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## LEAP OF FAITH

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IT'S ALWAYS WISE TO LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP, AS ONE COUPLE LEARNED WHEN THEY TOOK A QUICK HOUSE-HUNTING TRIP TO THE NORTH SHORE BEFORE TAKING POSSESSION OF A CHICAGO SIX-FLAT THEY'D ALREADY BOUGHT. "We were going to convert it to a single-family, but my husband had this vision," chuckles the wife, a non-practicing physician.

**INTERIOR DESIGN** Petra Adelfang, Petra Adelfang Design

**ARCHITECTURE** Scott Javore, R. Scott Javore & Associates, Ltd.

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE** Douglas Hoerr, FASLA,  
Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects

**HOME BUILDER** John Weiss, Weiss Enterprises, Inc.

**BEDROOMS** 7 **BATHROOMS** 7 **SQUARE FEET** 9,864



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"We have three young kids, and we're all outdoor types, so I wanted to be closer to nature and on the lake if possible. I thought we'd be happier in that kind of setting," reasons the husband, a web entrepreneur. "So we saw 14 homes in a day."

Midway through the lineup, they walked into a sleek ranch on a 2-acre, bluff-hugging lakeside lot, with a lower level that burrowed down in back and overlooked the water with floor-to-ceiling windows. "It was in bad shape. The real estate agent was talking teardown, but we fell for it and knew we wanted to fix it up," says the husband.

That's when they switched gears and "threw caution to the wind," he says. "We knew it was perfect for us, but it was a major stretch because it needed a lot of work. We just didn't realize how much." They asked Petra Adelfang, a Glencoe interior designer with an eponymous firm, to spearhead the project. "We're close friends, and we've always admired her aesthetic. She got what we wanted to do with this house immediately," says the husband.

#### **SAVING FACE**

New face brick in a velvety buff replaced the painted common brick original to the home and gives it a smoother, more polished appearance. The front door was replaced with a glass version from Fleetwood Windows & Doors for total transparency.



**INSIDE STORY**

Adelfang outfitted the newly minted mudroom with handsome butternut millwork of her own design, planned to offer lots of hidden storage; each of the owners' daughters has her own locker. Baltimore limestone planks from Stone Source in Chicago emulate wood and provide a waterproof surface.



#### **BENCH PLAYER**

For an elegant-but-not-too-formal take on a great room, Christian Liaigre upholstered pieces were covered in coordinating fabrics, and a custom dining table conceived by interior designer Petra Adelfang and fabricated by Bernhard Woodwork in Northbrook was paired with six Flip dining chairs by Poliform and a long leather Walter Knoll bench from Luminaire. The wool-and-silk rug is by Odegard; the antique, Chinese glazed water jug is from Chen & Chen in Highland Park.





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Today, Adelfang laughs when she recalls the story. "It was a classically modern home built in 1968 by an anonymous designer that had received a bad '80s update. 'A lot of work' was a total understatement," she quips. Adelfang was particularly irked by the choppy layout and heavy-handed detailing that defied the home's true intentions: to be open, airy and related to the lake. "Lifestyles have changed. They were moving there for the views and an outdoor existence, but the house had an enclosed kitchen, and you could only access the back and lake from the lower level," she points out. The grounds needed just as much help. "The swimming pool was in the front yard because of the narrow bluff, and the landscaping wasn't appropriate for the setting," she explains.

To realize the couple's vision, Adelfang assembled a dream team that included Glencoe architect Scott Javore, of R. Scott Javore & Associates, respected for his restoration work; acclaimed Chicago landscape architect Douglas Hoerr, of Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects, known for his groundbreaking public gardens; and general contractor John Weiss, of Weiss Enterprises in Highwood.

#### STYLE SELECTION

Contrast between dark and light elements can be seen in this table from Arteriors Home, made of black marble and cast metal with an antiqued-silver finish. The top's round shape replicates itself at the base. *Keifer Cast Metal/Marble Side Table*, \$1,140; [arteriorshome.com](http://arteriorshome.com)







#### **CALL YOUR BLUFF**

The beefed-up bluff allowed the design team to build an infinity-edge pool—installed by the Boilini Company in Libertyville—behind the house and surround it with a newly designed two-story deck. It also includes a new floating staircase that connects the main level to the pool area. The landscape, designed by Douglas Hoerr of Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects, was installed by Mariani Landscape in Lake Bluff.



#### SEASONAL MENU

The outdoor hearth is in a secluded spot in the front of the house and can be used three seasons a year. Two teak Pure Sofas from Henry Hall Design in San Francisco are paired together to form a pit-style L for cozily roasting marshmallows over the campfire with the kids.

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The program they devised left no brick unturned—literally. It also kept growing. The home was given a new layout and a master staircase to increase lake views and enhance room-to-room flow; updated materials and millwork; all new systems from high-efficiency mechanicals to low-e windows; and a perpendicular addition at its north end for a music room, a home gym and more garage space.

“Once we realized the magnitude of the changes, we recognized it would be better from both a structural and aesthetic standpoint to reclad the painted white, common brick façade with a higher-quality and better-looking face brick,” explains Javore, who worked with project architect Brad Korando, a member of his firm, on the renovation.



**WHITE SQUALL**

The kitchen is now open to the family room and has sightlines to the lake. Custom cabinets are clad in the same butternut veneer that sheathes the home's two-sided, floating hearths. A cast concrete countertop from Soupcan in Chicago was dyed ice white and echoes the white leather and chrome Cappellini stools, Flip dining chairs by Poliform, Duna dining table by Arper and pendant light by Moooi. Appliances from Abt Electronics.





#### SECRET PASSAGE

A floating wall in the couple's bedroom anchors the bed on one side and masks this private staircase on the other, which leads to the husband's home office on the lower level. It turns the master suite into a duplex affair. The plain-sawn American walnut floors seen here are found throughout most of the house.

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Hoerr took a similar stance on the landscape. "It made more sense to beef up the bluff and move the pool lakeside, even though it was a huge, technically demanding undertaking. But it opened up the entire back of the house to the lake and changed the way it lives," he explains. Weiss proved to be a master at managing the army of designers, engineers, subcontractors and craftsmen. "He's amazingly thorough and incredibly calm," says Adelfang.

The job boiled down to redoing absolutely everything, even though "we didn't know we were going to go this far when we started," admits the husband. But the family has reaped its just rewards. When Adelfang recently asked them where they were going for spring break, the wife responded, "Nowhere. Living here, we're on vacation year-round." **L**





**MULTILEVEL APPROACH**

The platform bed and cantilevered nightstands in the master suite were designed by Adelfang; the polished chrome lamps are Christian Liaigre. The bedding was found at Holland & Sherry, and the coverlet is from Osborne & Little. A B&B Italia chaise provides a perch to enjoy the view, while a Kyle Bunting cowhide-mosaic area rug adds texture and pattern to the space.