



# Innovation and Collaboration

## How Big Minds and a Little Piece of Blue Quartz Transformed a Lakefront Cottage

WRITER | CARRIE BISTLINE    PHOTOGRAPHER | W. PATRICK CHAMBERS

What some would define as a challenging project is just the norm for Jeff Stille, founder and owner of Stille Construction. When asked to take a look at this Spring Lake home, Jeff happily agreed to the major reconstruction opportunity. The 1960's lakeside cottage soon became a two-story, five-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath masterpiece with multi-level outdoor decking.

This house was a collaborative project through and through. Jeff worked closely with the owners, architect, interior designer and his own team of subcontractors to form a dream home built as much for beauty and comfort as convenience.

Originally, this home was used as a vacation home and rented out when not in use. As the owners began spending more time in it, however, they decided it needed a transformation. After working with architect, Kevin Edison of W.L. Perry Associates, LTD, a grand blueprint was formed and it was time to find a builder. Enter Stille Construction.

"Transformation and remodeling projects are always interesting to me. Even though the process is challenging, it's extremely rewarding when you see the final product - and the look on your client's faces," says Stille.

After Stille accepted the challenge, the ideas started flowing,

from a martini-shaped sink with a toothpick-and-olive faucet on the main-floor to the impromptu addition of the rooftop deck. Not in the original plans, the rooftop deck was Stille's spark of genius. The deck flooring is made of recycled tire, providing a porous, non-skid, heat-resistant surface perfect for quick drainage and easy maintenance. More impressive is the glass railings from City Glass & Mirror. Because the glass is illuminated with remote-controlled-LED lighting used to display varying colors with multiple degrees of animation, Stille believed using this glass would enhance the rooftop lounging experience exponentially. We believe he was right. Throw in an outdoor bar and generous amounts of seating encircled by a living garden, and the utopic recipe is all but complete.

If rooftop reveling proves to be a little chilly, however, the rooftop access door allows easy reentrance to the house, where a gas, stack-



BEFORE

stoned fireplace on the main floor wards off the cold. This unique addition, designed and built by the dynamic trio of Stille, Rob Klomp (mason) and Corrie Witherell (interior designer) is a perfect addition to a home exuding an aura of Cape Cod vacationing with a twist of modern rustic comfort. Helping to achieve this ambience are walls splashed with “Manchester Tan” and trim and ceilings of “Cloud White,” both by Benjamin Moore.

Witherell says the entire color scheme of the house started with a tiny, two-by-two-inch piece of blue quartz. The owners came to her and basically said, “Can you design the house around this?” According to Witherell, this mantra became the running joke throughout the design process.

Joke or not, matching the colors to that blue quartz culminated perfectly into a matte and water scheme, an appropriate back lay for a house designed with an emphasis on the view of the lake and natural lighting. Stille estimates nearly 70 percent of the side facing the lake is made of glass. The master and two guest bedrooms of the second floor feature floor-to-ceiling windows, as well as glass doors leading to a private bedroom balcony.

