

Spring 2013 HomeLifeStyle

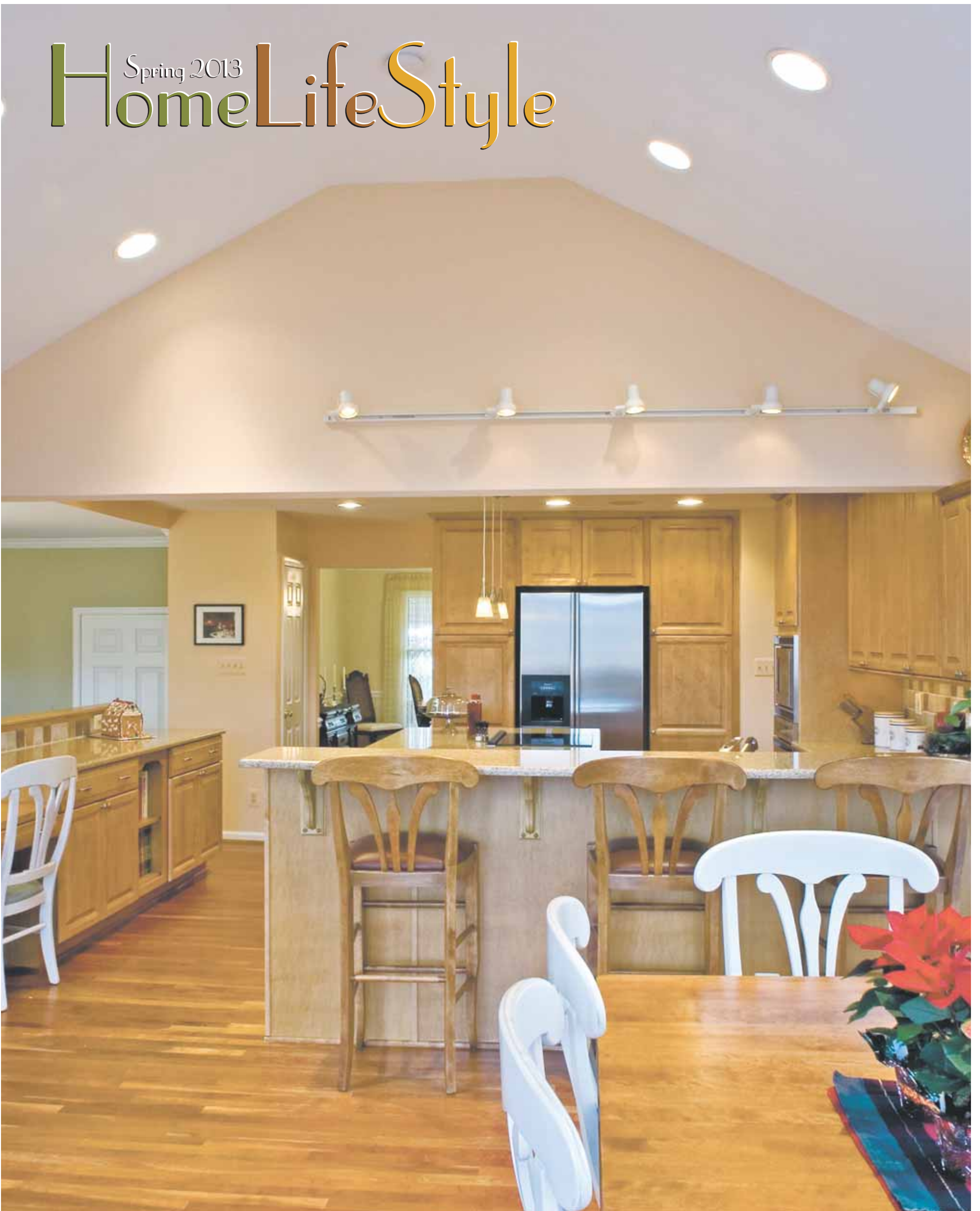


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This McLean kitchen by BOWA took top honors in the “Residential Kitchen Over \$120,000” category. The homeowners wanted to create a free-flowing, light-filled space.

