

# 4D REAL ESTATE

A&amp;E 1D

## Arena puts new value on Uptown



The Charlotte Bobcats Arena not only adds basketball and entertainment to Charlotte's Uptown neighborhood, it also makes living in the area more attractive.

### Bobcats' new home adds sparkle to city's urban core

Things are jumping in the Uptown area, especially around the new Charlotte Bobcats' Arena.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to acquire tickets to Saturday's sold-out grand opening were not disappointed. The festivities were almost as spectacular as the arena itself.

This new arena is truly Charlotte's crown jewel, if not the state. I spent most of the game in awe of the magnificent structure.

The value of real estate around the Uptown area is already pricey and will certainly increase in value. You can easily find several condominiums that exceed the \$1 million price tag Uptown. Located just a block away from the arena, in the new 17 story Courtside complex you can purchase a 2685 square foot two bedroom high rise penthouse with a purchase price of \$1.1 million. The courtside high-rise condominium complex is scheduled for completion in early 2006. You can purchase a smaller 1,640 square foot, two-bedroom unit for \$615,000. If you can wait until 2007, the Trademark complex is scheduled for completion. The 28-story contemporary icon will contain 192 units and a 330-space parking garage. Most two-bedroom units are currently listed around \$650,000.

Uptown condominiums are designed for people who desire luxury and the city lifestyle. The condominium lifestyle is most popular among empty nesters and young home buyers. Both groups understand and appreciate the value of home ownership. Owning a condo relieves home owners of external residency responsibility and maintenance. Yard work is not a popular chore for some, especially condominium dwellers.

Practically every age or income bracket can afford condomini-



ROLAND  
HAWKINS

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## Outdoor space for all seasons

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Does the approaching season not only cool the air but also chill your spirits? If the first cold snap sends you indoors to embrace warm blankets, you'll be happy to know your enjoyment of outdoor living spaces doesn't need to succumb to the elements.

A properly designed and well-appointed outdoor living space can become quite a comfortable spot to enjoy the cooler months, and create a focal point outdoors where the family can enjoy quality time together instead of hibernating indoors in front of the television. And with many stylish, durable products on the market these days to enhance the comfort and convenience of backyard entertaining - the end result is a space that not only meets your needs, but lifts your spirits.

"The outdoor room is definitely becoming more than a seasonal space," says Peter Lang, general manager of the Western Red Cedar Lumber Association. "And just like every other room, homeowners can easily create an enjoyable locale with a few simple additions, some thoughtful planning and a few decorative touches." Taking the time to incorporate some decorative and functional elements will not only add aesthetic flair, but also provide that cozy feeling to help extend the decking season. When inserting these elements into your outdoor retreat, be sure to consider the following ideas and tips to properly "decoration" this season:

### Decorative touches

One of the easiest ways to brighten any outdoor living space is with seasonal touches placed throughout. An ideal way to welcome in the colors of fall includes baskets filled with pumpkins, Indian corn, leaves and Russet apples. Remember, borrowing items from nature exudes the rich colors of autumn, provides a warming presence as the days grow cooler and smartly blends the space with the natural surroundings. Strategically placed tea

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## Want to dress fireplace? Just add a touch of jewelry

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The little black dress has always been a wardrobe basic, but jewelry adds the sparkle. At home, a few well-placed accessories can dress up a basic fireplace too. According to a 2004 consumer survey conducted by the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association, homeowners with a gas or wood-burning fireplace consider it a major design feature, with many describing it as an architectural element. But now it's time to play dress up!

A variety of hearth accessories are available, in styles to fit the taste of virtually

every fireplace owner. Whether buying a matching set of accessories, or pulling the look together piece by piece, be sure to consider all the options. If the fireplace doesn't have a mantel, consider adding one. A mantel can provide a finished look, and can make a small fireplace look bigger.

Whether choosing a mantelshelf, or a full surround mantel, be sure the design complements the room, and neither overwhelms nor underwhelms the size of the firebox. An eye-catching fireplace screen - available at home centers and specialty

hearth retailers - costs a little, installs in seconds, and creates an instant focal point.

Whether your style is contemporary, Victorian, country, art deco or just eclectic, there are screens that will blend seamlessly with your home. Firesets are a necessity for wood burning fireplaces and are a great decoy for gas fireplaces. They include a brush, ash shovel, and poker mounted in a decorative stand. For wood-burning fireplaces, a log holder is a must. Styles and finishes run the gamut. Choose an open, grate-like

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## Next time you remodel, dare to do something totally different

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When was the last time you heard the phrase, "Think outside the box."

It's usually associated with the business world, but is applicable to a lot of things in our personal lives too, particularly home decorating.

Where is it written that you have to paint all four walls in a room the same color, get a sofa for the living room and a bed for the guestroom; or lay down the same kind of flooring throughout a room? Dare to be different, and you're sure to be impressed with the results. When it comes to flooring, getting creative with design and color can be time consuming and costly.

"Not so with Forbo's new Marmoleum click," says Piera Marotto of Forbo Flooring. The company's latest flooring option, Marmoleum Click, is getting a lot of attention from professional home decorators these days because of its versatility. It's available in 18 different colors, including barbados and caribbean, which look like different shades of sand; serene gray, which resembles a piece of granite; virgin blue which could be likened to the ocean; and golden sunset, which is fiery orange like the sun going down in the western sky.

This smooth, warm-to-the touch natural flooring offers a healthy, easy to clean surface, along with an ultra comfortable platform for your tired feet. Log on to [www.themarmoleumstore.com](http://www.themarmoleumstore.com) to learn more.

"You can do pretty much anything you can imagine with this flooring," says Marotto. Not only can the flooring be used to create visual effects, but optical ones as well. You can make a room appear larger by using light colors and simple patterns, or choose a busy pattern and darker colors to make the room feel cozier. "If you want the patterns to be the focal point of the room, you can install zig zags of alternating colors, or even checkerboards."

Unlike conventional flooring materials, such as tile that requires cement, vinyl that has to be glued down, or hardwood that needs to be nailed down, Marmoleum Click comes in easy-to-install click panels and squares. The panels simply lock into place with a tongue and groove system. Each panel is approximately 12 inches wide and 36 inches long.

They can be combined with the 12-inch by 12-inch squares for a wide variety of patterns and color combinations. Since no glue is required, you can walk on the floor immediately after installation. Easy installation is just one of the many benefits this product offers.

Marmoleum is a favorite among environmentalists because it is natural and environmentally responsible. Marmoleum is made of linseed oil, resins, and wood flour, calendered onto a natural jute backing. It is naturally anti-static and antimicrobial, making it a great choice for a healthy indoor environment.

To learn more about Marmoleum Click, or to find the dealer nearest you, log on to [www.themarmoleumstore.com](http://www.themarmoleumstore.com) or call (866) MARMOLEUM.