

floor space COTTAGE IN THE PINES

Well grounded

TOWERING PINES INSPIRED A HOME THAT HONORED ITS SITE
BY ARIC KARPINSKI / PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN GUTMAKER



The Bolands' cottage (opposite page) is carefully nestled among the tall pines. In order to protect against erosion, the existing pine needles were collected and later scattered over the area. The dining room (this page top) opens out onto the home's north-facing, screened-in porch. "A lot of people want their porches on the south. Throughout history you see a lot of that. It's a way of getting sunlight in the winter and that kind of thing," says architect Marco Silveri. "North-facing porches have an advantage that a lot of people don't know about and that is that your vista to the north is really the best in terms of light."

The home's narrow frame corresponds to the surrounding pine forest and situates the house to maximize the available views. "For a 1,300-square-foot house to have six rooms with a view of the lake, the only way to do it is to stretch it out and go two floors with it," Silveri says. "If you go one floor with it half of those rooms are looking at the other side of the site."



The home's second-floor bedroom suite (above) features a sleeping porch and the same pine paneling found throughout the home. The sleeping porch also incorporates the cedar shingles from the home's exterior.

"People comment when they come here for the first time," Boland says of the home's proximity to the pines. "They can reach out and grab a tree limb if they wanted to." The second-floor bathroom (above) also features a view of the lake.

Kevin and Marilyn Boland had a plan all along. For nearly a decade after buying an acre of land on Spider Lake, the couple camped on the site under an umbrella of tall red and white pines. But their small Fleetwood Prowler camper would only serve as a temporary substitute for the cottage they would build when their money came together. Their wish list, on the other hand, came together more quickly.

"We had a conglomeration of disjointed ideas," Kevin says. "We had collected a lot of stuff over the years." Among the things they collected were names. Kevin's job in the construction industry had introduced him to architect Marco Silveri years earlier. And they had settled on builder Roger Widing in 1980. "It was a

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long-term plan," he says, with the exaggerated emphasis of a sportscaster calling a home run. "We figured it would pay off in a certain amount of time."

The payoff came in the form of a tall, narrow cottage carefully nestled between the towering trees where the Bolands once parked their cramped camper. Finished in 2001, the house is a clapboard-sided, cedar-shingled testament to the virtue of patience. "There's something about a client spending time with the property and getting to know it intimately," says Marco, who designed the weekend home while his wife, landscape architect Cynthia Silveri, prepared the grounds.

"We asked Kevin and Marilyn what they wanted to do with the landscape and they said, 'nothing,'" Marco says. "They told me specifically the views they were interested in, where they wanted privacy from the road, and that kind of thing."

In order to accommodate their wishes, Marco's architectural design offered a compact footprint, steeply pitched roof, and ample views with minimal disruption to the surrounding scenery.


The result, Kevin says, has a feel that's "very much that of a treehouse." That "feel" was enough to get it published in Dale Mulfinger's book *The Getaway Home* (Taunton Press, 2004).

Kevin says he and his wife wanted their cottage "to look like it was dropped down there." They achieved their goal, in part, by using a sort of camouflage of minimal landscaping and native materials, including pine paneling and flooring, Rumford fireplaces of local fieldstone, and grindstone exterior steps quarried in northern Michigan.

The 1,350-square-foot home features an enclosed, second-floor sleeping porch and six principal rooms with lake views. But it does not have an attached garage. "This is more of a traditional cottage in that sense," Marco says. "On a house like this, the garage knocks out huge portions of the house." For their sacrifice, the Bolands were rewarded with a southward view into the pines and a steady cross-breeze that blows cool through the home's narrow frame.

"Now the hard part's coming home," Kevin says. "We talked about moving up there, but we didn't want to give up the escape aspect of it. We'd have to get a place in the U.P." □

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A photograph of a second-floor sleeping porch. The room features large, multi-paned windows that look out onto a lush green forest. In the foreground, a bed with a dark metal frame is covered with a bedspread featuring a large floral pattern in shades of pink, red, and white. Two pillows are propped up against the head of the bed: one is a solid deep red, and the other has a colorful, abstract pattern. On the bed, near the foot, are a pair of black binoculars and a small, closed book. To the left of the bed, a small, oval-shaped decorative object hangs on the wall, featuring a bottle and some text. The overall atmosphere is cozy and serene, with natural light streaming in from the windows.

Residential résumé

Location: East Bay Township

Architect: Marco Silveri, Silveri Architects

Landscape Architect: Cynthia Silveri, Silveri Architects

Contractor: Roger Widing, R. Widing Construction

Size: 1,350 square feet (excluding porches and attic)

The second-floor sleeping porch was a staple of bigger homes of the 1920s and '30s. "Many premium houses had — off the master bedroom — a screened-in porch or a porch with windows that would open all the way around so you could sleep outside," Silveri says. "Then air conditioning was invented and that went away."