

# Builder makes a splash with rooftop swimmer

By Shanna Howard  
Special Sections Staff

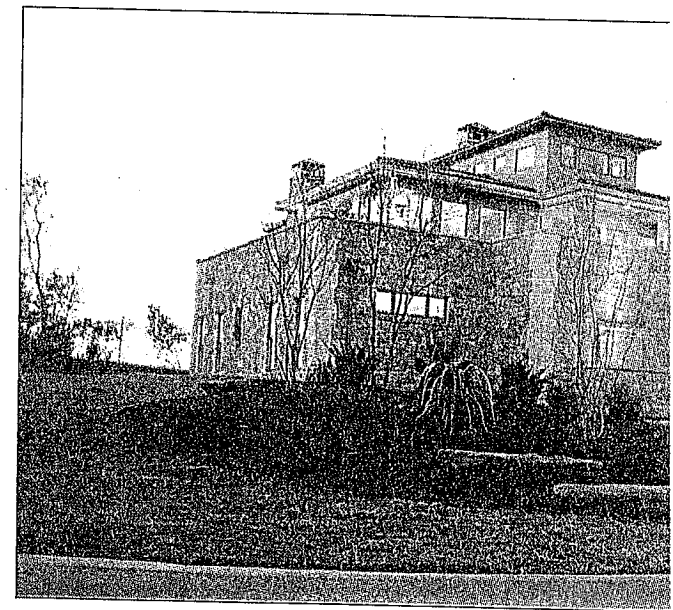
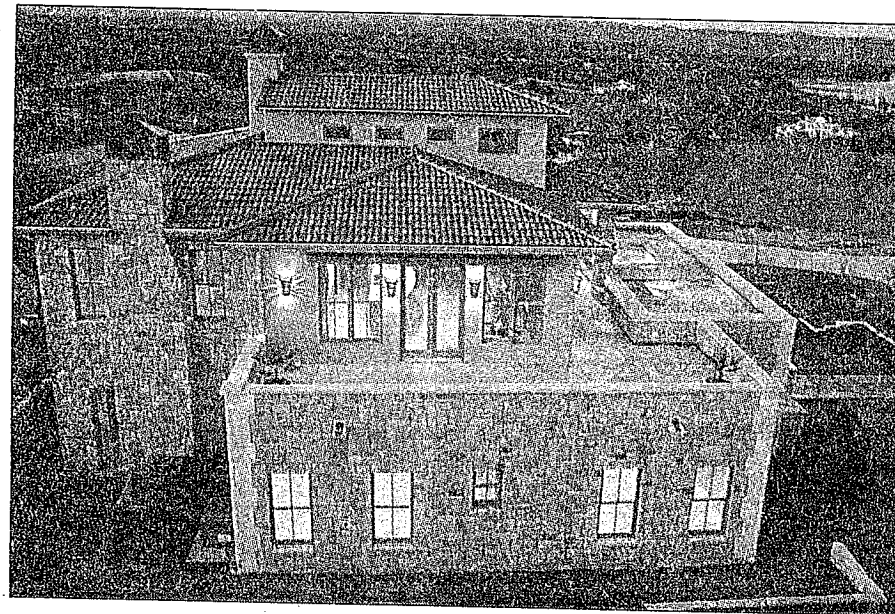
This custom Old World villa commands attention upon its hilltop vantage point. Unique touches entice the eyes, from the artistic decoration on the chimneys depicting the phases of the moon, to the two fountains streaming down the façade. But, the most curiously unusual part of this home is the second-floor pool.

Upon entering the home through a decorative gate, visitors glance up to find four feet of water above their head separated by a half-inch of Plexiglas. A glass-bottomed pool on the second story takes advantage of its elevation, offering stunning views of the Hill Country and Lake Travis, plus swimmers upstairs can greet you as you enter the home.

"You can be up there and enjoy the view," says Peggy Schatz, who handles the administration for her husband's company, Schatz Builders, Inc. "This is the most peaceful place in the world."

