

David Steuer built his first home when he was a student at the University of Michigan.

Homes/Gardens

Teen has a design for future

By JACK WOERPEL
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Dave Steuer liked to draw pictures of houses in his notebooks instead of doodling during class at Southfield Lathrup High School. "I've always liked to design homes," he recalled recently.

He's at the University of Michigan now, starting his sophomore year. And if anyone asks him how he spent his summer, he can tell them he helped supervise construction of one of the houses he designed in a homebuilding course he took during his senior year at high school.

And the house is no cracker box. It is priced at \$395,000.

WITH EXTRAS, the house might even top \$400,000.

Steuer is only 19, a tender age for designing homes for the wealthy.

It all started when he contacted several builders a year ago to see if they wanted to buy the plans for the huge home he had designed as his senior class project. "They all said it was so wide it wouldn't fit on any lots they had available," Steuer said last week as he took a visitor through the house, now under construction in Wabeek Forest, Bloomfield Township.

"They all turned me down, but one really showed some interest. He liked the house but had no site that was suitable. He



David Steuer in front of \$395,000 house he designed

was Marc Rosen, of Sherry Homes. So when I wanted a job for the summer vacation, I asked him. He hired me as a sort of construction expeditor.

"Then he decided to build on this large lot in Wabeek Forest — 156 feet wide by 164 deep. It was a natural for my big home design."

Since state law requires that a building of this size be designed by an architect, the working drawings were done by Alexander Bogearts, architect. Steuer is the designer and Rosen is the builder.

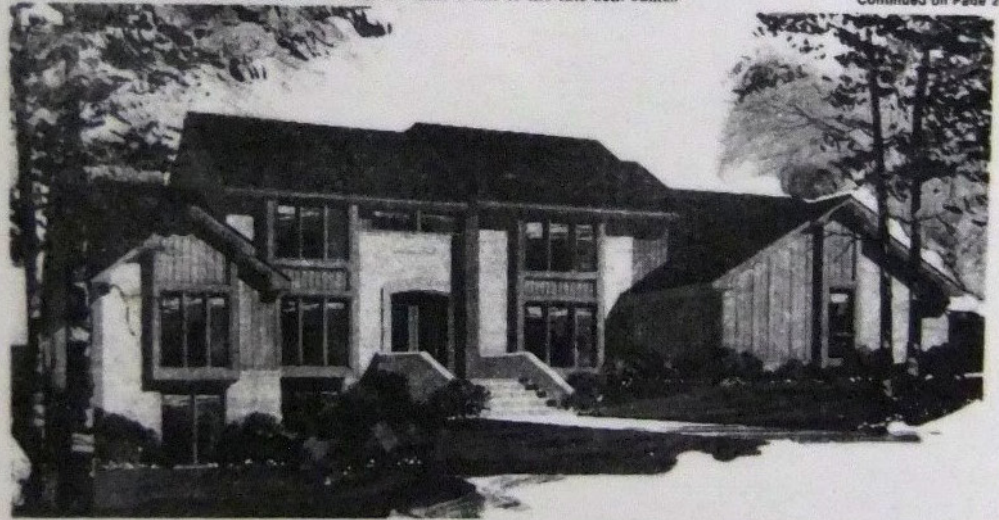
WABEEK FOREST is in the south end of the sprawling Wabeek development, the former farm estate of the late Sen. James

Couzens. The house is on Wabeek Lake Road at Birchwood Way, north of Lone Pine and east of Middle Belt in Bloomfield Township.

For all its 4,600 square feet of living space on two levels, the house has no living room. The designer used the great room concept, one huge room combining both living room and family room. There's also a library, which can serve as a living room.

The master suite is on the main floor, with three more bedrooms upstairs. This master suite has a special feature, a sitting room with fireplace. The suite runs the

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How 4,600-square-foot house will look once it is completed

Teen has design on the future

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full 62-foot depth of the house, from the bath in the front to the parlor at the rear.

The lower level has a walkout to the front, giving the facade a three-story look at one side.

The Wabeek golf course comes to the back of the lot and there's a distant view of a lake from the front windows.

SOME SPECIAL features you get with a \$395,000 house: three-car garage with electronic door operators, marble fireplace, marble foyer, "bridge" around the foyer at second floor level, wet bar in the great room, two powder rooms and three baths, formal dining room with butler's pantry, two furnaces and air conditioners, central vacuum system, inch-thick foam insulation all around, and triple-glazed windows.

Steuer was asked if he's studying architecture at the university. "I don't think I will," he said. "I really want to be a builder, not an architect. So I'm studying economics and psychology."

It's hard to fault that logic. Innovative home financing methods are the key to sales these days and builders need to know how to keep their customers happy.