




▲ Kundell can be seen on W Network's *The Decorating Challenge*

Need for a creative outlet sparked interest in design

by Billie Joe Newman

REPORT CARD 	
Thornlea S.S.	
Student:	Tracy Kundell
Year Graduated:	1983
Best Subject:	Art
Worst Subject:	Math
Current Job:	Interior Designer

You may know her from her guest stints on the TV show *Sue Warden's Craftscapes* or *Backyard Pleasures*. Maybe you've seen her at a local grocery store, or maybe you went to high school with her at Thornlea Secondary School. She may even be your interior designer. If you don't know her from any of these places, than you'll definitely recognize her from the ever-popular TV show *The Decorating Challenge*.

Kundell describes her high school experience as a positive one. "I had some life-learning lessons," she says. "I did the bad birl thing for a couple of years then smartened up before it was too late."

Kundell continues to call Thornhill home. She is married, and her two children, 13 and 11, will soon begin their own journey down the halls of Thornlea.

Kundell, owner of Avalon Interiors of Thornhill, is coming into her sixth season as one of the interior designers on the W Network's show, a

and decorate a room in each other's house.

They don't get to peek at their own room until the reveal at the end of the show, so there's no telling the designer what to do and what they like or don't like. But, the trickiest part is the designer is given only \$1,500 to completely transform the room.

"I was speaking with one of my suppliers who had just been talking to another designer on the show. The designer had told her they were looking for designers," says Kundell, of how she got on the show. "She knew I had been involved in television before, so she told me about it."

Although the show provides a number of challenging situations for Kundell to work her way out of, the biggest is always budget.

"Budget is always a challenge," she explains.

"We get these grand ideas and how we see the room complete. I don't think there is a designer who would just want the look; they want the quality too."

Kundell studied interior design after completing an undergraduate degree in political science at the University of Western Ontario.

"I guess I wanted a creative outlet" Kundell says.

"My mother is an interior designer. I've always been a part of a creative family. It was something I thought I would enjoy doing for a long period of time. I wouldn't get bored because every job is different.