"We had this corner lot that had this great view on the second floor," says Rick Schatz. So, he wanted to find some way to best utilize the vistas. The builder decided on an upside-down floorplan. The pool was manufactured as one piece, and Schatz brought it in from Houston on a flatbed truck. He says the weight of the water and metal clamps ensure the pool won't leak on unsuspecting guests.

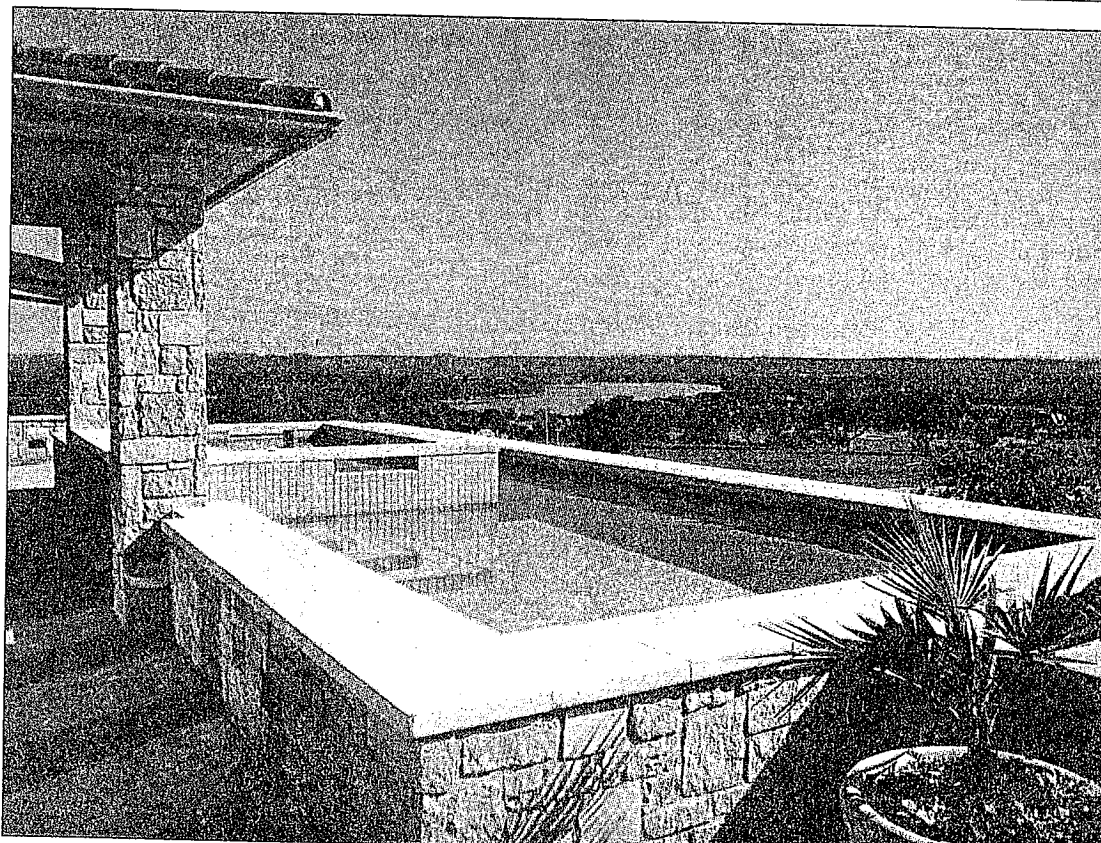
This house is the first speculative house Schatz has built, although he has been building custom homes in the Austin area for



15 years. He began building this home last April. "This has turned out to be a great challenge and a lot of joy," he says.

Schatz says he has gotten good feedback from people who have toured the house, even incorporating some of their ideas into the finished home. He says everyone, old and young alike, sees it as a "party house," a great place for entertaining, and they like the open floorplan and wide vistas.

