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**OCTAGONAL SHAPE PROVES  
HIGHLY FUNCTIONAL**

## Farm Couple Builds 8-Sided Home

By Naomi Simmons

Looking for a home that is different from anything else in the neighborhood? You might do like Larry Huffman and Velma Peacock of Crawford County, Kan.

Design one and build it yourself. Their eye-catching frame home, located at the south edge of Hepler, is constructed in an octagonal shape.

Larry describes the design of the four-bedroom home as "a 58-ft. square with the corners knocked off."

Actually, the design is two octagons — one inside the other. The inside octagon creates four small rooms in the center of the home, all exactly the same size. Each of these pie-shaped rooms has two 12-ft. 6-in. walls and two 10-ft. walls. The only "square" corners are in the very center of the house in these four rooms.

The two small rooms at the rear of the home are bathrooms directly across from the four bedrooms. The room across from the back door entry-way is the utility room and other room is Larry's room, occupied by his gun repair and shell loading equipment.

"The north four 24-ft. sides of the outside octagon form the outside walls of the isosceles trapezoid-shaped bedrooms, each with large closets. The master bedroom has "his" and "hers" closets.

The south 24-ft. sides form the exterior wall of the kitchen-dining room/family room complex. Velma has the furniture arranged in the west half of this living room to accommodate two conversation groups, one before the fireplace and the other behind a large picture window.

The dining area on the south is separated from the kitchen area by a table-height bar. "Whenever visitors come, we all seem to migrate to this bar," says Velma. "It was one of the conveniences I asked to have built into the plans."

Under the home is a partial basement which also serves as a storm cellar.

"The biggest reason I put the basement here is for all the piping," Larry

explains. "I call it my pipe chase. All of the plumbing goes up through the floor from here. If anything goes wrong, I can get to all the plumbing from here."

The main heating source for the home is a large woodburning fireplace in the southwest wall. This fireplace is equipped with iron doors and damper for heat regulation. A three-quarter horse electric fan can be turned on to circulate heat throughout the house if desired.

A propane furnace in the center of the house with duct work leading to each room provides back-up heat when the fire in the fireplace dies down.

Larry and Velma say it seldom runs.

Insulation in the walls and the 7-ft. 3-in. ceiling add to the heat efficiency of the home.

Larry says building an octagon shaped building is not as difficult as it may sound.

"Everything is simple. When you are doing carpenter work it's no harder to make one angle cut than it is another, as long as you set the saw accurately every time," Larry says.

He admits laying up the fireplace of native stone from the farm probably gave him the most challenge.

"This was my first time to lay stone. I had worked with block, brick and tile but never stone. It took me a while to learn to pick the right rocks and fit them together," Larry says. "I'm sure it took me a lot longer than it would have a stone mason."

However, both Velma and Larry are happy with the finished product.

"I'm pretty crazy about the whole house," Velma readily admits. "It's very simple to take care of. It doesn't seem to get cluttered — except for the back bedroom I use for my hobby shop."

Disadvantages, Velma points out, include difficulty in rearranging the furniture and a bit of wasted space in the bedrooms with no square corners for placement of the beds.

Believing the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, Velma and



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**PLANTED AND HARVESTED BY A SQUIRREL**

## Nebraska Corn Stalk Produces 14 Ears

If every corn stalk produced as many ears as the one which grew in H.G. Paschal's Fremont, Neb., garden this summer, we'd all have corn coming out of our ears.

The otherwise normal 7-ft. tall stalk produced a whopping 14 ears. The stalk apparently was "planted" by a squirrel who dropped the seed after raiding a bird feeder, says Paschal.

He notes that the stalk grew near his tomato plants so it probably benefited from the fertile soil and extra waterings that the tomatoes received.

"They weren't big ears," says Paschal. "There were only a few developed ears and the rest were partially developed having just a few kernels."

However, those kernels were enough incentive for a squirrel —

maybe even the same squirrel which planted the seed — to knock the stalk down to get a free dinner before Paschal was able to salvage any seed from the prolific plant.



Top portion of the 7-ft. tall stalk which produced 14 ears.

Larry enjoy entertaining family and friends in their home, or just relaxing after a day's work.

"Yep, we've been happy with it," Larry says as he gets up to add another log to the fireplace. "I just wanted something different so I built it — with a little help from my son-in-law and a few others. It's different!"

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