



A Spring Cottage

Luxury and livability coincide in this White Sulphur Springs home

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Photos by Steve Brightwell



Photo by Ken Sherman Photography

“Interviewing a client is like meeting a good friend for the first time,” says interior designer Linda Knight Carr of Knight Carr & Company. “It is a matter of listening. Most people answer the questions before you ask them.” And after meeting the homeowners of this Springhouse Cottage for the first time, she knew that they wanted a comfortable and inviting home. With a Greenbrier Sporting Club address, one would expect it to be a showplace, and although the craftsmanship is exquisite and the attention to detail unparalleled, the design and floor plan are smart and livable. *“We wanted to create a home that was as warm and intimate for two people as it was for 10 people,”* she says.

PREVIOUS PAGE: Clerestory windows in the vaulted ceiling can be opened by a remote control, providing a cool breeze in the summertime. “This is a large room, but we didn’t want it to feel big, so we created seating elements with two identical sofas and auxiliary chairs that could be pulled in. The chairs at the fireplace swivel, making it a more intimate arrangement for conversation,” says Carr. ABOVE: Built in 2005, the original design of the cottage was created by Donald Rattner of the Studio for Civil Architecture and then enhanced by Muse Architects.

From the outside, the cottage is approachable and welcoming. The classic architecture represented by the white clapboard siding and traditional Charleston green shutters evoke The Greenbrier's famous green domed, white-columned springhouse. It appears to be one-story. But in fact, the 6,100-square-foot home has a full lower level that walks out onto a lovely terrace that overlooks The Greenbrier's perfectly manicured fairways and panoramic vistas of the Allegheny Mountains. "We wanted to keep the interior colors minimal so that your eye would go out the windows and bring the outdoors in," explains Carr. "The rooms are influenced by French country, so we chose blues, yellows, greens, and reds. We wanted to create a comfortable and inviting feeling that was not cluttered or high maintenance."

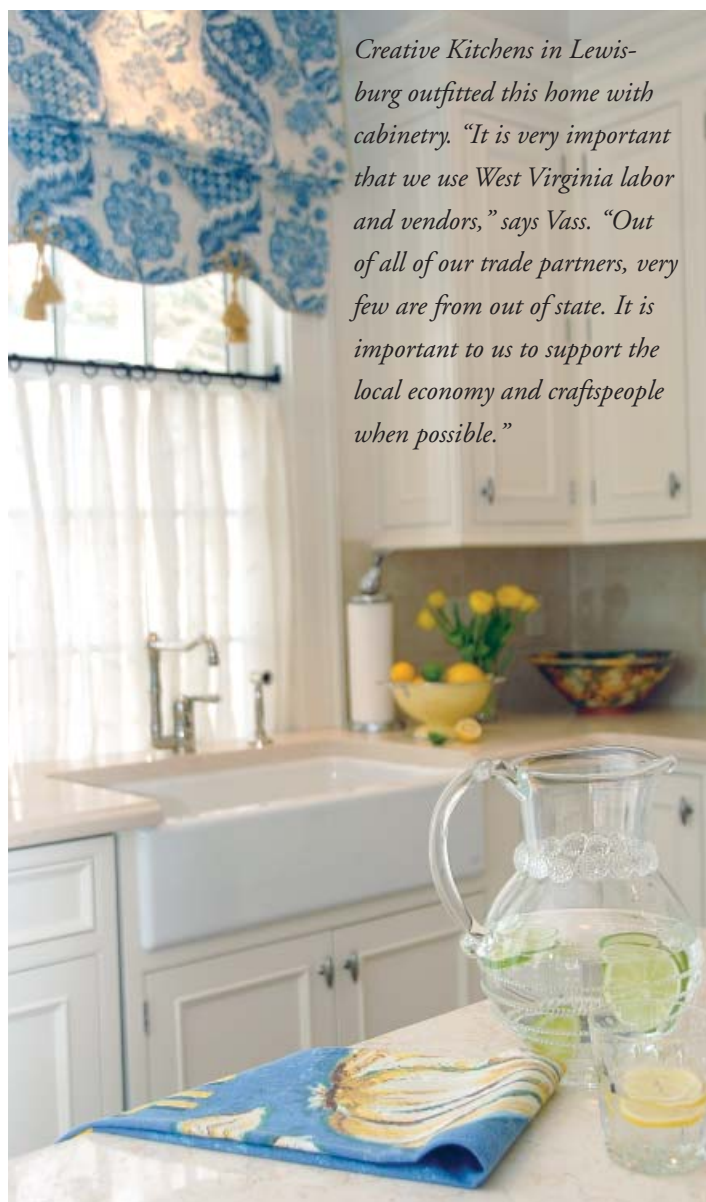
Robert Vass, III, president of Sterling Construction Management, who built this home as well as 89 others at The Greenbrier Sporting Club, says that most people want to have homes that are comfortable and easy to care for. "Today, people are moving to smaller homes. Even from just five years ago, we have seen a paradigm shift. Many people no

longer want sprawling mansions. People are changing the way they live."

