

Petersburg 2015

HOME & GARDEN EDITION



Football season is going to great at Roundtree and Aulbach's family-built dreamhome



Keeping farm animals for pets and livestock at home

Casey Knight's personality and sense of nostalgia shine in his new home's design

Family-built and made for having fun

By **ORIN PIERSON**
Petersburg Pilot

It all started on a bar napkin. After purchasing their corner lot on 14th Street, Kyle Roundtree and Jody Aulbach just started drawing it all out. The plan started with the kitchen. "We knew we wanted something that was very accommodating to having friends over, because we love to entertain and do dinners," said Aulbach. "I love to cook and Kyle does too." And so it began.

After the bar napkin came the graph paper. Aulbach started sketching her dream kitchen, complete with islands and bars. "The first drawing I gave to my dad and he said, 'that's about six thousand square feet. That's not going to work.' He got me to squish things," said Aulbach.

Jody has the good fortune of being the daughter of Gary Aulbach, owner of Alpine Design and Building, LLC. With the help of her dad's custom home construction expertise, Aulbach and Roundtree were able to get everything they wanted in a home and make the best possible use of their property.

They brought in an expert to get the kitchen design just right. Sharon Lewis runs a kitchen and cabinetry design company called Kitchens, Etc. based out of Bend, Ore. Lewis is the daughter of Tom Lewis, Sr. and often comes to Petersburg to visit family. "That's how we got this island and the dry bar in the corner," said Aulbach. "She helped with that a lot and I just love it."

The kitchen sink is configured in a unique and very intentional way. It sits in the middle island looking out at the dining area and living room, "because during a dinner party everyone wants to talk, but you're doing dishes all night," said Aulbach.

Aulbach appreciates all the counter space for chopping and baking. The countertops were custom made by the Counterfitters in Juneau, who, as a bonus, used extra counter material to make matching cutting boards and hot plates.

The floor plan in the kitchen is also dinner party friendly. It leaves plenty of room for people to walk by and mingle while others cook and clean up.

"The kitchen is mine," said Aulbach. "The garage is his," and a nice garage it is, a spacious 500 sq ft with abundant storage and workspace.

The house stands tall. The extra height gives them a little more storage underneath and greatly improves their view. "When we bought this property and put in the driveway, I actually brought a ladder here and climbed to the top to see what the view could look like someday," said Aulbach. "You want to know when you're investing in something for so long." She was happy with what she saw from atop that ladder.

Upstairs is mostly windows to take advantage of the fact that



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

The kitchen is clearly the most important room in the house for Aulbach, and her kitchen needed to be the perfect place to host a dinner party. The Counterfitters from Juneau helped bring kitchen designer Sharon Lewis' vision for this kitchen to life.

you can see mountains in 360 degrees. "You get amazing sunsets and great sunrises. We get the light all day long," Aulbach said. A spacious deck wraps

around two sides of the house, which was a mid-construction decision. "Originally it was going to be two small decks, but the budget was on and we were

doing good, so we thought 'Let's do it!'" This summer they enjoyed watching boats and icebergs in Frederick Sound and

their potted flowers on the deck enjoyed all the sunlight.

The 2,000 sq. ft. living space

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DANI PALMER / Petersburg Pilot

The dry bar gets its own tv so people in the kitchen can get a good view when the football game is on.

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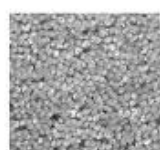
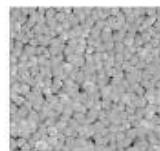
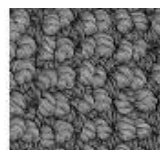
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Aulbach

Continued from page 2
 flips the usual floor plan design. There are no bedrooms upstairs. "Upstairs is for entertaining." The bedrooms are all fairly small. "Growing up, I never spent any time in my bedroom," said Aulbach. "We wanted the bigger area, the better view, to be the living room where everyone is going to be."

Football season just started, so upstairs is definitely where the people will be for the next four months. Football season entertaining came into play when they were planning the house's touches, like putting a second TV over the dry bar. "If I'm in the kitchen I want to be able to watch it too. Or we can turn on more than one game at once," said Aulbach. "We are a football household."

The home took two years to complete, from when they bought the property and started their designs to when they moved in. "We moved in on Thanksgiving Day and I cooked Thanksgiving dinner for the entire family," said Aulbach. "We didn't have a couch yet, so there were lots of lawn chairs in the living room. But we were just excited to be in here finally." From the time that the pilings were in, the building took a busy six months. "There's a lot that goes into it, that you wouldn't realize unless you actually do it," said Aulbach. "The operation went really smoothly, and it was really fun to work with my dad, and my brother Abel helped a lot too. It was family built."

Aulbach has known all the guys working for Alpine for a very long time, and that helped keep the hard work fun. "I'd come to work, whenever I had days off from Alaska Airlines, and I'd always bring a little breakfast or a snack to keep the guys happy" she said.

