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CHARLOTTE LIVING





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— Kevin Schooldcraft, owner of Masterpiece Staircase



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KEVIN SCHOOLDRAFT



Charlotte never experienced the real estate crisis found in other cities. "Sales have been strong with local people wishing to upsize or downsize," says Wyn Page, CEO, GRG Broker with Allen Tate Realtors. "Instead of a buyers' or sellers' market, it's been more of an equal balanced market. South Charlotte continues to be hot, hot, hot. Those unable to find the desired square footage in their price range in south Charlotte are moving into Union County. Half-backs, those who left the northeast and went to Florida, are now settling here. We also see a lot of people move to the area to be near relatives."

CUSTOM DESIGN

Your home is your sanctuary, your source of pride, your haven. Home is where family and friends gather. It's where you relax at the end of a busy day. Special touches add warm reflections of the homeowner's personality, transforming a house into a home.

Incorporating a customized staircase into your building plans can make "home sweet home" a little bit sweeter. "A staircase can make a dramatic statement," says Ervin Schockcraft, owner of Masterpiece Staircase,



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which specializes in custom built staircases for the Charlotte region and neighboring states. "It sets the mood, reflecting the warmth and personality of the homeowner. The visual impact of a staircase sets the tone for the style of the home. It differentiates the home from the others in the neighborhood."

Staircases can reflect whatever period the house represents. "The options are numerous and opportunities endless," adds Schookcraft. "We specialize in hickory, American cherry, walnut, and exotic woods like Curatana which comes from South America. The balusters can be wood or iron. For a Tuscan design, we incorporate iron work similar to what you would see in Tuscany. A client building an English Tudor home wanted a staircase reflect-

*Your home is your
sanctuary.*

ive of that period. We created hand carved panels instead of balusters. Seven solid pieces of white oak, one and three-quarters inches thick, were hand carved and accented by matching newel posts. The finished staircase was just magnificent. When people walk in, they are in awe."

OUTDOOR ROOMS

Love your home but need a little more space? Consider adding an outdoor room.

Indoor living has moved outdoors. With today's technology and the imagination of homeowners and designers, the opportunities for expanding your living space beyond the indoors are numerous. "With our good climate zone, residents can enjoy outdoor living and cooking eight to nine months of the year," says Emilio Conciatori, owner of Potter's Mill Design Center and Design by