

WelcomeHome

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A Vintage
MODERN
Farmhouse

A Vintage **MODERN** *Farmhouse*

An open floor plan with a great room concept works beautifully for the busy Platt family with four children. Vintage pieces blend nicely with a fresh and modern look.





He's a little bit modern, and she's a whole lot vintage. Together they make it work beautifully.

By Carol McGarvey, *Photography by* Tim Abramowitz

Blending styles is not always easy, especially when you're building a new home. But Betsy and Matt Platt of rural Dallas County pulled it off in a fine and fresh farmhouse. "We lived in a 1920s home in town for five years, but with four kids, we ran out of bathrooms," Betsy says. "We started out thinking we would remodel and add on. But in the end, it just made more sense to build a new home."

With the help of Colin King of K&V Homes and Curt Riesberg of Plum Design, the couple came up with a plan for a house on five acres that maximized every inch for their busy family of six. Betsy incorporated lots of vintage finds to repurpose from flea markets, shops, and "junquing" excursions with friends. And although Matt favors a clean, spare look, he has incorporated some special old finds in the new house, too. "He's really more into vintage pieces than he realizes," Betsy says with a smile.

Together they have pulled off a pleasing mix.

Visitors in the front entry know they have come to a welcoming place. An old gilded mirror frame holding a square of blackboard with the saying "You Are My Sunshine" sets the tone for the home.

Open plan

The first floor has an open-plan great-room for living area, kitchen with dining area, and a more formal dining room area. It also features a sitting room and the master bedroom suite.

The color scheme of shades of gray with abundant white woodwork creates a clean, subtle contemporary look. Repurposed accessories cozy up the feel of an eclectic country home.

Matt, a dentist, has made some special details from wood from the 1880 barn at the farm of his grandparents, the late Francis and Bobbie Platt, near Macksburg, southwest of Winterset.

With the help of his father, Dr. Mark Platt, also a dentist, of Ogden, he created some interesting furniture pieces and details for the new home. "I didn't want to overwhelm the house with barn



This spread, clockwise from top left: The open kitchen allows Betsy to keep tabs on the children. The clean-lined look features white cabinetry, mottled white and gray marble counter for the island, and soapstone on the perimeter counters. • A vintage gilded mirror frame greets guests at the front door with a chalk saying, "You Are My Sunshine," for a heartfelt welcome. • A chunky hood over the gas stove, and glass bell-shaped pendant lights illuminate the work space.

The dining room side of the main floor is separated by a built-in buffet, a feature the Platts liked from their 1920s home. Vintage pieces and a mix of chair styles add to the eclectic look.

More. See even more photos of this beautifully decorated home online at WelcomeHomeDesMoines.com.



wood, but using it here and there helped create the farmhouse look. I think my grandparents would approve,” Matt says.

Betsy grew up in Iowa City and graduated from the University of Iowa, where the couple met. She formerly was a high school business teacher.

The two incorporated some details from their 1920s home for the new design. Pieces such as pocket doors (you can’t slam them, important with four kids), beaded board, transom windows over doorways, lots of woodwork, and a built-in buffet with glass-front doors and a pass-through for serving food work as efficiently as they did nearly a century ago. But now all the woodwork isn’t oak; instead, it’s fresh white.

“It’s an open plan, but, true to the 1920s, columns here and there define the space without walls,” Betsy explains.

Underfoot, hand-scraped wide-plank flooring works well. “We like things pretty, but in reality, we have four children and two dogs,” she says.

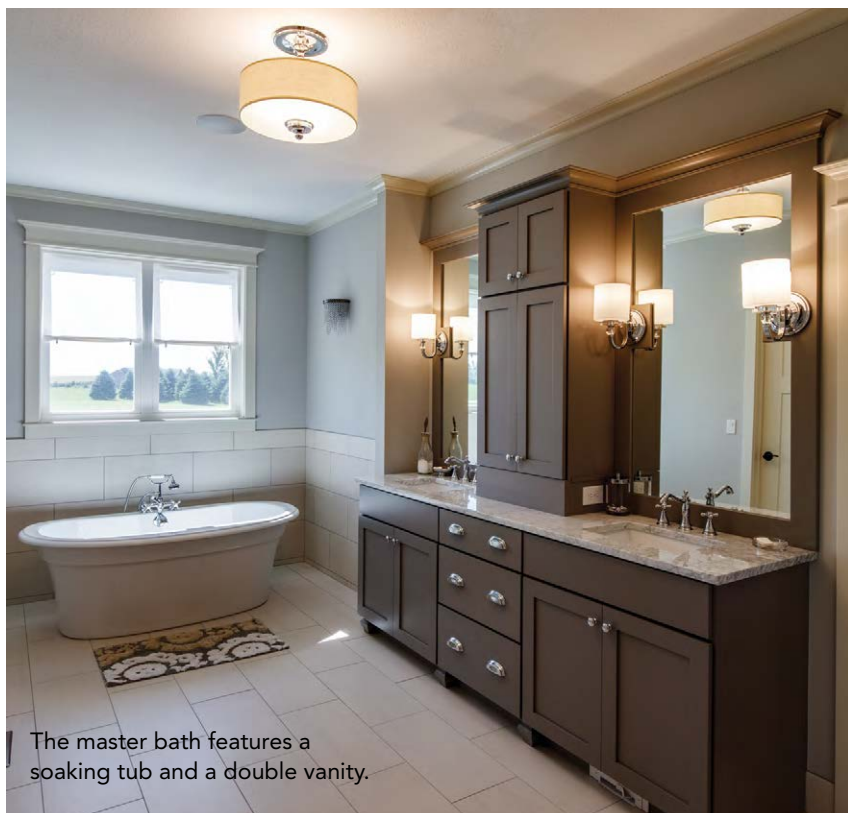
Builder Colin King says the home has about 4,400 square feet between the first and second floors. “Betsy, Matt, and I worked well together coming up with ideas to make the most of their space. It was so fun to work with them, and it was a real team effort with great communication all around.”

