

February 2022

# *Lake Panorama* **TIMES**

# **HOME IMPROVEMENT**

## **GUIDE**

Learn how Lake Panorama residents transform their homes and properties into beautiful living spaces.

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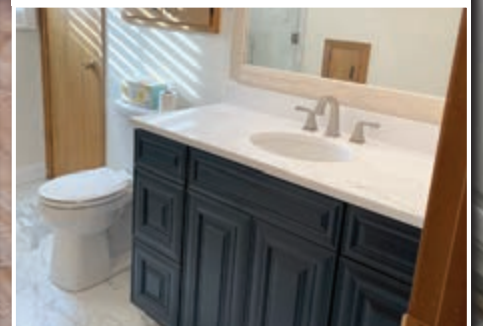
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## PUBLISHER'S COLUMN

### The home improvement projects continue

By Shane Goodman | Publisher

As Jolene and I remodel the upstairs of our Lake Panorama home, we commented to each other how we were looking forward to the day when we won't have all these projects to work on. The real question is, will that day ever come?

The major work will certainly end once the windows, framing and flooring are completed, right? But then there are all the little improvements that come next — replacing ceiling fans, installing new towel racks, upgrading light fixtures. And then it's about time again for new concrete, siding or shingles. The list may change, but it will never end.

That's what makes this time of year so important. Most all of us want to get these tasks completed in the dead of winter so we can have fun when the warm weather comes around. And, although there are some projects we can do ourselves, many others require the use of professionals.

So, if you are in the middle of a few household projects right now, we feel your pain. If you want some ideas for your next project, you will find some in this guide. If you need help to finish the ones you started, you will find many professionals who can do the work for you.

Yes, the home improvement projects may never end, but summer is coming soon, and we all need a reason to play.

Thanks for reading. ■

*Shane*

*Lake Panorama* **TIMES**



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# If you can dream it...

Additions pose unique challenges but are worth it, say the Dilleys



The Dilleys wanted the additions to their home to blend with the existing house. It took some time before they found a contractor who said it could be done.

John and Jennifer Dilleys' story of their beautiful Lake Panorama home is one of perseverance and wind. Yes, wind.

The Dilleys purchased a lot near Lake Panorama in 1984 when their boys, Joe and Jake, were 5 years and 9 months old, respectively, after having been "blown away" by what they saw while staying in a family member's condo on the lake.

There, across the main basin of the lake, was a seemingly perfect tract of land, complete with majestic pine trees and a locale to die for.

"We just kept staring at it with our binoculars," Jennifer remembers.

The drove toward the site otherwise known as "Christmas Tree Point," and, once they arrived, to their pleasant surprise, they found a "For Sale" sign on a piece of land by the road. The couple didn't know where the property lines were, so they walked the lot and heard the familiar "swoosh" of wind blowing through the pines — a lovely sound, especially to a family of snow skiers. It was the sound of perfection, and they knew: This is what they wanted.

Five years after purchasing the lot, they built a home and moved to the lake house permanently. The couple completed work on the interior of the house to make it more of a year-round feel for both of them and, by 2019, were deciding how to give the exterior the same facelift that



Jennifer and John Dilleys first purchased a lot on Lake Panorama in 1984. Their latest additions flow seamlessly from the original home.



# WHOLE HOUSE

the interior had already received. Then COVID hit, which sped up their building plans considerably.

“Neither of us felt ready to completely retire, but we also did not want to jump through the hoops that would be required when and if we reopened our Clive clinic,” says Dilley of the couple’s counseling clinic. “Teletherapy was working well for our patients during the pandemic, so the time was right to add on a couple of office areas to our home, which also included moving the laundry room from the lower level and making a large multi-functional closet area off the master bath. At the same time, we wanted to enclose our front roadside stoop to become a more gracious entry.”

After showing their rough sketches to several contractors, the couple was told to give up the dream of adding any more rooflines to those already existing. Most said it couldn’t be done or that it would end up looking “tacky.” But the Dilleys persevered.



Massive windows provide a stunning view of the lake. Wooden ceilings carry through the main house and additions.

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Jennifer and John Dilley wanted a welcoming front entry, so they enclosed their stoop area and added seating that serves as a reception area with a lot of natural light.

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The additions to the Dilley home have many windows, including a large circular one that lets light stream into a cozy area where a fireplace/television combination are the focal point.

“We disagreed and hired a structural engineer to design how we could ‘connect the parts,’ ” Dilley says. “Now we were more officially ready to go, but there still wasn’t a contractor willing to take it on.”

Enter Andrew Webster, owner of Soap Stone Construction. Webster spent 90 minutes one day looking at the original dog-eared blueprints and their new structural engineer’s drawings, while learning of their needs and desires. It wasn’t long before Webster uttered those magic words: “I think I’ve caught your vision. Give me a week to draw it out and get the sketches to you.”

Exactly one week later, he delivered, sending the couple an email with pictures of what the finished product would look like. Soon, the work began.

