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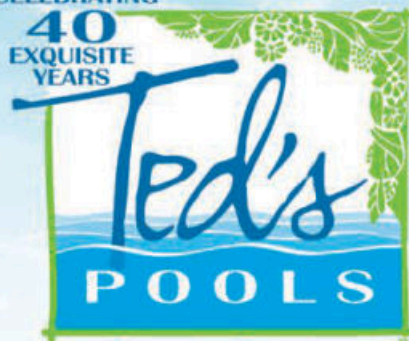
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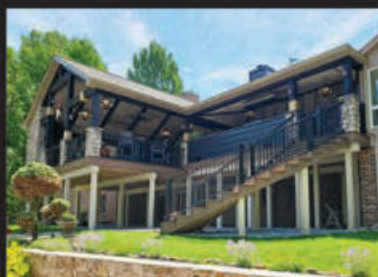
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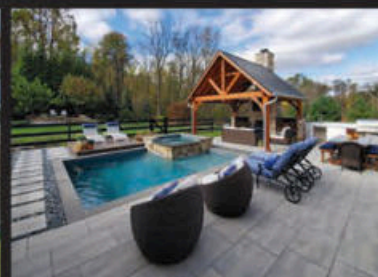
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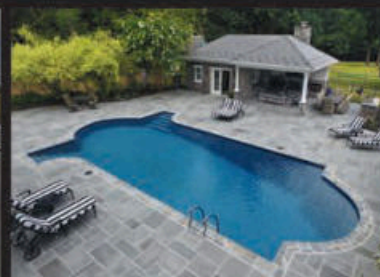
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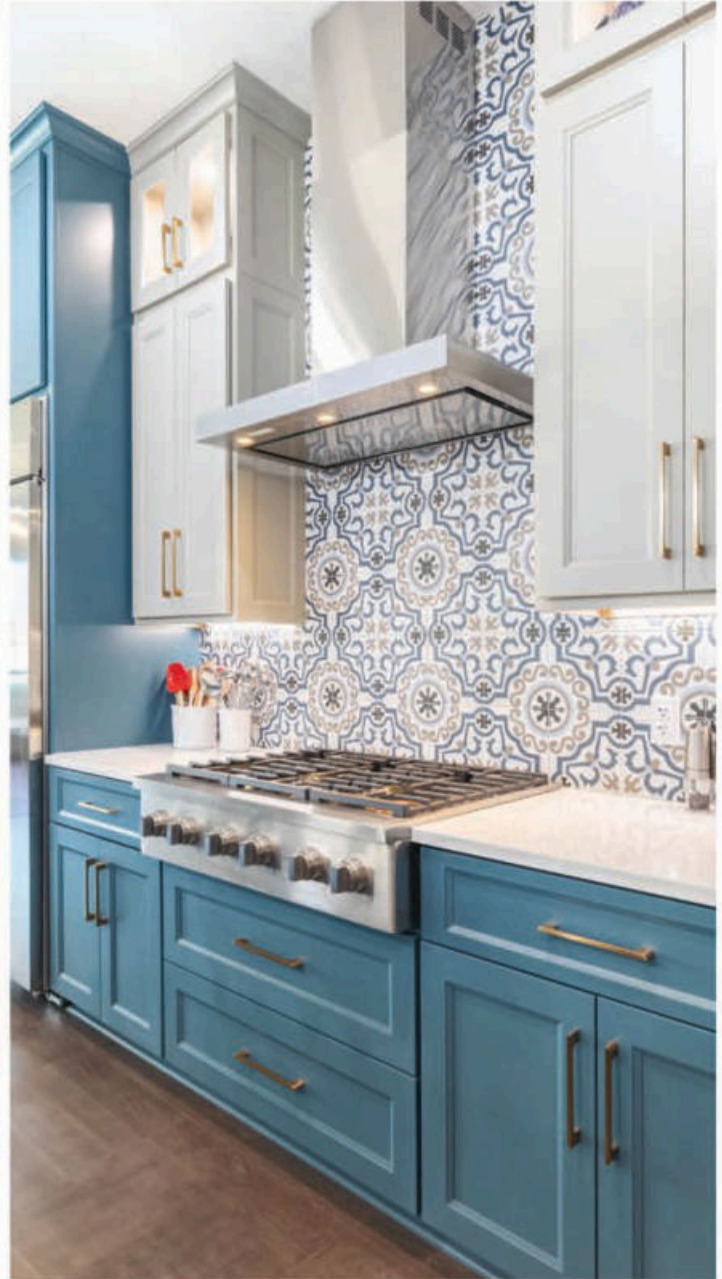


