

Building Scene

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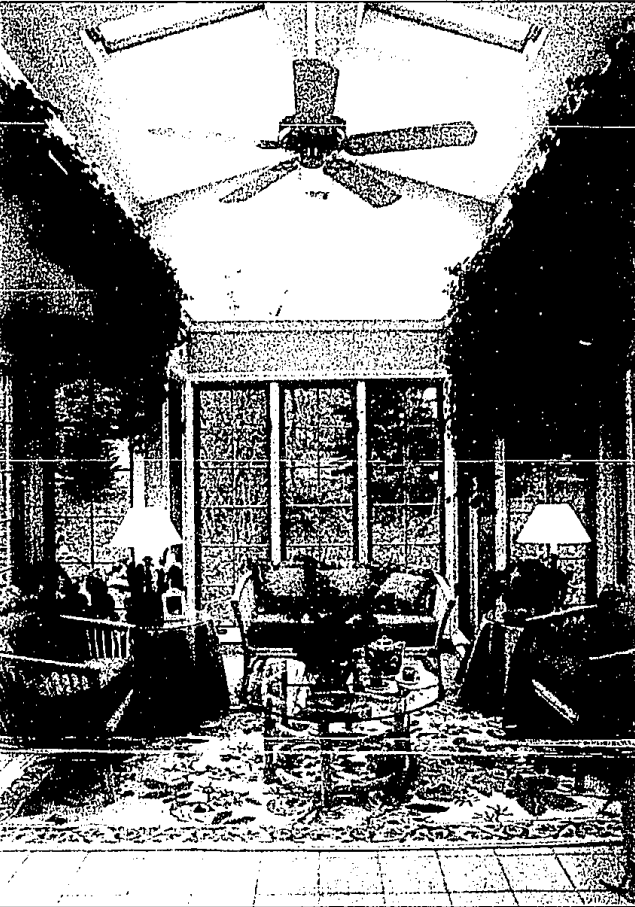
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Skylights: Do they let sun in or let heat out?



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Lynn and Carol Merritt had 12 skylights built into the glass garden room of their Bloomfield Township home.

Vail named leasing representative

Robert F. Vail has been named leasing representative for several of the shopping centers in the metro Detroit area for Schostak Brothers, the Southfield-based real estate development, management and commercial/industrial company.

Vail, a resident of Rochester Hills, previously served as vice president and director of leasing for the Campano Corp. for their centers in Boston and New York.

A new homes sales seminar, "A to Z of New Home Sales and Marketing," will be offered at the Southfield Radisson Plaza April 26-27, sponsored by the Greenman Institute of Florida.

The two-day program is aimed at helping real estate professionals involved in the sale of new home communities increase their market share, improve sales team recruit-

ment and management, better use of market analysis and use of new sale strategies.

For more information, call the Greenman Institute at 1-800-553-7885.

Thomas D. Lasky of Birmingham has been named vice president of the Byron W. Trerice Co. As vice president, Lasky is responsible for budget projections, cost allocations, marketing coordination, personnel training programs and with the development and implementation of policy guidelines for the Trerice Co. commercial/office leasing division.

With the company since 1987, Lasky previously practiced real estate law and commercial litigation for three years with a corporate law firm in Detroit.

The Byron W. Trerice Co., estab-

lished in 1927, is metropolitan Detroit's largest real estate brokerage firm. The Birmingham-based company offers industrial and commercial brokerage, management of commercial, industrial and apartment properties, appraisals, property development, joint ventures and limited partnership real estate offerings.

Hawkins, Tazelaar Associates, a full service architectural and engineering design firm, has opened new offices in the Southfield Office Plaza, 17000 W. 8 Mile Rd. The firm provides architectural, engineering, planning and interior design services on commercial, residential, industrial and institutional facilities.

Four sales people were honored at

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Gardens need attention, not big lots

From Midwest Living For AP News-features

These days it's not quite the same when Dean Grewell climbs behind the wheel of his John Deere tractor. The 700 acres he once farmed have shrunk to a 125 by 185 foot lot, and his John Deere is a miniature version of the one he plowed and planted with. But that hasn't stopped this lowland from raising bumper crops in his suburban West Des Moines backyard garden.

Grewell's garden thrives in terraces built up alongside his backyard fence and in 6 by 6 foot raised beds.

