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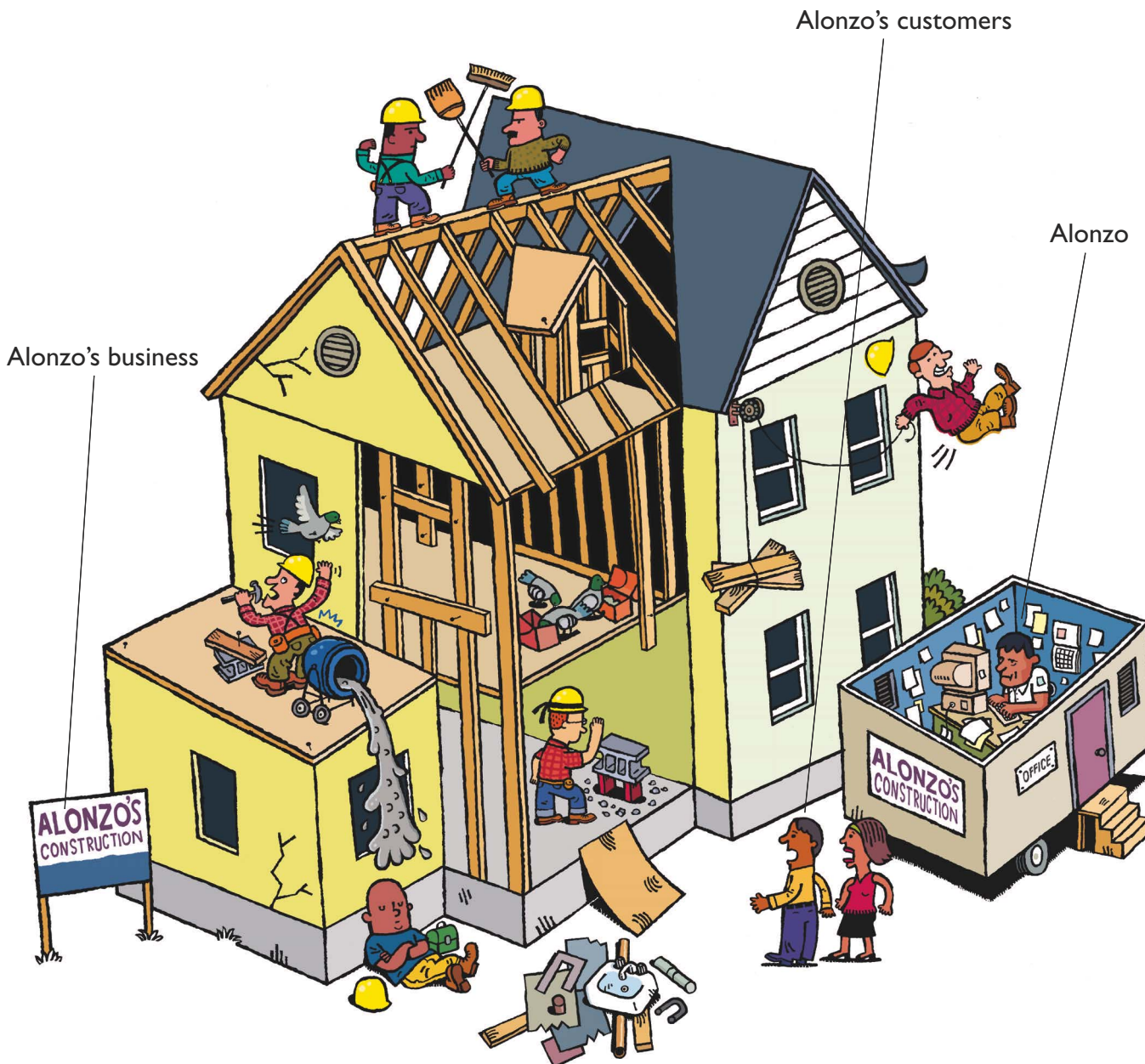
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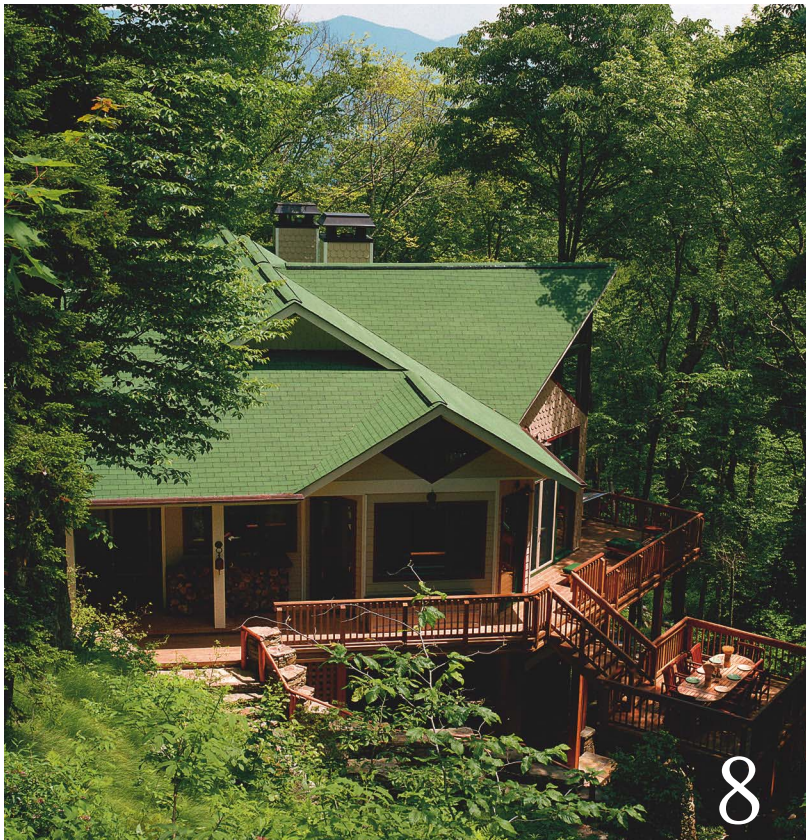
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A Mountaintop Hideaway

Don Evans' Vacation Retreat Gives New Meaning to Getting Away From it All

Architect Don Evans spends most of his time in Orlando, Fl. overseeing his architectural firm, The Evans Group. So when he wants to escape, he heads to the Great Smoky Mountains of western North Carolina. For years, he had a vacation retreat there, which he ultimately sold. It took him years to find another, special piece of property.

A mountaintop hideaway

Finally, he hit on it: a breathtaking location hidden atop Mount Lynn Lowry amid the balsam trees. Travellers must pass through a one-car tunnel to even get near Evans' property, which is situated along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Eventually you arrive at his electric gate and, from there, drive another 30 minutes to his door. To say it is secluded is a

huge understatement. Evans designed everything to be at one with nature.

Situated at a 6,000-foot elevation on a rock with a natural spring-fed waterfall, Evans' secret getaway, which he dubbed "Camp Evans," consists of three separate cottages:

- the main house of 4,000 square feet that Evans shares with his wife
- a 1,350-square-foot guest cottage
- a 1,650-square-foot getaway for Evans' daughter, Dawn

There are also three garages, a picnic gazebo, a boardroom, a sun deck and waterfall platforms.

Mountain climbing

Evans bought the property in 1997, started building on it in 2000, and finally finished in October 2004 — just in

DON EVANS DESIGNED his mountaintop retreat to blend in with the red and greens found in the home's natural environment.

time to lock it up for the winter. He returned in April 2005 to enjoy his first season in the home and reminisce about all it took to get to this point.

Due to the elevation, the temperature never gets higher than 72°F. "It was rough," Evans remembers, citing the weather, "everything was a challenge."

There was also the challenge of anchoring the house onto a solid rock when part of it is hanging over water. "It is expensive to build on a mountain you can get to only six months a year," he says, "but it's worth it."

It took a year just to build the guesthouse, which Evans says was "easy." It took a year and a half to build his daughter's cottage. Harder still was constructing the big house, which took 2-1/2 years, including a year alone just to put in the foundation. Because all three structures sit atop that single large rock, using dynamite was out of the question. In fact, Evans had to have a full-time geologist on site.

Bringing up materials wasn't easy

either. Most everything — the KitchenAid appliances, granite countertops, Tamko roofing materials, billiard table and exercise equipment - had to be trucked up piece by piece to the site on a small John Deere tractor. "We wanted to build as far up on the waterfall as possible," says Evans. "Just getting to the site was probably the biggest challenge we face."

Once materials got to the level with the two-car garage and sundeck, there were another 54 steps to climb before reaching the back door of the big house.

Do not disturb

Evans' love of nature and the land governed many of his design decisions. He was careful not to "harm the land that has as much God-given beauty as I had. North Carolina is as close to heaven as you can get."

Everything was done with green construction in mind, from how he handled the water - to how he handled the material. "When I finished the project, I wanted it to look like the houses were all

just dropped onto the site without disturbing the surroundings."

Evans' largest supplier was James Hardie Building Products, and he was among the first to use Hardiplank sculptured shake siding. "Because I'm near a waterfall, I knew I needed a material that would last. This can be a brutal environment." He painted the house in shades of red and green to mirror the natural environment. Copper gutters and copper rain chains add another dash of color, while multi-level decks provide additional living space to enjoy the surroundings. "When you're here, you want to be outside as much as you can. You go inside only if it's raining or when you want to go to bed," Evans notes.

A conservationist approach

Inside the main house, traffic patterns flow smoothly from room to room. The cottage has one bedroom, a great room, a kitchen and dining room, which opens onto a dining deck, a billiard



ALL OF THE ROOMS in the home have high ceilings and spacious windows to bring the outside in.

EVANS RELIES on his fireplaces for warmth, particularly the enormous stone fireplace that towers over the great room.







