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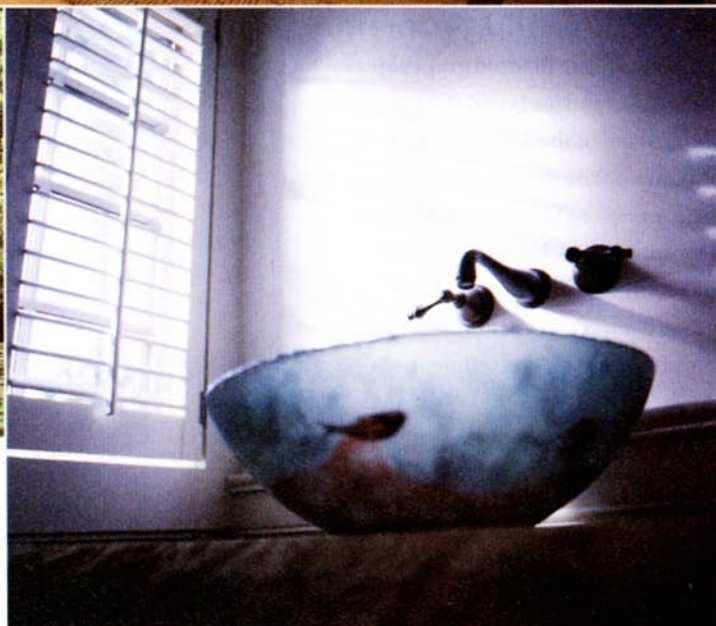
The GOP's Rising Star: Could
He Be Our Future Governor?

SPRING FASHION
The New Black (and White)

THE HOUSE SPECIAL
Chef Lydia Shire's Eclectic Digs



A ROOM WITH A VIEW: The living and dining areas blend together, inviting guests to linger, top; the home has views of the lake; a cast-glass vessel with embedded fossils is a spin on the ever-popular salad bowl basin.



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

A family creates a lakeside retreat to last for generations.

By **RITCH HOLBEN**
and **KEN De LORETO**

| Photographs by **MARY SCHJELDAHL**

CAROL AND STEVE HAD NEVER THOUGHT OF BUILDING A second home. But last year, when a weekend getaway to Canada was botched due to an airline strike, they were left with two choices: stay home in Philadelphia or find another destination. They chose the latter and headed to the Berkshires, landing in a charming town that stole their hearts and became an important part of their future.

"I have made the analogy that this house was like giving birth. It started as a twinkle in our eye," Carol says. The couple strolled along the main street of Stockbridge and on impulse, Steve ducked into a real estate office and made appointments to look at some land. A twinkle was sparked that weekend, when they saw the land that would be the site of their legacy—a second home they call Four Star Cottage after a family nickname for themselves and their two children.

"It was a decision [that was] truly from our hearts," Carol says. "When Steve and I see something and love it, I know that our instinct is worth trusting." However, Carol says that the decision to build the house was not devoid of thought and logic. "We bought this land on a whim, but we didn't do something we couldn't afford. The decision was in balance with our budget. We had to integrate the fantasy with the reality."

From the beginning, Four Star Cottage was to be Steve and Carol's gift to their two children and, they hoped, to generations to come. Years before, while visiting a friend's family farm, Carol was taken by the way that generations of the family gathered at the farm. "I think about the memories I want to leave behind," Carol says. "Our children are in their early twenties now, and we wanted to create a safe haven for our family."

But the first step was lining up the right team, one that could collaborate with all four family members throughout the design and construction processes to create their dream house. "We had done this before," says Carol.

[Continued on page 114]



STAR REPORT: The owners named their retreat Four Star Cottage for the four members of their family. From top: The open floor plan lets light filter through; a screened-in porch overlooks the yard; relaxing on the front porch.

Home Cooking *[Continued from page 126]*

She chose simple cotton linens, duvet, and pillows in warm earth tones for cotton's forgiving functionality—proven by a recent accident. "My son came in here with a juice box that had purple juice and spilled it everywhere, but it came right out," she says. In front of the window is an antique cock-fighting chair, found years ago at a store on Charles Street. On a later trip to Colombia, Shire bought a buttermilk-color hide for \$7, which she used to re-cover the chair. A saffron-colored silk throw draped over the chair adds a jolt of color.

