

HOMES FOR AGING CHICKENS

By Bob Feeman,

Personal note: I'm no spring chicken. Not even a mid-summer one. I suppose you could say I'm an early fall chicken (although that might be just a bit optimistic). The truth is, I was born at the tail end of the baby boomer generation, when (full disclosure) Ike was still president. (That would be Eisenhower for those of you who don't go back any further than the Ford, Carter or Reagan eras.) And yes, I am going somewhere with personal reminiscing and revelation.

Here's the point: You hit a certain age and certain parts of your body begin to protest (mildly at first, then louder as the years pass). Could be the back, the knees, the fingers, the feet, yada yada yada. I've noticed that sometimes the knees creak a bit when I'm climbing stairs. I tend to bump into things more often (though that could be because I'm just not paying attention, which happens a lot, especially when I'm in a hurry, as I usually am). And I find that I'm less flexible when it comes to bending or kneeling down to get something out of a bottom cabinet in the kitchen.

Sooner or later all of us will face these problems, or others like them, in our homes and lives. So what are we aging chickens to do? I have two simple suggestions: we can organize better, and we can start to think about incorporating universal design elements into our homes.

Organizing is key to making any home more livable, especially in the kitchen. My guess is just about every reader of this magazine has a kitchen that can be improved upon in some way, some more than others.

When it comes to these subjects, awareness is the first step toward finding a solution, and knowledge is often the most valuable asset today's smart homeowners can seek. After that, it's a relatively simple matter of implementation. We may not all be spring chickens, but we can take important steps to make our homes safer, more accessible and more comfortable.

This article is compliments of Smart HomeOwner Magazine, the Presenting Sponsor of our 2008 *Smart Home Owner Seminar Series* taking place throughout the weekend. Bob Feeman is the editor of Smart HomeOwner Magazine. He can be reached at bfeeman@smarthomeownermag.com