

DAY'S END

Focus on good design and clever construction



A whimsical bee inlay greets visitors to this New Hampshire home (A). To make the inlay, the author transferred the design onto plywood, cut out the individual pieces with a scroll saw, then reassembled the pieces on a piece of plastic so that he could show the design in full scale to his clients (B). Arrows marked on the patterns indicate the grain orientation on each wing. Shown here (C) is the reverse side of the assembled inlay, after the author used the plywood patterns to cut the 36 individual pieces out of decking on a shaper table. Pocket screws join the pieces together. After removing the existing porch decking, the author added PT blocking for the inlay and covered the blocking and tops of the joists with peel-and-stick membrane. Here (D), the new decking has been installed with a cutout to accommodate the inlay. The author face-fastened the assembled bee and the pieces that make up the hive to the blocking (E), then later filled in the holes with Cortex plugs that matched the color of each individual piece.

The Bee's Knees

by Brian Hand

The honeybee inlay shown here was a key part of a recent entry porch makeover for a family of avid beekeepers. To create the double inlay of a bee within a hive, I found an image of a bee online and projected it full-scale onto a piece of paper marked with deck-board spacing. I traced the outline and the body parts and wings, labeled the parts, then cut out the design to transfer it onto a piece of 1/4-inch plywood.

I used a scroll saw to cut the plywood into pattern pieces that I then attached

to the decking material. As I did so, I carefully matched each pattern piece to the associated decking color and grain orientation indicated on my original design, then used a shaper table to form the final 36 inlay pieces.

Because I needed to use decking material of different thicknesses to get the colors I wanted, I used pocket screws to keep the face in plane while screwing the body together, then padded out the backs of the thinner pieces with 1/16-inch PVC material. To give the wings a natural

look, I not only used the differences of the grain but also created a gap to differentiate the wings. The antennae are simply gaps cut strategically within a few hive pieces. Each individual piece of the hive was rounded on the outer edge to form a stylized image of how many people conceive hives to look. ❖

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PHOTOS BY BRIAN HAND