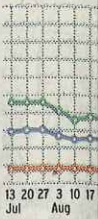
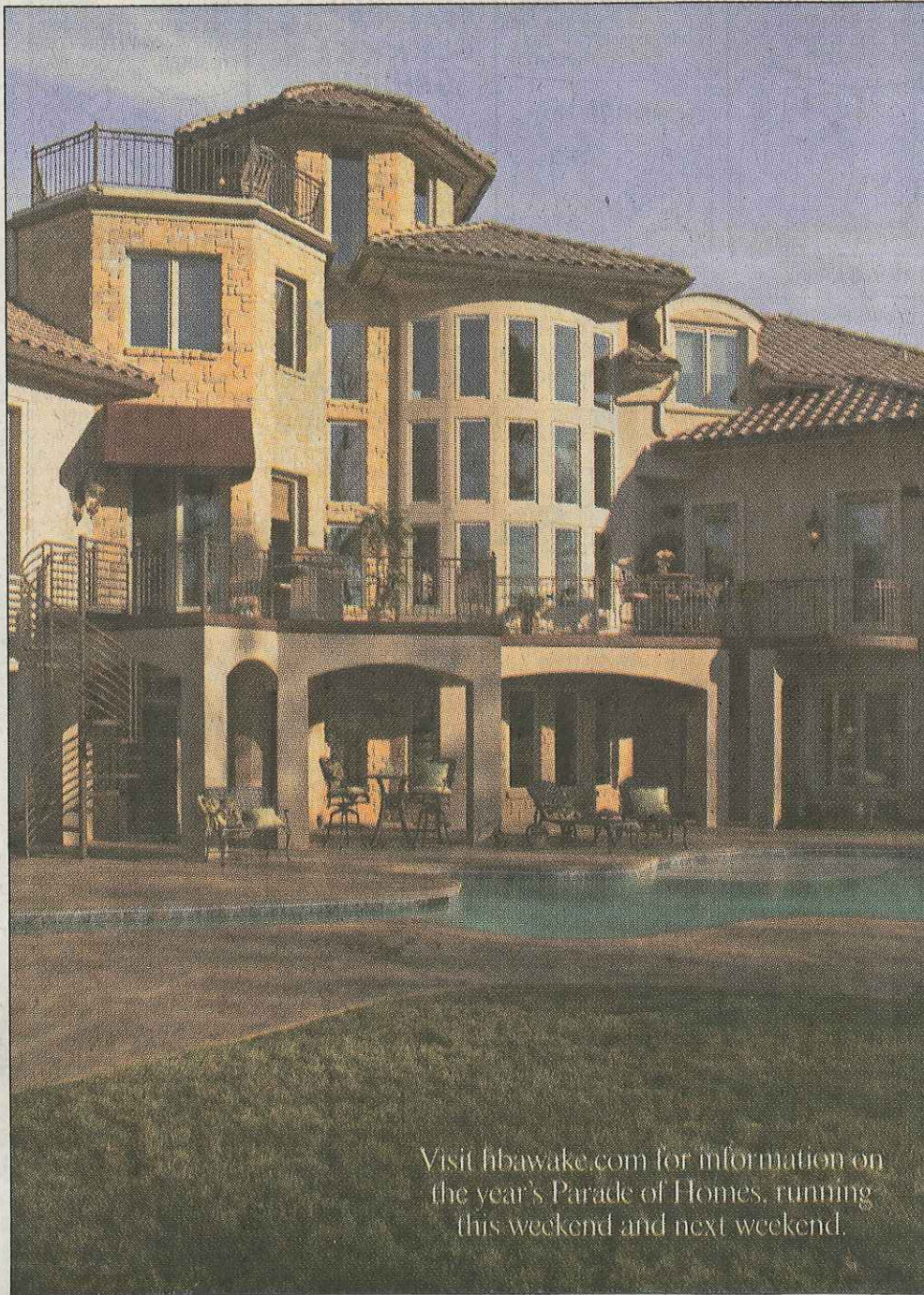


# real estate

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## Memories of Parades past



Visit [hbawake.com](http://hbawake.com) for information on the year's Parade of Homes, running this weekend and next weekend.

Builder Rex Bost misses the Tuscan Sun's guitar-shaped pool.

RAY STRAWBRIDGE/STRAWBRIDGEPHOTO.COM

During the annual Wake County Parade of Homes hosted by the Home Builders Association of Raleigh-Wake County and spans for three weekends every October, builders show off their talents, passion and interests for home building. Typically the homes on tour are each special in design and layout, but every so often a home comes along that remains a topic of conversation during that year's Parade and is remembered for years.

What generates the interest in one home over another could be its overall design and layout, a charity that the house was built for or a new neighborhood with a selection of desirable homes.

### The charity benefit house

Some people would argue that a Parade home is memorable because of a particular charity a builder supported with the proceeds of the sale. Home builders find several ways to give back to the community.

