

# REGIONAL FEATURE

## DeHAAN HOMES

WRITER | MARY ANN HUMPHREY PHOTO | W. PATRICK CHAMBERS PHOTOGRAPHY

### Challenging Landscapes and Incredible Views

Some people might call the way that Rick and Jan DeBoer chose Douglas DeHaan of DeHaan Homes to build their Lake Michigan home serendipity.

The former Chicago residents had been coming to Michigan all their lives to vacation, and owned a cottage in their current Holland location since 1995. Over the years they viewed many Parade of Homes houses, dreaming of the transformation their cottage property might undergo one day. As luck would have it, a house they admired in Saugatuck was built by DeHaan Homes, and belonged to the same person who had purchased their house in Illinois. “We didn’t even know he built her house,” Rick explains. “Then when we met her, she told us, ‘If you ever need anybody, DeHaan is the guy to go to.’ So we called him, and we talked for over an hour.”

“We spoke with many builders,” Rick continues. “DeHaan seemed to be the one to pay attention and listen to what we wanted.”

One of the biggest issues they faced was whether to renovate their existing cottage, or to build new on the same lot. That’s where DeHaan’s design expertise came into play. “We were taking down an 80 year old cottage because



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it was going to be a better overall investment and asset to build a new house," DeHaan explains. "We were building on Lake Michigan, so we had to design a new home while respecting the contours of the dunes, and stay within the limits of the existing landscape, while keeping the mature trees," he went on to say. "Designing a sizeable footprint with the restrictions of the site and implement the clients dream floor plan, became nothing short of an amazing accomplishment."

"Our most challenging sites produce the most interesting architecturally designed homes," DeHaan goes on to say.

It's the kind of challenge DeHaan is used to. He's a fourth generation builder whose passion is home design, interior architecture, and cabinetry. He has designed several custom homes for their clients, and observes that many people are surprised to discover when they engage DeHaan Homes, they have the talent to design homes *in-house*. "DeHaan is a premier building company that has surprised the market with our ability to design high end homes, offering a true 'design/build' experience" DeHaan notes.

DeHaan shared a 20 page "Lifestyle Study" questionnaire with the DeBoers, to help him determine how to design their home around their wants and needs. "He came out and looked at the layout of the place we had, and we told him what we liked and didn't like," Rick says.

"Being a consultant/advocate and offering that design-build experience - separates us from the crowd," Douglas adds.

The challenge to this home is that it wanted expansive views of Lake Michigan, balanced with the livability, flow and scale of the rooms which didn't want to be oversized. DeHaan cites the home's great room as an example: "How do you take a room with a 16 foot ceilings, grand windows..... then make it feel cozy? It's all about scale and the balance, with the proportion of designing each element within this room to match the client's desire keeping the interior architecture and design appropriate for the space."



The home's design, with the DeBoer's input, is nothing short of ingenious. The five bedroom coastal style home has five full baths, a one and three quarter bath and one half bath, but its flow and accessibility create a deceptively casual yet cozy feel. "The way he designed it, the traffic pattern flows beautifully," Jan notes. The main floor is designed for a couple with the convenience of condo living, expanded for entertaining, and the upper level can sleep 25.

"We wanted a house where we could have people over and not worry about stuff getting ruined," Jan says. "It's a gathering place for our family and friends, for our kids' friends, our friends from Illinois. We're blessed to be able to share."

Even while sharing with family and friends, Rick and Jan can get a little down time in their "Owner's Retreat," which DeHaan designed to give them a sanctuary away from the rest of the house. It's self-contained, with a sitting area, bedroom, bathroom, walk-in closets, a patio, and access to the laundry room. "It's idyllic," Jan says. Another aspect of the home the DeBoers appreciate is that when there are no guests, they can shut off the entire upper floor to save energy.

The DeBoers wanted friends and family to be able to come for a day at the beach, even if they weren't at home. The ground level area opens up to the "Beach Room," finished with an epoxy floor and water resistant walls. It contains a changing room, bathroom, 8 x 10 shower, full kitchen, and laundry, and can be locked off from the rest of the house.

Laura Davidson of Dwellings was an integral part of the home's interior design. The DeBoers met with her and DeHaan, and decided together on everything from moldings to cornice boards. "Sometimes it was girls against the boys," Jan says with a laugh. Their bed is custom made with side cabinetry from one large piece of gray glazed maple. "Depending on the angle of the sun, it might look like a different color," Jan says. "We wanted the inside of the house to replicate the outside, with soft greens, blues, and grays."