80th Historic Garden Week, April 20-27

Historic Garden Week 2013 will feature approximately 200 private homes and gardens open on 32 separate tours throughout the state of Virginia over eight consecutive days. It is the largest ongoing volunteer effort in Virginia and represents the coordinated efforts of 3,400 club members. One hundred percent of tour proceeds are used to enhance Virginia’s landscape. Visit www.vagardenweek.org.

SATURDAY APRIL 20, 2013

Old Town Alexandria
Sponsored by the Hunting Creek Garden Club and the Garden Club of Alexandria, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
All eight private properties on the historic Old Town Alexandria tour are within an easy walk of each other, allowing visitors to enjoy strolling the quaint streets lined with charming townhouses and intimate walled gardens.

Tickets are \$40 and available at the Ramsey House Visitors Center at the corner of King Street and North Fairfax Street on the day of the tour. For advance tickets contact Mrs. Donald Rocen Virginia.rocen@comcast.net 703-684-3876. For more information, please contact Tour Chairmen Mason Bavin at mbavin@mcenearney.com, Twig Murray attwig@twigweb.com or Catherine Bolton at 4boltons@comcast.net

TUESDAY APRIL 23, 2013

Fairfax: Oakton/Vienna
Sponsored by The Garden Club of Fairfax
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Fairfax County communities of Oakton and Vienna have emerged from small rural towns into thriving family-oriented neighborhoods with homes and gardens reflecting a wide range of architectural and personal style. Ticket price includes admission to the Cosby Home, the Unger Home and Garden, the Buster Home and Garden, the Kampa Home and Garden, the Rosenthal Home and Garden and Meadowlark Botanical Gardens.

Advance tickets are \$20 through April 9. Contact Marty Whipple at mwhip155@aol.com. For more information about the tour, contact Bonnie Rekemeyer at chezdarbon@aol.com.

FOR FULL SCHEDULE THROUGH APRIL 27.

VISIT www.vagardenweek.org.



This home in the Vienna/Oakton area is featured on Virginia’s Historic Garden Week.

The Region’s Best Home Designs

Local contractors get top honors for remodeling projects.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

From designing a kitchen with a concave glass tile backsplash to creating a backyard with a fire place and pool, some local home remodelers were honored recently with the National Association of the Remodeling Industry’s (NARI) 2013 Regional Contractor of the Year awards for design acumen. Winning projects ran the gamut from historic preservation projects to environmentally conscious conceptions.

A MCLEAN KITCHEN by BOWA took top honors in the “Residential Kitchen Over \$120,000” category. The homeowners were looking to create a free-flowing, light-filled space.

“Their kitchen was not as open as they would have liked,” said Josh Baker, founder and co-chairman of BOWA. “They wanted to make it more integrated and useful for the family.”

To accommodate a larger kitchen, the design team, which included BOWA’s George Hodges-Fulton, built an addition and added a sitting room, screened porch

and additional windows to allow an abundance of natural light to stream into the space. The new kitchen also included a butler’s pantry and a family dining area.

What is the key to turning one’s home into an award-winning, showcase house? Baker, who founded BOWA with his college friend Larry Weinberg, says an open dialogue is essential to a successful remodeling project. “The key is finding a person or company that you communicate very, very well with and whose process is in line with how you like to do business,” he said. “This is a customer service business. It is not just a construction business. The entire process is important, not just the end result.”

FAIRFAX-BASED FIRM RJK Construction, Inc. received top honors in the category of “Residential Addition \$100,000 to \$250,000” for a home in the Mantua area of Fairfax County. Company president Robert Kalmin says the homeowners’ goal was to blend their interior and exterior spaces. “They wanted to make their exterior landscaping a visual point because they entertain a lot,” he said. “The windows act as murals to the exterior landscaping bring the outdoors in and the indoors out.”

The owners requested an open floor plan that allowed guests to move freely between the kitchen and the backyard. “They were very specific about how they wanted people to meander from the outside to the inside,” Kalmin said. “We had to relocate the powder room so that people are able to use the

restroom without having to go anywhere else.”

An abundance of windows allows natural light to flow throughout the home. “The kitchen has red oak flooring and other colors and finishes that compliment the natural scenery outside,” said Kalmin.

