

Tour an Energy Star Home

BY KATE MAIER

Even if your building plans have been put on hold until rosier economic times, you can still dream. Michael Forst's green-minded construction firm has put together an Energy Star model house in Amagansett, where anyone interested in residential energy efficiency can learn a few things. The house will be open to the public through the end of January. Mr. Forst will do a walk-through of the house with groups or individuals by appointment, showing off its features from top to bottom. Appointments can be made by calling Forst Construction in East Hampton or visiting its Web site, www.forstconstruction.com.

Built under Environmental Protection Agency guidelines, the house passed Energy Star rating tests with flying colors, he said, making its new homeowner eligible for rebates and saving money on energy costs.

A third-generation builder and designer who grew up in East Hampton, Mr. Forst said he has been committed to green practices since he started in business with his wife, Amy Forst, over three years ago. "A lot of building green is just building a higher-quality house," he said during a tour of the house, on Devon Close, last week. "With the terminology, people think you're stuffing it with hay or something, and that's not what it is."

Mr. Forst showed off the spray-foam isomer insulation in the attic. As a volunteer fireman, Mr. Forst particularly likes its self-extinguishing character. Most other insulations tend to smolder and burn beneath walls in the event of fire, he said.

"You really have to come up with a whole-house building approach," Mr. Forst said of the Energy Star challenge. "Because you've made the house tighter



Through the end of January, Michael Forst will lead tours of an Energy Star model house he built in Amagansett. *Kate Maier*

the air becomes stagnant. The heat-recovery ventilation system is constantly circulating the air on a timer. We're bringing fresh air in, conditioning it, and then letting it go." Without such a system household cleaners and other contaminants can hang in the air.

The basement of the house is the control center, with a natural gas burner. Because a two-kilowatt photovoltaic solar system is installed, an electric meter runs backward when the sun is out. Appliances are also Energy Star rated. Other aspects of the house don't necessarily save money but offer peace of mind, like water-based polymer paints.

According to the National Association of Home Builders' green guidelines, "there's a full spectrum [in going green], from the beginning of the design, picking your lot, protecting the lot, and protecting the natural vegetation."

"There's six different sections, you

get to pick and choose, which is the nice part, because not everybody has tons of money," Mr. Forst said. "We don't live in an area where water is such a huge issue for us. If we lived in Arizona, maybe we would want to work on a gray water system." But living here, "it was a no-brainer, just to be an Energy Star builder."

"The nice thing about Energy Star is someone is coming and testing things. It's nice, there's no way for me to test the heating and air-conditioning. I don't have that stuff, and neither does the [East Hampton Town] Building Department."

Mr. Forst was pleased to say that the Energy Star inspector who examined the Devon Close house said it was "the second tightest house he had ever tested, and we're 900 square feet bigger" than another one he tested. "We really blew it out of the water, we did excellent."

Business Owners Commiserate

BY KATE MAIER

A smattering of East Hampton's business leaders met last Thursday for an informal chamber of commerce breakfast at the Indian Wells Tavern in Amagansett to discuss the dismal state of the economy and the sustainability of off-season business.

Paul Brennan, the regional director for Prudential Douglas Elliman, spoke not just about the real estate market but about the stock market and its effects on the economy here.

"We like to think, growing up here, that we are not linked to the city," said the East End native, who considers himself lucky to have found a lucrative enough job to stay here. "A lot of my friends have moved away, and a lot of local people can't afford to live here."

Since the stock market started swinging, things have taken a more ominous tone than even Mr. Brennan could remember in his 30 years of experience in the business. "I've been through a lot of downturns, and I've never seen the lack of confidence that I see now," he said. There's a saying that "when Wall Street sneezes, the Hamptons catch a cold. Well, Wall Street has done more than sneeze."

Michael Pellman, a financial planner for Morgan Stanley who spoke at the meeting, predicted that the East End would survive during the summer season — people are still going to want to get away, he said. Even if their bonuses — or lack thereof — prevent them from buying a house, they're likely to rent here next summer, and continue to hire the working-class people who live here as landscapers, caterers, and house-cleaners, he said. However, there are "year-round business concerns . . . people are not coming out every weekend" as they once did.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, many business leaders at the meeting agreed, people from New York have been spending more time here year round. The forecast for this winter doesn't look so good, they said, as the Manhattan market tightens.