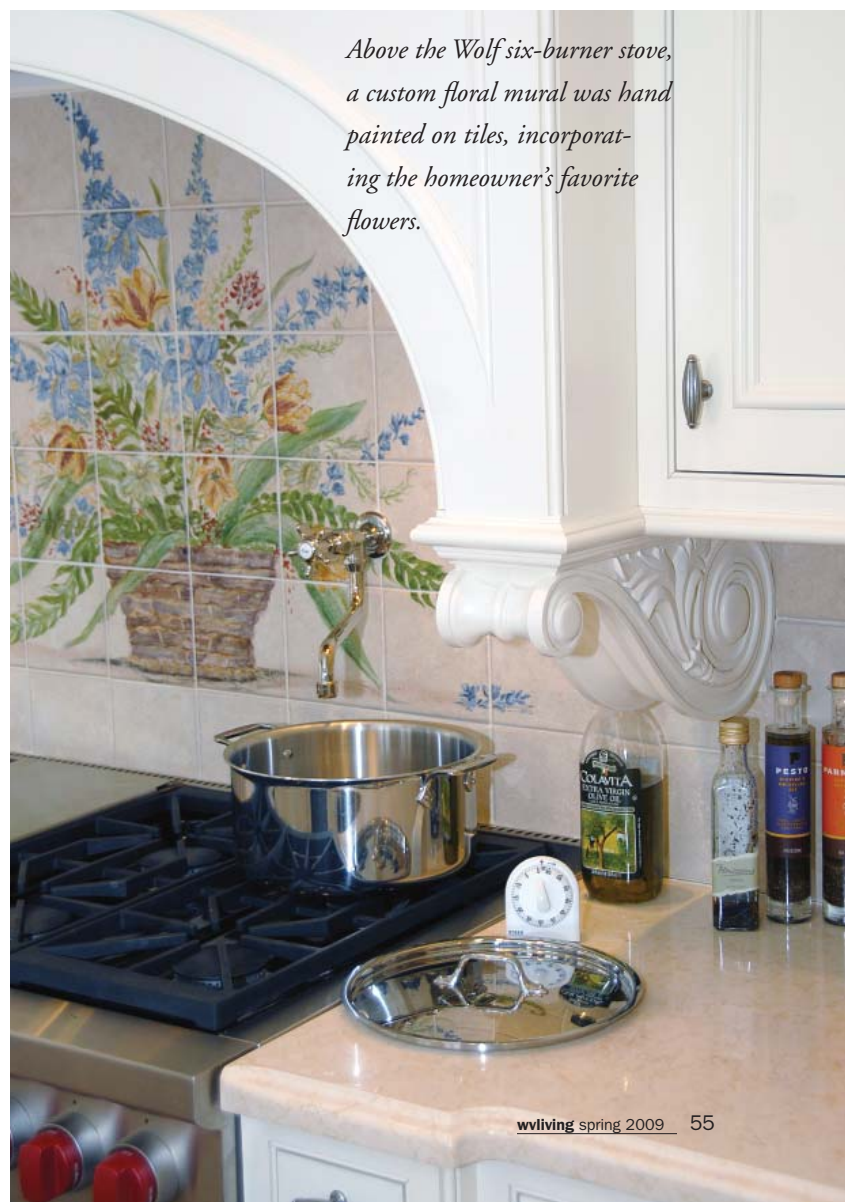
Houses may be getting smaller, but they are also getting smarter—without compromising quality. "Our homes are environmentally responsible and energy-efficient. They incorporate on-demand water heaters, the latest innovations in insulation systems, and cutting edge technology," says Vass. "The high quality of the architecture, materials, and construction, as seen in this home, is what makes our homes stand out. We pay careful attention to details and the quality of finishes."

As soon as you enter the home, the attention to detail is striking. Reclaimed oak floors help give the home a sense of history and permanence. The moulding and millwork hark back to the days of traveling master craftsmen. And the faux graining that is evident throughout the home transforms ordinary millwork and drywall into elegant, albeit deceptive, bird's eye maple and oak paneling and trim for a fraction of the cost.

The vaulted ceiling with clerestory windows bathes the living room in soft light. And with natural elements like the soaring stone fireplace and



Creative Kitchens in Lewisburg outfitted this home with cabinetry. "It is very important that we use West Virginia labor and vendors," says Vass. "Out of all of our trade partners, very few are from out of state. It is important to us to support the local economy and craftspeople when possible."



Above the Wolf six-burner stove, a custom floral mural was hand painted on tiles, incorporating the homeowner's favorite flowers.