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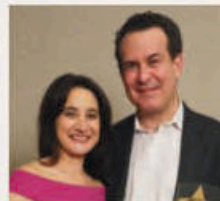
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Best of HOUSE & HOME



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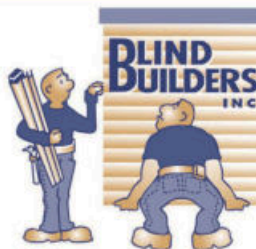
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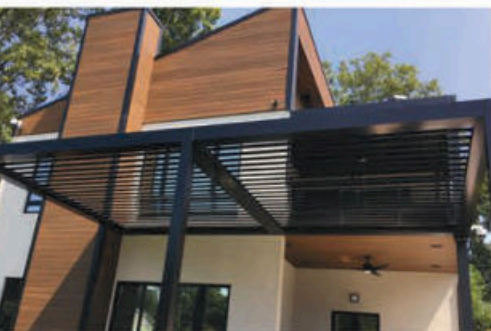
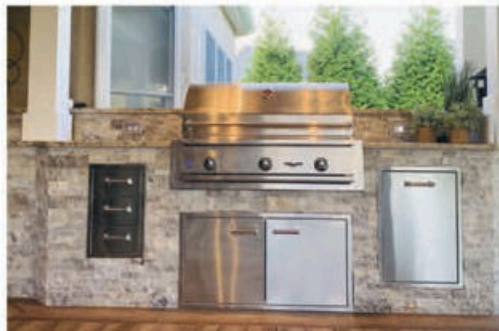
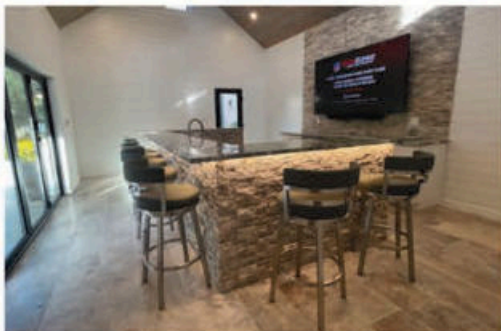
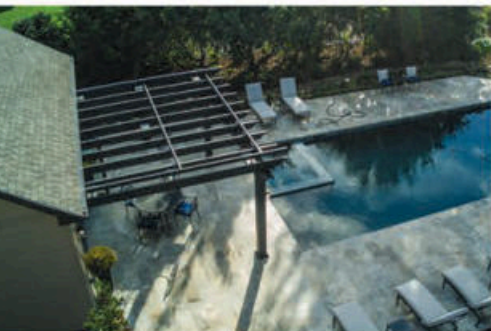
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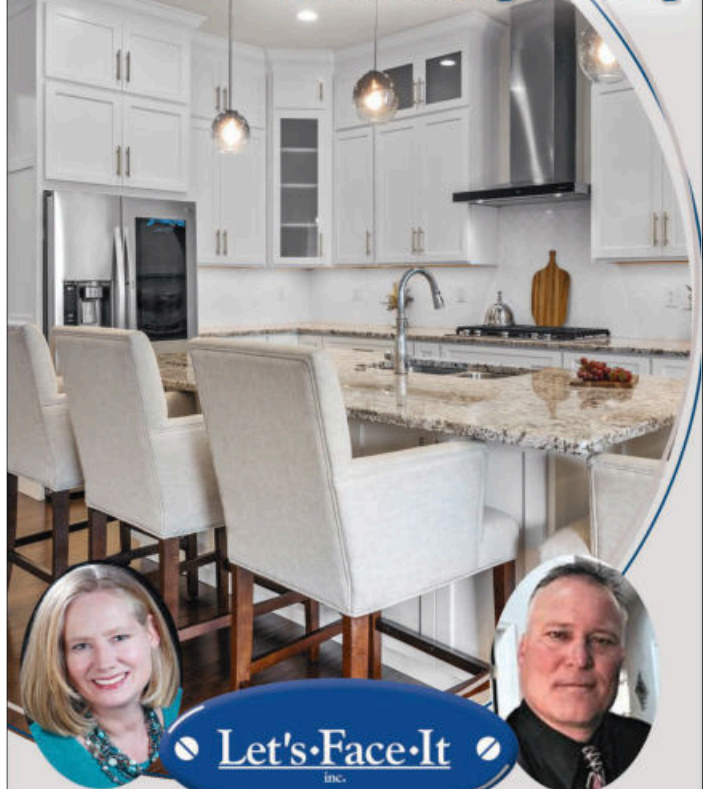
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Basement Waterproofing Specialists

