

# Catching some rays!

Sunroom has empty-nesters beaming

By Margaret Anne Fehr

Photos By Michael Roberts

## EMPTY NESTERS, TAKE HEART!

There's a world of possibilities that open up after the kids are gone and you start to re-fashion your house to suit your more carefree lifestyle.

Tibi and Kati can speak to that, having recently installed a spacious new sunroom onto their 1100 square foot home built in the seventies.

Kati explained the somewhat circuitous route that led to the recent construction of the Glastar sunroom that had actually started out to be a bathroom addition. "We waited until the kids, our 3 daughters, got married and then Tibi and I started to fix things up. Last year, we had the interior updated and then we thought of renovating the bathroom, and somehow, we wound up with the sunroom instead," she chuckles.

"We had visited some resorts in the past that had a hot tub and other amenities. When we started on the bathroom, we thought we'd knock out a wall, extend it and put in a two person soaker tub."



When the couple started looking for bathtubs, a salesperson jokingly pointed out a hot tub to them.

"When we got home, we started crunching some numbers as to how much it would cost for the renovations, including a soaker tub and a small porch off the back. Tibi said why don't we just go with the hot tub idea instead, which by this time, included a sunroom enclosure.

"Once the decision was made, we did our homework," says Kati. "We interviewed a number of sunroom and construction companies who drew up plans and quoted us prices on all kinds of different options. Of all of them, we felt that Glastar Sunroom Systems did a fantastic job of presenting what they had, who they were and how long they'd been in business. The sales rep even brought samples of the actual manufactured products with him, so we felt that they really knew their product."

The couple chose to go for the largest size they could build according to the zoning requirements for their yard which



*"When we sit in the hot tub at night, having that roof opens up the sky view which is so great," says Kati. "It's definitely something we wouldn't have had with a slanted roof."*

was 16 ft by 20 resulting in 320 additional square feet.

The sunroom is enclosed with 4 foot panel windows on three sides with every other window equipped with a full screen for efficient ventilation. The couple also chose to go with two sliding doors, one that opens onto the backyard and patio and the other leading to the front yard and driveway.

The two opposite walls are equipped with insulated aluminum lower panels while the front of the sunroom is virtually a wall-of-glass to facilitate an unimpeded view. The couple chose a gable roof that, in hindsight, they are glad they did. "When we sit in the hot tub at night, having that roof opens up the sky view which is so great," says Kati. "It's definitely something we wouldn't have had with a slanted roof."

The gable roof also contributes to increased cubic volume inside the sunroom adding to its sense of spaciousness along with a combination overhead fan/light fixture that keeps the air in motion.



The sunroom sits on teleposts on the front and is secured to the foundation of the house for stability. Steve Sarens, co-owner and service manager with Glastar says that the company has developed a 'floatation' system over their 35 year history that addresses the shifting nature of Manitoba's gumbo soil.

Steve explains that the Glastar Sunroom System's unique "floatation" design has been engineered specifically for soil movement. Every panel has its own tracking which allows it to move up, down, or sideways when there is soil movement. The panels actually float independently of the main structure. Says Steve, "In all the years that SunShade has used the Glastar "floatation" system no one has ever had any broken glass or a twisted panel from deck or building movement, although probably 99% of the decks or buildings in Manitoba have moved."

While the sunroom will not have auxiliary heating, heavy insulation on floor and roof and Styrofoam insulation on doors and panels will help keep the worst of external cold and heat at bay year-round. The couple chose carpeting for the interior flooring for warmth underfoot and also to provide a comfortable play area for their grandchildren.

Tibi and Kati were impressed with how quickly the sunroom went up, taking just 3 weeks, including rain days! "This space has kind of taken over," says Kati. "We've had a bridal shower here and seated 15 people very comfortably. Between outdoor lunches, suppers and hot tub sessions, we don't even know what the dining room looks like anymore!"

The couple took the time to write a letter of thanks to the Glastar team for "making the whole sunroom experience so enjoyable" and also added, "No matter how many times we have walked around and through our sunroom, we are amazed at the precision of fittings and the solidness of every window and door."

Tibi and Kati can rest assured knowing that their sunroom is covered with a 10 year warranty on materials and a five year warranty on installation. However, Steve says that when and if there are any problems to address, "we don't even check back to the date of the install. We just come out to make it right." <sup>®</sup>



Steven Sarens stands proudly in front of another successful project.