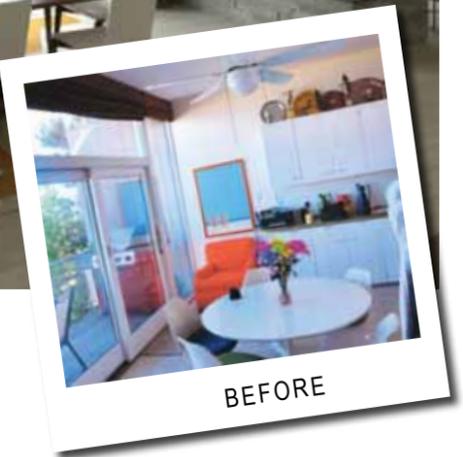
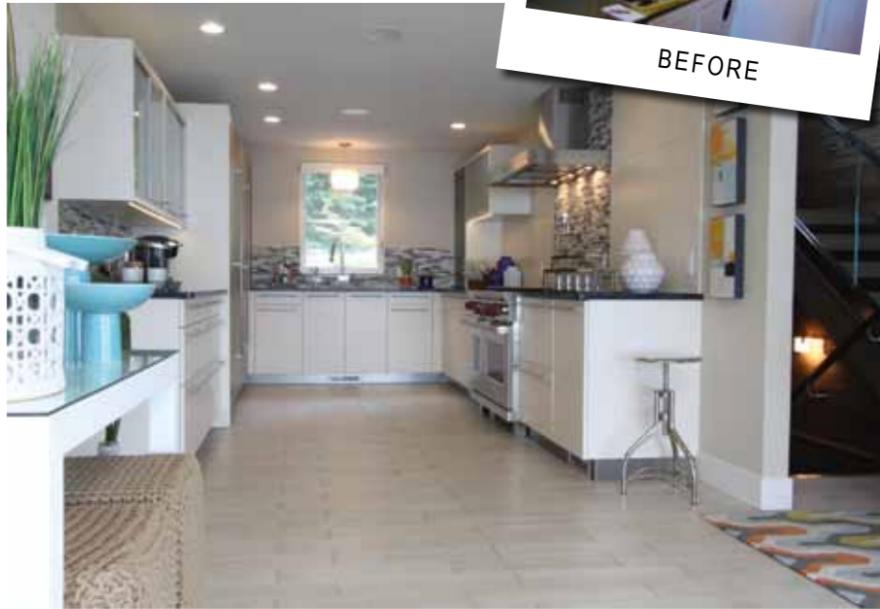
The two remaining bedrooms, as well as the kitchen, dining and living areas, can be found on the main floor. However, stopping to admire the grandeur on the way down is a must. Stille flashed even more flair as a capable builder with the designing of the staircase. Adorned with a glass guardrail boasting stainless steel hand railing, the oak stairwell is encompassed by walls of ironwood with a back-shadowing of stainless steel.

The show doesn't stop there, though. By now, it should come as no surprise that the bunk beds in the two guest bedrooms of the main floor--as well as the kitchen cabinetry--were all custom-made.

After absorbing all this grandeur, finding fresh air from the main floor couldn't be easier. Attached to the outside of the main floor is a 14-by-65-foot TimberTech composite deck overlooking the lake. With an outdoor fireplace and plentiful seating—including a staircase leading to another, smaller seating area—this deck is ideal for dazzling company with outdoor entertainment coupled with the unbeatable view.

Pinpointing one aspect of the house as the most impressive, however, would be a difficult task. The only uniform thing about the construction process was the uniform use of imagination, flexibility, and collaboration. And it all started with a talented builder and a piece of blue quartz. □

## Kitchen



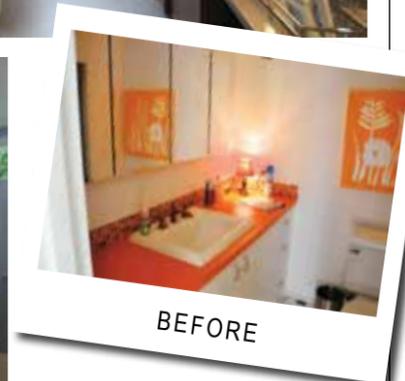
## Dining Room



## Den



## Bedroom



## Bathroom



## Bar



## Back

Nearly as impressive as the view is the fireplace of real Diamond Ridge stone, originating from Bulgaria.



## Roof

Starphire Low Iron Glass Railing by City Glass & Mirror. Rooftop living garden by Blue Ridge Landscaping.



## Stille Construction

PRINCIPAL OWNERS: Jeffrey D. Stille

YEARS IN BUSINESS: 23 years

ESTABLISHED IN: 1991

### EDUCATION:

Jeff graduated from Grand Haven High School in 1980. He then spent two years at Grand Valley State University and six years in the U.S. Navy as a Missile and Radar Technician.

### BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY:

We will do any project. Project size, type, value, etc. – it makes no difference to us. We want to give the best-valued end product for the customer.

### WHAT SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART?

We enjoy unusual, "out-of-the-norm" projects, and we take pride in trying to create as close as possible to what the customer envisions.

### HOBBIES, VOLUNTEERISM, ETC.:

Jeff enjoys spending time with his three children - the oldest of which is in the Navy. He also enjoys being active and outside. His hobbies include horses, snow skiing, water skiing, boating, motorcycling, traveling and sightseeing.

### CONTACT PHONE NUMBER:

(616) 638-1198