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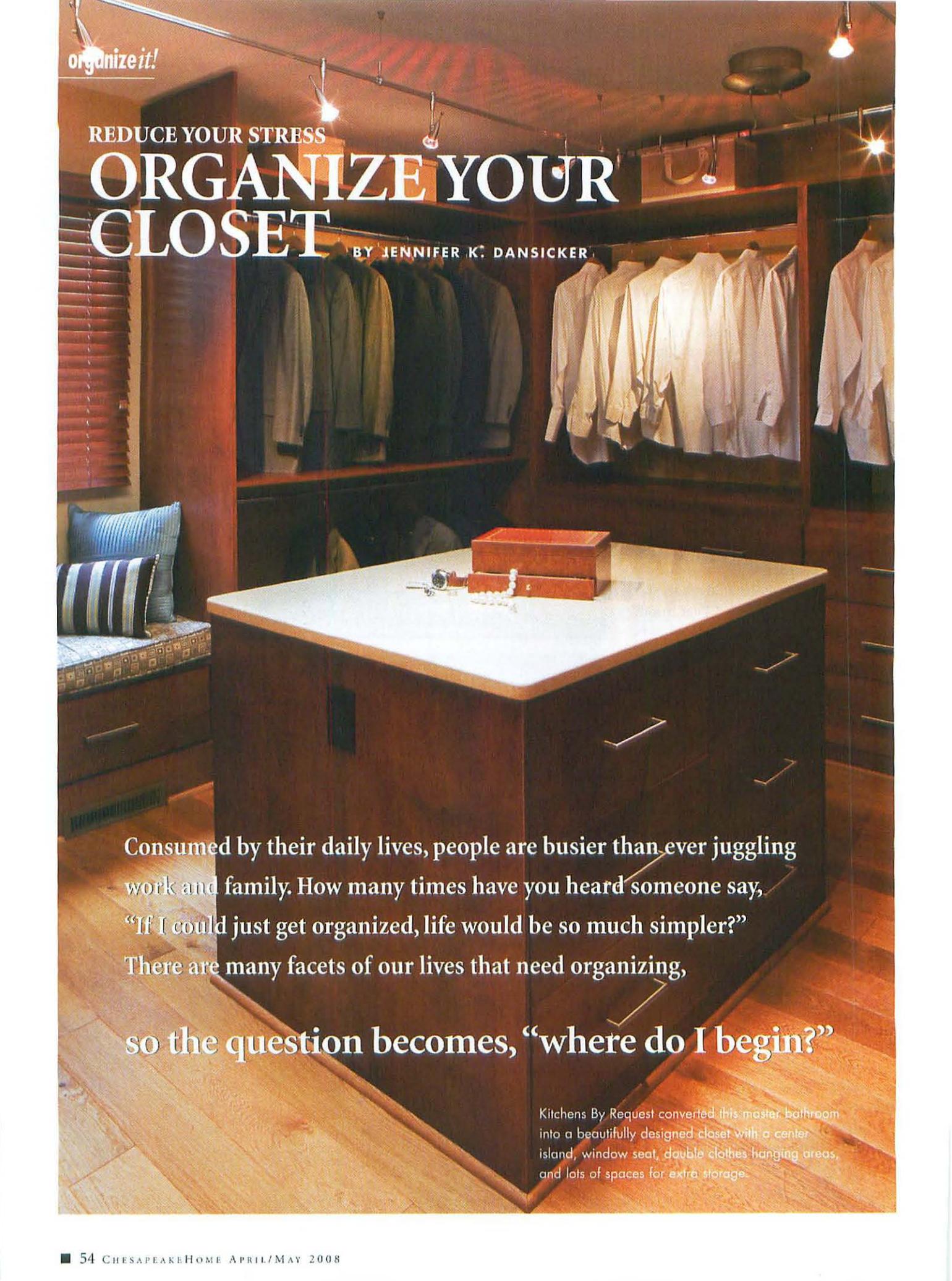
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organizeit!

