

# Lay of the Land



A Virginia home transforms from colonial to farmhouse, taking its cues from the land and the family who calls it home.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIP DAWKINS PHOTOGRAPHY

The relationship between home and land is an important one—particularly for this Rockville, Virginia, home belonging to Mary Beth and JT Grier. The couple wanted to give their 1997 colonial a modern farmhouse renovation, and they turned to designer Jennifer Radakovic of Jennifer Radakovic Design to transform their home. “They have chickens, goats, horses, cats and other animals, and were drawn to the modern farmhouse style to match their actual small farm,” Jennifer says. It’s an instance of art paralleling life, and the two meshed beautifully, resulting in a farmhouse-style renovation that accommodates the family of six and reflects their homesteading lifestyle.

This area was previously a laundry/utility room, but it now functions as the family’s main entry and as a transition to the new master suite addition. Custom cabinets with both open and closed storage are great for storing school, sports and farm gear. “The cabinets feature a shiplap back face with wood accents to warm up the otherwise cool palette,” Jennifer says.

“We used clean lines and honest materials to achieve the family’s dreams. It flows and captures the beauty of life on a farm.”



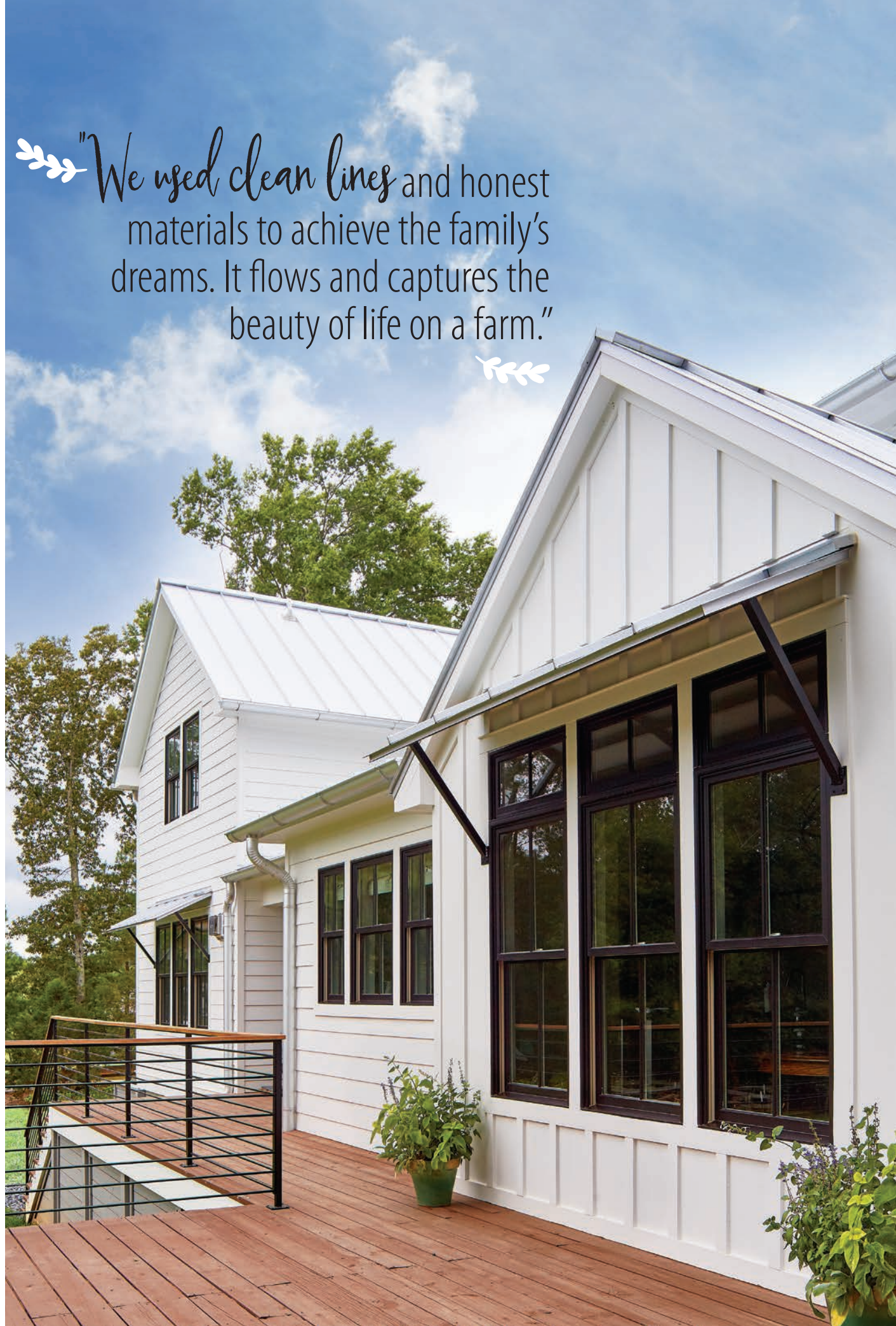
A ¾ glass mahogany door replaced the original colonial-style door and gives the entry a warm and welcoming feel for both the family and their visitors.



