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YOUR HOME

Ultimate Bachelor Pads

VROOM WITH A VIEW | THE KING OF NEON | A KITSCHY KITCHEN'S MAKEOVER

SPACE UNCLUTTERED

A VINTAGE COLLECTION TAKES CENTER STAGE
IN A WELL-ORGANIZED KITCHEN REMAKE.

BY GAIL RAVGIALA

It wasn't that Eddie Kelly was a pack rat. He just had more Rosite glass, Jadite, Moderntone, and Platonite dinnerware and accessories from the 1940s, '50s, and '60s than he had display space. The lovely collectibles, many of which he had inherited from his grandmother, were packed into cupboards and appreciated only when he pulled them out to show friends.

That the kitchen of his 1940s Quincy bungalow was small, dark, and inefficient didn't help the disheartened Kelly's outlook. "I felt completely overwhelmed," says Kelly, a hairstylist at Avanti Salon in Boston. "Where do you begin?"

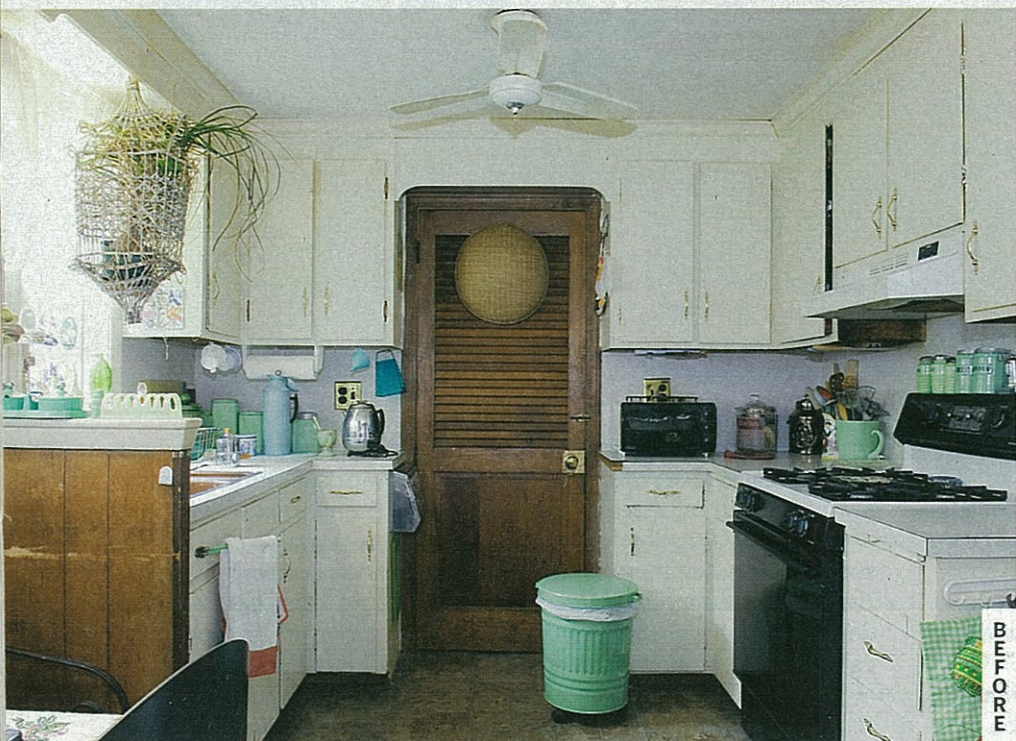
Michele Matties of No Worries Professional Organizing Services in Framingham came to the rescue. "In a case like this, the organizer's role is to optimize space, create work areas, and help the client decide what to keep and what not to keep," says Matties. She also assists her clients in accessorizing a room. "With Eddie's limited budget," she adds, "we needed to prioritize where to spend money."

The 9½-by-16-foot kitchen doubled as laundry room, with a top-loading washing machine tucked into a closet space by the back door. By replacing it with a front-loader, Matties noted, they could add a counter above the machine for folding clothes and preparing food. They could also install overhead cabinets and, beside the washer, add deep storage drawers. A bulky table jammed into a corner of the kitchen could be replaced by a custom breakfast bar with cabinets and a dishwasher underneath. A narrower refrigerator would also help streamline the space.

