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**L**IFE IS FULL OF SURPRISES. Just ask Leslie and Michael Schreiber.

After living in the northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C., for decades, they decided it was time to downsize in 2012. But after looking at local condos, things took a turn — a turn towards the country.

“This move really took on a life of its own when we started looking at old farms,” explains Michael, adding that he

and Leslie actually put offers on three existing homes before coming across a piece of land for sale in the rolling hills of Bluemont, Virginia. “We didn’t even know the house was there until we came to see the land,” he says.

It was that house that would become the Schreibers’ home, a charming stone farmhouse that had been part of the local landscape for more than 200 years. “We immediately fell in love with the

house,” says Leslie, “but we knew, because of its state, that we’d have to start from scratch or build an addition to make it work for our lives.” Luckily, the love was too strong and the latter won out in the end.

Keeping the historical integrity and style of the home in harmony with the Virginia countryside was important to the Schreibers, so they immediately started thinking about building styles.

They ultimately decided a timber frame could provide the open feel and traditional look they were hoping for and, after meeting Kevin Perdue, representative for West Virginia-based Heavy Timber Truss & Frame at a local Log & Timber Home Show, they were sold on the idea. Soon after, plans for the addition were underway.

“The process moved quickly because Leslie and Michael were so de-

cisive,” says Perdue, allowing the Schreibers and their design team to work together through online meetings and virtual tours of the plans. “If they weren’t home, they’d let us stay at the house to take notes and measurements. This trust allowed us to get through the planning phase quickly and allowed for a level of detail since we were so familiar with the house and the property before the build began.”

Although the project did slow for a few weeks when the construction crew hit rock during the initial excavation, the rest of the build went off without a hitch — and the resulting hybrid of old meets new is nothing short of spectacular.

“The timber goes with the stone from the original house perfectly,” says Leslie, pointing to an intentional design decision that was made to pay respect to the historical



To make the 18th-century stone house work for the Schreibers’ lifestyle while keeping the integrity of the existing structure, they worked with the team at Heavy Timber Truss & Frame to build an expansive timber-frame addition that more than doubled the size of the home. The frame was constructed from fresh-sawn Douglas fir and cypress (used on the exterior and porches) before being sealed with structural insulated panels (SIPs) on the walls and roof. “We also used insulated concrete forms (ICFs) for the foundation,” explains Kevin Perdue, representative for Heavy Timber Truss & Frame, “so the addition is incredibly tight and efficient.”



# Better With Age

A timber-frame addition brings out the best in an 18th-century Virginia farmhouse.

PHOTOS BY JOSEPH HILLIARD



## BUILDING ON THE PAST

When the Schreibers' purchased their little stone farmhouse, they purchased a structure that had been built in the late 1700s — a fact that gave the property instant charm, but did require an added attention to detail during the design and building phases.

"It was important to the homeowners, and to us, that we be considerate of the original house," explains Kevin Perdue, representative at Heavy Timber Truss & Frame. "For example, we found windows for the addition that perfectly matched the windows in the farmhouse. Those kind of details are what makes the finished house really come together and work."

For more photos of the Schreibers' construction process, and for tips on creating your own timber-frame addition, log on to [timberhomeliving.com](http://timberhomeliving.com).

