

an award-winning
seamless addition



When Thaddeus and Tammy purchased their property in 2013, it was nearly perfect. Along with a beautiful home, the property was spacious for their children to play, there was plenty of privacy, and the views were exceptional. As a huge bonus, there was even a barn that would eliminate the need for Tammy to rent stable space for her horses. And while the home had the charm and feel of a beautifully restored 1700's farmhouse (it was actually built in 1976), the couple knew that they would have to add on to accommodate a family of their size. There just weren't enough bedrooms.

Since there was plenty of room to construct an

addition, the challenge was going to be finding a builder who they felt comfortable with and who could create an appealing design while keeping true to the architectural style of original construction. It was critical to them that the addition blended in.

After talking with a handful of prospective contractors, Thaddeus and Tammy enthusiastically chose the award-winning Ephrata-based home remodeler, Renovations by Garman—a division of Garman Builders. According to them, once they met with Garman's Vice President of Operations, Fred Heim, the search was over. And as you will learn from our interview, they couldn't be more happy with their decision.



SPOTLIGHT

project description

Type:	Master Suite and Guest Bedroom Addition
Contractor:	Renovations by Garman (see ad on p. 35)
Trade Partners:	Classic Granite (see ad p.9) Cloister's Flooring America (see ad p. 48) County Line Mechanical (see ad p. 48) Musselman Lumber Inc. (see ad p. 44) Quality Stone Veneer Inc. (see ad p.36) Stamped Concrete Works (see ad p.38) Swartz Kitchens and Baths (see ad p. 46) Vernon's Excavating Company LLC (see ad p. 38) Zimtech Exteriors LLC (see ad p. 36)

Scope: The homeowners had recently purchased the property and while they loved the home, they recognized that it wasn't large enough for the size of their family. Specifically, there weren't enough bedrooms. The solution was to add a first floor addition that would include a master bedroom suite, a guest bedroom and bath, a spacious mudroom complete with a laundry. The family wanted the addition to match the architectural style of the original home.

The vision for this addition came about through a collaborative effort from the initial meeting between the client and design staff at Renovations by Garman.

The proposal included the creation of all plans and securing all necessary permits to start the project. Also included were all materials, labor, equipment and supervision. All material finishes were to be the same or equal to those used in the original construction unless otherwise noted. Every aspect of detail starting with the initial meeting, through the construction process and up until the customer inhabits the new space was managed by Renovations by Garman and backed up by their customer care team and warranty service program.



Winning Category
ADDITION
Division 4



As it turned out, the homeowners weren't the only ones impressed by the design and work performed by Garman. Upon completion, Fred received permission from Thaddeus and Tammy to enter their project in the annual BIA (Building Industry Association of Lancaster County) Remodelers Awards of Excellence competition—where it was awarded the winning entry in the *ADDITIONS, Division 4* category.

Let's start off by talking about the original house. What can you tell us about it?

Thaddeus: Despite its historic appearance, it was actually built in 1976 by an engineer for him and his family. Not only did he design it based on a 1700's farmhouse, but he went through the painstaking process of replicating many of the details that were common for that period. That's why you see the details on the shutters with the period-appropriate anchors, the way they are hinged, the trim, as well as the doors. We even have the skeleton keys that lock the original doors.



For us, we appreciate and value the work this gentleman put into this home and we decided we would try to mimic that level of craftsmanship and attention to detail. What we didn't want was an addition that didn't look like it belonged.

Fred: Our vision was to make part of the addition appear as though it was an original summer kitchen that over time got tied into the home. The stone gable and the roof lines helped create that effect and tie everything together. Replacing the original cedar roof

on the main portion of the home with a standing seam metal roof used on the addition also helped tie everything together.

Thaddeus: And everything looks absolutely great! Replacing the cedar roof as part of the project was definitely the right decision. It was starting to show its age.

Tammy: As for the interior, as much as we wanted to blend in with the home's original theme, we also wanted modern conveniences. I think Fred and his team at Garman did a beautiful job in mixing the two styles.

