

# THE BUILDER'S JOURNAL™

Twin Cities Edition



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Jones Design Build  
Remodelers with a Passion for Excellence



A plain, non-descript kitchen was transformed into an open, gleaming masterpiece. Photo By Marc Scholtes.

## Jones Design Build Remodelers with a Passion for Excellence

By Alison Baus

Sometimes homeowners need a change. *“My kitchen is outdated.”* Or *“The family room would be perfect if it was just a little larger.”* *“I would love my house if all of the woodwork was the same.”* They know that the foundation is there. They just need to build upon that to obtain their perfect home. Brian Jones of Jones Design Build can help make these dreams a reality.

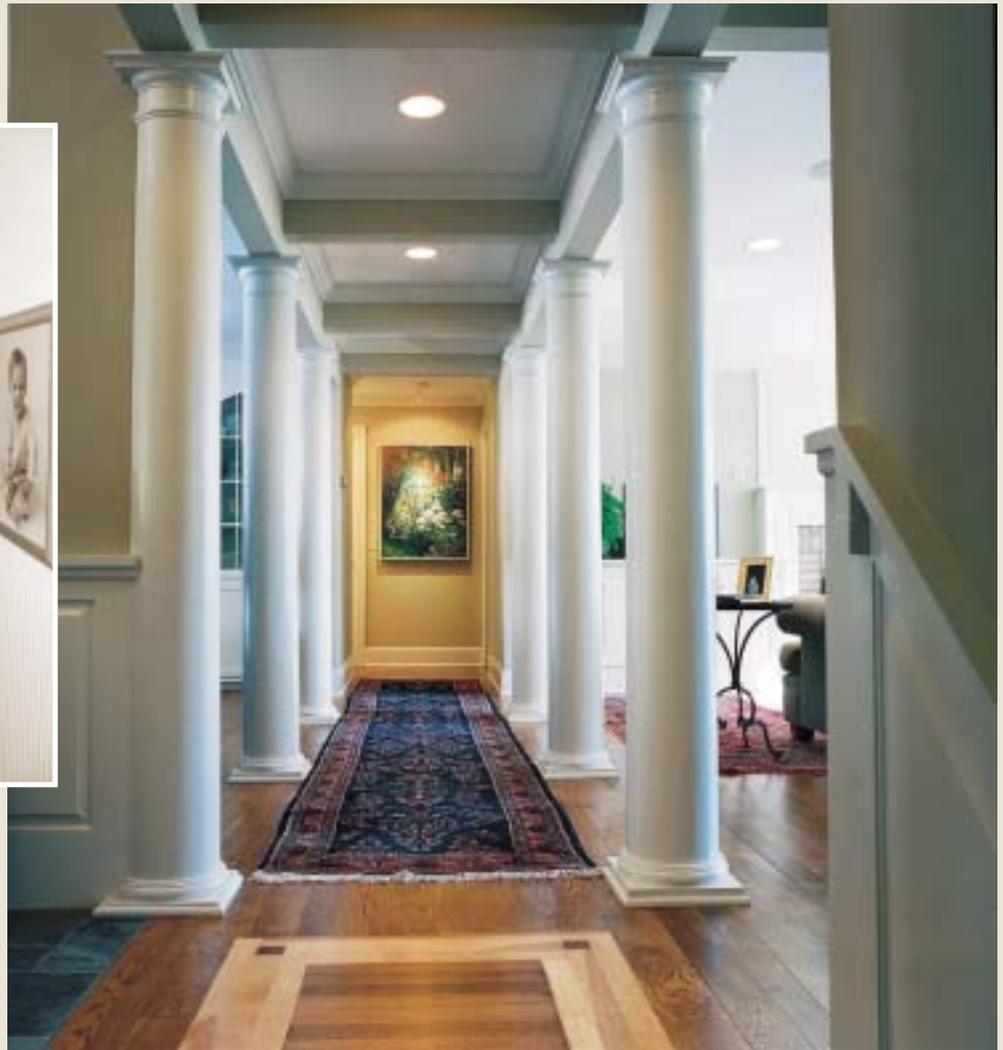
Brian knows that it is important for upgrades in his client’s homes to reflect the original architectural and

design style of the house. Before he started Jones Design Build 13 years ago, he was in the carpentry and construction business for seven years. This diverse background helps him communicate his ideas with his customers. He also received a Master’s Degree in architecture at the University of Minnesota. Brian’s customers have come to appreciate his vast knowledge in these areas and look to him for guidance during their remodeling project.

Jones Design Build primarily works on larger projects, but they occasionally take on smaller jobs, such as building a gazebo or adding on a deck or patio. Most of his remodeling projects take approximately four to eight months to complete. Working this long with clients, Brian understands the importance of customer service. It’s important for customers to be comfortable with, trust and get along with the remodeler they choose. *“My team almost becomes one of*



The long, confining hallway was opened up with columned elegance. Photo By Marc Scholtes.



the family,” says Brian. “They spend all day, every day, at the homeowners’ residence. Being around each other for that length of time, it’s really important that everyone is able to communicate their needs. It’s really a two-way street. We need to get along with the homeowners and respect their space, and they need to be able to tell us their concerns and issues.”

However, the homeowners aren’t always on the property when Brian is working on a remodeling project. Jones Design Build was hired to restore the interior of a 2,500-square-foot townhouse in Loring Park. The owners requested that everything be finished before their move-in date. According to Brian, that was an unusual request. Most of his clients want to be there and be involved in every step of the process. “They

placed their trust in us and what we were doing,” he said.

