



NOT *So* BIG Northern Dream Home

How one couple used design
to create ample space with
minimal square footage

WRITER ELIZABETH BOOTH O'TOOLE • PHOTOGRAPHER DAVID SPECKMAN

this past Mother's Day, Nancy Plessner got a fabulous gift—a custom built waterfront home nestled along Lake Michigan in Glen Arbor. "I told our builder I'd love to move my wife into the house on Mother's Day, and he made it happen," says Mike Plessner. The Illinois couple had been vacationing in Glen Arbor at a family cottage for decades. When they retired they knew they wanted to move to northern Michigan permanently. They were inspired by Sarah Susanka's book, an architect and author with a "build better, not bigger" approach. Their goal? A simple home that wasn't too grand and true to Susanka's "Not So Big House" concept.

The Plessners enlisted Dean Adams of Bay Area Contracting to build their "enough for us" dream home. During their first meeting around the kitchen table, the trio agreed to have a lot of fun during the process, and not make it a headache. They broke ground on Oct. 5, 2010, and less than eight months later the existing 900-square-foot cottage was replaced by a 2,800-square-foot home. Not wanting to paint or polish the exterior of the house, they went with a wood siding resembling rough sawn cedar. The style of the home is contemporary craftsman, but Mike prefers to describe it as "Frank Lloyd Wright moved to the beach."

The square footage is split evenly among two floors. The upper level hosts a master bed and bath, a living and dining room, an office and a kitchen complete with a tray ceiling trimmed in tongue and



groove. With granite countertops from Brazil, it's one of Nancy's favorite rooms which she calls "a delightful living space." The floor has the look of wood, but is actually vinyl planks that are easy to care for and can withstand flip flops and sand. Downstairs boasts a walkout basement, two guest bedrooms, one bath, an artist's studio and a sitting area complete with a wet bar.

All of the rooms facing Lake Michigan have sweeping views of the Sleeping Bear Dunes, which are maximized with large open windows. "We built this home to complement the lot. It's a natural part of the landscape," says Adams.

The energy-efficient home is also ready for any weather Mother Nature throws its way. During the summer the couple enjoys barbecues and sunsets on a two-level deck, built on-site. When it rains, you can hear water drizzle down the rain chains which replace down spouts. Come winter, Mike and Nancy will gather around their contemporary fireplace to brave the wicked weather. Friends who come to visit describe their home as "comfortable, calm and cozy."

True to his word, the Plessners said working with Adams was a lot of fun. When asked about what challenges they faced during the building process, they couldn't think of any. They even joked they have considered wearing T-shirts around town that read, "Bay Area Contracting built our dream home. Ask us about it." □

Delivering a perfect combination of style and size.

PREVIOUS PAGE:

ABOVE: Classical styling and attention to detail combine to create the perfect haven.

INSET: A small footprint delivers maximum appeal.

THIS PAGE:

ABOVE: State-of-the-art appliances, along with granite countertops and a stone backsplash give this kitchen a sleek, contemporary look.

OPPOSITE PAGE:

The owners opted for a casual, yet elegant eating area instead of a formal dining room.





ABOVE: Living room, complete with a tray ceiling and contemporary fireplace.

BELOW: A sitting area on the lower level, with a polished concrete floor.



ABOVE: Master bedroom, with plenty of large open windows to maximize the view and sunlight.

LEFT: This master bath features a large soaking tub and limestone countertops.





ABOVE: This is the perfect artist studio for Nancy to practice her pastels.

BELOW: One of two guest bedrooms.

Architect: **KENNETH WARREN WILLIAMS**

Building Materials: **KINGLSEY LUMBER**

Cabinetry: **CREATIVE KITCHENS**

Construction: **JAMES JONES CONSTRUCTOIN**

Countertops: **STRATUS MARBLE & GRANITE**

Gypsum Supplier: **GREAT LAKES GYPSUM SUPPLY**

Pavement: **TEAM ELMER'S**

Plumbing: **FERGUSON TRAVERSE SUPPLY COMPANY**

Well Drilling: **B & Z WELL DRILLING**

Windows & Doors: **OLD MISSION WINDOWS**



BAY AREA CONTRACTING

PRINCIPAL OWNER (S): Dean and Tricia Adams

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS: 4+ years

YEAR BUSINESS STARTED: 2007

EDUCATION: Dean has worked in the building industry since 1998, beginning as a framer for a custom home builder. He gradually learned the administrative end of the business, eventually becoming a project manager where he oversaw developments, spec homes, large custom homes and commercial jobs. In May 2007, the opportunity arose to start Bay Area Contracting, and the company's project roster has been filled ever since. Dean also studied engineering at Grand Valley State University.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY: We are a family-owned business, and "family" is the essence of everything we do. We understand how important a home is to our clients and this is why we invest all of our time and effort into building homes to suit their needs and desires. Our relationships with our clients can be described in three words: personable, honest, flexible. Our dedication to satisfaction is unconditional, and our passion for professionalism and quality is absolute.

WHAT SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART? Bay Area Contracting prides itself on the relationships it builds. Not only with our homeowners, but also with our subcontractors and suppliers. We work together to build homes with quality materials and craftsmanship, and exceptional attention to detail. Our commitment to quality and excellence is the foundation for the relationships we build. And this commitment to our homeowners does not end when they receive the keys to their new homes and move in. It continues on, as they have joined the "Bay Area" family.

HOBBIES: Dean and Tricia Adams are both Northern Michigan natives, were high school sweethearts and attended Grand Valley State University. They moved back to Traverse City and got married in 2004. Over the next few years, they founded Bay Area Contracting and started a family that has now grown to four. Tricia works as a nurse in the NICU at Munson Medical Center. As a family, they enjoy boating, water skiing, downhill skiing and traveling. Bay Area Contracting is a proud supporter of Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Northern Michigan, the United Way and Third Level Crisis Center.

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER/WEB ADDRESS:

For additional information, call (231) 941-0014 or visit www.Bayareacontracting.net.