This page, from top: The casual dining table is a custom piece, made from old cathedral windows. • An office tucks away off the kitchen complete with letter flap, and dead space in the wall became cubbies for wine bottle storage.





The master bedroom is a refuge for busy parents. The ceiling beams are from Matt's grandfather's farm.



The master bath features a soaking tub and a double vanity.

Vignettes of detail

Betsy has created vignettes of vintage pieces and layers of accessories throughout the home. "I need it to remind me of going to my grandparents' home, and some pieces are actually from their house. I'm not a matchy-matchy person, so it's fun to add pieces as I go." In the great-room, the focal point is a huge stone fireplace that adds physical and visual warmth to the space.

Nearby, the kitchen features white cabinetry, white/gray mottled marble counter on the island made of rustic alder with a dark custom finish, and soapstone on the perimeter countertops. A chunky hood is over the Wolf gas stove. Three glass bell-shape pendant lights from Pottery Barn add a sophisticated touch.

A small office is tucked away to keep the family details and schedules running smoothly. Look closely to see a letter flap on the office door. Betsy found it on the side of a road. Dead space in the nearby kitchen became wine bottle cubbies.

The family dining table is funky and was custom-made for the Platts by designers at West End Architectural Salvage. It was fashioned from



A quiet sitting room is Betsy's special spot. The two-way fireplace on this side also opens in the master bedroom.



old rounded-top 300-year-old cathedral windows. Shutters open to expand the table in width instead of the normal expansion in length. The light that hangs over the table was made from an upside-down wire basket.

A pantry is handy for storing staples, and a mudroom has cubbies and hooks for hanging jackets and backpacks.

At the other end of the great-room is a more formal dining area with the built-in buffet. For larger gatherings, both dining tables have easy access to the kitchen. The table is trimmed with shabby chic columns in various heights and glass terrariums for interest.

A small sitting room on the main floor is Betsy's quiet refuge. She loves to sit in there and read or plan. A stone floor-to-ceiling fireplace in the room opens onto the master bedroom on the other side.

Barn board touches

Matt created a sliding barn door at the opening of the sitting room. In the cathedral ceiling of the master bedroom, he fashioned barn beams at the peak for a warm detail. It's a visual contrast to the white poster bed and simple, clean style of the room and the chandelier for a bit of bling, which is surrounded by a copper orb for a little masculine touch. A covered deck is nearby off the master. The master bath has a freestanding soaker tub and double vanity.

Each floor has a laundry room for practicality. The one near the master suite features a built-in dog kennel and also a pass-through for getting folded clothing closer to the closet space.

The second floor has bedrooms for each of the four children—Caleb, Adelyn, Asher, and Stella. Jack-n-Jill bathrooms lie between the boys' rooms and between the girls' rooms.

Matt used more barn wood to create the headboard and footboard for Caleb's room, along with shelves in the room.

Loft, family room

A practical and fun aspect of the second floor is the "LEGO loft." It's a great spot with a table for building creations. The LEGOs can be left out of the bedrooms and are always accessible, especially for Star Wars fantasizing.

One plan that has worked out beautifully is having a family room on the second floor. "We love it," Betsy says. "In fact, I wish we had made it bigger somehow." With a built-in desk area, the kids can spread out homework projects, and bulletin boards provide space for notes and artwork. Shelves for books and games and a big-screen TV for movies bring the family together.



Next up, Betsy would love to build a small barn to be used for gatherings. "I know how fast time goes. I'd love to have it done by the time we start having graduation parties."

Near the kitchen eating area is a saying that sums up the Platts' philosophy:

*This is the beginning of a new day.
You have been given this day to use as you will.
You can waste it or use it for good.
What you do today is important because
You are exchanging a day of your life for it.
When tomorrow comes,
This day will be gone forever.
In its place is something
That you have left behind.
Let it be something good. ■*

This spread, clockwise from top left: For a little garden art, how about framing some potted plants, literally? • Barn wood and pipe form open shelving in son Caleb's room. • The upstairs family room offers gathering space for watching movies and for doing homework and other school projects. • Frilly and feminine define the two daughters' rooms. • Old fencing turns into a working potting table.