The only hint of tradition in the house's interior is the master bathroom with its marble shower, a mahogany-encased tub and floral William Morris wallpaper. Still, the room retains the dark wood floors found throughout the house, used at Shire's insistence. "They told me not to use wood in the bathroom, but I love it," she says. "I think in an old house you should have continuity—you should

get one great flooring and use it."

Here, original art by Shire's mother dots the wall, one example of which depicts Shire as a girl and hangs above a small red chair she saved from her childhood. "I wanted it to feel like a parlor," she says. And it does, an unusual retreat in a unique house.

So now that Shire has created her dream home, has it lived up to her expectations? Her architect-daughter says it has, and the pair has changed hardly a thing since finishing.

"My mother has a high level of taste, and when we started the project, we knew that if the design worked well, we wouldn't need to revisit it," Lisa says. "I asked my mother a couple of years ago if she was happy with the way the house turned out, and she said that, above all, it's a house that she enjoys."

It's fitting, then, that the greatest delight of this house is its zest and warmth. Is it over the top? Definitely. It breaks the rules and stimulates the senses, and ultimately lures you in. **BH**

Second Homes *[Continued from page 113]*

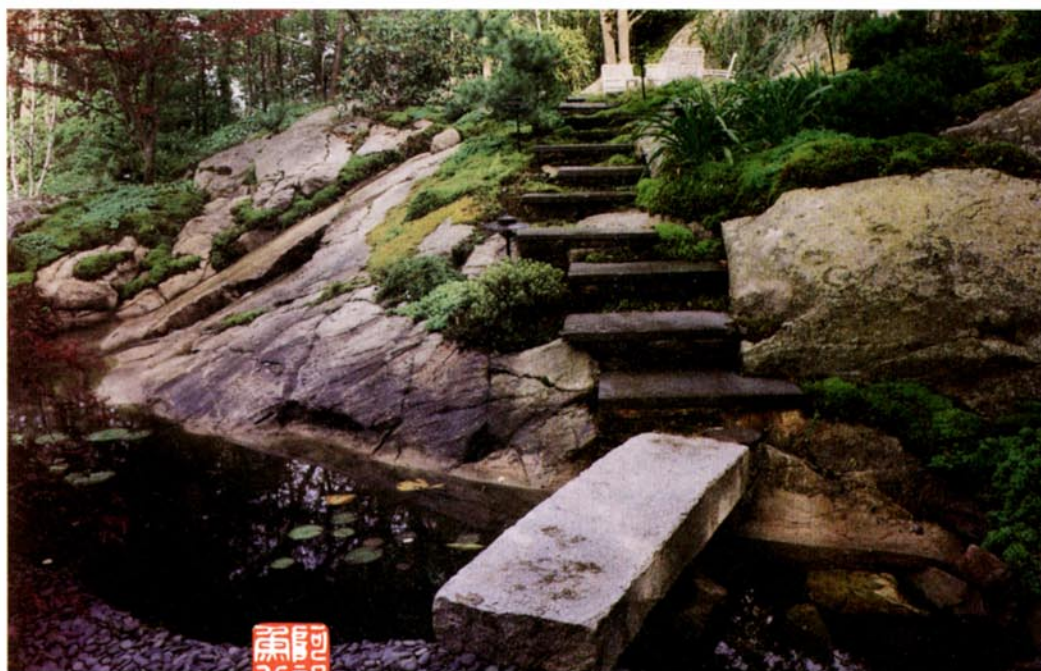
"We had been through the process of building one home from scratch." Dealings with a shady contractor had made them wary.

Recommendations from a friend pointed Carol and Steve to architect Pamela Sandler-Rota's Berkshire-based firm. "Pam said two things in our initial

From the beginning, the cottage was to be a gift to future generations. "It was a decision that was truly from our hearts."

call that made us select her," says Carol. "First, she prides herself on building the home that her clients want, not the one she wants them to build. Second, this would be a process that we would work through together. These comments were very much in line with our thinking."

