

## Renovation and Build History

### Katherine Lane: Final renovations in 2024



When we purchased Katherine Lane, the property was already remarkable—a 2.2-acre gem valued at \$1 million by the county—but it had been neglected for years. The house itself had a history, having been featured in *Good Housekeeping* in the 1950s. The builder, who owned a sawmill, used only the finest wood with exceptional grain for his home. I even met his son, who proudly shared the article and stories about the craftsmanship that went into constructing this house. You can feel the quality when you're inside. My Contractor once stomped his foot on the upstairs living room floor and responded, "Barry, this is one of the most solid homes I have ever worked on."

### Upstairs Renovations

The upstairs was our starting point, with its beautiful original wood floors still in excellent condition. We modernized the bathroom, adding sleek new fixtures while preserving the home's charm. In the kitchen, we kept the solid, vintage cupboards, gave them a facelift with paint and new hardware, and complemented them with brand-new quartz countertops and state-of-the-art appliances. To flood the dining area with natural light, we enlarged the windows, creating a bright and welcoming space.

Outside, we tackled years of overgrowth. Trees loomed over the roof, threatening its integrity, so I climbed up there and cleared off all the moss, dirt and leaves. We decided to replace one side of the roof. Behind the house was a huge rotting, old wooden deck. Piece by piece, I dismantled it, and hauled the debris into dumpsters. Then we hired a crew to replace it with a beautiful stamped concrete deck that slopes carefully away from the house to prevent water damage. The circular driveway, once an overgrown eyesore, became a centerpiece. We removed the shrubs and replaced them with giant stone slabs, bamboo, and an artificial grass path. On the sides of the driveway, we added gravel parking spaces for up to 11 cars.

## **Creating Experiences**

The outdoor spaces were transformed with trails and gravel areas for games like cornhole. We added a new fence between the upper and lower unit, preserving privacy. A hot tub was added at the forest's edge. I have found that guests love hot tubs :-). The hot tub is surrounded by trails, the old growth forest, and even towering Redwood trees planted in the 1980s. Inside, we converted one enormous bedroom into two smaller ones, increasing the rental appeal of the upstairs as a three- bedroom unit.

## **The Downstairs Journey**

The downstairs was nothing more than a cold cement slab when we began. I'll never forget the sound of the jackhammer breaking it apart so we could lay new pipes for the bathroom and kitchen. From there, we built everything: three bedrooms, a full kitchen, a laundry room, and a cozy living space with a matching fireplace to the one upstairs. Each bedroom was outfitted with large closets and up-to-code windows for fire escapes. The high-quality linoleum floors provide both durability and comfort, softening the space and adding a welcoming touch. My wife, Christi, and I decorated the house with furnishings and art to reflect what is now a modern era home. Much of the new furnishings are still there however, some have been removed at the renter's request. The remodel was a labor of love, taking over two years to complete, we finished in 2023. I personally climbed the roof to clear debris, cut down trees, and worked alongside the contractors every step of the way. We spent over \$247,000 in total, not counting the hundreds of hours of my own labor. Today, Katherine Lane rents for \$4,995 per month plus utilities. Its six bedrooms, two kitchens, and open living spaces make it an ideal rental property, but the true value lies in the experiences it offers—spacious, inviting, and designed with care. Also, I receive a few calls a month from developers who would like to buy both of my properties. As of yet, of course I have not been willing to sell.

## **Upstairs Renovation:**

- Installed brand-new windows and fully remodeled the bathroom.
- Kept the original kitchen cupboards, updated with fresh paint and new hardware, complemented by quartz countertops and new appliances.
- Enlarged dining area windows for more natural light.

## **Exterior Improvements:**

- Cleared overgrown foliage, removed hazardous trees, and replaced part of the roof impacted by tree coverage.
- Replaced a rotted wood deck with a durable, stamped cement deck designed for optimal drainage.
- Revamped the circular driveway centerpiece with stone slabs, bamboo, and artificial grass paths. Added parking for 11 cars using gravel and landscaping mesh.

**Outdoor Enhancements:**

- Created trails and gravel areas for activities like cornhole near a hot tub installed at the forest edge.
- Constructed a dividing fence between units and preserved five majestic Redwood trees planted in the 1980s.

**Garage Additions:**

- Installed a washer and dryer and programmable garage door controllers operable via smartphone.

**Downstairs Unit Construction:**

- Transformed a bare concrete slab into a three-bedroom, one-bath unit with a full kitchen, laundry room, and matching fireplace.
- Installed high-quality linoleum flooring for comfort and durability. Egress-compliant bedroom windows and large closets enhance functionality.

