

FEATURE  
HOME





# Crystal CLEAR

A COUPLES' *Vision* COMES TO LIFE  
IN *Custom* RURAL HOME

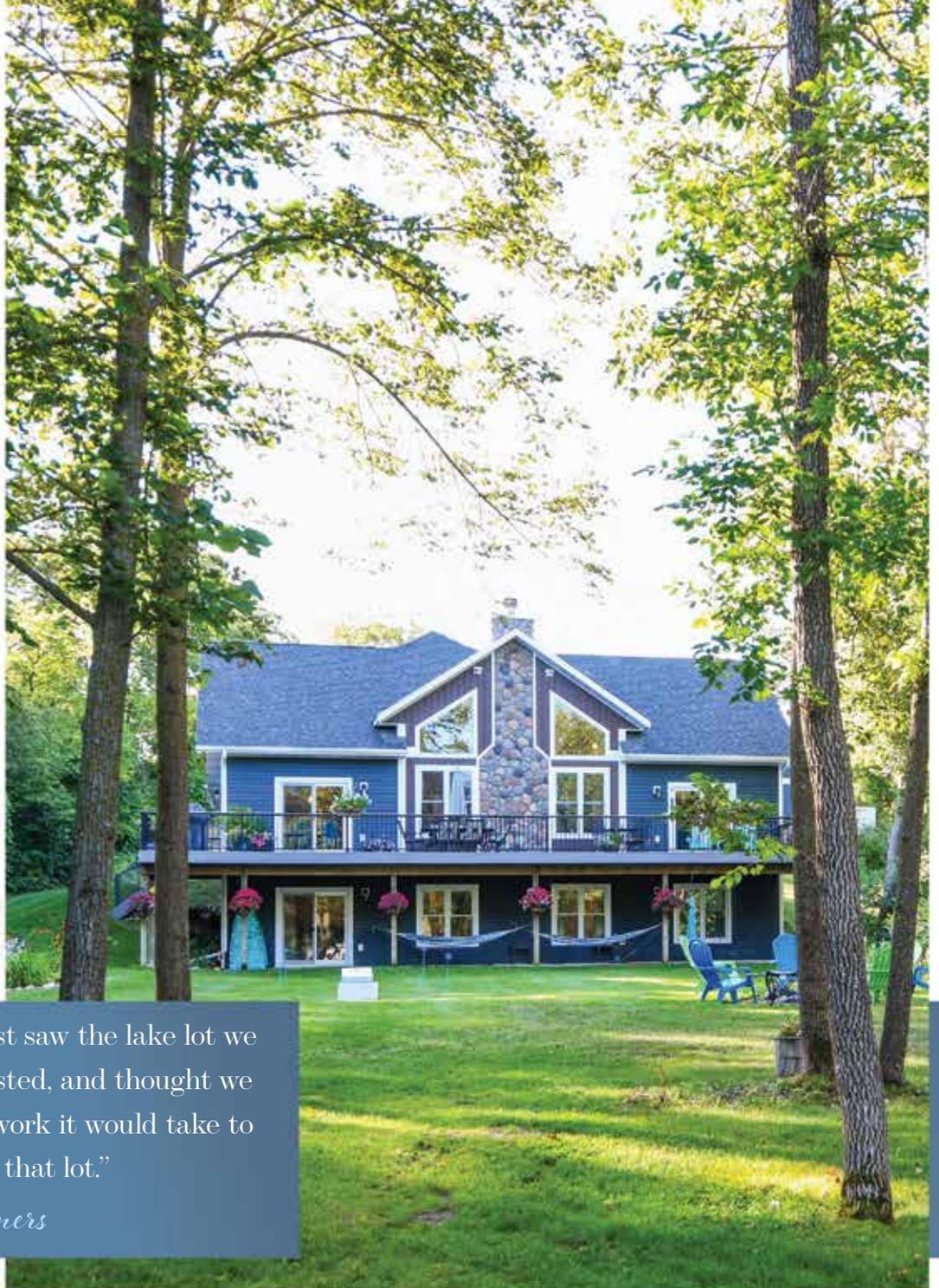
WORDS *Patrice Peterson* PHOTOS *Kip Johnson*

*B*uilding a lake home on an empty lot can be exciting, yet challenging. With no existing structure to provide a snapshot of exactly how a new house will look and feel, sometimes it takes a certain kind of vision to see the full picture.