Family values and amazing, happy customers triumphed BWS to have the best year in the history of the company in spite of the pandemic.

MANY BUSINESSES HAVE CLOSED THEIR DOORS FOREVER. However, despite the bleak outlook for many, one local business is overwhelmed with new customers. In fact, it's in the midst of an immense expansion, including the conversion of a historic Collegeville home, built in the 1700s, into a second location.

Using a house as an office isn't new for Basement Waterproofing Specialists. Its main office, located in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, is also a farmhouse-turned-waterproofing headquarters. It's no coincidence that the company recently converted a second home into a new workspace. "Our goal has always been to treat you like family. That's not a marketing gimmick. We are blessed with exceptional employees who really care about our customers.

We teach our inspectors and work crews to treat every single client's home as if it were the house of one of their family members," says Ken Klinger, his wife Deb and daughter Anne.

This philosophy has paid off well for both the company and its clients. It's been a happy home to many pets. Employees are encouraged to bring their pets to work. Besides Ken and Deb's two giant, lovable Boz shepherds, Calvin and Clarabelle, the main office is also often host to a happy flock of dogs, cats, rabbits and birds.

Over the last seven years, the company has won awards for "Best Basement Waterproofing company" from Angie's List, *House & Home*, *Home Advisor Magazine*, the *Mercury Newspaper* and more. It currently holds an overall 4.6-star rating, based on over 200 reviews on Facebook, Google, Thumbtack and Angie's List. It also has an astonishing

9,000 likes and 10,000 followers on Facebook while competitors average under 500.

This award-winning service combined with extreme customer loyalty is the major driving force behind the company expanding while many are retreating. "Humble thanks to our amazing customers. We have been overwhelmed by so many referrals during the COVID crisis. Those referrals, plus Gov. Tom Wolf deeming us an essential business, have helped us expand into a second office to house our ever-growing staff," says Ken. "We are not only thrilled to help our customers solve their problems, but also happy to create new jobs for people in the area."

In March of 2020, Gov. Wolf determined that Basement Waterproofing Specialists is an essential business whose work is "necessary to help stop the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19." In addition to waterproofing, the company also removes mold and improves air quality. Its Ozone Generation technology is EPA-approved and can help eliminate not only mold and mildew, but also airborne pathogens in your home.

