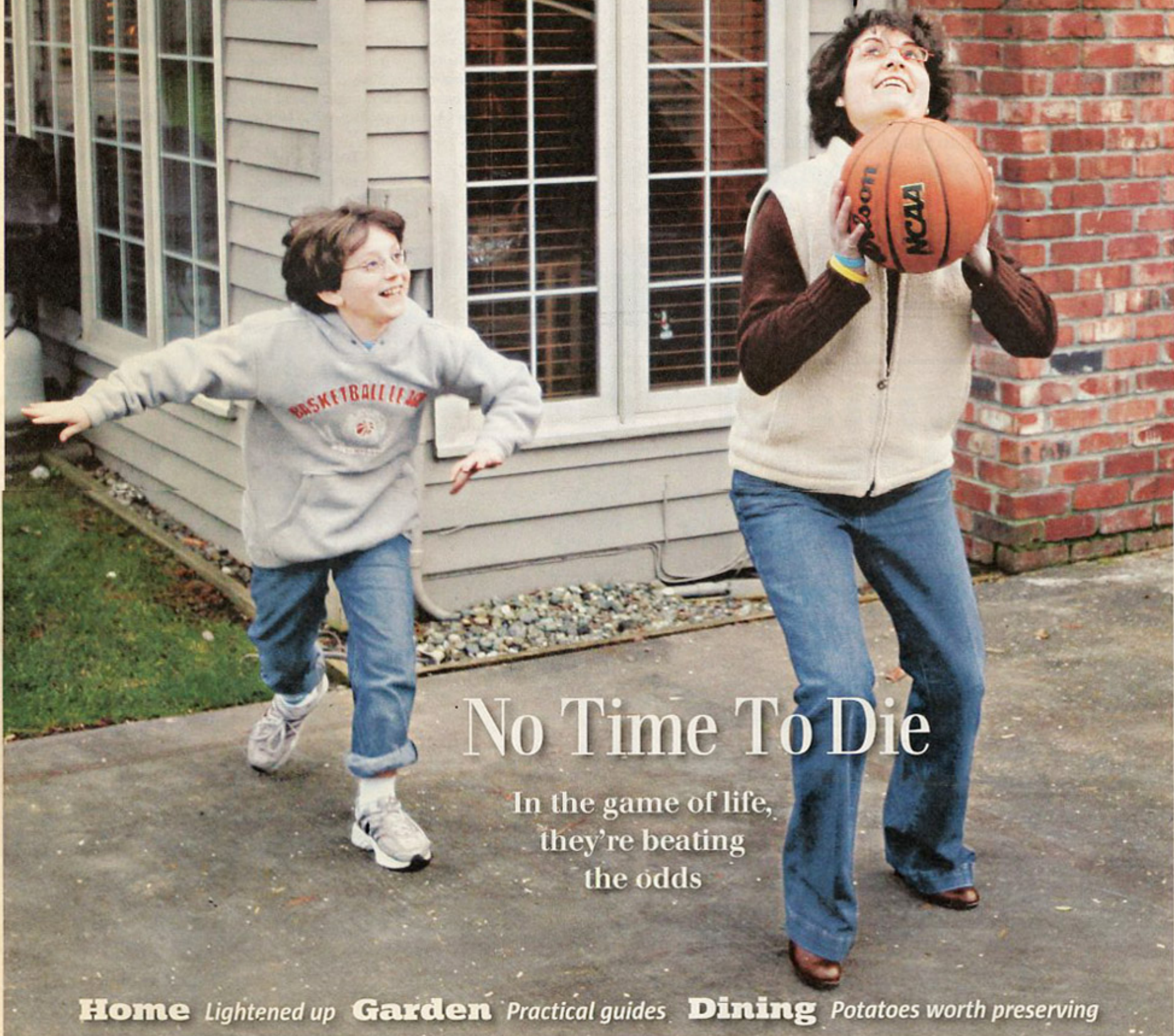


PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The Seattle Times SUNDAY MAGAZINE | MARCH 11, 2007



No Time To Die

In the game of life,
they're beating
the odds

Home Lightened up **Garden** Practical guides **Dining** Potatoes worth preserving



Owen Butz busies himself in the living room, proving there's nothing off-limits to kids in this house. The Butzes bought the piece over the fireplace by Seattle artist Marvin Oliver as a housewarming gift to themselves. It is called "New Generations" and features salmon with embossed



OPEN TO CHANGE

From plain and choppy, a basic house breaks out into the light

JONNA AND ERIC Butz got in a tussle the day they met.

"I basically was trying to take his head off," Jonna says of her first encounter with Eric at an aikido seminar 10 years ago. "After it was over I said to somebody, 'Who's that?' And he was asking the same thing about me."

