



A Family Affair

Delores Lastinger says the stone and wood of the 8,500-square-foot home create the feel of a lodge that is “elegantly casual.”

BY NORMA LUGAR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TODD BUSH

When Allen and Delores Lastinger decided to invest in a summer home, they started small. Their place in North Carolina’s Linville Ridge was ample for the twosome, their grown son and two daughters. But in the past decade, things have changed. Including an 8,500-square-foot home and the birth of 10 grandchildren.

Funny how things work out.

Anchored in St. Augustine, where the couple moved after his retirement as president and COO of Barnett Bank, Allen and Delores Lastinger were drawn to the Southern mountains by the promise of an escape from the state’s oppressive summer heat.

“Delores and I decided we wanted a second home somewhere cooler than Florida,” Allen recalls, “so we started looking originally in 1997, though we’d visited way before that.”

“We knew we wanted to go to North Carolina; we’d seen several places,” Delores adds. “We wanted to be able to drive – we have dogs – and we never looked past a day’s trip.

“We found that Linville Ridge most closely met what we wanted ... good roads, good restaurants, a beautiful golf course and good value for our property. It all came together there.”

“We were also looking for a lot of variety,” Allen says. “This area around Blowing Rock has that.”

So it was settled.

THE GROWTH FACTOR

Today, the Lastingers have spread out.

The original house is just a memory. The couple bought their current property in 2000 and, five years later, started work on plans for the six-bedroom, 8,500-square foot home. The pivotal reason: the expansion from zero to 10 grandchildren – seven boys and three girls – over seven years.

“We wanted to build a home big enough,” Allen notes, “to accommodate all the family.”

“For us, that’s 18 people,” Delores points out.

Allen and Delores Lastinger wanted to create a home that would be welcoming to the 10 grandchildren that have joined the family over the past decade.



“Ten grandchildren and eight adults.” Designed by architect David Patrick Moses of Banner Elk, the home is, in Allen Lastinger’s opinion, “a comfortable mountain lodge.”

His wife defines the look. “Yes, it’s sort of like a lodge,” she agrees. “There’s a lot of stone and wood with stone fireplaces and a lodge feel. I’d call it elegantly casual.”

“We gave the architect about two pages of things we wanted,” Allen adds. “Two floors, a [main-floor] room for ourselves, and the primary thing that determined the floor plan: equal-sized rooms for each of our children and a bunk room for the boys over the garage.”

“There’s also a pretty bedroom for the little girls,” Delores says, “though we only had two when we built the house.” Today, the oldest grandchild is 10; the youngest just two.

The home’s configuration includes the main-floor living room, dining room, mud room, master bedroom with dual offices, powder room, pantry and gorgeous kitchen. Situated on the lower level are four bedrooms – one for each sibling plus the granddaughters’ bedroom – baths and outside stone sitting areas for each room, a charming wine cellar, theater room and downstairs family room. The bunk room is positioned over the garage.

“Each room, though not gigantic, is comfortable and warm,” Delores points out. “There’s not a massive feel. Our primary criteria is that everything has to be comfortable. That and warmth are big decorat-

ing items for me. A piece can be perfect and beautiful, but if it’s not comfortable, I say ‘no’.”

TAKING ON PERSONALITY

With interior design by Banner Elk’s noted expert Dianne Davant, the home was completed in 2007, though the next year was spent accessorizing, finishing the interior and attending to odds and ends.

The final effect: “We tended to bring the outside in,” Delores says. “We used warm autumn colors – green and brown and gold – with some red for accents.” Obviously, the result is pleasing. “We generally have lots of company and fill up the bedrooms, whether it’s with children or friends.”

Part of the home’s charm is its reflection of the community around it. Almost exclusively, the work was done by local craftsmen and women, including the creation of cabinets, stonework, carpeting, landscaping and metal work on all interior railings and porches with one unique facsimile of wooden twigs. Of special interest are the handmade doors and random-sized plank flooring fashioned of reclaimed wood from a nearby barn.