HARRY BRASWELL of Harry Braswell, Inc. in Alexandria, was named Contractor of the Year in the “Entire House \$500,001 to \$1,000,000” category for the renovation of a home that had not been updated since the 1950s. “The house was outdated, too small for the family’s needs,” he said.

The renovation included a kitchen outfitted with cabinet-front appliances and porcelain sinks including an apron farm sink and an island sink in a pale aqua. “That color is carried throughout the house,” said project manager Gretchen Brown.

A concave glass tile backsplash surrounds the durable, brown-toned quartzite counter. “Quartzite doesn’t stain easily,” said Brown. “It is strong like granite, but is more expensive.”

The Braswell team also got a nod for energy efficiency for this project, which was named “NARI Green Project.” Brown noted that the team installed energy efficiency lighting and energy star appliances.

“The homeowners had specific criteria about wanting to meet [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design] certifica

SEE DESIGNS, PAGE 4

The Region's Best Home Designs

FROM PAGE 3

tion because they are dedicated to protecting the environment," said Braswell.

CABIN JOHN, MD., BASED firm Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc. received kudos in the "Residential Exterior, \$100,000 and Over" category for a backyard space that includes a pool and fireplace. "The homeowner wanted four separate living spaces in the backyard," said company spokeswoman Danielle Frye. "He wanted a dining room, a living room with a heat source, a place to sunbathe near his pool and a place to play cricket on his lawn."

Frye said the Wilder team, which included architect George R. Bott and

lead designer Anthony Wilder, developed a backyard plan that replaced overgrown grass with flagstone and a badly worn fence with foliage to create a sense of privacy. "There is a sundeck and spaces for a sofa and dining table, but the fireplace is the focal point," said Frye. "We used really tall bamboo to shield the view from the hotel across the street."

A BETHESDA HOME ADDITION garnered a top prize in the "Residential Addition Over \$250,000" category for A.R.T Design Build Inc. with team member Grossmueller's Design Consultants, Inc.

"The client wanted to expand their one story house to have a separate area for [bedrooms] and create a more functional first floor with more communal spaces, the kitchen, family room [and] dining room," said Cindy G. McClure of Grossmueller's



PHOTO COURTESY OF MORGAN HOWARTH

This backyard oasis, designed by Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc., won a Contractor of the Year Award in the "Residential Exterior, \$100,000 and Over" category. The homeowner wanted a backyard space with a place to sunbathe near the pool, a dining room, a living room with a heat source and a place to play cricket.

Design Consultants, Inc.

The design team added a new second floor to the home, which accommodates a laundry room, a master suite, two additional bedrooms and a bathroom. A stair

tower and cathedral foyer create an open floor plan and connect the first and second levels.

"Elements of the old house, like the wide chimney on the front and the contemporary 1960 style were played upon and accentuated," said McClure. "The result is a functional home that meets the needs of today's family, remained within budget and was completed on time."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NARI

Harry Brawell of Harry Braswell, Inc. in Alexandria, was named Contractor of the Year in the "Entire House \$500,001 to \$1,000,000" category for renovating a home that had not been updated since the 1950s. Braswell and his team installed cabinet-front appliances and a concave glass tile backsplash that surrounds the durable, brown-toned quartzite counter. The kitchen also features porcelain sinks, including an apron farm sink.



This kitchen, designed by Grossmueller's Design Consultants, Inc. and A.R.T Design Build in Bethesda, Md., was part of a remodeling project that earned a 2013 Contractor of the Year award. The homeowner's goal was to create a free-flowing kitchen, dining and family room space.

"The key to a successful project is finding a person or company that you communicate very, very well with and whose process is in line with how you like to do business."

— Josh Baker, founder and co-chairman of BOWA

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Home

Recycle, Reuse, Remodel

BY JOSHUA BAKER BOWA



Remodeling often affords an opportunity to re-purpose existing materials by donating to those less fortunate. Ask your remodeler if there is a plan or policy for saving materials for re-use rather than sending it to a land fill. Every project is different. And some materials are more easily removed and saved than others. Here are a couple of organizations that accepted used materials.