Basement Waterproofing Specialists' expansion is a bit historic, as well. Its new building, located at 109 River Road in Collegeville, was built in 1700, and was used as a hotel to help with the growing tourism to the area. This fourth-generation family business is eager to help your family enjoy a clean, dry, mold-free, safe basement. **H&H**



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After



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We are excited to present our ninth annual

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As voted by our readers, the following companies and professionals are being recognized for their quality products, expertise, top-notch customer service and reliability. We're also featuring a closer look at these companies in informative spotlights and showcases that shed some light on their dedication. For your next home project, there is no one better than these winners.





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Embracing the Great Outdoors

Founded in 1983, Blue Tree Landscaping designs and builds outdoor spaces that, according to the company's president Jeff Mattiola, "respect and enhance the natural beauty of your property and maintain the integrity of your surroundings." Of course, this is no easy feat, and Mattiola's expertise aligns with his values that encompass his company model and commitment to his clients throughout his more than 40 years of experience.

Chad Ochnich, the company's vice president, adds, "When working with clients to make their outdoor dreams become a reality, the process should be painless and enjoyable."

Blue Tree Landscaping's degreed designers spend time developing new relationships with clients that help them bring their dreams to life. Their friendly, knowledgeable staff will work to create the perfect space for you, your family and friends to enjoy for years to come, and their ongoing education and learning is essential to keeping their staff up to date on current trends.

The Blue Tree Landscaping team brings cohesive ideas and plans to every project and understands the values of what their clients are looking for. Homeowners invest in their properties to bring people together, whether it's their family, friends or neighbors. After all, you can't put a price on creating memories! That's why their professional designers not only ensure that spaces are up to clients' expectations, but also strive to go above and beyond

to find creative options for functionality and accessibility. Blue Tree Landscaping utilizes computer-aided design (CAD) and 3D drawings during the design process so that each client is given clear expectations.

Enhancing outdoor living spaces has been a trend for several years, as clients have realized that the season for enjoying the outdoors can be extended with the use of roof structures, fire features, infrared heaters, landscape lighting, etc. Clients want to create spaces that work within their environment and special constraints. Sometimes they don't have the large canvas or the perfect flat yard to work with. Blue Tree Landscaping's skilled team evaluates every project based upon client needs and desires. Looking at the big picture allows them to properly build pools, patios, structures and other features within the yard that create the perfect outdoor living space while saving time and money.

Whether you are planning a small or large project, it is always good to get the details worked out sooner than later. Larger projects may require additional steps such as engineering, permitting and HOA approvals, which can be a multiweek process. Getting started right now ensures that a new pool, patio, landscape or outdoor space is ready to enjoy the moment summer arrives.

What's more, utilizing an all-in-one landscape professional allows for additions

previously unfathomable to really bring a space all together.

"Basically, that all-inclusive package that people are looking for when we're building out an outdoor project for them, we integrate it into the design and overall plan to make it a cohesive element from start to finish," says Justin Acal, pool and landscape designer. "The other benefit of this is that they're working with one person. They're not working with multiple contractors and then have to piece it together themselves, or become the general contractor."

Blue Tree Landscaping keeps every element in mind for large and small projects alike—from budget to style to utilization—to create the most ideal finished product guaranteed to provide excitement, relaxation and quality time with family and friends.

They work with clients throughout the entire process. Each space receives Blue Tree Landscaping's undivided attention to personalize every project to each client's desires.

"The home is the nucleus of the family, and we all have fond memories that may range from the smell of fresh baked cookies to classic backyard picnics, football games and relaxing by the fire," says Tim Tuhacek, sales director. "Our goal is to design and provide custom outdoor spaces to enhance family time and provide the opportunity to build more memories." **H&H**

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Built to Last

by Carly Murray



As an increasing number of homeowners anticipate staying in their residences long term, they're considering longevity as a primary driver of their home renovations.

With home prices and moving costs at an all-time high, it's no surprise that many are deciding to stay put.

Consequently, those planning to put down long-term roots want their home to be long-lasting and characteristic of both their preferences and their family's needs for years to come. *House & Home* spoke with area experts for advice on how to achieve longevity in functionality, style and advantageous residency.