The effort has paid off in a home that expands the property’s distinctive appeal.

“The reason we bought the lot is that it’s one of the community’s very few flat lots,” Delores says. “We have a long driveway that comes into a flat open area with a water feature. The children have so much fun there; they ride their big wheels and bikes and last summer we built a tree house for them on our



Almost all of the home’s detail work was done by local artisans, including the metal work on all the interior railings.

The dominant colors in the home are “warm, autumn colors,” according to Delores Lastinger. “Green and brown and gold, with some red for accents.” Note also the distinctive hand-made door.

ABOVE AND RIGHT: The indoor and outdoor fireplaces help accomplish the design goal to “bring the outside in.”



Kitchen Decor

Among the home's most striking features, both the indoor and outdoor kitchens are handsome, fully furnished and gracious in style and dimensions.

The brainchild of designer Margaret Handley of Dianne Davant & Associates, Banner Cabinets and Delores Lastinger, the finished effect is a vintage French Country look.

Countertops are fashioned from honed limestone and the backsplash is of tumbled limestone with hand-painted decorative fruit tiles adding a rustic feel. Floors combine reclaimed wood with Jerusalem limestone, and the generous island is set apart from the rest of the kitchen through the use of a green finish, in contrast to the dark stain used for cabinets. Seating includes three bar stools, a six-seat table and nearby sofa and TV area.

Appliances and accessories are from Queen City Audio-Video-Appliances, Morganton. The list includes Kitchen Aide and Bosch dishwashers; Whirlpool and Kitchen Aide microwaves; Kitchen Aide ice machine; Kitchen Aide warming drawer Marvel Wine Grotto (cooler); Sub Zero refrigerator; Wolf 48-inch six-burner range and griddle; Viking (outdoor) natural gas grill; Viking Hood blower and Viking grill hood.

– NVL



The Lastingers chose the site for the home because it is one of Linville Ridge's very few flat lots.

extra lot.

"We have a nice view of the [nearby] pond and golf course, and lots of places to sit and look out since the terrace wraps around the house downstairs as the porch does upstairs, and looks onto the mountains and woods."

FUN YEAR-ROUND

The family has found new ways to enjoy their new home. Though they generally go to Linville in June and come back in mid-October, they departed from their normal routine and celebrated Thanksgiving there a year ago. Different as it was from their Florida holidays, they spent the time ice skating, snow tubing and sledding on the golf course.

On cooler days, Allen has his special place.

"My favorite area of the home is the summer kitchen," he says. "We wanted a very comfortable spot where we could cook, eat and socialize. For me, I'd rather be out in the summer kitchen in cooler weather with a glass of wine, a fire and friends."

And finally, in these prickly economic times, there's the big question: Has this second home been the good investment the Lastingers expected?

"Today we're enjoying the house as a place to have fun and be together," Allen says. "Someday we may sell it, but whether we lose money or make money, it's been a great investment in spending time with our friends and family." ▲



Delores Lastinger says of the water feature near the driveway: "The children have so much fun there. They ride their big wheels and bikes and this summer we built a tree house for them on our extra lot."

Resources:

Builder: Griffin Builders, Alan Griffin, Linville, N.C., 828-733-9228

Appliances: Queen City Audio-Video-Appliances, Morganton, N.C., 828-437-2494

Cabinets and carved double sink: Banner Cabinets, Joe or Debbie Banner, Newland, N.C., 828-733-2031

Doors: Appalachian Woodwrights, Morganton, N.C., 828-437-4300

Electronic and Audio-Visual Equipment: Mountain Heritage Systems, Charley Dearmin, Newland, N.C., 828-733-0140

Landscaping: Mountaineer Landscaping, Wayne and Terry Brewer, Linville, N.C. 828-733-3726

Metal Work: Blue Mountain Metal Works, Dirk Brown, Banner Elk, N.C., 828-898-8582

Tile and Stone: Classic Stone Works Inc., Debbie Guinn, Linville, N.C., 828-737-0400