For one family that relocated to the lakes area in Ottertail County, finding the right lot on the right lake was just the beginning of that vision. They wanted to raise their four children in this house, so it had to be more than a cabin on a lake; it had to be their home.

“When our extended families first saw the lake lot we had chosen, they were flabbergasted and thought we were unaware of the amount of work it would take to develop and build on that lot. They just couldn’t see the vision that we could see. It has been fun watching their reactions now.”

To design the home, this couple wanted to find an architect or designer who could take their drawings, along with their budget, and then add the artistic touch and expertise that would make the house project come together for them.



“When our extended families first saw the lake lot we had chosen, they were flabbergasted, and thought we were unaware of the amount of work it would take to develop and build on that lot.”

*The Homeowners*



While walking down Main Street in Perham one day, they noticed the sign for Harmonious Architecture and stopped in to ask a couple of questions.

“Right from the start, Kelli Wegscheid was very helpful, professional, and accommodating. We had the nuts and bolts figured out and she definitely added that artistic touch we were seeking.”

Wegscheid describes the home as cozy, welcoming, and filled with kids, dogs, and happiness.

# Harmonious ARCHITECTURE



*Creating more than a lake home...  
designed for making memories.*



Serving Detroit Lakes, Perham, Ottertail and Park Rapids Lakes Areas

[www.HarmoniousArchitecture.com](http://www.HarmoniousArchitecture.com) 218.346.0081

"They came to me with scale drawings on grid paper," says Wegscheid, AIA, architect and owner of Harmonious Architecture. "We refined it, but they had their initial ideas sketched out as far as where everything would be located, with the specific sizes included. We fine-tuned it and tweaked it from there."

Positioning this four bedroom, two-level house on the lot in order to take advantage of the walk-out to the lake, however, would mean a steeper driveway up to the road. They worked together with both Wegscheid and

their builder, Eric Munson, owner of Emcon, Inc., in Nevis, Minnesota, to solve this issue. "When the homeowners came to me, one of their requirements was that we start the construction right away, which would involve a winter build," says Munson. "A winter build has its own set of challenges, but one of the most unique aspects of this project was the placement of the house on the lot."





That wood-burning stone fireplace is a focal point in the living area, which is an open room with high ceilings, multiple windows, and a view to the lake. The homeowners wanted the fireplace as part of their natural design for the front of the house, even though most fireplaces aren't usually located on the lakeside wall.

"Our vision was to have it as a centerpiece. There was a lot of discussion about moving it to an inside wall, but this is what we wanted. For us, our families have always had a wood-burning fireplace with a large sofa surrounding it; it's the spot where everyone gets

"Right from the start, Kelli Wegscheid was very helpful, professional, and accommodating. We had the nuts and bolts figured out and she definitely added that artistic touch we were seeking."

*The Homeowners*

He says they had many conversations about the lot elevation and how to maximize that placement.

"They wanted the walk to the lake to be more level, but we had to take the steepness of the driveway into consideration," he continues. "Finding the right spot and splitting the difference between those two factors was critical."

Emcon, Inc. had been highly recommended to the homeowners by a close friend and they weren't disappointed.

"We were very pleased with Eric and his crew. They added so many extra touches and had such great attitudes. Andrew Burton, in particular, did all the concrete work, was the lead on the framing and roofing, and did all the hand grouting on the entire fireplace, which is a work of art."

An advertisement for Northland Lumber Co. of Park Rapids. The top part features the company name in a stylized font. Below is a photograph of a two-story blue house with a grey roof and a two-car garage. A banner at the bottom of the photo reads "PROUD FEATURE HOME CONTRIBUTOR". To the right is the logo for Bayer Building Products Inc. At the bottom, the address "1001 1st St W | Park Rapids, MN | 218.732.1423" is listed, along with the tagline "Proudly serving Park Rapids and the surrounding area for nearly 30 years!".

together, hangs out, and talks in front of a crackling fire. We have so many memories based around that ambiance, and we wanted that to be part of our family's memories."

When they first began putting together their personal drawings for the house they wanted to build, they borrowed several elements of inspiration from a favorite family cabin, particularly the layout of the kitchen, along with a walk-in pantry. From there, they took into account a smattering of Pinterest and HGTV ideas, sliding barn doors, some shiplap, some stone, and each of their own "non-negotiables," along with the personal needs for a busy family of six that also likes to host large group gatherings. They describe the home's style as "Coastal Craftsman Farmhouse."