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#### UPDATED FARMHOUSE

Using the surrounding land and the family's needs as her cues, Jennifer implemented an exterior renovation that included new siding, roofing, windows, doors and a staggering addition that adds over 1,000 square feet to the home. "The existing house was basically a vinyl box," she says. "Our challenge was to make the outside architecturally interesting." She achieved this with two types of siding (lap siding and board and batten), as well as awnings and railings to add visual dimension. An underlying palette of white, black and wood harkens to the classic farmhouses of yesteryear but with updated details. With every design decision, Jennifer carefully considered the environment and how the family would enjoy the house while outside. Rear awnings provide shelter from the harsh Western sun, and horizontal deck railings minimize obstruction of the view.



(top) Since JT wanted a place in this house that's truly his, Jennifer converted the old dining room into an office retreat for him. "We closed off the entrance to the kitchen and designed all new, built-in shelving," Jennifer says. She also used shiplap, light walls and floors mixed with dark accents—all trademarks of modern farmhouse design.

(bottom) A simple desk area makes homework a less distracting task for the kids.



Jennifer redesigned the dining room by removing a large arched transom and replacing it with rectangular transoms. She also added whitewashed shiplap boards to the ceiling, saying "it gave the existing colonial-style drywall vaulted ceiling a farmhouse feel."

(opposite) Backsplash tiles add loads of character to the kitchen. Jennifer and the homeowners selected Walker Zanger tiles because "they have a handmade look and crackle finish."

"Our priorities were to add space while keeping the kitchen open and connected to the rest of the house."





(bottom, right) A huge pantry was a creative way for Jennifer to add counter and storage space to the kitchen. It features a counter with a dark wood top that ties in with the walnut island and built-in shelves. The subway tiles in between the two give it just the right touch of farmhouse modernity.



## Tip

IF YOU HAVE ROOM, INSTALL BOTH STORAGE AND COUNTER SPACE INTO YOUR BUTLER'S PANTRY INSTEAD OF JUST ONE. THE SPACE WILL BE MORE USABLE THAT WAY.



The kitchen has open shelving made from reclaimed walnut, light gray cabinets ("it's a slightly more modern color than white," Jennifer says) and cabinet pulls. The area is strikingly restrained and is frequently filled with the life of the farm. During the different seasons, fresh herbs and flowers are often displayed.

## THE HEART OF THE HOME

As the hub of the house and family life, the kitchen needed more space as well as a modern farmhouse sensibility. "Our priorities were to add space while keeping the kitchen open and connected to the rest of the house," Jennifer says. She designed a small addition and wove earthy details throughout with a farmhouse sink, soapstone countertops and a walnut island top. Since the homeowners sought more space and a place for Mary Beth—who grinds her own grain—to keep her five-gallon grain buckets, Jennifer also created a pantry. "It's a working pantry," she says. "The double doors enabled us to make a large opening so that, when

open, the pantry feels like an extension of the kitchen." Barn door hardware ties it in with the farmhouse styling, and when company is over, the door can easily be closed.

## A SPA ON THE FARM

The master bathroom, which is part of the new addition, is a refined approach to modern farmhouse styling and fulfills the homeowners' request for a spa-like master bathroom. "It's more polished," Jennifer says. "But it still has the white-washed feel we associate with farmhouse style." Other subtle motifs include a hexagonal penny tile that has a handmade look and alludes to the

family's beehives. The windows over the sink provide views to the property. It's also a masterful showcase of achieving dimension with all-white cabinetry and walls. Jennifer says, "Although the bathroom is mostly muted tones, we achieved a richness by layering a variety of materials and textures."

With a mindful approach on how to create a residence for a modern family, Jennifer designed a stunning home that's as connected to the land as the homeowners themselves. "We used clean lines and honest materials to achieve the family's dreams," Jennifer says. "It flows and captures the beauty of life on a farm."

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(left) The master bathroom is a serene escape with subtle modern farmhouse touches and clever furnishings. The side medicine cabinets are a particular point of interest—they contain mirrors on the inside faces of the doors.

(opposite) This bathroom is part of the new addition and is designed to be used as a second master (for future use when the kids are grown and have families of their own) but is currently shared by the homeowners' two sons. "The individual vanities are perfect for a bath shared by siblings," Jennifer says. The navy walls and charcoal penny tile in the shower are both fresh and kid-friendly.

## TEXTURAL DEPTH

Jennifer is an expert at using renovation materials like subway tile and shiplap to create texture. Here's how she does it.

- **DEPTH.** Shadow lines, light reflection and the inherent beauty of natural materials are the elements Jennifer uses to create texture and depth.
- **COLOR KEY.** Jennifer likes to keep materials in the same color family. "It keeps the space from looking too busy," she says. "For example, there are four different tiles in this project's master bathroom, but it works because they are all muted neutrals."
- **FINISHERS.** Another aspect of using renovation materials to create texture is the finish. Jennifer says, "We decided to whitewash the interior shiplap in this project, which lets some of the wood grain through, thereby creating depth."
- **A HANDSPUN TOUCH.** Handmade tiles (or machine-made with a handmade look) have uneven surfaces that capture and reflect light. "They can give a flat wall an incredible amount of depth," Jennifer says.
- **OPTICAL ILLUSIONS.** "Using two different kinds of siding on the exterior can create hierarchy, drawing the eye to a specific area," Jennifer says. Just as with the interior finishes, painting the siding all one color will provide the cleanest look. And, similar to fashion, horizontal lines (traditional lap siding) can emphasize width, while vertical lines (such as board and batten) can give the illusion of more height.