A WIDER CIRCLE

This organization provides basic-need items to families transitioning out of shelters and those living without life's necessities. If you wish to donate furniture and other home essentials that are in good condition (no rips or stains), you can drop off items at their Center for Community Service in Silver Spring, Md. You can also schedule a pickup in most areas throughout greater Washington, D.C. Visit www.awidercircle.org.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY RESTORE

ReStore is a resale business that sells new and used building materials and home items to the general public. All donations are tax deductible and donated by individuals, local retailers, building contractors and suppliers. Donated items are then sold at 50-90 percent off the retail price, with all proceeds benefiting Habitat for Humanity, an organization that provides safe and affordable housing to low-income families. ReStore accepts appliances, furniture, cabinets, roofing and flooring materials, exercise equipment, countertops, electronics, lighting and plumbing fixtures, etc. For more, visit Northern Virginia stores in Alexandria and Chantilly - www.restorenova.org

GOODWILL

Founded in 1902, Goodwill accepts gently used clothing, furniture, housewares, working electronics, and other household items. These items are then sold at their retail locations, with the proceeds used to fund employment, job training, and placement services for the disadvantaged and those with disabilities. To view their full list of goods accepted, and for the list of donation centers and stores, visit www.dcgoodwill.org.

BOWA HOME CLEANUP DAYS

As a thank you to the neighbors in the communities in which we work, from time to time BOWA hosts Home Cleanup Days. Home Cleanup Day is a great opportunity to donate and recycle gently used household items, toys and clothing, and dispose of any debris or other unwanted clutter. A BOWA employee will help folks unload their items and a Goodwill representative will be on hand to accept donations and provide receipts.

To find a BOWA Home Cleanup Day in your area, please visit our <http://info.bowa.com/communityblog/>.

Josh Baker is founder of BOWA, learn more at www.bowa.com.

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Demand for Incremental Improvements

Over time, some owners makeover the entire house — one phase at a time.

BY JOHN BYRD

If you compare the current home remodeling market to 2007, it's clear that homeowners are less likely to execute a top-to-bottom makeover in a single stroke than they were five years ago.

Home resales are rising again, but the belief that every dollar spent on a Northern Virginia home will be quickly recovered has been suspended — if only temporarily — as homeowners reassess.

For most local homeowners, a house is an asset of enormous personal appeal: an expression of identity and aspiration, periodically adapted to life's changes.

While the scale of the average project may be smaller, it's evident that many homeowners middle age or older have come to see the home as a long-term — even lifelong — work in progress, one that they take up passionately, and at regular intervals.

Veteran remodeler David Foster calls these homeowners "incremental" improvers, and has come to see

them them as the primary focus of a home improvement enterprise he started 30 years ago.

As president of Foster Remodeling Solutions in Lorton, Foster regularly coaches his team on the importance of understanding what these homeowners need, what they are expecting and how to articulate their best options with clarity.

"Providing an experience that the homeowner will value unequivocally is probably our most important marketing activity," Foster said. "Our core belief is that there are many homeowners who will make a notable home improvement every two to five years, so we place a high priority on earning that person's trust. In this sense, there is nothing more important than outperforming expectation."

WHILE THERE MAY BE many reasons why a homeowner will remodel in stages, Foster said that the typical incremental improver has a pay-as-you-go orientation — often driven by evolving family requirements.

Vienna resident Kelly Grems, for



The plans for a kitchen remodel were complicated by the fact that the home's rear elevation backs into a woodland set-aside and a notably precipitous drop.

instance, has executed four remodeling projects with Foster starting with a kitchen addition in 2003.

"We bought the house in 1995 when I was pregnant," Grems explains. "My husband [Ed] and I had been living in a much smaller house in Maryland, but envisioned a traditional home that would offer our growing family lots of useful activity areas."

A kitchen with a sizable breakfast room was the first item on the "wish list," an assignment complicated by the fact that home's rear elevation backs into a woodland set-aside and a precipitous drop.

"The ground level decking was already in place," Grems said. "But David showed us a plan for an elevated breakfast room extension built on pilings that wouldn't require a ground level foundation. Turns out, this solution created a welcome canopy for the ground level patio. And it was also a more sensible, eco-

nomical choice for us at the time."

Grems said her first step was handing Foster a file of articles on kitchen interiors she had clipped from Southern Living; the Foster Remodeling design staff then took over, helping the couple visualize design ideas with the aid of a CAD computer program. The team also provided an array of relevant finish work choices, mostly pointing

to readily available considerations on display in the company's showroom.