Appliances/Kitchen: KitchenAid appliances
Cabinets: Kitchen Craft cabinets
Doors-Interior: Simpson Door
Fireplaces: Heatilator fireplace
Hardware: Rocky Mountain hardware
Home theater: Knoll HDTV projector, Integra THX
Roofing: Tamko roofing
Siding: James Hardie siding
Windows: Finistere

MANY INTERIOR TOUCHES came courtesy of local artisans including the upstairs railing that is made from local plants and trees.

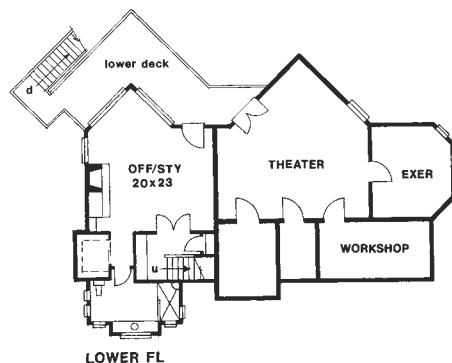
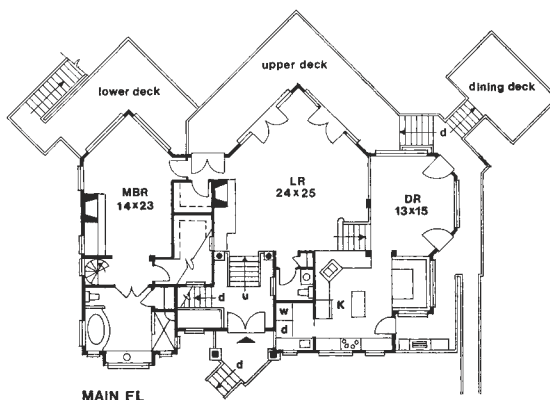
room, a media room and a complete studio. Evans works at the latter one week a month from April through October.

The windows were another challenge for Evans. He couldn't find any with the small, unobtrusive trim he wanted until he discovered Finistere double thermal pane windows from Finland that gave him the indoor/outdoor effect he sought. "I tried to mimic the mountains and everything going on around us here," notes Evans.

He was also very energy-conscious: "I don't need but 30 minutes of electricity a day. The house holds daytime heat because there's so much glass. At night in August, the temperature might fall to 40 something, but we pride ourselves on having a very small electric bill."

High tech, soft touch

In line with the nature theme, the home keeps all of its electrical and electronic, high-tech aspects hidden. "I want the house to be smart and electronic," says Evans, "but I'm not crazy about seeing it." Among the high-tech innovations is a music system and a satellite



Many of the interior touches come courtesy of local artisans. The home includes beveled glass, handmade sinks and railings made from local plants and trees. The floors are recycled pine from an old structure, and most of the furniture is made locally. "I collect art, so the artists in the mountains all know me."

However, while it may look like the tree bark that serves as his rustic wall covering came from local trees, it didn't. Evans imported it from Russia.

A Labor of Love

"A lot of people will tell me, 'I can't believe how much you went through!'" says Evans. "It was a labor of love."

The people who helped Evans build his homes "were all just waiting for the crazy architect to get there and tell them what to do," he now recalls. "When I started building, no one was doing the level of house I was doing. Everyone had log homes. Now, five years later, my house is more the norm." **PB**

connection that keeps the compound connected to the outside world. Evans' home theater system includes a Knoll HDTV Projector, Integra THX and acoustics by Anthony Galle. But again, everything is unobtrusive, so as not to detract from the rustic interior.

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Technical Sessions Schedule

Wednesday, Jan. 11	Thursday, Jan. 12	Friday, Jan. 13	Saturday, Jan. 14
9:30-10:30 <i>Extreme Building for All Climates,</i> Joseph Lstiburek, Building Science Corporation	9:30-10:30 <i>Extreme Building for All Climates,</i> Joseph Lstiburek, Building Science Corporation	9:30-10:30 <i>Extreme Building for All Climates,</i> Joseph Lstiburek, Building Science Corporation	9:00-9:45 <i>Energy and Moisture Solutions from Dow,</i> Dow
10:30-11:15 <i>Benefits of a Closed Crawl Space,</i> Jeff Tooley, The Healthy Building Company	10:30-11:15 <i>Benefits of a Closed Crawl Space,</i> Jeff Tooley, The Healthy Building Company	10:30-11:15 <i>Benefits of a Closed Crawl Space,</i> Jeff Tooley, The Healthy Building Company	10:00-10:45 <i>Insulating and Finishing a Better Basement,</i> Dow
11:15-Noon <i>Insulating and Finishing a Better Basement,</i> Dow	11:15-Noon <i>Insulating and Finishing a Better Basement,</i> Dow	11:15-Noon <i>Insulating and Finishing a Better Basement,</i> Dow	11:00-Noon <i>Protecting Basements and Foundations,</i> Dow
1:00-2:00 <i>Protecting Basements and Foundations,</i> Dow	1:00-2:00 <i>Protecting Basements and Foundations,</i> Dow	1:00-2:00 <i>Protecting Basements and Foundations,</i> Dow	
2:00-3:00 <i>Compatible Wall Bracing and Foam Sheathing Solutions,</i> Jay H. Crandell, Consulting Engineer	2:00-3:00 <i>Compatible Wall Bracing and Foam Sheathing Solutions,</i> Jay H. Crandell, Consulting Engineer	2:00-3:00 <i>Compatible Wall Bracing and Foam Sheathing Solutions,</i> Jay H. Crandell, Consulting Engineer	
3:00-3:30 <i>Shear Wall Panels for Advanced Framing,</i> Peter Baker, PE, Building Science Corporation, and Jim Wilcoski, PE, Department of Army, Corps of Engineers, Sponsored by Tamlyn	3:00-3:30 <i>Shear Wall Panels for Advanced Framing,</i> Peter Baker, PE, Building Science Corporation, and Jim Wilcoski, PE, Department of Army, Corps of Engineers, Sponsored by Tamlyn	3:00-3:45 <i>Energy and Moisture Solutions from Dow,</i> Dow	
3:30-4:15 <i>Energy and Moisture Solutions from Dow,</i> Dow	3:30-4:15 <i>Energy and Moisture Solutions from Dow,</i> Dow	4:00-4:45 <i>The Superior Advantages of Precast Concrete Walls,</i> Jim Osborne, Superior Walls	
4:15-5:00 <i>The Superior Advantages of Precast Concrete Walls,</i> Jim Osborne, Superior Walls	4:15-5:00 <i>The Superior Advantages of Precast Concrete Walls,</i> Jim Osborne, Superior Walls		

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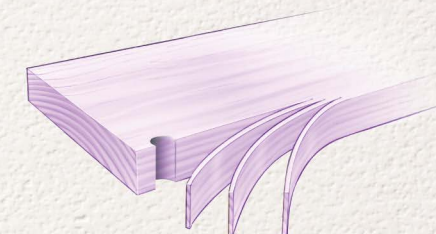
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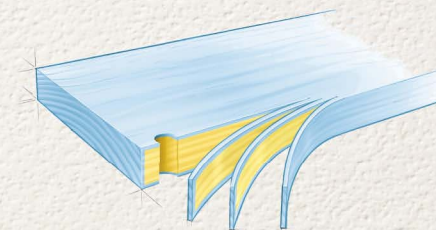
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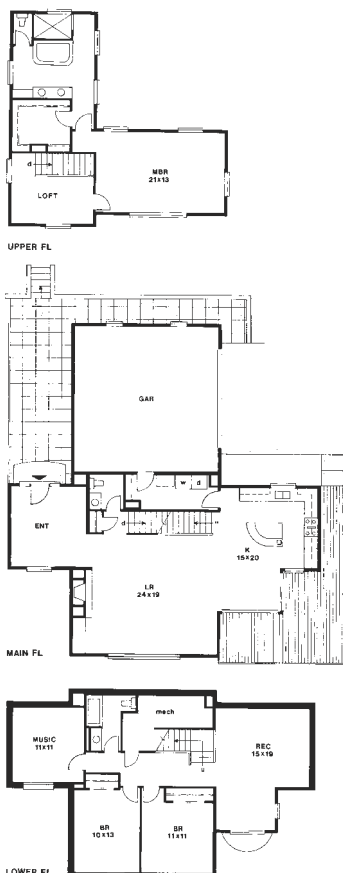
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The Cool Factor

David Hale's Boise Home Captures the Lay of the Land



David Hale, founder of Hale Development, Inc. in Boise, Idaho, lives in a home that is fun, yet functional – at once contemporary and earthy, yet daring and avant-garde. “My house is modern in design, but has warmth so that it doesn’t feel like a concrete box,” he explains.

According to Hale, the colors and finishes he chose along with the furnishings warm up the house considerably. But its unique appeal may also have something to do with how the house, in Hale’s words, “captures the lay of the land.” It is at one with its environment, sitting atop a hill with views of downtown Boise, which can be seen from every room (except the laundry and mechanical areas) due to Hale’s clever and strategic placement of windows.

Hale, a 30-something bachelor, built his 3,100-square-foot, three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath home as a showpiece. He wanted to put it in the Parade of Homes, but missed the deadline. Nevertheless, he knew that he could use

it to demonstrate “what I can do as a builder and what I can do inside a house that simply allows for more fun in everyday living,” he says.

A lot with a view

Hale moved to Boise eight years ago and stumbled upon this lot three weeks after his arrival, but didn’t get control of it for nearly another six years. “It was a view lot and one of the most dynamic I had seen, so I knew it would allow me to do things that I hadn’t before.

“Over the course of that time,” he continues, “I started developing more modern tastes for a simpler way of living, as well as ideas on how I wanted a house to feel. I wanted to bring the outside in and feel good about the products I was putting in there.”