REDUCE YOUR STRESS

ORGANIZE YOUR CLOSET

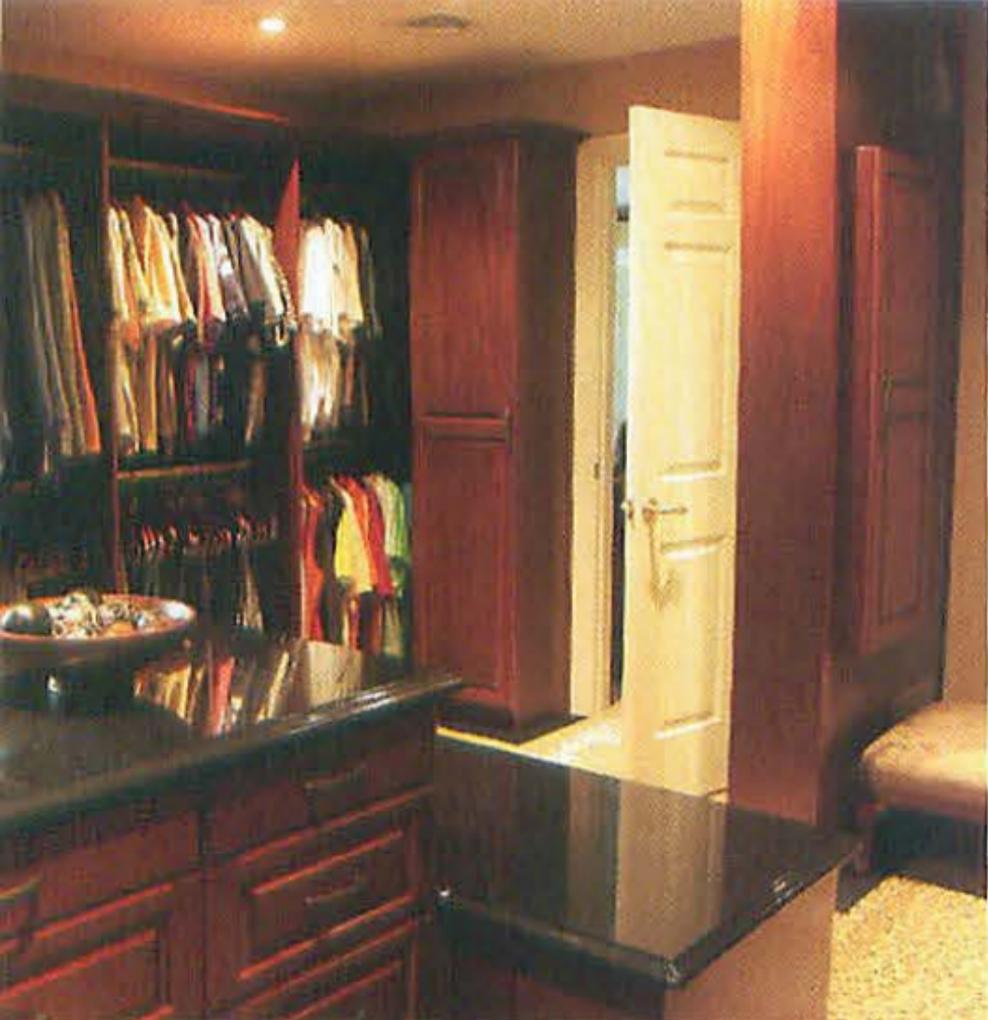
BY JENNIFER K. DANSICKER

A photograph of a modern, walk-in closet. The closet features dark wood cabinetry and a central island with a white countertop. On the island, there is a wooden jewelry box and a pearl necklace. To the left, there is a window seat with a blue and white striped cushion. The closet is filled with hanging clothes, including jackets and shirts. The lighting is warm and focused on the island.

Consumed by their daily lives, people are busier than ever juggling work and family. How many times have you heard someone say, "If I could just get organized, life would be so much simpler?" There are many facets of our lives that need organizing,

so the question becomes, "where do I begin?"

Kitchens By Request converted this master bathroom into a beautifully designed closet with a center island, window seat, double clothes hanging areas, and lots of spaces for extra storage.



