

Creative Living

CLASSIFIED REAL ESTATE



Bob Sklar editor/953-2113

Thursday, July 4, 1991 O&E

(F)10

Couple shapes dream house

By Janice Tiger-Kramer
special writer

YOU COULD say Rich and Stephanie Skaggs left the past behind three years ago when they built their ranch-style house in Camborne subdivision.

Married 33 years, the Livonia couple decided to sell everything that filled their old house, a ranch they built 27 years ago in Burton Hollow.

"This was the last house we'd build, so I thought, 'Go for it!'" said Rich, a government worker for the past 32 years.

BEING MORE practical, Stephanie had second thoughts, but not before a two-day moving sale nearly emptied their house of everything, including dishes and wastebaskets. They kept only some crystal and collectibles given to them by Stephanie's mother and a bedroom set, which they reused in a spare room.

"What we didn't sell we donated," Stephanie said. "It was a bold decision."

Moving obviously was easier, but Stephanie, an office manager in Redford Township, then faced the job of selecting furnishings and window treatments for the new, 2,800-square-foot house, which has expansive windows overlooking a large, wooded lot.

THOUGH RICH left most of the decision-making to Stephanie, having "carte blanche" doesn't make the job of furnishing a seven-room house any easier, Stephanie said. "We ruled out ultra-modern furniture, but there was still much to see."

The couple used light mauve, yet fairly neutral, carpeting throughout the house. Walls are



Stephanie Skaggs enjoys a wooded view of the yard from the bay window in the master suite.

pale beige accented by stained crown moldings to give rooms a classic look.

Searching for furniture styles they both could live with, Stephanie, who hadn't made a major furniture purchase in 15 years, briefly suffered "sticker shock."

"WE BUDGETED for furnishings, but I think we tripled it by the time we finished," she said.

During the furniture hunt, Stephanie realized she needed an interior designer to help her "humanize" the new house.

On one of many shopping trips, she met Carmenlena Brown-Dantley, a young designer from Gorman's Furniture in Dearborn, who helped the Skaggs put together pretty, comfortable and livable rooms.

SINCE STEPHANIE always wanted a dining room, she furnished that room first, choosing a large Oriental-style table of cherry wood for its clean lines and simplicity. A matching china cabinet in the adjoining living room became the room's focal point. The couple selected a carved cherry wood server and a similar table for the spacious entry.

A tufted, crescent-shaped sofa in the living room is upholstered in a rayon fabric of cream, rose and seafoam. High-back dining chairs are covered in a bright check of the same colors.

A PAIR of rounded, fully

Photos by
Douglas Susalla

upholstered armless chairs covered in moire are placed opposite the sofa. Completing the conversation group is a handsome Louis XV arm chair and ottoman in an updated pickled finish.

Glass and brass tables accent the living area, which also includes porcelain ginger jar lamps. A pair of torchiere lamps in brass and

green glass flanks the china cabinet.

Since the Skaggs enjoy their yard and planned much of the landscaping themselves, they hoped to leave lofty windows and French doors in the living and dining rooms bare to enjoy the

Please turn to Page 2



Stephanie Skaggs selected an Oriental-style dining set for its simple lines and simplicity. Chairs are upholstered in a rose, seafoam and cream plaid to blend with upholstered pieces in the adjoining living room.



The large family room, with a cream-colored leather sectional sofa, features a floor-to-ceiling fireplace. The rose, pale green and clay-colored stones give the room a Southwestern look.

Antique quilts, coverlets exhibited

In conjunction with the Farmington/Farmington Hills Founders Festival Civil War Encampment, antique quilts and coverlets will be displayed Friday-Saturday, July 5-6, at the Spicer House in Heritage Park, Farmington Road, north of 10 Mile.

There is no admission charge either to the park or to the show. "Quilts and Coverlets: 1850-1930" Show hours will be noon to 4 p.m. each day.

Sponsored by the Farmington Hills Historical Commission and the Friends of Heritage Park, the show will feature folk art displays of items our grandparents, and great-grandparents, used to cover their beds.

Co-chairwomen for the event are Barbara McCann of Friends of Heritage Park and Sherrie Stewart of the historical commission.

Among the items on display will be a Barber family basket-pattern quilt of ecru and green, made in Farmington Township circa 1930; a Dove family quilt of spool pattern on an ecru background, dating from the 1890s and quilted in Farmington Township; and a blue-and-white woven coverlet dated 1869 from Florissant County, Iowa.

ANOTHER UNUSUAL covering is an all-cotton spread made in a Kentucky plantation in 1850 from cotton grown on the grounds then loomed on spinning wheels of the plantation. It was designed and hand-embroidered by the daughter of the household. Each of the four corners, containing cut work, are embroidered with a different design.