Tell us how you came upon Renovations by Garman and what it was that convinced you that they were the ones for the job.

Tammy: Early on I went online and did some searches. We looked at a number of websites of local builders and looked closely at their project photos. Those that looked impressive got a phone call and we set up some appointments.

Thaddeus: We actually talked to five builders and received renderings from three before we even made a call to Garman.

Tammy: Up until then, we actually thought we had decided on a company to go with. Garman came in at the very end of the process and changed the game completely.



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Thaddeus: I was particularly impressed with how easy Fred was able to solve an issue that was bothering me. In all my preliminary sketches, I couldn't figure out how to avoid having a long straight hallway leading to the master suite. Fred's solution—which was awesome—was to break up the long stretch by putting an angle in the hallway. In addition to breaking up the hallway, the angle gave us an extra bonus by providing additional bathroom and closet space.

Thaddeus: Our first sit down meeting with Garman went exceptionally well and when Fred came back with his drawings, we were blown away! It was clear that both Fred and his design team paid very close attention to what we had to say and understood what we were looking for. We wanted the new space to flow seamlessly with the original construction—functionally as well as aesthetically. Again, what we didn't want was a modular-looking addition sticking off the back of the house.

Tammy: This was just one example of how great Garman was to work with. We were very impressed by how carefully they listened to us and how they were not only able to incorporate our ideas, but actually augment them.

I'm told that most of the construction took place last winter. What was that experience like?

Tammy: And based on the plans that Fred came up with, it was clear that he heard what we were saying. We were definitely on the same page.

Fred: With all our projects, we produce a detailed schedule that is shared with the homeowners prior to the start of any work being done. These schedules



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are designed to keep the project on track as well as the homeowners informed of what to expect and when to expect them. For this particular project, due to the extremely harsh winter, that schedule was quite a bit more fluid than normal. Due to the snow and ice and the length of the lane leading up to the property, just accessing the project was a challenge on many of the days.

Thaddeus: Our neighbor, Dave, has to be the best neighbor on the planet. With each storm, he was there plowing our lane. And considering it's length which is close to a third of a mile, that's no small job.

Tammy: Dave started plowing our lane even before we were introduced. What a great neighbor!





over the years, including having a home built, so we know the difference. Doug and his team at Garman, including their subs, were absolutely great to work with and very respectful of our time and privacy, even when they were under the gun to catch up.

Fred: That's great to hear. We try very hard to select trade partners who have our same values and work ethic. We actually have them sign an agreement that they will abide by

our expectations with regard to their work, customer relations, workplace behavior, etc. We try for example, to be respectful of the homeowners' times and our working hours. We start everyday—Monday thru Friday—at 7 a.m. and stop no later than 5 p.m. If, as in this project, we are required to work outside these hours (Sunday excluded), we will only do so with the homeowner's permission.

Tammy: And in our case, we were only too happy to accommodate their request to work beyond regular hours—we were all about getting back on schedule.

Thaddeus: To Garman's credit, despite the obstacles mother nature threw at us and the scheduling changes that resulted, your guys were awesome in keeping us informed of things and making up for lost time. The weather certainly caused things to be delayed, but your Project Supervisor, Doug Kauffman, was great in getting them rescheduled and completed—including after hours and weekends. We were especially impressed with how well they communicated and kept us informed—it was something we weren't used to. It was very much appreciated.

Tammy: We've had some experience with contractors



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In touring this beautiful project, it was an amazing experience to walk into the master bedroom. With the height of the ceiling and all the windows, it's almost church like. What was your motivation for such a dramatic look?

Thaddeus: In addition to a big open feel, we also talked about having a big windowed wall. And with our view out back, this was a perfect situation. I couldn't be more happy with the way it turned out. It's become my refuge—my favorite place to take a break and relax. I love going back there.

Tammy: I'm a big fan of natural light and this room, with all of the windows, is just wonderful. The high ceiling made it all possible.

Thaddeus: At first, we were kicking around the idea of skylights but Fred brought in the idea of incorporating dormers instead.

