

## Two-level rear addition accommodates family of seven

■ Satisfying wide-ranging homeowner requirements is a Michael Nash specialty

BY JOHN BYRD  
SPECIAL TO THE FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

Giving customers what they want is always a good idea, especially in the home improvement business. When scope of the average project grows steadily every year though, a remodeler had better know his trade.

"We've gotten good at anticipating market trends," says Sonny Nazemian, founder and CEO of Michael Nash Design Build and Homes. "Our question is always: how do we make it easier for homeowners to satisfy an agenda with a lot of requirements? To accomplish this, we're continually developing our showroom, which makes it easier for homeowners to make finish-work decisions, and we regularly add new skill-sets to our staff."

By his own account, Nazemian describes his approach to business development as "cautiously incremental". Back in the 1990s, he focused on smaller-scale projects - kitchens and baths, interior upgrades. But he was quick to respond to homeowners with more ambitious projects in mind, and had the management skills needed to introduce specialty disciplines like site engineering and architectural design - always keeping



The stainless steel refrigerator and cooktop range are two pegs of the chef's "work triangle," which the food preparation island completes. The floor plan provides a series of interactive work triangles facilitating meal prep, clean-up and entertainment.

PHOTOS BY JUNE STANWICH



To yield more value from a proposed kitchen "bump-out," remodeler Sonny Nazemian suggested extending the addition at the basement level as well, a move which added two new bedrooms and a full bath.



The new food preparation island - two levels of granite surface where 10 can be seated at Thanksgiving - sits where the exterior wall once stood.

costs under control.

A quick look at Nazemian's 20-year history with Scott

and Mary Beth Brown proves the point. Not long before their first child was born, the Browns

hired Michael Nash to help decorate their first home. "They did our window treatments, wall paper, carpet - even a custom bedspread," says Mary Beth. "We really liked Sonny and loved the work he did."

Fast forward a couple of decades: the Browns live in Fairfax Station and have five children, the oldest 19, and the youngest only four. Their kitchen - though typical for a 1980s center hall colonial - is small, dark and wholly inadequate for feeding a large brood.

"Mary Beth said from the beginning that we'd have to expand it," says Scott. "But it was nearly three years before we started calling contractors."

Several of those calls were never returned; the contractors who did call back were either inexperienced at handling a project of the proposed scope, or offered bids too high to consider. The Browns' old friend Sonny Nazemian was the exception.

Over the years, Nazemian had built Michael Nash into one of the region's premier remodeling firms. The company's kitchen and bath showroom in Merrifield, Va. is the area's largest, with over 30 fully-assembled displays.

Nazemian listened carefully to the Browns, and then trumped their plans with a comprehensive vision of his own.

"We were thinking, maybe, a bump-out supported by pillars," says Scott. "Sonny immediately said, 'Bump out the basement too. That way, you support the kitchen and gain a couple of bedrooms for

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Extending the lower level formed the space needed for two additional bedrooms and a full bath.



Michael Nash converted an upstairs half bath to a full - creating a private suite for an older son.

**HOMES**

Continued from Page B-4

the boys.' Then he and Jimmy (the firm's lead kitchen specialist) just took over the kitchen design... they knew exactly what our situation called for."

What Nazemian envisioned was something he's done many times: create a "kitchen-centric" zone that works for both family activities and entertaining. His

solutions almost always include an open floor plan with the kitchen linking several rooms - a family room, dining area, and maybe a porch or deck. But, says Nazemian, if the kitchen is going to be so prominent, "it has to be pretty."

On that score, the Brown's new kitchen is both expansive and beautiful.

The new food preparation island - two levels of granite where 10 can be seated at Thanksgiving - sits where the exterior wall once

stood. The 16-by-20 "bump-out" surrounded by windows on all sides incorporates a new dining area, and a computer workstation framed by bookcases.

The workstation offers a spot where the children can do homework while meals are being prepared, or even watch the sunrise at breakfast.

Its running granite surface and cabinets extend towards the foyer - serving as a space divider between kitchen and family room.

It is also equipped with a clean-up sink and dishwasher.

The floor plan is thoughtfully designed, with a series of interactive work triangles facilitating meal prep, clean-up and entertainment, to wit:

The stainless steel refrigerator and cook top range are two pegs of the chef's "work triangle"... which the food preparation island completes.

The food prep surface is positioned for service to both the

breakfast area and a formal dining room on the front of the house.

The surface and cabinets separating the kitchen and family room also function as a serving station for the family room and support guest circulation from all directions.

One level below, Nazemian created a two-bedroom suite with a full bath for two teenage sons.

"We were just thinking logically about the emerging household requirements," Nazemian

says. "Finding ways to give more value than what the client may have originally considered is a key part of our business mission."

For information call (703) 641-9800 or go to MichaelNash-Kitchens.com

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**And the painting forecast is... gray**

COURTESY THE PAINT QUALITY INSTITUTE

Despite the fickle nature of interior design trends, when it comes to paint, gray is topping the charts for the second year in a row.

"Gray, in all its variations, has emerged as the overwhelming choice of designers for spaces ranging from home interiors to elegant office settings, and everything in between," says Debbie Zimmer, color expert for the Paint Quality Institute.

What's making gray the most popular color once again? Versatility, says Zimmer. "Gray is beautiful in its own right, but it is so perfectly neutral that it can work alongside other soft tints, or serve as a perfect foil for vibrant accent colors."

According to Zimmer, the color we refer to as gray is actually a wide range of complex grayish colors that often contain hints of red, green, blue, yellow, or some other hue.

Yellowish-grays paired with beiges or off-whites create neutral color schemes that are not only classic, but also calming. Similar results can be achieved with blue-grays. Meanwhile, red- or green-leaning grays often appear ultra-sophisticated.

Grays are practical, too. Since they work with so many colors, it's easy to change the overall appearance of a room by simply repainting an accent wall in a different shade, or adding a pop of color with pillows, rugs,

wall décor or ceramics.

If you've decided to use gray as the dominant color in a room, get a variety of samples and paint swatches on your walls. See how different shades look in the various stages of natural and artificial light throughout the day, as well as how they complement your floors and furnishings. Zimmer also suggests asking the salesperson to show you the color formula. Pigment colors blended into the "gray" paint point to the colors you should choose for trim paint, accent walls, and even furnishings.

So, if you jumped on board last year with the gray trend, rest assured that your home design is still on point. And if you want to join in now, it's still not too late to go gray!

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