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Cass City

## Reshape space with linen wallcoverings

Today, it is more important than ever to provide ourselves with a living space that is multi-functional, comfortable and personal.

This office-den lends itself as a convenient and practical place to work and relax in. Walls account for the single largest space in a room. What you do to them can change the whole character of that room.

### Attractive solution

In this case, a Belgian linen textile wallcovering is used as a solution to several decorating problems: to hide wall irregularities, to amplify space, to create dimension, and to add decorative appeal.

Like a fine piece of furniture, linen ages well and evenly, which makes it a top quality product for covering walls today.

### Many advantages

The advantages of linen wallcoverings are numerous. Some of the outstanding features include: insulation from the cold, durability, easy maintenance due to low static dust attraction, and some acoustical properties.

Designed in American Traditional, this den is furnished with such great furniture classics as the Chippendale Wing Chair and the Duxbury Arm Chair. American Traditional has always been appreciated and cherished for its grace and beauty.

### Space-savers

For practicality and good design, the Custom Room Plan Modular Units by Ethan Allen are great space-savers for storage problems. These units contain organizers for papers, records and typewriter.

Another space-saver is the flip top table. It functions as a table for both writing and dining.

### Satisfying contrast

Naturals abound in a play of rich woods against texture; this room is satisfying to the senses.

The blending of warm and rustic woods, the sheen of highly polished wood and plank floors, the nubby texture of Belgian linen wallcovering, and the feel of wool carpeting underfoot—all harmonize to make this room a favorite niche to spend lots of time in.

## Construction firms agree

# No building boom or bust in area

The construction industry may be suffering from a near-depression elsewhere, but local builders say conditions aren't so bad here, nor do they expect they will be.

"It's not going to be a banner year," said builder Elmer Francis, who does mainly commercial work and remodeling.

"From what I can see, it's not going to be that bad. We're not living in Detroit." There, he said, 75 percent of the carpenters are out of work.

In contrast to the Detroit area, with its heavy dependence on the auto industry, explained Larry Hartwick, "Things will always be better up here."

Nevertheless, there will be some changes from 1979, which those contacted described as from "fair" to "average" to "pretty good."

Last year, for instance, Hartwick, who works with Randy Doerr under the title Doerr Builders, did all new construction. This year, he has doubts whether they will build any new homes.

"At 16 percent (interest on mortgages), there aren't going to be too many," but forecasts they will be doing remodeling and repair work.

"All I can say is, we've got enough work to get us by." That is a trend noted by the builders. Families who in better times might have sold their old homes and moved into new ones instead are staying put, but are having remodeling done, rooms added, etc.

Another change is that the builders may have to go farther to find work.

Developer Tom Herron, whose biggest home building territory is usually right in Cass City, will be building a home in Pigeon and another in Caseville. That is farther than he and his crew normally have to travel, he noted.

"It's not going to be a big year, but it won't be as bad as everyone is predicting."

### BUILD NOW?

Although the current 16-17 percent interest rate is very high -- a year ago, it was hovering around 11 percent -- Herron pointed out there may be an advantage to building a new home now, rather than wait for interest rates to drop.

Mortgages can be refinanced when the interest rates decline, plus now is a good time in terms of materials costs.

Because of the big slump in building, the cost of lumber has stabilized or declined. The cost of other materials is still going up, however.

When Hartwick got into the business 10 years ago, three bundles of asphalt shingles, to cover 100 square feet, cost \$9. Now the price is \$34.

A 2x4 stud, which sold for 69 cents back then, is \$2 now. The cost of labor has also gone up.

Gagetown builder Gary McKellar estimated an average house might cost \$60,000 to build today, \$5,000 more than a year ago and \$10,000 more than two years ago.

Still, for that price, a buyer here will get a lot more house than in the Detroit area.

Hartwick said he was in Dearborn recently, where homes with 1,200-1,400 square feet were selling for \$60,000-80,000. "Here you could build twice as big and have change left over."

A big reason for the difference, he explained, is that in the Detroit area, middlemen developers often take a big chunk of the sales price.

but don't do any of the construction. Labor and land costs are also higher.

The big reason for what is expected to be a slow year, of course, is the high interest rates. When they do finally drop, local builders expect the building business will boom, due to pent-up demand and members of the post World War II baby boom being of house building age.

Hartwick doesn't expect a big drop in interest rates until after the November election.

Francis predicted that whereas they went up 9 percent in one year, it will take two years to decline that much.

