

Residence

REDUX

DRUM ROLL PLEASE.....WE ARE EXCITED TO INTRODUCE OUR “HOME FOR THE YEAR” WHERE WE WILL EXAMINE THE PRICE AND PUBLIC SPACES THROUGHOUT THE HOME AND GAIN INSIGHT INTO THE DESIGN CHOICES THE HOMEOWNERS’ IMPLEMENTED AS THEY WORKED CLOSELY WITH A UNIQUELY QUALIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER.

Nestled into a nook of Buzzards Bay known as Nye’s Neck, there sits a pristine slice of white-sand beach. It’s the kind of beach that consistently yields daily harvests of precious beach glass, gnarled driftwood from distant shores and polished pebbles. The sort of beach that has packed sugar-like sand that slopes gently down to a steady beat of rolling waves and constantly changing hues of the moving tides. The view is one of the most active on Cape Cod as ships, barges, tankers, power boats, sailboats and small watercraft move up and down the coast taking advantage of the busy Hog Island Channel and Cape Cod Canal as marine traffic takes a shortcut between the Atlantic Ocean and Massachusetts Bay and points beyond. On the shore across the bay, the towns of Marion, Mattapoisett and Fairhaven twinkle their lights at night like Morse Code to inhabitants on the distant shore.

What must it be like to have this beach, these treasures, this view as your own? What would it be like to plan with anticipation and visions of possibility, a home for your family on this special spot? How would you temper your excitement

to hurry the process in favor of making the right decisions since you really have only one chance to get it exactly right?

In 2018 we are delighted to deliver the story of a special family, and some very talented professionals, who had the unique opportunity to build a home on one of the prettiest sites on Cape Cod. In this issue we will examine the efforts to determine the most optimal siting of the house taking elevations, views, level transitions and countless other tiny, yet important details into consideration. We will also explore the needs of the family and learn how the architect accommodated those desires all the while surpassing everyone’s expectations. Future issues will examine the outdoor entertainment and recreation areas, the landscape, hardscape and natural environment that so deftly embraces the home, while seeming to have grown effortlessly from the surrounding earth. We will explore the elegant and functional super-sized kitchen that seems ready to entertain at a moment’s notice in our Autumn “Kitchen Issue.”

A home FOR THE *future*

Cataldo Custom Builders assembles a dream team to build a home on Buzzards Bay for generations to come.

BY JULIE CRAVEN WAGNER
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF CATALDO CUSTOM BUILDERS

GREG BILOWZ

This extraordinary home

This extraordinary home is the result of deliberate, thoughtful planning and preparation that resulted in a beloved place for this active family to gather during the warmer months on Cape Cod. Owners Charles and Judy Laverty have worked with Ralph Cataldo, principal of Cataldo Custom Builders in East Falmouth since 2000 when he built their home next door. While that is an extraordinary home in its own right, Charlie often gazed out its windows and saw the unique potential of the parcel next door. His home had a million-dollar view, but the house next door had that billion-dollar beach. Laverty says that the construction of the first house was so successful, he never hesitated to undertake this project. "We decided to build a house for three generations. The beauty is that our four grandchildren have only known summers in Nye's Neck. Now two are in college and two are finishing high school but they all have jobs on the Cape so they stay with us the entire summer," Charlie observes.

The opportunity for a significant dock was another attraction. And the level, gently sloping terrain kept tugging at his imagination. Laverty had confidence in the team he had assembled for his first home, so when the dated, dilapidated home next door finally went on the market, it was less of a decision about who to hire, but more like the call to "get the band back together."

Architect Denise Bonoli from East Falmouth had imagined a beautiful home for the Lavertys in 2000 and deftly managed the challenge of creating an intimate family home with a large square footage structure. For



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A family friendly second floor landing is a favorite respite after a busy day on the beach (top).



GREG BILOWZ

This oceanfront site on Buzzards Bay is arguably one of the finest home sites on the Cape.