In a Parade during the '90s, Stuart M. Jones Custom Homes Inc. built homes where 25 percent of the profits from the sale was contributed to Step Up Ministry and its "Hope for the Homeless" program. More recently, Bost Custom Homes donated proceeds from its 2004 parade house to the Leukemia/Lymphoma Society. In 2007, 1st American Builders built a Jimmy V House and in 2010 Old Heritage Builders built a Duke Children's Miracle House. Also in 2010, Royal Oaks Building Group, LLC built the home for Operation: Coming Home II and a Habitat for Humanity of Wake County home has been featured a few times in recent years.

"Most people have never seen a Habitat home, so the Parade of Homes is a great opportunity for Habitat Wake to showcase one of our homes for potential homeowners," Kerry Celestini, the media and marketing manager for Habitat for Humanity of Wake County. "It has been a great way to highlight the wonderful work being done by community donors and volunteers."

### The hot new development

Often during the Parade of Homes, a new community will generate a large amount of

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## PAST

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buzz. Over the past 10 years, Wakefield, Heritage, 12 Oaks and Linville were new neighborhoods that became large attractions when they first opened and showcased a lot of Parade homes.

In 2007, Hasentree in North Raleigh was a development that generated a lot of interest for its 12 homes around \$1 million or more. The Wake County sheriff's department was called in to direct traffic as visitors flooded the development. Many people had to park outside the two entrances of the community and take shuttle buses. Above the development, serious home buyers were provided helicopter tours to see the golf course and available lots.

### The one-of-kind Parade home

If you were to ask any builder what their most memorable house in the parade has been over the years, they'd first remark, "Besides mine?" Then a lot of them would confess, "Well there was that one house that Rex Bost built with the guitar-shaped pool..." It was called the Tuscan Sun.

The son of a masonry contractor, Rex Bost, owner of Bost Custom Homes, developed an appreciation for different types of architecture and combined with his first passion for music, he created a 7,400 sq. ft. show piece. Although the house was featured in the 2005 Parade of Homes and listed for \$2.4 million, it was initially built to be a personal residence and living model home for his company.

Leading up the design of the Tuscan Sun, Bost was working with several different homeown-

ers to help them understand that even in a large home, spaces did not have to be oversized.

"Often large homes have some dry spaces with little functionality that owners are just trying to fill with furniture," explained Bost. "Tuscan Sun was built to show better proportions and a cozier atmosphere for spaces like the living room and bedroom."

The masonry framed Mediterranean style home had several unique features such as a rooftop patio turret with 360 degree views of Prestonwood golf club, a round powder room with one solid piece of granite for the floor, a full view glass elevator with outdoor views, a smart pantry with an area to use small appliances, and a 13 x 21 sound-proof music studio that also doubled as a safe room by meeting FEMA 320 guidelines.

But what really made the home memorable was the pool.

"I wanted a pool that was long enough for swimming laps, but something that was not over budget," said Bost. "Then one day it hit me — a guitar pool. So I traced the shape of my Gibson Les Paul Guitar and had it turned into a pool."

Bost described other unique details of the home that included a compact exercise room built within the master suite, the permanent concrete tile roof, and resort style verandas.

"We sold the house a few years ago, but can you tell I miss it?" Bost asked. He and his wife only planned to live in the home for about four or five years. "We not only kept the house show ready as a model home, but also used it for fundraising dinners, meetings and entertaining clients."

While the house's name, Tuscan Sun, has not been as memorable, the 'house with the guitar shaped pool' continues to be a Parade home not soon forgotten.

## SMART

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8D

have to gain awareness of where your money is trickling out wastefully and then make adjustments to redirect funds to your highest goals, like finding down payment money to buy a house," Lawrence says.

Before deciding on the categories where you can cut spending, it's important to get a clear sense of where your money is now going. That doesn't necessarily mean you have to buy budgeting software or use a free online money tracking service. Personal finance experts say that for many people, a simple pencil-and-paper system may be the best option.

Lawrence suggests you examine your recent checking and credit card statements and write down what you've spent for the past two months, breaking out your expenses into man-

datory and discretionary.

Mandatory outlays include such items as car payments and insurance bills. Discretionary items include restaurant bills and clothing purchases. Once you've tracked past spending, search within the discretionary section for low-priority items that could be cut.

■ Steer clear of budget-busters.

Lawrence advises people carry a small notebook to record all outlays as they occur. This increases your awareness of where your money is going. Then make sure you enter these amounts in your budget book or online program.

Are you an impulse buyer? Do you later wonder why you made those purchases? Follow the 24-hour rule. When shopping for anything but food, leave your cash and credit cards at home. Go to the store and make your selections, but allow yourself at least one full day to decide which choices are im-

portant.

■ Contain your food costs.

Financial advisers are nearly universal in saying that many clients overspend on eating out. As soon as many prospective homebuyers find this black hole in their budget, they often proceed promptly to close it.

Though many potential homebuyers know restaurant and coffee shop consumption is a threat to their savings plan, Lawrence says people often fail to notice how much of their grocery money goes to waste with uneaten food.

Lawrence says many people intent on saving for a house — or for any purpose — are often wise to avoid shopping for food at "big box" discounters that sell to customers in bulk.

"You should only use these stores for your food purchases if you plan your menus carefully to ensure that food in these large containers doesn't get thrown out," she says.