"What can we do as local business people? It's incumbent on us as leaders in the business community to really focus on that concept of confidence," said Mr. Brennan. He couldn't emphasize enough the importance of shopping lo-

cally, and compared the East End to a chimney, where "the stones are the business community . . . and the people are the mortar. Anything we could do as a business community to ease the pain for those we serve, that would go a long way."

Mr. Pellman said that his company is predicting the economy will "bottom out in the middle of '09," and added that it might not be a traditional "V-shaped recovery"; instead, it will be more of a "U-shape." There's a possibility that "things will bottom out and stay there for a while."

While he couldn't offer any specific advice about any individual's retirement planning, "for the most part, stay the course" was the message for chamber members who wondered what they should be doing with their money in the stock market.

"There are some staggering data points that say right now is the worst time to sell. Any money you put in the market right now, it's just going to be a wild ride going day to day. At least when you go to Vegas you're going to get a free drink."

Meanwhile, the chamber is operating on a shoestring budget, having lost a grant from East Hampton Town that provided for off-season advertising. Marina Van, the executive director, said she could use some volunteer help from high school students or retirees, because she's all alone in the office. She has cut down on mailings and is relying solely on e-mail to communicate with her members.

While the global economy isn't on the upswing either, Ms. Van said she's received a number of inquiries from magazines in places like Germany, Scandinavia, and Australia. "They are writing articles that will come out in March and April to attract people here. It's not the ocean, but it's the celebrities" that the Europeans seem to be interested in, she said.

No matter what their reason for coming, East End business owners will most likely welcome those summertime visitors — and their euros — with open arms. In the meantime, Ms. Van urged everyone at the meeting to shop nearby this holiday season. "As my 92-year-old mother says, 'You don't want to go to the mall, you'll get mugged!' So stick around here."

Keeping Account

White's Christmas

Starting this weekend, White's Pharmacy on Main Street in East Hampton will be open on Sundays between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. through Dec. 21. In keeping with the season, White's will give anyone who walks through the door on Sundays a free goodie bag.

Pizza and T-Shirts

There will be free pizza, pumpkin pie, and apple cider served between 1 and 6 p.m. on Saturday at Labl, a store in Sag Harbor's Shopping Cove, where Quendrim Hoti of Southampton, a graphic artist, will promote his line of T-shirts at a trunk show.

"Gryle" shirts are "a brand driven by the vitality of street art," according to a press release. The graphics are hand-drawn and applied, and the brand name is a synthesis of the words grimy and style.

A Correction

In the Nov. 20 issue of The Star, East End agents who made The Wall Street Journal's "Top 200" list were mentioned. The Star neglected to include Susan Breitenbach, who made the list and works out of the Corcoran Group's Bridgehampton office. In 2007, Ms. Breitenbach sold \$123,776,000 worth of real estate.

Recorded Deeds

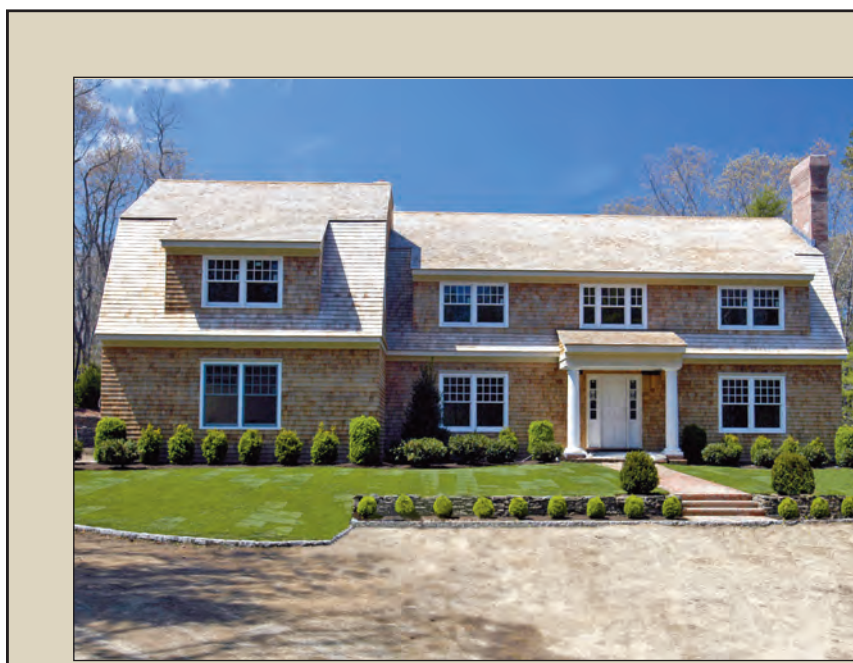
The prices below have been calculated from the county transfer tax. Unless otherwise noted, the parcels contain structures.

