

The stone fireplace, the anchor of the living room, dramatically reaches to the ceiling and is framed by views of Rattlesnake Ridge. All the wood, including the built-ins to the right along the window, are custom built with fir. The door offers easy access to an outside deck and fireplace.

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HOME ON THE RANGE

A Seattle doctor finds Nirvana in North Bend | BY ROBIN FOGEL AVNI

WHEN COLLEEN PARKER, M.D., gathered up her box of dreams—packed with clippings from every home publication imaginable—and walked into architect Geoff Prentiss' Queen Anne office, they quickly found a common ground upon which to build. ■ The simpatico isn't too surprising, considering that both bring a keen eye for detail to their respective professions. Parker, a Seattle radiologist, spends her days evaluating and analyzing the human form, while Prentiss, an award-winning architect, expends his intellect and imagination on the residential form. ■ With a perfect parcel of land in North Bend already



The open floor plan of the great room is divided into three areas. Beyond the living room and the built-in seating for dining, the library accommodates a cozy TV viewing area, gas fireplace and built-in bookshelves and window seat. The unique "box" that is home to an efficient kitchen provides an intimate front-door entryway. Below, the strong roof lines for both the main house and the garage structure (on right), were designed to direct the interior views up and out.



secured, Parker was in search of a design that was small enough to allow easy upkeep but big enough to comfortably accommodate long visits by family members. "I can only afford one home," she explains, "[so] this is my compromise between a vacation house and a primary residence."

Prentiss delivered a modern 2,262-square-foot home oriented to the spectacular mountain views of Rattlesnake Ridge and Mount Si, with an additional 500 square feet of living space over the garage. Huge floor-to-ceiling windows in the main house capture the ever-changing mountain light and offer spectacular vistas from every room. Says a pleased Parker, "The windows are my pictures."

HER DREAM HOME was five years in the making, but Parker's patience was rewarded.

"There was making the money to buy the property, making the money to hire the architect and making the money to build the house," she explains. "[But] I ended up with a much better house because it took me a while."

She had plenty of familial support during her home's final building phase. "My brother just finished building his own house (in South Africa)...and my parents have just finished building a house in Australia," say Parker, a South Africa native who came to Seattle 15 years ago for her residency at the University of Washington. "We're all in scientific fields," she adds, "but we're all actually artists at heart."

Although her artistic heart most certainly influenced her choices, Parker's scientific soul fueled her research. "I'm very much a 'read the instruction booklet' type of person—from A to Z," she confesses. "I need to know everything. I researched everything: the appliances, the paint, the tile, everything. It was as much out of interest as anything else." (Parker claims that she made so many trips to the tile, appliance and fixture stores that they recognized her on sight.)

"She was great at working to understand the issues," Prentiss acknowledges. "Colleen would do her homework. She went out and found materials and brought them back into the office and would ask, 'How about



The "kitchen box" sits cozily alongside the great room. Prentiss designed the space to be compact and efficient, like "a ship's galley," yet with space enough for two cooks to move easily between the two sinks and professional-style stove

KITCHEN SENSE

In the Parker house, dramatic roof lines create high ceilings that enhance the amazing outdoor views and openness of the great room, but architect Geoff Prentiss and project architect Johanna Schorr wanted a more intimate feeling for the kitchen. The detailed design and unique positioning (nicely edging into a garden courtyard) of what Prentiss calls the "kitchen box," features a lowered ceiling and a discreet intersection with the open living area. ■ The kitchen's workspace flow can easily accommodate two cooks, which is a good thing because when Parker's family comes to visit they love to cook. The compact space, animated by a colorful mosaic tile back splash, includes a peninsula island for seating or serving, a food prep area with wood-block cutting board and small prep sink, six-burner stove, microwave bay, large refrigerator, built-in storage and full walk-in pantry. "It's like a ship's galley," Prentiss says, "It's very well organized." *R.F.A.*

TEAM >>

ARCHITECT: Geoffrey T. Prentiss, Prentiss Architects, 224 W Galer St.; 206.283.9930; prentissarch.com.

CONTRACTOR: Harry Strouse, Westhomes Construction Inc., 2831 268th Place SE, Issaquah; 425.864.1622

COST: \$850,000 (excluding land purchase)

this?" Counters an appreciative Parker, "[Prentiss] was great to work with because he would let me have fun doing my thing, but steer me in the direction of good taste and what was appropriate."

Both of them admit that the house ended up being very different from where they started at the beginning of the process. "The house sort of evolved," says Parker.

