



# Family FIRST

A Labor of Love Results in the Perfect Family Cottage

GREER FAMILY PHOTO

BY KAREN VANDER WERP • PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE DRILLING

**a**n ever-expanding collection of photographs catches your eye. The phrase “a picture is worth a thousand words” has never had more meaning. In the center is a photo of the family’s first cottage, circa 1905, named Kingfisher, the rebuilt cottage of 1964, and Kingfisher Too of 2010. The surrounding photos depict generations of Crystal Lake memories. The photos exhibit without words the memorable moments and times: Great Grandmother proudly standing in front of Point Betsie; toothless smiles of children now grown with children of their own; a beaming Great Grandfather displaying “the big catch”; a four-legged friend, gone now but never forgotten; sand castles, sunsets and bonfires.



Lacey Greer had been vacationing in Beulah at Kingfisher for 64 years. As the family grew, it became impossible to accommodate all the children and grandchildren of the now five owners of Kingfisher. Because of the over-crowding, Lacey and her husband, Bob, bought a lot

with a small cottage, an 8-minute walk away from Kingfisher and proceeded to build Kingfisher Too.

“This house is all about family—it links us to the past and it’s a future promise for our children,” shares Lacey.

The homeowners envisioned their new cottage as a place of constancy, where everyone could gather to remember the past and celebrate the future. They accomplished their mission perfectly.

“This home means we are all together at least once a year in Michigan,” explains Lacey. “This is the legacy we leave our family for the next 100 years—nothing could be more valuable.”

Architect Caleb Luibrand expertly translated the Greer’s passion for family and its history into form and function. To begin, the family salvaged from the existing cottage French doors, which were repurposed for the master bedroom closet, so there would be some continuity from the former cabin to the new home with a new family. Stones from the

fireplace were salvaged and combined with others their daughter collected and found on the property.

Since all of the Greens wanted to wake up looking at the lake, Luibrand designed the cottage so that every bedroom had a view of the lake, as did the main living room. This posed a problem due to limitations of the narrow building site, but again, mission accomplished.

To eliminate the difficulty of living so far away during construction, the Greens selected everything—from paint to hardware—at the outset of the process.

Architect Caleb Luibrand and builder Brad Hopwood, of B.J. Hopwood Inc., have a mutually-successful, 23-year working relationship. “Brad’s invaluable willingness to ask and receive input, sometimes talking two to three times a day, makes the cohesiveness of a project unparalleled,” according to Luibrand. “All good projects come from a team that combines architect, builder and homeowners.”

Hopwood believes the team concept is one that is often skipped. Besides being placemakers, their expertise falls into the niche of building in dunes and other areas where most builders don’t want to work. “We build legacy homes that are unique and can stand the test of time,” shared Hopwood.

It was this team that made the Greer project a joy. “Caleb seemed to grasp what we wanted so effortlessly, and Brad brought Caleb’s vision to life,” shares Lacey.

The quintessential Michigan cottage is cozy and comfortable. The color palette captures the surrounding sand, water and sun.

In an attempt to keep it authentic, with the exception of family pieces, the furnishings were found in antique shops, malls and other places of hidden treasures in Benzie County and Traverse City. Every purchase is of a vintage of Lacey’s parents, grandparents or great grandparents.

The uniqueness of the home is found in the collaboration of effort by every family member. Bob insisted on a basement with an owner’s closet/wine cellar, in case future generations might want to rent the house. Their daughter insisted on a bedroom paneled in cedar for a rustic feel, reminiscent of the room she had spent so much time growing up in at Kingfisher. Lacey and Bob’s daughter-in-law wanted their room and bath muted and soft with white bead board and sea glass colored walls. Their granddaughter chose the decorative tile for the children’s half bath, and the fabrics covering the furniture in the children’s bunk room. The son and son-in-law were interested in the yard, beach and outside lighting. Lacey opted for a small covered-porch off the master bedroom, decorated with antique wicker furniture, providing a quiet space for reading and relaxing.

The house and its contents are an inscription of family heritage, defining the personalities of those who have gone before. “Things are just things unless they transport you to other places and times past,” shares Lacey.

This home, so full of tradition, exudes an appreciation for family which seems to have been lost by many. It was a labor of love where everyone, including owners, architect and builder, were emotionally invested by taking part. The result is a Michigan home worthy of many happy visits spent adding to the family history and lore. □



**PREVIOUS PAGE:**

The home posed a design challenge: to create a multigenerational family cottage on a 50-foot lot without making it look like a tall box.

