

# “Forever Home”

## One Family’s Story

By Genie Nowicki



**Creating an accessible “forever” home is a wonderful goal. It can provide a home that is safe, comfortable and useable by everyone who might live there or visit.**

The process, however, is different for everyone. It depends on “how accessible” you want it to be, how much work you are willing to do to your home, and, of course, how much you want to invest. This is one family’s story.

Our clients, call them Bill and Jane, were considering retirement. They also had a daughter and son-in-law with a young child in a wheelchair. Bill and Jane wanted to move closer to them so that they could both

participate and provide support with all of the wonderful things that grandparents do.

While shopping for a home, they decided to move from their 3-story condo to a 1-story home within walking distance of “the kids.”

They considered the opportunity that this could provide if well planned. With a carefully thought out remodel, they could have a completely accessible home that would be

welcoming to their grandchild, family and friends and also provide them with a “forever home” that they could stay in as long as they chose to.

Having watched their own parents make the difficult decision to move out of their homes due to physical limitations, this was an exciting prospect for Bill and Jane.

They purchased a three bedroom, two bath Ranch style home and we started the design process. They stayed in their condo while their new home was completely remodeled.

The remodel included the kitchen, two existing bathrooms and an addition for a Master Suite with bedroom, office, walk-in/roll-through closet and large fully accessible master bathroom with roll-under sinks and a curb-less shower.

Bill and Jane decided to put those features in only the master bathroom. We re-arranged some interior walls to provide better traffic flow throughout the house and created an interior laundry area, wider halls, doors and passages and smooth flooring transitions.

The kitchen and breakfast nook were combined to give them a large family kitchen with a baking center and a great island where grand children gather to make cookies.

We changed the walkway and steps to the front porch and door to provide an inclined path and eliminate the steps so that we have a zero-step entrance at the front door. Similar changes were made at the French doors to the back deck with an inclined “ramp” leading from the deck to the yard which was about two steps below.

The new layout includes a guest suite that welcomes visiting friends and can also serve as a comfortable area for a caregiver should they need that in the future.

Their new home is peaceful and provides a lovely place for making memories with daily life, family time and large gatherings. Everyone is comfortable, safe and feels welcome.

And, best of all, these features are woven into the design in a seamless and almost un-noticeable way. It’s just a great family home—a “Forever Home.”

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