"The selection and pricing process was transparent, and really anticipated what we needed," Grems said. "When you're as busy as we are, you appreciate this quality of support."

Apart from budget considerations, Grems said taking a pause

between projects allowed the couple to pay more attention to how the family is actually using the house, and to develop ideas that work for everyone.

The recently completed family room upgrade didn't become an immediate action plan, for instance, because the family design process was fomenting slowly — again starting with magazine ar-



PHOTOS BY DIMITRI CANAS

The Pipers' new powder room includes a Mediterranean-style foot bath ringed in glass and mosaic tiling. A vessel basin with exposed copper piping, marble floors and a coffered ceiling with concealed lights complete the portrait.

ticles and other sources.

"We're particular; we let the look come to us piece by piece," she said.

In the end, Foster Remodeling Solutions designers created interior elevations that bear no resemblance to the original.

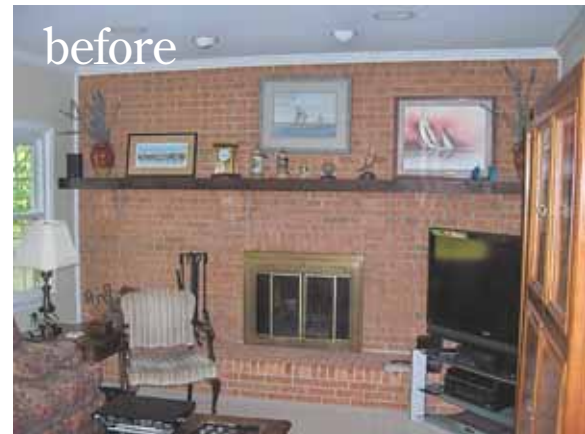
The half-brick floor-to-ceiling backwall was replaced by perfectly symmetrical built-ins, crown molding and an elevated hearth with a marble surround and Edwardian-style mantle.

"It's an entirely different mood from the sun room," Grems said, "and perfectly satisfies another dimension of our lifestyle."

SEE DEMAND, PAGE 8



after
The existing half-brick floor-to-ceiling backwall was replaced by perfectly symmetrical built-ins, crown molding and an elevated hearth with a marble surround and Edwardian-style mantle.



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HomeLifeStyle

All in the Family

With solid planning and skillful remodeling, seniors convert personal residence into a multi-generational household.

BY JOHN BYRD
FOR THE CONNECTION

Challenging times demand creative thinking — so you don't have to look far to find homeowners executing remodeling projects with far-reaching objectives.

Take, for instance, the case of Mary and Harry Warren of Mount Vernon, both in their mid-70s.

Scrolling back a few years, the Warrens were weighing various retirement options when they learned that their daughter and three grandchildren would be moving back to Virginia from the midwest and might be amenable to participating in a three-generation household.

"There was really a lot for us to consider," said Mary Warren. "Harry and I thought that if we expanded the house to incorporate the extended family, we could eventually pass it on to the next generation. We could also make some changes that would help us to move around as we get older."

FROM PAGE 7

ON A SIMILAR NOTE, south Alexandria resident Sandy Nusbaum attributes her periodic home upgrade inclinations to a gradual but decisive recognition that the four bedroom colonial she has occupied for 28 years with husband Mike is the last single family residence the couple will ever own.

"We raised three children here, and when the last of them moved away, we looked at other houses in the area and even a retirement village in North Carolina," Nusbaum said. "That's when I renewed my appreciation for the many advantages of this house. I recognized that everything we wanted was already here; we just needed a few pointed improvements to take us into the foreseeable future."

Initially that meant introducing an open, "kitchen-centric" plan in the back half of the house, and creating an outdoor component — in the form of a 16-by-16-foot back



PHOTOS BY BRYAN BURRIS PHOTOGRAPHY

The multi-generational solution introduced by Sun Design Remodeling includes a one level seniors wing supplemented by a sitting area that exits through French doors to the newly formed courtyard. Hallways and doors in the new section are wheelchair friendly.

On the other hand: the more the Warrens scrutinized the existing property, the more they wondered if their vision was even feasible.