Fred: While the main portion of the original home doesn't have dormers, the smaller portion which was deliberately designed to look like an addition, had them in the the front and back. In keeping with that design, we deliberately matched the dormers of the mud-room entry with those on the front. While the ceiling height provides the high-volume, cathedral ceiling that Tammy and Thaddeus were looking for, it also helped tie the whole outside look together—the dormers, roof lines, and matching roofing, siding and trim materials. One of the things that usually gets lost on

the average person is how well the new siding and trim materials match the original. And to think we used low-maintenance composite materials instead of wood.

Thaddeus: As a person who doesn't have the time to sand and paint every other year—I thank you.



Excavation: VERNON'S EXCAVATING CO.
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What kind of feedback have you gotten from your friends and family?

Tammy: They all love it, so do we. I especially love the exposed ceiling beams—I think it's a great look. My other favorite thing is the steam shower. What a treat!

Thaddeus: It's amazing, we have friends who saw the house when we first bought it and now they can't tell where the new construction started—it blends in so well, it's virtually seamless. It's





another strong statement attesting to Garman's great design skills and quality workmanship.

Knowing what you now know, would you do anything differently if you had the chance?

Tammy: Yes, probably a bigger closet in the master suite.

Thaddeus: Yes—definitely a bigger closet. It seems ridiculous that ours isn't big enough considering it's double-sided with room for a hamper, two dressers and a large mirror—but it isn't. I suppose I could help matters by rotating my seasonal clothes, but who wants to do that?

Do you have any advice for homeowners who are contemplating an addition to their home?

Tammy: Yes, don't underestimate your space.

Thaddeus: That's a good way to put it...don't underestimate your space. My advice would be to go bigger than what you initially think—it'll avoid any regrets later.

Tammy: But aside from the closet, we did it just fine and are very, very pleased with our finished project. It was

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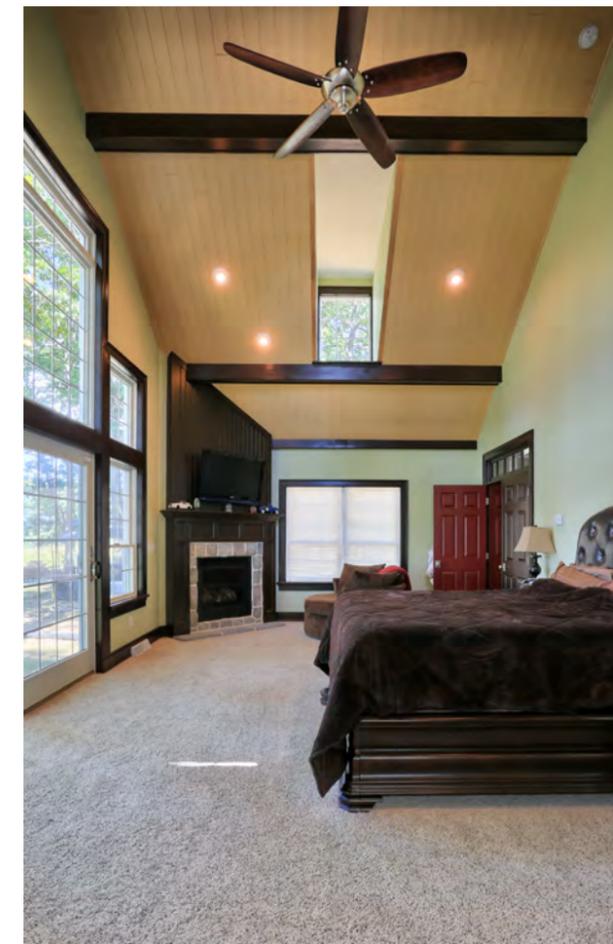