“Our home is loaded with windows, and the project required removal of three of those, but the crew was able to recycle those three windows into the new additions,” Dilley says. “Once the additions were complete, we requested that Andrew — and our wonderful plumber Stew Firebaugh — add a second full bath in the lower level area of the former laundry room; it was an ‘add-on afterthought’ and required cement work, etc., but was

completed quickly and efficiently.”

With so many “moving parts” in the year-long project, the couple braced themselves for unwelcome surprises. But they never came, thanks in part to the diligence of Webster. The additions to the home were finished and were exactly what they had envisioned — an updated home that didn’t look updated.

“One of our largest concerns was that the finished additions blend seamlessly with the existing home — from correct flooring transitions, to vaulted wood ceilings



# WHOLE HOUSE



Accents in the Dilley home include a propeller ceiling fan, antiques and sliding doors, at right.



In the process of reconfiguring their home, the Dilleys moved the laundry room into an area with plenty of storage.

and car-sided walls; from matching the existing kitchen cupboards and stone splash and granite countertops, to using identical window and door trim,” Dilley says. “And, sure enough, the biggest compliment we’ve received from family and friends is that the final home product looks like it’s always been here. Now that’s a feat.” ■



The kitchen of the Dilley home features contrasting materials complementing each other.



# A long time coming

Jo Juhl-Johnson's recent bathroom renovation is a project that's been 20 years in the making.



Jo Juhl-Johnson was tired of her outdated bathroom with its linoleum floor and dated fixtures.

The 85-year-old Jo Juhl-Johnson, who lives on Lake Panorama in the summer and is an Arizona snowbird for the remainder of the year, had been thinking long and hard about what she would put in her new bathroom, should that “right time” ever happen. Needless to say, when it did happen, and she met with Billy Donovan of Donovan Construction, she knew exactly what she wanted.

“I had linoleum floor and wanted that upgraded, and, in the shower, I wanted marble,” she says. “I figured, I’m 85 years old, and if I’m ever going to have it, it’s going to be now.”

Everything in the bathroom was been upgraded, includ-

ing new cabinetry she purchased not from a big box store, but locally at Lake Lumber in Panora.

“I told Billy I wasn’t impressed with Home Depot and all those,” she says. “I just wasn’t impressed. He said, ‘The best is right here in town.’ And I’m very pleased with it. Great workmanship.”

The cabinetry is a dark navy blue, which offsets the tile perfectly.

“It pops,” she says. “I had seen it, and it jumped out at me. I don’t like boring.”

Because she’s currently wintering in Arizona, Juhl-Johnson has yet to see the finished product in person. But

The bathroom’s cabinetry is a navy blue, which Jo Juhl-Johnson says is a great pop of color.



Jo Juhl-Johnson is looking forward to returning from Arizona to see her newly renovated bathroom.



# BATHROOM

AFTER



Jo Juhl-Johnson wanted a bathroom that would amaze, and she says she got it, including her dream marble shower.

that’s not to say she hasn’t been kept up to date every step of the way. She has been, and that “eyes on” approach has been exactly what she wanted. Dozens of photos have been sent to her from Donovan to meet her approval. And approving she’s been. And amazed. The speed of which Donovan revamped the room was nothing short of startling, she adds.

“He just put it together so fast and so complete,” she says. “He’s done work for me before, and he’s just amazing. It’s just as I imagined it would look.” ■

AFTER



An eye-catching floor replaces the linoleum floor that Jo Juhl-Johnson wanted upgraded in her bathroom.

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# A room for all seasons

Jeschkes add relaxing space to enjoy nature.

After moving into their home at Lake Panorama, Conni Jeschke would take a moment every now and then to toss a little nudging hint to her husband, Tom. Something about “putting a little room in the back,” as Tom recalls.

“Finally, one day, I gave in,” he jokes. “We got to talking about it and decided the space would be a screened-in porch, and, if we were going to do that, we might as well have a vaulted ceiling, which is how it ended up being a four seasons room,” Tom says.

Soon the designs were drawn, and the search began for a contractor. Upon the recommendation of a friend, the couple chose Dylan Laughery, owner of D.L. Customs.



Tom and Conni Jeschke wanted to take full advantage of the beauty behind their house and decided a four-season room could be added.



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# FOUR-SEASONS ROOM



Tom and Conni Jeschke spend a portion of every day in their newly added four-seasons room.

Work began on the scheduled eight-week project, but the nationwide material and labor shortages that hamstrung most industries caused some unforeseen delays. It was no one's fault. All hands were tied. Eight weeks soon turned



A stone-faced fireplace makes the four-season room cozy year-round.



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# FOUR-SEASONS ROOM

into six months. Finally, the work was complete, much to the delight of the Jeschkes.

The finished room is 18-foot by 22-foot with seven, 5-foot windows providing the space with an abundance of natural light. The view into the trees beyond them is great as well.

“We have tons of birds and squirrels and fox,” Tom says. “We’re really enjoying the room.”