FOR STARTERS, at 1,500 sq. ft., the three-bedroom split-level the couple had occupied since 1994 was neatly centered on a small lot in a neighborhood with strictly observed set-back requirements.

To provide all three generations with the necessary space and privacy, the Warrens figured they would have to increase usable living space by 40 percent or more.

A carefully planned addition along the property's western side offered promising possibilities. But even if you could find the needed lot space, the floorplan configuration that would satisfy everyone's privacy requirements remained elusive.

It was at this juncture that the Warrens turned to Craig Durosko, founder and principal of Sun Design Remodeling.

"The program was certainly tricky," Durosko said. "The Warrens wanted a functionally independent suite that would include

Demand for Incremental

screen porch — that allows for easy warm-weather circulation.

Replacing a wall between kitchen and dining room with a three-stool dining counter proved an effective starting point to delineating a more interactive entertainment space. The new surface is also well-positioned as a serving station for *al fresco* porch dining.

Although the needed structural changes were relatively minor, a new shelled-in niche for the refrigerator allows for additional storage. Maple cabinets with a Barton door style and honey-spice stain evoke a clean linear look within a softly lit ambiance. Likewise, the Silestone quartz surfaces in ebony pearl provide a tonal and textural contrast.

With a better rationalized kitchen in place, a few years on the Nusbaums began planning a follow-on phase: an extension of the rear family room, an open-air grilling deck and a layout that permits children, grandchildren and many guests to circulate freely through a now wide-ranging en-

tertainment suite.

Then, just last year, the largely unused lower level was converted into a multi-purpose suite that serves as both an exercise room and guest accommodation.

"The built-ins include closets on either side of a new Murphy bed — one exclusively for guest use," Nusbaum said. "We also made the laundry room more functional and added a full bath with handicapped access."

Meanwhile, Nusbaum uses the remade lower level for her daily treadmill workouts: "It's a luxury having so many useful things exactly where you want them."

OF COURSE, CONSIDERATIONS to functional and aesthetic improvements aside, the long term remodeler also may venture into non-essential, even quite personal, "tweaks" to the existing property from time to time.

After comprehensive upgrades to their kitchen and master bath, for instance, Alexandrians Steve

More

Sun Design Remodeling frequently sponsors workshops on specific remodeling topics as well as tours of recently remodeled homes. Headquartered in Burke, the firm recently opened a second office in McLean. Call 703-425-5588 or visit www.SunDesignInc.com.

a luxury bath, lots of custom built-ins and interior design improvements. Our thought was: if we could satisfy this requirement from the ground up, Meg and the grandchildren could take over half of the existing house as their own wing.”

“We particularly liked the consideration to everyone’s privacy needs,” Mary Warren said. “Their plan allows for independence where you want it.”

Thus, stripped to its essentials, Durosco’s solution called for converting the three-bedroom split-level into a five bedroom two-level structure that provides the Warrens with private quarters, yet also incorporates transitional zones suitable for easy everyday interaction.

TO ACCOMMODATE the elder Warrens, Durosco and team designed a 650 sq. ft. wing adjacent to a newly formed rear courtyard. The perfectly-integrated one-level addition features two large bedrooms, a master bath and large reach-in closets. A former family room now serves as the couple’s sitting room.

By extension, Meg and the grandchildren inherit sleeping quarters in the existing bedroom wing — a configuration of rooms

that affords everyone with the sufficient convenience and living space. Both families share the newly upgraded kitchen.

The makeover also allowed the Warrens to introduce a number of Universal Design features. Hallway widths in the new wing have been expanded to 44”; doors are 34” wide — compliant with American Disabilities Act requirements. The rear entrance has, likewise, been designed to accommodate a ramp, should a wheelchair be required in the future.

“We’re just thinking ahead,” Mary Warren said.

More recently, Mindy Mitchell — Sun Design’s certified Aging-In-Place Specialist — followed Universal Design principals in renovating the original circa 1960s kitchen. Revisions included removing unneeded walls, widening doors and hallways and introducing roll-out cabinets with drawer pulls. There’s also task lighting, easily maneuvered faucets and a multi-level island suitable for standing or sitting.

“The new kitchen feels significantly expanded, yet it’s very efficiently designed — a great solution for a family like ours,” said Mary Warren. “The changes have made life easier for everyone.”

