

Is this Colorado? No, it's West Des Moines, Iowa, complete with mellow wood, leather, a huge stone fireplace, and an antler chandelier. The home was built by Tyler Homes.

Colorado CONNECTION





Rustic cabinetry, much of it knotty cherry, was fashioned by the crew at Fine Line Woodworks of Bondurant.



Couple transplants their love of the mountains to West Des Moines.

BY CAROL MCGARVEY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIM ABRAMOWITZ

When Linda and Joe Cookman, then of Fort Dodge, decided they would build a new home at Glen Oaks in West Des Moines, they didn't have to look far to find a home builder. "Our neighbors, Deb and Casey Johnson, had such a good experience with building their home with Jim Harmeyer of Tyler Homes, so we started and ended our search with him. (*"A Dream Come True,"* Welcome Home, *February/March 2012*).

"Linda and Joe came to visit us at our HomeShowExpo house in 2014, and we moved forward from there," Harmeyer says. "Joe and Linda had definite ideas about the kind of home they wanted. This is one of the most unique homes we have ever built. If you look at the plan from above in a bird's-eye view, you would see that it has a Z shape, which is very interesting."

It is the fourth home the couple has constructed. "Each one, of course, is very different," Linda says. Their most recent home in Fort Dodge was more of a cottage

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JIM HARMEYER, Tyler Homes

style, and a vacation home they built in Colorado was a log structure. “When we decided to sell that home, we knew we wanted to create that Colorado feel again. We chose Glen Oaks because Joe has been a member since early on, and lots were getting scarce.”

Joe is a cardiologist at the Iowa Heart Center in Des Moines and still practices two days a week in Fort Dodge. The couple has three adult children and four grandchildren.

DISTINCTIVE EXTERIOR

The home’s distinctive exterior is a mix of interesting textures—cedar siding, shakes, and stone from Telluride, Colorado. Rich sage green and gold trim add to the rustic lodge look.

“It was a challenging site,” Harmeyer points out. “With a steep hill behind, we built a huge retaining wall with 2×4-foot stones, each weighing 2,000 pounds. It was quite a feat to complete.” Aspens and pine trees add to the Western feel outside.

Inside the home, the rustic feel is the focus. The open kitchen, dining, and living areas offer a commanding center core for the home. The 26-foot ceiling full of wood and natural ambiance in the kitchen and living room area gives a cozy feel in spite of the height. Joe designed beams to fill in at the top of the ceiling. Harmeyer says those timbers were cut on-site, each weighing hundreds and hundreds of pounds. Huge scaffolding was required to get them in place.

Two-story windows give an open feel to the living area, which has a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace as its focal point. Joe chose three large chandeliers made of antlers for a natural touch.

EXTENSIVE WOOD

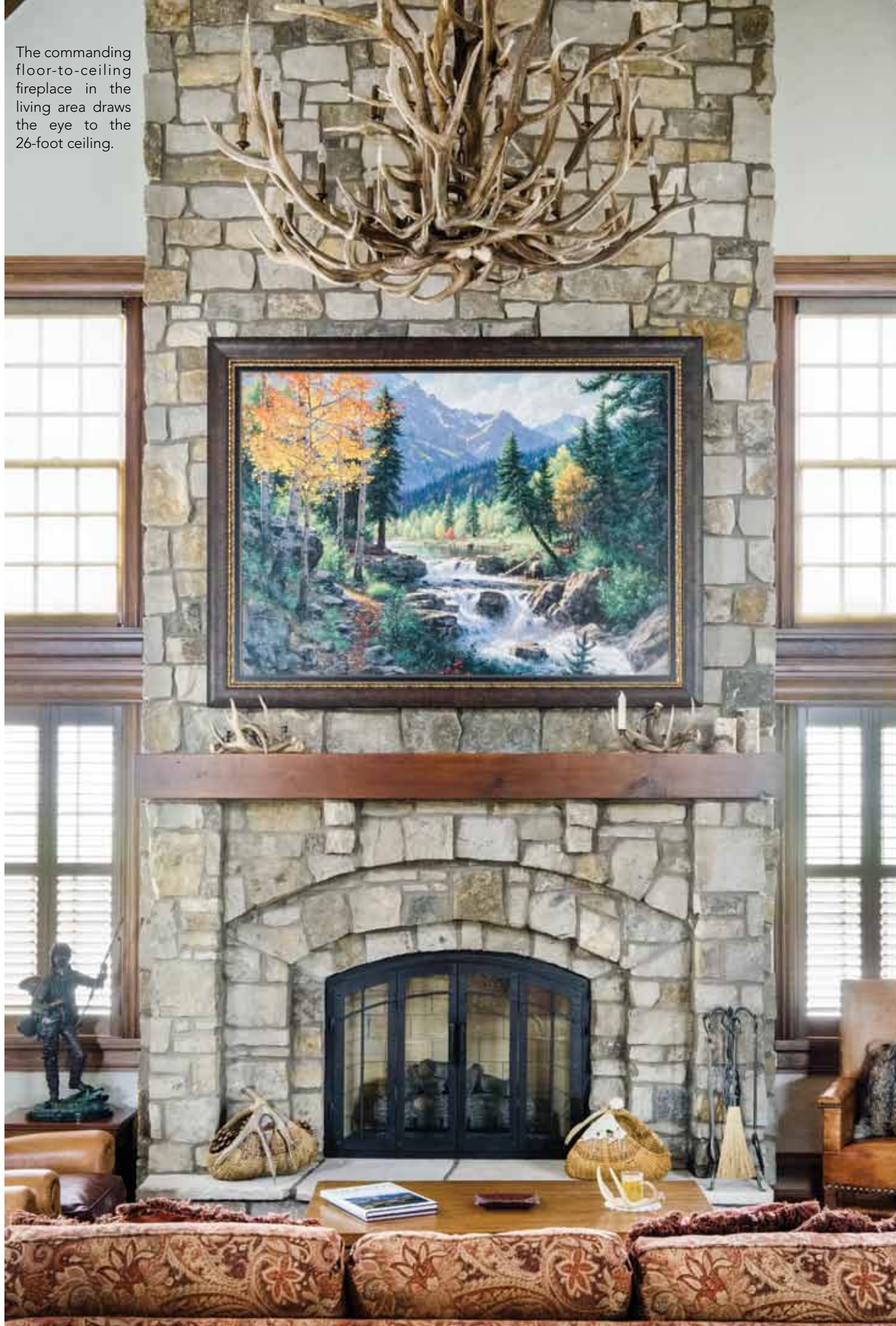
Dave McGrath and his crew from Fine Line Woodworks of Bondurant did yeoman’s duty with all the cabinetry throughout the home. “The ideas the Cookmans brought into the home were amazing. I could keep revisiting this home forever,” he says. “They knew what they wanted, including a comfortable, casual feel.” That came out in the main choice for wood— knotty cherry instead of more formal cherry.