Also displayed will be a "crazy quilt" with patches of velvets and satins, made from party dresses of girls in southern Indiana with elaborate embroidery stitches.

This quilt is comparable to one hanging in the Mellon National Gallery of Art in Washington.

The quilt was sewn circa 1885 by girlhood friends of the bride. It was given as a wedding present.

This show is a gift of the Friends of Heritage Park and the historical commission to the community in celebration of our American heritage on the Fourth of July weekend," Sherrie Stewart said.

Garden walk in the works

Tickets are on sale for the fifth biennial Redford Beautification Commission garden walk Saturday, July 20.

Five gardens and a variety of types will be featured on the walk, scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tickets are available, in advance, at the Redford Township Hall for \$4 per tour. Pick up tickets during regular office hours or by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope by July 13 to: Redford Beautification Commission, Township Hall, 15145 Beech Daly Road, Redford, Mich. 48239.

Tickets also will be sold at the hosts' homes the day of the walk. For information, call the city hall, 531-3110.

Walk proceeds help the volunteer commission keep Redford beautiful by replacing trees and shrubs, planting flowers and providing for cleanups.

Historic schoolhouse a genuine community landmark

IT WAS an honor long due. I applaud the American Association of University Women's Plymouth chapter for choosing Cherry Hill School for a landmark award.

The annual award salutes century-old local sites of historical and architectural significance. A restoration project of the Canton Historical Society and the Canton Historical Commission, Cherry Hill School dates back to 1876, when a primitive 42-year-old log schoolhouse was replaced.

Amid tall trees in the Cherry Hill Historic Settlement at Cherry Hill and Ridge Road, the white clapboard, two-room schoolhouse today serves as a center for community activities.

The Victorian-style schoolhouse,

with Roman arched windows, is part of a small historic crossroads in western Canton that's retained its country zest despite growth around it. The tiny village flourished between 1840 and 1920.

IN ITS heyday, the red brick school (since plastered over) boasted narrow planked, wood floors, a round woodburning stove, kerosene lamps and a pail of water with a dipper for drinking.

Down the road from Cherry Hill School is Cherry Hills Methodist Church, dedicated in 1882. It's one of 40 sites that the AAUW has honored with a landmark plaque since the 1970s.

It's no surprise Cherry Hill School is part of Ford Heritage Trails, a 20-site, five-county trail honoring Hen-



Bob Sklar

ry Ford's contributions to the history of southeast Michigan.

"If Henry Ford had not gotten involved in improving the school in the 1940s, it probably wouldn't be standing today," said Plymouth resident Anne Schlick, AAUW landmark study group chairwoman.

By the 1940s, the school was showing its age. Enter Ol' Henry. A Canton Historic District Commission brochure relates this story: While driving through Cherry Hill

one day, Ford came upon a woman and her 10 children at the side of a road. Stopping to see if he could help, he learned the woman's husband was out of work and the family was homeless.

FORD QUICKLY took charge. He gave the husband a job in his small "Cherry Hill factory," one of 20 village industries he opened in the '20s, '30s and '40s in the Rouge, Huron and Raisin river valleys to protect the values and experiences of the rural way of life.

Disabled war vets made auto parts at the Cherry Hill factory, living nearby in a dorm fashioned from an old Wilson Creamery building.

Ford offered the downtrodden family use of the house on the Gottfredson farm. But when he then tried to enroll the 10 children in

Cherry Hill School, he learned the farm was not within the school district.

To counter that roadblock, Ford offered to renovate the schoolhouse, add on to the back and hire a second teacher if the school board would let the 10 children attend the school.

Not about to let a windfall slip by, the school board accepted the offer. Ford kept his promise in the form of a \$22,000 addition.

AFTER THAT, Cherry Hill School became an adopted member of the Greenfield Village Edison School System until 1947.

Ties to Ford reaped big dividends for Cherry Hill students. "There were dance, art and music teachers and he brought in looms and sewing machines," recalled Canton Historical Society member Doro-

thy West, whose son, Terry, attended Cherry Hill during the Ford years.

"Mr. Ford even paid for the medical expenses of the students and always sent them to visit Greenfield Village."

Cherry Hill School was closed to students in 1962. The township acquired it from the Plymouth-Canton schools in 1986. Restoration has included the bell tower, plans call for a bell to be installed soon.

It's exciting to hear that Canton trustees, with the blessing of local residents, are seeking state designated historical area status for the village of Cherry Hill, one of the township's living reminders of its rural heritage.

Bob Sklar is assistant managing editor for special projects.