- EAST HAMPTON**
 Russell Field Trust to Reb/John L.L.C., 105 Cove Hollow Road, 1.25 acres, Oct. 22, \$600,000.
 J. and M. Smith to F. and N. Crowley, 32 Jonathan Drive, .93 acre, Sept. 22, \$840,000.
- SAG HARBOR**
 L. Friedman to 8 East Union L.L.C., 8 East Union Street, .22 acre, Oct. 14, \$988,000.
 S. Mead to G.V. Investment Holding, 64 Union Street, .17 acre, Oct. 17, \$975,000.
- SPRINGS**
 Score Construction to R. and A.

- Wolf, 50 Cedar Drive, .22 acre, March 25, \$685,000.
 V. LoPriore to G. and G. Grosso, 12 Underwood Drive, .46 acre, Oct. 7, \$645,000.
 M. Lester to G. Drummond and B. Thomas, 900 Fireplace Road, 1.98 acres, Oct. 17, \$1,100,000.
 Millevolte and Terribile to G. Roberts, 15 Harbor Lane, .26 acre, Sept. 29, \$1,200,000.
 G. Horne to M. Henry, 14 Harbor Lane, .34 acre, Oct. 15, \$1,475,000.
 J. Bolger to J. Uhl and R. Cummings, 128 Three Mile Harbor-Hog Creek Road, 1.54 acres, July 30, \$815,000.

Data provided by Suffolk Research Service of Southampton

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Four Open Houses To Give Thanks For.

Open House.
Saturday, November 29th, 1 to 3pm.
23 Bull Run, East Hampton

Exciting new listing on 2 gorgeous acres in the most prestigious NW area. 6,500 s.f. Larry Kane construction with 6 bedrooms, 7.5 baths, 50 ft. gunite pool, 10 ft. ceilings, library, multi-level home theater, wine cellar, beautiful landscaping & stone work. Ed Brody. Exclusive. \$3,600,000. *Dir: Stephen Hands Path to Bull Path to Bull Run.*



Open House.
Saturday, November 29th, 1 to 3pm.
1124 Springs Fireplace Road, East Hampton

Striking, energy efficient contemporary with the feel of a Soho loft. The interior of red and gold hardwood and polished stone merges with the colors of Accabonac via the home's generous windows and porches. On 2.78 acres with pool, sprawling lawn and extensive landscaping. Exclusive. Gary Reiswig. **New Price: \$1,295,000**



Open House.
Saturday, November 29th, 1 to 3pm.
5 Clamshell Avenue, East Hampton

Extraordinary new traditional features old wood exposed beams, gourmet kitchen, fireplaces in master Bedroom, den and living room, 12 inch oak floors, and extensive covered porches. Master bedroom suite has sitting room. Heated pool. Co-Exclusive. Doug McCullough. \$2,250,000. *Dir: Stephen Hands to Hands Creek to Clamshell Ave.*



Open House.
Saturday, November 29th, 1 to 3pm.
14 Briarcroft Road, East Hampton

Delightful family traditional home on a full acre with heated pool and 3,000 s.f. of living space including cook's kitchen with granite tops, family area, 4 bedrooms including masters up and down, 3.5 baths, English gardens. Tasteful yet comfortable. **New Exclusive.** Carol David. \$1,250,000. *Dir: Three Mile Harbor Rd. to Briarcroft.*



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