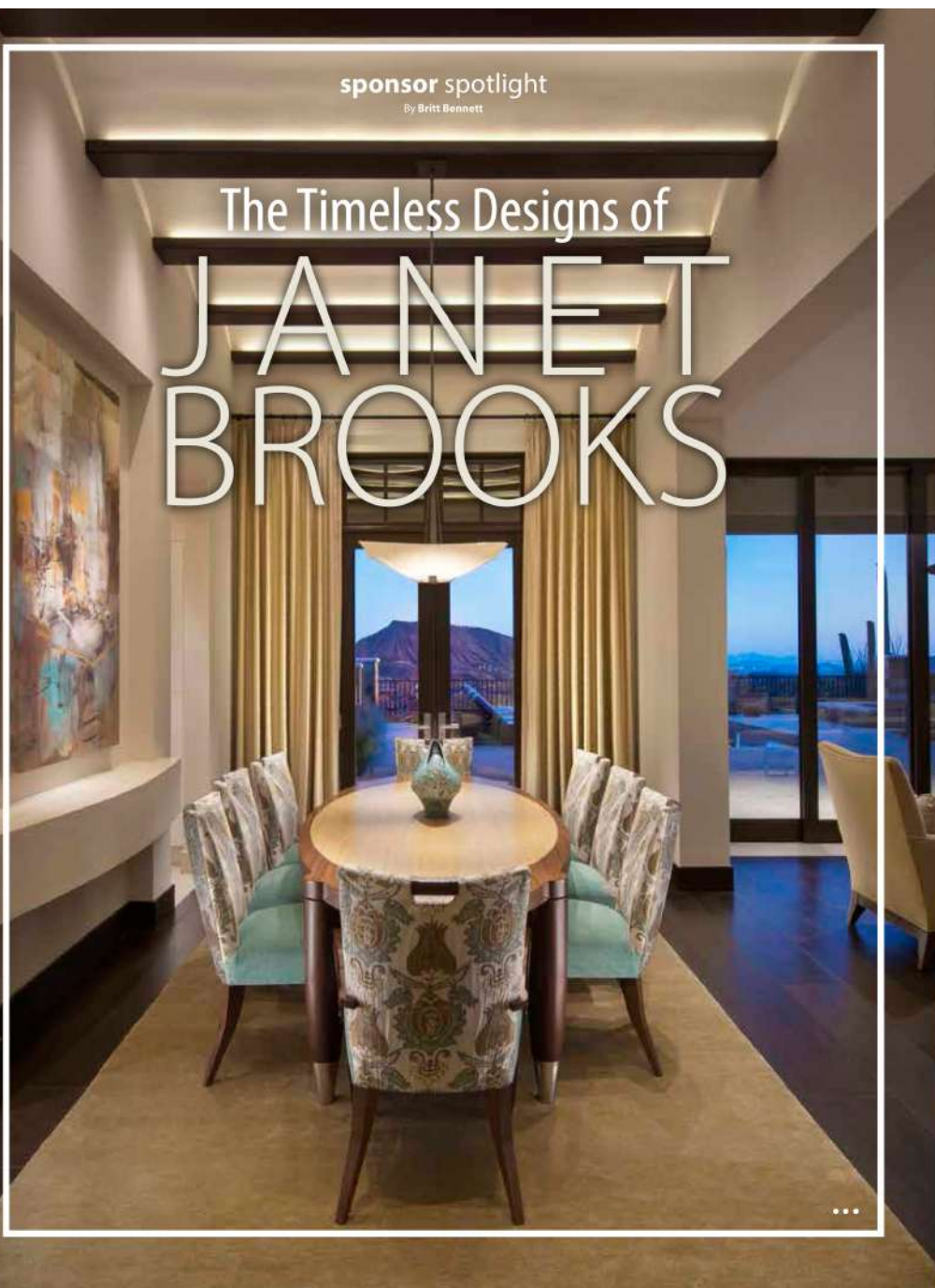


sponsor spotlight

By Britt Bennett

The Timeless Designs of JANET BROOKS



LEFT: Mark and Janet with son Alex and his wife Allie, and daughter Ashley.

CLIENT-CENTERED DESIGN

Just the other day, Janet Brooks, one of Scottsdale's leading interior designers, visited a home in The Boulders she had designed in 1992. "Here we were, more than 25 years later," she says, "and my clients, who are from New York City, are still in love with their winter home."

