

Honoring History



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FEATURE
HOME

Cherishing THE OLD
AND *Embracing* THE NEW
ON *Little Pine* LAKE

WRITTEN BY *Angela Garwin* | PHOTOS BY *Alp Johnson*



In the 1940s, David Johnson's grandfather and his brother Mart purchased over a thousand feet of the east shoreline on Little Pine Lake, as well as much of the adjoining forty acres of woods. Each of them built cottages that still stand today and thus set the stage for what would become a cherished family getaway for decades to come.

His grandparents sold a lot immediately to the south of their own cottage to their dear friends, the Pepple's. Sixty years later, David and Kelly Johnson purchased that land and its cottage back from their son, Jay Pepple.

The Johnson's have three children, two of whom are married, and they have two grandchildren and another on the way. The homeowners knew they would want a place large enough to accommodate the entire family so they decided to tear down the existing structure and build new.

The original structure on the property was roughly 1,800 square feet. The new four-bedroom, three-bathroom home is about 4,400 square feet.

"Kelly put in hundreds of hours planning, researching, choosing, and coordinating," David said. "With that, her personality, her



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preferences, and priorities, and, in essence, her fingerprints are all over the place.”

“From the outset, Kelly was fast friends with Kelli Wegscheid of Harmonious Architecture, who shared her passion for putting those things together, and that yielded a great plan.”

During the building process, the homeowners were able to stay at what they call the “main cabin” that David owns with his sisters, which is next door.

“It allowed us to be onsite during most of the construction, [which was] great and exciting for us to see the progress each day. Maybe

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DAVID JOHNSON | HOMEOWNER

less than ideal for Bill Holtti, our project manager, of Andy Pettow Construction and their subcontractors because we kept tweaking things,” David said with a laugh.

“Lucky for us, everyone enthusiastically worked with us. For example, Jeremy Seifert Electric, Precision Plumbing, BK Heating and Plumbing, Roberts Custom Wood Design, North Country Restoration Stonework, and Precision Landscaping. All of them remained incredibly positive and responsive to our requests.”

Jay Pepple, whom they had purchased the home from, worked closely with the homeowners as the interior designer.

Kelly added, “The project wouldn’t have gone as well without Kelli, Jay, and Bill.”

“I knew I wanted a raised ranch,” Kelly continued. “We wanted a walkout, but in order to do that, we had to situate it in the right place [on the lot], and we had to dig out 10 to 12 feet of dirt.” Precision Landscaping brought in boulders to create a 15-foot high retaining wall.



The cedar accent above the windows on both the roadside and lakeside front of the home makes the house pop and gives the house more definition and warmth.

The homeowners decided to use Brazilian Walnut IPE decking and metal railings with cables for their large deck on the back of the home.

"We've been really happy with that so far," David said of the IPE. "It's durable, and you can stain it or treat it, but you can just let it weather, and it lasts for years."

David continued, "And the outside shower has been used more than we envisioned. It is just very convenient since it's right outside the hot tub room and right off the lake."

The home also features European Kömmerling windows from Heritage Window & Door.





The wide-open kitchen and living room with its vaulted ceiling is a welcoming space for family and visitors alike.

A very unique and distinct wood flooring stretches out throughout much of the main level of the home, except the sunroom, guest bedrooms, and entry.

"The flooring is an antique oak that came out of old barns in Tennessee," Kelly said. They were able to purchase it from Ron Holstrom, and Sharp Edge Floors installed it.

"The coffered ceiling is made of old fence posts we got from Dakota Timber in Fargo," Kelly continued. "We put it in the kitchen, dining room, entryway, the barn door to the mudroom, and the baby gate that goes to the stairs."

