







## A MID-CENTURY MODERN HOME IN BARRINGTON IS

# REIMAGINED

While staying true to their home's iconic retro design, new owners refresh the property into an ideal year-round family retreat

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ROB REINERT AND DANIELLE CHARETTE found the perfect home in unincorporated Barrington to raise their children and enjoy the things that matter most to them. While living in Bucktown, and prior to the purchase of their Mid-century Modern home, the couple thought that moving from Chicago to Oak Park would offer them more outdoor living space than the city. Both love the outdoors, gardening, and nature.

They had purchased a get-away place, a Mid-century style fixer-upper in Bridgman, Michigan, where they spent weekends. "I grew up going to the beach in Michigan," Rob said. The young family loved their time at their cottage. Back in Oak Park, a neighbor mentioned that the family seemed to spend more time at their cottage than at home. "We figured out if that is the way we want to live, with more land and nature, then we should consider moving to the country," Danielle said.

Barrington was on the couple's radar for a relocation. "During high school, I lived in St. Charles," Rob said. "My mother always talked about Barrington, and I saw Barrington Pool vans in our area."

During 2017, they looked at about 10 homes in the Barrington area and

landed on the Mid-century Modern home with its 1960s mauve exterior and salmon-colored partial brick siding. It was both the iconic style of the home and the generous amount of land that sold them.

"I wanted a tractor," Rob said.

Danielle saw the location and community as ideal. "Our kids can walk to school, and be part of village events," she said. "The people here—like the CSA guy and flower people—all have the same sensibility and caring for the land. The people here care deeply about the environment and are incredibly involved in the community, and we appreciate that."

### Natural Abundance

Rob and Danielle met working in the corporate food industry and are both passionate about food and food sources. Today, Rob is a stay-at-home dad, a role he loves. Danielle is a Senior Vice President of Fortune Fish & Gourmet. "I have a high-stress job. Coming home to this peaceful and grounding environment is very helpful," she said. "Flowers, nature, trees, landscaping... and I noticed we have more varieties of birds than we've ever seen."










The children, India, Beck, and Levi Reinert, were thrilled to watch painted turtles hatching on their property. Rob shares a story about the baby duck. “We found a baby duck all by itself in our yard. I was able to grab it and take it to neighborhood ponds, trying to find its mother. Without any luck, we placed the duck with our chickens. The duck eventually flew away, but comes back each year with its mate.” The family also sees Sandhill Cranes in their yard.

## Retrofitting a Retro House

“We use every inch of this house,” Danielle said. Architect Jeff Klymson of Collective Office helped the couple reimagine an updated layout for their new home. Danielle wanted the home to be old-school in that everyone would gather in the same spaces. “We live 90% of the time in our kitchen and dining area,” she said.

There were plans for an in-ground pool, but the pandemic caused the couple to decide an outdoor kitchen would be a better investment. Once time came for the pool space to be dug, the location had moved to what was a higher elevation in the backyard.

The best aspect of the Reinert’s updated Mid-century Modern home is that much like the period’s design principles of post-WWII optimism, structural simplicity, and value of function over ornamentation, it is a place that nurtures family life. “We feel our children have something here at home, and in nature, that is helping them become well-rounded beyond just academia. This is helping our children become aware of what they are good at, and who they are.”

At the time Rob and Danielle bought this gem of a home, the seller was hoping that they were not going to tear it down, but give it new life. There is new life, indeed. 











“We live outdoors in spring, summer, and fall with our three decks, patio, outdoor kitchen, and pool. We enjoy meals outside every chance we get. In our backyard is a chicken coop. The children take care of our Blue Cochin and Wyandotte laying chickens and gather the eggs. It teaches them good responsibility.”













*Previous two pages: The clean lines of the living room are enhanced with Mid-century Modern style furniture scaled to the room and architecture. The kitchen and dining area are seamlessly blended and close to the outdoor table. Every home needs a warm and cozy area. This reading nook serves as a place to read, do homework, or nap for the children.*

*Above this page: A collection of retro macramé owls, made only of natural materials, was collected by Danielle. Rob suggested the grouping of them on the dining area wall. The staircase leads down to the reading nook. Right: The porch features large windows and serves as the bridge between the kitchen and outdoor dining table. The children's colorful artwork is staged above the window on a shelf. Left: Natural and organic style art, such as these smooth rocks with wood and bamboo details, are found throughout the home.*