Improvements

and Diane Piper decided that their eclectically re-designed powder room should include a Mediterranean-style foot bath ringed in glass and mosaic tiling.

The artfully-executed first floor facility — planned with an assist from Foster designer Sarah Wolf — includes a vessel basin with exposed copper piping, marble floors and a coffered ceiling with concealed lights.

The Pipers — who often travel internationally — say the foot bath is a pleasant convenience in the summer when they are often wearing sandals.

“I wouldn’t say a footbath adds anything to re-sale value,” Diane Piper said, “But we do plan to be in this house for at least another ten years.”

AND SPEAKING OF PERSONAL vision: after re-doing the front elevation — and before remodeling the kitchen — the Baldinos of Springfield had Foster design a screen porch with a floor-

to-ceiling stone hearth. The porch is closed on three sides and features a 15-foot cathedral ceiling with an overhead rotating fan. The project included an extensive flagstone patio, a privacy fence, a retaining wall and landscaping.

“We wanted space that brings us into the outdoors, and the fireplace keeps the porch surprisingly comfortable in cooler weather,” said Nancy Baldino. “It’s a great place to watch the game.”

The Baldinos, who have lived in their circa 1970s split-level for 24 years, say that their four remodeling projects have always been focused and budgetable.

“We love the neighborhood, so the improvements are just a natural result of efforts to make the house feel even more like home.”

Staff at Foster Remodeling Solutions periodically offer workshops on home improvement topics at the Lorton showroom. Call 703-550-1371 or visit www.FosterRemodeling.com.

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PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**January, 2013
Top Sales in
Great Falls,
McLean, Reston,
Oak Hill, Oakton
and Vienna**



1 1036 Aziza Court, Great Falls — \$5,115,693



3 8305 Fox Haven Drive, McLean — \$3,125,000



5 9720 Arnon Chapel Road, Great Falls — \$1,800,000



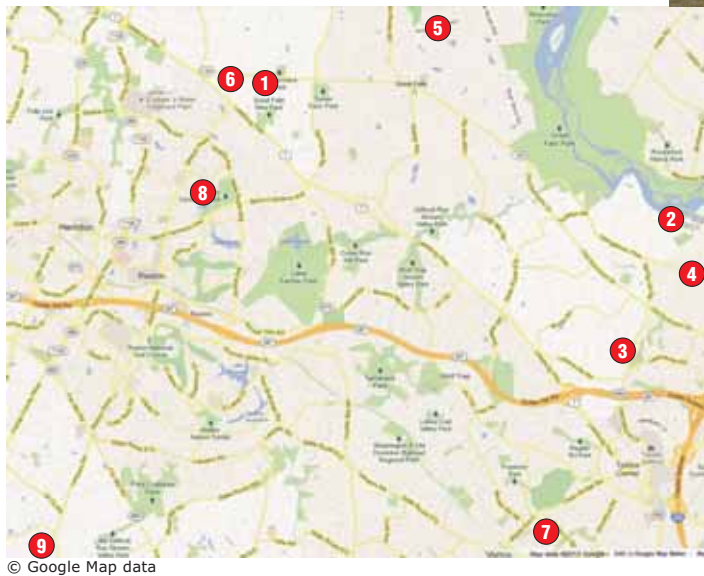
9 12705 Autumn Crest Drive, Oak Hill — \$965,000



7 400 Berry Street SE, Vienna — \$1,402,735



8 11580 Greenwich Point Road, Reston — \$1,000,000



Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 1036 AZIZA CT	5	5	3	GREAT FALLS	\$5,115,693	Detached	0.84	22066	PUTNAM FARM ESTATES	01/04/13
2 710 BULLS NECK RD	6	6	1	MCLEAN	\$5,000,000	Detached	5.00	22102	BULLS NECK HUNDRED	01/16/13
3 8305 FOX HAVEN DR	5	6	2	MCLEAN	\$3,125,000	Detached	0.83	22102	FOX HALL OF MCLEAN	01/04/13
4 845 CANAL DR	5	5	2	MCLEAN	\$1,900,000	Detached	1.18	22102	OLD GEORGETOWN ESTATES	01/25/13
5 9720 ARNON CHAPEL RD	6	6	3	GREAT FALLS	\$1,800,000	Detached	2.46	22066	HARMON FARM	01/15/13
6 11301 LANDY LN	5	5	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,734,604	Detached	1.47	22066	CHANEL ESTATES	01/04/13
7 400 BERRY ST SE	5	4	1	VIENNA	\$1,402,735	Detached	0.51	22180	MURMURING PINES	01/29/13
8 11580 GREENWICH POINT RD	4	2	1	RESTON	\$1,000,000	Detached	0.31	20194	RESTON	01/02/13
9 12705 AUTUMN CREST DR	5	4	1	OAK HILL	\$965,000	Detached	0.30	20171	FRANKLINS TRUST	01/04/13

