



Breathtaking Transformation

of Lakewood Home

by Sheryl Jensen

A young professional couple moved into their Lakewood home in 1997 and lived there nearly ten years before they decided to do a major remodeling project beginning in January of 2007. That project would, in essence, be nearly a complete rebuild before the couple and their three children moved back into the home in March of 2008.

The design for the remodel project was started by the late architect Tim Johnson and completed by architect Chuck Levin after Johnson passed away. Levin worked hard to keep the design on the path that Johnson had begun.

The couple had worked with contractor Bruckelmyer Brothers Construction before on some smaller projects, but this was much more extensive, so much so that the family had to move out of the home for over a year while the project was completed. According to the wife, "It was a year to plan, a year to build, and a year to get settled back in."

Ed Bruckelmyer says, "It is always challenging to use an existing structure as your base. Removing the entire existing roof system, ceilings, and many of the interior



This Lakewood home underwent a complete rebuild on the existing site, requiring the family to move out for a year. One major change was the home's front, designed to be a welcoming entry for family and guests. A huge wall of windows and decks on the back of the home help take advantage of the views of the wooded lot and Lake Superior. The "renovation" included removing the entire roof system, ceilings, and many interior walls, along with adding a new third level.



Above: Airy, light, and open, the kitchen and dining area is family friendly. A granite-topped island is a favorite place for the kids to eat and have snacks. The windows in the dining area take maximum advantage of the view. Doors lead out to the deck and out to the screened porch. Left: The clean, white, custom cabinetry is contrasted with the dark wood of the furniture and the dark-stained wood of the floor. A convenient built-in desk with computer area provides a work space that is still part of the Great Room.

walls, adding a third level above, were all part of the 'plan.' The open stair way wrapping around the stone fireplace added some real challenging aspects to the building. A unique overlook from the third level to the entry also added much interest."

Working As a Team

The couple kept a detailed photo album of the steps of the process along the way, and both were very

Continued on page 60

THEWOMANTODAY.COM 59



Above: A perspective from the landing on the third level gives a commanding view down to the comfortable seating areas in the Great Room and out the prow windows to the gorgeous view. Top Right: The dominant element in the Great Room is the floor to ceiling stone fireplace with the wrap around staircase behind leading to the upper level. The creams and whites in the fireplace also help maintain the lightness of the home's lower level. Right: The screened-in porch is a family favorite spot to gather, have a meal, and enjoy the view.

Breathtaking Transformation cont.

hands on from start to finish. They knew what they wanted and worked side by side with their team of builders and subcontractors to bring their vision to life.

The wife expresses their great admi-

ration for Bruckelmyer and his crew. "They were really great to work with. My husband and I are very detail oriented, and they were there with us every step of the way with exactly what we wanted."

They also worked closely with interior designer Linda Podvin, owner of Courtney and Leigh Interiors, who was very instrumental in many of their design choices. "We were involved from start to finish," says Podvin. "We revised the exterior front entrance of the home to incorporate a covered porch to welcome their guests."

Podvin expresses how pleased she is with the way the remodel turned out in working so closely with the couple. "They were a delightful family to work



Above: A main level powder room is easily accessible from the Great Room. Built-in and track lighting keep the hallway bright.

with. I think together we accomplished the light and airy feeling they were looking for to make the home as welcoming and comfortable as it is."

Changes and Challenges

Bumping out the entry and another area in the front of the house allowed for the addition of a mud room. "This was a very practical and needed addition with three young children in the family," says the wife. Each child has a "locker" with an immediate place to put coats, backpacks, shoes, and odds and ends as they come in the door from the garage. Benches provide a place to sit down to take off shoes and boots.

One of the biggest changes in the remodel was the addition of the mammoth wrap around stone fireplace in the Great Room, a commanding visual element on the main floor. Its mix of travertine stone and brick above also add to the Great Room's elegance.

"The Great Room with its prow window walls, expansive ceiling height, beautiful views of Lake Superior, and

Continued on page 62

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Below: Echoing the kitchen's white cabinetry, the master bath has clean lines and a fresh spa look. Right: The master bedroom is furnished with family antiques. Wraparound windows and a door leading to a private deck also provide an instant connection with the beauty of the outdoors. Below Right: A bubble tub is kept light and airy with the window and the glass blocks.



Breathtaking Transformation cont.

floor to ceiling stone fireplace immediately grab your attention," notes Bruckelmyer.

Kitchen Mix of Function and Beauty

The family spends a good part of their time at home in the kitchen, a central hub of the Great Room. The kitchen has white custom cabinetry (done by Bruck-

elmyer Brothers) with brushed nickel handles for a crisp, clean look.

The granite countertops in a rich chocolate are an elegant contrast to the white cabinetry. The couple had Riverside flooring experiment a bit to get the darkest chocolate stain for the flooring.

One of the wife's favorite aspects of the kitchen is a nearby walk-in pantry with ample storage and granite countertops for more work space. Another family favorite is the large screened-in porch off the dining area and kitchen where the kids love to eat and play.

Main Floor Master Suite

Putting the master suite on the main floor and the children's bedrooms upstairs helps to make it more secluded and

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quiet. A deck off the master suite gives immediate access to the view and the outdoors in a very private space. The master bedroom is furnished with some antiques including a dresser from the husband's grandmother. A bubble tub, large walk-in shower, and ample walk-in closet space help make the master suite functional for the couple.

The Children's Floor

The upstairs is mostly "the kid zone." The boys' bedroom is all about cars and trucks with the "automotive motif" repeated everywhere including in a gas pump dresser. The boys' bathroom has the unique use of rocks as the floor in the shower.

A total feminine contrast is the daughter's room, a lavender and pink "suite" of her own, complete with a little crystal chandelier. Her bathroom is also "girly," done in pink, with lavender and white stripes.

An upstairs laundry room makes dealing with the children's laundry much easier. Their clothes and towels can go directly back to their rooms and bathrooms within just a few steps. An upstairs private study, entered through French doors, is an oasis for work and contemplation. The position of the large desk affords a great view of the lake.

Family Time

Downstairs is the place for family time in a comfortable room for movie watching, with a gas fireplace for cozy comfort on winter's eves. A corner table provides a place for playing games and doing puzzles for family entertainment.

A huge playroom with a girls' half and a boys' half gives the children a great place to play when friends and relatives come to visit. The lower level also includes a guest bedroom and bath, a huge storage area, and an additional laundry room.

Rooms With a View

"We were especially pleased with everything about this project; there is nothing to indicate that there was an existing structure here. From the elegant front entry to the impressive screened-in

Continued on page 64



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Above: Kid friendly throughout, the lower level is a fun space to relax, watch TV, play games, do puzzles, and enjoy a snack, with its convenient wet bar with microwave, sink, and refrigerator. A door from this room leads directly outside. Left: The boys' upstairs bedroom has a fun car motif. Spacious and bright, it is accented with colors of green, red, and blue. Upper Right: A downstairs play area has separate girls' and boys' zones. It is a fun spot when the family's two sons and daughter have friends over to play. Right: A little girl's dream room is done in lavender and white with pink accents.



Breathtaking Transformation cont.

porch with its decks looking over Lake Superior, this home remodeling project is breathtaking to see," states Bruckelmyer.

Nearly every room has a commanding view of the woods and out beyond to the lake. "We really feel like we are looking

over the treetops," say the homeowners. "It is an ever-changing panorama that we never get tired of looking at." ♦

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