

A Simple Screened

A photograph of a wooden screened porch with a cable railing system. The porch has a wooden deck floor and a wooden railing with stainless steel cables. The porch is attached to a wooden building. The background shows a lake and trees with autumn foliage.

Inexpensive screen panels combined with cable railings
create a clever assembly

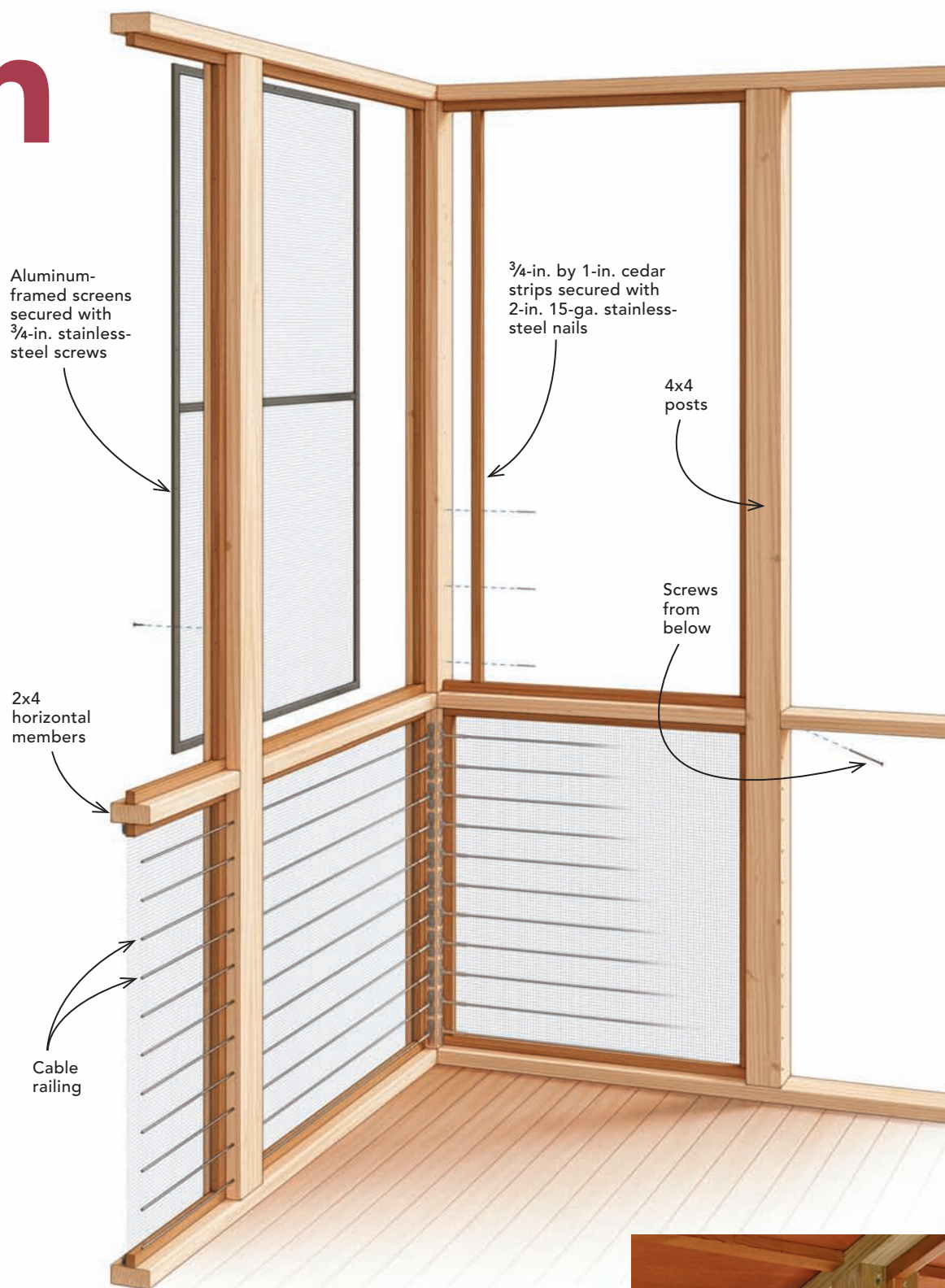
BY ANDY ENGEL

Porch

Brian Kelley's company, Fusion Renovations, Inc., was building a new home on a ridge overlooking upstate New York's rural Harlem Valley when his clients decided to add insect screening to the porch. This isn't an uncommon request, and over the years I've seen carpenters tackle this project in many ways. The most common solutions seem to be either filling the spaces between the posts with wooden screen doors or adding horizontal members, unrolling screening across the assembly and securing it with trim strips. But wood can rot, and there's no elegant way to repair future damage to screen that does not have an individual frame.

Brian and carpenter Eric Paulson took a simple approach to avoid these issues. They used the existing posts to anchor aluminum-framed screens purchased from Metro Screenworks (metroscreenworks.com) for \$30 to \$40 each, depending on size. In this case, the homeowners knew they would be leaving the screens in place year-round, so fastening them from the outside made sense. But for a more convertible approach, the screen panels could be secured to the inside of the cedar stops. Because cable railings had been installed everywhere else on the existing deck to preserve the incredible view to the west, it was an easy decision to continue these railings around the porch as well. Screens are only intended to keep out bugs, but a screened porch built to code will also keep people from falling. □

Andy Engel is a senior editor.
Photos by the author.



AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE DETAILS

Stops ripped from scraps of cedar and nailed to the framing create attachment points for the screens. A spacer block is used to locate the strips consistently. Stainless-steel screws fasten the screens to the mounting strips. The screens are easily removed should one need repairs. If seasonal removal of the screens had been desired, the screens could have been mounted from inside for easier removal.