The rooftop pool and spa features automatic heating and a swim-up bar. The pool heating and the downstairs fountains can be controlled with the flip of a switch. In addition, this 4,656 square-foot house features almost 1,400 feet of patio space. Downstairs, a covered deck extends from the family room for entertaining. Upstairs, off the living room, there's the pool and a



See Hill Country, G3

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Photos by Bret Bond, courtesy of Schatz Builders, Inc.

This one-of-a-kind house sits atop a hill in Barton Creek Lakeside.

# Hill Country house features cool pool

Continued from G1

wraparound leuder limestone deck with views of the signature hole of the golf course, featuring a waterfall, along with panoramic views of the Hill Country and Lake Travis.

The upstairs living room features motorized shades to block the sun shining in through the room's walls of windows; upper windows create a thermal siphon by providing a vent for rising heat. The room is trimmed with a special cypress that is found throughout the house. Custom lighting by Two Hill Studios illuminates the room. Above the fireplace, the living room is wired for flat-panel television. The open floorplan joins the dining room to a bar and a gourmet galley kitchen featuring Sub-Zero and Thermador appliances, and Venetian gold granite and dark marble. Off the living room is the master bedroom, featuring Mexican walnut travertine tile in the bath.

Downstairs, reached by either a staircase or an elevator, visitors will find stone archways and arched breezeways. Off the main entry, also done in gray leuder limestone, there is a wine cellar with 12-inch-thick walls and an exercise room. Three additional bed-

rooms can be found downstairs.

The family room, located at the back of the house, features a high ceiling with cypress beams, a fireplace and a kitchenette. Additionally, there is a laundry room and a three-car garage, as well as 3 1/2 bathrooms total.

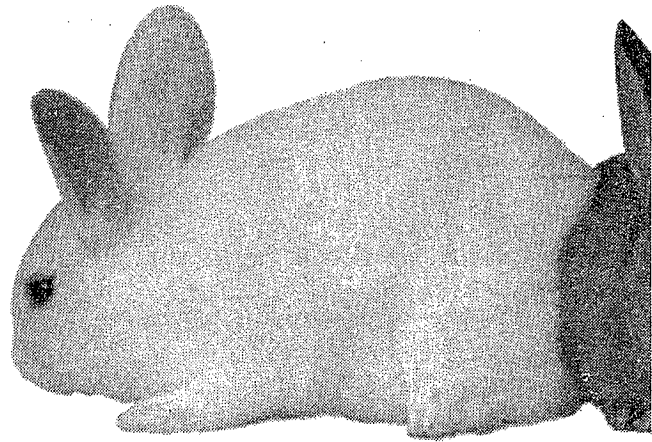
Other hand-chosen features include solid maple doors with satin nickel finish hardware, slate, stone and stressed-hardwood floors and Marvin wood windows.

The home presides over Barton Creek Lakeside, a master planned community designed to remain a small, private and very secluded enclave with a finite number of primary and secondary homes landscaped into 800 acres of prime Texas Hill Country.

Most buyers are retirees or are owners purchasing their second homes, but professionals working in Austin call the area home, as well. With a full golf course and a clubhouse, a sense of community has been developed in Barton Creek Lakeside.

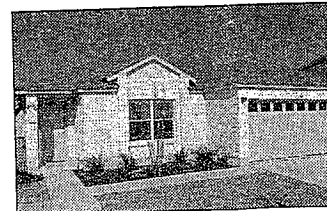
Schatz, who has built a dozen other homes in the community over the last several years says, "We have a lot of confidence that once somebody meets the neighbors, they'll love the area."

Visit Schatz Builders online at [www.schatzbuilders.com](http://www.schatzbuilders.com).



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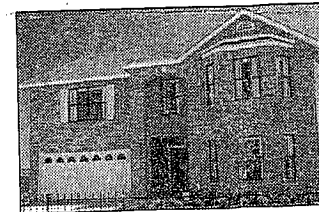


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