



# Sunnyslope Family Home Brings Home Awards

**AT HOME**  
FRESH IDEAS FOR THE HOME Good Life

Story by Susan Lagsdin  
Photos by Mike Irwin

A (relatively) new kid on the block, Jake Gann just swept the awards at the 2022 Building North Central Washington Annual Tour of Homes, held Sept. 17-18.

"Five stars" is the top rating used by industry professionals who evaluated the seven entries. Gann Construction won top honors in all four categories: 5 Star Exterior Appeal, 5 Star Kitchen, 5 Star Master Suite, 5 Star Interior Appeal, and, finally, the People's Choice Award, chosen by a vote of Tour attendees who visited all of the homes.

This was a first-time entry for a builder who's only been in the business since 2017, a short but very busy five years. Jake, whose

The spacious home, designed to suit the owners/builder's family of five, offers plenty of both gathering and getaway spaces. Opening it to visitors for the weekend of 2022 Home Tour meant some last-minute finishing and decluttering, but Jake and Denise Gann were proud to share their favorite features.

background is mainly in pro baseball, retail lumber and agriculture, was aided and encouraged by his extended family of builders to begin a new career at age 39.

Jake has since built several homes in the Desert Aire community and wanted to demonstrate his design and construction skills for BNCW judges and for the local public. He figured every bit of exposure helps; it was a good calculation.

He and his wife Denise decided this summer to enter their own new home in the Tour. Built on a .75-acre Sunnyslope homesite off Knowles Road in Wenatchee, it was move-in ready just last February, and it seemed like the perfect showplace.

Siting the house on the hilly terrain wasn't easy. "I'd estimate we moved hundreds, no...thousands of cubic yards of dirt to make this place level," Jake said gesturing at the placid green lawn, deep porch, landscaped retaining wall, and the dark asphalt of a double roomy parking area. Nothing on the property belied any type of extreme earthmoving.

Jake and Denise love their big (5,300 square foot) new house, having willingly moved after two years from what was to be their "forever" home far up on a nearby slope, literally a cliffhanger.

She said, "I couldn't get to my flowers – they were down a hillside, and there was no place for the kids to play." They did give

up a sweeping view. "But," Jake said, "The lot was really steep. It's OK being down here—there's a secure feeling and it's more of a neighborhood."

The Ganns are playing the long game; they intend to live here until their kids bring home their own families. Daughter Elliot and her twin brother Lincoln are 8, and their big brother Wallace is 10, and Jake and Denise both work full time. They designed this home to accommodate five active individuals.

Some decisions were purely practical: the kitchen-length butler's pantry makes food and drink prep easy, and out in front,

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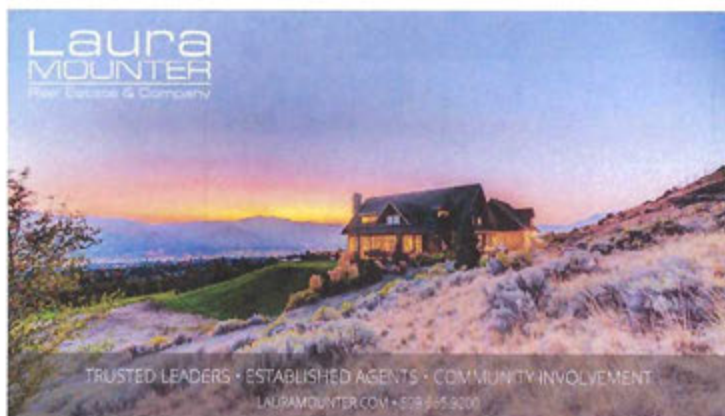


(above) Artful accessory choices are Denise's department, and she's used vintage implements, repurposed and refreshed, to add traditional charm to every room. She dresses the house up for the seasons, and this harvest themed alcove is a preview of her upcoming Halloween look.

**He builds homes, she beautifies them. Jake and Denise Gann are originally from Okanogan, where he learned the family building trades. Since 2017, they have collaborated on new homes in Wenatchee and farther downriver at Desert Aire, near Mattawa.**

a chef's gas range works hard alongside the doublewide refrigerator. There's a whole lot of cooking going on; family meals and regular church group gatherings make this the hub of the house.

Two laundry rooms, one at the main level and one on the second floor for the kids, means no lugging loads of clothes up the stairs. The guest powder room, which



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▶▶▶ Continued on page 23



The 5,000+ square foot home has the scale to accommodate this mountain goat (temporarily on loan from a relative) above the open living area. Pale floors and whisper-soft gray wall color, plus large glass patio doors to the right, add to the airy, light tone of the main level.

HOME STORY — From page 13 ▶▶▶

doubles as a changing room, offers easy access to both the indoor and outdoor living areas and the swimming pool.

"We were going to keep the long bonus space over the garage unfinished, just for storage," Denise said. "But I'm so glad we didn't." Instead, carpeted and painted, it provides room for their exercise machines and for two twin beds, each in its narrow alcove, for naps or overflow sleepovers.

The boys have their own rooms and share a bath; their daughter has her own bed and bath across an open loft space overlooking the living room. In addition, they all share a dedicated playroom. Kids upstairs, adults downstairs; the family is just the right age for that plan to work.

Some design decisions were pure luxury and a pleasure to the eye. The two-story-high

fireplace surround is horizontal, white-painted pine boards. Deep, covered cement porches front and back mean outdoor living in all weathers.

For indoor relaxation, there's a media room across from the primary bedroom. They all enjoy a sophisticated sound system (Again, "We couldn't decide if it was worth it," Denise remembers) that can grace the house and patio, or just one room, with music.

Jake is more than content with this most important building venture. "It took a little while, but it's really grown on me." He's pleased to have a lawn and spacious new shop building, and about the living area, he said, "Every time I come in here and sit down, I look up and think 'I just love this big, tall, open room.'"

A lot of discerning visitors on the Home Tour liked it also. A big room and big awards seem to signal a big future ahead for this ambitious builder.



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