**Yeti's Treehouse: Engineering Marvel Meets Childhood Wonder**

Building the 400 sq. foot Yeti's Treehouse in 2021, was an adventure in itself. Suspended in the air by four trees, this isn't your average backyard project. I spent months researching treehouses across the Pacific Northwest before designing one that could truly stand apart. Most "treehouses" are not truly what the name implies. They are lifted by beams bought at Home Depot. Yeti's is the real deal, suspended by 4 old growth trees, it uses state of the art, innovative galvanized steel "tree floaters" that allow the trees to sway naturally in the wind without tearing the structure apart. Installing these floaters was no small feat. With a team of seven men, we hoisted massive beams into place using a pulley system. I held my breath watching the crew balance on 20-foot ladders, dangling from the trees to secure the foundation.

Once the deck was built, the vision came to life. Yeti's Treehouse is a two-story retreat with a cedar interior, three skylights, and a mini-kitchen. It features a full bathroom, an

electric fireplace, and a cozy queen bed. A giant hammock, suspended beneath the skylights, invites guests to watch movies or simply stargaze. This treehouse even has high-speed Wi-Fi and a laundry unit. In all of my searching, no treehouse had all of the luxuries we have become a custom too and guests simply need in many cases or they would not book. Outside, the spacious polyvinyl deck—a material chosen for its durability—boasts a giant soaking tub and shower. And for a touch of adventure, I added a zip line that never fails to bring out everyone's inner child. Total cost? \$211,000. The result? A one-of-a-kind sanctuary in the trees that feel like it belongs in a fairytale.

- **Features:** Mini kitchen, full bathroom, laundry, electric fireplace, queen bed, hammock, couch bed for kids, and three skylights.
- **Outdoor Amenities:** Spacious polyvinyl deck, soaking tub, shower, and a zip line for added fun.

### Sasquatch's Tiny Treehouse on the Creek: Off- Grid Perfection



This was my most challenging project. Hidden deep in the woods, this treehouse clings to Golf Creek in a way that would be impossible under current building codes. Since a previous structure existed there, I was able to rebuild and create something extraordinary. No one else on the entire street of 87th actually owns a part of the creek as I do. The first phase began in 2021, with materials hauled in by hand down a steep hill. Carrying cement, lumber, and supplies was grueling, but the result was worth it. In 2024, I returned to upgrade it into a self-sustaining off-grid unit. A metal roof collects rainwater, a generator provides backup power, and the foundations are reinforced to withstand earthquakes. The interior features cedar walls, a kitchenette, and a large deck that seems to float over the creek. Guests are enchanted by the



sound of the water, the sight of owls and deer, and the serenity of this hidden retreat. Total cost: \$275,000.

- **Key Features:** Metal roof for water collection, city and off-grid plumbing, and earthquake-resistant foundation.
- **Ambiance:** Cedar interiors, large windows, and a deck overlooking the creek offer a serene escape.
- **Additions:** 100-foot-long Suspension bridge and large labyrinth for outdoor enjoyment.

### **Bigfoot Glamping Treehouse: Luxury in the**



**Canopy** What started as a simple tent on the ground evolved into a raised glamping experience. In 2022, I Perched it 12 feet above the forest floor. This unit blends the simplicity of camping with the luxury of a treehouse. Guests rave about the cozy deck, the view, and the charm of being immersed in nature. I learned from Yeti's Tree House just how much people love tree houses which inspired this project. Building the deck and improving the structure cost \$35,000.

**History:** This combined with Sasquatch's tiny treehouse recently rented for \$3,000/month on a long-term basis.

## The Old Barn



Rebuilt in 2017, what began as an overgrown, unrecognizable existing structure was lovingly restored from the ground up, preserving its original charm while adding modern functionality. Inspired by its likely origins as a barn, I embraced that theme, incorporating custom, handmade barn doors for the main entrance and matching smaller barn-door-style windows upstairs. To get the trusses up and into the woods I had to rent a large crane. It was quite a sight seeing the trusses dangling over top of the trees.

**Approximate Size:** 1,000 square feet

### First Level Features:

- **Unique Flooring:** Instead of traditional coverings, I opted for a custom multi-colored acid lacquer stain directly on the poured cement floor. This creates a stunning, durable surface that's easy to maintain and will last indefinitely.
- **Lighting:** The 9-foot ceilings are accented by Edison- style lights hanging at varying levels, creating a warm, magical atmosphere, especially at night.
- **Natural Light:** Two expansive 4x9-foot windows flood the space with sunlight, connecting the indoors to the natural surroundings.
- **Bedroom Nook:** A cozy corner features a trundle bed that comfortably sleeps two.
- **Kitchen and Bath:** Located opposite the sleeping area, the kitchen and a half bath complete the first floor's layout.

- **Spiral Staircase:** A spiral staircase leads to the upper level, adding both function and charm.
- **Personal Touches:** My personal grand piano takes center stage, accompanied by a few of my guitars—always a favorite for guests.