MIDWEST LIVING magazine reports that novice gardeners can cultivate bumper crops in small spaces, too. Grewell advises:

- Plant corn about 10 inches apart (two kernels per hill) and pull the weaker plant later in a row.
- Grewell staggers plantings over a six-week period through the end of June; then, he fertilizes with 10-10-10 every three weeks after the corn stands a foot tall. When he picks the ears, Grewell cuts off the stalks so they don't continue to rob other corn plants of water and nutrients.
- For continuous production in a plot, Grewell plants cool-season crops (such as spinach, peas, leaf lettuce, radishes) with later-maturing crops (beans, carrots, cucumbers). Gardeners can even replace long-season crops in late summer with radishes and lettuce.
- RAISED BEDS dry out faster, so instead of hauling a hose from bed to

bed, Grewell strings a drip-irrigation hose through the garden. He gives his bed about 1 1/4 inches of water a week.

- To save space, grow vining plants, such as cucumbers or melons, on trellises.

For pole beans, construct a tepee from three 6 foot long laths. Plant cool-weather crops in the sheltered ground underneath the tepee.

Clarification

Gil "Buzz" Silverman's partner, incorrectly identified in the April 5 edition, is Jonathan Holtzman.

By Doug Funko
staff writer

There is another way to bring light and cheeriness into a house besides turning on a switch.

Some buyers are letting the sun shine in — not to mention the moon, stars and other delights of nature — through skylights.

"Light expands rooms, whether it's light coming through windows or light coming through skylights," said

'Light expands rooms, whether it's coming through windows or light coming through skylights.'

—Robert R. Jones
West Bloomfield builder

Robert R. Jones, president of a West Bloomfield building company.

"We like them, the additional exposure to the exterior we get out of them," Jones added. "We think they're an architectural highlight to any home."

Don Frericks, president of Don Frericks Homes, also includes skylights in some of his models. "I would think in the last seven to eight years particularly they've become more popular," he said.

Gil Behling, president of Troy Building Products, supplies skylights to builders.

"IT SEEMS that people are trying to bring the outside in," Behling said. "Depending on how the house sits on a lot, a lot of light is missed in late afternoon or the early evening glow."

"The use of skylights in houses (nationally) has more than doubled since 1982," said Leslie Devore, spokeswoman for Velux, a skylight manufacturer.

A trade association reports that while 600,000 units were sold in

1982, 1.7 million are expected to be sold this year, Devore said.

Skylights will cost more than running shingles up the entire roof.

A simple 2-by-4 foot skylight can cost \$250 to \$400. Figure on another couple of hundred dollars per skylight for labor and finishing touches.

Better quality insulated glass and extras like skylights that can be opened, window treatments and automatic opening systems will boost the price even more.

'YOU CAN get into more expensive You'll see that can cost \$3,000 to \$4,000," Frericks said. "There's no limit on what you can spend if you want to do it."

Pella and Anderson are major manufacturers in addition to Velux. People who think about getting skylights usually have two concerns — energy efficiency and potential water leakage.

Joseph Duran, Energy Craft Homes president, isn't a big fan of skylights.

"I try to avoid them," he said. "They're terrible. I'd rather see R-44 insulation than a piece of glass."

Duran, who installs skylights if customers insist, will try for a southern exposure placement to get the most out of the sun and passive solar energy.

Duran figures that a 16-square-foot skylight will add about \$32 a season to the heating bill.

THAT MIGHT not seem like much when buyers will pay a couple hundred thousand dollars for new houses. But Duran argues that \$32 saved here, \$32 there and \$32 somewhere else adds up.

Others in the business agree that there's more heat loss with a skylight than an unbroken, shingled roof.

"You're definitely going to lose heat just like a glass window," Frericks said.

"You're dealing with an insulated fixture, not 22 inches of insulation," Behling said. "So you're going to

have some heat loss, but not as much as 15 years ago."

"In the last five years products have improved tremendously by manufacturers," said Jones.

Jill Deacon, a sales representative for builder Larry Baker, said her highest heating bill this winter was \$98 for a 3,600-square-foot house with five skylights.

As for avoiding leakage, it's all in the installation, builders maintain.

'I try to avoid them. They're terrible. I'd rather see R-44 insulation than a piece of glass.'

—Joseph Duran, president
Energy Craft Homes

"WE'RE HEAVILY focused so we don't have leaks. We're very respectful of them (skylights)," Jones said.

"I'm on the roof myself," Duran said. "I refuse to be called back. The only way to avoid it is to be involved."

What some people perceive as a leak may just be condensation with houses being built so airtight today, said Keith Seefeldt, manager of Benson's Oakland Wholesale.

Homeowners who have skylights speak highly of them.

Lynn and Carol Merritt had 12 skylights built into the glass garden room of their Bloomfield Township home.

"My husband and I are both from Texas and we just moved here from California," Carol said. "We're outside people. We enjoy the patio lifestyle."

"Since we're confined indoors so long with the length of the cold season, we thought we'd extend our patio season," she said.

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