



▲ Pierson-Gibbs Homes Inc. built the "shell" of the Bastianellis' house; the couple did a lot of the work.

Finish what they started

Framed house becomes home when owners do the work

By Helen S. Bas
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When Tony and Luane Bastianelli decided to build a house, they knew they wanted more control than the typical homeowner has. Saving money sounded pretty good, too.

They were willing to put in a huge amount of sweat equity and deal with contractors, so the couple teamed with Pierson-Gibbs Homes Inc. in Richmond.

The 20-year-old company is a custom home builder that specializes in helping customers participate in the building process. The customer can do as much or as little of the work as desired, with corresponding cost savings.

Pierson-Gibbs builds the main structure on the lot and foundation the homeowner provides. Sub-flooring, framing, exterior wall and interior stud partitions, roofing and siding and exterior doors and windows are completed and exterior door locks are installed.

Permits are obtained by the homeowner; the homeowner also is responsible for making sure that municipality ordinances and any neighborhood association rules are followed.

"Pierson-Gibbs gives you a copy of the plans for when you apply for permits," said Luane. "The township (or city) will mark it up and give you a list of what

► **Finish, D2**



▲ The living room faces the back yard, which can be seen through tall windows that frame a stone fireplace.

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▲ Scott Smith (left), a builder from Pierson-Gibbs, listens as Tony and Luane Bastianelli relate stories of their home-building experiences. The couple did a lot of the interior work and completed exterior finishing to have more say in how the work was done.



▲ The large kitchen opens to the dining area and the living room beyond. Walls in the three rooms and the family room (not shown) were painted graduated shades of the same color. Granite countertops and island are standard in Pierson-Gibbs houses.



▲ By choosing a lot carefully and doing much of the work, the Bastianellis could afford the home of their dreams.

Who is a candidate for building?

Building a house takes more than time and money. To contribute as much work as the Bastianellis did requires knowledge, patience and perhaps a few friends in strategic places.

"It's not for everyone," said Bill Pierson, president of Pierson-Gibbs Homes Inc. "We provide a considerable amount of information, and a customer service rep is with each customer at every step.

"But the customer needs to be inclined to working with building materials, have the ability to deal with contractors and have a little knowledge of things like permits and codes.

Having a friend or relative in the building trades (to provide information and support) isn't a bad idea, either."

For more information about trying such a project, visit Pierson-Gibbs' showroom in Richmond or call (586) 727-2050 for hours and how to schedule a visit.