

# How Builders Build For Themselves

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Pati said, "and we have lots of people in and out. This is easy to clean. I sometimes think we could just bring a garden hose and hose down the whole house."

Ironically, Murphy, one of the airedales responsible for the choice of tile, slipped on it recently and broke his leg.

Only one aspect of the tiling process displeased Pati. "I did every bit of the grouting myself, and I'd never, never do it again," she declared.

The Lewellyn's moved to Calabash in 1973 from Boone, just after their marriage, and had long headstarts on their present careers. Lewellyn did house construction projects back in High Point College, and Pati began work as a realtor when she was 19.

"When we came here there was just dirt roads, no subdivisions, no gift stores, not even a stop light," Pati recalled.

When the couple decided to "try out" the Calabash area, they said, "If we didn't like it we could go to some exotic place, like Colorado," Pati laughed.

They liked it, and have now become an integral part of their community. Pati serves as a town commissioner and officer of the Brunswick Islands Board of Realtors; Darius is on the Calabash Alcoholic Beverage Control board and is an officer in the Calabash Elks Lodge.

For the first time in their marriage they're building a home for themselves, one in which they've tried some new products and methods.

Many of these experiments show up in the homes they build for other people. "We build about 20 per year," Pati estimated. "and strictly for retirees. These are people who are very concerned about electric bills. They build smaller homes, but they often put nicer things in them, such as Jacuzzis and hardwood floors."

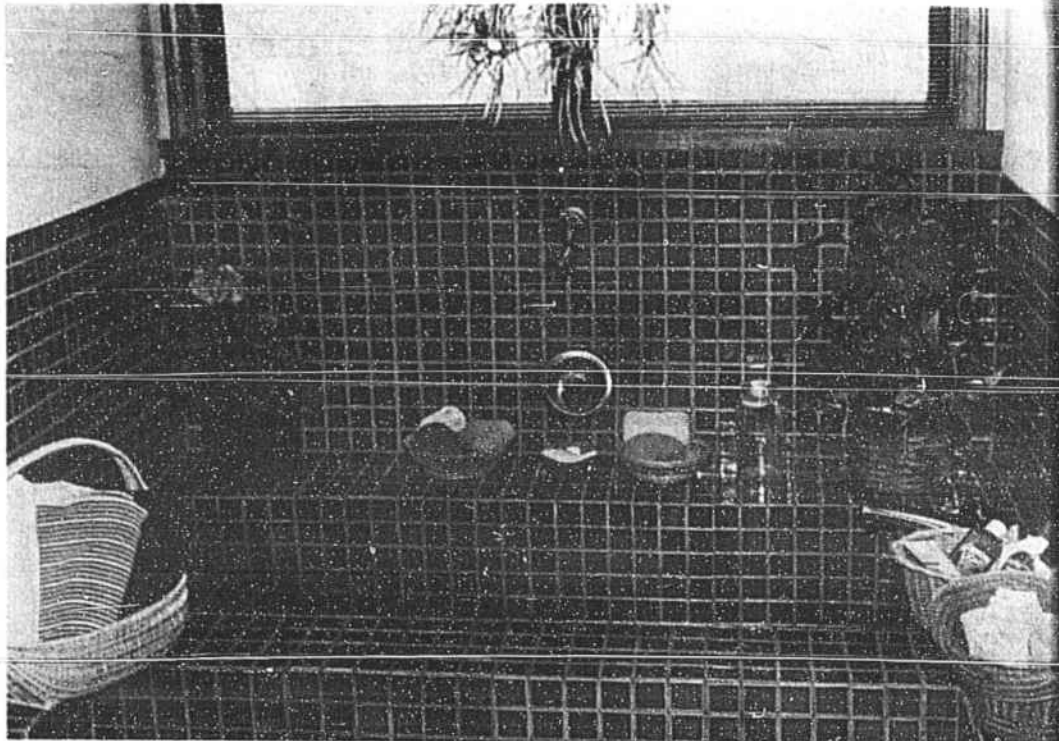
For this clientele, energy-saving tricks are important in house construction. "We tried the water-to-air heat pump that came out about ten years ago, and found it more economical than the old air-to-air type," Pati noted.

Other experiments have included the ceiling fans. "We use lots of them to save on the heating bill, because most heat loss is in the ceiling," she said.

Solar heating, according to Pati, is still expensive. "And the panels aren't attractive. But we do a lot with passive solar, orienting windows the right way and using skylights to get the western sun."

Demands of their businesses have kept the Lewellyn's own house in an unfinished state for several months. Their busy lives dictated the design of that house, too. "We don't have time to enjoy a screened porch, so the foyer takes the place of it," Pati observed.

"And we're both earthy people, so



THIS SUNKEN TUB in the Lewellyn's bathroom is of gleaming brown tile. A red geranium in one corner, a green plant in the other and overhead, provide a colorful atmosphere for relaxed bathing.

STAFF PHOTO BY MARJORIE MEGIVER

we wanted a house where people could put their feet on anything and not worry."

The ability to fit house plans to lifestyle serves them well in meeting the needs of clients. "People now are more sophisticated about building," Pati said, "They read building magazines and know about new products; they often know what they want."

Making use of experiments in the Lewellyn home, what people want could soon be those carefree tiles from top to bottom. Only fast-moving dogs could possibly object.

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