James Barton Design-Build gives one couple a stunning new open floor plan that accommodates their large family

When Charlie and Kris Wesser approached James Barton Design-Build, they wanted a way to bring their family together. The couple’s two-story suburban house was a wonderful home for their five children growing up, but with the last one recently moving out, the Wessers were looking to the future – children’s spouses and grandchildren meant the need for more space.

Their busiest entertaining rooms – the kitchen, living room and dining room were separated, resulting in a poor traffic flow with little area for the entire family to gather.

Downstairs, the basement offered sufficient space, but had remained unfinished for years.

The Wessers initially considered moving, but were convinced to stay by their children. “Us staying in this house is what they wanted,” explained Charlie.

JBDB’s goal was to provide the couple with a clean, open floor plan that facilitated easy movement and great conversation spaces. “They showed us some possibilities that would be better for entertaining and bigger gatherings,” said Charlie. “We got to see what our current house could be, and it was exciting.”
A Note from James

Spring is right around the corner (hopefully) and we’re once again excited to be a part of the Parade of Homes Remodelers Showcase with a main/lower level renovation.

When relocating to Apple Valley the Wesser family considered the home they purchased to be more of a transitional home. As the family grew, so too did the spaces needed for their family. The Wesser’s briefly considered moving but enjoyed the community and location of their home. They questioned whether a renovation could address their family’s growing needs and lifestyle changes. Once the decision was made to move forward with the renovation, we were thrilled that we could give them a home they could enjoy with their family and friends for many years to come.

In our Winter 2014 newsletter we were excited to share with you the projects and the homeowners who won a Minnesota 2013 CotY Award. We are pleased to announce that we have been chosen as a Regional CotY winner – congratulations Julia on your stunning bathroom project! We’re extremely excited about this recognition and feel fortunate we were able to meet the clients wants and needs.

We hope you will give us a call when your ready to do your next remodeling project…. and until then “think spring”.

Best regards,
James Madsen
President – James Barton Design-Build

With five children, the Wessers needed to interact easily and accommodate family gatherings. The kitchen had become a central congregation point, but one that often felt overly crowded. “Everybody always wants to be in the kitchen,” said Kris. With a large family, extra space for a few more cooks in the kitchen was vital.

After exploring the area, the JBDB design team, led by Senior Designer Tamra Mueller, suggested a radical solution – removing the wall between the kitchen and formal dining room and giving the main level a large open space.

The Wessers loved the idea. “Tamra’s your friend,” Kris said. “She was excellent at guiding us, but she did a good job of understanding what we liked… It was a lot of fun.”

To best use the new space, Tamra and the team moved the kitchen back where the formal dining room had been and placed the dining room table between the kitchen and den. This expansion allowed plenty of room for both food preparation and family time. The extra space also added functionality. The island was enlarged and a preparation sink was installed.

One corner of the kitchen was converted into a spacious walk-in pantry. Additionally, the kitchen was updated with all new KitchenAid® appliances.

Contrasting details give the kitchen a unique, contemporary feel
The custom cherry wood cabinetry in the kitchen created a warm, inviting space. Rustic grade, Brown Sugar maple flooring replaced the patterned linoleum, and a stainless steel range hood contrasted with a tile and stone backsplash. Updated faucets, handles, and knobs provided subtle elegance.

Cambria engineered quartz countertops – a choice that is rapidly catching up to granite in popularity – abundant lighting and chic new barstools rounded out the kitchen’s modern, sophisticated feel.

The railing separating the kitchen and den was removed to create an accessible flow. Installing a stunning modern fireplace and mantle made from cultured stone in the den brought in a natural look that added to the richness of the entire space. Large windows in the living and dining areas let in daylight and enhanced the open atmosphere.

Beyond renovating these key rooms, the JDBD team upgraded the entire main level. The nearby half bathroom got new features and details, and the laundry room received a mini-makeover that greatly expanded its usable area. JDBD also built a new deck and patio that accommodated more people without compromising yard space.

The home’s unfinished basement gave JDBD the ability to start from scratch. The team transformed the space by putting in a bar, bathroom, and family recreation room, which everyone appreciated. “The rec room/bar has been a great addition,” said Charlie. Kris agreed, adding, “People really feel comfortable down there.”

The curved bar with stylish backsplash and black granite countertops compliment the bars custom made Knotty Alder cabinets. The wine refrigerator and wine rack on the back wall give the bar area versatility and visual interest.

Today, the couple has plenty of space to entertain family and friends. From large groups to a quick get-together, the beautiful renovation is accommodating and inviting. “We really like it, very much. I didn’t realize how much space we had in the house,” Kris said. “I finally have my dream kitchen!”

The kids were pleased as well. “Seeing the reaction of our kids, them enjoying it, was what we were hoping for,” said Charlie.

Even Marley the family lab is enjoying the new living spaces

The Wesser’s

“The modern bar downstairs provides a comfortable gathering place

“Seeing the reaction of our kids, them enjoying it, was what we were hoping for.” - Charlie Wesser
A Private Oasis

This family's backyard boasted an in-ground swimming pool, but lacked the style and amenities to truly make their urban yard an outdoor oasis. The generous lot provided the perfect area for an enviable pool house and outdoor kitchen, double garage with lofted area for bonus room, and a large outdoor grill with seating space. The kitchen offers features such as a stainless steel refrigerator, dishwasher and sink, as well as weather-proofed countertops and cabinetry. For convenience, an indoor changing area and bathroom with shower are included in the pool house. The cozy seating around the stone fire pit completes this family retreat!

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