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# Rooms with a View

Classic Remodeling helps homeowners integrate indoor and outdoor living spaces

BY HOLLY FISHER | PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRIPP SMITH

**R**obyn and Gordon Wilhoit had simply planned to extend their Mount Pleasant home's family room to showcase wide expanses of windows. But what they ended up with is even better—a great outdoor living space perfect for an oyster roast with friends or a quiet dinner for two around the fire pit. There's even an extensive media room with balconies overlooking the pool, patio and marsh.

After discovering the Wilhoit's initial idea didn't meet setback requirements, Bob

Fleming, owner of Classic Remodeling & Construction Inc., wasn't deterred. He looked around the house and asked the Wilhoits how they used various spaces, then began to craft Plan B.

The Wilhoits had a multilevel dark wood deck that was really too hot in the summer. They rarely used the small screened-in gazebo. And the family's swimming pool looked unconnected to the house. In fact, when Fleming visited the house, he asked if the pool even belonged to them.

Fleming then made suggestions and wasn't

afraid to help the Wilhoits think outside the box. He suggested tying the pool deck into the patio as well as opening up the second-floor family room for better views of the marsh and patio.

Robyn Wilhoit says, "Bob looked around in the house and asked, 'You have this incredible view of the marsh, why do you have such a small room with two little windows? Let's cut a hole in the wall and put in windows for a view down to the patio.' I stood there with my mouth agape."

By making no modifications to the family room downstairs and reconfiguring the upstairs room over the garage, the goal of capitalizing on the marsh views in the media room was achieved. Adding French doors and balconies also opened up the interior to the views below.

While the ideas were a far cry from where the Wilhoits first started, Robyn says, "We got something that was a much better option than a 10 by 12 room expansion."

Wilhoit says she was impressed with Classic Remodeling and the company's focus on total planning, using in-house designers and a selections coordinator who helped them pick out the finishing features. "They didn't let me make any mistakes and kept me on budget," she adds. "You select everything, but you don't spend large amounts of time going here and there. They streamline the





process and set up appointments. You don't have to walk into a business and hope someone can help you find the European tile you want."

The result is a patio that connects to the pool, which has a raised deck with views of the marsh and chaise lounges. The outdoor space has a covered pergola, built-in grill and fire pit. And the second-story family room is open and shows off the views.

The Wilhoits, who have three older children, are getting good use of their new space. They have family dinners under the pergola and have had one big party with 100 guests. And they fight to see who can use the remodeled family room. "It's not something we put up and walked away from," Robyn says. "We have used it a lot."

Classic Remodeling is doing another project

in West Ashley that includes revamping a room over the garage to add French doors so it overlooks the patio. The designers have added an outdoor covered patio with a fireplace and a lower terrace area with landscaping. In a couple of years, the family plans to add a pool and pool house, extending the use of their outdoor space even more.

And at another home in Mount Pleasant, the company has constructed a detached, multilevel pool house with a teak deck and widescreen television. The third level has an outdoor kitchen and bathroom.

Fleming asserts he is seeing more and more homeowners looking to create outdoor living spaces. "As you're sitting at the doors and windows, what views are you seeing? Are you on the marsh, a lake or do you have a

backyard with a pool? We think about traffic flow and trying to keep the grill as close to the kitchen as we can," he says.

With these kinds of projects, Classic Remodeling focuses on helping clients create seamless transitions from indoor spaces to outdoor living areas and maximizing the views. ➔

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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