

# Great place to live

Continued from page 3D  
need to sell their current residence prior to purchasing again. Both sellers and buyers can benefit from today's attractive interest rates.

If you are planning to purchase a home or invest in real

estate in the near future, then Charlotte may be one of the best areas in the country to own property.

Currently, the Charlotte area is considered one of the best real estate values in

America.

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# Home: It's all about you and definition of space

Continued from page 3D

wanted a log home, they agreed that now was their chance.

Ty and Ida found the perfect property just outside the town where they had raised their family. It had the trees they both wanted and it was within a reasonable drive to the services of the city. They had their dream lot; now they needed their dream home. Log homes to them were an extension of living close to the outdoors, which said "relaxation" to them in a way conventional homes did not. When the Manns completed their research on line they decided to visit Wisconsin Log Homes in Green Bay, Wis. They found a friendly team of people to guide them through the custom home process.

"They made it very enjoyable," says Ty. One selling point was the fact that Wisconsin Log Homes originated the energy-efficient half-log building system, in which the exterior log of their choice would be applied over a 2-inch by 6-inch wall filled with six inches of fiberglass insulation. This innovative concept would both conserve energy costs and help preserve the surroundings they had chosen for their new home.

"I can't emphasize how important an authentic handcrafted finish is to us," says Ty. "We saw their craftsmen hew the entire surface of the logs at the mill, they're beautiful."

Also helpful was the 144-page planning guide put together by the company. The combination of home plans, building information and photos of existing Wisconsin Log Homes was just what they needed to get started. With the lot and home style defined, they were now ready to design their dream home. "Having an experienced team walk us through the planning stage resulted in a home which functions just the way we want it to," says Ida. The peo-

ple at Wisconsin Log Homes suggested that the Manns look at how they spend their time now that they are empty nesters.

They found they both enjoy time together over morning coffee, and so a sunny breakfast spot was designed. They love to cook and entertain friends, so an open concept kitchen/dining room was designed to allow interaction between them and their guests.

They also knew that they both needed their own space, and so a media room for Ty and a craft room for Ida came about. Occasionally they have overnight visitors, resulting in a loft area with separate bedroom and bath. They both wanted a larger master bedroom so a master bedroom suite with a large master bath and plenty of closet space was added.

"Then came the fun part," says Ida. "We added the extra special touches we simply couldn't afford when we were raising our family." The finishing touches in the home include upscale appliances in the kitchen, a stone-faced floor-to-ceiling fireplace and large windows in the greatroom to let in their beautiful view, log interiors in the greatroom and master bedroom to add warmth and coziness to their home, hardwood floors in appropriate areas, a stunning timber staircase leading to the loft, a large shower and whirlpool tub in the master bath.

Companies like Wisconsin Log Homes see more and more people like the Manns, who may have had to compromise on previous homes, but the next one is all about them. More information about designing and building log homes can be found at Wisconsin Log Homes' Web site, [www.wisconsinloghomes.com](http://www.wisconsinloghomes.com), or calling (800) 678-9107.

# Bring the islands home this summer

Continued from page 3D

worth splurging on," he says. These days, remodeled bathrooms resemble those you'd see at a spa, only on a smaller scale. They have lounge areas where the home owner can exercise, do yoga or simply relax and read the newspaper; radiant floor heating; dimmable lighting; overhead speakers; and massaging showers and baths people can use anytime they feel like it.

Tennant's company just introduced a new line of baths at the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show in Las Vegas, Nevada, that are perfect for the home spa. The new Acryzen Series baths are simple in design and focus on comfort. They focus on com-

fort by offering two anatomically comfortable back rests with lower lumbar support, arm rests along both sides and flat bottoms. They are available with several different massage options - as soaking baths or with a choice of three different warm air hydro-massage systems offered by Acryline.