GREG BILOWZ

“YOU ONLY HAVE ONE CHANCE TO GET IT RIGHT, YOU’RE NOT GOING TO BUILD A HOUSE OF THIS SIZE AND FEEL GOOD ABOUT HAVING REGRETS BECAUSE YOU DIDN’T THINK THINGS THROUGH COMPLETELY,”
- Ralph Cataldo -

This home is obviously spacious and luxurious, but it still manages to feel like a family home. Natural sunlight and expansive water views continually remind you that you are at the Cape house.



DAN CUTRONA

this home the family had grown to accommodate the expanding families of four grown children and a squad of grandchildren. “Most of my clients plan for an expanding family, but with this home, since the Lavertys had already a history of their adult children and grandchildren looking forward to time on the Cape, so there was no holding back, the family patterns had already been established,” Bonoli says. She says that the history with the family made it a very easy and satisfying experience. Instead of it being treated as a “do-over,” the experience was more like a vow renewal. “We knew what we dealing with, it was just about, ‘this works, tweak this, add a couple of feet here.’ It was really a pleasure.”

Cataldo recalls the deliberate and thoughtful process of continually



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The design program has created multiple places for the family to gather, share stories and create memories.



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tweaking the positioning and siting of the new house. Day after day for over six weeks, sometimes only adjusting by inches, Cataldo would spend hours at the site imagining how small changes to the positioning of the house could reap big benefits. "You have to rotate it, you have to elevate it, and you have to study it because there is always a compromise somewhere. You usually can't have it all! We could have gone up and achieved a slightly better view, but it would have meant another step across the entire back of the house but instead the stone patio is flush with the lawn, no steps and it's perfect. We considered where the family could accommodate a tent in the back for major celebrations," Cataldo remembers as he illustrates the difference in

