

C

OMING HOME

IDAHO
WATERFRONT
FULFILLS
FAMILY'S
DREAM



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"We've rediscovered everything we lost from childhood."

Our story begins with water. It also ends with water.

Or rather, it begins all over again. Because in this story, childhood memories turn to dreams, which in turn become the real thing – reflected in vivid Idaho blues and greens.

Meet Jan Ryan, a sun-bleached southwestern girl. She grew up on the California Delta, a vast freshwater system of waterways and islands where the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers meet. Jan's life revolved around waterskiing, windsurfing and sailing in the summer, and skiing in winter.

Then there is Jeff Gan, a northeastern lad from New York State. He spent his summers as a boy in the Finger Lakes region of central upstate New York. He boated, water skied and enjoyed the waters with his family and friends. In winters they would ski upstate New York, the Adirondacks and New England states.

They grew up separated by an entire continent. Little did they know that their love for water would lead them to each other – and eventually to a wonderful new home in northern Idaho.

They're one of the lucky first to reserve a home site at Dover Bay, a residential waterfront resort community on the shores of lovely Lake Pend Oreille.

"Here in North Idaho, we found something we couldn't find anywhere else," Jeff says. "Here is everything we lost from our childhood – and then some. And now we can pass that waterfront dream along to our own kids."

Dreams of water

Jan eventually moved southward to San Diego County in 1986 to continue a career in real estate.

Here she met Jeff Gan, a fellow Realtor who'd left the rainy days of New York behind to migrate to the sunny southwest.

They both became top real estate producers, and

in 1992 started their own firm, Ryan Gan Real Estate, now RE/MAX DIRECT.

They enjoyed their life in a rural community near San Diego. Jan served as secretary of Rotary and team manager for a Pop Warner football team.

Jeff, with an extensive background in construction and land development, served on the Ramona Chamber of Commerce. He was top producer at Century 21 where he was known for his energy and enthusiasm, winning numerous awards.

They were married in 1992. Together, they've raised three kids: Ryan, 30; Kelly, 26; and Tori, 14.

An active family, they enjoyed camping and hiking in the nearby Cuyamaca Mountains. But Jan and Jeff still craved the water from their youth. To get to it, they bought boats and trailers. They'd hitch up the ski boat, load up the kids, and drive for hours to local reservoirs. But it wasn't the same.

Somewhere, the real thing was calling their name. Somewhere was a deep, freshwater lake in the mountains, where the kids could jump off the dock and generally live the good life.

And where mom and dad could see the view their souls still remembered.

"I always dreamed of having breakfast looking out at our own dock on the lake," Jan says.

"Yes, and I dreamed of her cooking us breakfast there," Jeff says.

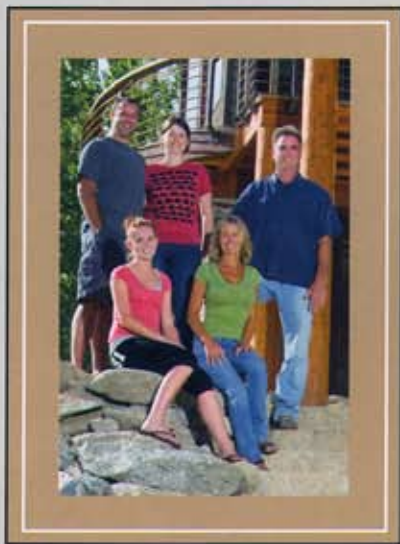
Now, they had to go in search of the view that matched the dream.

Finding perfection

So off they went, on a quest throughout the West.

They sought new vistas with forests and mountains, craving the feeling that would bring them back to their roots. They kept looking.

"A lot of what they call lakes out there are really ponds," Jeff says. "We wanted the real thing."



They even flew around in airplanes to scout new locations. They traveled through Oregon, California and Utah.

"We looked everywhere," Jan says. "We just didn't find what we were looking for."

Both Jan and Jeff are devoted skiers, and in 2002 the lure of powder snow brought them to North Idaho.

"We'd always heard of Schweitzer Mountain," Jeff says. "On our way to check out Schweitzer, we drove into Sandpoint. When we hit the Long Bridge, it was all over. We saw that view, our eyes got big, and we said to each other, 'This is it!'"

"It was a total surprise," Jan recalls. "We had no idea what Sandpoint was. Here was a place that reminded us of a Colorado ski town. We ate lunch in town, went to the mountain and bought a condo that day."