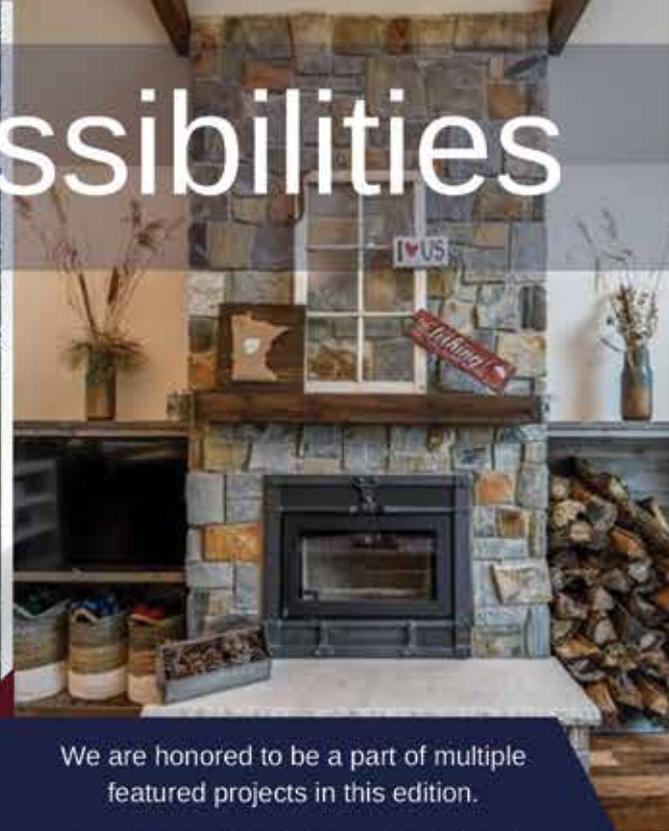
Light gray painted cabinets from Roberts Custom Wood Design hang on the kitchen wall with a beautiful oak range hood accent. Mango wood light fixtures hang above the dark walnut finished kitchen island.



Quartz countertops from B&D Granite Tops were used throughout the entire home. A pantry completes the kitchen.

Light streams in through the large windows and into the living room with fir beams hanging above head. A beautiful stone wood fireplace in the space is from Alex Brick & Stone that can be lit electronically using compressed air to light the kindling.

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Two other bedrooms complete the main floor of the home. One bedroom has a fishing theme with historic family decor, and the other has a college theme, complete with school pennants collected by David's mother when she was looking at colleges.

The homeowners wanted more sleeping space for the home and created a special place for the grandchildren when they came to visit, so they decided to include a bunkroom rich in detail.

Corrugated steel covers the ceiling, and the custom-made bunks provide comfortable sleeping spaces for kids and adults alike.

David's great-grandfather's carpentry tools were incorporated in many different places in the home, including the grab bars on the bunks that were made from drills that are welded together.



"Jay came up with the idea of doing a drink rail along one side and a foot rail below."

DAVID JOHNSON | HOMEOWNER

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Old tool trunk box inserts were added on opposite sides of the lower beds to hold the storybooks for the grandchildren.

There is also a space for the kids to color and play on a library desk in the room.

Inspired by a bar near Walker, Minn., the homeowners decided to create their own boat bar in their basement, complete with a 16-foot Chris Craft boat. While researching for ideas, the Johnson's discovered that many times the boat bar design would require the boat to be cut in half.

"Seemed kind of heartbreaking to cut into the boat and change it that way," David said. "We also wanted our grandkids to be able to sit in the boat and pretend they are fishing or steer the boat."

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“Jay came up with the idea of doing a drink rail along one side and a foot rail below,” David continued.

The custom copper countertops pop against the dark cabinetry and appliances and are balanced out by the elevated copper bottle rail overhead, giving the space the full bar feel.

The bricks used to create the feature wall in the boat bar and bookshelf posts in the new home originally came from Chicago, IL.

The bricks had made their way to Fargo in the early 20th century and then were secured by Jay when a building in Fargo was torn down.

Jay brought them to Little Pine for his father, who spent hundreds of hours in the mid-70s to 80s knocking the mortar off the bricks and stacking them several hundred feet behind his cottage. Sometimes he did so with the help of a young David Johnson.