Hale started construction of the home in November 2002 and finished six months later in May 2003. When clients drive up, they see a modern, two-story exterior that is a series of angles

DAVID HALE’S HOME sits atop a hill with views of downtown Boise, Idaho. Although modern in design, Hale has added warmth so that it doesn’t look or feel like a “concrete box.”

and slopes, not unlike the hill he built it on. Upon closer inspection, visitors discover the home has a very open, loft-like floor plan and that it possesses spectacular views of the city from not just two levels, but three.

A daylight basement with two bedrooms, a recreation room and an insulated music room ground the home. The main floor, with 10 to 11-foot ceilings, consists of a single, large area in which the kitchen flows into the living and dining rooms. The master suite occupies the top floor.

Hale's window on the world

Hale strived to use windows as pieces of art in his new home; he wanted to use these openings to frame the breathtaking views of Boise and the surrounding areas.

He got his chance in the dining room, which originally called for a 10-foot, sliding glass door to open onto the deck. Hale instead opted to install a commercial-grade glass garage door that would allow the entire wall to disappear up into the ceiling, taking full advantage of the view and bringing in the outside in a way few think possible.

Having seen this type of window in restaurants, Hale had always wanted to do something similar in a home. With his floor plan, he finally had the right application. "The door opens up the

whole house, so that I have phenomenal views into the city," he enthuses.

The tricky part was finding a way to run the tracks into the ceiling without interfering with the dining room's overhead lighting. The answer came by dropping the dining room ceiling down a foot to 10 feet – the same height as the kitchen, but lower than the living room. He also made sure he'd have access to the tracks through the attic, in case they ever had to be serviced.

The cool factor

Aside from the windows, among Hale's favorite features are his two custom-built, secret bookcase doors that access his mechanical room and music room. He started building secret doors with his first house in Boise in 1998, and it's part of Hale's penchant for building fun into his homes. Secret doors conjured up fond memories of his childhood home.

"I grew up in a house that had a lot of secret doors, so I wanted to bring them into my own home to access areas that don't need to be looked at as a door," he says. "Over time, people would ask me to put these areas inside their houses, too. It's different and there's definitely a cool factor with it."

The original plan called for a door in the entryway to access the furnace and water heater. Hale didn't want to have a

plain door staring down visitors, so he drew up an alternative concept and took it to a finish carpenter. Today, visitors enter the house and see a bookcase, not a door to a utility room.

Hale took the same approach with his music room. There, he built two secret bookcase doors to access this basement-level, a 10 x 10-foot room that houses his drum set and guitars as well as stereo components. No one would even know the room existed without being told, because it is also sound-proofed. He created 10-inch thick insulated walls that make use of channel locks and foam to help dampen the sound.

"Drumming is loud; my music is loud," Hale explains. "I wanted to have good sound in there when I'm playing."

The ultimate locker room

Two floors up, the master bath incorporates the same aura of fun and has Hale's distinctive signature on it. He takes credit for the design of the master bathroom tile work, shower-and-tub design, cut-glass countertop and mirror.

Working with the radiuses of the room instead of angles, Hale designed a deep oval soaking tub that is nestled inside a shower area. These two spaces flow into the contoured countertop area that is accented with a matching mirror. The

THE KITCHEN IS EARTHY yet coolly efficient with a concrete countertop on the gourmet island and dark slab granite elsewhere.



HALE LIKES TO INCORPORATE WATER THEMES into his personal bath. Working with the radiuses of the room instead of angles, Hale designed a deep, soaking tub that is nestled inside a shower area. These two areas seem to flow into the contoured countertop area that is accented with a matching mirror.



PHOTOGRAPHY: PAULA JANSEN





VIEWS OF DOWNTOWN BOISE can be seen from every room due to Hale's clever and strategic placement of windows.

custom walk-in shower is locker room-like in its openness, with no doors or partitions – in keeping with the tone of the rest of the house. “There aren’t too many right angles; it’s just kind of flowing,” notes Hale.

Hale likes to incorporate water themes into his personal bathroom. In doing so, he makes heavy use of blue, his favorite color, which plays to the cool, refreshing environment Hale sought to create. For example, the tub-and-shower area is coated in iridescent blue mosaic tiles from Mexico. “It took some time to get the tiles, but with proper planning we finally got them here,” remembers Hale.

The countertop, an aqua-colored glass, was a special-order, custom-cut from a template Hale created from cardboard. He used the same pattern for the mirror. The counter is topped with two American Standard vessel sinks with rounded faucets from American Standard’s Porcher line.

A Toto toilet, featuring a heated Washlet (Chloe) bidet-type seat, rounds out the master bath and gives visitors plenty to talk about.

Cooking up a good time

In contrast to the cool blues of the master bathroom, the kitchen is earthy, yet superbly efficient, featuring a concrete countertop on the gourmet island and dark-slab granite elsewhere. Another striking design element is corrugated metal, which Hale also used on

the roof. Standing at the kitchen sink, Hale has direct sight to the television built into the wall over the living room’s gas fireplace.

There’s an abundance of stainless steel and ultra-modern conveniences on the main floor, all of them complementing the sleek, contemporary décor.

Would Hale do anything differently if he had the chance? Yes, he admits. He’d change the position of the refrigerator in his master bathroom by putting it under the linen cabinet rather than above. “I wanted to keep water in the fridge there, but this one sits higher than I would like. I’m tall enough to reach it, so it isn’t a big deal, but a future owner who is only 5’1/2 feet tall will likely find it difficult to access.”

Upon further consideration, Hale adds, “I would install a door going out to one of the parapets from the master suite and use it as a rooftop sitting area or garden.” Although he constructed a window opening so that area could be accessed in the future, he’d prefer either a regular swinging door or a garage door.

“When you walk up stairs to the master suite, there’s an 8 x 12-foot sitting area there that could potentially open up to the parapet rooftop,” Hale comments. “But I didn’t have the means to do it at that point in the construction process, so I framed it in and installed a window instead, in case someone wants to do it later.” **PB**

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Insulation/Rigid: Cellotex
Insulation Unfaced: Visqueen
Interior Molding: Trimco
Lighting: Monorail Satin Nickel, Luz Azul - UltraLights Collection, Oxygen Collection
Paints/Stains/Finishes: Pratt & Lambert, Kraftmaid stain for Garage/front door
Plumbing Fixtures: Grohe, Toto fixtures
Plumbing Fixtures/Kitchen: Lancelot Kitchen Sink by Moen, Lancelot Island Prep Sink by Moen
Plumbing Fixtures/Bath: American Standard White Steel – 5-foot tub, Salangane Pedestal sinks
Roofing: Ryerson Tull Corrugated
Siding: Adobe Panel Weyerhaeuser, Smooth Hardi Board, Weyerhaeuser exterior panels, 3 Coat Stucco System
Tiles: Golden Sun Slate, Blue Limestone, Azul Verde, Cancun Blue
Truss: MiTek Industries
Toilets: Salangane elongated toilets, Toto Chloe Washlet
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Florida Retreat

Bobby Gross Strives to Present Drama
and Amenities in his Florida Retreat



What do the words “Florida retreat” mean to you? To builder Bobby Gross, co-owner of Tampa-based Wind Star Homes, they mean a Mediterranean home boasting beautiful indoor and outdoor living opportunities.

Situated on a waterfront lot within an exclusive, gated golf course community in Tampa, the exterior of Casa Linda commands attention and exhibits a fastidious attention to architectural nuance. There is cast-stone detailing, an intricate clay-tile roof, as well as arches, columns

and corbel details. Once inside Casa Linda, which Gross named for his wife, visitors are struck by the expansive faux finishes, stone columns, numerous ceiling details, rich wood work and custom built-ins, as well as the travertine and marble flooring throughout the home.

Gross worked very closely with The Evans Group, an architectural firm based in Orlando. “They did a fantastic job for us,” says Gross of all the detail work that went into the house.

CASA LINDA COMMANDS ATTENTION as visitors pull up to its grand entrance. The exterior is adorned with cast-stone detailing, intricate clay-tile roof, as well as arches, columns and corbels.

Casual elegance

The concept behind the floor plan of the Gross home was one of casual elegance, so that the couple would be equally comfortable entertaining family or friends, formally or informally. The exquisite details and sophisticated styling unfold throughout the two-story, five-bedroom home, which also includes six full bathrooms, two half-bathrooms and numerous luxury amenities.

The home is opulent by anyone's standards, featuring a two-story grand parlor and dining salon for formal entertaining. Visitors may well have the feeling they are touring an historic mansion — not the home for a couple with two young boys. In the end, it is a mix of both worlds, formal and casual.

"Our intentions were for the finished detailing to be at a very high level, demonstrating the skill sets of our company and the people we engage," explains Gross. "We also wanted a comfortable home that says to visitors, 'Come, stay and relax a while.' We didn't want to have rooms in the house that our parents used to rope off or where guests would find plastic covers on the couch. We wanted it to be livable, very family friendly and incredibly entertaining."

Family fun

The heart of this home is its kitchen. Here is where the family gathers for meals or to watch TV. The gourmet kitchen features a large center island with bar seating, Sub-Zero appliances and easy access to the adjoining playroom/nursery, leisure room and butler's pantry access to the dining salon.

Adults have a couple of playrooms of their own. For boys who love their toys, Gross has dubbed one room the "Gentleman's Lounge," which is complete with a billiard table, custom built-in ale bar with a glass front Sub-Zero refrigerator, and a fully automated cinema with tiered seating and seven televisions.

"Many of our clients will ask for a media room, a home theater or a billiard room, so why not create a space that allows us to offer all three?" asks Gross. "We wanted a self-contained situation in which the owner can close the doors, shoot billiards, and sit around the bar or in the theater," which includes a 100-inch screen projection TV in the center and two 27-inch TVs flanking it.

