



Photos by Jim Harper

Landscape architect Dan Week was careful to keep the environment in mind, using native plants and installing a rain-harvesting system and babbling brook water feature.



Four whimsical, summer-camp inspired bunk beds tucked away on the third floor offer plenty of space for guests to stay.

“When people move to this area, they have a Southern vision – an idea of how they are going to live in the South. They are moving from up North or from a city. It’s time for them to relax and retreat. We wanted the house to reflect that vision.”

– Sam Guidry, architect



Ronald Wiese Jr., purchasing manager with builder Mark Saunders Luxury Homes, points out a swinging daybed – one of many comfy places to curl up for a nap on the sleeping porch.

BUILT to INSPIRE

Coastal Living’s 2009 Idea House shares the beauty of Brunswick County with readers across the country

By Suzi Drake
Features Editor

When *Coastal Living* magazine’s three million readers delve into this November’s issue, they will be treated to a page-by-page tour of the 2009 Idea House. Chock full of the latest trends in interior design, responsible building and, of course, the easy, breezy seaside lifestyle, the project intends to introduce readers to new styles and products.

This year, it will also introduce them to Brunswick County.

With all the coastal communities in the country to choose from, for its 11th annual Idea House, the folks at *Coastal Living* set their sights on a cozy marsh-front lot in the planned neighborhood of Seawatch, located just off Sunset Harbor Road near Southport.

“East to west, we keep our eyes out for areas that are really growing,” Nicole Hendrick, *Coastal Living* Idea House program manager, said. “We look for an area that has a good vision. We’ve had our eye on Brunswick County for quite a while. Its beautiful land and calm nature make it a truly amazing place. We really feel like it’s a hidden jewel.”

In January, a carefully selected think-pool of architects, designers and builders went to work on the 7,000-square-foot “Cape-style” home nestled on Mercer Mill Creek. While the majority of *Coastal Living*’s Idea Houses are smack-dab on the oceanfront, this project is intended to speak to readers who have a penchant for the coastal lifestyle, but don’t necessarily want the beach in their front yard.

“Being on the marsh really differentiates this house,” Hendrick said. “It’s a different kind of coastal.”

To further set the three-bedroom, five-bath home apart from Idea Houses of the past, architect Sam Guidry of Guidry-Coastal Architecture Inc. in Wilmington opted to infuse Northern, Southern and coastal architecture to achieve a distinctive design.

“The house combines the Cape Cod style common to New England with elements that are distinctly coastal North Carolina,” Guidry said. “It’s a style that is unique, blending traditional and nautical themes.”

According to Guidry, a former Southport resident, he and interior designer Phillip Sides of Phillip Sides Interior Design in Montgomery, Ala., set out to design “a space to live comfortably but elegantly; a space to entertain family and friends, with plenty of room for them to stay.”

“When people move to this area, they have a Southern vision – an idea of how they are going to live in the South,” Guidry explained. “They are moving from up North or from a city. It’s time for them to relax and retreat. We wanted the house to reflect that vision.”

And reflect it does. From the light, airy periwinkle-stained cupola over the third-floor sitting room that lets in soft rays of natural light, to the swinging daybed suspended by antiques wrought iron on the enclosed sleeping porch and four-bed bunk nook reminiscent of summer camp or a boat cabin, though graceful and refined, the home is intended to exude lived-in comfort.

It is also intended to inspire.

“That’s why it’s called an Idea House,” Ronald Wiese Jr., purchasing manager with builder Mark Saunders Luxury Homes, said. “It is meant to bring people into an area, show construction



Architect Sam Guidry descends the 2009 Idea House’s main staircase, accented by a grand collection of black-and-white photographs.

and design and give ideas about structure, fabrics, furniture, color, layout and storage.”

Throughout its three levels, the 2009 Idea House is brimming with thousands of inspiring details. Uncommon and brilliant colors coat the walls; plush upholstered benches offer built-in seating; a mélange of bold black-and-white photographs cascade along the zig-zag staircase; fabric moonlights as wallpaper; motion detectors activate the Rinnai on-demand water heater and Upanor radiant floor heating; mealtime takes to the open air in an outdoor kitchen and dining room; and a host of energy-saving and eco-friendly techniques pervade the home and landscape.

“The folks at *Coastal Living* said they admired what we are doing to protect the coastal environment,” Jamie Prevatte, director of marketing for Seawatch’s parent company The Coastal Companies, said.

“I didn’t want the house to feel out of place,” Dan Weeks, landscape architect, said. “I wanted the landscape to be a portal to the environments and to create an outdoor living space.”

See “Idea House” on back page of *Portfolio*.