

Jordan's wish

An Ottawa decorator helps make a 13-year-old girl's dream come true

BY LORI STEEVES

One recent Saturday evening, while hosting dinner with friends, I heard my office phone ringing. I wondered who could possibly need an interior decorator at this hour. To stop the relentless ringing, I answered the phone.

It was Lynn Noel of the National Capital Chapter of the Children's Wish Foundation. She felt compelled to call after reading an article about my home renovation in the *Citizen* earlier that day. Then she relayed the story of 13-year-old Jordan, who was recently diagnosed with a serious illness and was hoping for a bedroom makeover.

Unlike many "wish children," Jordan didn't want Winnie the Pooh wallpaper or Mickey Mouse sheets. She wanted professional help transforming her childhood bedroom into a funky teenage hangout.

"I really don't know who to talk to about this," Noel said, "and when I read about you, I thought that you might be able to help us out." Realizing that the opportunity to grant wishes doesn't come along every day, I agreed to take on the project without hesitation.

When I met Jordan, she was more organized than many of my adult clients. She had a folder of magazine tearsheets and pictures cut out of catalogues. She was full of ideas and had a very strong sense of her likes and dislikes. Over the course of the project, we met several times to exchange ideas, to select fabrics and accessories, and, of course, to shop.

Our meetings were scheduled around her treatment days at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and depended on her energy level. What Jordan lacked in physical energy, she made up for in creativity.

Together, we overcame the challenges of her small, north-facing room and a limited budget to create a bright and fashionable, multi-purpose living space.

I say "we" because every detail in the room — from the purple shag carpet, to the hanging chair and beaded curtains — was dreamed up by or inspired by Jordan. I acted as co-decorator, calling in favours from tradespeople and tapping into my designer resources to find just the right things.

Maximizing the space in Jordan's small bedroom was crucial so we opened up the closet, replacing the small door with a wall of iridescent magenta-blue sheers. We designed a closet organizer integrating a computer desk, bookshelves and lots of hanging space to accommodate Jordan's extensive wardrobe. We found creative ways to display her growing collection of unique lamps and plush toys.

I was resistant when Jordan first announced she wanted a turquoise and raspberry colour scheme with purple, orange and green accents. But not wanting to disappoint, I threw caution to the wind, took a deep breath and we went for it. I have to admit I have no regrets. The results are a bold and colourful decor that is truly Jordan.

I was overcome with emotion and a sense of hope during a recent conversation with Jordan when she told me she loves the iridescent magenta-blue sheers so much that some day, she intends to have a dress made out of the fabric. Her creative spirit continues to inspire me every day.

Special thanks to everyone who dedicated their time and resources to this bedroom makeover, but of course to Jordan, wish co-ordinator Mara Barnett and



LORI STEEVES, STYLE WEEKLY HOMES

Ottawa interior decorator Lori Steeves, left, played fairy godmother after being contacted by the Children's Wish Foundation to help transform a teen's kiddy bedroom, below left, into a funky hangout. Steeves credits her young client's bold sense of style for the turquoise and raspberry colour scheme, the purple shag carpet, unique lamps and beaded curtains.



the Children's Wish Foundation for giving me the opportunity to feel like a fairy godmother.

The Children's Wish Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing a special moment of joy into the lives of children suffering from life-threatening illnesses. If you would like to help make a child's wish come true, please contact your area chapter of the Children's Wish Foundation or visit www.childrenswish.ca.

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Jordan's hanging chair helps maximize space in her small bedroom. Her plush toys and trendy pillows add a cosy touch.