It was important to Gross that guests

could sit anywhere in this room and still have a direct sightline to the big TV. At the same time, he wanted to distinguish the billiard area from the home theater and did so by building a soffit and bar area as a visual and physical separation. "They're separate spaces, but all in one area," says Gross.

Gross's clientele have embraced the "Gentleman's Lounge" as well. "Virtually everyone who sees the space — both men and women — want it if they can afford it. 'This is the best solution I've ever seen. It tackles everything,' they say. It's a very big winner when it comes to hitting a hot button with our clientele."

Once in the lounge, visitors never need to leave. Gross didn't specify undercounter refrigeration for the main entertainment room because available units lacked the capacity he wanted. Instead, he installed a Sub-Zero 601 glass front refrigerator. "Now, we never run out of beverages," he claims.

Outside fun

A guest to Casa Linda couldn't want any more, yet there's more to come. A leisure room with pocket sliding glass doors allows the indoor entertainment space to flow outdoors to the lush pool

environment and raised spa. The outdoor living room, called the Florida Den, is accentuated by the extensive covered lanai space with a pecky cypress ceiling. Cypress cabinetry is built in above the indoor/outdoor fireplace, which can be viewed from the den, while the other side opens to the billiard room.

There's plenty of deck space and, for fun, an outdoor sunken, swim-up tiki bar with a full array of cabinetry and refrigeration. "Overhead, we've created a closed-roof environment with a pergola that's aesthetically beautiful and functional if you're entertaining," says Gross, who remembers hosting a large fundraiser at the house and finding the secondary outside bar a nice complement to the full bar inside.

The wine cellar

Complementing the bars is an extensive wine cellar that has earned a great deal of positive feedback for its unique look back to a bygone era. "In Florida, we don't have basements," explains Gross. "So we built the house up higher, so we'd have the ability to step down into our cellar. Once inside, we designed it to look like it was there before the house was."

A TWO-STORY GRAND PARLOR and dining salon set the tone for formal entertaining.

THE GOURMET KITCHEN features a large center island with bar seating, Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances.







THE OUTDOOR “FLORIDA DEN” has a pecky cypress ceiling and cypress cabinetry built in above the indoor/outdoor fireplace, which can be viewed from the den while the other side opens to the billiard room.



Instead of putting down traditional flooring, Gross used distressed plaster and a stained slab of concrete along with cedar planks and old Chicago brick to make it look like it was built ages ago. “They used to build wine cellars from scrap construction materials, and we mimicked that effect,” he adds. “It is a real conversation piece.”

The master retreat

After a long evening of entertaining, The Gross’s can retreat to the master suite, which is accessed through a private foyer. The sumptuous room, with its ornate ceiling is a showpiece all its own. The master bedroom and bathroom have a level of finish that is unmatched, including a four-step plaster finish for the walls and hand-painted millwork.

Yet, the master suite has its practical side, too, including his/her walk-in closets

with a mirrored dressing area and valet center. The bath includes a large whirlpool tub, garden shower and dual vanities, one side of which has a television sealed behind a two-way glass mirror. That way, when Gross is shaving, he can catch up on the news. Another television above the entrance to the bathroom can be viewed through a window inside the shower, which is equipped with a speaker and volume control.

Everything is automated by an AMX touch screen, whose one-button control allows Gross to adjust the HVAC system, lighting, audio and video. “It is a real haven of comfort,” he says of the master suite. “Our kids love being with us there in the early evenings before they go to bed.”

Simple tastes

Ask Gross which room is his favorite and his answer is simple: “Honestly,

wherever my kids are. When it is warm, and it almost always is, we spend a lot of time in the Florida Den and in the pool.”

Gross admits that his home is a showpiece, built more for prospective clients than for his family. With 7,635 square feet of air-conditioned space and 11,280 square feet under-roof, the structure took him nearly two years to build. This house gives us an opportunity to show what we can do.”

Would he do anything differently if he built it today? “I’d love to say it is the perfect home!” But as you gain knowledge and grow as a builder, there are certainly things you’d do differently. My taste has evolved, but my goal is always to present drama, as well as all the goodies that can be done in our world and in our business.” **PB**



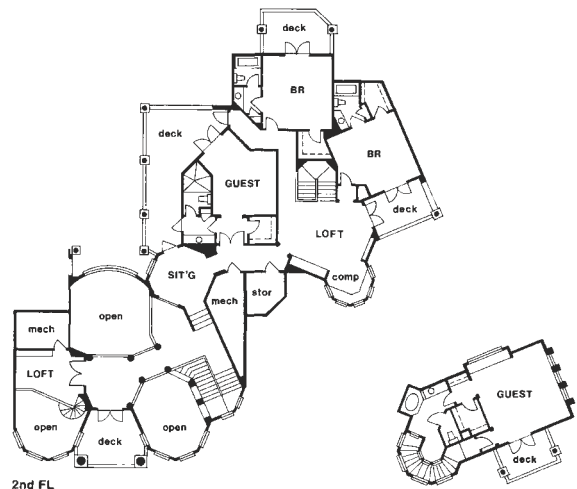
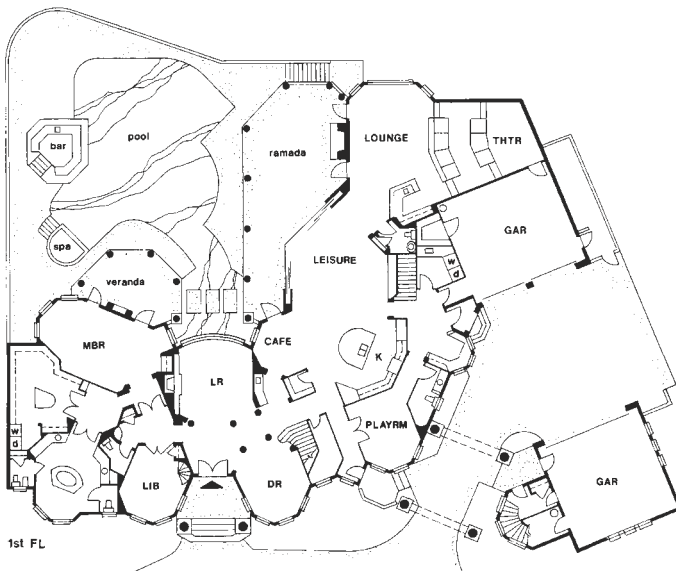
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CALLED THE FLORIDA DEN, the outdoor living room allows for all-weather entertaining, thanks to an extensive amount of covered lanai space. It also features plenty of deck space along with an outdoor sunken, swim-up tiki bar with a full array of cabinetry and refrigeration.

MAJOR PRODUCTS USED

Appliances/Kitchen: Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances
Doors/Exterior: Cantera doors
Faucets/Bathroom: Kohler faucets
Faucets/Kitchen: Rohl Corp. faucets
Home Automation System: AMX and Crestron home automation systems
Home Entertainment System: Runco projection TV
HVAC System/Thermostat: Honeywell programmable thermostats
HVAC System: Trane
Insulation/Foam: Icynene Insulation
Light Switches/Controllers: LiteTouch automated lighting system
Plumbing Fixtures: Sinks from Kohler, Bates & Bates
Roofing: Roof Tile & Slate Company
Windows: Andersen Windows





THE NYZNYK HOME has an East Coast feel in a West Coast neighborhood.



Nautical But Nice



One glance at the home of Darryl Nyznyk conjures up images of clam-bakes on the North Atlantic shore. You can practically smell the New England clam chowder simmering on the stove.

The thing is this Cape Cod-style home isn't on Cape Cod. Built in 2003, the Nyznyk residence isn't even in the Northeast or anywhere near the Atlantic Ocean. It sits on the opposite side of the country, five blocks from the Pacific Ocean in Manhattan Beach, Calif.

Blue and white

Nyznyk's family loves the ocean, so

they wanted a nautical theme; they just didn't want that theme to reflect a California décor. "We went to Cape Cod for the first time three or four years ago to see how houses were built, and we simply fell in love with this style," says Nyznyk, who is president of Anastasi Development Company in Redondo Beach, Calif.

The exterior is done as a traditional Cape Cod, including Newburyport Blue shingles with white trim to lend the home its distinctively nautical feel. "Manhattan Beach had a number of Cape Cod homes prior to ours, but most

Darryl Nyznyk's West Coast Cape Cod
Brings the Beach Inside

were gray, tan or olive green,” recalls Nyznyk. “When we first started building, ours was the only one with this color blue. To my wife and myself, the other Cape Cod homes looked tired. One did have cedar shingles in barn door red, and although we didn’t like it, it at least inspired us to check out other colors.

Today, we get people coming up to our door to ask about the color we used. As a result, a number of homes in Manhattan Beach currently are using blue.”

A Coastal view

A 5-foot deep wraparound porch encircles the home and provides seating for entertaining and taking in the views. The west side overlooks the ocean, with views from the Palos Verdes Peninsula to Catalina Island to Malibu. Extra-thick spindle railings make a dramatic state-

ment, playing up the beach-look. The west side of the porch extends an additional 6 feet, so there’s a total of 11 feet under an overhang. That provides plenty of room for a fully furnished outdoor living area, complete with Adirondack chairs and tables.

If plush seating and the view weren’t enough, built-in heaters allow year-round use of the porch. Music piped in through strategically placed speakers adds to the ambience. “At Christmas, our family had occupied the house only couple of months,” Nyznyk recalls. “We turned on the heaters, so we could sit outside on Christmas Eve with Christmas carols playing. It was a blustery night, but still beautiful.”