They pictured a white ceramic sink replacing the dark-brown one by the window. They could repaint the sturdy white wood cabinets and dress them up with new hardware. Ceramic tile was an easy, inexpensive replacement for the worn laminate countertops.

Better lighting would vastly improve how the space worked and felt. "A lot of the existing lighting didn't even work," says Matties, and swapping a ceiling fan for one with a built-in light would help. To display Kelly's collections, Matties suggested

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BUDGET

Breakfast bar and custom cabinetry	\$3,009
Glass shelves	\$1,500
Repair materials, paint, and lighting	\$364
Frigidaire washer	\$520
Amana stove	\$600
Faucet	\$145
Ceramic tiles and plaster backsplash	\$180
New cabinet hardware	\$135
Labor (\$45 per hour)	\$3,000
Organizer (\$80-\$100 per hour)	\$2,400
TOTAL	\$11,853



MINIMIZING FOR MAXIMUM RESULTS By evening out the palette to a basic white with silver accents, organizer Michele Matties reduced the visual confusion and created a serene space where homeowner Eddie Kelly's collectibles, like the Jadite on the counters, could stand out. The cabinets got new pulls, but to save money, Kelly left the original hinges. He removed them and scrubbed them clean, then reinstalled them.

glass shelving in front of the room's lone 7-foot-wide window.

Matties estimated basic labor costs at \$2,000 to \$3,000 ("A good carpenter-handyman will cost \$35 to \$45 an hour," she says). The custom cabinets and shelving would be \$4,500. Kelly realized he had to scale down. He'd been living without a dishwasher since he had moved into the house nine years ago, so that item was eliminated, as was the new fridge and the ceiling fan. When his stove died and had to be replaced, he took the sink off the list as well. Instead of replacing all the cabinet hardware, he kept the hinges and just swapped the door pulls.

"We needed to even out the palette to reduce the visual confusion," says Matties, so they settled on a white and silver color scheme. Next, Matties brought in Phil Wallace of Prestige Custom Mirror & Glass in Waltham to design display shelves. "We needed an expert," she says. "It was not the kind of thing where you could go to Home Depot and buy the pieces." Wallace used 3/8-inch-thick glass set on brushed-chrome brackets for the window and corner shelves above the breakfast bar. Allen Frechter of Great Garage & Closets in Needham measured for the custom breakfast bar, cabinets, and drawers while Nate Roach, carpenter and handyman with E.J. Wells Property Maintenance Services in Boston, began demolition and repair work. He fixed wooden cornices that housed the lighting above the sink and doorways, prepped and painted the walls, ceiling, and cupboards, and installed the countertops.

The transformation is stunning. "I keep looking at the space," says Matties, "and if I didn't witness it myself, I wouldn't believe the change." Kelly plans to add some of those left-out items as his budget allows, but for the time being, he says, "I use the kitchen more. People always wind up in the kitchen, but now it's really a comfortable place to be." ■



Organizing and Design

MICHELE MATTIES, NO WORRIES ORGANIZING

Framingham, 508-405-1234, noworriesorganizing.com

Carpentry and Painting

NATE ROACH, E.J. WELLS PROPERTY MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Boston, 617-922-2656, ejwpms.com

Custom Cabinetry

ALLEN FRECHTER, GREAT GARAGE & CLOSETS

Needham, 781-444-4133, greatgarageandclosets.com

Glass Shelving

PHIL WALLACE, PRESTIGE CUSTOM MIRROR & GLASS

Waltham, 781-647-0878, prestigecmg.com





To find an organizer

Check out the National Association of Professional Organizers, napo-newengland.com.



ON DISPLAY Clockwise from left: Corner shelves above the custom breakfast bar allow Kelly to display his collections, and opening up a closet area and installing a front-loading washer gave him extra counter and storage space, while a niche on the back wall, now bright white, can hold more collectibles; Matties installs a snap-in light above the dressed-up laundry area; Kelly with coffee at the breakfast bar; the glass shelves in the window add a sense of privacy without blocking the view.