"People are remodeling their house to stay [there] as opposed to selling it and moving into a new house, and they're remodeling and making the house more convenient [in preparation] for as they get older," says Aaron Lewis, owner of Closets For Less.

Storage solutions are an excellent way to create the feeling of an expanded space with the extra benefit of organization. The

days of chaotic clutter and not knowing where anything is are long over, especially with organizational systems that vary depending on client needs.

"I often explain to people that a closet system is a great idea for any space that you want to maximize the storage in. It is a flexible system, which allows you to use the space for your exact needs, even if those needs change in the future," says Karen McWilliams, owner of Closets by Karen.

Homeowners are also becoming more creative than ever before: transforming garages for more space, creating gathering places in their outdoor areas and dedicating unused rooms to make expansive walk-in closets reminiscent of Barbie's.

"If they want to get rid of their furniture and make their closets

Built to Last

more of a dressing area, we can put drawers in the closet as opposed to just shelving, shoe shelves and so forth,” explains Lewis.

Walk-in closets can be a game-changer, providing a better quality of life with clothes and accessories easily accessible and arranged to speed up a morning routine. With organization trending on social media lately, people are looking to both simplify the everyday aspects of their lives and designate spaces and systems for specific purposes. It’s also in style to show off these home transformations—which is why design and color are equally considered.

“In general, organization of every aspect of your life has become a huge trend. Closets and closet organization have become a priority when people are remodeling a space, building a home, or just need to make their existing closets more functional. As far as the closet materials go, I am seeing a huge trend of lighter wood and white closets. Most people want a light, bright feeling in their closets,” says McWilliams.

One option is to use a personal passion as a starting point for brainstorming ideas to create a prized new space. Book lovers can take their supply of books and organize them by color to display a unique and charming library for visitors to admire while also designing a picturesque environment in which to read; seated window nooks are great for pets and a place to relax in the sun-

light while still indoors; a backyard patio with television and sound system installations can be the new favorite place to watch the game—the options are endless.

Home Trimwork’s design sales manager Mark Ollivier determines his client’s taste from inspiration images. His projects include built-ins, stairways, paint, molding, fireplace mantles and flooring, thus bringing the wisdom it requires to make a room—and the entire home—come together harmoniously.

“For many years, clients would tear out magazine pages of images they like and put them on the refrigerator door so they could glance at it several times a day. These days, anyone can do a simple Google search and have countless images to browse and save,” he says. “Getting the client to

share these images so that we can review them together is vital. Having several images from a client is very helpful to see if there is a common thread from a style standpoint. As we go through these examples, I can pick out certain details to see what part of the example draws their eye. From there, I can apply those features to their design and display how it flows and complements their space.”

While everyone’s taste is different, experts see more of their customers drawn to timeless designs with room for alterations. Having modifiable implementations allows for tweaks to be made when a fixture needs sprucing up, allowing for easy changes in the future. Neutral colors and simple lines are popular for that very reason.





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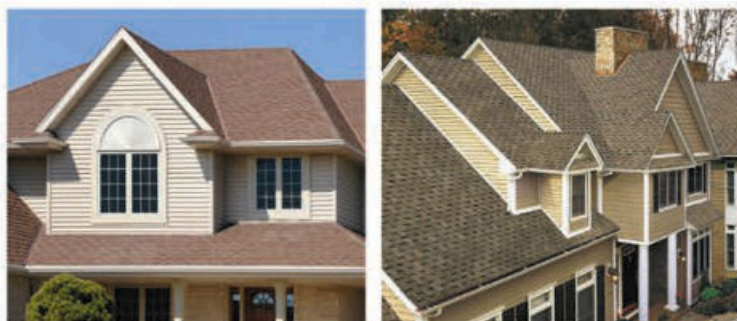
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Built to Last

“Clean, simple lines with painted finishes tend to have more longevity, as they can easily be changed as time goes on. Natural wood products that commonly receive stained finishes are not as common unless we have a client that has longed for a traditional-style library or home office where most or all of the surfaces are finished with stain and polyurethane. This, of course, is timeless if done properly,” Ollivier continues.