A welcoming foyer

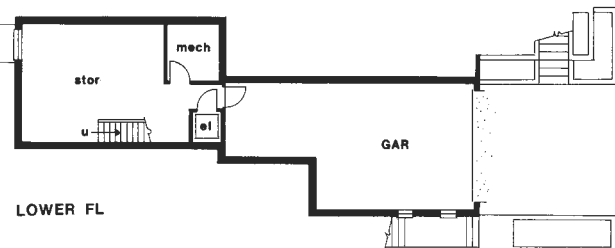
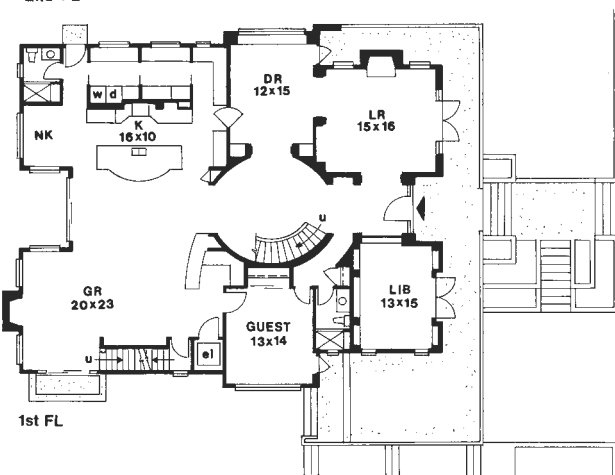
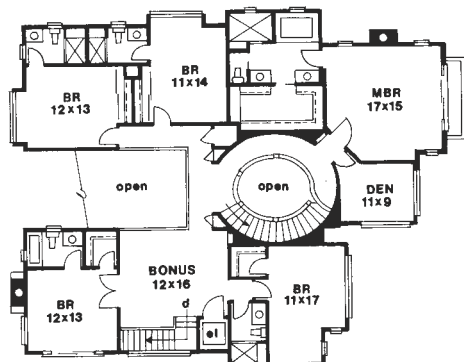
Nyznyk designed the home to bring

the beach inside, as typified by an entry through the Dutch-style front door. On most days, the family leaves the top portion open, allowing the beach air to circulate freely throughout the house. Having the top portion open also allows visitors to see clear through the house into the backyard. “It creates a serene country feel that is very comforting and soothing,” Nyznyk notes.

Upon entering the home through the spacious foyer, you feel it immediately: this home is warm and lived in. Nyznyk credits his wife with giving the home its rich, historic patina. “She didn’t want to build a mausoleum, but something that looked lived in. It was one of the things she insisted upon.”

The foyer is illuminated with a simple chandelier, studded with genuine beeswax candles that took the Nyznyks months to find. “We didn’t want the standard crystal stuff you see everywhere. This one is simple, but it stands out,” says Nyznyk. “I was absolutely amazed; it has become the mood piece in the foyer. We just have to be careful with the wattage of bulbs used, because they will melt the wax.”

THIS ANTIQUE CHANDELIER over the dining room table is in the shape of an anchor.





THE SEASIDE HOME is cozy and has a very warm, inviting lived-in look.

Off the foyer is a library, featuring dark woodwork, that looks out onto the porch and the ocean. Inside are four large wicker chairs, while in the middle of the room, instead of a conventional coffee table, is a cushioned footrest that doubles as one, providing a pleasant sitting area for relaxation or listening to music from the high-tech sound system.

Keypads located throughout the structure can be used to key in a CD, stored on the computer-based hard drive system. The Nyznyks can choose from as many as 3,500 different songs, piping them into any room in the house as well as the backyard and the porch.

Steeped in tradition

Inside the home, the common areas are painted in soft yellow with white crown molding and baseboards. Some rooms have nautical white paneling to offset the yellow. All in all, there is an abundance of wood throughout, including columns at each entry.

For example, the living and dining rooms have detailed ceilings with beams and cross beams and tongue-and-groove wood between them. Taking center stage in the dining room is a custom-built table that Nyznyk describes as “like one you’d see in a Robin Hood movie, where the merry men slam their tankards of ale on the table.” Above the table is an antique chandelier in the shape of an anchor.

The kitchen, too, carries through on the nautical theme with white wall cabinets contrasting with dark-blue cabinetry for the 9-foot-long center island. Over the range is painted tile with a scene showing a beach umbrella, chairs and towels. The kitchen also has distressed white tile with a blue ribbon running through it and floors of dark walnut.

Surprisingly, you won’t find any granite countertops in this kitchen. “My wife was sick of it, so we chose custom tiles with chips already cut into them for a unique, lived-in look,” he explains.

Above the kitchen and family room, there is a second-story opening. A special telephone system allows Nyznyk to dial the kids upstairs, but he can also just call up to them in the old-fashioned way. “We have immediate view and access to the kids at all time,” he says. “You don’t feel hemmed in or



Appliances/Kitchen: Thermador ovens, GE Monogram refrigerator, KitchenAid dishwashers/pantry refrigerator
Appliances/Outdoor: Dacor outdoor kitchen/grill
Appliances/Laundry: Maytag washer/dryer
Doors/Interior: Grohe/Kohler plumbing fittings
Elevator: CemcoLift elevator
HVAC System: Rheem furnace
Plumbing Fixtures: Kohler
Roofing: Elk Corp. roofing
Siding: Cedar Valley shingle siding, Cabot stain
Tiles: Sonoma Cast Stone
Ventilation Systems: Vent-A-Hood range hood
Windows: Kolbe & Kolbe windows

THE SPACIOUS KITCHEN ISLAND is open fully to the family room and big enough to have five stools at it. "It is a great place to serve food at parties," says Nyznyk.

separated. Everything centers on the family room and kitchen areas. It's all very homey."

Whimsical hideaway

Nyznyk's favorite room is still in the making. Instead of what Nyznyk refers to as a "ridiculously large" master bedroom, he reserved some space for a secluded hideaway, fondly referred to as his writing room. "I like to write fiction and this room has some of the best views in the house — out to Catalina and Palos Verde," he says of the 11 x 9-foot space. "It's a very inspirational room."

Bear in mind, this is no ordinary room. The entrance is another Dutch-style split door, but here the top portion remains in place, while the bottom swings open to permit entry.

Nyznyk is having the top portion of the wood door carved with the words, "Children and Dreamers Only"; the bottom will feature the face of a gnome.

He is researching hardware that would make the locking mechanism for the bottom half puzzle-like. His whimsical side wants those who enter to have to push a nose or wiggle the ear of the gnome to gain access.

"The intent is to have it look like a tree house," he explains. "I want access for most people to be through that bottom door. You have to crouch down to

get through it."

The five bedrooms upstairs all have magnificent views. There's even a bonus room with a pool table where the Nyznyk's four kids, ranging in age from 14 to 26, can hang out.

Months of pre-planning

Months and months of pre-planning — as well as scouring ideas from *Coastal Living* magazine, which Nyznyk says his wife reviewed constantly — went into designing this house. After starting on the plans in early 2002, Nyznyk and architect Michael Lee took a solid 15 months to complete them.

"Michael is known as a modern architect, so the project was unique challenge for him," says Nyznyk. "I knew what I was looking for, and I drew it. Michael then designed it, and he did it perfectly."

The only difference of opinion they had, if you could call it that, had to do with stairs. "Most architects want stairs everywhere," Nyznyk says. "My wife was adamant: 'No stairs!'"

It ended up being a win-win situation. The configuration required a step up into the library, since it is the only room not on a flat plane. There are also two staircases to the second floor, one of which is elliptical.

Bending walnut into a half circle challenged Nyznyk's rail maker, who

had to piece together a number of small sections, shaving and then sanding them. The ellipse starts at the top of the staircase and continues down and around before it does a backward ellipse that leads into master bedroom.

Nyznyk's wife also won her no stairs argument by adding an elevator from that is routinely used by the family's older, extended family and for bringing up groceries from the entry off the basement-level garage.

In all, the home packs an abundance of amenities into a comparatively compact footprint. The first- and second-floor living areas total 5,200 square feet. The basement, which Nyznyk converted into an exercise and TV room for the kids, brings the total square footage to 5,500.

Nyznyk has taken the same approach with the backyard, which is not a big space. He ingeniously configured the house on the site, so that there's not only area enough to walk about, but also room for a basketball court.

The concrete area is 25 x 25 feet and the rest of it is brick, studded with planters. For entertaining, a built-in barbeque features a refrigerator and fire pit — an efficient use of space. **PB**



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Kipling Homes' Ed Mattox Makes Room for Family

ED MATTOX'S 12,000-SQUARE FOOT HOME has something for everyone—a home theater, pond, pool, downstairs game room downstairs and three family rooms, one on each floor, for private getaways.

Family Matters

“Kid-centric” might be the best way to describe the home of Ed Mattox, owner and president of Kipling Homes in Shorewood, Ill. Having a house that his kids would enjoy and want to return to when grown was key to every decision that went into building his Minooka, Ill., home.

“My number one objective was to fulfill my family’s needs,” states Mattox. “I wanted to keep my older kids coming back home, while encouraging those who are still home to stay here and invite their friends over.”

Married with seven children, Ed and his wife Kathy each



have three children from previous marriages, as well as one child together. The three boys and four girls range in age from 29 to 44.

“We have a lot of family functions, so I looked to have a place that would entertain all ages.” To that end, his 12,000-square-foot home has something for everyone: a home theater, pond, pool, downstairs game room, and three family rooms — one on each floor — for private getaways.

Family gathering

It is no surprise that Mattox’s favorite room is the combination kitchen and family room, which he refers to as the “hearth room.” This large area encompasses the kitchen, eating and family room, including a Heatilator fireplace and Zenith 60-inch plasma TV, one of seven in the home. “That’s the central area, because when you’re with kids or friends, you

congregate in the kitchen,” he says. “It turned out to be the most favored area of the house. I like the cabinetry, vaulted ceiling and fireplace.”