Why?

"I stay on top of trends, but I don't like doing something so edgy that it dates you in two years. I like to go into a home I designed a decade or two ago and find it doesn't scream, 'Out of date!'"

Janet describes her design style as "organic, earthy. I like to use natural materials and local artisans. All of my designs start with the architectural style of the home. New-build projects are all about blending the exterior and interior architecturally and creating a palette of finishes that pulls it all together. Remodels, however, sometimes offer the challenge of balancing out of date architecture with the clients' desires to freshen and modernize the interiors.

"While I want my clients' homes to be stunning, unique and luxurious, I also want them to be comfortable and enjoy a livable environment. Most of my clients are all about 'casual beauty.'"

"I always focus on an 'Inside-Out' orientation in my design. Desert Mountain homes are set in a spectacular environment, and most are architecturally focused on amazing views. This becomes an important element in our interior choices. I am an outdoor-loving girl (hiking, skiing, biking) and I love to use natural, organic materials in varieties of wood, stones, metal and glass in my residential designs.

"I'm a good listener, but I also keep my clients from going too far off the path. I don't want them to look



Janet with her husband, Mark.

at their house in a year and have regrets. I stay open to ideas, but also hold a clear vision."

HER WILDEST PROJECT

"I've designed yacht clubs, restaurants, boutique stores, even clubhouses. But my wildest design was for a corporate retreat in Colorado. The wives of the executives wanted a mirrored powder room, and I mean 100% mirrored—walls, ceiling, and floor. And they wanted platinum fixtures. Believe me, I talked them out of the mirrored floor!"

GRADUATE: ASID AND THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

Janet is an award-winning, professional ASID designer. She explains, "To use the 'ASID' designation after your name means you have passed the NCIDQ test (National Council for Interior Design Qualification), which is a 17-hour exam that only a small percentage of people who call themselves interior designers ever even attempt to take."

"I'm serious about my career—it's not just my hobby."

Janet's design firm is well-known and respected across the U.S. She has been doing projects within Desert Mountain for more than 25 years. But her path to success wasn't an easy one.

She majored in Art History, starting out in Crested Butte, Colorado as a showroom manager for an ASID designer. "Working there," she says, "I felt like I had fallen into my element." She began what would become a passionate career. She continued working in interior design in Durango, CO for a number of years and then followed her husband's career to Scottsdale where they



Janet and Mark have two rescue dogs, Maggie Mae and Josie.



bought a home and had a son—the future looked bright.

Then one day her husband gave her 24-hours' notice, said he had fallen for another woman and was leaving. On the way out the door, he added, "If you want to save your credit, you're going to have to pay our bills, because I'm filing for bankruptcy."

With no money, a baby in her arms, and an uncertain future ahead of her, Janet looked for work with some of the local design firms, but all of them expected her to bring her own clients. She could have taken work elsewhere, but she says, "I knew that if I settled for something less, I would have gotten stuck in that. I had already had my own interior design studio for 11 years and I knew what I had to do. I had to start my own business again and get my own clients."

Determined and committed, Janet would follow trucks into gated communities to visit builder's job sites. Sometimes she would show up on job sites at 5:00 in the morning and wait for the builders to arrive.

How did such humble beginnings change her?

"It really makes you believe you're capable of anything. It gives you an inner strength."

Today Janet is happily remarried to Mark, her husband of 20 years, who had had a daughter just 3 months after she had her son. And that sixteen-month-old baby boy (Alex) she would leave with her mother while chasing down builders, portfolio in hand? He became an Army Ranger, did three tours in Iraq, was later admitted to West Point, married a girl who also went to West Point, and is now a Captain. Mark's daughter, Ashley, is engaged to a West Point classmate of Alex and Allie's, and living in Germany.

Janet and Mark are now busy raising Maggie and Josie, both rescue dogs they adopted from Foothills Animal Rescue near her office at Pinnacle Peak and Pima. She loves her work, and it shows. "I would die of boredom if I stuck to one style. I love the challenge of inventing client-centric designs."

Janet's work consists of approximately 50% remodels and 50% new builds. If you'd like to discuss your dream project with her, you'll find her at Janet Brooks Design, JANETBROOKSDESIGN.COM, or 480-776-2700.

