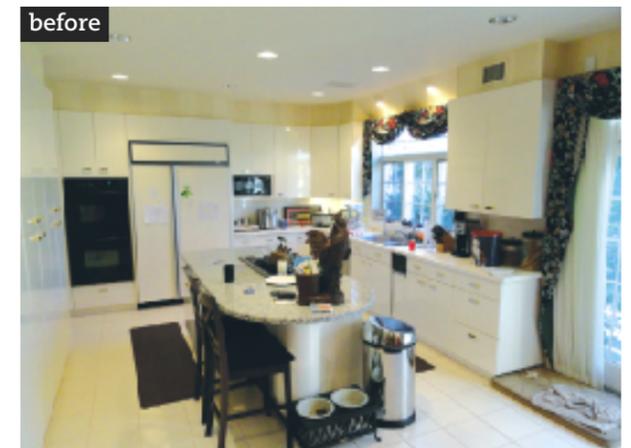




**WRITER** JUDY JEANNIN  
**PHOTOGRAPHER** DAVID VAN SCOTT  
**ARCHITECT** CURTISS BYRNE

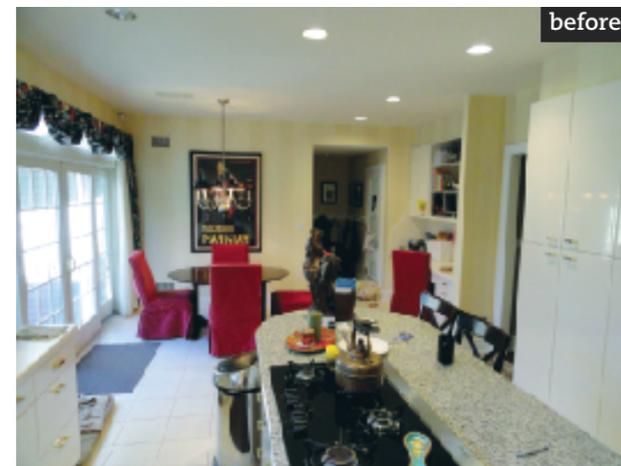
# Family Affair

Additional space, more suitable cabinetry and a new breakfast room result from a kitchen collaboration between Westfield homeowners and their relative, an architect



Traditional cabinetry, a longer island tailored to tall cooks and a new entrance to the family room are among the key elements in the kitchen renovation. A sink and microwave were incorporated into the island. Custom cabinetry, beams and molding in the new kitchen reflect custom woodwork added throughout the home.

The kitchen, shown from the new breakfast room, includes subtle but important details. The range, for example, nestles into cabinetry above the subway-tile backsplash set in a herringbone pattern. Doors flanking the range feature mirrored glass that obscures the cabinet's contents and reflects light. To the left is the butler's pantry where the family stores cooking supplies.



French doors in the "before" photo were removed when creating the entry to the new breakfast room. The conservatory-like breakfast room features a heated slate floor and three walls of windows overlooking the garden. The table can be expanded for large groups and has become the favorite place for dinner when family members visit from Missouri. Homeowner Jennifer Miller designed the chairs upholstered in a fabric depicting birds and branches to reflect the garden setting. With the table now in the breakfast room, there's space in the kitchen for a longer island.

## Jennifer Miller wanted to renovate the kitchen as soon as her family moved into their Westfield home.

Her husband, Christopher, thought it would be wiser to wait so they had time to assess what worked and what didn't.

So she waited while they redid the façade of the house and other interior spaces. After three years she had a firm fix on exactly what she wanted in her new kitchen. "He was right," Miller admits. "In those three years we saw how we wanted to transform it."

For openers she wanted to add a breakfast room. "I grew up in a house with a breakfast room, and I wanted to free up more space in the kitchen," she says. "I wanted to model it after a conservatory with glass on two sides and French doors."

She also wanted a longer island and one better suited to

Architect Curtiss Byrne designed the exterior of the breakfast room in the Adams-like style that he used for the front of the house for a cohesive look. To avoid blocking the second-floor windows, he topped the addition with a copper roof that allows for a lower pitch but provides adequate interior ceiling height.



style,” she says. “I wanted it to look as though it had been there for 100 years, but with new appliances.”

#### ALL IN THE FAMILY

Miller’s brother-in-law, Curtiss Byrne, an architect based in Chesterfield, Missouri, handled the earlier projects, so he was the logical choice to design the structural elements of the kitchen renovation. Miller, an avid cook, took the lead on appliance and design choices.

The physical distance between Miller and Byrne was no problem. “We work together well,” Byrne says. “I know what she’s talking about even though she may not know the exact words.” Frequent phone calls also helped to keep the project on track. “She was on the site every day and, if something didn’t look right, she would call and send me pictures.”

The breakfast room turned out to be the only real challenge because of structural issues. The doors that lead from the kitchen to the patio were replaced with an open doorway, but then a large beam had to be added to support the room above. In addition, to

tall cooks because she and her father—5 feet 10 inches and 6 feet 5 inches, respectively—like to cook together when he visits.

They also needed better access to the adjacent family room and new cabinetry to reflect the traditional feel of the house. “The existing kitchen was not really my

avoid having the breakfast-room roof obscure the second-floor windows, Byrne designed a copper roof that allows for a lower pitch. Meanwhile, they chose a heated slate floor for easy cleanup because of all the boots and muddy paws passing through the room.

#### CARRYING THROUGH THEMES

In the kitchen, Miller and Byrne paid special attention to custom cabinetry by Russ Heard of Heard Woodworking in Westfield. It was designed to mimic bookshelves flanking the fireplace in the family room, while Gothic arched cabinetry mullions reflect the design of several windows in the home. Deep crown molding rimming the ceiling and the ceiling beams also tie the kitchen to custom woodwork throughout the home.

The 10-foot-long island was topped with a double-thick ogee-edged quartz top to make it a little higher and, thus, more comfortable for Miller when preparing meals.

Another major change involved creating an entrance to the family room with pocket French doors that reflect the look of the breakfast room. “I like my space in the kitchen, but I don’t want people to see pots and pans,” she says. “This way I can be a part of the party, but the kitchen can be closed off.

“It is by far our favorite room. One day my daughter was eating lunch in the breakfast room and asked me to come and look at something. It was a windy day, and pink flower petals were blowing past the floor-to-ceiling doors and windows. She said ‘Look Mommy, it’s like we’re inside a summer snow globe!’

“I feel completely blessed to live and cook in this lovely space and to be able to share it with my family and friends.” **DW**

**SOURCES Throughout:** architect, Curtiss Byrne Architect in Chesterfield, Missouri. **Kitchen:** island design, range and hood placement, Dave Presuto of Beauty Craft Kitchens & Baths in Green Brook; cabinetry and woodworking, Heard Woodworking in Westfield; Cambria Stone countertops and double ogee island top, Peter Brooks Stone Works in Wood-Ridge; backsplash tile, Westfield Tile and Marble in Westfield; lighting, Pottery Barn; floral arrangement, Christoffers Flowers in Mountainside. **Breakfast Room:** slate floor, Westfield Tile and Marble in Westfield; chair upholstery, Creative Designs and Fabrics in Watchung.

For contact information, page 142