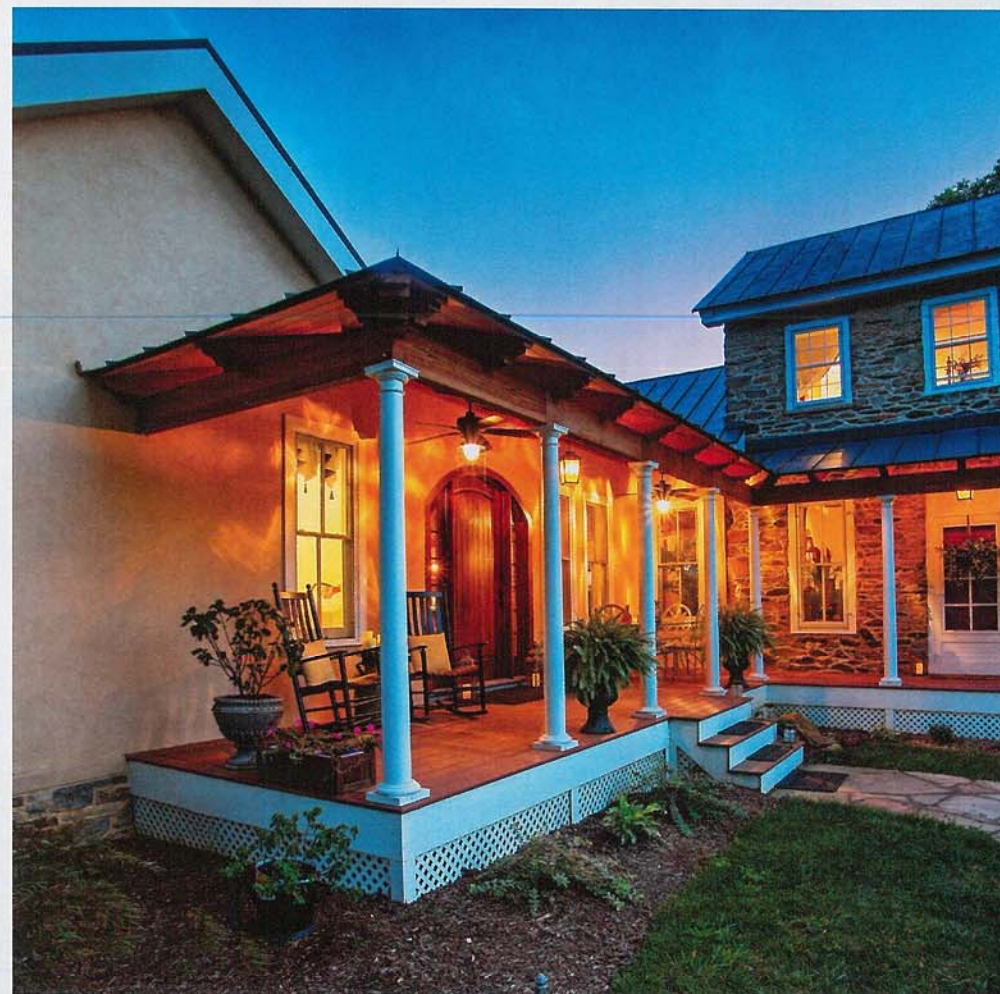


**ABOVE:** The view from the great room showcases the wide-open feel of the 1,900-square-foot main-level addition. Reclaimed barnwood flooring and a fireplace designed to mimic the look of the farmhouse's stone walls bring a time-worn feel to the space.

**OPPOSITE:** The home's front porch was built to cover both the entrance to the addition and the original front door to create a seamless connection. The Schreibers also decided to rehab the home's existing stucco and add new matching stucco to the addition for continuity.

The 8-inch-thick fresh-sawn Douglas fir timbers and tongue-and-groove ceilings make an impact in the open kitchen. Cream-colored drywall, Daltile flooring, granite countertops and knotty alder cabinetry create an old-meets-new combination of materials in the space.





**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** The farmhouse's exterior stone wall was used as a show piece in both the new great room and the existing dining space. ■ The luxurious first-floor master bedroom suite combines beauty and smart design. ■ The charming front porch is all you see of the expansive addition upon approaching the home. ■ To make the most of the Schreibers' spectacular property, 1,600 square feet of deck and patio space were included in the design.

## home details

**SQUARE FOOTAGE:** 1,900 (addition only, main level); 4,600 (addition + existing house)

**DESIGNER; TIMBER PROVIDER:** Heavy Timber Truss & Frame, 800-845-0855; heavytimbers.com

significance of the house. "We love how it's so unassuming from the outside, and then people are so surprised when they step through the front door."

Inside, 8-inch-thick fresh-sawn, Douglas fir timbers with a Danish oil finish comprise the addition, creating soaring ceilings and a wide-open floor plan that's perfect for entertaining guests while still feeling cozy when it's just the two of them. "We love the look of the vaulted ceilings so much that we changed the original design that included a flat ceiling near the entry of the house. Now, the entire frame shares one center roofline, resulting in more space for areas like the powder room and the pantry because there are no load-bearing walls in the middle of the structure."

The finished addition includes an open living/kitchen space, main-floor master bedroom suite and a spacious lower level, complete with a TV room, bedroom and game room. Because of the slope of the property, the lower level gets plenty of natural light and walks right out to the rolling hills and farmland, making it a true second living space for the Schreibers' and their family. "The house has this great flow to it," says Bruce Bode, partner and sales manager at Heavy Timber Truss & Frame. "They took a beautiful property and just made it better."

The Schreibers are just as pleased with their old-meets-new abode. "The finished house has really turned out to be everything we dreamed of and more," says Michael. "We love the openness, the first-floor master bedroom, the mix of old and new — all of it. It's better than we ever thought it could be. We'd never go back." ■

