

# From crowded galley kitchen to kitchen-centric first-level solution

■ **Michael Nash interior makeover sharply improves townhouse functionality and eye appeal**

BY JOHN BYRD  
 SPECIAL TO THE FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

The revolution of the American home continues unabated in an Alexandria townhouse - finding full expression in a "kitchen-centric" first-level makeover.

So what are this revolution's primary battlefields?

"The old kitchen was pretty hemmed-in," acknowledges the homeowner, a retired female in her early sixties who purchased the spacious end unit with her husband about four years ago. "It didn't really support our lifestyle, which includes lots of entertaining on a side deck in good weather, and in the front living room all year round. Also, I wanted a more stylish look, and display space for our Italian ceramics."

Adds Michael Nash principal Sonny Nazemian:

"Partitions aren't the best solution in a lot of situations today. A kitchen that's hard to access can actually inhibit a social gath-

ering. When cabinetry and finish-work are well-integrated into an open plan, though, you can bring all the needed utilities into compelling interior design scheme."

On this point, the Alexandria home is an interesting case study, Nazemian observes. The home's original kitchen was "open," yet sequestered in a back corner by an L-shaped serving and dining counter. With the couple's favorite grilling deck in view (yet cut-off by a half-wall serving counter) the home's "traffic problem" became increasingly apparent when favorable weather beckoned. To travel from kitchen to deck, for instance, one had to circle around the counter and through the living room.

Beyond the kitchen, the traditional formal living room offered a spaciouly inviting place "to watch the game with friends." Three glass-facing French doors nearby opened to a side elevation grilling deck where the owners had discovered their favorite outdoor spot.

"Logistically, the problem was too many steps to the kitchen," the husband observes. "We thought about tearing down the counter to gain easier access [to] the social areas, but that just made everything seem too exposed."

The couple also wanted to position a wine cooler, sink and serving surfaces closer to the

See HOMES PAGE B-5



PHOTOS BY JUNE STANICH

To introduce an open, kitchen-centric plan into a traditional townhouse, remodeler Michael Nash eliminated a half-wall and reconfigured the L-shaped great room. The center of the new kitchen is now a stand-alone island with sink which doubles as wet bar and mid-room dining surface. The lower cabinet was designed to spotlight the owners' Italian porcelain collection.



Storage capacity has been greatly enhanced by new cherry wood cabinetry with fluted molding that stretches across the back wall.



The wet bar offers a convenient serving station to the grilling deck accessible through a pair of French doors. It's also equipped with a wine refrigerator.



BEFORE: 'A kitchen that's hard to access can inhibit a social gathering,' says remodeler Sonny Nazemian. 'When cabinetry and finish work are well-integrated into an open plan, you can bring all the needed utilities into compelling interior design scheme.'



Residents since 2012 & 2015

## Local Color

At Westminster at Lake Ridge, a vibrant and exciting world awaits you. The retirement lifestyle you deserve is shared with the active and engaged friends and neighbors who make our community home, all with peace of mind that comes with on-site health care.

**Now accepting wait list deposits.  
 Call 703-496-5914 or visit us today!**



**WESTMINSTER**  
 AT LAKE RIDGE  
 ENGAGED LIVING  
 An Ingleside Community

*Westminster at Lake Ridge is a CARF accredited, not-for-profit, continuing care retirement community.*

703-496-5914 | [www.wlrva.org](http://www.wlrva.org)  
 12191 Clipper Drive | Lake Ridge, VA



**HOMES**

Continued from Page B-4

deck. And then there was the matter of display space for the prized Italian ceramics.

"We talked to quite a few contractors, but Sonny was the only one with a real working vision," he recalls.

Early on, Nazemian recognized that the owners' dilemma could partly be resolved by re-defining the aesthetic relationships between kitchen work zones and the adjacent living and socializing areas. Typical of most production homes, the existing plan called for a discretely self-contained utility kitchen. But in an open area, containment can seem arbitrary, even anachronistic.

Nazemian suggested that the entire back half of the L-shaped "great room" could be reconfigured as a component in a new kitchen entertainment area. The cabinetry would extend all the way to the French doors leading to the deck. He next proposed a smaller, stand-alone island for the sink; it would look toward the family room from the center of the "new" kitchen, and double as wet bar and mid-room dining counter. A small wine cooler

would fit below the sink. As a bonus, the island's lower cabinet would house a glass display case - complete with accent lighting - custom-designed to spotlight the Italian porcelain collection.

The planned effects work beautifully. The glass-facing cherry wood cabinets are so handsomely designed none of the kitchen appliances are even visible from the front living room.

"The ceramics display is the dominant focal point," the lady of the house adds enthusiastically. "The dark woods and textured tile backsplash on the rear wall converge into a nicely warm background."

Moreover, the new spatial configuration invites a more functionally circular traffic plan with plenty of room on either side of the island - and straight paths to the deck, family room, and dining room.

Storage capacity is also greatly enhanced with the new cabinets stretching across the back wall. The gas range and stove below are perfectly placed, yet not visible from the living room. A refrigerator and trivection oven - both stainless steel - now dominate the side wall of the new kitchen layout. The owner says that the kitchen's "work triangle" is ideal for a whole series of cooking and entertainment tasks.

High-intensity recessed lighting in the ceiling - and indirect lighting from the cabinets - keep the room bright after sundown. The grilling zone on the deck has its indoor grilling counterpart, and the new food preparation island/counter has seating on three sides - each with a view of the flat screen television on the family room wall.