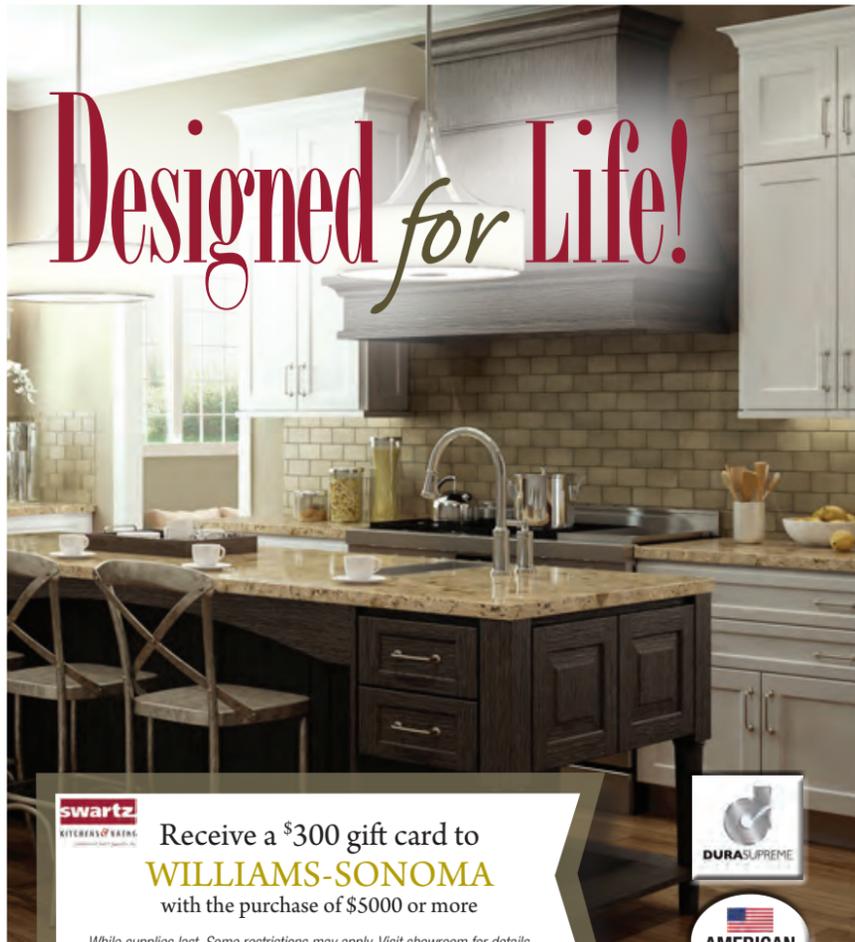
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good that we had prior experience with building a home and doing renovations. Over the years, we had a number of homes and we gained valuable experience in assessing our needs with each purchase. That really helped us in planning this project.

Thaddeus: Adding to that, for those with or without that type of experience, my advice is to be very selective in hiring a contractor. A good one, like Garman, will be your *partner* in the project—not just a retailer. They'll listen very carefully and help you sort out what it is that you really want and, in the case of a budget issue, help you identify the critical pieces that'll get you closest to your ultimate goal. That's what we got with Garman—a trusted project partner.





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Fred: Before meeting with a client, it's actually standard operating procedure for us to give the customer some homework in which they are asked to develop a *needs* and a prioritized *wants* list. For the project planning, our goal is to incorporate every single item on the *needs* list since it was the basis for the project in the first place. To the extent that their budget will allow, we try to include as many items on their priori-



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tized *wants* list as possible. This approach has been extremely helpful to us in developing designs that address the client's goals.

Tammy: That approach certainly won us over, but it went well beyond that. It wasn't just during those initial meetings either. We felt a strong relationship throughout the entire length of the project.

