



CYBERspace Yields Creative SOLUTIONS

The Global Reach of The Internet and
Old World Craftsmanship Pair Beautifully

WRITER KAREN VANDER WERP
PHOTOGRAPHER STEVE SIMPKINS

Building a home should be the fulfillment of a dream, representing excellence in design expertly tailored to the individual. For the owners of this traditional home, the search for excellence and the unusual proved to be a difficult task. Their search took them through multiple Parade of Homes sites, homes for sale, and just about any other opportunity to view and seek out ideas for a dream home. "As we looked at homes we only found bits and pieces we liked," explains the lady of the house. "We wanted a whole plan that we liked and would fit our individual needs."

The frustration of an empty search brought them to the Internet. It was an extensive online search that produced a plan with everything that fit their lifestyle. "We found it on an architectural design site and purchased the initial plans," explain the homeowners.

The purchased plan encompassed an abundance of floor-to-ceiling windows to enjoy the view—a must for this family who thoroughly enjoys their ideal homestead location. The windows highlight the country setting of their 10-acre lot and the adjoining wooded area that stretches for as far as the eye can see.



To tweak the plans so that the owners would ultimately have a home that fit their entire vision perfectly, builder Gary Ratti, re-designed two bathrooms, creating the perfect master bath. This entailed taking part of a second full bath and adding it to the master, making it large enough for the required amenities. The extra space made it possible to have both a soaking tub and a walk-in shower. Ratti was also able to adapt to a last minute request to redesign the staircase. Because of its free-standing design, it was a task requiring expertise, creativity and precision.

One of the most unusual features of

the home—another custom detail not found on the original plans—is the underground vault. This concrete, fireproof room is outfitted with a security door to safely and securely house the homeowner's gun collection.

The homeowners left their creative stamp on the home's décor as well. In a surprising move from rustic detailing, they chose hickory cabinetry and dark granite countertops for a surprisingly traditional look in an otherwise rural landscape.

The family anxiously awaits the completion of the outdoor living area so that they can begin to enjoy their underground pool,

outdoor kitchen and fireplace for late night campfires under the stars.

This home is a perfect example of how modern ingenuity and time-honored building techniques can be combined for the ultimate dream home. In an era where the Web can provide limitless possibilities, the homeowners found that relationships close to home are the ones that matter. "We love the look of the house, the location, the porches and the backyard. We feel the size is perfect for now and in the future, and we couldn't be happier," agree the homeowners. □

PREVIOUS PAGE:

ABOVE : This country setting is the ideal location for a bustling family home.

BELOW : The covered patio allows the family to enjoy long summer days spent outside.

THIS PAGE:

ABOVE : This family home provides a place for living today and years to come.

BELOW : An open floor plan integrates family activities.



THIS PAGE: Dark granite counters combined with hickory cabinets emphasize a rustic twist on traditional design.



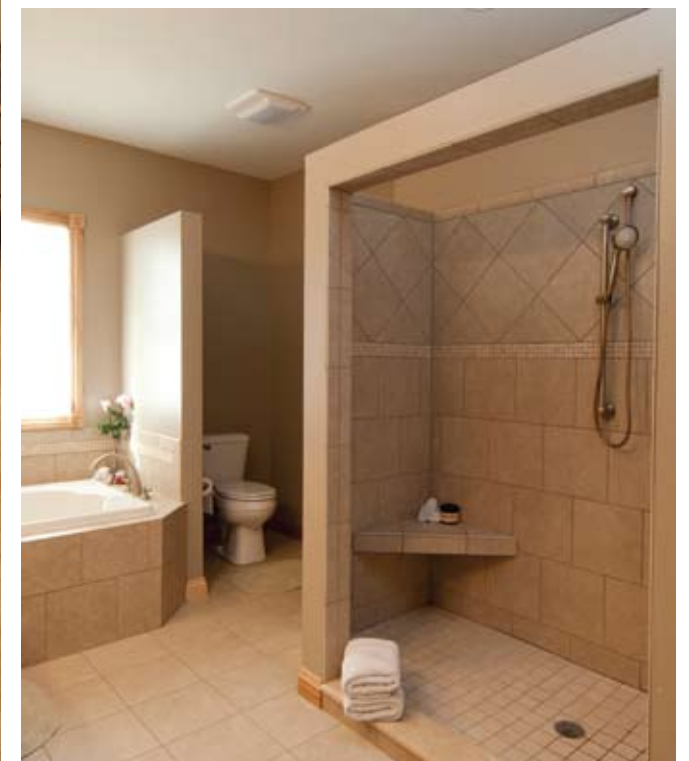
An abundance of wood brings the country setting indoors.



ABOVE: A formal dining area provides a cozy location for intimate dining and large gatherings.
 BELOW LEFT: The French doors leading to the office can be closed when privacy is needed.
 BELOW RIGHT: The kitchen eating area is bright and cheery.



ABOVE: The tile floor combines practicality and luxury.
 ABOVE RIGHT: The master bedroom is the perfect hideaway.
 MIDDLE RIGHT: A large walk-in shower offers ease of use and maintenance.
 BELOW RIGHT: This soaking tub is the perfect alternative source of relaxation in the master bath.





ABOVE: The outdoor fireplace and patio completes the luxuries for country living enjoyment.

BELOW: The laundry/powder room completes the homeowners search for perfection.



Ratti Builders

PRINCIPAL OWNER (S):

Gary W. Ratti

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS:

30 years

YEAR BUSINESS STARTED:

1981

EDUCATION:

Gary Ratti graduated from Hemlock High School in 1977, attended Delta College and learned the building trade from his father.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY:

Ratti Builders strives to provide the highest possible quality home at a fair price, and to build a home that will stand the test of time with enduring quality. The home is typically the buyer's largest investment in life; Ratti Builders understands this and works to ensure that every project is completed with value and quality in mind.

WHAT SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART FROM OTHERS?

Gary Ratti personally meets with the buyer to design a home that will reflect the buyer's unique needs, utilize the latest green building technology, and contain custom trim and cabinets that cannot be found elsewhere. He oversees the building process from beginning to completion. In addition, he works alongside his hourly crew of 4 full-time employees, two of whom have worked with him for more than 20 years. Underscoring his commitment to building the best, Ratti Builders provides a 5-year new home warranty on new homes.

HOBBIES, VOLUNTEERISM, ETC. :

Gary Ratti is a member of the Saginaw, Midland and Bay City Home Builders Association, and a member of the Michigan and National Home Builders Associations. He is a member of the National Corvette Club and the Safari Club International. He has also done volunteer work for Habitat for Humanity.

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER:

For additional information, call (989) 642-2868 or visit www.rattibuilders.com.