Good Design Saves Dollars

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Remember when you could buy a suitcase for a dollar and a yard of cotton for a dime? Well, if you don't remember that maybe you can remember when hamburgers were a quarter, a soda pop was a nickel and matches were one penny a box. The cost of anything is more this year than it was last year and a dollar doesn't buy half the things it did 20 years ago - especially if you are building a home.

The cost of building a home has increased about $2,500 in the past two years and further increases seem inevitable.

Costs for mortgage money, materials and labor all have risen dramatically. A Louisiana study, made in the spring of this year, concluded that the experiences here came within one-tenth of one per cent of the national average-cost figures reported in a survey conducted by the Associate Press. For example, the typical home building family in Acadiana will pay 36 per cent more to finance a home this year than they would have paid two years ago.

One Louisiana contractor compared the cost of a $24,900 home he built in 1967 with the cost of an identical home built in 1966. The 67 model cost $1,497 more than the '66 model. He found that in just one year, his materials had gone up 22 per cent and labor costs had risen 11 per cent as had the cost of sub-contracted work.

A big developer and builder in New Jersey told the Associated Press that increasing demand for homes and higher building costs meant that the prices of homes will continue to climb. Postponing the purchase of a home will inevitably result in an over-increasing purchase price, he said.

In Lafayette, the best and only answer lies in the utilization of better home design. It is available, and it will work. There is almost end to the ways, large and small, that good design can save money in construction and, when the designer is truly capable, the buyer not only saves money, he gets a better home in the bargain.

The large commercial and industrial owners long ago recognized the dollar value of good design and practically all of the buildings are designed by professionals. A talented designer understands, for instance, that improperly used space costs dearly and needlessly. Working with you personally, he will analyze your real needs and preferences, and plan a home that reflects these needs faithfully, without those costly "dead areas." He puts space to work by a proper arrangement of rooms with relation to each other; by multiple use of areas where it is practicable; by the arrangement of traffic patterns so as not to cut up the rooms; by the disposition of solids and voids to create the illusion of continuing space; by the use of storage elements as space dividers.

In all of these ways, and more, the competent designer is able to get the most usable space possible for your building dollar. And as a side benefit, your house will have the beauty that is obtained only from custom design and which will endure long after the typical subdivision "alikes" have become dated and out of style.