#### **Upper-Level Features:**

- **Deck and Entry:** The deck includes a hot tub and offers views of wildlife such as owls and eagles. As you enter the upper level from the outside deck, you step onto a stone floor. The stone floors extend into the oversized shower, ensuring durability and preventing water damage.
- **Storage:** Seven closets provide ample space for storage, keeping the unit organized and guest-ready. Extra sheets, towels, vacuum etc. are kept here.
- **Luxury Bed:** A king-size, remote-controlled bed offers customizable comfort, including adjustable back and leg positions and a massage feature. Positioned to face a large-screen TV and an electric fireplace, it creates a perfect relaxation zone.
- **Windows:** Large barn-door-style windows to the left of the bed can be opened to let in fresh air during the warmer months.

#### **Additional Highlights:**

- **Driveway:** The gravel driveway was replaced with a paved surface, ensuring easy access year-round, with parking space for at least three cars.
- **Washer and Dryer:** A dedicated laundry area is tucked conveniently under the carport.
- This project was both a challenge and a joy. Every detail, from the stained cement floors to the custom barn doors, reflects the thought and effort that went into creating this space.
- Guests consistently rave about the atmosphere, amenities, and attention to detail, whether they're soaking in the hot tub, playing the piano, or enjoying the high-tech king-size bed.

**Total Cost:** \$167,000 (excluding my labor)

## The Main House at 2215



Built in 1936 by a skilled mason, the 3,400 sq. ft. house at 2215 offers a unique blend of original charm and matching updates. One of its standout features is the cement-poured carport, an exceptionally robust structure capable of holding two cars on top and two cars below. Adjacent to this carport is a six-foot-high, 50-foot-long cement retaining wall, designed with functional engineering. The wall features small drainage holes to prevent water buildup, ensuring its longevity. Built into the wall are steps providing easy access to Yeti's treehouse, making maintenance and cleaning straightforward. Yeti's treehouse is conveniently accessible from both the 2215 property and the neighboring lot. Nearby, there's also a functioning water well with a pump system, offering the option to pump your own water.

### Driveway and Initial Improvements

When I purchased the property in 2014, the driveway was dirt. One of my first major projects was paving the entire approximately 100-foot-long driveway. This investment transformed the property's accessibility and curb appeal. Another major improvement involved the "bonus room." Initially, its cement floor was covered with bright red shag carpeting glued down with industrial-strength adhesive. After a week of painstakingly removing the carpeting and scraping off the adhesive, I installed beautiful wood flooring to match the original hardwood floors throughout the main level. The original wood floors, hidden under layers of golden shag carpeting, were carefully revealed transforming the look and feel of the home.

### Recent Renovations

Within the last 30 days, I have completed several significant updates:

- **Kitchen:** Installed new flooring.
- **Bathrooms:** Fully remodeled one bathroom and partially remodeled the other.
- **Laundry Room:** Added a new laundry room on the main floor, equipped with a brand-new washer and dryer.
- **Bedrooms:** Freshly painted. The house also features a durable metal roof, which has been a low-maintenance blessing since the beginning



- **Rental Potential and Investment Value**

This house sits in an ideal zone for return on investment. While I've preserved much of its original charm, I've made strategic updates where necessary. Further improvements are possible but not needed for the overall ROI. Currently configured as a duplex:

- **Upstairs Unit:** Leased for \$2,895/month under a long-term rental agreement.
- **Downstairs Unit:** My property manager resides there for \$900/month. This arrangement has been beneficial, as the manager handles cleaning, maintenance, and organization. This lower unit also includes two washers and dryers, plus organized storage for linens and supplies. It has one full bath, one bedroom and a huge open space. The downstairs unit could easily be converted into a fully modernized second rental space, though it's equally advantageous in its current setup.

### **Summary of Investments**

The total cost of improvements at 2215 amounts to approximately \$79,000, not including my labor, divided into two phases:

#### **1. Initial Phase (2014):**

- New paved driveway.
- Wood flooring installation in the bonus room.
- Removal of old shag carpeting.
- Extensive painting.

#### **2. Recent Phase:**

- Full bathroom remodel and partial second bathroom remodel.
- New kitchen flooring.
- Addition of a new laundry room.
- Interior repainting of bedrooms. This property represents a perfect balance of preserved character and modern updates, positioned to deliver strong returns while maintaining its timeless appeal.

### **My Personal Legacy**

Creating these spaces has been more than a business venture—it's been a journey of passion, creativity, and hard work. Each corner of the property holds memories: hauling lumber through the woods, brainstorming designs with my contractor, and watching guests discover the magic of these spaces. This property isn't just real estate; it's a destination. A place where people come to reconnect with nature, celebrate milestones, or find clarity during life's transitions. I myself have performed weddings, christenings and concerts on my land. Many have written to tell me how their time here changed their lives; that's what makes this work so meaningful to me. While letting go of this dream is bittersweet, my wife's new position in Florida has shifted our focus. I hope this gives you a sense of the care, vision, and heart that went into creating this extraordinary property. Had my wife's career not lead us to Florida I would have never considered selling my business and the valuable, enchanting land I love so dearly.