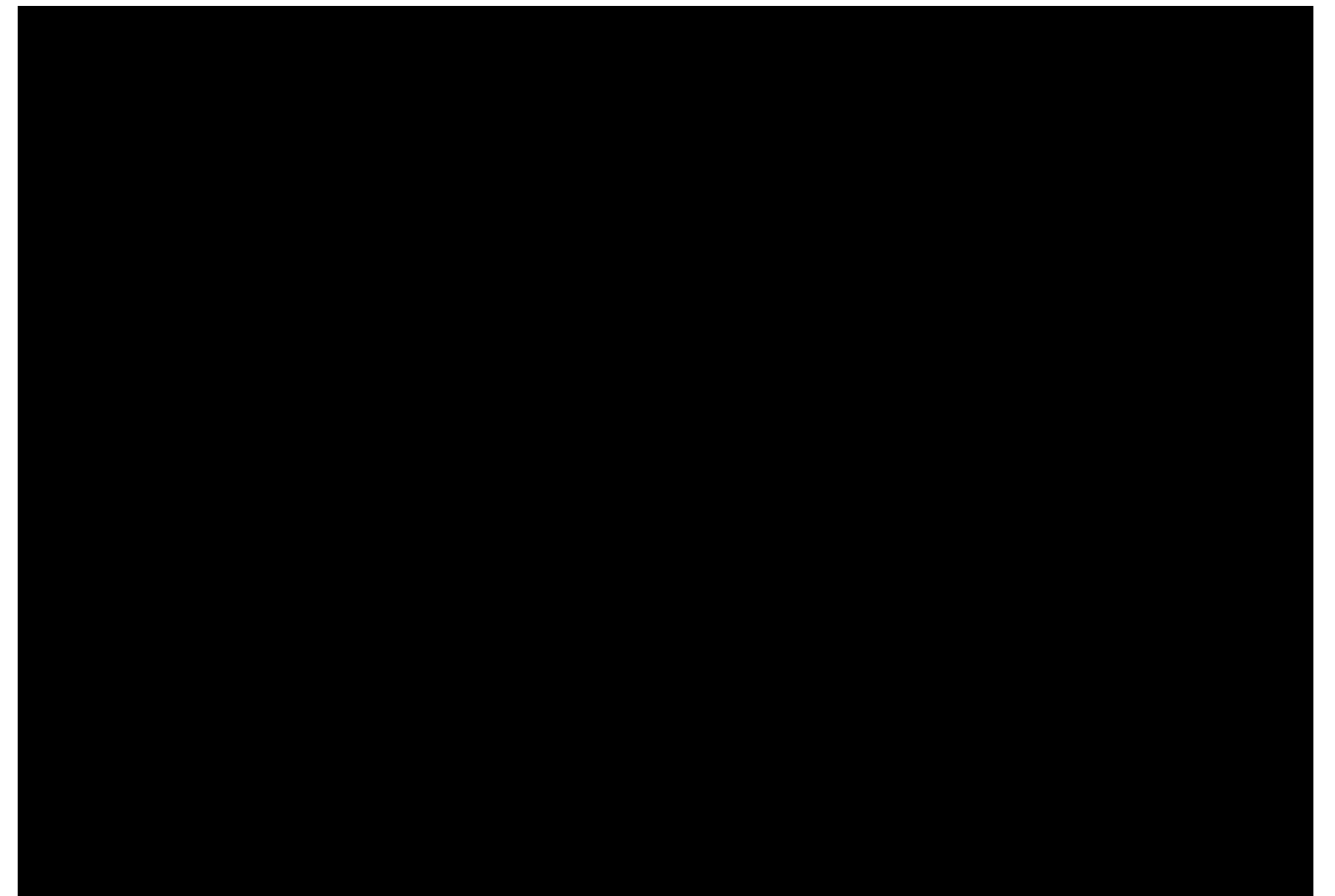
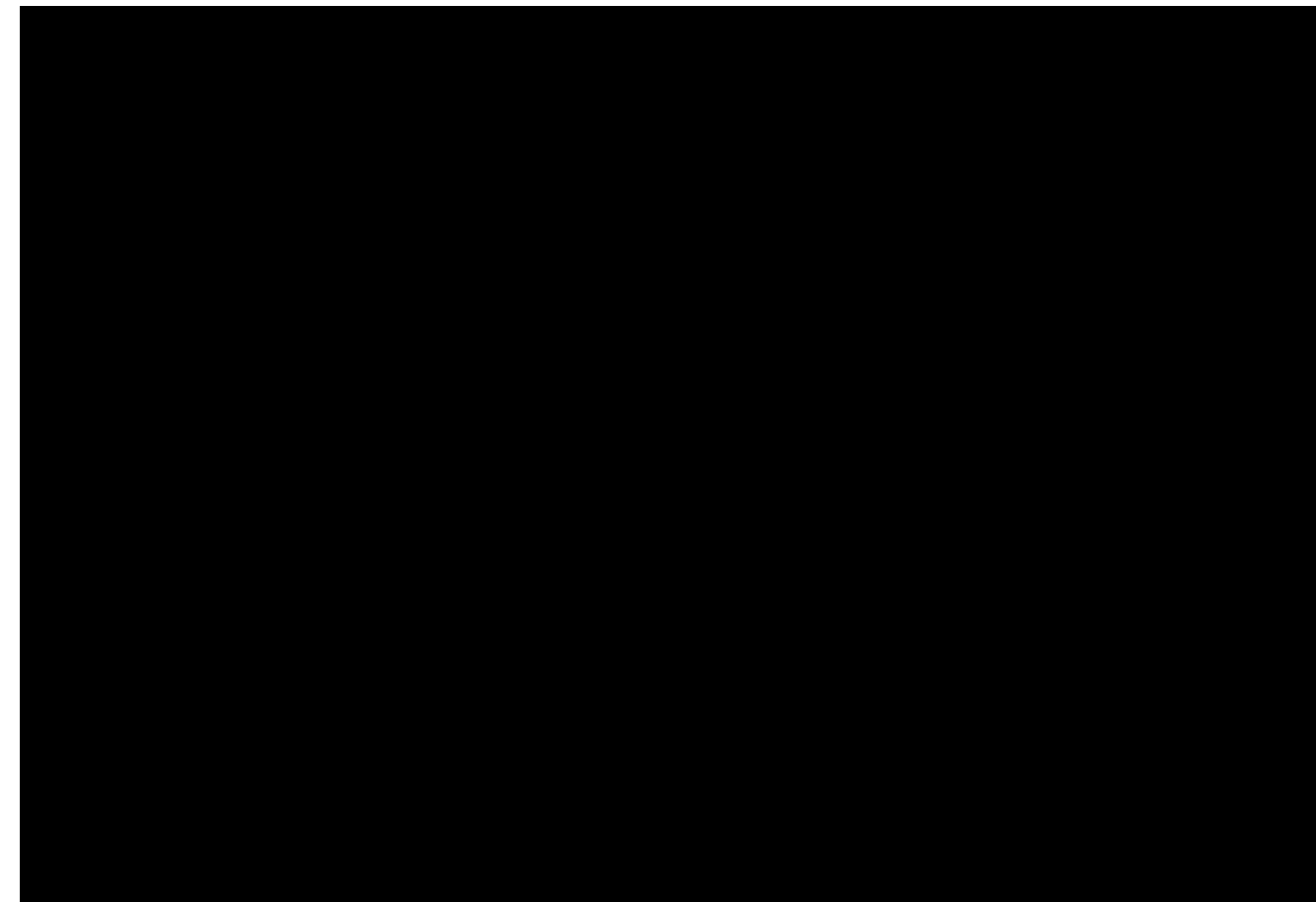
approach this team brought to this project. Most homeowners will work with an architect to design a home that meets their needs and takes best advantage of the site upon which they will build. Then the builder steps in and constructs that vision, always looping back with the architect, the landscape architect, and the team for slight amendments. Cataldo understood the importance of getting this project just right, "You only have one chance to get it right, you're not going to build a house of this size and feel good about having regrets because you didn't think things through completely," he says. "This is one of the best oceanfront sites I've not only ever worked on, but have ever seen, and I've seen many."

