



## HELFENSTEINS - From page 2

In wanting all the girls' bedrooms on the same floor, in this case on the second floor, they decided to build a two-story house with a full basement, rather than a walk-out rambler like their last house. One complication to this design were the stairs. This time, they needed two sets of stairs (instead of one in a rambler). "You have to have steps to go upstairs and downstairs," said Matt. "Now you need two staircases, without interrupting the flow."

When they finally settled on open stairs leading to a balcony overlooking the living room, "everything fell into place," said Shelly of the design.

"Building comes easy to us, because we do agree," said Shelly. On 98 percent of the decisions, they agreed, estimated Matt. "Our tastes are very similar," he said.

Matt actually picked out the granite for the kitchen countertops without Shelly even seeing it. (OK, she saw a picture of the slab, which didn't do the granite justice due to the poor light, and she saw a two-inch by two-inch sample, which barely showed the swirling pattern.) "It was perfect. It had the right colors," said Matt of the granite.

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Photo by Michael Jacobson

The two-story living room features two sets of windows overlooking the wetlands out their back door and a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace.

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