The cabinetry has an Old World look that is painted, glazed and distressed. The contrast of the built-in cabinetry with the kitchen’s two islands built out of a glazed and stained cherry wood further contributes to the Old World look. The islands are topped with granite, while a tumbled marble backsplash and glass cabinet doors give it added character and distinction.

Overlooking the kitchen and hearth room from a balcony is the kids’ upstairs family room. “We live in a big house, but even if the kids aren’t in the hearth room or kitchen, but in their own family room, we’re all still close together,” says Mattox.

Off the kitchen are two outdoor patios: a cooking patio with

a stone grill on one side and a more formal patio for entertaining on the other.

Central controls

The kitchen is not only the heart of the home, but also the heart of Mattox's Crestron home automation system and Lutron lighting system. From a touch screen panel, he can call up a menu that lets him put music into any room or out by the pool. He can also program any radio station, including satellite radio channels, and burn a CD to the system's hardware.

From this same touch panel, Mattox can control his HVAC system, including five furnaces, from home or a remote location. It integrates cable television with satellite TV and his home theater, while also controlling all the lights in the house.

"The control system integrates everything, and you can manipulate it from a single area inside or outside the home,"

Mattox says. "With a big house, it will take you all day to set thermostats and with as many kids as we have we always have lights on."

A whole-house lighting control system is not only practical, but energy-wise, too, while also providing a level of security. Late at night, if Mattox hears a noise outside, he can easily turn on outside spotlights without leaving his bedroom.

Tied into the automation system is a series of four security cameras, located by the lower-level bar, front door, garage and by the lake and pool.

Using a computer, Mattox can operate them even when he's out of town. Once on the Internet, he can call up the cameras from thousands of miles away to keep tabs on the kids having a party or see who just pulled into the driveway.

The pool house

After the hearth room, Mattox loves

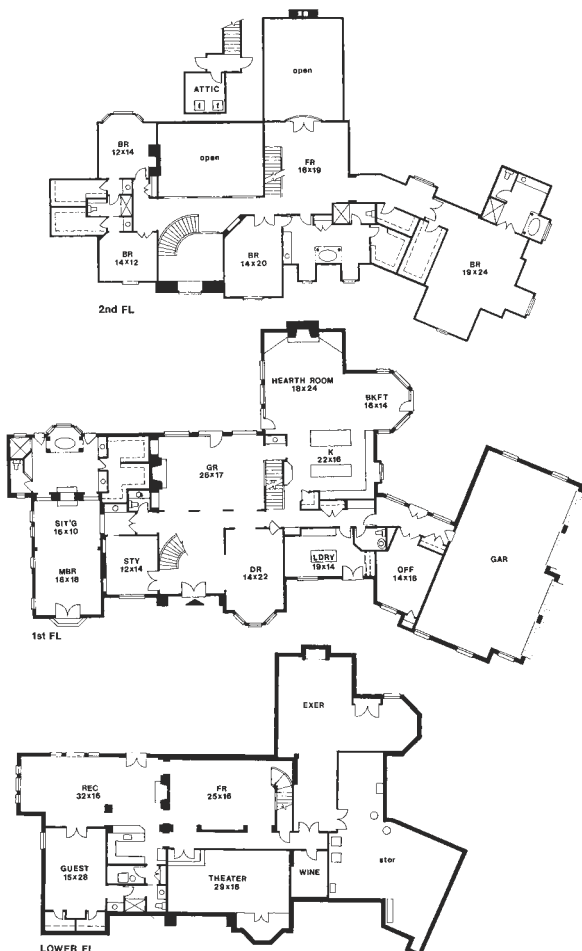
the 1,200-square-foot pool house, located 100 feet behind the main house. A getaway used for both entertaining or kicking back to watch the 42-inch plasma TV, the interior features knotty pine trim work, doors and ceiling, a stone fireplace, and windows that overlook the three-acre lake.

It's equipped with a full bathroom and lockers for family and friends to stash their clothing when they go for a swim. There is also a covered bar area, stocked with soft drinks for the kids and beers for the adults.

The private getaway

The master suite provides the busy parents a respite from a hectic household. Situated on the main floor, the space has a sunken seating area that is comfortable and cozy, nestled near a see-through fireplace that looks into the bathroom.

"I've always liked the Heatilator brand. They make one of the largest pre-





THE HEARTH ROOM tops Mattox's list of his favorite rooms because it is where the family gathers. Aside from the fireplace, the focus of the room is its Zenith 60-inch plasma TV.



PAINTED, GLAZED AND DISTRESSED CABINETS providing an old world décor are juxtaposed beside high-tech appliances.

THE POOL AREA provides a spacious area for entertaining or family fun.



A GENEROUSLY SIZED JACUZZI TUB provides a quiet respite after a long day.

A SEE-THROUGH fireplace spotlights the sunken seating area in the master suite.

fab fireboxes that look like real stone. When you put the finished face on it, the inside part looks like a real masonry fireplace, says Mattox.

There's a 43-inch Zenith TV in the bedroom as well as a 30-inch LCD Toshiba TV in the bathroom, mounted behind a two-way mirror system over dressing table.

"It looks like a regular mirror, but when you turn the TV on, the brightness of it shines through the mirror," says Mattox. "No one would ever know it is there until you turn it on."

The lower the lighting in the room, the brighter the TV, which makes it especially dramatic at night. "If I'm in tub, I can be watching the TV," says Mattox."

Movie night

When the kids want to watch a movie, they don't need to go to the local Cineplex. Instead, they can invite friends over to their home theater, a 16 x 30-foot room with theater-style seating for 12, although Mattox says the room can accommodate as many as 30.

Crushed velvet fabric and theater



drapes provide plenty of atmosphere, but the focal point, of course, is the room's 10-foot-wide movie screen.

"We had a Super Bowl party, and with the game broadcast in high definition, the colors were just so vivid," Mattox remembers.

To ensure good sound, Mattox did more than install a good sound system. He also soundproofed the ceiling and walls with double the thickness of dry-wall and upholstered the chairs with

Appliances/Kitchen: GE Monogram Appliances
Ceiling Fans: Casablanca Fans
Central Vacuum System: NuTone Central Vac System
Doors/Exterior: Weather Shield Windows & Doors
Electrical: Square D Electrical Distribution Panels/Circuit Breakers
Faucets/Bathroom: Kohler
Faucets/Kitchen: Grohe
Fireplaces: Heatilator Fireplaces
Flooring: Karastan Carpet
Home Automation System: Crestron Automation
Home Entertainment System: Zenith Plasma TV, Toshiba LCD TV, LG Plasma TV
HVAC System: American Standard
Light Switches/Controllers: Lutron Lighting Control System
Plumbing Fixtures/Kitchen: Kohler
Windows: Weather Shield Windows & Doors

crushed-velvet-over-leather for better sound absorption.

Mattox broke ground on his home in the winter of 2002 and moved into it in June 2004. Looking back, he would change very little. "That is so unlike me," he says. "Generally, I'm someone who is not quite satisfied, but I am really pretty happy with how everything has turned out." **PB**

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Kid-Friendly

Building A Kid-Friendly Home Is Part of Dan Green's Master Plan

The Green Company is known for homes that target empty nesters — properties that feature privacy, lush landscaping and spectacular views, of a golf course, water or woods. But vice president Dan Green is not yet at that stage in life.

Prior to purchasing an 1876 Victorian farmhouse in 1999, Green and his wife had squeezed themselves and their three children into a two-bedroom house in Cambridge, Mass. A 25-minute commute to work, when added to his workday, forced him to miss out on much of his third child's babyhood. "It became important to me to focus on family and privacy, so the purchase of the house started off with location," he says.

Location, location, location

"Everything they say about location, location, location is really true," says Green of his new home, which is located

in Newton Center, one block from the town's center and less than a half mile from his office. The move made a huge difference in both his business and personal life. The Greens are within walking distance of shops and restaurants as well as transportation into Boston for an occasional taste of city life.

"It's absolutely ideal. Although we live in the suburbs, we're located only eight miles out of downtown Boston."

Of course, this slice of heaven wasn't just sitting there for the taking. In fact, the old home needed to be gutted. In the 1970s, it had been carved up into rental rooms, and all the millwork had been stripped out.

"We had to recreate what was likely there in the past," Green recalls. "The house had been on the market for a while, so it was a big task to redo it. It was run down and worn out, including a barn with four bays only 18 inches from the main house.

DAN GREEN'S RENOVATED 1876 Victorian farmhouse is one block from the town center and only eight miles from Boston, providing the best of small town and big city life.



THE KITCHEN HAS WALNUT, random-width, long-plank hardwood flooring with a tung oil finish, providing a beautiful shine and a rich, Old World feel. Everything else in this Victorian kitchen is high-tech.

The garage had also not been maintained. Worse, it was only 15-feet deep and most cars are 18 feet, so the doors were off of it."

Nonetheless, Green saw the project as an opportunity. "Being a builder, I was confident that if I took the time, I could do it right."

He started with designing the new home in July 1999. Demolition began in February 2000, and the Green family finally moved in during January 2002.

Comfort, safety and family life

Green says the goal of the renovation was to incorporate family-friendly technology as well as amenities that would deliver comfort, safety and an enhanced family life — all while preserving the home's historic flavor.

A big contributor to the home's comfort is a Bryant heating and cooling system, combined with an Icynene insulation package. The latter is blown-in foam

that stays soft and completely fills the space between wall studs and roof rafters.

"When it becomes really cold," says Green, "the foam is a barrier to wind, which makes the house much more livable and energy-efficient. We don't need as much heating or air conditioning to keep comfortable. Combined with an HAI home automation system, the house almost maintains itself."

The HAI system automatically switches to heat when the temperature falls below 55° F and to air conditioning when the temperature rises above 70° F. In addition, Green can control the home's six zones from a telephone or the Internet.

"Besides monitoring the temperature in any part of the house, I can turn the alarm on or off and see who has been inside," Green says.

