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THOUGHTS ON
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Dick Blume / dblume@syracuse.com

Like paradise

EAST SYRACUSE CONDO LANGUISHES IN LUSH GREENERY AND LAKE VIEWS



By M.J. Kravec
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Despite its more humble size, there is something about Marcia Philipp's backyard deck that reminds you of the outdoor terrace from "The Sound of Music."

It could be the view of Erie Lake that it borders. Or the the potted ferns in concrete containers that flank a white gate leading to the water. With cushioned wicker furniture, MacKenzie-Childs accents and a trickling water fountain, it's a scene that practically begs you to sit back and relax. And if the weather is less than perfect, there's an outdoor room nearby that's just as lush and inviting.

It's all the work of Marcia Philipp, interior designer. She and her husband, Rick Granozio, bought the condominium in Erie Village in East Syracuse in 2004. The couple made some non permanent changes (since it's a homeowner's association, Marcia notes), including adding an outdoor screen room, to accommodate their love of nature and their two Abyssinian cats, Remi and Sami. When asked how they came up with



Marcia's cat, Sami, an Abyssinian, peers out onto the back deck from the living room. Upper left, a view of Erie Lake.

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The screened-in hexagon house offers comfort for humans and cats alike, with cushioned wicker furniture, soft colors and lush greens.



The backyard deck is an ideal spot for bird watching, says Marcia, an avid bird lover. Below, fresh blooms top the kitchen table.

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the idea for the screen room, Marcia laughs.

“We really wanted something for the cats,” she says.

GETTING OUT

On the deck, outdoor rugs soften the transition from indoors. Wicker furniture with cushions, potted lavender, rosemary and parsley and accents from MacKenzie-Childs add color and texture.

Under a rectangular umbrella, a Lloyd Flanders outdoor dining set offers a spot to take in the sunrise while sipping coffee. Cushioned outdoor seating and a wicker ottoman offer another gathering spot. Concrete containers with summer annual combinations from Carol Watson Greenhouse in LaFayette and a concrete fountain add a sensory touch. Potted zinnias from ACE Hardware in Fayetteville add color on an antique shutter refurbished into a shelf. Marcia uses the piece to set out refreshments when having friends over.

“I love to entertain,” she says. “I put that out for water and appetizers. I got it at a salvage yard,” she says.

SCREEN ROOM

Also on the deck, the hexagon screen house merges indoors and out and is a hit with the cats, who lounge on cushioned furniture in shady comfort. Outdoor wicker furniture with floral pattern cushions complement a rug in sage and white stripe. A battery-operated lantern on a timer offers



soft lighting as night approaches. Tables topped with potted ferns and antique boxes filled with shells, binoculars and bird books are telling of Marcia’s interest.

“I’m an avid bird lover and we have great blue herons, green herons,... in spring we get migrating ducks and a few years ago, we had two Tundra swans,” says Marcia.

Around the screen room frame, Marcia hung shower curtain rods with rope and outdoor drapes in linen white. It’s a comfortable spot where humans and cats can take in a summer night even in unruly weather.

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In the living room, a soft yellow sofa and coordinating chairs, potted plants and a glass-topped coffee table that displays nature books keep the look earthy, light and chic.

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“It’s nice because when it’s raining, I can close the drapes and it stays dry and we’ll sit out here and listen to the rain. It’s very pretty.”

LIVING COLOR

From the deck, sliding glass doors (and a cat door) lead to an open living and dining area. Large windows offer lake views, while skylights bring in plenty of light. A soft yellow-chenille sofa and coordinating chairs, potted plants and a glass topped coffee table that displays nature books keep the look earthy and chic.

In the dining area, a table from Fremarc Designs, upholstered chairs from Lexington Home Brands and a nine-arm chandelier with shades add a touch of grandeur. A reproduction hutch displays the couple’s collection of MacKenzie-Childs, Portmeirion and Lennox pieces and antique pitchers.

COUNTER INTUITIVE

In the kitchen, black quartz countertops from Busch Products in Syracuse and a cream limestone backsplash from Best Tile in

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Remi stands watch over a tray of blueberry scones and orange and mint infused ice water in the screen room.



Surrounded by potted plants, a Lloyd Flanders dining set is a favorite spot to sip coffee and watch the sunrise.



Quartz countertops from Busch Products, a cream limestone backsplash from Best Tile, MacKenzie-Childs accents and fresh blooms add color and whimsy in the kitchen.

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Syracuse coordinates with MacKenzie-Childs' Courtly Check accents. Custom cabinets from Schaack Fabricating in Syracuse keep the look light and elegant, while white shutters flanking a bay window over the kitchen table offer privacy and a view of the front garden.

A WALK TO REMEMBER

At the front of the house, Aspinall's Landscaping & Tree Nursery in Chittanooga installed the brick path and patio that Marcia designed. Landscapes East in Kirkville helped Marcia with the garden's concept. Two Adirondack chairs and a sunny yellow umbrella offer a romantic spot to enjoy the garden that includes wild geranium, pin cushions, mini zinnias and trumpet honeysuckle.

"Which the hummingbird loves," says Marcia, adding that she designed the garden with the natural habitat in mind and had it certified by the American Wildlife Federation.

"I use a miniature barley straw bale in the pond to keep it clean vs. chemicals," Marcia says.

In a corner of the garden, a meandering pond and handcarved rock waterfall by Landmasters in Cicero adds to the sensory experience. Garden accents — a birdbath and trellis — are kept to a minimum to keep the focus on plants, Marcia says. But

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a few touches have sentimental value — a miniature “bunny trail” sign that belonged to Marcia’s mother, who was nicknamed “Bunny;” a concrete hedgehog at the front door and a boxwood topiary bought at Chuck Hafner’s Farm Market and used in Marcia and Rick’s wedding eight years ago.

It’s a suitable greeting to the home the couple’s shared and decorated and enjoyed for nearly 10 years.

“My husband says it’s an adventure living with an interior designer. He’ll come home one day and a table will be gone, or a rug will be out,” Marcia laughs.



Garden blooms and an outdoor fountain add to the lushness of the deck and garden.





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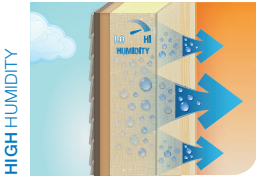
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