What never changed was their combined desire to create a design that tied the man-made structure to its natural surroundings. "We made a very conscious effort to blur the inside and outside. Hence the big doors, the rationale for putting concrete inside and out," explains Parker. The great room features radiant-heat concrete floors that appear to extend beyond the sliding glass doors to the concrete decking surrounding the exterior and the fireplace deck. "One of the reasons for living out here is to be outside even if the windows and doors are closed," says Parker.

Prentiss has more than a passing interest in creating fluidity between interior and exterior spaces. While studying architecture at the University of Washington, the Northwest native—his family homesteaded in the San Juan Islands in 1861—received a *Monbusho* Fellowship to Kobe University in Japan and spent almost two years studying the concepts of interior and exterior exchange. "How do you approach a space? How do you blend your protected environment into the wild environment? That's what all of my projects are about," says Prentiss.

Parker's North Bend location provided an ideal place for Prentiss to put some of



Home owner Parker says that she always knew she wanted limestone in her master bath and glass tile in the shower. Throughout the entire house, fir built-ins, such as the ones in the bathroom, abound, effectively infusing every square inch of space with great beauty. In the winter, with the roof covered in snow and the mountains behind, the view from her bathroom sink is even more spectacular.

those principles into practice. The well-sited house captures the southern light and simultaneously takes advantage of the dramatic views to the west and north. The full-height, west-facing stone fireplace can be enjoyed from inside the living room or outside, sitting below the shelter of the roof overhang. What Prentiss calls the “kitchen box” (see sidebar on page 70) intersects the wide-open space yet peeks out into the side garden courtyard. With its north-facing floor-to-ceiling windows, the second-floor master bedroom floats among the trees with a peaceful view of Mount Si. Sliding doors abound, easily opening up the space to the outside on all sides, and allowing the cool mountain breeze to work its way effortlessly throughout the home.

“My favorite [time] is the summer when I can open all the doors,” Parker says. She also loves to sit in the window seat in the library and read, with the small gas fireplace lit, and watch the animals come past her window—elk, deer, even bears.

FOR PARKER, her daily 45-minute commute, eased by plenty of books-on-tape, is worth it for the sanctuary that she finds at the end of her drive.

“I don’t have a difficult schedule where I have to take kids to soccer practice, so I can indulge living out here,” says Parker. “But, ultimately, if you’re going to build a custom house way out in the middle of nowhere, you better be happy living there.”

And, is she? Well, let’s just say the doctor is most happily “in.” **S**

Find it

Fir cabinets: Woodway Woodworks & Cabinets, 425.771.8875; woodwaywoodworks.com. **Kitchen appliances:** Wolf 48-inch dual-fuel range with Viking exhaust hood, Sub-Zero refrigerator/freezer, Bosch dishwasher, Sharp microwave, Crossroads Appliance, 15625 NE Eighth St., Bellevue; 425.746.0550; crossroadsappliance.com. **Tile:** Bisazza Madagascar kitchen mosaic tile, Mediterranean Crema guest bath marble slab and floor tile and Teresa guest bath shower floor and niche accent mosaic tile, Ann Sacks, 115 Stewart St.; 206.441.8917; annsacks.com. Seagrass master bath limestone slab and tile, Moda Vetro and Rain glass mosaic tile, and black honed granite kitchen countertop, Pental Granite & Marble, 713 S Fidalgo St.; 206.768.3200. Brazilian multicolor slate, Tile Specialists, 1267 120th Ave. NE, Bellevue; 425.462.1146. **Flooring:** Radiant floor heating: Geo-thermal system by Econar 2000 GeoSource, heat pump with Viessman boiler. Concrete flooring: custom charcoal Milestone finish. **Stone fireplace:** Eagle Mountain LedgeStone, Marenakos Stone Center, 30250 SE High Point Way, Issaquah; 425.392.3313; marenakos.com. **Library gas fireplace:** Scan, Sutter Home and Hearth, 14475 Woodinville-Redmond Road, Woodinville; 425.486.9286; sutterhearth.com. **Lighting:** Kitchen, dining room and bathrooms: Resolute, 1201 Ninth Ave.; 206.343.9308; resoluteonline.com. Other lighting: Lighting Supply, 2729 Second Ave.; 206.441.5075. **Dining room table:** Bensen Wenge X-table, Inform Interiors, 1220 Western Ave.; 206.622.1608. **Rugs:** Living room: Driscoll-Robbins Oriental Carpets, 1002 Western Ave.; 206.292.1115. Library: Calvin Klein from Thomasville Furnishings, 2200 Western Ave.; 206.441.0531.

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