"If we're away on vacation, I can turn up the heat or cool it down. If I know someone is coming to the house, I can disable the alarm remotely to let him or

her in. Next, I'm going to experiment with a lighting package, so that I can turn the lights on and off in the same way."

A healthy home

Contributing to the health of the home's occupants are two LifeBreath heat recovery ventilators (HRV) that pull in fresh air from the outside and exhaust stale air. "It's much better than opening the window," Green notes. The HRV units change out the air on a regular basis.

"If the kids are sick or we're having a party, we'll adjust the speed of the HRV," Green comments. "We've eliminated any issues about the air inside being more dangerous than the air outside."

A Nortec unit humidifies the home, while radiant in-floor heating warms the bathrooms off the upstairs bedrooms. "Although this seems like a small thing, the radiant heating is a great feature with little kids," says Green.

"When they're sick, they will lay down on the floor on towels, and the



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GREEN'S GOAL was to incorporate family-friendly technology as well as amenities that would deliver comfort, safety and an enhanced family life all the while preserving the home's historic flavor.

warmth radiating from the floor comforts them."

Details are critical

For Green, little things like radiant heating make a huge difference. For example, a basement playroom boasts walls painted with Crayola blackboard paint and corkboards for displaying drawings. The kids can also play to their heart's content without fear of harming the Wilsonart, prefinished laminate floor.

In addition, the basement also houses an exercise room with a softer floor — like those found in health clubs — by Decathlon Sport flooring.

Green converted the original four-bay barn to a three-bay garage and attached it to the house, making the fourth bay into a family room. The new garage is

heated, so that the children can play in the open space during the cold winter months.

Another kid-friendly area is the loft above the family room where Green and his wife set up a long table on which sit three computers. "The kids go there by themselves or together to play games or go on the web — it's great.

"Their computer activities happen in a public space in the home, but they quickly became accustomed to that. As they get older, that won't change, and we can better monitor what they're doing."

The home uses Honeywell's Structured Wiring package, including high speed Internet, cable, multiple phone lines, an audio system and even fiber optic cables to take advantage of future technology.

"Although their rooms are hardwired for technology," says Green, "we blank-plated the outlets. That way, they don't know the outlets are there."

Gourmet meals with speed

The Greens' kitchen has walnut, random-width, long-plank hardwood flooring with a tung oil finish, providing a beautiful shine and a rich, Old World feel. According to Green, the best thing he did was install two dishwashers, flanking either side of the sink. These are helpful with the kids and when they entertain.

"We bought the GE Profile Triton, their quietest dishwasher. We can run it even when there are guests, because you can hardly hear it."

Green also likes the GE Advantium



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oven, which cooks eight-times faster than a conventional oven. He describes it as “a lifesaver with kids. We can cook a baked potato in six minutes, while broiling steaks and preparing steamed vegetables — an entire gourmet meal — in 15 minutes. We use it almost every night to cook something. The only downside is that it is not self-cleaning.”

A computer in the kitchen is left on all day to make it easy to order groceries and catch up on email or even the latest weather forecast.

Green often feels like a product tester in his own home. That’s because he wants to ensure that the products he puts into the homes he builds perform the way he and his team say they will.

“I feel more comfortable if I experience them personally,” he says. “It is so powerful for our sales team to be able to tell a buyer that I live with these products every day in my own home.”

The wow factors

As if all the above were not enough, Green says there are two additional “wow” factors in his home.

First, there is a hidden room off his wife’s third floor office. Push a corner of a bookcase and the wall opens to reveal a secret room with two windows and a lot of storage.

The second is a wine cellar in the basement. “The foundation sits on giant rock, and the space features a comparatively low ceiling — 7 feet — and a very rustic feel, so it seemed the perfect space for a wine cellar,” explains Green. He used leftover dark walnut flooring from the kitchen to make wine racks around the entire perimeter.

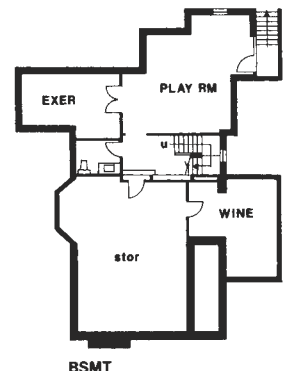
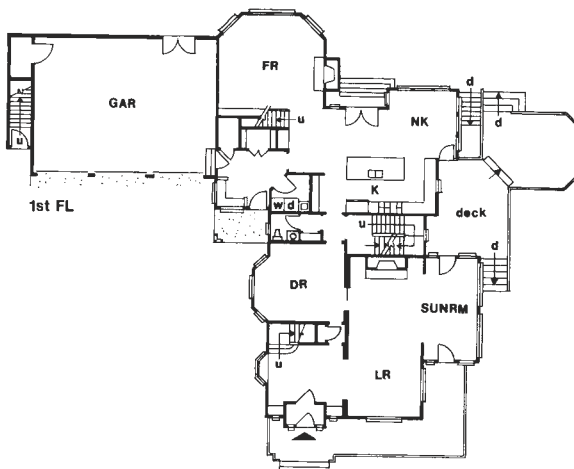
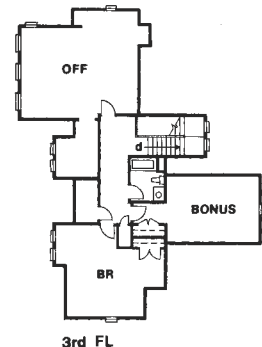
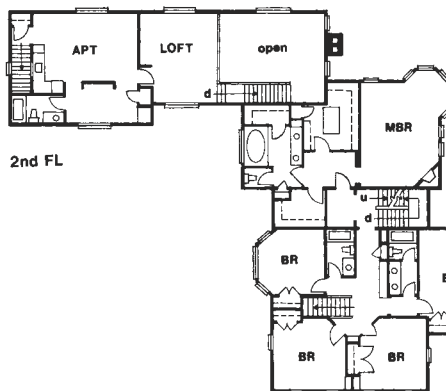
The renovation took more than two years, but in the end, Green says it was all worth it. His family has grown to four children, from seven years old to less than a year.

Meanwhile, his commute to his offices lasts all of seven minutes — if he walks, that is. Driving during rush hour is a breathtaking minute and a half! **PB**



Appliances/Kitchen: GE Appliances
Cabinets: Wood Mode Cabinetry
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Engineered Wood/OSB: Weyerhaeuser Engineered Lumber
Faucets/Bathroom: Moen Faucets
Flooring: Decathlon Sport flooring, Wilsonart laminate flooring, Advantech Flooring
Home Automation System: Honeywell Structured wiring & Security System, HAI Home Automation
HVAC System: Bryant HVAC Boilers and Condensers, LifeBreath Heat Recovery Ventilators, Nortec home humidification
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Green Acres



Hedgewood Properties' Pam Sessions Has a Green Thumb for Home Building

Pam Sessions has picked up, moved and renovated her own living space more times than she can count, but she has never moved very far. That's because all of her moves were on the same lot, which is why tracing her home's history is rather complex.

The home's family tree

Sessions, co-president and co-founder of Hedgewood Properties in Cumming, Ga., built the house she proudly calls home 22 years ago. She and her family lived in that residence for six years when they had it literally picked up and relocated to the front of the property, where it became her office. She added onto it three times, then rebuilt the home again and added on once more. Two years ago, she remodeled it

one more time down to the studs and put in new windows and new insulation. "You can tell we're in the building business," Sessions notes.

The objective of the most recent renovation was to create a greener home. Sessions wanted to practice what she preaches to her buyers.

Hedgewood Properties started building green five years ago when the time was right for Sessions to implement smart-growth practices, too. Sessions assembled her 22 acres with the neighbors' property and purchased an additional 214 acres. She and her husband worked with a land planner who specializes in traditional neighborhood design to create a pedestrian-friendly village with offices, retail stores and restaurants that are all connected with parks. Says

PAM SESSIONS likes the fact that her home offers a casual living space that is cozy and allows family members to perform different activities at the same time. Also important is having a lot of windows so that she can see the outdoor space and especially the garden.



Sessions: “It is all walkable and we live in the middle of the development, so we designed our house and office into that overall smart-growth neighborhood plan.”

Going for green

With the 2003 renovation, Sessions’ goal was a high-performance home that was also high on aesthetics. Two years later, the Colonial Revival, one-and-a-half story, 5,000-square-foot-home now has five bedrooms, a kitchen/breakfast/keeping room, two additional living areas — a more formal living room as well as a casual area — and a dining room.



She and her husband also paid close attention to the outdoor space, which includes a screened porch, a rose garden and other small outdoor rooms.

Hedgewood Properties builds its homes in conjunction with the EarthCraft House Program, a regional initiative that provides a prescriptive blueprint that encompasses energy and water efficiency, waste management, indoor air quality and environmental stewardship, all of which reduce energy costs by taking a highly efficient, systems approach.

The blueprint recommends cellulose insulation, airtight construction, properly sized HVAC equipment, Energy Star appliances and moisture management.

“The end result is a healthier, more comfortable, low-maintenance and more durable home,” says Sessions. She adds that homeowners benefit from

improved health and lower costs for maintenance and energy.

Sessions followed the EarthCraft program recommendations, particularly with regard to insulation. Her earlier home’s less effective insulation system resulted in a lot of air leakage. That, in turn, made the latest renovation a big priority. “We were very focused on high performance, so we used Icynene insulation, which was nice because we could feel the difference. The insulation is more expensive, but pays for itself over time. If it did ever get wet for any reason, it drains and dries out, which is another nice feature.”

Keeping the family together

So what is Sessions’ favorite part of her new home? She admits it is the combination kitchen/breakfast/keeping room because it’s the central hub of the house.