It is a lovely set-up for entertaining and, more importantly, for everyday living.

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

*John Byrd has been writing about home improvement for 30 years. He can be reached at (703) 715-8006, [www.HomeFrontsNews.com](http://www.HomeFrontsNews.com) or [byrdmatx@gmail.com](mailto:byrdmatx@gmail.com). Send photos of interesting remodeling projects to <http://homefrontsnews.com/contact/>*



Interior design focused on re-defining the aesthetic relationships between kitchen work zones and the adjacent living and socializing areas. The owners say the kitchen appliances aren't visible from the front living room.



The ornate Italianate ventilator hood and four burner gas cooktop are positioned for both meal prep and entertainment.



A stainless steel refrigerator and trivection oven now dominate the side wall of the new kitchen layout. The owner say the kitchen's work triangle is ideal for a whole series of cooking and entertainment tasks.



**PATHWAY HOMES, INC.**  
Supportive Residential Mental Health Services



**Help The Homeless 5K Walk 2017**  
**Saturday, October 21st**  
**Veterans Amphitheater**  
**At Fairfax City Hall**  
10455 Armstrong St, Fairfax




In just one morning, you can make a real impact on the lives of men and women who are homeless in Fairfax County and the Northern Virginia region. Your registration fee of just \$32 provides a day of supportive services for someone in need.

**Schedule of Activities**  
Check-in and registration opens: 8:30am  
Program and walk begins: 9:00am

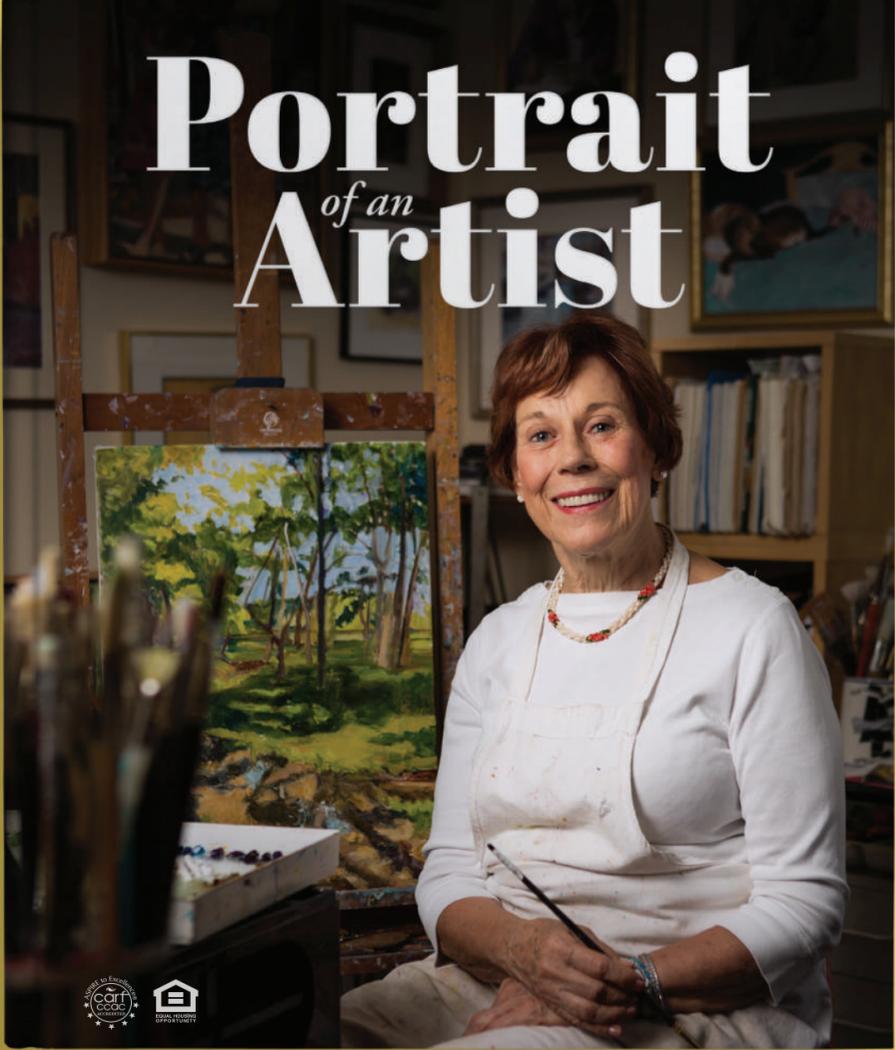
**You Choose The Walk**  
A 5K through the neighborhoods of Fairfax city  
OR  
A 1.5 mile short course

To register on-line or for more information:  
[www.PathwayHomes.org](http://www.PathwayHomes.org) or (703) 876-0390

# Portrait

*of an*

# Artist






**EXTRAORDINARY STORIES BEYOND THE FRONT LINE**

Norma Lasher found her love for art overseas during one of her more than 35 family moves while her husband, Wendall Lasher was serving in the United States Air Force. Those journeys inspire much of the beautiful artwork that fills her apartment and now graces our halls. Hers is but one chapter in our amazing collection of patriots and heroes.

We invite you to experience a connection that can only be found through the common bond of service to country. To learn more about the extraordinary residents and lifestyle at Falcons Landing visit our website, [www.falconslanding.org](http://www.falconslanding.org).

