



RETREAT TO LAKE HOMES AND COTTAGES

In 2020, the market for lakefront property and second homes in Wisconsin exploded as families bought every available property to escape the city or to provide relief from the pandemic shutdown.

Many older existing homes were purchased despite their condition and regardless of the inflated cost at the time. Architect Steve Holzauer, AIA is semi-retired, having worked over 35 years for two major Wisconsin design firms. From his lake home he witnessed the surge of acquisitions and predicted a push for upgrades to the cabins and homes, most which were 40-50 years old. The subject of this story originated when the new owner retained Holzauer to design upgrades and renovate their exposed-basement, ranch-style house.

Holzauer got right on it, clamoring all through the musty house and basement. With a leg up, he pushed into the attic through a narrow hatch to study the roof structure. What he discovered was tinder-dry wood and evidence of a colony of bats. With input from the owners, he developed floorplans to remodel the design with a big focus on the lake views. A challenge was the low-pitch gable roof and the 40' x 40' underlying basement. The old house was built right to the edge of a 30'-high bedrock ledge. It took one meeting and the owners decided to demolish the old wood house, with the hope that the foundation might be salvageable. They wanted higher ceilings, bigger windows and patio spaces.

Building upon the ancient rock ledge, Friede & Associates, and Ray Zobel & Sons, both from Reedsburg, WI, carefully demolished the 1970's-era cottage house and erected the new home upon its footings!

The clients fell in love with an early sketch, pushing to optimize the transparency of the house on the hilly, wooded lot with excellent views of a lake below. The design emerged as a study of projecting planes and masses, perforated with broad windows. 360° clerestory windows in the living room invite the changing mood of nature and daylight. Several lakeside decks extend the living space beyond the compact 1,600 square-foot plan.

A fun project with great clients, partners included Friede & Associates (builder), Echelon Structures (engineer), Prestige Landscaping, Ray Zobel & Sons (demolition and excavation). Photography by Mark Boyce Creative.

STEVE HOLZHAUER, AIA
HOLZHAUER
P A R T N E R S
7450 South Avenue Middleton WI 53562
steve@holzhauserpartners.com

608.333.2164