“I like the scale of the space,” she says. “It is very human and cozy, yet it’s all open, so someone can be doing homework, while I’m cooking or watching TV. We often have a fire going, so everyone can gather in that space and perform different activities at the same time.

“I also like it because it has a lot of windows, offering exposure to the outdoors and allowing me to see the garden. That’s real important.”

The room is a study in light and rich materials. Wood paneling is painted a cream color and stands out against an oak plank floor that was sanded and stained on the job. The kitchen cabinets

are painted a cross between tan and green with a faux finish.

The island, which resembles furniture with table legs, is painted gray/green. The cabinets and island feature open shelving and flank two Sub-Zero refrigerators and two KitchenAid dishwashers. Nonetheless, the kitchen itself is not exceptionally large. “It is very efficient, but compact,” Sessions says.

The Sub-Zero units each feature a refrigeration unit on top with two pull-out freezer drawers below. “That’s working really well,” she says, “and I like it. Things that people grab a lot are in one



THE KITCHEN CABINETS are painted a color that is a cross between tan and green with a faux finish, while the island, which resembles furniture with table legs, is painted a gray/green.

refrigerator and perishables are in the other. It is easy to find what we need quickly in this configuration.”

There’s a granite countertop between the two refrigerators positioned higher than the standard height, while the taller-than-usual cabinets feature pullout shelves.

“I’m tall, so I like the extra height,” says Sessions, who adds that the cabinets let her store a lot in a small space.

Warming up the keeping room is an Isokern masonry fireplace — prefabricated, but assembled onsite. The firebox opening is quite large, which according to Sessions, makes the fire even more enjoyable: “You can see the firebrick, which adds to the ambience of the fire.”

The next most-used space is the media room or den, which has a computer station and is equipped with surround sound and a plasma screen TV.

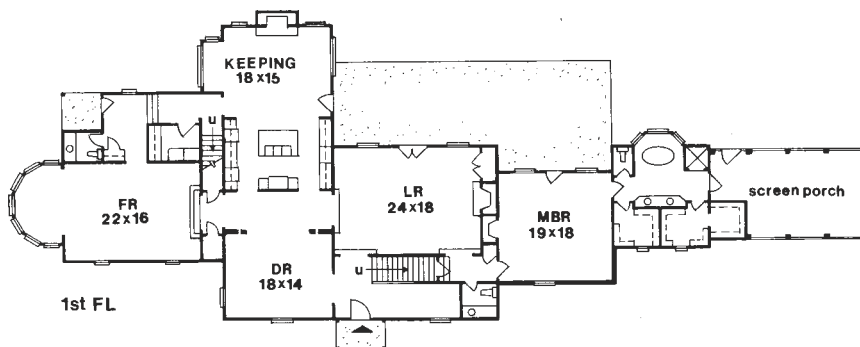
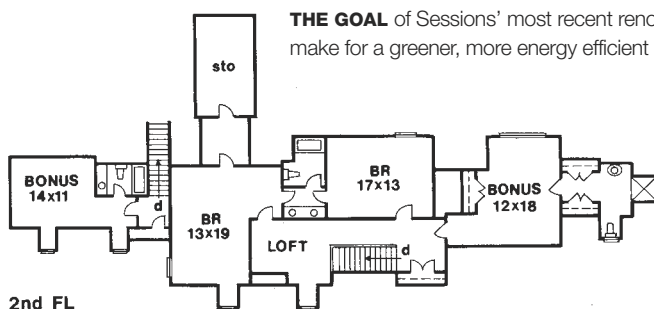
SESSIONS' COLONIAL REVIVAL one-and-a-half story, 5,000 square foot-home has five bedrooms, a kitchen/breakfast/keeping room, two additional living areas—a more formal living room as well as a casual area and a dining room.





Appliances/Kitchen: KitchenAid Microwave, KitchenAid dishwashers, Sub-Zero, Thermador commercial stainless steel range with hood
Countertops: Granite countertops
Faucets/Bathroom: Kohler
Faucets/Kitchen: Kohler
Faucets: Sonoma Forge copper faucets in powder rooms
Fireplaces: Isokern Fireplace
Flooring: Oak hardwood flooring
Insulation/Foam: Icynene insulation
Plumbing Fixtures/Kitchen: Kohler double-bowl sink with sliding cutting system and basket, Sonoma Forge vessel sink

THE GOAL of Sessions' most recent renovation was to make for a greener, more energy efficient home.



Just passing through

The living room features Pecky Cypress paneling on the walls and ceiling. The paneling “creates a jewel-box effect,” Sessions explains. “We walk through this room every day. It is really important to think about the space you travel through. Even if you don’t use that room as much, it is still an important part of how you feel about the house. The richness of wood adds a lot of value.”

Sessions feels the same way about the dining room, which also functions as a study and hallway to other rooms.

“You must go through the dining room to get to other rooms, so I connected them all with furnishings. There are antique columns and a wall of bookcases with library lights, adding to the warmth and enjoyment of walking through it.”

Finishing touches

The home has four full bathrooms and two half-bathrooms, most of whose faucets are chrome and stainless. However, Sessions did use Sonoma Forge copper faucets where she wanted to add a bit more distinction. One powder



THE HOME IS VERY LIVABLE FOR OUR FAMILY AND OUR LIFESTYLE. WE DON'T FEEL ANY URGE TO CHANGE TO THE LATEST AND GREATEST.”

room features a wall-mounted faucet with a vessel sink, also from Sonoma Forge, while the other has a Sonoma Forge deck-mounted copper faucet. The latter complements a copper undermount sink that is nestled into a custom-built vanity that Sessions designed herself.

The entire renovation took eight months, much of it done without a floor plan. “That’s an occupational hazard,” Sessions admits. “Builders typically don’t do their own homes correctly, and we did a lot of things on the fly.”

What might Sessions do differently were she building today? Nothing, she says without hesitation. “We are really enjoying the changes we made. The home is very livable for our family and our lifestyle. The things we chose have a pretty good shelf life in terms of design and function. We don’t feel any urge to change to the latest and greatest.” **PB**



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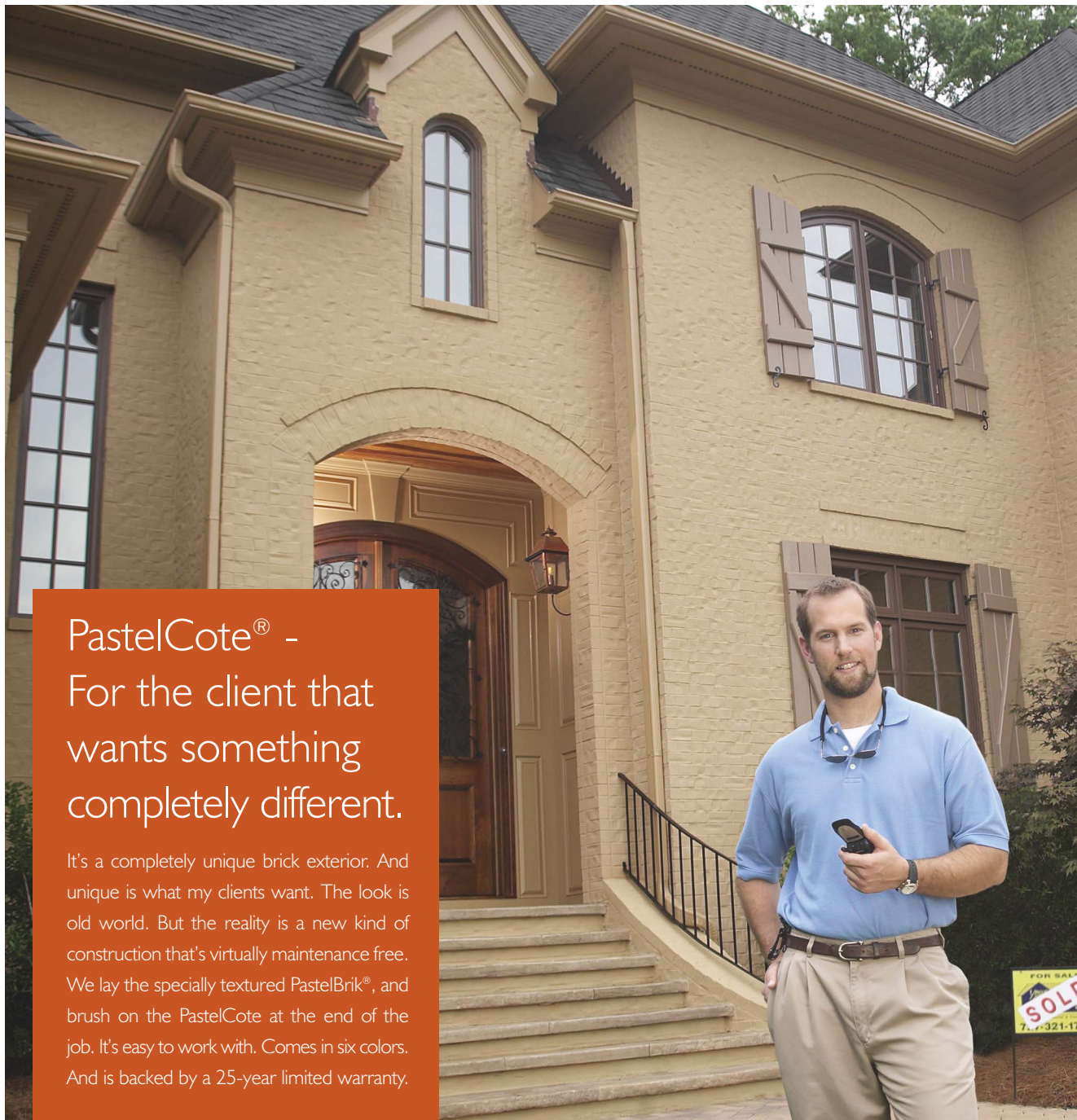
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