



# Bright and Beautiful

Creating a gorgeous new space for a growing family

by Beth Puliti

Homeowners came to Gemmi Construction, Inc. with a desire to create additional bedrooms and expand the kitchen in their beautiful residence.

After consulting with John Gemmi, CR, CKBR, owner of the full-service, design build residential remodeling company, construction began on the addition that would turn the homeowners' dream into reality.

## A vital addition

As a large family that loves to entertain, the homeowners' existing kitchen proved too dark, cramped and uninviting. Gemmi Construction, Inc. was called in to turn the space into a brighter, aesthetically pleasing area that offered better function and flow.

In order to transform the environment into an inviting room, an addition was vital as well as addressing awkward architectural elements. At the rear of the house, a hardly used dark corner turned into the ideal location for the kitchen expansion, and an existing sun-room became the inspiration for both the expanded kitchen and outdoor covered terrace.

"We decided to remove most of the interior walls and push out

the back of the home to create a very large kitchen and gathering area for the family," says Gemmi.

In addition to creating a bright and beautiful kitchen, the homeowners requested extra functional storage and an improved work and traffic flow. A double island, along with the stove and refrigerator wall, house all the necessary appliances and storage to facilitate everyday life in an aesthetically efficient space.

The new addition features three raised countertops and an adjoining sitting room complete with fireplace, which provides improved traffic flow and abundant seating options for family and friends. Vertical and horizontal molding details on the edges of all cabinets, custom legs and panels, and custom patterned refrigerator and mirror glass were chosen to add an aura of richness and glamour.

Rumford-inspired fireplaces were created outside the kitchen area, inside the covered porch and within an extension of the finished basement. This heat source helps turn the exterior living areas into a space to be enjoyed almost all year round.

## A third-floor retreat

During initial discussions, it was decided that additional bedroom



space would be added from above.

“When we walked up into the existing attic, we realized that there was a tremendous amount of space that could be utilized to create bedrooms the homeowner desired,” explains Gemmi.

As it would turn out, there was enough space on the third floor to also create a large gathering room for the family and children to play and work.

Converting the existing attic into a third floor living space proved to be one of the most overall challenging aspects of this project as a third floor retreat had to be built, complete with two guest bedrooms each with their own bathroom, while the family lived below.

In addition, Gemmi needed to figure out how to comfortably gain access to the attic level without majorly disrupting the existing second floor. The answer came in turning an already small bedroom into a staircase and a dressing room for the master bedroom. The new staircase wrapped around the existing chimney, and so it only made sense to veneer the wall with real face brick.

An impressive amount of steel went into building the third floor, with care to avoid disrupting the finished spaces below. The new floor system spans the existing attic floor and is supported with a steel undercarriage that weaves its way through the existing walls of the first and second floor to the basement foundation. A crawl space allows for clearance of an existing tray ceiling in the master bedroom on the second floor. This space also provided a place to conceal the existing second-floor duct work and minimize sound transmission to the second and first floors.



Two bedrooms, each with its own bathroom featuring unique custom cabinetry and high-end fixtures, were added to serve as guest suites.

### ‘Without a hitch’

Performing a major third-floor and kitchen renovation that required tons of steel beams and invasive structural improvements while the homeowners lived in the home was a highlight for Gemmi.

“We installed the scaffold staircase system on the back of the home to give us access to the third floor without going through the homeowners’ home,” he elaborates.

Gemmi points to the time the roof was removed and a crane hoisted tons of steel beams over top of the home (all while watching the weather) as the most difficult challenge of this project.

“There is nothing more nerve-racking than having somebody’s roof removed while they are still living below,” he recalls. “But through careful planning and managing client expectations, all went off without a hitch.” **H&H**



### Gemmi Construction, Inc.,

located in Mechanicsville, Pa., is a member of NARI (BucksMontNARI.org). Call (215) 340-4600 or visit [GemmiConstruction.com](http://GemmiConstruction.com) for more information.

Architectural/design work: JFA Architecture, 1017 Greenwood Ave., Wyncote, Pa., (215) 517-8068, [JFA-Architecture.com](http://JFA-Architecture.com)

Cate Conti Design, (215) 297-8196, [CateContiDesign.com](http://CateContiDesign.com)