They relished the outdoor four-season flavor. They enjoyed strolling the main street and dining at small restaurants that impressed them with big-city food. They especially enjoyed the sounds of trains rumbling through town.

Although they made frequent ski trips over the next couple of years, in the back of their minds the dream of water lingered.

"Stan Hatch, our realtor at Schweitzer, knew we wanted a place on the lake," Jeff says. "He said 'I've got what you want. I can't really tell you - I have to take you there.' We walked down the beach in the snow, and he told us about Dover Bay."

What they heard was a tale that intrigued them, a rare planned development on the lakefront with plenty of open space. Dover Bay's owner Ralph Sletager was reclaiming a special piece of property from a former mill site and restoring and preserving the natural splendor.



Dover Bay would make the most of North Idaho's towering pines, sandy beaches and majestic views of water and mountains. The community had two miles of lakefront as well as streams, ponds and islands. Nine miles of walking and biking trails would wind through acres of nature preserves and parks.

Although, it was a wintry day in 2004, with nothing yet on site, Jeff and Jan could see the remarkable potential.

After all of their travels, they were finally home.

With their backgrounds in real estate and development, combined with their exhaustive home-seeking travels throughout the West, they knew they'd found something special in North Idaho. They returned to make their reservations.

They were even more excited on their next trip to Dover Bay, where they met Ralph Sletager and builder Skip Pucci.

"They treated us fantastic," Jeff says. "First class. Without knowing anyone, we were taken care of like long-standing friends."

Ralph Sletager is happy to see his vision taking shape with neighbors like Jeff and Jan.

"They are exactly the people we had in mind when we designed Dover Bay," Sletager says. "They were searching for something special, and we're absolutely thrilled that they found that something special here."

Living the life

Last fall, Jan saw two moose walking by their home site. It was a magical "welcome to Idaho" moment.

"I know I looked silly, but I was so excited," she says. "I was jumping up and down."

From their property on the west shores of Lake Pend Oreille, the family has southern exposure and plentiful lake and mountain views.

Designed by local architect Jon Sayler, their home has a rugged North Idaho alpine appeal. Built from rock and big timber, it echoes a request from Jeff for a heavy structured design.

*Once here, they slow down to Idaho time.
It's a healthier pace of life.*





Indoors, designer Kathy Morris from Sandpoint helped with colors schemes and finish materials that set off the panoramic views from every room.

"It's been a great experience working with talented people who love what they do," Jan says. "We're really lucky we met up with the right people."

Jeff, a demanding client with an eye for perfection, is impressed by the way the home was built.

"All I can say is that the workmanship is that of a pure craftsman," Jeff says. "The subcontractors were all professional and they all really care about their trades. They do great work, use the best materials and do things right."

Out the front door, it's 50 feet to the water. Out the back is a bike path that connects with community pathways leading to Sandpoint.

In fact, one of Jeff and Jan's favorite things about their new Idaho home is the convenience of being close to town. They can drive their boat to go out to dinner at Beach House or The Landing, or ride their bikes to town to eat at favorite restaurants such as Café Trinity and Spuds.

"Civilization is nearby, but we just can't see it out the front window," Jan says. "We absolutely love Sandpoint. It's a big town, but it's small. It has a great atmosphere but everything is here."

Eclectic dining, fine art galleries and an outdoor vibe complete the charm.

"You feel welcome here," she adds. "No one treats you like a stranger and everyone's smiling."



The vast and varied terrain of Schweitzer Mountain gets a five-star rating from these ski junkies (Jeff formerly worked as an instructor and ski patroller in upstate New York, while Jan lived and skied in Tahoe for years).

"This place just feels right," Jan says. "You just don't find all of this in one place, no matter where you look. It all comes together here."

Dreams realized

Recently Jan and Jeff completed another step toward the dream when they both became licensed pilots. They'll be able to take off in their private plane and fly direct between San Diego and the Sandpoint airport.

Once here, they slow down to Idaho time. It's a healthier pace of life.

"When we arrive, we kind of forget everything south of here," Jeff says. "We've been trying to shut the cell phone off and just get into vacation mode."

For this active family, their leisure hours include plenty of time in the outdoors.

They enjoy biking and walking forested trails, or kayaking the waterways near their home. The family thrills to sunrises over the Cabinet Mountains and sunsets along the Pend Oreille River.

They share those experiences with the families next door.

"We discovered we have great neighbors," Jan says. "When we get together their interests are the same as ours - hiking, skiing, boating."