The architect then *[Continued on page 130]*



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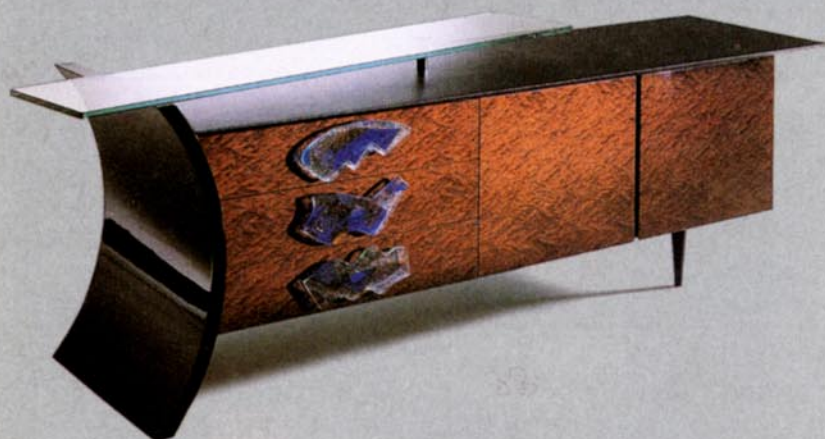


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**Boston
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Second Homes [Continued from page 128]

recommended several contractors for the job. The family chose local contractor Chris May.

"Chris was always willing to solve problems," Steve says. "If something wasn't right, he was one of the first to say it."

To reflect stability while maintaining a welcoming feel, the exterior of the house has an updated shingle-style design that blends with the other homes in the area. Cedar shakes flare out to meet the stone foundation, while the porch's tapered piers sit firmly on stone. A star motif, representing the cottage's name, is sprinkled throughout the house and is most prominent in an inlaid blue stone star on the front porch.

"When you build a home, whether it's conscious or not, it says something about who you are and what

"When you build a home, it says something about who you are," says Carol. "It's about relationships, not the size of a living room."

your values are," says Carol. "It's about relationships, not about the size of a living room."

At approximately 3,500 square feet, Four Star Cottage is not large by today's standards. But thanks to the openness of the two-story entry and windowed rear wall, the house feels generous and spacious. The kitchen is a functional c-shaped plan, with a center butcher-block island open to the dining area, which offers clear views to both the lake behind the house and the fireplace in the living area. Outside, an oversized garage provides storage for family kayaks, rowboats, life jackets, and other sports equipment.

While a large portion of the house is devoted to open gathering spaces for the family, private spots are also important to the couple. "One of the choices we made," Carol explains, "was to put the master bedroom downstairs. There are two other bedrooms and a tower bunkroom upstairs. This allows our children, and someday maybe their families, to have [Continued on page 132]

Second Homes [Continued from page 130]

their privacy. If you ask for too much togetherness from adult children, they won't want to be there. As a social worker, I learned that to bind people together you have to be willing to let them drift apart."

It was this thoughtfulness about the planning of the house that the couple hopes will make it last for generations. "This is the home where we'll see our grandchildren grow up," says Steve. "That's why this became a very special project, because it will transcend us." BH

**RESOURCES LIST FOR
THE FOUR STAR COTTAGE**

CONTRACTOR Chris May, Chris May Builders, Richmond, 413-698-2702 **ARCHITECTS** Pamela Sandler-Rota, Architect; Ritch Holben, Senior Designer; Robert Viel, James Vaughn, designers, Stockbridge, 413-298-4227 **INTERIOR Decorator** Susan Agger, Washington, DC, 202-965-3545 **LANDSCAPE DESIGN** Matt Tomich, Tomich Landscape Design, Sheffield, 413-229-2945 **COLOR CONSULTANT** Carl Black, Liberty Design Consultants, Hudson, NY, 518-828-4060 **ANTIQUES** Buggy Whip Factory, Southfield, 413-229-3576 **LINENS** Seeds, Great Barrington, 413-528-8122 **TEXTILES** Crispina French, Crispina Designs, Housatonic, 413-274-1000 **CUSTOM IRONWORK** (Bed, sinkbase) John Graney, Graney Metal Designs, Great Barrington, 413-528-6744

Fast Food [Continued from page 115]

is available in limited quantities through a licensing agreement with Jenn-Air/ Maytag and is designed to cook at five times the speed of conventional ovens. Frozen hors d'oeuvres, salmon, whole chickens, pizza, potatoes, and brownies all went in. And, to my chagrin, they all came out looking and tasting very good.

This isn't science fiction. The oven works by using two-thirds convection heat (traveling at speeds of up to 60 miles per hour), and one-third electromagnetic energy (microwaves). The heat transfer (convection) pushes super-hot air down onto, around, and under the food. At the same time, microwaves are directed into the food from a circular launcher synchronized by complicated algorithms that are in tune with the convection energy, helping to achieve the [Continued on page 134]

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