Whether opting for an addition like a protective top coat or a larger construction project like new flooring, any change can make a long-occupied home feel revitalized and brand new. If the time comes to move one day, refurbishments and exclusive qualities only add to the property value.

“[Floor finishing is] a water base or oil base. It depends on the type of the floor they have; we figure out the best finish to put on the floor. Water base is going to last longer than three years ... even oil base is good as well, standard for three or more years,” says Gilmar Marcelino, owner of Victorian Floor Finishing.

To prove that planning is everything, he emphasizes an all-at-once methodology.

“One shot from beginning to the end; not phases, like, one room today, another room tomorrow. We never recommend that. Two things: the process takes longer ... and the cost of the effect,” Marcelino continues.

The key to a long-lasting look is to implement materials that are more resistant to damage. Like everything, finding the right product is a case-by-case scenario, but evaluating expectations and necessities for a project with a professional can make renovation goals a reality. Knowing the chosen materials and products will go a long

way in expediting any needed replacements in subsequent years.

It’s no mystery why homeowners are opting to make a home the best possible version of itself. At the forefront of a completed project is the everyday satisfaction it will bring for years to come. Refurbishments, remodeling or just a fresh coat of paint can bring a new spark of energy to your home and, subsequently, to your life. **H&H**



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THE SOCIAL KITCHEN – FISHER & PAYKEL'S DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

The idea of the social kitchen is Fisher & Paykel's inspiration in developing flexible appliances that can be distributed throughout your kitchen and tailored to your individual lifestyle and needs. It is both a concept and a lived experience that connects people with food and design. The kitchen is no longer just a place where food is made, it is

where you need to talk about your day, where homework is done, and where you engage with family and friends.

One of Fisher & Paykel's visionary appliances is the single or double DishDrawer. These options give homeowners the design freedom to allow their kitchen to take center stage with modular appliances that can be distributed to fit any space. The single model is easily configurable and fits any kitchen for complete freedom of design expression. Meanwhile, the double DishDrawer offers ergonomic convenience of the drawer accessibility and the split-load capability, which is perfect for a busy household.

Another appliance that will turn heads is the Fisher & Paykel refrigeration. Whether it is a built-in column or a freestanding preference, your options are endless with what this brand has to offer. Not only that, but the integrated CoolDrawer is a nice multi-temperature drawer that gives you the bonus of using it as a refrigerator, freezer or pantry with the push of a button. You can create a refrigeration combination that gives you the control to set the right temperature with the right humidity for your food, and the flexibility to care for it with products that keep ingredients fresher for longer.



If those aren't enough, you should look into their cooking options. Perfect results in the kitchen seldom come from one type of heat. The best kitchens bring together the right appliances to give you absolute control. With that in mind, check out their combination steam oven. This appliance gives you the flexibility to use both convection and steam cooking, which reduces the need for oils and fats.

Feel free to match your kitchen to configure and style your cabinetry with the Fisher & Paykel appliance brand. The flexibility that allows them to shift between the different requirements and understand the way kitchens are used gives you the freedom to create your dream kitchen with no restrictions.

Come see what Fisher & Paykel has to offer with their innovation that changes every day into something extraordinary, as well as other brands in Kieffer's 18,000-square-foot showroom. Kieffer's Appliances are here for you from expert consultation to compliance. **H&H**



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You've spent a lot on your home, so it's important to take care of it—that includes taking care of problems both large and small.

Small projects can often fall victim to procrastination, being put to the wayside to make time for important life events. Other times these projects, as inconsequential as they may seem, are impossible to complete due to accessibility issues. Whatever the reason, it's vital to take care of these issues before they turn into something worse and begin to add up.

That's where Harth Builders steps in. No matter how big or small the project, Harth has teams to make sure it gets done.

