

The **Sunday** Macomb Daily

MOVIE HOUSE

HOMEFRONT



The cost of a private home theater: \$10,000 to \$5500,000. Movie rental: \$3.99. Popcorn and drinks: \$8. Enjoying the big picture in the comforts of your own home and bonding with your kids: Priceless! Some things money can't buy. Ken and Beth Carpenter of Harrison Township, pictured above, bond with daughters Madeline and Danielle while watching *Soiey* in their home theater.

Macomb Daily staff photos by Craig Garfield

Home theaters bring the cinema experience right to you

By **Gina Joseph**
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

When the members of the Carpenter family wants to go to the movies, they stay home.

"It has been great," said Ken Carpenter, standing in the middle of the movie theater in the basement of his home.

His wife, Beth, agreed. "Being able to watch anything we want, whenever we want. That's got to be the best thing. And the kids, it's been fun for them, too. We've had a lot more bonding," she said, while pointing to four theater seats in front of the big-screen television. When the seats are fully reclined, it's like a giant island. The entire family, including Ken, Beth

and the girls, Madeline, 9, Danielle, 6, and Lily 1, can cuddle up together and watch a movie.

Basement theater.
The words conjure up images of a room with black-and-white checkered linoleum, a speckled white screen and rickety projector with big loud speakers. However, the Carpenters went to great lengths to ensure that their theater was anything but basement-like.

Off the kitchen is a stairway covered with a ribbon of creamy white carpeting. I was surprised at how comfortable I felt as I descended the stairs into the theater. The room was very bright. And the floor was not rock hard and icy cold, as would be expected in a basement, but soft and warm. My socked feet definitely appreciated the Berber rug's com-

mercial grade underlay.

On the wall halfway down the stairs was a plaque announcing the cinema. At this point, the stairs took a sharp turn, spilling out into the Carpenters' playroom. To the right of it was the family's fitness room. It was separated from the rest of the basement by a set of double doors made of glass. To the left was the cinema or fan-movie room, as I like to call it. That's half family room, half theater.

Building such a room was no easy task.

Ken and Beth enlisted the help of several experts, including Mike Short, a Macomb Township carpenter who fashioned their ideas into a workable design. Since it was a basement with poles in the middle of nowhere, the Car-

penters also hired an engineer. He re-designed the home's support structure so the beams could be placed elsewhere. One support beam now stands as a painted column and an accent to the room's décor.

Beige and taupe walls with custom molding and wainscoting surround a large seating area — two levels with a perfect view and eight leather recliners. At the back of the theater is a kitchen and bar area, equipped with a sink, refrigerator, stove, dishwasher and cherry wood cabinets. It is the perfect setting for Super Bowl, birthday or Academy Awards parties.

"If I've got my buddies here I can be right with them and still be in the

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