



Southbeac

by **Charles Schwab AIA**

Dona and John made the retirement move from New York to sunny Southbeach, a quaint village south of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to get away from the long cold winters and to be situated between their three children which are spread north and south of their new retreat.



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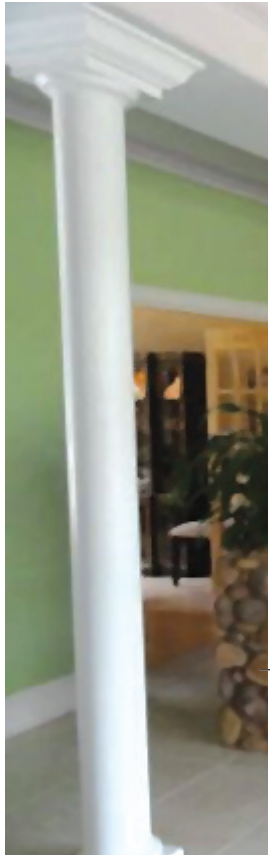
John suffered a work related injury resulting in the use of a wheelchair. The new location gives them quick access to the beach and their pontoon boat (complete with ramp) at the

Ospry Marina on the Intracoastal Waterway.

They chose “River Plantation” a gated community with a quiet back to nature feel for the location of their home.



**Previous page: No step entry at covered portico
Front and partial side view showing garage doors
This page (above) Foyer with view to living area
and backyard
Right: Center bar and aquarium**



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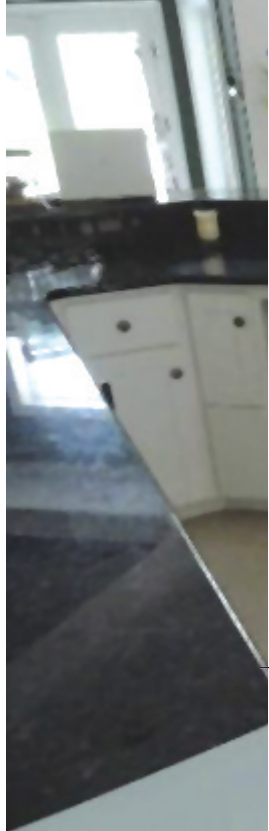
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ound their “perfect” lot
d under tall pine trees and
ommunity lake it was time

to find an architect.

Dona and John had read several Q & A universal design articles written by myself and they purchased my plan book through Specialiving. They were in search of a U.D. home plan designed with energy efficient construction and a hurricane safe-room among other features.

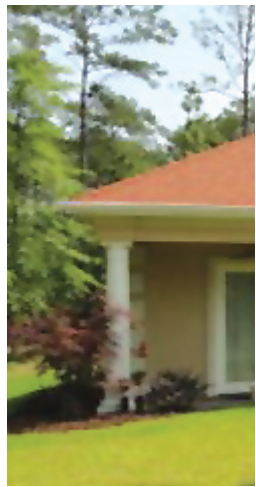
They chose plan UD 3390 from page 85



Above: John in kitchen at computer.
Above right: UD full access bar with living area and piano beyond.
Right: Covered master portico and fire pit at back of house.

of the plan book. It is a three-bedroom slab on grade home with a central common living area and a safe-room that is

also the bathroom for bedrooms two and three. The larger U.D. bathroom doubles up nicely as it is larger







Master bath has knee space under the sinks and a curbless shower (r).



(because it is wheelchair accessible) than a typical bathroom and it has the necessary ameni-

ties in case of a hurricane. It is built with concrete walls and is actually a separate structure



Charles Scchwab, the architect, and and John at front entry.

within the home. The ceiling is not attached to the house trusses above and the safe-room has a blast resistant window and emergency lighting. It also has a separate phone line direct to the phone company not bundled with the cable and internet so that if the cable goes out they

will still have a phone line

The kitchen is centrally located and has visual access to the great room the breakfast area and the living room. From all of these views there are vignettes to the beautiful backyard landscape and lake. The “rooms” are not separated by walls but rather defined by colors, various ceiling treatments and floor types.

I had the pleasure of joining John and Dona for dinner in Philadelphia at an accessibility conference. Several revisions were required including adding a salt water aquarium (still under construction) between the kitchen and an additional serv-

ing bar adjacent the sitting/living area. The serving bar was, of course, to be fully U.D. with open knee space under the sink with a lever handle, easy access storage and refrigeration and dual height counter tops at the high-low bar.

The garage doors needed to be changed from a front load to a side load per neighborhood covenants. A bumped out window at the front of the garage was added flanked with “mini” columns that imitate the style of the columns at the covered main entry porch. Similar style columns were added at a covered portico with direct access from the master bedroom overlooking the lake and fire pit in back.

These were all welcome revisions and in line with the overall design concept of “the inside being an extension of the outside and vice versa.”

Upon entering into the foyer with elegant fixture and vaulted ceiling one looks through the sunny home to the Pineapple

trees, flowering landscape and lake beyond. The back yard even has an easy-access ramp down to a fishing platform, complete with a curb to bumper the wheelchair wheels while fishing. The house was set further back from the street to be closer to the pond. This thoughtful setback invites the approaching visitor to a sort of majestic all encompassing view of the home.

I was fortunate to visit this spring. The couple even invited me to stay in their home. What a wonderful treat! It was such a pleasure to see how well the home functioned for everyone.

In John words, “It’s so nice to have the extra space and not be banging up the finish trim with my wheelchair”.

In Dona’s words, “ Since we first found you (Charles) through SpecialLiving Magazine, with this article it all comes full circle, the rest is history”

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