

Art BY TIMBERS

BY LAUREL FORTIN // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

PineRidge Timberframe crafted Ann and Greg Becks' stunning timber frame home, located in the countryside south of Owen Sound. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** (1) A warm mix of wood and stone creates an inviting front patio. (2) A relaxing atmosphere is immediately established as water trickles down a stone wall into thriving plants. (3) Framed alphabet photography, spelling Becks, adorns the living room mantel - a gift from the construction crew. (4) Ann's adorable pets always put a smile on her face.



You'll find little in Ann and Greg Becks' house that hasn't been thoughtfully honed or crafted by **Mike Mader** and his team at **PineRidge Timberframe**. From the timber joists to the kitchen cabinets and the desk in the home office, Mader not only built the Becks' house, but he infused it with unique touches that make their house a home.

The 5,500 sq. ft. rural residence south of Owen Sound was what Mader calls a turnkey home. As a timber frame builder based in Mount Forest, Mader raises 12 to 15 house frames each year, most in Ontario and a few across Canada or in the U.S., but he selects only one turnkey project where he acts as general contractor to design, build and finish a client's home. In 2010, the house his team chose to raise belonged to the Becks.

The result is a soaring timber frame interior space with walls of windows that pull the exterior views and fields inside. "When we bought the property in 2007, Mike came out and looked at capturing sunlight and suggested positioning for both winter and summer," Ann recalls. "We walked the property with him and talked about different features we wanted, like a walkout basement. We looked at every aspect – what view would be out this window or that and what would be the shape of the roof. He spent a lot of time with us to find out what we wanted."

Ann and Greg are both busy professionals in the medical field. They value the environment and a healthy lifestyle. Their 25-acre property was a blank slate with no existing structures on it.

In their first summer, the couple planted a modest garden. "We wanted

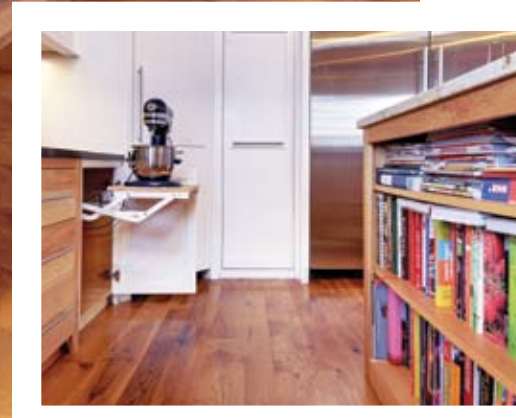
to make our landscaping eco-friendly so that it wouldn't require much grass cutting or maintenance and water," says Ann. With a five-year plan by Landscape Architect **Paul Brydges** of Guelph, to be executed by **Hutten & Co. Landscaping**, they seeded their would-be lawn area with red and white clover, which holds a thick green colour most of the summer season.

In warmer months, the family entertains on a massive outdoor deck (clear glass railings by **Bob's Glass & Mirror Ltd.** in Hanover). Planters and arrangements to dress the home throughout the year are brought in by floral designer and event planner **Rob Dinsmore** of **Wilma's Flower Shoppe** in Owen Sound.

Ann and Greg's blended family sees three teenage boys living in the home plus two adult children whose families join in for holidays and special occasions. "We've got the space now to fit everyone," says Ann. "Our entertaining is in keeping with our house style: relaxed. We'll serve a nice hot chili and fresh cornbread and wine." Guests are also treated to great music played in each room, easily controlled through a Control4 smart home system from **Fast Forward Audio-Video** in Owen Sound. *Continued on page 26*



The large open kitchen, with cabinetry designed by PineRidge, has all the bells and whistles, including basket drawers for root vegetables, shelving for cookbooks and a hinge-lift for the mix-master. **OPPOSITE:** Rob Dinsmore of Wilma's Flower Shoppe provided all of the fresh floral arrangements, including the dining room's lush centrepieces.



home & builder

RIGHT: A colourful sofa combined with other simple, elegant pieces from Legates Fine Furniture makes the loft a comfy place to relax and read. **BELOW LEFT:** The Becks' main-floor master bedroom boasts a walkout to a huge wrap-around deck that offers magnificent views of the property. **BELOW RIGHT:** Wildlife can be spotted while enjoying a relaxing bubble bath in the spa-like master en suite.



In winter months, the family explores the acreage by snowshoe, serving hot cocoa and warming up at the wood burning fireplace in the sprawling basement family room, which also features acid-etched coloured concrete floors heated by the home's geothermal system by **Northern Heating & Ventilation** in Berkeley.

Meal preparation is shared among the family. "We use the counter as a buffet for gatherings," says Ann. The kitchen is a pleasure to work in with hickory cabinetry designed by PineRidge. Space is maximized with creative and practical cupboard placements. The massive granite-topped centre island (**City Stone**) allows ample separate workspaces. Ann loves her baking centre with the mix-master on a hinge-lift stand plus extra deep drawers for supplies.

Overlooking the kitchen, a loft tucked in the rafters houses a quiet sitting area (furnished by **Legates Fine Furniture** in Owen Sound), with floor space for Ann to practise yoga plus a home office. "We went for a more rustic flavour in the loft," says Ann, where PineRidge built shelving with rough-hewn wood and designed a special desk for her. "We had a portion of a cedar tree in our yard that dated back almost 500 years," says Mader, "so we took a slab of that to build her desk."

"It was fun working out all the design things Ann and Greg wanted to incorporate, and feeding off of each other's thoughts," says PineRidge's Mader. The front entrance features a stone, water trickle wall that feeds thriving plants from Wilma's Flower Shoppe. "It's a zen-like feature so that the transition from work to home would be past this stream," says Ann.

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LEFT: A fabulous mudroom/laundry room keeps the Becks family clean and organized. Ample storage, coat hooks, a large folding table and a dog shower station are all geniusly integrated into this functional space. **BELOW:** Greg's downstairs bar brings back memories of the birch and pine trees on Manitoulin Island, where he grew up.

The couple wanted a bar in the basement. "When Greg told me about his family origins on Manitoulin Island, that he was quite fond of the birch and pine trees up there, we incorporated those two woods to build a whimsical log bar," says Mader. The resulting counter has a cutout for the sink and the mirror on the wall above is framed with birch saplings.

The master en suite is spa-like with a marble countertop (City Stone) and a white-painted pine ceiling. All paint was purchased through **Grey Bruce Paint & Decor** in Owen Sound. The unique, flat and square faucets create waterfall-like streams, adding to the relaxing atmosphere.

The master bedroom is in the hybrid-built wing of the home, explains Mader. Whereas the timber frame encloses the main living spaces, the rooms in the hybrid wing (bathroom, laundry, master bedroom and garage) are built with conventional construction methods. "Ann and Greg wanted to carry the feeling of timber throughout, so we used timber joists for the ceiling in the hybrid wing," says Mader. The technique gives a consistent look through the home without having to invest in an all-timber frame.

"We've been doing this for 20 years now, so we understand how a whole house will fit together," says Mader. That's what allows PineRidge Timberframe to offer such design and attention to detail.

As the family settles into its home, the house itself settles, too. "You can hear it cracking as it dries – great loud snaps and bangs," says Ann. It's the natural process of timber drying and it doesn't jeopardize the integrity of the structure.

Decorating is also a work in progress. "Mike warned us that we'd have to take out windows if we wanted a place to hang art," laughs Ann, but she and Greg have traded one kind of artwork for another – the new one just happens to be by an artist called Mother Nature. **OH**



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