**INSET:** Every family member has a vested and emotional interest in the building of the home.

**THIS PAGE:**

**TOP:** The cook is never excluded from the family with this open kitchen

**BOTTOM LEFT:** A local artist was commissioned to duplicate a photo of Lacey’s grandchildren and their dog on the tiles behind the stove.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** A place for everyone and everyone in their place.





The 800 pounds of rocks for the fireplace were hand selected by Lacey, her daughter and two grandchildren.



**OPPOSITE PAGE:**

This quintessential cottage is cozy informal.

**THIS PAGE:**

**TOP:** The color palette is reminiscent of lakefront living and is reflected in fabrics throughout the home.

**MIDDLE:** Tiles echoing the color of the lake were selected for the master bath.

**BOTTOM:** A main floor master suite is ideal when the matriarch and patriarch are in residence.



**THIS PAGE:**

**TOP:** This bedroom oasis features white bead board detailing with a soft sea glass color for a soothing beach feel.

**MIDDLE:** Distinctly its own oasis, another bedroom features cedar paneling as a reminder of one of the bedrooms at the Kingfisher cottage.

**BOTTOM:** The kid's bunk was custom built for fun and will never be outgrown.

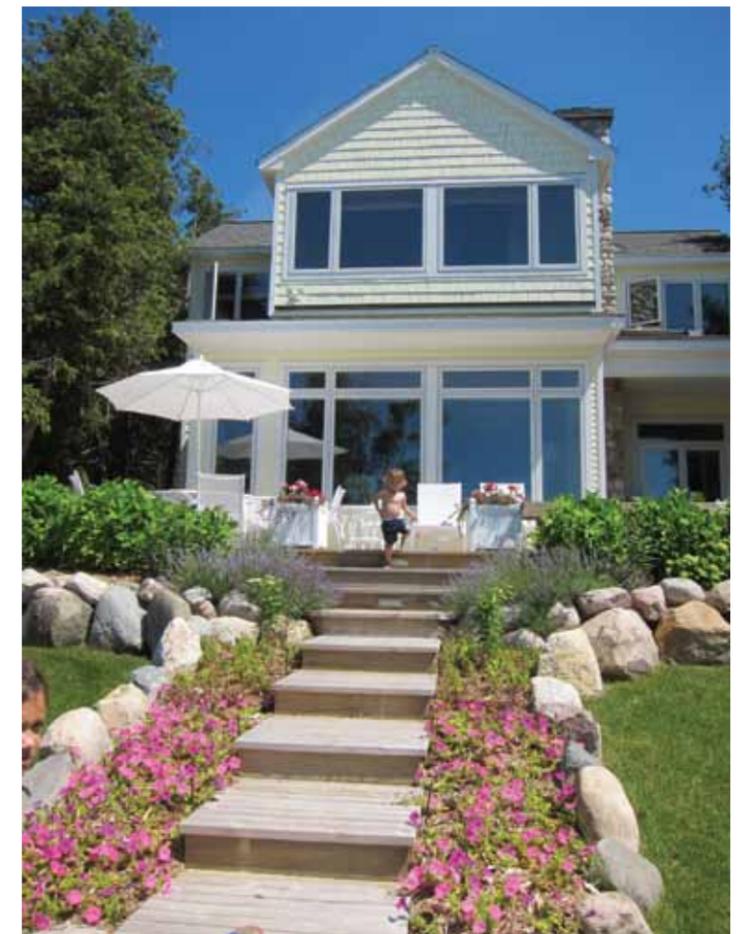
**OPPOSITE PAGE:**

**TOP:** This porch off the master bedroom is a favorite for a glass of wine and relaxation.

**MIDDLE:** The house is perfectly situated with a buffer for privacy on the side with neighbors.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Everyone—young and old—enjoys time spent vacationing at this family home.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** With a landscape brimming with color and a path leading from the house to the lakefront beach, grandkids enjoy their time spent outside while creating happy Michigan memories.



GREER FAMILY PHOTOS

## Caleb P. Luibrand Architect PC, Architect



**PRINCIPAL OWNER:**  
Caleb P. Luibrand

Jesse Warman, Draftsman  
Judith Danford, Office Manager

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:**  
The office, located in Beulah,  
opened 36 years ago.

**EDUCATION:**

Caleb graduated from Lawrence Technological University with a B.S. in Architecture in 1971. Before opening his own business, he worked for Gillet Associates in Bloomfield Hills, and Eldon Eroh, in Arcadia.