Jan enjoys cooking, and is very pleased with her large kitchen area, which is divided into zones for ease of working. The island that faces the refrigerator has a "baking station" with measuring cups, scales, rolling pins, and everything necessary for baking. A double set



of dishwashers in the island takes care of all the dishes, and there's plenty of room for the family to sit and chat while someone prepares food. DeHaan designed the pantry for storage, so that the kitchen's lake views weren't obstructed. "The pantry is wonderful, it has open storage for food products, a food warming drawer and another refrigerator," Jan says.

The DeBoers remain friends with DDeHaan and Laura to this day. "I can't tell you how many clients are personal friends," DeHaan says. "It's a testament to the relationship we build." He adds that he's grateful for the work he has, and feels his company has a lot of strengths. One of those is building homes that are as unique as his clients. "What is really rewarding is when a new client brings photos of homes they like to a meeting that they've printed off the Houzz or Pinterest websites, just to discover they're homes we have previously designed and built." □



# LAURA DAVIDSON



Laura has provided interior design solutions for residential and small scale commercial projects in the West Michigan area for over 20 years. She is described as sophisticated, down to

earth and easy to work with among clients and design professionals alike. Her design philosophy stresses the close link of architecture and interior design. The end result is rich environments defined by sophisticated color palettes, and refined materials and detailing that tailor these interiors to suit her client's desires. She has the expertise to create a wide variety of interior environments from transitional to modern.

Laura strives to develop interior spaces with an underlying classicism that survives the passage of design trends. She is committed to coordinating the design efforts with an organized and well managed project that consistently exceeds client expectations and come in on budget. Laura houses her craft in a small, quaint, design Studio: "Dwellings" ... a house, a residence, an abode.

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# DEHAAN HOMES

PRINCIPAL OWNER: Douglas A. DeHaan

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS: 31

YEAR BUSINESS STARTED:

DeHaan Homes Incorporated in 1992. Douglas DeHaan is a fourth-generation builder with his Great- Grandfather beginning in 1926.

EDUCATION: Associate degree in Business Engineering

### BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY:

Our goal is to:

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- Creating an enjoyable experience for our clients

WHAT SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART? Implementing our philosophy consistently.

HOBBIES: Douglas DeHaan has written a book and has just released the third edition: *Inside Tips to Building a Custom Home*. Douglas enjoys his leadership role in the development of an evangelical/community Food Pantry.

CONTACT INFORMATION: 3299 Hudson Trails Dr., Hudsonville MI 49426 | Phone: (616) 896-8300 | DeHaanHomes.com

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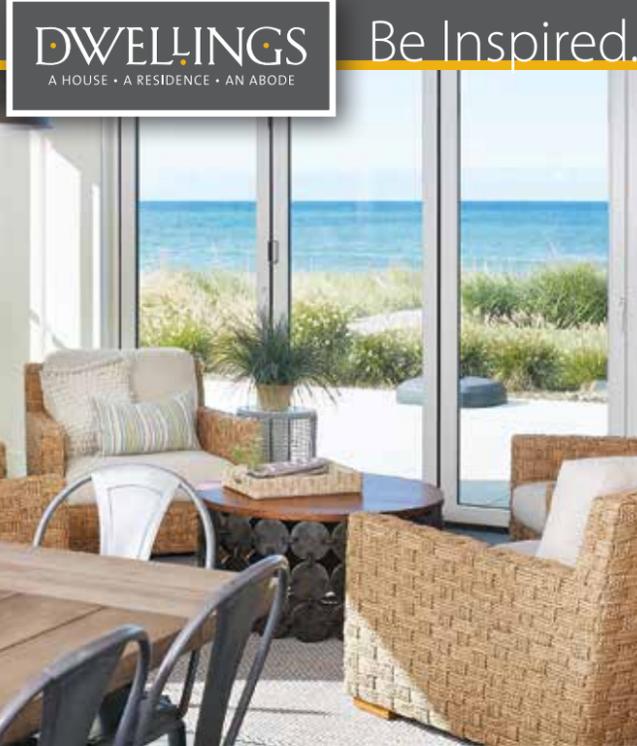
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