Most of Brian’s business comes through referrals. Clients appreciate his highly skilled team and good work ethics, and pass this information on to family, friends, neighbors and coworkers. People also choose Jones Design Build because of Brian’s professionalism, attentiveness and respect.

“I always sit down with the homeowner and discuss the remodeling process,” says Brian. “I want it to be a ‘worry-free’ experience for them and I want them to understand the details and feel comfortable enough to ask any questions.”

Brian also has a keen eye for detail. “I’m a perfectionist,” admits Brian. “From the landscaping, to the electrical work, to the interior—it must be exactly what the homeowner wants or, in my

eyes, it’s just not a job well done.”

Jones Design Build primarily remodels older homes in Minneapolis and the western suburbs of the Twin Cities. Recently, Brian had the opportunity to remodel a home by Lake of the Isles built in 1913. The homeowners, Michael Olafson and Gary Bennett, had hired Brian to work on his previous homes since 1996 when Jones Design Build was recommended to him by a co-worker. Some of the projects Brian completed for Michael in the past included creating a new kitchen, renovating the master bedroom and bathrooms, and building a larger garage that matched the English country style of the rest of the house.

“I like that Brian is an architect,” says Michael. “He really has an eye for design. He can match new things



A 70's style split level is rejuvenated with several porches/decks and an updated look.



Photo By Marc Scholtes.

to what already exists.” A good example of this is how Brian restored the woodwork in Michael’s current residence. The wood was gorgeous, but it had been layered with six coats of paint. Some of the doors in the house still had their original wood, so

Brian used those as models. The hard work was worth the result. It was almost impossible to tell the difference between the new woodwork and the 1913 original.

“Brian always has a good plan in place,” says Michael. “There are

rarely ever any changes. If there are, it’s usually very minor. He also has a great team working for him. They are pleasant to work with and communicate well.”

Connie Fagre and her husband, Nathan, agree with Michael Olafson.



Outdated and confining turns into light and airy.  
Photo By Marc Scholtes.



Brian started “Phase One” of the remodeling process on their 20-year-old house in Orono last August. This phase included remodeling the first floor, which entailed completely overhauling the kitchen, putting in new windows, taking down interior walls and adding a vaulted ceiling.

“It’s very comfortable working with Brian,” says Connie. “He sees the big picture, as well as the small picture. He is good with details, fixing things that we didn’t even realize needed fixing.” An example of this is a range hood that did not sound right.

Connie said they weren’t aware anything was wrong with it. “My husband and I thought it was supposed to sound like that. But Brian knew something was wrong and replaced it. And he was right—it sounds much better.”

The Fagre’s also appreciated Brian’s crew. “They were great,” says Connie. “Brian warned us that we would be sick of everyone, but we didn’t feel that way at all. In fact, we were always looking forward to them being there. They solved all of our problems and let us know that they were taking care of our needs.”

Connie and Nathan plan on starting “Phase Two” of their remodeling projects with Brian later this year.

Clients are not exaggerating when they say that Jones Design Build produces award-winning remodeling projects. Brian’s company has been the recipient of numerous national and regional awards. This past November, the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) hosted its eighth annual Contractor of the Year

awards in Golden Valley, which recognized outstanding projects completed in 2003 by local contractors. NARI received more than 60 entries. Out of these entries, Jones Design Build walked away with top honors—the 2004 Minnesota Contractor of the Year “Best In Show” award. Brian’s company also won the category for “Residential Interiors over \$100,000.”

Since the award, Jones Design Build has been recognized in *Midwest Home* magazine and had a renovation featured on Home and Garden Television (HGTV). The episode ran on the “Generation Renovations” series and showed how Brian took a 1950s 900-square-foot rambler built on lakeside property in Shorewood and turned it into a beautiful, modern 3,000-square-foot home.

This was to be his family's new home and also his signature piece. In fact, the house was to be showcased in the Remodelers Showcase. The Jones Design Build team worked evenings and weekends for more than a year-and-a-half to finish the house.

The process was time consuming, to say the least. The only remaining original piece of the rambler was the fireplace. The "shell" of the original home was transformed into one large great room. Maple and African mahogany wood was installed and thousands of pieces of redwood were salvaged from an old church and used in the porch, after it was stripped, oiled and reinstalled. Each window in the home received at least four hours of trimming attention from someone on Brian's team.

After completing the patio and adding the finishing touches to the floors and maple built-in cabinets, Jones Design Build met their deadline. "We were working 24/7," says Brian. "But quality can't be rushed. We put our



Fatima groom from above: A tiny house in a great location undergoes a metamorphosis to become a stunning lake home. Photo By Marc Scholtes.



Left to right: Sean Hawkins, Brian Jones and Scott Friberg.

heart and soul into the house for two years—and it pays off on a daily basis for my family”

From small projects to large, indoors or outdoors, Brian Jones of Jones Design Build can be trusted to deliver excellent customer service and innovative, award-winning renovations.

Brian moved from New York state to Minneapolis because of the well-respected architecture program at the University of Minnesota. He has lived in the area for more than 20 years and recently moved to Shorewood from Linden Hills. He and his wife, Shawn, have two children: Jessica (7) and Nicholas (5).

To see samples of Brian's work or for more information, visit the Jones Design Build Web site at [www.jonesdesignbuild.com](http://www.jonesdesignbuild.com), call Brian at 612.369.2709 or e-mail him at [Brian@JonesDesignBuild.com](mailto:Brian@JonesDesignBuild.com).

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