**YEAR BUSINESS STARTED:** 1977

**BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY:**

Caleb's decision to locate his architectural business in the small, quaint village of Beulah—where people value family, friendliness, neighborhoods, and face-to-face, one-on-one business transactions—reflects the personal, down-to-earth service given to each client who comes into the office. The goal of CPL is to infuse our creative design experience into clients' drawings—and to sustain community values.

This is achieved through listening carefully to our clients' expressed design ideas and by translating the verbal into a hand-drawn (not computer drawn) design. Each project is a team effort with the owner and our full office staff, the general contractor, and all of the subcontractors. As we help clients with the selection of all interior items, we encourage them to do business locally, usually within a 50-mile radius. This not only supports the local economy, but also fosters a sense of community. Our business philosophy extends well beyond the confines of our office walls. While creating homes for our clients, we perpetuate the values for family, friendliness, neighborhoods and the personal, down-to-earth lifestyle of the community.

**WHAT SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART?**

What truly sets Caleb P. Luibrand Architect, PC apart from other firms is the scope of work we do. Even before agreeing to a full contract, we offer tailor-made, multifaceted research services ranging from a simple feasibility study—beginning with helping the client determine the desirability of a property prior to purchase—to researching local zoning, DEQ rules and regulations, and the determination of the feasibility of a redesign or new design. Providing this information aids our clients in making sound decisions. Because we are a small firm we are able to listen carefully and to work closely with our clients from conceptual design through construction.

We also specialize in obtaining permits to build in the Critical Dunes and High Risk Erosion Areas and in designing homes on these parcels that maintain the integrity of their natural surroundings.

**HOBBIES, VOLUNTEERISM, ETC. :**

Having served in his community over the past years, Caleb is currently enjoying focusing on his passion for architecture, and spending time with his children and grandchildren. He enjoys watching basketball, hockey and golf. He can be considered a "gentleman" farmer; he cans his fruits and bakes wonderful pies. He has a family tree farm and is finishing the restoration on a farmhouse and the original barn.

**CONTACT PHONE NUMBER & WEB ADDRESS:**

For additional information, contact Caleb at (231) 882-5061.

## B.J. Hopwood Inc., General Contractor



**PRINCIPAL OWNERS:**  
Brad and Jan Hopwood

**EDUCATION:**

Brad understands that keeping up to date with ever-changing regulations and technologies is key to providing his clients the best product available and he stays current by taking advantage of the many educational opportunities available. Brad has acquired numerous certifications, including National

Association of Home Builders Certified Green Professional and Michigan State University's Master Citizen Planner.

**YEAR BUSINESS STARTED:** Licensed since 1976

**WHAT SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART?**

We build legacy homes that are unique and can stand the test of time. B. J. Hopwood Inc. has always maintained an unwavering commitment to integrity, excellence and customer satisfaction, and we believe we have the best team in the business. Several of our employees have been with the company 30 years or more. Our subcontractors are among the best in the business and most of them have been with us for many years as well. Everyone on the project understands what is expected and everyone works together as a team. Our team approach allows us to work across disciplines to build homes to exacting specifications. Beyond the daily on-site operations, we believe that successful projects require a team approach with the owner, architect and builder working as partners from conceptual design through project completion. As the builder, a primary responsibility is keeping the communication lines open and the partners involved on a day-to-day basis. Our company also excels at building in areas where other builders may be uncomfortable because we specialize in understanding complex environmental and regulatory issues and develop appropriate workable approaches to solving them.

**HOBBIES, VOLUNTEERISM, ETC. :**

Brad and Jan have been married business partners for more than 30 years. They have two married children, one grandchild, Brad's parents and eight siblings between them; spending time with family is their greatest pleasure. They also enjoy traveling around the country in their coach when their busy schedules allow it. "A lifelong resident of Arcadia and Manistee County, I have been involved in planning, economic development and placemaking in the area for most of my life," Brad shares. "I have a passion for creating special places where people want to live, work and recreate. I think of what I do as placemaking for present and future generations whether it's in the homes we build or protecting and restoring a special place like Arcadia Marsh or developing an accessible fishing dock for the community. As such, I am involved in numerous civic and community organizations and projects." Brad currently serves as chair of the Arcadia Township Planning Commission, is on the board of directors of the Manistee County Community Foundation serving as secretary, serves on Arcadia's Pleasant Valley Community Center board of directors as advisor and is co-chair of the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative. Jan is an avid runner and Brad collects unique and rare antique Allis Chalmers tractors and farm implements, and enjoys being a hobby farmer and woodsman on the acreage they live on.