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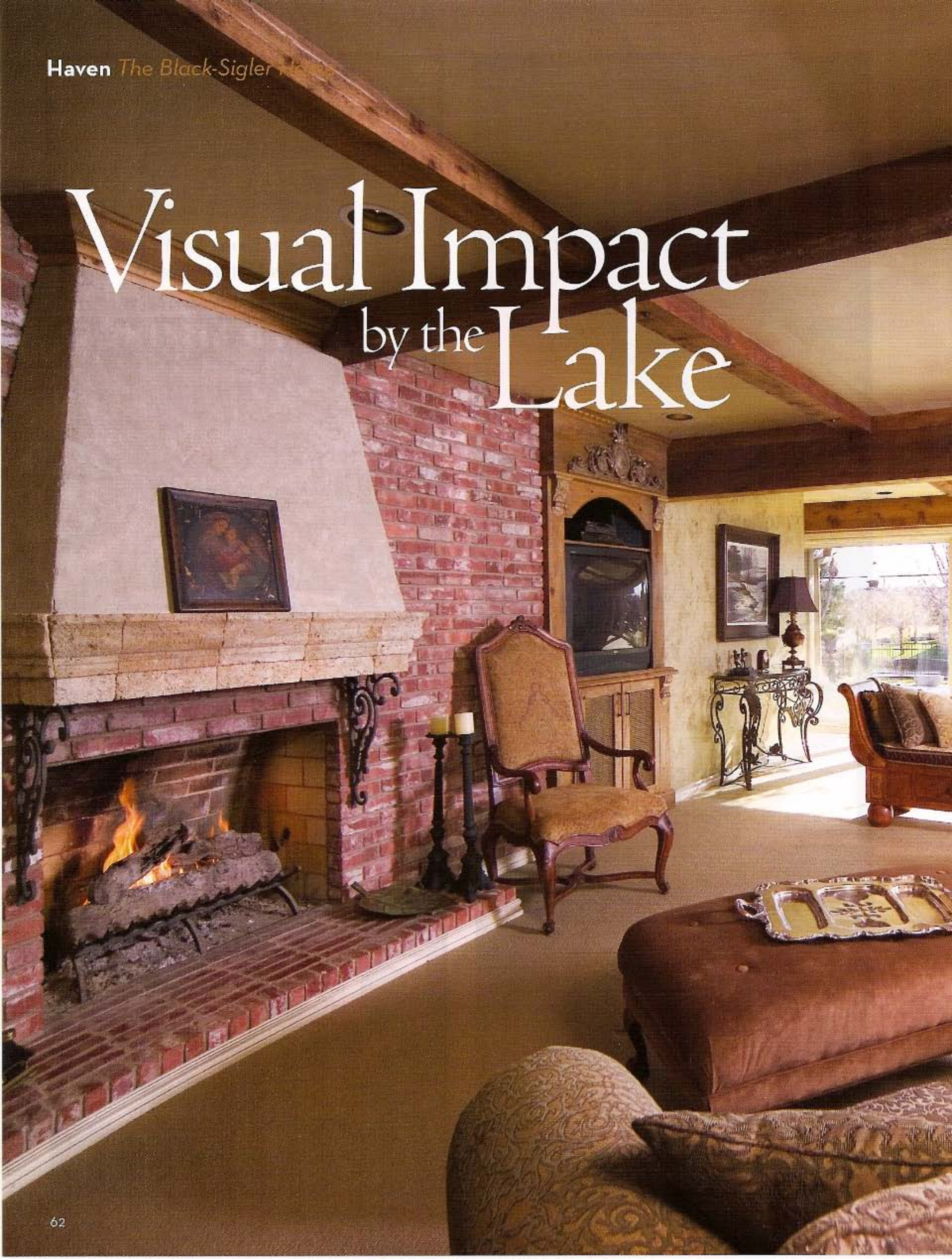
VISUAL IMPACT BY THE LAKE

Thoughtful Design & Distinctive Appeal

IN SEARCH OF LONGTIME LOVE

Decades of Devotion

Visual Impact by the Lake





By **Kent Anderson** Photos by **David Cobb**

When Karen Black and her fiancée Scott Sigler walked through the door of the home in 1998, they had differing opinions about the place.