Then they got married.

After that they bought a nondescript little rambler for \$225,000 in North Seattle.

"It was so ugly," Jonna says. "Eric told me I wasn't allowed to call it ugly, just plain." But they thought it had real potential to evolve with their family.

Two kids and one newly updated house eight years later, they were right.

Architect Julie Campbell loves the flexibility of the rambler, the architectural equivalent of white cake. "These houses are really easy to open up to the site," says Campbell of CTA Design Builders, which served as

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Doors that fold open bring the dining room into the outdoors. The table is Jonna's grandmother's library table from Vancouver, B.C. The light fixture is called Plano by LBL Lighting.

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architect and contractor on the Butz project.

The house built in 1958 now has an open, Asian calm about it, beginning with the distinctive covered entry. A new kitchen wing with a big table and built-in fir bench tucked in the corner has become their favorite place to hang out. Through large windows that wrap around the corner, Owen, 3, stands on the bench seat and watches his dad, an Amgen scientist, till up the front lawn. Across the table, Jonna nurses a plump and pink Trygvy, 1 year. Arbors and decks create outdoor living rooms for a house with a very private, woodsy backyard with a stream. And at every opportunity, the designers opened it to the light.

"When we started we were footloose and fancy free, and had all the time in the world," says Jonna, a full-time mother who, with mixed feelings, recently quit her job working in biomedical research ethics at the University of Washington. "And I got pregnant while we were still looking at plans." Construction started when Owen was born and completed in time for Thanksgiving in 2004.

Because they are working on a budget and because "with Eric it will never be finished," Jonna laughs, they are remaking their home in stages.

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The stainless Amana refrigerator makes a nice backdrop for a watercolor by Owen. The oven is Thermador and the dishwasher a Bosch. The backsplash is Tunas Green marble. The countertops are Richlite.

Jonna and Eric Butz, both black belts in aikido, collect calligraphy art. The ink-on-paper piece in the entrance is by Mitsugi Sautome, the Butzes' most senior teacher and head of the national aikido organization Aikido Schools of Ueshiba. The entrance hall is black slate. The railings and doors are fir.



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Shown today is what Jonna calls Phase I (\$383,000): "I wanted the upstairs done so I could live in it and Eric could take his time downstairs" with Phase II: a remodeled bathroom, kids' play area and fourth bedroom.

For the most part, Campbell retained the original 2,555-square-foot footprint, adding only 133 square feet for the kitchen bump-out. There are two bedrooms upstairs, one big walk-in closet and back-to-back baths, one for grownups and one for kids. The dining and living rooms are one now, a huge stone fireplace separating them moved to the far end of the living room.

The Butzes live solely on the 1,500-square-foot ground floor now. "We had no desire for a large house," Jonna says. "I didn't want to clean it. I didn't want to hire someone to clean it." Their architect couldn't agree more: "Big is not conducive to intimate family living," says Campbell.

The kitchen bump-out was key to the flow of the new layout.

"It was hysterical," Jonna says about the old cut-up space. "Eric and I couldn't talk to each other in one room for all the walls and cabinets in the way. We couldn't even be in the same room."

"Eric does all the cooking, and one day he kicked his own grandmother out of the kitchen!"

Their old home will be a new place for their boys to

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Romancing the rambler

ARCHITECT JULIE CAMPBELL has a way of working with the rambler, which she sees as a Northwest blank canvas.



COURTESY OF CTA DESIGN BUILDERS



BEVERLY MULTERER /
COURTESY OF CTA DESIGN BUILDERS

The remodeled entrance adds depth and an Asian flair that begins at the front step.

"We use fir in a lot of homes of this age. These 1950s, '60s ranchburgers are Northwest houses. They are nestled into the landscape so nicely. So you can really open them up, and using Northwest material makes sense."

"The key, especially for smaller homes to make them seem larger, is to keep a pretty limited palette. You need to pick a tile, a wood and countertops."

"We used fir, slate and light wood flooring. It continues throughout the house, and that's hard to do because there are so many wonderful materials out there."

See examples of CTA Design Builders' work at www.ctabuilds.com.

A-Ha!

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grow up. A place of balance and tranquility — as taught by aikido sensei masters. A place to display their collection of large calligraphy art.

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"Our dream was to have a room tall enough to swing our swords and sticks" for aikido, Jonna says. "We don't have quite that much room."

Rebecca Teagarden is assistant editor of Pacific Northwest magazine. Ken Lambert is a Seattle Times staff photographer.

Jonna, Owen and Trygvy hang out in the kitchen booth. "It's Owen's territory," Jonna says. "One of the first questions we ask is if people like booths or bars," Campbell says. "People with children generally like bench seats. It's about how you entertain in your kitchen."

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