

URBAN LAKE LIVING

photography by aj sundby, written by ellen olson

Sunsets and wildlife sightings are a counterpoint to this family's active lifestyle.





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When Doug and Lisa Tanner received an unsolicited offer on their home on Kenilworth Place near Lake of the Isles, their “must haves” for a new home were pretty daunting. They were only willing to move if they were able to stay in the neighborhood, live on a quiet street and to be able to have a skating rink in the winter. Amazingly, they found a property on Park Lane, which fit the bill perfectly.

“The property and lot were beautiful when we bought it,” said Lisa, “but we wanted to make it our own and we wanted it to support our family’s active lifestyle.” Park Lane has proven to be a magical place for the Tanners, just as the previous owner promised.

Doug Tanner has been a partner at Dovetail Renovation for the last twenty years. Lisa has a career in software, and she currently works at Four51 in downtown Minneapolis. Both are graduates of St. Olaf College. Son Benjamin, 18, is a 2018 graduate of Southwest High School and in the fall will be heading to Whitman College. He owns his own lawn and yard service business, one that he started in 2011 – Benjamin’s Lawn and Yard Service. He enjoys photography, Crossfit and sailing. Sister Rachel, 17, will be a senior this fall at Southwest High School. She’s involved in soccer, Crossfit and choir. Both Benjamin and Rachel inherited their love of alpine ski racing from their dad, Doug; both were on the varsity alpine ski team at Southwest High School.

So, what does urban lake living really look like? Doug has a short commute to Uptown around the lakes. Both Benjamin and Rachel biked to school at Southwest. Lisa bikes to work in downtown Minneapolis year round. The entire family takes advantage of all the recreational opportunities afforded to them – cross-country skiing, skating, sailing, swimming, windsurfing, paddleboarding, canoeing, fishing and observing wildlife. “Who needs a cabin at a lake?” questions Doug. “We have lake living right here at home.”

“We love living in the city of Minneapolis,” observed Lisa. “The people are interesting and friendly, and it really feels like a small town sometimes. Our lives are so interconnected with so many other people.” Some of their favorite family moments are related to the sunsets, which they observe from the back deck. They never tire of them. Even after six years of living in the home, pictures at sunsets are taken and remembered. The wildlife sightings are diverse – migrating waterfowl, coyotes and fox, eagles, loons, osprey, muskrats, and occasionally, deer, wild turkeys and mink.

The Tanner family is firmly rooted in the community. Both of their children went to Lake Country Montessori through the eighth grade. The adjustment to a large urban high school was a big change for both of them. But, as Lisa confirms, Southwest High School has been a great experience for both of her children. The staff, coaches, students and families are all impressive. And, she feels that her children are well prepared for college.

“At times, it seems impossible that we are able to live on a lake in the city, bike to work downtown, have access to the great amenities of city living, and also know that our children are getting a great education,” said Lisa. “It’s incredible.”

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