Fred: That's good to hear because we try hard to establish and maintain the relationship as an actual partnership. From start to finish of the project we may be in each others lives for 6, 7 months or more. Together, we're designing it, planning it, making selections, followed by the actual construction and post construction and warranty follow-ups. The bottom line is that we care about our clients and are committed to seeing that they are happy with

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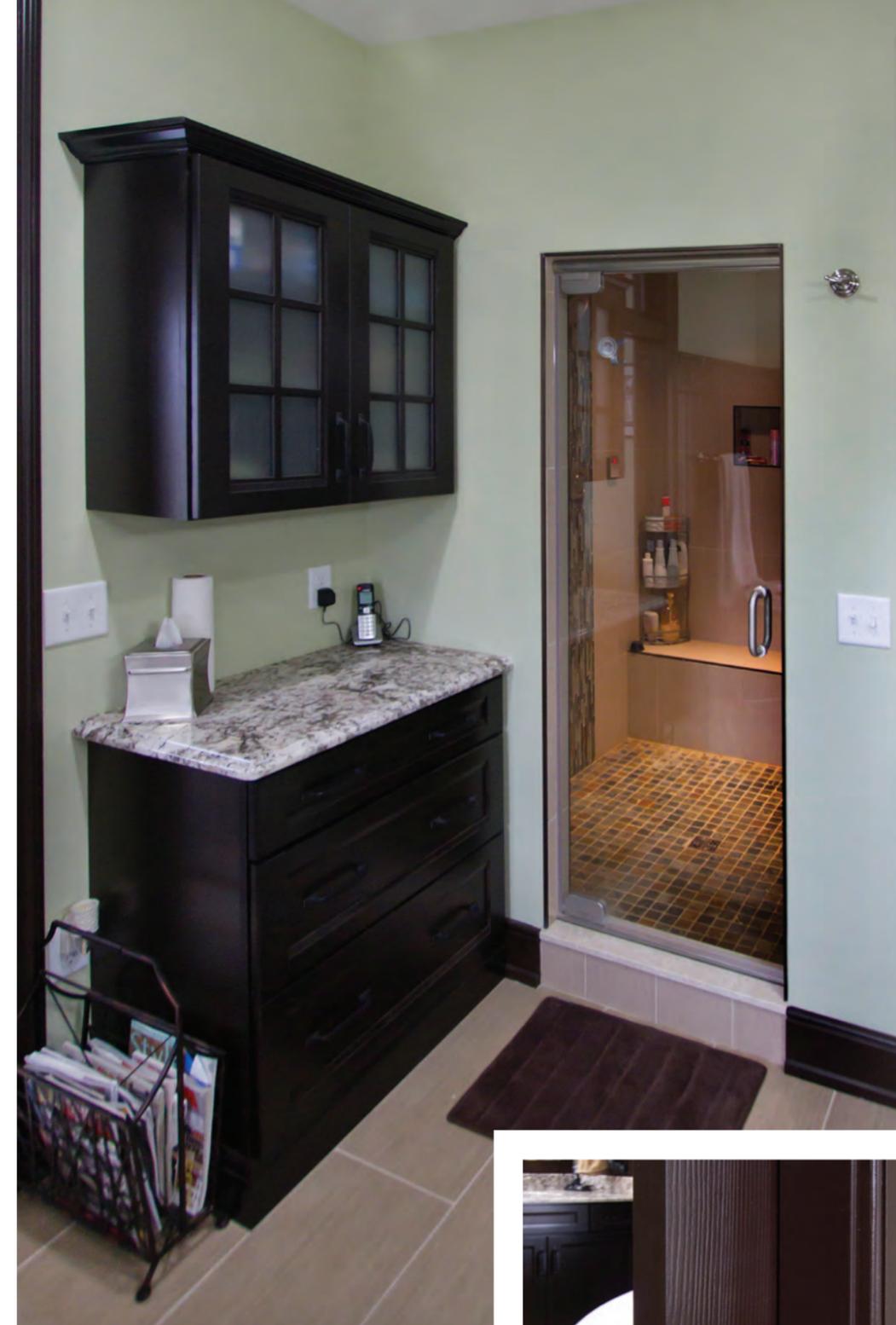
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Any final comments?

Thaddeus: I may be repeating myself, but I can't stress enough how critical



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it is to select the right contractor. Not only did Fred and his team at Garman capture our vision in designing the project, their execution and especially their attention to detail really stood out—they were just awesome! Renovations by Garman absolutely made the difference on this project.

R&A