"I didn't want it," Karen now recalls with a smile. "I thought it was too much house for us at the time. But he got one look at the view of the lake and said, 'This is our home.'"

Eleven years ago next month, Karen and now-husband Scott bought the ranch-style house on the southwestern fringes of Nichols Hills, with its incredible views of the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club's lake. "We've been remodeling it ever since!" Karen says.

Karen Black knows a thing or two about remodeling homes. Her business, A Karen Black Company, has emerged as one of Oklahoma City's leading interior design firms. Karen is most renowned for her kitchen and bathroom designs, but as her own home illustrates, she knows her way around the entire house.

Karen and Scott are only the second owners of their home, which was built in 1950. The original owners added an upstairs room as an art studio in the 1970s, but otherwise had done no extensive renovation. "It needed to be remodeled from top to bottom," Karen says.

One of the first things to go was the vinyl tile flooring in the entry, replaced by wood. Immediately to the right of the foyer is the spacious formal dining room. Karen raised all the ceilings in the house from eight to nine feet, and reversed the positions of the formal dining and living rooms.





The result is an open, airy dining area that Karen and Scott often use for entertaining. The ceilings are made of lumber, bisected by dark wooden beam work. Another distinctive design touch: the dining table is round. French doors connect to a smaller breakfast area. The two areas combined can seat up to 18 people.

A small wine cellar stands in one corner of the dining room. Scott is a wine connoisseur, with relatives in Sonoma County. Karen proudly shows a bottle of wine that is autographed by the vintner, Vincent Arroyo. "This will be for our son's 21st birthday!" Karen says. The vintage will have ample opportunity to age well – their son is now seven years old.

An archway leads to what Karen now calls a music room and sitting area, previously the formal dining room. With a piano and comfortable chairs, Karen says Scott enjoys sitting in this area to read the newspaper, and it serves as an intimate conversation area when family members visit. A lovely painting of a field of boldly colored red flowers perfectly offsets the arching entry to the room.



Haven *The Black-Sigler Home*

As one might expect from a woman who designs kitchens for a living, Karen's kitchen is a study both in aesthetics and functionality. Its island is large – Karen says it is one of the longest islands she has ever done. But by far, the most attention-grabbing feature is the fireplace: it is situated *above* the two ovens.

"Because I'm a kitchen designer, I wanted two separate ovens," Karen explains. "That in turn started us thinking about the fireplace and the visual impact it would have."

Other tantalizing design items in the kitchen include a rolling "library ladder" for reaching storage areas, and a plasma screen TV that can be completely hidden behind a piece of artwork. Karen's favorite aspect of the kitchen is the baking center, where she and her son often make cookies together.

The master bedroom is warm and comfortable in hues of soft gold, repeating the ceiling beams from other areas of the house. Karen points out the entertainment center, which is

