Versaci Architecture

Middleburg, Va., *designer*

SPECS: 1,769-square-foot detached home; two stories plus full, unfinished basement; three bedrooms; 21/2 bathrooms

WHAT MAKES IT WORK: Eat-in kitchen (no breakfast nook or dining room); first-floor powder room and coat closets; shared bathroom for master bedroom and secondary bedroom; generously proportioned living room; central staircase; French doors that open to back porch spanning rear of home; no corridors on second floor.
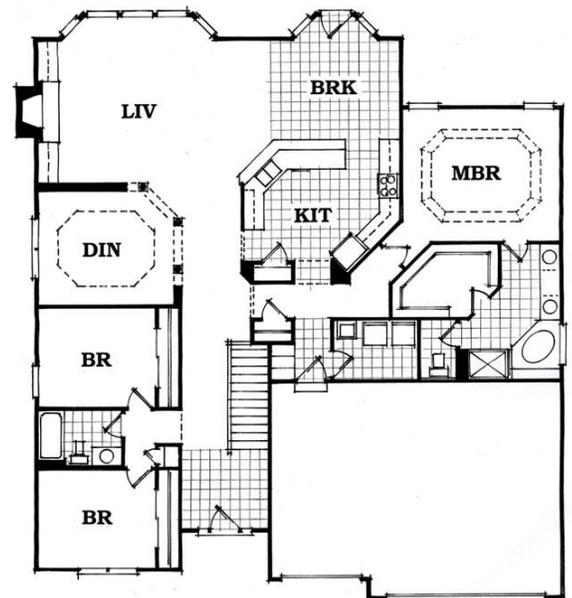
The Birch

BARRY GLANTZ

Glantz and Associates Architects

St. Louis, Mo., *designer*
McBride & Son Homes, Chesterfield, Mo., *builder*

SPECS: 2,184-square-foot detached home; one story;
three bedrooms; two bathrooms

WHAT MAKES IT WORK: Three-car garage with one bay recessed to minimize impact on elevation; open, family living spaces at rear of plan; formal dining room; master bedroom separated from secondary bedrooms; optional walkout basement.

Remember These Rules

- *Keep hallways to a minimum.*
- *Put the staircase toward the center of the plan.*
- *Use windows liberally to bring in natural light from different directions.*
- *Raise ceiling heights to enhance the feeling of spaciousness.*
- *Examine every nook and cranny for storage potential.*
- *Incorporate outdoor living areas (even small ones make an impact).*
- *Eliminate rooms the targeted buyer won't use, such as a formal dining room, to enlarge frequently-used spaces.*
- *Consider shared bathrooms instead of en-suite baths.*

Plan 2A, Celsius 44, Petaluma, Calif.

JOHN THATCH
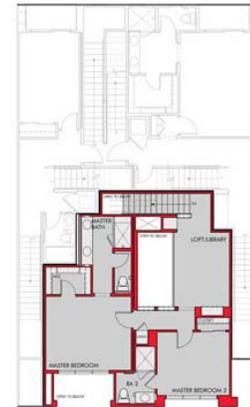
Dahlin Group Architecture Planning
Pleasanton, Calif., *designer*
St. James Properties, Walnut Creek, Calif., *builder*

Specs: 1,759-square-foot condominium; two stories; three bedrooms; 3-1/2 bathrooms; option for home office instead of bedroom 2.

Room Dimensions:
Living/Dining- 15'-2" x 22'-10"; Kitchen- 10'-0" x 14'-4"; Bedroom 3/ Den- 10'-10" x 11'-0"; Garage-10'-2" x 28'-8"; Loft- 8'-10" x 11'-10"; Bedroom 1/Master- 11'-8" x 13'-6"; Bedroom 2- 10'-0" x 11'-5"

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

PLAN 2A   UNITS 11,18,32,37,39

CELSIUS 44
Degrees above.

3 BEDROOMS   3 1/2 BATHS
TOTAL SQ. FT.
PLAN 2A= 1,759 SF
PATIO AREA= 58 SF

What makes it work: Full width of plan utilized, creating larger, more open rooms; mudroom off oversized one-car garage; loft/library space on second floor; two master suites; ceiling heights vary from 8 feet to 9 feet; luxurious kitchen is focal point of main level.

In John Thatch's Words: "The biggest thing that bugs me about small houses is that they often get cut up. They feel small because the designer hasn't used the full width to open up the plan, and they don't furnish properly."