"You can set the massage system for a light tactical massage that stimulates the nervous system or a highly vigorous tissue massage that will really get the blood flowing," says Tennant. "There's a lot of flexibility." Not only in the massage, but the baths' versatility as well. They can be set up anywhere in the floor space where there's an

area that's at least 6 feet long and 4 feet wide. Depending on the room's configuration, you can either create an island oasis where you can sit back and dream about a Hawaiian vacation, or tuck the bath back in a corner of the room near a window and enjoy the natural light coming in. No matter what configuration you choose, make the experience even more pleasurable by adding your favorite herbal bath elixir, throwing some music in the CD player, and letting the massaging waves take you away from it all. For more information about the Acryzen Series baths, and others available from Acryline, log on to [www.acrylineusa.com](http://www.acrylineusa.com).

# Comfort can cost much less

Continued from page 3D

percent more energy savings than one rated at 10 SEER. To help you decide if your HVAC equipment needs to be replaced, take a closer look at these tips from ENERGY STAR, a program of the U.S. Department of Energy:

- Your heat pump or air conditioner is more than 10 years old
  - Your furnace or boiler is more than 15 years old
  - Your equipment is in need of frequent repairs and your energy bills are rising
  - Your room temperatures are inconsistent
  - Your home does not have a programmable thermostat, and no one is home for long periods of the day
  - Your home has humidity problems
  - Your home has excessive dust
  - Your cooling system is noisy
- While some of the above issues may be solved with simple maintenance checks, others may require an entirely new HVAC system. Fortunately, homeowners can reduce monthly payments with equipment featuring increased efficiency.

"Compared to traditional furnaces and air conditioners, our high-efficiency systems can save the average homeowner as much as \$140 a year," says John Gibbons, vice president of Bryant national accounts. Installing a high-efficiency heating and cooling unit can save homeowners as much as 20 percent on annual energy costs. These units have less impact on the environment, producing less carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide than their counterparts. In addition to high-efficiency products, Bryant Heating and Cooling offers the Evolution\* Control, a new technology that allows homeowners to achieve close to 100 percent efficiency with their HVAC System. If you believe your HVAC system is in need of repair or replacement, visit Bryant Heating and Cooling Systems online at [www.bryant.com](http://www.bryant.com) to locate a professional dealer who can help evaluate the effectiveness of your system. Bryant, one of the HVAC industry's leaders in providing home comfort solutions, has provided millions of customers nationwide with over a century of reliable care.

# At home and in the neighborhood. The Charlotte Post



Someday, you'll find a community you can call "home."

*Someday starts today*

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### ASHBURN FARMS

Homes from the \$130's

- Spacious two-story and ranch homes
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- 704.509.0862



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Homes from the \$130's

- Close to shopping, restaurants, and Mountain Island Lake
  - Spacious and affordable ranch and two-story homes
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  - Community surrounded by mature trees
- 704.393.0603



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Beazer Homes



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Beazer Homes

## Astounding Center City Opportunities!



Rosa Place

AT DUNCAN GARDENS

Projected move-in:  
JANUARY 2006

TOWNHOUSES:  
1BR/1 bath  
Caldwell Street addresses

from  
\$125,000



Azalea Place

AT DUNCAN GARDENS

Projected move-in:  
MARCH 2006

TOWNHOUSES:  
2BR/2.5 baths  
Parkwood Avenue and  
16th Street addresses

from  
\$125,000



Camellia Place

AT DUNCAN GARDENS

Projected move-in:  
MAY 2006

FLATS:  
1BR/1 bath and 2BR/2 bath  
Skyline views available  
15th Street addresses

from  
\$110,000

Located four blocks from First Ward  
Complete appliance packages • Electric heat and air • Thoughtful landscaping

Qualifiers receive city funds  
up to \$20,600



[www.DuncanGardens.com](http://www.DuncanGardens.com)



For more information, contact Catherine Browning at First Charlotte Properties

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Always at home and the neighborhood.

The Charlotte Post