"We teach our children that procrastination leads to more stress and anxiety and that is true about our home renovation projects too," says Harth Home Services Coordinator Siobhan Dowdy. "If you see an issue in your home, call us and someone from our team can come out to assess the issue and provide you with a plan on how to proceed so you can make the right decision in a timely manner."

In order to help homeowners maintain their homes and identify hidden problems, Harth Builders offers a Home Maintenance Checklist available through their website. This checklist covers every part of the home—as small as door knobs and locks and as big as roofs and flooring.

"The home maintenance checklist is a great resource because it highlights areas of our homes that we tend to forget about. For example: Do the windows need to be replaced? Are the vents clear of debris? Are the carbon monoxide detectors working?" says Dowdy. "We all have busy schedules, but it is important to take a few minutes to run through the HHS home maintenance checklist. The checklist is essential for your home's future."

Once problem areas are identified, Harth Home Services will assign a competent, professional team consisting of an experienced project manager, skilled carpenters, and licensed plumbers and electricians to make sure your home repair is as efficient and easy as possible.

In order to minimize intrusion into the home during the project, the team protects the home's floors and uses a ZipWall system to keep all the dust and debris out of other parts of the home.

Once completed, the project is covered under a two-year warranty.

Whatever the project—from bathroom refreshes and repairing decks to hanging art and replacing doors—the team over at Harth Builders is eager to help.

"We are always available if you'd like to start a conversation about your home's needs," says Dowdy. "No project is too small. We are here to help, and we want to make sure your home is your favorite place!" **H&H**



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Renovated main bathroom



Walk-in closet fashioned from one of the home's five bedrooms

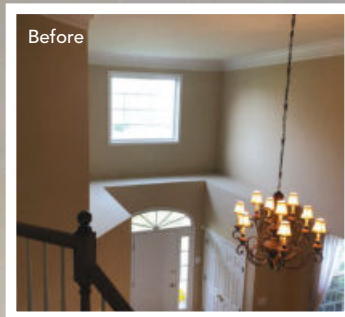


Renovated guest bathroom



Renovated main bedroom

Gehman's team added a new guest bathroom by claiming unutilized overhead space in the foyer. These photos show before the renovation and after.



After



Built to Suit

Gehman Design Remodeling executes a dramatic renovation of a family's newly purchased home to accommodate out-of-town guests.

Anytime someone moves into a new home, some renovations are likely to be in order. Dennis D. Gehman cites one empty-nest couple from York County, Pennsylvania, who relocated to Ambler with the purchase of a five-bedroom home.

"They had one daughter who lived nearby and other children in other states," recalls Gehman, a Master Certified Remodeler and president of Gehman Design Remodeling in Harleysville. "They called us because they wanted to make some changes in case the kids came in from out of town and needed a place to stay."

The couple was willing to sacrifice one of the home's five bedrooms in order to add a third bathroom and a sprawling walk-in closet. Gehman's team suggested adding the new guest bathroom by claiming unutilized overhead space in either the foyer or the family room; using the family room was ultimately nixed because all parties agreed it would detract from the elegance of a two-story fireplace.

Besides adding the third bathroom and the walk-in closet, complete with a three-way mirror, the project involved the main bathroom, the hallway bathroom, and the main bedroom. Gehman's team installed hardwood floors throughout the upstairs, updated the tile flooring in the existing bathrooms, and replaced a nine-foot-wide patio door off the main bedroom, which necessitated the use of a crane.

Demolition began in April 2020 and the finishing touches were completed in October 2020, factoring in delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Gehman recently saw the homeowners—he returned to replace a cracked tile in one of the bathrooms—who told him they could not be more pleased with the outcome.

"They said it's working out great," he says. "It's being used at least every other month. Initially they thought the upgrades would be used mostly by their adult children, but they have retired siblings who come in, too. Everybody's happy." ■

Gehman Design Remodeling

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