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## Water Oasis

BY RICK ROMANO  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUG EDMUNDS

The perfect centerpiece to a revitalized Mequon backyard includes a simply elegant pavilion and an expertly sculpted pool. The structure's tongue-and-groove mahogany cathedral ceiling with paddle fan and arched window, frost-free slate floor and purposely simple block columns frame the scene. The pavilion is just steps from its residence, nearby patios, grilling and fire pit areas as well as surrounding gardens — all of which make this backyard remake a personal oasis. Turn the page for more on this elegant retreat.











# Pool Paradise

SWIMMING POOLS ARE MAKING A COMEBACK BUT WITH MORE OPTIONS THAN EVER FOR YOUR PERFECT OASIS

BY RICK ROMANO | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUG EDMUNDS

**D**esign and build pros worked together swimmingly well to redefine outdoor residential life for a Mequon family.

The result is a picturesque pool framed by a casual, gracious pavilion and accompanied by carefully planned gardens and grounds perfect for a multitude of activities. The project design and initial build was completed in 2013 and has been enhanced ever since.

David and Lori Poull hired Deep River Partners of Milwaukee to design their dream. Lori had wanted to add a pool since they built their 35,000-square-foot contemporary colonial 20 years ago. David wanted a water feature that could further attract a multitude of hummingbirds. They enjoy gardening and landscaping and large family gatherings.

The Poulles are unique clients, since they own Lange Brothers Woodwork in Milwaukee. Their experience in the building trades led to the Deep River hire and allowed them to take on the construction portion of the project.

“Our charge was to design a rectangular pool with activity nodes all around it,” says Richard Sherer, president of Deep River who joined his designer Nick Blavat on the project. Together, they tackled the challenge of centering the main elements — the pavilion and pool — at the back of the house over a natural swale. They raised the structures and included drainage — enhancing pavers.

They also took advantage of the varying topography, naturally dividing the land for separate purposes. The plan included an 18-foot square pavilion with a cathedral ceiling of tongue-and-groove mahogany and a frost-free slate floor. The shaded respite had an uncovered extension in its adjoining patio and grilling area. Both are accessible from the same level as the home’s main kitchen on one side and a sunroom on the other.





One may step down to the 18-foot-wide by 36-foot-long lap pool for a quick dip or sit in adjoining deck areas and experience spraying water features for sense-tingling sights and sounds.

A fire pit and a growing number of gardens dot the landscape. It's all about an opportunity to enjoy a favorite spot or sample the entire landscape. "The individual areas, the warmth of the material used in the pavilion, and how the large yard was landscaped to divide various areas was important to Lori and Dave," Blavat says. "That's not always easy in an outdoor space."

The designers and the client/builders favor the pool and pavilion, though other aspects also are special. "We are always improving the gardens," Lori says. "I was surprised at how easy it has been to maintain the pool. We have an automatic cover, which takes care of a lot of the maintenance, and all I do once a week is add chlorine."

## Pool renaissance

Pool design options and an improving economy have generated more residential interest.

Sherer and Blavat of Deep River Partners and James Drzewiecki of Ginkgo Leaf Studios in Cedarburg say client

tastes have evolved from the traditional rectangle with a deep base and a diving board.

"Pools take on the character of the owners and their setting," Sherer says, adding that they can accomplish any type of water activity from diving, swimming laps, integrating other sports and providing a desired décor and sound.

Blavat senses a pool renaissance. "People are looking for multigenerational flexibility so the whole family can enjoy it," he says.

Drzewiecki says the new millennium mind-set has stretched well beyond 20th century rectangles and kidney shapes with a diving board. "Placement is more important so that the pool works with the rest of the backyard," he explains.

He noted other popular options that have replaced diving boards, including nets for volleyball, hoops for basketball and jets so that one can do laps in place. Hot tubs, both next to and attached to the pools, also are increasingly popular.

"There is a lot of new technology that allows us to use different shapes and many different types of materials," Drzewiecki says. "We also have been able to redo pools and refresh their look and function. Pools are as popular as they were in the '70s. The difference today is clients want them to look different and serve different needs."