

HOME



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Couple's remodeling project retains the home's classic Craftsman style. E3

VERSATILE PLAN
Design provides open layout, and has space for future expansion. E2

INSIDE

GOING GREEN TO THE MAX



PHOTOS BY SUZANNE CARR ROSSI / THE FREE LANCE-STAR

This house being built by J. Hall Homes blends luxury, state-of-the-art energy efficiency and age-in-place design.

Luxury home showcases energy-efficient features

BY RICHARD AMRHINE
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

The home Brian Healy is building in Spotsylvania county's Carriage Hills subdivision will be spacious, luxurious and perhaps above all else, green. Once it's completed later this fall, it will demonstrate that a house can be not just energy efficient, but actually feed energy back into the power grid.

"I wanted green and no steps—I'd never heard of aging-in-place before—and I wanted it to be spacious," Healy said. "With this house all these things come together. They all work together because they are part of the design of the house."

The custom house is being built by Jeff Hall of J. Hall



Jeff Hall of J. Hall Homes explains the routing system that brings hot water to any faucet in the home in just seconds.

Homes of Fredericksburg. He has been a leading local advocate of residential construction that applies the

latest technology to achieve extreme energy efficiency. He points out that just because a house is large and luxurious

doesn't mean that it can't have a next-to-unnoticeable carbon footprint.

"There are certain costs involved, but it becomes more of an investment," said Hall of the higher up-front costs that are recovered through utility savings over time. "You get educated and the 'green' part grows on you."

Some of the features, such as the Water Furnace geothermal heating and cooling system, and the 54 photovoltaic solar panels on the south-facing rear side of the roof, are not exactly new, but they are constantly being improved and prices are coming down a bit as the technology is more widely used.

The tightly sealed envelope

SEE EFFICIENT, E4



Advanced photo-voltaic solar panels are installed on the the south-facing roof, out of sight from the front of the house.



The family room has a coffered ceiling and shares the main living area with the kitchen. Sliding doors open to the patio.

SEE WEATHER, E4

Scented candles can make your home happy

BY BILL DALEY
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Scented candles can help set a mood just as effectively as music, lighting, color and interior design. All you need is a match to spark the magic. But how do you go about buying scented candles?

"What will make me happy?" suggests Tim Rossi, director of communications and public relations for Nest Fragrances in New York. Find out which "fragrance family" suits you best—citrus,

floral, gourmand for example—and zero in, says the self-described "citrus guy." Rossi recommends you sniff a candle both unlit and lit in judging the fragrance; your opinion might change.

"A scented candle is like a personal fragrance. It is, of course, personal," says Mary Wallace, North American marketing director for Diptyque, the Paris-based luxury goods company. She recommends you visit the store in person to smell for

yourself.

Given a scented candle, like a personal fragrance, can be expensive, the points made by Rossi and Wallace are good to remember. Makers justify their prices by pointing to what's in the candles.

"The more elaborate the vessel, the more expensive the candle. But even simple vessels can house quality fragrances as usually expensive to produce," wrote Andrew Goetz, co-founder of New

York-based Malin+Goetz apothecary and lab, in an email forwarded by his publicist. "High quality wax and cotton wicks will also add to the expense. Lastly, if candles are hand poured in an artisanal manner—this too will drive up the cost of producing a great quality candle."

Scents, like almost everything, have their moments in the sun. What are the hot fragrances right now?

SEE CANDLES, E2



The Beach Walk Candle combines notes of coconut milk, lemon, pink pepper and musk to evoke memories.

EFFICIENT

► FROM E1

of insulation in which the house is enclosed allows the exchange of indoor and outdoor air to be carefully regulated. That's handled by a pair of energy recovery ventilators (ERVs) that help heat, cool and dehumidify air as it enters the house, thereby increasing the efficiency of the geothermal system.

"Instant" hot water is provided by a loop system that puts hot water where it's needed. Depending on the location, a button or motion detector activates the system, sending hot water out of the faucet in a matter of seconds.

The house is being built to standards set by Viridian, formerly EarthCraft Virginia, which educates builders and helps them embrace "a holistic approach to green building." The program encourages the use of best construction practices, resulting in homes that have lower utility costs through energy efficiency, improved indoor air quality, increased comfort, less maintenance and higher resale value. The home will also receive Energy Star Version 3 certification.

To put the efficiency in perspective, the U.S. Department of Energy says a typical resale home scores 130 on the HERS (Home Energy Rating System) Index while a standard new home built to current code is rated at 100. This house has a HERS target score to be between 0-5, and even without the solar panels would score a 36.

