



# OUT WITH THE OLD AND *In With the New*

## Challenges of a Remodel Give Way to New Construction

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**a** quaint cottage nestled in the hills overlooking the water sounds idyllic. However, for the Gull Lake cottage owners, it posed more problems than pleasure.

After builder, Sera Gesmundo, of Hawks Hollow Builders, and the architect inspected the cottage and foundation, it was decided that it would be better to start from scratch and build new.

“The existing structure had too many problems that restricted what we wanted to accomplish,” according to the homeowner.

Because the site is surrounded by hills to the north, south and west, a good rain would send torrents of water flooding across the lot as it traveled on its way down to the lake. As a result, the basement would become damp and musty.

The plan for a new home, combining a classic blend of traditional materials and a one-of-a-kind design, was created to meet the demands of the site. The selection and use of materials for the resulting shapes and lines have been crafted into a satisfying harmony of color and form. The interior and exterior of the home were designed to complement each other and take advantage of all the features the site provides.

Gesmundo and the landscape company designed a series of drainage basins to direct rain water back into the ground, as well as capture

points connected underground to piping that transfers water around the house and towards the lake.

The new home was designed to accommodate living spaces and bedrooms for a large family. Almost every room takes advantage of the lot’s spectacular views.

The desired effect was a home that makes everyone feel comfortable, warm and cozy. A selection of stone and wood, chosen for their natural beauty and strength, was utilized on the interior as well as the exterior. Expansive windows on the north, east and south, showcase the sparkle of sunrise or the silver radiance of the moon dancing on the waves—providing an ever changing canvas of beauty.

Hawks Hollow designed and built most of the cabinetry: the family room entertainment center, the fireplace mantel, and many other architectural features. “They were excellent at organizing mantels, tracking and communicating with us on numerous details and decisions that make building a home an enjoyable process,” share the homeowners.

Gesmundo designed the thermal envelope and energy saving features of the home according to the guidelines of Michigan’s Green Built program. With the material selections, careful site development



and energy features, the home achieved a Silver rating and a Five Star Plus Home rating under the EPA's Energy Star program.

Initially, the home was designed to accommodate an elevator in the far off future. But, when one of the children had a serious accident resulting in paralysis, the Hawks Hollow team stepped in and quickly completed the elevator. They also modified the home so that the inside and outside of the home would be easily accessed by the entire family. Their ability to address this problem and resolve the issues it posed in such an expeditious manner will leave these homeowners forever grateful.

Architectural detail is a highlight throughout the home. The vaulted ceiling and tall windows of the great room are open to the kitchen, dining area, den, upper sitting area and foyer, a large expanse of space. Despite the open floor plan there is a feeling of containment. For this family, the home maintains a feeling of solidarity and strength, providing shelter and protection from weather and storms.

A great deal of thought was given to storage and organization. The home's ideal laundry room has ample storage, a dedicated place to hang clothes for drying, a separate laundry sink and a system to organize each of the children's clothes after they are laundered and folded, and ready to be returned to their rooms. The lady of the house explains, "This nearly everyday task has been made easy and enjoyable because the workplace was thoughtfully organized and beautifully constructed."

The kitchen is the nucleus of the home. Its compact size provides generous work surfaces and abundant storage. The island, crafted of natural pine, has the appearance of a piece of furniture with its curved corbeled knee braces supporting the raised granite top along with a playful use of columns and panels.

The master bedroom is the only bedroom on the main floor. It was designed to be a private sanctuary. North and east windows, with picturesque views of the lake, flood the space with welcoming morning light. This home is a work of thought and craftsmanship—resolving obstacles and challenges—to create the ideal family abode. □



PREVIOUS PAGE:

ABOVE: Topography posed a major challenge in the design of this Gull Lake home.

THIS PAGE: High ceilings provide space for upper cabinets featuring glass and mutton bars atop lower cabinets, cottage style flat panel doors, and applied moldings.

OPPOSITE PAGE: An expansive dining area and great room combine family activities while preparing meals.



## Architectural Detail Is a Highlight Throughout the Home



ABOVE: The architect designed the home to encompass exceptional views in every direction.

MIDDLE LEFT: An exceptionally large bath showcases his and her vanities.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Programmable controlled radiant heat provides comfort in the master bath both morning and evenings.

BOTTOM: French doors open from the master suite to the den.



## Hawks Hollow Builders

### PRINCIPAL OWNERS:

Sera Gesmundo – President

Jack Gesmundo – Owner, Vice President

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS: 35

### EDUCATION:

While going to college to become an accountant, I worked for my father at Hawks Hollow Builders. I fell in love with the construction process of designing and imagining a house, and then watching this beautiful home come out of the ground. I have been designing and building custom homes, remodels, and cabinetry for the last 22 years; I still love the process. I am a licensed builder, Certified Aging In Place Specialist (CAPS) and Certified Green Professional (CGP).

YEAR BUSINESS STARTED: 1973

### BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY:

For many reasons, a home is a significant part of every person's life. It is often the largest purchase that a family will make. Home is also the place where memories are made. It is our responsibility to help create spaces that reflect those qualities our clients want to create for their family, loved ones and friends. Listening to what a client truly desires and envisions is key to being able to guide them through the design and selections process. This allows us to deliver their dream home while staying in the desired budget. Good design makes living easier to organize, it saves effort, and creates an enjoyable atmosphere in which one can truly relax. Each project gets this full attention whether it is a custom home or an addition to an existing home.

### WHAT SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART?

The skill and craftsmanship of our designers, architects, cabinetry shop crew, field crew and long-term subcontractors, allows us to give clients the best information, options, new innovations, creativity and unique design solutions.

### HOBBIES:

I have two beautiful daughters, a junior in high school and an eighth-grader. Both girls play year-round travel soccer which keeps all of us very busy. I also enjoy snowboarding, traveling, reading and boating. I enjoy participating in various networking groups (BNI, SMPN, and Kalamazoo Network) and am a board member of the Gull Lake Sports Boosters.

### CONTACT PHONE NUMBER/WEB ADDRESS:

For additional information, call (269) 629-0400 or visit [www.hawkshollow.com](http://www.hawkshollow.com).



**ABOVE:** The entertainment center exemplifies Hawks Hollow craftsmanship.

**MIDDLE:** A classic blend of traditional materials defines this home.

**BELOW:** Builder and architect optimized the narrow lakefront lot to accommodate a large family with multiple living spaces.