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IN CHICAGO, A
WIDOWED YOUNG
MOTHER OF TWO
COMPLETES THE
WEEKEND GETAWAY
THAT WAS HER
LATE HUSBAND'S
PRIDE AND JOY

a
loving
tribute



In the dining room, a crystal chandelier hanging from the coffered ceiling draws the eye. **Preceding pages:** The living room shimmers in light reflected from nearby Lake Michigan. Large windows, dressed with French-pleated draperies and wispy sheers, run the length of the room.



Right: Dawn Loughlin and her cute-as-a-button boys, Hunter, 7, and Riley, 5.
Below: The classic 1890s-era building that houses the Loughlin condominium was once home to the K-12 Latin School of Chicago.



When the exclusive K-12 Latin School of Chicago moved to a new location, a developer bought the 1890s-era building and converted it into condos. Jamie Loughlin, owner of a construction company, was first to buy a unit, planning to turn it into a wonderful weekend retreat for himself, wife Dawn, and their two sons. Tragically, just months before his project was due to be completed, Jamie was killed in a car accident. Work on the condo came to a halt.

“It was up to Dawn to decide the next step,” says Tom Riker, the architectural designer who had worked on the two-years-in-the-making renovation. At first she hesitated, but ultimately she forged ahead: “I knew this is what Jamie would have wanted, and I felt that completing it would be a tribute to him.”

Dawn honored her husband’s wishes by finishing the project to both architectural and decorative perfection. “He was meticulous about all of his construction projects, but this one especially,” she says. “Our primary residence in the suburbs is an hour from Chicago, and he wanted our condo to be a great getaway for our family, friends, and relatives, and his clients.”

Jamie had already demonstrated his aesthetic by dramatically altering the developer’s floor plan to make it more open and inviting. For instance, to avoid a tunnel-like passage between the front and back of the condo, he created a wider-than-specified central hallway and divided the ceiling into three unique sections in order to create a gallery effect.

A stickler for authenticity, Jamie had nixed the idea of modern ventless gas fireplaces and instead installed wood-burning models with chimneys. Walls were finished in time-honored plaster instead of drywall, and Jamie personally handpicked all of the ornamental plaster crown moldings. “There are amazing details everywhere, all thanks to him,” says Dawn.

In December 2005, the condo was completed. To celebrate the occasion (and what would have been their anniversary), Dawn threw a New Year’s Eve party for family and friends. “Everyone enjoyed it, but even more, they loved seeing the place that had meant so much to my husband,” she recalls.

Guests were greeted in the beautiful groin-vaulted foyer, then ushered into the living room, where a palette of cream,



blue, copper, and beige sheathes the space in warmth and softness. "People were quick to notice the fine workmanship and the details," Dawn says. "Jamie would have been so happy."

Dawn and Riker agreed that furnishings in the living room should be clean-lined transitional pieces with an urban, but not edgy, attitude. The sofa, open-arm chairs, and daybed—all upholstered in child-friendly fabrics—are grouped to focus on the limestone fireplace, handcrafted by a French stone mason.

In this room and others, Riker's goal was to strike a beautiful balance between here-and-now furniture and classic old-world details as seen in the fireplace, the Versailles-pattern parquet floors, the tray ceiling, and the moldings. While no walls separate the living room from the dining room and kitchen, there are defining transitions. The spectacular coffered ceiling sets the ▶

Above: A classic daybed provides a decorative yet functional division between the living room and the kitchen, a beautiful space replete with elegant walnut cabinetry and a French copper range (left)—the room's pièce de résistance, which cooks as good as it looks.



Left: In the peaceful retreat of the master bedroom, ornately crafted crown molding contrasts with the simple lines of the new, quietly dressed mahogany bed.

Bottom left: The master bathroom's hand-milled mahogany vanity was intentionally designed to look more like fine furniture than a commonplace bathroom fixture.

Below: The luxe tub is surrounded by Carrara marble, a material that Dawn initially didn't think she would like but now loves.



dining room apart and provides a traditional counterbalance for the city-sleek mahogany table and shapely barrel chairs.

A daybed, with seating that faces either the living room or the open kitchen, bridges the two spaces. The kitchen's detailed walnut cabinetry looks more like fine furniture than storage. French antique chandeliers adorned with German crystals hang above each end of the island. The island bar stools, custom-made to mimic the shape of the dining-room chairs, bring design consistency to the three living spaces. "We chose a kid-proof fabric for the stools," says Riker of the practical selection. "Even orange soda just beads up and rolls off."

More than she imagined, Dawn enjoys spending time at the condo—not just weekends, but during the summer for a month at a time. She and the boys explore the city and go to the beach, as do friends and relatives who are frequent guests. "This is how Jamie envisioned the place would be used," says Dawn, "and knowing that, it always makes me happy to be here." ❏

Architectural designer: Tom Riker

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