Landscape architect Greg Bilowz has carved out a perfect spot to end the day around a fire pit set into the Chinese stone patio that overlooks Buzzards Bay.



His commitment and passion becomes clear as he recalls the activity of the team to get things just right. "I'd call meetings with the engineers, I'd have them stake the corner of the house in relation to the corner of the patio. I'd have them put first floor elevations on a stake. I'd push dirt around with a machine so landscape architect, Greg Bilowz could provide his final blessing. You have one chance and Charlie trusted me, we had a great team that took our time and maximised this opportunity," Cataldo says.

Bonoli explains, "Typically houses are a couple of feet above grade, once you have the 8 inches exposed for the foundation and then the first floor joists, which often requires three or four steps to go from the



house to the grade. We knew we didn't want that for this house, we wanted the house to flow very gradually and sit low enough to nestle right into the site." A shelf foundation was employed to set the floor joists into the foundation wall allowing the floor joists to be eight inches above the grade and therefore one step between house and grade.

Bonoli continues to discuss how the orientation of the front door, the driveway, auxiliary parking and even the driveway entrance were all mutually discussed and deliberated amongst the team. "You have a million ideas at first, most of them really good, but it is always interesting to see the perfected, refined result that becomes the

composite of all of the input and ingenuity," she says.

"We all gave each other the luxury of letting the project evolve, Charlie didn't pressure any of us to put every bell and whistle into the project, like a swimming and a tennis court," Bonoli adds.

The island in the middle of the driveway holds a secret, in fact a secret room. Originally designed to hold water for the original structure, a 10 foot by 12 foot underground concrete structure was discovered during construction. Laverty says local legend claims that bootleggers used it to store their contraband. He says he has plans for the bunker in his next phase, perhaps even a special spot for a glass of brandy.



Bonoli recalls a meeting at the site early in the process when she and Judy Laverty wandered off from the group of engineers, builders and landscapers. Judy confided in Bonoli that she was genuinely content in her current home and sometimes she didn't understand why Charlie was so committed to building another large house. But she says that Charlie looked her straight in the eye and said, "Judy, we may be old, but we aren't done!" She explained to Bonoli that unlike many other men, he was not a golfer, and didn't have any other distractions. "Real estate and planning is what he truly loves," Judy told Bonoli.

Julie Craven Wagner is the Editor of Cape Cod HOME.