David stated, “After we bought the place back from Jay, I spent time again knocking the mortar off many of the same bricks.”

The beautiful rafter ceiling in this space also has a fascinating history. Sometime during the mid-80s, Jay was able to obtain redwood that was being discarded during a bank

remodel in Fargo. Recognizing that it was a pretty rare find, Jay saved over a thousand board feet. He brought that wood to Little Pine and it sat in storage for several decades.

“Coincidentally, when my grandparents finished the interior of what we called their ‘guest cabin’, they did so with redwood. Thus,

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I was already nostalgic about trying to use it in the new construction,” David said.

Architect Kelli Wegsheid stated, “Bill [Holtti] was excellent in helping to make all of their ideas come to fruition. The construction details that he helped deal with were very impressive. Overall it was just really a fabulous team of homeowners, architect, and builder.”

The basement has a polished concrete floor, with in-floor heating. Historical sports memorabilia collected over the years by David’s grandfather fills the family room.

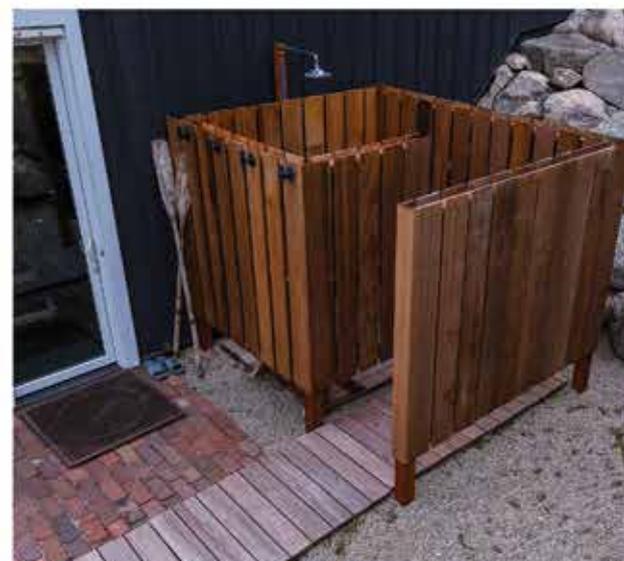
Twenty-six trees were removed from the property, and the homeowners had them milled into a long console table, a bench in their master bedroom, and the second console behind their couch in the living room, all made of oak.

The site milled wood was also used on the wall in the basement bedroom. This space has a beamed ceiling, corrugated steel

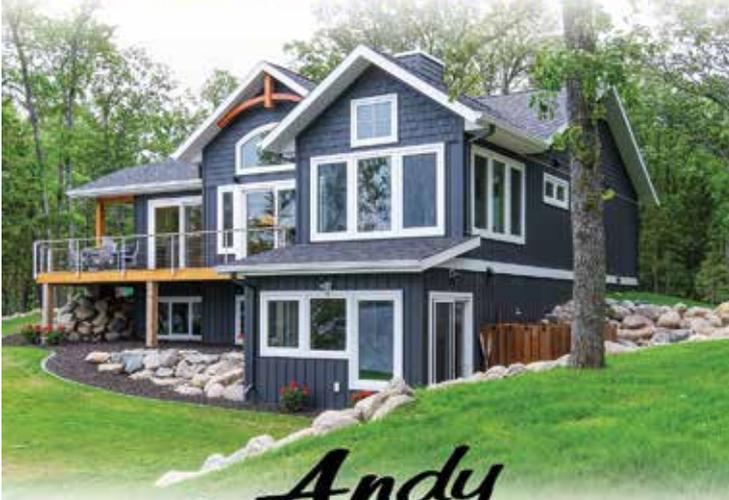
on the wall, and tools on the wall used as hanging pegs.

The lower level of the home also includes a sauna with tools used as door handles.

The Johnson’s have taken great pride in creating their new home while also honoring the past and pieces of their history, and look forward to making many more memories there together in the years to come. ~L&H



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