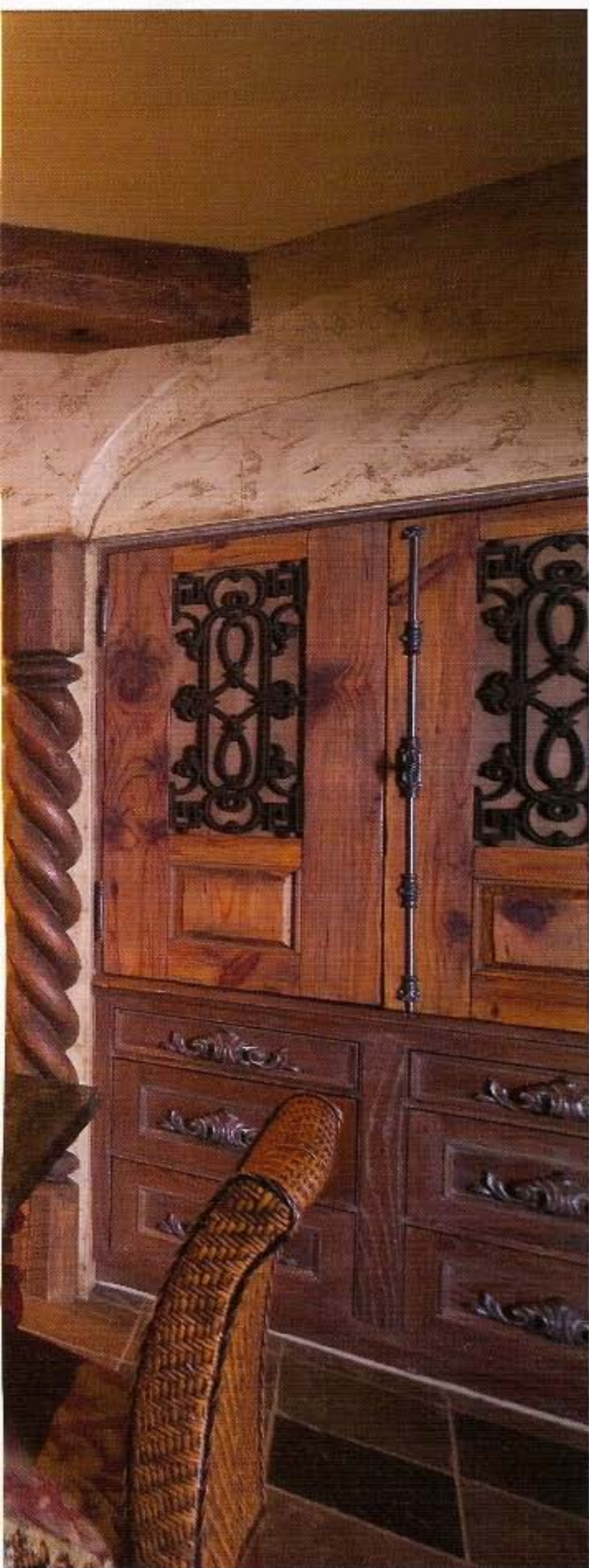


built into the wall, rather than a separate freestanding unit. "We really wanted it to look more like a chest than an entertainment center," she says. Windows and French doors look outside, with another magnificent view of the lake.

The family room is large, encompassing part of what was once a covered patio. It is open to the breakfast area and kitchen, creating a sense of great space. Karen enlarged the hearth in this room and added made-in-Oklahoma brickwork around it.

The upstairs addition is no longer an art studio, but is now a gorgeous guest suite. It is flooded with natural light, though Karen observes that when she and Scott moved in, the windows were typically 1970s – only about two feet wide. Now the windows are much larger, and doors open onto a small veranda.

The bedroom features not only a guest bed but exercise equipment and a pool table. "The pool table wasn't in my original design," Karen laughs. "That was my husband's idea."



Haven *The Black-Sigler Home*



The guest bath is quite distinctive in its own right. “Our friends call this our spa,” Karen says. The shower features pocket doors, handheld showerhead and an extra-long bench. The rest of the bathroom sports heated flooring and bowl sinks with playful koi painted on them.

Karen and Scott have accomplished much with this home, combining an American classic – the ‘50s ranch – with fresh ideas and innovations. More work is on the horizon as well, as they are planning major outdoor landscaping and a completely new upstairs addition.

That Karen has been able to do so much with her own home is all the more remarkable considering how busy she is. Her business is growing, and she finds time to collaborate with two non-profits about whose work she is quite passionate. Rebuilding Together (formerly Christmas in April) works at renovating homes for low-income families and those with disabilities. Positive Tomorrows provides education and support services for homeless children and families. Karen frequently donates her workers’ time to various projects of the two organizations, and is encouraging other contractors to become a part of their mission as well.

Designer, businesswoman, wife, mother, community leader – Karen Black is quite busy indeed, but in the midst of all these roles, she and Scott have created a home of their own that has a broad and diverse appeal.

“We wanted a house that was very nice,” she says, “but we also wanted a house where people could come over in a pair of jeans and flip-flops, or come over in black tie and still be comfortable.” ■