McGrath’s craftsmen fashioned kitchen cabinetry, built-in shelves in the great-room, a built-in full-wall china cabinetry in the dining room, and a full wall of walnut shelves in Joe’s den, along with room for an 85-inch big screen TV in the middle,



This spread, clockwise from top: The home’s distinctive rustic lodge exterior gains its texture from cedar siding, shakes, and stone from Telluride, Colorado. • A second-floor loft, complete with sliding barn doors, overlooks the living area and showcases the room’s massive beams. • The dining room’s rich wood look comes from a wall of built-in cabinetry and short beams to carry out the timbered look.

The commanding floor-to-ceiling fireplace in the living area draws the eye to the 26-foot ceiling.



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DAVE MCGRATH, *Fine Line Woodworks*



just off the dining room. In the kitchen the refrigerator is hidden by panels. Cabinet doors adjacent to the refrigerator open to a hidden walk-in pantry.

“This is the first time we have done whole-house cabinetry with Jim Harmeyer,” McGrath says. “Often we have done the kitchen only, for example. It was fun to formulate the color of the wood. We now just call that color Cookman,” he says.

Short beams in the dining room carry through the look of a timbered ceiling. In the den the ceiling is coffered, again adding to the warm and cozy feel.

OLD, NEW FURNISHINGS

Linda says that some of the furniture for the new home came from their previous Colorado home. She purchased some new pieces and some lighting from Colorado Classics, a shop in Valley Junction. The store also helped with choosing fabrics to reupholster some other pieces.

Swirled plaster on a number of walls adds to the feel of texture throughout the home,

The master bedroom suite with a small sitting room, bedroom, master bath, and huge walk-in closet is a sanctuary. A sliding barn door and 8½-foot doorways fit the scheme, as do a walnut headboard and dresser, each with hand-tooled leather insets.

A loft on the second-floor landing features another sliding barn door and an overlook into the great-room. It’s a great



This page, from top left: The massive walnut headboard includes a leather inset. • A small sitting room outside the master bedroom. • A decorative mirror adds a touch of texture. • A second sliding barn door reinforces the total look of the home.

More. See WelcomeHomeDesMoines.com for resources and additional photos.



This spread, from top left: Joe Cookman's den, complete with an 85-inch TV, has a rustic man-cave feel about it. It's where he can get away from a busy day to read, watch sports, and relax. • The bonus room over the three-car garage is Linda's light-filled rug-hooking sanctuary. • Fine Line Woodworks duplicated a vintage oak fireplace mantel that was special to Linda in her previous home. • A wall of wood and interesting art greet visitors at the front entry. Go around the wall at either end into the home's welcoming living space.



spot for grandkids to play games, Linda says. Because of the configuration of the home's shape, the two guest rooms on the second floor have dormer-effect windows for a comfortable feel.

Quartersawn oak flooring in 7-inch planks with rounded edges gives a low-maintenance footing.

The home's lower level has more bedrooms and storage space, and the main floor's back entry features a built-in computer center, a mudroom with cubbies, and a large laundry room. A covered deck makes for pleasant relaxing outdoors.

COLORFUL BONUS ROOM

Linda's pride and joy is the bonus room over the three-car garage. She has been a rug hooking hobbyist for 20 years, and her studio is a colorful, light-filled special getaway and workroom. She recently had an instructor and 14 students at her home for four days for a workshop. "The craft is addictive, for sure, but you can do anything with it, from still life pieces to abstracts."

In that space Dave McGrath also duplicated an oak fireplace mantel from the Cookmans' previous home in Fort Dodge. "I couldn't bring that one with me, so Dave reproduced it," Linda says with a chuckle.

Has it all worked? "Absolutely," Linda says. "I feel right at home here. It's not at all formal. We can sit down and put our feet up. Wonderful." ■