Their pantry, for instance, has an eight-foot wood countertop. While probably less common than pantries that are focused on storage space, this one fits their needs for an expansive food prep area to accommodate the large groups when their extended families get together. It's also the perfect spot to come in from the garage and unload groceries.



"We were very pleased with Eric and his crew. They added so many extra touches and had such great attitudes."

*The Homeowners on Emcon, Inc.*



The rest of the kitchen, decorated with shades of blues and grays, is accented by a dramatic fleur-de-lis design in the tile backsplash above the range. The unique lighting fixtures also make a style statement.

Finding the exact lighting they wanted took a great deal of time to research, shop, and carefully select each fixture as product shortages often forced them to order from several different sites.

Choosing their waterproof, low maintenance vinyl plank Metroflor flooring was a little simpler. With the amount of wet or snowy kids coming in from the outside, it was the perfect choice for this active family.

In the children's bedrooms, they wanted to keep the bed space simple and uncluttered, so the closets were built large enough to not only hang clothes, but also to include the dressers. This allows more space in the room and also keeps clothes tucked away in the closet area.





“Part of why we love our home is that it reflects our vision and we did so much ourselves, putting our own sweat into it. We were so involved, and it has made it all the more special to see the progress and the end result.”

*The Homeowners*



On the exterior, the homeowners chose a Royal vinyl siding from Northland Lumber in a shade of blue called Edgewood, and Thermo-Tech windows. An aluminum wrap-around deck railing from Westbury spans the structure and accentuates the stone fireplace in the center.

"The majority of the compliments we get from people are about our deck. Some people seem to have poor luck with composite decking, but with a builder like Eric, he gave us a great deal of help in making those kinds of choices. He suggested MoistureShield as an option. We had never heard of this, but it was an awesome choice. It looks like a fancy, expensive deck, but it was moderately priced and has held up well."



Wegscheid adds that one aspect of this home that makes it more personal for the family is that the homeowner put his own craftsmanship into several areas.

"He does a lot of woodworking," she explains. "He built the mantel from heirloom wood, and he also built much of their bedroom furniture. For the countertops and shelving in the pantry, he used wood from a Norway Pine that they cut and milled from their previous home."

Besides the personal touches added with the woodworking, the couple also installed



their own landscaping, rock wall, and sprinkler system.

Building this rural home on a new lake lot came with its own set of complications. Along with the need to add a well and a septic tank with a drainfield, a small area of wetlands near the lake had to be resolved through the county's Wetland Delineation. In the end, it was all worth it, and there isn't much they would change about the way they built this home.

"Part of why we love our home is that it reflects our vision and we did so much ourselves, putting our own sweat into it. We were so involved, and it has made it all the more special to see the progress and the end result." **L&H**





**JOHNSON  
& SON  
WELL DRILLING**

**218.837.5500**  
**SEBEKA, MN**

- HORIZONTAL / DIRECTIONAL DRILLING
- PUMPS & REPAIR -CAMERA INSPECTION
- WELL ABANDONMENT -HORIZONTAL BORING
- IRRIGATION WELLS UP TO 12"

Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning, HVAC, Boilers,  
Process Piping, Pipefitting, Fabricating, Welding, In-Floor Heat

**LEADING  
EDGE**

Water  
Heater  
Service &  
Install

19974 129th Ave N  
Park Rapids MN  
**MECHANICAL**



[www.leadingedgemech.com](http://www.leadingedgemech.com)  
**218.237.5125**

## COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT:

Harmonious Architecture | ARCHITECT  
• View our ad on page 81

Emcon | BUILDER, MASONRY, EXCAVATING, FLOORING INSTALL,  
DRYWALL, TILE, FIREPLACE

Johnson & Son Well Drilling | WELL  
• View our ad on page 89

Eric Olsen | INSULATION

Leading Edge | HVAC, PLUMBING  
• View our ad on page 89

Homeowners | PAINTING, LANDSCAPING

T&S | DRYWALL

Topline Electric | ELECTRIC

Northland Lumber | BUILDING MATERIALS, SIDING  
• View our ad on page 83

Dirk Currier | TILE

Wayne King | GUTTERS

Lyla the Dog | SECURITY