### LAST YEAR

In 1979, there were a total of eight homes built in Elkland and Novesta townships, including Cass City, at

an average cost of \$43,632, according to the records in the county building code department. The cheapest was \$24,000; most expensive, \$63,000.

In Cass City proper, four building permits were taken out for new homes, compared to 10 in 1978. The average cost of those homes in 1978 was \$39,082.

Through early April, no permits had been taken out yet for new homes.

In 1979, there were permits taken out for installation of 13 mobile or modular homes in the two townships, value not available.

The most popular item of construction last year was garages. Permits were taken out for 22 of them. Not including the one commercial type at \$17,280, they ranged in cost from \$1,000 to \$7,200.

The most costly construction projects in 1979, both now about done, were churches. The Novesta Church of Christ auditorium and fellowship hall-gymnasium-kitchen buildings on Cemetery Road were valued at \$289,090 on the building permit application. The Good Shepherd Lutheran church addition housing classrooms and offices is listed at \$173,571.

Construction should begin by June 1 and be completed in 18 months.

Contractor is H.C. Weber Construction Co. of Bay City.

Construction should begin by June 1 and be completed in 18 months.



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## Choosing paint colors to showcase fabrics

This year, home furnishings are more imaginative and exciting than we've seen in recent memory.

Found abundantly on upholstered pieces and in drapery fabrics, they're the perfect focal point around which to plan a new decorating scheme.

Designers have created materials that stir the senses and excite the mind: finely drawn florals in sumptuous color combinations; opulent Oriental shades in exotic florals, many elegantly outline-quilted; dramatic abstracts and geometries in vibrant, uplifting colors; and lush velvets and corduroys, often in two-color patterns.

To create the right setting for these scene-stealing designs, wall paint colors should be carefully selected so that they enhance rather than compete with

the patterns.

Here are a few suggestions from the National Paint and Coatings Association:

• With a print that has two rather dominant colors, use a very pale version of one of the colors for walls and ceiling, and a darker shade of the other for woodwork.

• Vibrantly colored plushy fabrics can be displayed beautifully against walls treated to deep-toned, neutral textured paint.

• Heighten the stimulating effect of an abstract or geometric pattern by continuing it onto the wall with a color-coded super-graphic.

• For an Oriental-inspired design, set off the jewel-like colors by painting an accent wall deep turquoise, emerald or ruby enamel.

# New! ENERGY

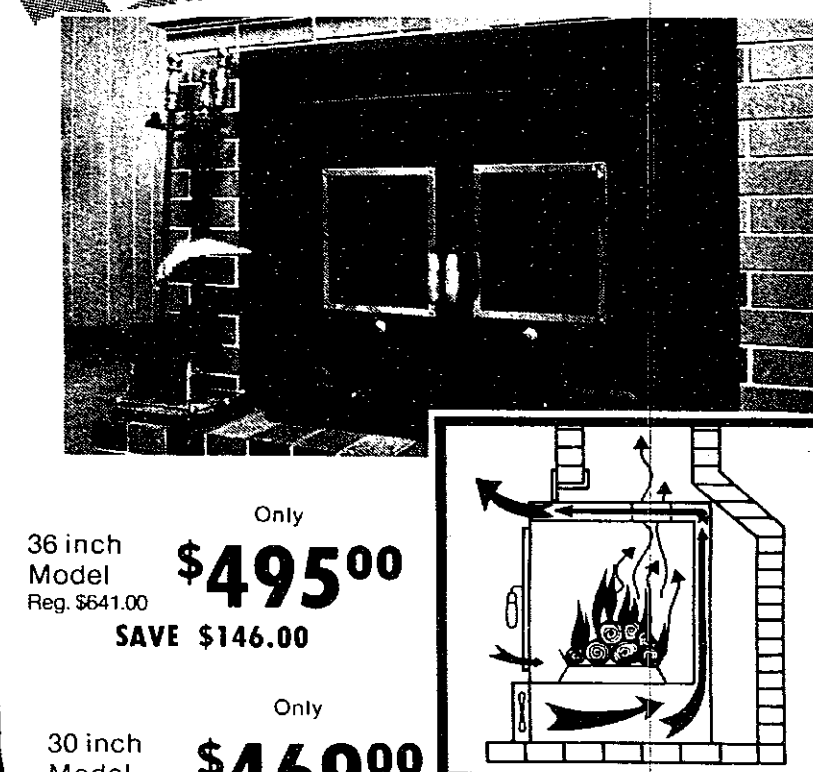
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