

# Serenbe offers new place to roost in 'The Nest'

At a time when home building has ground to a virtual halt, the eco-conscious Serenbe community in south Fulton County has a new offering — lower-priced cottages that offer a smaller footprint and an easier entry into the popular, rural-urban neighborhood.

The minds behind Serenbe, a modern enclave tucked inside a carefully preserved tract of farmland near Palmetto, Ga., realized that home buyers want smaller homes with all of the amenities of a "McMansion," said a spokesperson for Serenbe. Buyers are placing an emphasis on quality over quantity and Serenbe responded to that value shift with the recent introduction of The Nest, featuring the Lew Oliver-designed cottage concept.

The 15 homes priced from \$260,000 to \$455,000, are being built by Martin Dodson Homes.

Located directly across from Serenbe's organic farm, where residents grow and raise their own vegetables, The Nest already boasts one contract signed and three reservations for homes.

As with all homes in the Serenbe community, the cottages are part of a master plan to demonstrate model green construction concepts, including geothermal heating and cooling, solar-ready options, and EarthCraft standards.

Atlanta-based Southface has become a partner with the new community.

Southface is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that provides environmental education and outreach programs, and helps set the standards for healthy, environmental home building and design.



SPECIAL

**Model citizen:** New Lew Oliver-designed cottages at Serenbe start at \$260,000 and offer model green construction features in partnership with Atlanta's Southface.

"As a Building America research team partner, Southface is delighted for the opportunity to work with the innovative Nest model home at Serenbe to evaluate new energy-efficiency solutions and collect valuable, real-world comfort and energy performance data," said Sydney Roberts, Southface Home Services program manager. "This data, gathered using advanced monitoring capabilities, will result in a case study that helps educate building professionals, and that provides real-world feedback to the U.S. Department of Energy for use in developing improved energy-efficiency standards for residential construction everywhere," said Roberts, who oversees all home-related programs at

Southface, including Building America.

Building America is an industry-driven research program, sponsored by the Department of Energy, designed to accelerate the development and adoption of advanced building-energy technologies in new and existing homes.

The new cottage homes at The Nest offer front-porch access to sidewalks, walking trails and a 6-acre lake.

"The 'Lew Oliver Nest' cottage is not simply downsizing, it is a lightening up, bringing about an increase in quality of one's life," said Lew Oliver. "Simple living patterns and increased leisure time are consequences

of life in a Nest house. All of the luxuries found in the McMansion are found in the Nest Cottage, only much more efficient, green, and up-to-date, without the overwhelming maintenance and mortgage associated with the typical house," added Oliver.

Lew Oliver Inc. is an award-winning Atlanta-based design firm that offers a range of services, including custom-home design and urban planning and specializes in "new urbanism," with an emphasis on green concepts. Oliver's work can be found in towns and communities across the U.S., including metro Atlanta's Vickery.

New local projects include Big Canoe in Georgia and Hartness Preserve, while Oliver's current international projects include towns in Tornagrain, Scotland; Batan, Ecuador; Isla Pedro Gonzalez, Panama; and Arcos de la Frontera, Spain.

Serenbe embraces the concept of "new urbanism," by offering residents a rural retreat with amenities associated with intown living, including shops, restaurants, art galleries and an overall master plan that emphasizes organic and eco-friendly living.

Created by renowned Atlanta restaurateurs Steve and Marie Nygren, of The Pleasant Peasant and Mary Mac's Tea Room fame, the Serenbe community is part of the 40,000-acre Chattahoochee Hill Country, which, through land conservation efforts, is largely untouched by development.



**Nygren**  
Serenbe