This closet from Creative Closets features Mahogany solids and veneers, Uba Tuba granite countertops with a Roman Ogee edge, oil-rubbed bronze hardware and accessories, a fold out ironing board, and numerous locking jewelry and file drawers.

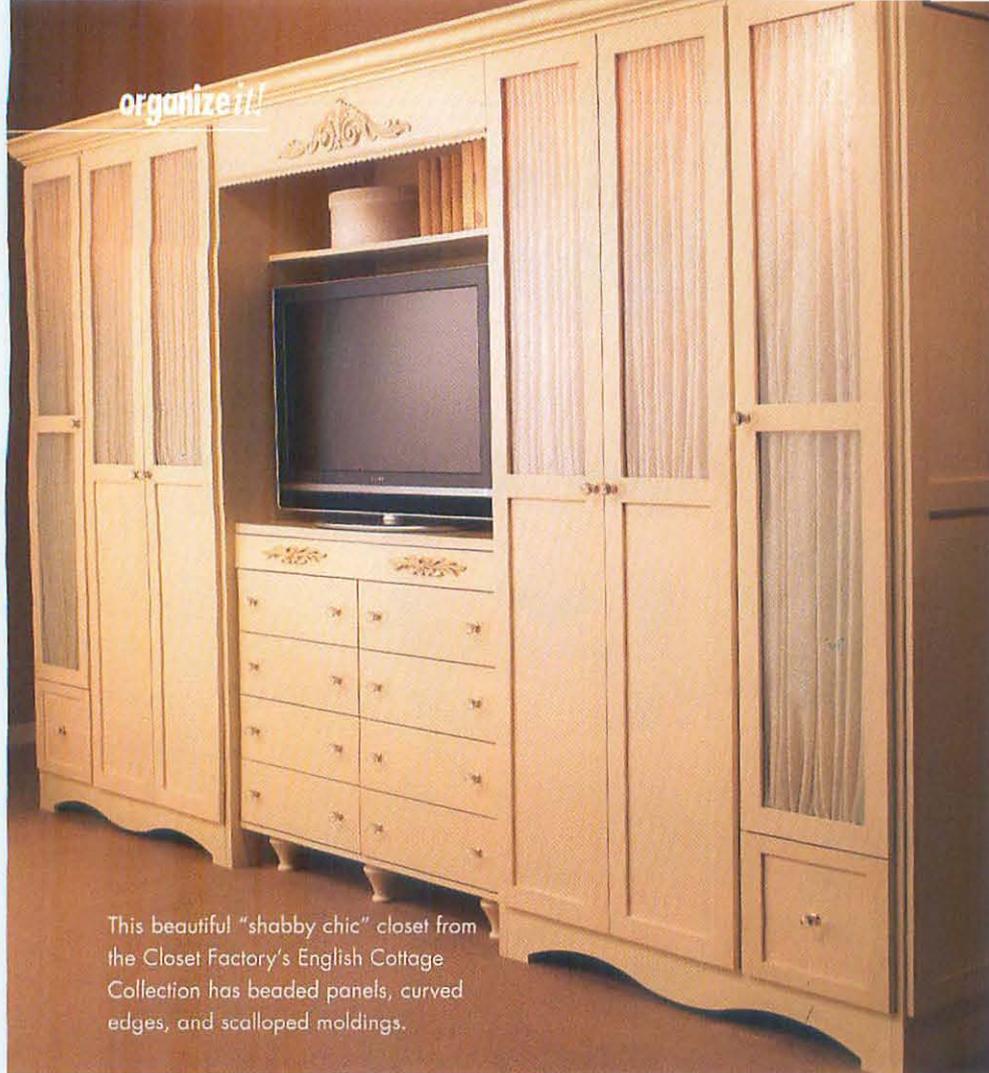
Organizing your life could begin by simply organizing your closet. After all, the first thing many of us ask ourselves when we awake is, “what am I going to wear today?” If your closet is cluttered and unorganized, your stress level increases before the sun begins to rise.