Working to make sure all these elements come together is Elena Theobald, an architectural designer and owner of Reverie, a Fairfax-based interior architecture and design firm.

"The owner wanted a strong connection between indoor and outdoor living—an interior that's light and airy," she said. "We want to create an ideal interior environment."

Theobald said that projects like this always start with the vision of the owner, and in this case the focus was on creating a luxurious home with all these green elements, rather than the bare-bones type of house that some people might associate with house that's highly energy efficient.

She said the master bedroom, kitchen, dining room and living areas, situated along the southern exposure of the house, are also the beneficiaries of passive solar design. Heat is wel-



The home is getting a hot tub and saltwater pool. The deck will be salt-resistant travertine tile.



Hot water is never more than a few seconds away, thanks to the loop supply system. Less water is wasted waiting for hot water.

comed though windows when the sun is lower in winter, while that side of the house is shaded by overhangs when the sun is higher in summer.

Ground was broken for the project last March, and the exteriors of the main structure and pool house are complete. The indoor climate technology is in place, as is drywall and some flooring. The marble and granite countertops and bathroom vanities are installed, as are the brass and oiled-bronze fixtures.

The house will have 7,100 square feet of finished living space, 4,580 square feet on the main level, and 2,460 square feet on the lower. About 2,100 square feet on the lower level will remain unfinished for now

as utility and storage space.

The house sits on a five-acre lot. It has five bedrooms, five full bathrooms plus a powder room. There's also a full bathroom in the pool house.

The home's exterior is a handsome blend of HardiPlank siding and Centurion faux stone veneer. An arched, enclosed opening protects the main entry, which is also arched and has sidelights that wrap around it.

Hall pointed out that the foyer begins a sight line that continues through the family room and out the large rear sliding glass doors to the pool out back. He noted that the spaces are large, but not cavernous and impersonal as they might feel in some big houses.

storage space, Theobald said

A butler's pantry provides the ideal staging spot between the kitchen and dining room, and the food storage pantry is just steps away.

The walls of the piano room are angled to provide better acoustics.

Four of the five bedrooms are on the main level, with the master separated from the secondaries by the main living space. The area that includes the master bedroom, bathroom, walk-in closet and laundry room is served by a second door that allows the early riser to shower, dress and depart without reentering the bedroom.

The lower level space affords various uses. There is open recreation space for game tables, and a full kitchen is fronted by a bar. There are two full bathrooms, including one that's part of a bedroom suite, and a second laundry room. An exercise room will be furnished with equipment, and there's space for media room to be finished later. There is a well exit to the back yard which extends to the bedroom to provide the egress code requires.

Utility space on the lower level provides space for the geothermal unit, a storage tank for water heated by the geothermal system, plus a pair of electric water heaters that feed the loop hot water system. Electric water heaters were chosen because they can be fueled by the solar panels that are expected to generate surplus power that will be fed back to the grid. The homeowner will receive a \$43,300 tax credit for the solar panels and geothermal systems through the federal Residential Renewable Energy Tax Credit program.

Automatic dampening in the air ducts allows the dual-zone heat and cooling system to be served by four thermostats, allowing comfortable temperatures to be efficiently maintained.

Another sampling of the home's high-level and high-tech features extends to the three-car garage, which is equipped with a dog shower and a pair of charging stations for electric vehicles.

Out back, there's a covered patio with a fireplace, and the hot tub and heated salt-water pool are nearing completion. The deck will be paved with Travertine tile, which can handle the salt water without deteriorating. Count on plenty of relaxing and entertaining to be done here.

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This photo taken early on in the project shows the excavation required to bury the geothermal at least 6 feet down, where the temperature of the earth is a near constant 55 degrees.

"It leads the eye to something bigger and something bigger again," he said. "It just keeps on going."

Theobald said the challenge was to create a floor plan that is attractive, convenient, comfortable and exactly what the owner wants. Broad, gently arched openings are a theme throughout. Doorways are wide and the bathrooms are Americans with Disabilities Act compliant. There is also an elevator shaft built in for future use. In the meantime temporary floors are installed to create storage space.

Great attention was given to the placement of closet and

WEATHER

► FROM E1

to be cleaned and inspected at least twice a year.

7. Remove outdoor hoses. A hose left on an outdoor faucet can freeze and burst through the faucet supply pipe inside the home. You can check for a broken faucet by placing your thumb over the faucet to restrict water flow. If the flow stops, you have a broken faucet.

8. If you have a sprinkler or garden watering system, shut off the water supply and clear the lines using an air compressor blowing out one zone and then another. If you don't have the equipment, have the system winterized by a professional.