Carr says, "In the dining room, we had to balance the extremely tall French doors with smaller windows, so we created Roman shades and placed them higher on the wall in order to give the illusion of taller windows." The short woven linen shears provided privacy. Carr found the large antique wine vessels at a flea market in Paris. "We wanted something that would be attractive on the table year-round and easy to see around if you are seated at the table," she says.

floor-to-ceiling French doors that run the span of the back side of the home, the room feels as if it is an extension of the lush outdoors. "We grounded the room with a dark carpet and used fairly large-scale pieces to fill the volume of the space without cluttering it," says Carr. "The result is an inviting and comfortable space no matter how many people are in the room."

The Springhouse Cottages are just one of the neighborhoods within The Greenbrier Sporting Club, which first broke ground in 2001. "Private development is nothing new to The Greenbrier," says Larry Klein, general manager of the Sporting Club. "It actually goes back to the early beginnings in the late 1700s, when folks would set up tents and cabins on the grounds. In fact, the resort originally consisted of a row of cottages. After the U.S. government's nuclear bunker was decommissioned in 1995, all of this land that the government had been leasing was available for residential development."

The development was carefully planned out, capitalizing on the abundance of outdoor activities and the beauty of the natural surroundings. With all of The Greenbrier's amenities within easy walking distance, as well as the additional perks of club membership that include exclusive clubhouses, golf course, spa, equestrian center, tennis courts, pools, and restaurants, the homes serve as retreats from the stress of modern day life. "Most of our homes are vacation homes, but people are now staying for longer periods of time and returning more often," says Klein. "One of the reasons that our members are staying longer is because we have really built a sense of community. In today's world, folks don't know their neighbors, but here everyone knows everyone, and it is easy to form long-term friendships."

With houses in The Greenbrier Sporting Club ranging in price from \$1.3 million to \$5.9 million, it may come as a surprise that 75% of



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Malcom and Paul Robson of Robson Worldwide Graining, fifth and sixth generation of master grainers and marblers, were brought in from Virginia to transform ordinary millwork and drywall into the illusion of beautiful bird's eye maple and oak paneling and trim. Their work can be seen in Buckingham Palace, Mount Vernon, the Hermitage, and the West Virginia Independence Hall.

The soaring stone fireplace, built by local mason Tom Cullen, serves as the living room's focal point.

"It was important to create enough beds for sleeping arrangements. This room can double as a nursery," says Carr.

The architect incorporated several Jeffersonian details. Doors that are seamlessly hidden in the walls open to reveal a linen closet or extra storage.

"We found the English pub mirrors from the late 1800s at Randall Tysinger in High Point, North Carolina, so we asked the architect to design them into the room. They were the inspiration for that space."

An antique mirror and handpainted sink give this bathroom an elegant old world feel.

Traditional wooden rockers invite guests to sit a spell.

Sterling used wood salvaged from the old Greenbrier water tower to finish the wine room.





ABOVE: The master bedroom serves as an elegant yet comfortable retreat. The painted, small oval desk was custom made and hand-painted to fit the décor of the room. RIGHT: Each bedroom was decorated with a distinct personality in mind.



the 500 home sites are sold. And, although the community has members representing 32 states, West Virginians make up the largest percentage.

Homeowners are drawn to the area in search of a retreat where livability is effortless and recreational opportunities abound. But it is the precise coordination of all involved during the construction process of a member's home that set the tone. "As construction managers, we prefer to become involved at the beginning of the planning process; in this way we can assist by providing pricing, value engineering and builder perspective and experience. By doing so, we become familiar with the project, become part of a team and can assist owners and architects in making cost-effective choices. By our early involvement and participation in the design process and thorough understanding of the cost aspects of the project, we are able to offer a guaranteed maximum price for the home. Our construction management delivery system, and its implicit 'partnering' approach, allows us to circumvent many of the inherent problems in the classic design, bid, build scenario," says Vass. "We have 100% customer satisfaction based on responses through Guild Quality, an independent, objective, third-party that we utilize to measure our customer's satisfaction."

It is no wonder. The workmanship, creativity, and design details evident in this Springhouse Cottage set the standard for modern construction and serve as an inspiration for anyone embarking on a homebuilding or remodeling project. ~



FAR LEFT: Authentic movie posters and antique golf prints decorate the walls. A game table provides a place for cards, puzzles, or eating area, making the recreational room a comfortable gathering spot.

LEFT: Vass says, "The faux graining in this home is amazing. If we had used real wood, it would have cost approximately five times as much." The red walls in the Billiard Room were glazed to look like leather.

BOTTOM: A large scale, narrow English farm table and an antique French clock face from a church tower solved the challenging design problem of the long uninterrupted wall. Iron candlesticks were made into lamps.



"The level of craftsmanship and architecture in our homes is of extremely high caliber. We are working with some of the best architects and designers from around the country. And it is a point of pride that we have the craftsmen here in West Virginia who can execute and deliver a world class product," says Sterling Construction Management President Robert Vass, III.