



HOME WATCH

MADISON

By Vesna Vuynovich Kovach



would they know that they were actually being filled? What about the possibility of freezing pipes should the HVAC fail? Was it realistic to expect a friend to remember to come over to take in the mail or water the plants on a snowbound day like this? To know what to do if an ice-laden limb fell through the roof? She thought of her own vacation property in the Northwoods, and all the things that she wished she could check up on.

Andrea Finck was shoveling snow one day outside her Maple Bluff home when “the light bulb went off” that led to her founding the only certified home watch business in the Madison area.

“I was thinking about some of the vacation homes in the neighborhood,” and also of a homeowner on her street whose primary residence is in another state. Supposing these neighbors had contracts for snow removal—how

Suppose, she wondered, you could hire a service to come over and methodically check your home inside and out, then upload a report that you could access from wherever you happened to be—including photo documentation. Or simply someone to rely on when you need something done from afar.

“I thought, wow! Why doesn’t someone do this as a business? I quickly discovered that concierge



Andrea recently completed a video series detailing Home Watch Madison’s many services—scan the QR code in the Home Watch ad below to see!

Photo by Faith Dey, Live Well Video.

and home watch businesses are common in places with many part-time residents, like Florida and Arizona. I realized I could leverage my experience in real estate, customer service, client experience, and home building and improvement,” Andrea says. Plus, “I grew up living on a lake and I own a lake home, so I understand issues specific to waterfront properties.”

Andrea knew the time was right, given our strong local economy, with “double-digit increases in second/vacation homeownership, and people are also traveling or living away for long periods of time because they can work from anywhere.”

Home Watch Madison specializes in caring for lake and luxury homes while the owners are away, serving vacation homeowners, local residents on vacation, snowbirds, UW sabbaticals, corporate residences, and homes in probate

proceedings or in a trust.

“Home Watch Madison is the area’s only accredited and certified home watch professional. We’re bonded and insured, we have ongoing training and support,” explains Andrea, who belongs to Women in Watch and the National Home Watch Association. “I participate in daily forums and best-practice sharing with others around the country.”

The baseline service is the Home Wellness Check, with 50–300 checkpoints “to make sure everything internally and externally is functioning properly. We check all the doors and windows, and the exterior and perimeter of the property, to confirm there’s no debris or damage. We flush all the water systems, and ensure the appliances and mechanicals are working properly. Integrated electronic reporting lets you see what’s going on with your

WE TAKE THE WORRY OUT OF BEING AWAY



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CONCIERGE & CARETAKER FOR LAKE & LUXURY HOMES

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home, from wherever you are in the world.”

Additional services abound. “If a client wants us to decorate their home because they will be here for the holidays, they can arrive to a fully decked-out property,” says Andrea. “With my design and home building experience, I can also advocate for the client onsite while they are out of town.” Personal shopping and custom concierge services are “perfect for busy homeowners who want to spend less time doing projects and more time living. We do everything from supervise contractors to hire personal chefs.”

Andrea says she’s most surprised by popularity of Home Watch Madison’s feng shui offerings. “It is unique. I don’t know of anyone else who does this

in my industry,” she says, explaining that “homes are not meant to sit empty. The energy becomes stagnant, accumulating “energetic dust. Home watch is about how a property works and runs. Feng shui is about how it feels—which actually affects how it runs! It’s one big circle.”

Andrea, a certified feng shui consultant, will first clear and activate energy by burning sage or palo santo incense and wafting the scent through every “nook, cranny and corner, floor to ceiling” with a sacred feather. The second step is to “bring crystals or purified water to bring positive energy into the area. If preparing to welcome the owners home, I say affirmations to welcome them back, and to thank the home”

The best part of owning and operating homes Watch Madison, says Andrea, is simply this: “I love working with homeowners as someone they can count on. It is client or customer service at the highest level.”

Andrea Finck, CHWP, lives in Maple Bluff with her husband, Jeff, their teenage son, Karson,

and golden retriever Mia. Andrea serves on the Governor’s Council for Financial Literacy and volunteers with several non-profits, and for several years ran the village Fourth of July festivities. “My favorite Friday afternoons are spent on Lake Mendota,” she says. Contact 608-867-7870 and visit homewatchmadison.com to learn more about Home Watch Madison.



Longtime readers may recognize Andrea from our December 2016 feature story about Maple Bluff’s Finck family.