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Decorating for Easter

Easy ideas to welcome spring into your ahome.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

From floral arrangements that burst with pastel blooms to candles that fill one's home with scents reminiscent of warm weather, local style experts offer suggestions for accents that welcome spring.

Turn simple twigs and greenery into a harbinger of Easter. "Welcome guests into your home with a spring wreath on the front door decorated with

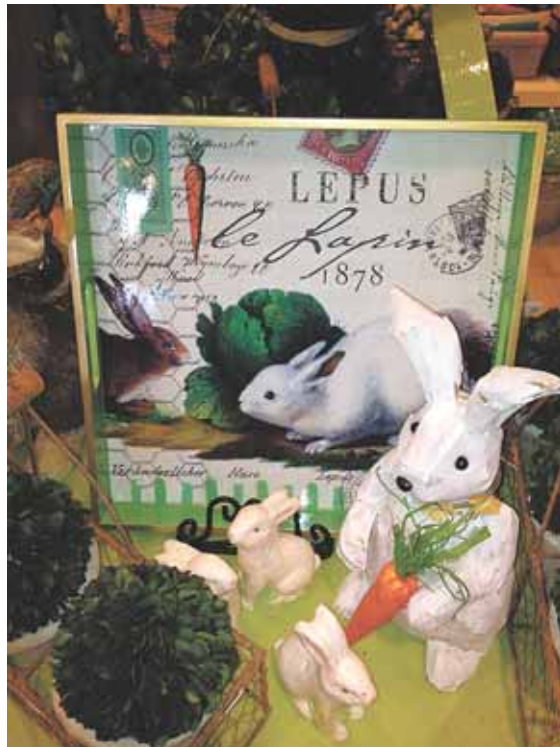


Hydrangeas in white or soft green, daffodils, tulips in yellow, hyacinths in pink or blue, Esperance roses and white or pink hybrid lilies are popular for Easter.



Welcome guests into one's home with wreaths made of twigs, greenery, spring flowers and wooden eggs in colors like bright green and lavender.

PHOTOS BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/THE CONNECTION



Local design experts suggest using serveware imprinted with produce like lettuces that herald the new season.

"Welcome guests into your home with a spring wreath on the front door decorated with greenery, flowers or eggs."

— Ann O'Shields

greenery, flowers or eggs," said Ann O'Shields of The Nest Egg in Fairfax. "Scents of spring are a sure way to alleviate the end of winter."

Laura Smith of The Dandelion Patch in Vienna, Reston and Georgetown recommends filling air with crisp, fresh aromas. "There are candles with really nice spring scents, like jasmine or gardenia and lemongrass. Citrus scents are also very big in spring and summer."

Smith suggests setting one's table with serveware imprinted with spring produce like lettuces that herald the new season. "You can use cutting boards with artichoke prints or platters with asparagus prints. They are entertaining and fun accessories," Smith said.

Festive baskets filled with paper grass, wooden eggs, bunnies and flowers make ideal home accents. "Using seasonal blooms are a great way to welcome spring," said O'Shields.

A floral arrangement displayed in baskets covered with spring flower petals make a chic centerpiece for one's dining table. "When it comes to floral arrangements, people are often driven by what their home décor is," said Potomac, Md., based floral designer Evelyn Kinville. "The most popular flowers for Easter are hydrangeas in white or soft green, daffodils, tulips in yellow, hyacinths in pink or blue, Esperance roses, which are large pink and cream-toned in color, and White or pink hybrid lilies."

O'Shields said, "Pick one flower style and repeat it in various places throughout the room for the most impact."

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