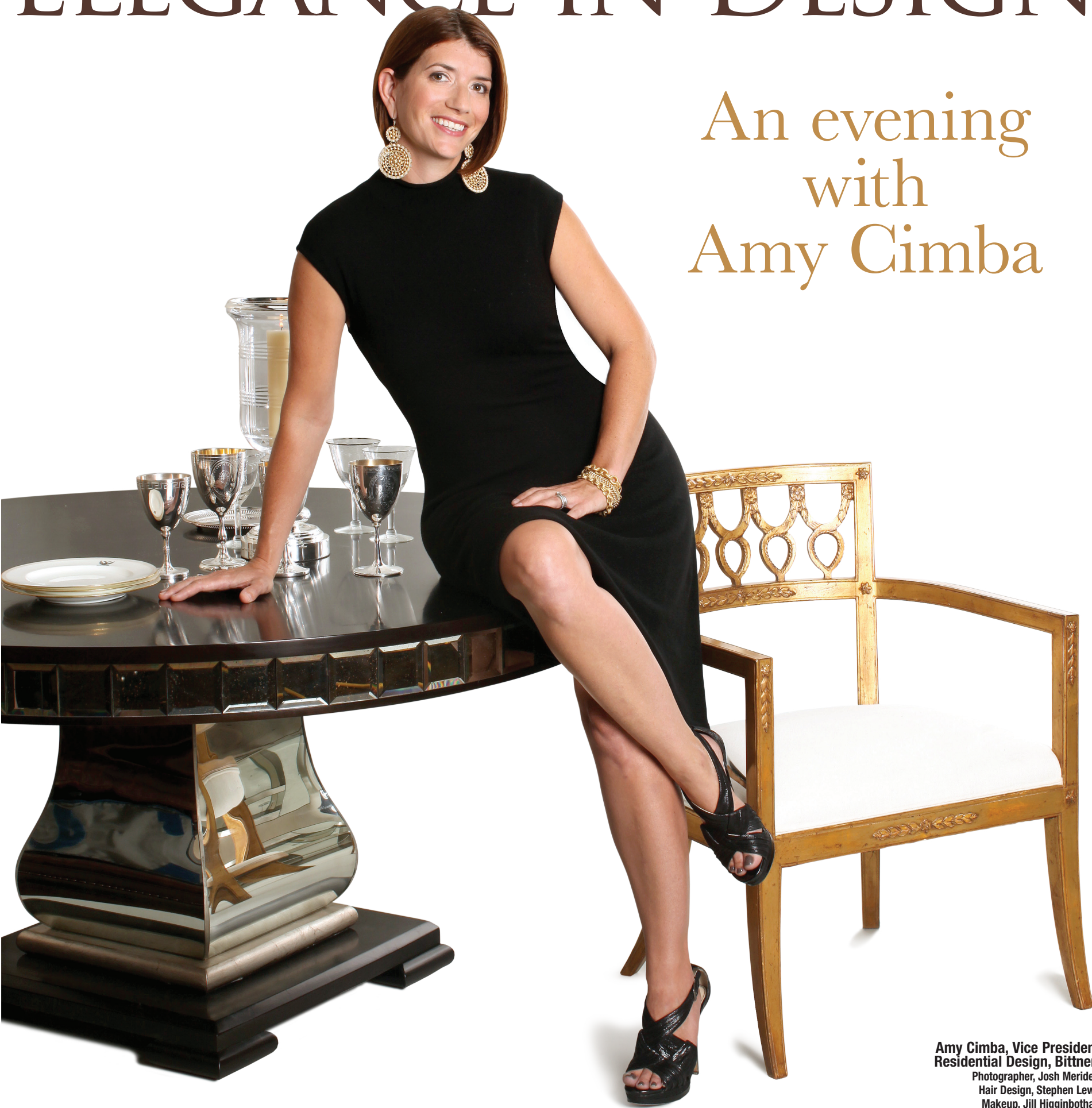


Profile

# ELEGANCE IN DESIGN

## An evening with Amy Cimba



**Amy Cimba, Vice President, Residential Design, Bittners**  
 Photographer, Josh Merideth  
 Hair Design, Stephen Lewis  
 Makeup, Jill Higginbotham

By **FRANNY CORRIGAN GUENTHNER**  
 Special to The Voice-Tribune

The holidays have arrived at Bittners. Beautiful holiday gifts and accessories are being carried in. Decorations are going up. From this swirl of activity, Amy Cimba warmly greets me. She takes me into Club 1854, an upscale, newly renovated showroom area. Breaktaking reclaimed, wide plank hardwood floors and ceiling beams, by Longwood Antique Woods, set the tone for this very chic urban space.

