



Janice and Cassie Laprade hang for ten on their Thousand Islands dock.

GREAT INVENTIONS *By Pat Lynch*

A surfing benchmark

Cottagers in the Thousand Islands aren't always looking out for the next big wave, but if they're ever in the mood to shoot the tube, a surfer's paradise awaits at the end of Michael and Janice Laprade's Honey Bee Island dock. When the Laprades, who hail from California, bought the 130-year-old cottage six years ago, they brought a piece of their home state north, transforming a surfboard into something that's still good for a ride.

"The kids had grown up and left home, so we were trying to decide what to do with their surfboard," says Michael.



"The idea of making it into a bench was my wife's, as are all great ideas in our family."

The surfboard was mounted on a pair of wooden blocks, which were sanded to fit its concave base, and affixed with fiberglass resin. A pair of floor flanges screw into the wooden blocks, and a couple of 17" threaded pipes act as legs.

A second set of floor flanges mount to the dock, and are the bench's feet.

Now, even when the Laprades aren't down at the water enjoying their California creation, they often stumble across surfers-in-training who are. "My wife and I were out in the boat one day," recounts Laprade, "when some passersby pulled over, and, thinking no one was home, the teenage girl hopped on and posed for a photo." The little surfer girl caught her wave, and then some. "Our daughter, Cassie, glimpsed the pair scampering off. It's actually become a landmark."

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