“The number one reason that people seek out closet organization is to simplify their lives. The first thing you do everyday is take a shower and figure out what you want to wear. Simplifying that process helps you start the day out right,” says Blue Arnold, CKD, CBD, co-owner of Kitchens by Request.

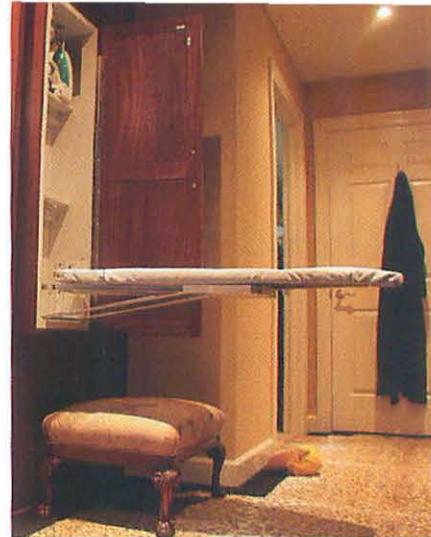
Some people may want to work with a professional organizer if they are feeling plagued with the arduous task of simplifying their closet. “People get overwhelmed doing it on their own. A professional organizer gives you tools to organizing and a process to learn how to maintain your closet by yourself,” says Certified Professional Organizer® Scott Roewer, president of Solutions by Scott and a National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) member.

Simplicity is not the only goal when tackling closet organization. “A lot of people are downsizing, and a whole section of the population is moving into condos. They need to maximize every inch of space they have,” says Don Ray, owner of Aesthetic Closets in Hampstead, Maryland.

organize it!



This beautiful "shabby chic" closet from the Closet Factory's English Cottage Collection has beaded panels, curved edges, and scalloped moldings.



Creative Closets offers solutions for any closet or storage organization challenge including fold-out ironing boards and multi-level drawers for shirts, documents, or jewelry.



Created by California Closets, this closet epitomizes order and serenity with its typical walk-in floor plan, clean and simple lines, and a place for everything.

For many, custom closets are the answer. "I have been able to see generational clients: grandmothers, mothers, and daughters. Our clients grow up with California Closets. It becomes a necessity instead of a luxury when you grow up having one," says Sherry Sansing, president of California Closets in Baltimore and Severna Park, Maryland.

Sansing says that closets can also serve another purpose other than organizing your clothes. "We have created false partitions that actually hide a door to a safe room. People put water, a telephone and all the supplies necessary in case of an emergency. We have also built hidden gun lockers and drawers for important documents."

Custom closets have many unique features including motorized tie racks, fold-out ironing boards, drawers with glass fronts made for easy access to men's shirts and, of course, box and basket storage bins for sweaters. Other common additions to custom closets include jewelry drawers and hampers. "We know how important it is, especially for the

ladies, to have access to their multiple pairs of shoes. We custom cut the shelves so it creates a built-in effect," says Ray.

A standard walk-in custom closet can range from \$1,500 to \$3,000. Each closet is custom-made to fit any size closet. "It is not a cookie cutter design. We sit down and talk with the client and work within a budget. It is their space, their money, and we want the customer to be happy," says Sansing.

In high-end residential homes, people sometimes use spare rooms and convert them into master closets. These high-end closets can cost from \$20,000 to \$30,000 and include clothes storage islands with granite countertops, all-wood custom cabinetry, unique wood flooring, and low-voltage halogen lighting.

"Lighting is very important in the redesign of a closet. Most closets are under lit. They should be properly illuminated so you can see the true color of your clothes. Never use a non-color corrected fluorescent light. Use incandescent or low-voltage halogen lighting, which gives a lot of beautiful white light and shows the true color of your clothes properly," explains Arnold.

Ultimately, organizing your closet can save you money, decrease your daily stress, maximize your closet space, help you make good decisions, and simplify your life. "I think organizing your closet brings order to a part of your life," says Sansing. "People are going in so many different directions, and they have so little time, it's hard. It is a small way to take control of your life. I think control and order is very elusive today for a lot of people." ❖

Jennifer K. Dansicker works on Editorial Special Projects for ChesapeakeHome.

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