As Amy and I settled in on a charcoal linen settee, her love of design and passion for her clients is quite apparent. She glows as she begins to tell me about her career in design and creating a difference in the lives of her clients.

### Why did you choose to be a designer?

Early on, I discovered that I was a creative person. Art played a major role in my life at school. My love of pencil and charcoal drawings along with paintings emerged. In high school, I actually designed a few pieces of furniture. As I entered college, my creative side complemented an aptitude I had for business. After receiving my Studio Art degree with a business minor, I interned with a design firm outside of Chicago and worked with many great designers while there. Eventually, I stayed on with this Chicago firm to get the experience I needed before joining Bittners.

### Who was your mentor, early on in your career?

Early on at Bittners, I worked as an intern directly under Todd Klein, today a well-known New York designer. His influence left me with a strong impression that design was my career path.

The other designer who truly took me under his wing was Ben Small. He was a wonderful teacher and mentor in my early years that opened my eyes to

creating great design. He is a special friend whom I am very grateful to and admire so much.

### What is your design philosophy?

As a part of a young family, I love working with other families. I feel that as their designer, I should 'design for the way they live' so that their home reflects their lifestyle. One example of a young style is to mix 'casual chic' with an urban style. Taking a couple of great antique pieces and mixing them with reclaimed and understated furniture makes the home very personal, interesting and inviting.

I also believe that you can live in luxury everyday and in every phase of your life. I work with many clients who are in different phases of their lives so 'designing for the way they live' is very important to the success of creating their own design style in their home.

### How have your travels inspired you?

My travels have been very inspirational. I have traveled throughout Spain, France, England, Scotland and Japan. For a time, I lived in England. While there, I would take my sketchbook into their wonderful museums and draw for hours. In all my travels, I just loved all the culture, food and fashion that I experienced, but my true love was Spain.

### What trends do you see in design today?

First, I always tell my clients that classic elements last forever. I help my clients purchase pieces with longevity. Any trend pieces should be easily removable so that your home remains timeless.

Second, clean is in. From the design approach and color choices to the furniture lines, clean and neutral is a new, modern trend. Color can date itself very quickly.

Third, detail is timeless. For example, topstitching and nail heads make pieces unique and everlasting.

### What are the design strengths of Bittners?

The Bittners difference is huge. We are blessed by the vision of Owsley Brown Frazier and Laura Frazier. Thanks to them, today we have one of the largest design resource rooms in the country and it continues to expand.

Our firm is extremely unique. We are truly the only "full-service" design firm in Louisville. We are so fortunate to have a highly talented group of designers, on-site master craftsmen, extensive showroom, both residential and commercial design services, wonderful antiques, fabulous support staff and our own delivery personnel. Our master craftsmen are true artists that can create any furniture piece including tables, chairs and beds to custom wood wall paneling and crown moldings.

### Who has inspired you?

Without question, Douglas Riddle, President of Bittners, has been my inspiration. Working side by side with someone so talented and gifted, has been a blessing. He is a true visionary and has a deep understanding of people and great design which inspires us all at Bittners. We are taken to a higher level, as designers, because of Douglas and I am personally very grateful for his devotion to Bittners.

### What are you most grateful for?

I am so grateful for my family. My sons, Miller and Bates, have amazing personalities and have brought pure joy to my life! I am very appreciative of my parents, Marilyn and Denis Frankenger, who were wonderful role models growing up and allowed me to dream big. Being a part of a large family, I am thankful for the love and sup-

port of all my siblings.

I am, also, grateful for the opportunity to be here at Bittners. There are a lot of designers who would love this opportunity. We are so blessed. It is an amazing place to be!

### What is the best advice you have ever received?

"Live life with an ounce of humility since you are only as good as those who surround you."

### What type of community service are you involved in?

I have been on numerous boards throughout the years such as the Board of Directors at the Ronald McDonald house as well as Broadway Series. I have volunteered for the Historic Homes Foundation-Farmington's Derby Breakfast, the Speed Ball at the Speed Art Museum and at Kentucky Country Day.

### What is one thing that people are surprised to know about you?

I am a wicked good knee boarder.

### Q&A with AMY CIMBA

**Hobbies:** Love traveling, watersports, walking.

**Favorite Books:** *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini. *A Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier

**Favorite Movies:** *Pride & Prejudice* and any Will Ferrell movie.

**Memorable Vacation Spot:** Spain.

**Favorite Restaurant:** Campiello, Naples, Fla.

**Best Broadway Show:** *Les Miserables*, London.

**Favorite Art Style:** Drawings, paintings & photography.

**Best Wine:** Petite Sirah, but love Bourbon!

**Philosophy:** "Live life in elegance."