After having lived in a large home previously, downsizing to their Lake Panorama home took a bit of an adjustment at first, Conni says. Their new backyard was beautiful, however, and a room to sit and enjoy it and all that Mother Nature has to offer would be a wonderful addition.

“We both are golfers and hike and enjoy birds and our dogs,” she says. “We added a deck off it so we can grill or sit out there and have dinner.”

The room features wood flooring, a car-siding ceiling with beams, and framed-in windows with black trim. Oriental rugs, the fireplace and couches give the space a comfortable log cabin or lodge feel.

“I like to watch HGTV and all the home improvement programs, so I had a lot of ideas, and it was just a matter of whether Dylan could do all of them,”



An abundance of windows provide a stunning view of the trees and wildlife abundant behind the Jeschkes’ home.

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# FOUR-SEASONS ROOM

Conni laughs. “He said, ‘Maybe stay off that Internet a little bit.’ ”

First on the list of must-haves for the room was a stone-faced fireplace, built with stacked stone and featuring a large wooden mantle.

The finished product was just what they’d anticipated it would be, thanks to the craftsmanship of Laughery and Conni’s eye for decorating.

“She and I designed our other home that we lived in for 16 years, then moved here and remodeled it,” Tom says.

The two spend upwards of an hour a day in the room, enjoying all that it has to offer.

“It’s an integral part of the house,” Tom says. “It’s not just like it’s there. We’ve had a lot of parties, as it can hold about eight to 10 people comfortably. So we like it a lot. We think it’s a nice addition to the house.”

A seamless addition, that is.

“That was one of the things we wanted, too. We wanted it so that, when people came over, they didn’t say ‘nice addition,’ ” Tom says. “It looks like it’s always been here.” ■



Comfortable seating and plenty of natural light mean the Jeschkes spend time daily in their four-seasons room.

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# A home for empty-nesters

Kitchen is the place for entertaining, say the Tills.

Recently, when Chad Till and his wife, Sarah, looked ahead at their rapidly approaching life as empty-nesters, they knew that moving out of state was out of the question. Johnston was home, but they wanted something more.

“We know we want to stay in Iowa long-term, just not in Johnston, so, once the kids got out of high school and move on to college, we were looking for a place to pick up and move to,” Chad says. “We owned a lot on Lake Panorama for seven or eight



Custom cabinetry and a large island are the highlights of the kitchen, say the Tills.



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## KITCHEN

years but had never really done anything with it. We finally just decided that, yeah, that's where we wanted to end up."

The family, which includes their children, Audrey and Blake, has been in Johnston for more than 20 years. Chad and Sarah work at Corteva Agriscience there.

The plan for the Lake Panorama site was to not have just a week-end home but a long-term home, Chad says.

Ironically, the pandemic has played a role in shaping the couple's future as well. Home offices became necessities, not just luxuries, and it caused a shift in the construction plans, which were completed by Dylan Laughery of D.L. Customs.

"The beauty of that is now we can be virtual, we don't have to come into the office," Till says. "The house is a simple, walkout ranch. We had Dylan do the first floor, and we left the basement unfinished, as I was going to do that myself as I had time. The



The Till family, Sarah, Audrey, Blake and Chad, has made their home at Lake Panorama.



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# KITCHEN

plan was to have a couple of extra bedrooms down there, maybe have a little office space. But now that my wife and I are both able to work remotely, we're going to have a couple of offices down there for us so that we can be home-based from the basement."

The pandemic did cause some supply chain and worker shortage issues in the 11-month project, but Till is pleased with how things turned out. The new space is just over 1,700 square feet with two bedrooms and two bathrooms.

"We didn't want to build a mammoth thing that we'd have to take care of when we got older," Till says. "We wanted it to be something a little more simple to take care of."

Most everything, as planned, is on the main level, including Till's favorite part of the house, the kitchen. Laughery's custom cabinetry work was one of his biggest selling points to the Tills, and his work in the new house is a shining example



Chad and Sarah Till had custom cabinets installed, choosing a traditional look with a modern flair.



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# KITCHEN



A deck off the back of the Till house offers a wonderful view of the lake, and, since it is partially covered, the view can be enjoyed even when it's raining.

with its traditional, yet modern flair.

“It’s our favorite spot,” Till says. “We have a huge island. That’s where people gather, and we just wanted to make sure we had enough space there when we are cooking and visiting.”

An 18-foot by 30-foot deck was built off the back of the house as well, with half of it covered. Till says the couple spends as much time as they can there, continuing with projects as they see fit, including most recently installing a 120-foot retaining wall on one side of the home and another smaller one on another.

The nice surprise was how well the home fit the lot, Till says.

“We’ve had subcontractors tell us that they didn’t even know this lot was here,” he says. “It was totally covered in trees. But, once we got those out and did some excavating work to change the lay of the hill a little bit, it fits in the lot perfectly, and we have a great view out over the cove.” ■

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