If they take their boat one direction, they're on the Pend Oreille River for miles. In the other direction is the wide-open expanse of beautiful Lake Pend Oreille.

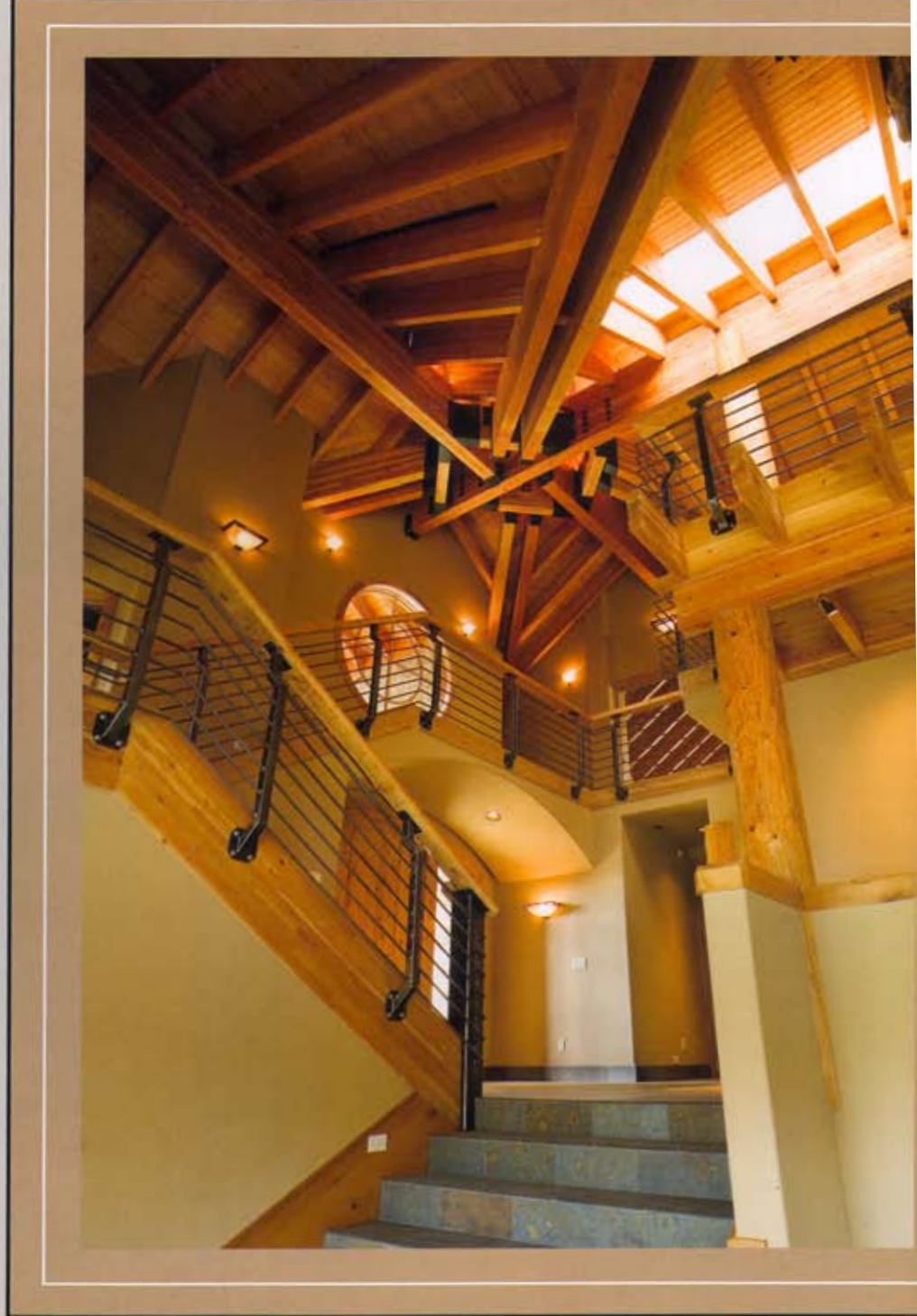
"We've rediscovered what we lost from our childhood," Jeff says. "We wanted to give our kids and ourselves again what we once had."

On any given weekend, Jan might be cooking Jeff breakfast. They might be watching the kids play at water's edge.

As they look out across the sparkling waters of Lake Pend Oreille, they reflect on a dream that began long ago.

Today, that vision is shared with friends, family and neighbors on this idyllic Idaho waterfront.

The dream continues on.



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