9. Check the insulation in the attic to make sure it is sufficient. Your local building official or a home inspector can give you an estimate on the amount of insulation required in your area. Loose fill fiberglass insulation can be blown into piles by winds coming through the soffit vents, or loose fill insulations can be compressed and damaged by walking on the insulation. Evenly redistribute or add insulation where needed. Check for openings in the insulation where there are bulkheads on the interior of the home. A bulkhead is a dropped ceiling for kitchen and bathroom cabinets or over stairways. You may find the vertical walls of the bulkheads are

exposed and opened to the cold attic air.

10. Change furnace filters every two to three months depending on the quality of the filter and the amount of dust in the environment where you live. A dirty filter can damage the furnace fan and increase your utility costs. Attach a "filter change" card to the furnace to record the date when the filter is changed. Note the airflow arrow on the filter and install the filter in the proper direction.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

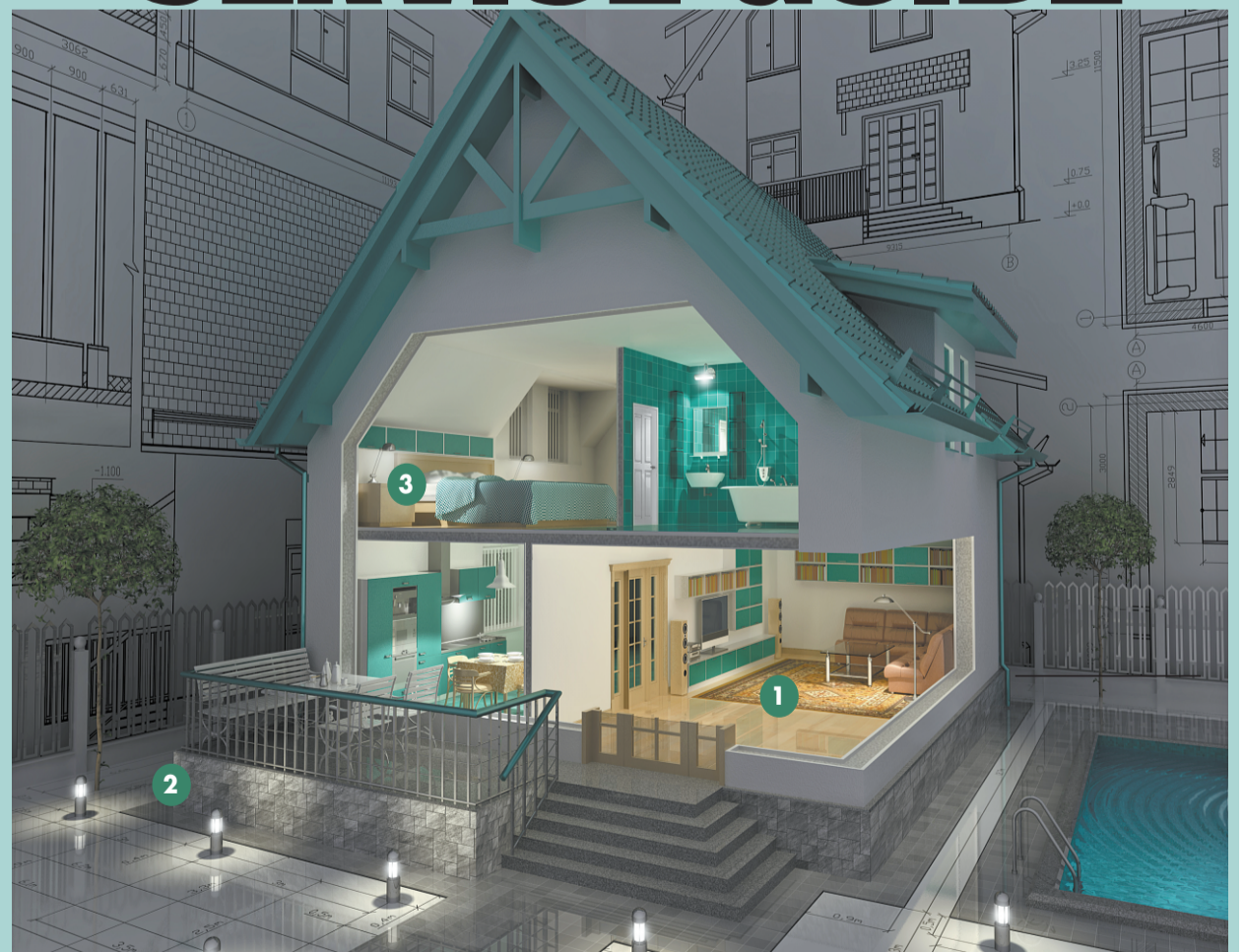
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