

of interest

GLEN LAKE / COUNTRY VILLAGE

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FEBRUARY 2010

Start planning now to remodel.

If your home could use a spruce-up or a facelift, why not start planning now to get the work done? Whether you're thinking of adding on to accommodate an expanding family, building an in-law suite for aging parents, updating now that the kids have left the nest, or turning your yard into an outdoor paradise, now's the time to begin. Our metropolitan area hosts a number of remodeling events, including the West Metro Home Remodeling Fair in Hopkins, where you can get a head start. We at First Minnetonka City Bank may be able to help make your plans a reality.

Get the ideas and information you need at the Fair, so you can spring into action.



Go prepared. Make lists of must-haves and would-like-to-haves for your project, then clip pictures from magazines of ideas you have in mind. Along with your wish-list file, bring a folder for gathering cards and brochures, some paperclips for keeping information together, a pen and notebook (make specific notes on the cards you gather), and a camera.

Keep an open mind. Be receptive to new possibilities the professionals can offer—it's their job to keep abreast of the latest. If you're thinking about doing a costly project in stages, remember that future expenses will include the price of setting up equipment again, as well as inflation that may accrue to products and services.

Continued...

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AND THE PRESIDENT



Tom Rogers



Del Smith

Once again, Minnetonka and several nearby communities are sponsoring the West Metro Home Remodeling Fair. For the 18th year, this free event will give homeowners a chance to see what's new in the world of home-improvement projects, and to meet some of the vendors who can turn your plans into reality. Get some design and resource ideas from nearly 100 exhibitors, attend a few

seminars for more specific information, then come over to our booth for help with financing your project.

The fair takes place on Sunday, February 28 at the Eisenhower Community Center, 1001 Highway 7, Hopkins. We hope to see you there!



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Planning your remodel. *(Continued)*

Do the numbers. It's good to have a total figure in mind for your project, along with an idea how much of a monthly payment you'd be comfortable with. We can help by working with you to make a realistic assessment of your budget and loans that might be available to you.

Be realistic about other commitments. Before you commit to "sweat equity" or acting as your own contractor to save money, be clear about the extent of your time and talents. Costs can escalate quickly when projects are stalled by well-intentioned homeowners who can't meet their deadlines. Learn how much time your project may take, and think of scheduling when work is least likely to interfere with other plans.

See us about financing. Stop by our booth during the fair or by the bank whenever you need help with financing. You'll find experienced, knowledgeable lenders, some of whom may be friends or acquaintances. They are committed to your best interests and to the growth of our community, not to filling quotas and selling select products. Make an appointment so that we can review your financial picture together. With that in mind, we'll recommend appropriate options to help you finance your dream.

Tax credits can stretch your budget.



Visit energystar.gov for more information on products and tax credits.

Many of last year's tax credit programs are still in effect, which is great news for budget-savvy homeowners. Available through the end of 2010 for existing homes and primary residences, these credits can save you 30 percent of the cost of a product, up to \$1,500 per item. Included are such things as windows and doors, roofing, water heaters, insulation, and air-conditioning systems. In addition, credit for some larger energy-saving items is valid through 2016.

As you shop for appliances and products, look for the EnergyStar label for products that exceed the government's recommended energy-saving ratings.



For all life's moments, bank among friends.

FINANCING:
Let us put the numbers together.



Recent news about banks not lending may be overstated. Federal guidelines may be stricter in response to those who engaged in sub-prime lending, says Kurt Wilkowske, Country Village Office manager. But First Minnetonka City Bank has money to lend qualified borrowers. We're also committed to making the process as easy as possible.

To make a home-improvement loan, we must first determine a "loan-to-value" or LTV ratio on the property, Kurt notes. Using this information, we then review your overall financial picture, as well as your employment history to determine the appropriate amount we might lend and the terms for repayment. Then we can explore the best credit alternative for you—whether it's an installment loan, home equity line of credit, mortgage refinancing, or some combination.

While many banks rely strictly on a credit score to determine creditworthiness, we do not. "That credit number is a financial snapshot of a given point in time," says Kurt. "We prefer to look at your total picture and rely on our knowledge of you to show us your reliability over time." Call Kurt at **952.935.5995** to set up an appointment.