With her dad's guidance the project stayed on budget and finished slightly ahead of schedule. Jody said his most important piece of advice was "once you make a decision on something, a light fixture or window trim or light fixtures, just stick with it. Don't go back and think 'oh



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

This living room is for congregating and enjoying great views with plenty of natural light pouring in all those windows. Thanks to the HRV central air system and heatpump this house still comes in at a 5+ Energy Star rating, despite all that glass.

maybe this, or maybe that.' Make the decision and move on."

And of course Jody and Kyle learned how their own hard work was a crucial part of getting things done in a timely fashion. By putting in work and helping with cleanup, "we were paying ourselves," said Aulbach.

"I nailed that whole staircase together," said Aulbach.

Roundtree took care of installing the plumbing himself. His previous construction experience came in handy for that. Rock N Road Construction put in the pilings, driveway, finish rock and foundation. Mattingly Electric did all the electric work. Alaska Floorcovering took care of all their flooring. "We have Cali Bamboo, super hard and gorgeous," said Aulbach, along with heated tile in the entries and carpet in the living room.

Their heat pump was installed

by Fleet Refrigeration. "We love it. It's so energy efficient," said Aulbach. The heat pump plus the HRV central air system helped ensure the house a 5 + Energy Star rating. "With all these windows, it's amazing we can get a rating that good," said Aulbach.

They did have one big materials snafu, a kind of thing bound to happen with ordering so much from down south. Their top windows, the arch of their vaulted living room ceiling, arrived with the wrong measurements. "We put them all in, thinking 'if you can't tell we'll just leave it and save the money' but oh no. You could tell they were off by a whole inch," said Aulbach. "When the new ones got in we had to rip them all down. It was early on in the process though. It wasn't like we had to re-sheetrock the whole wall. We just had to get the forklift back up there and, pull them out, and pop the new ones in."

It's taken some time for being homeowners to sink in for Roundtree and Aulbach. "I've

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Submitted Photo

Jody got to make the first Christmas in their new home special with a 12-foot Christmas tree that fit nicely under the vaulted ceiling.

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Aulbach

Continued from page 3
 built a house and now I'm living

in it. It is amazing," said everyone was asking 'so, is it Aulbach. "When we first got in, really weird?' And, no. Since

we've been working on it the amazement. Wow. We did this. It's funny that it took me this long to have that feeling."



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Plans changed during construction to expand the deck. Originally expected to be 2 small decks, this spacious outdoor area now wraps around the house.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Standing extra tall, the house enjoys 360 degree views of mountains.

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Freeze it, dry it, can it:

Food preservation extends the life of the harvest

By **MARY KOPPES**
Petersburg Pilot

Preserving the local bounty harvested from the sea or the land, from the wild or from one's garden, is a great way to ensure you eat well over the winter months when markedly less is growing and the waters grow less enticing for a day out fishing.

Much knowledge—from smoking salmon to canning berry jellies and jams—is passed on through friends and family who treasure and guard their secret recipes. For those wanting to try their hand at food preservation, there's another resource available to us all: University of Alaska Fairbanks

Cooperative Extension Service (CES). The Southeast coordinator for the CES, Sarah Lewis, recently visited Petersburg with tips and information on how to preserve local foods.

The CES website, www.uaf.edu/ced/foods, offers a number of digital info sheets (available for free download) on freezing, drying and canning foods, and a breakdown on the pros and cons of each method.

Freezing is the easiest of the three methods and is the best at ensuring nutrient retention, though it can be costly as it requires constant energy use. While canning requires some knowledge to get started, this method is the cheapest in the long run for preserving food and

offers the longest shelf life. Drying or dehydrating food in Southeast, and keeping it that way, can be tricky. It can also be costly to purchase the needed equipment that makes the whole process easier and faster.

Lewis said that though some worry about getting sick from eating canned food, there have not been any recorded cases of botulism from home canners in Alaska. Other molds, yeast and bacteria can be destroyed through high temperatures reached through water-bath can-



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

These juicy bog blueberries make outstanding jams and syrups.

ning—for acidic foods like fruits and pickles—or through pressure canning—for low acid foods like meat, seafood and vegetables. Canned foods that

have spoiled often show the spoilage through bulging lids or by the food's appearance or an unpleasant odor.

The CES web module "Preserving Alaska's Bounty" (www.uaf.edu/files/ces/preservingalaskabounty) provides more in depth information on both canning methods and specific information on canning fish, meat, jams and jellies, and pickled vegetables.

Also found on the module is a section on collecting and using wild berries in Alaska. This year's bumper crop of blueberries, salmonberries, huckleberries and others have left many folks with a generous supply. The CES module recommends three methods for freezing berries to preserve and prepare them for later use.

Dry packed berries can be gently cleaned and wiped free of debris before being laid out on a cookie sheet lined with parchment or freezer paper in a single, uncrowded row. This allows each berry to freeze separately making it easier to use the berries whole in recipes later on. Alternatively, berries can be frozen together in tightly sealed containers or plastic bags.

Packing berries with sugar before freezing is a good way to store berries that are to be cooked later. CES recommends sprinkling one-half cup sugar over every four cups of berries, gently mixing the two and storing the mix in plastic bags. Similarly, syrup packed berries are housed in a simple syrup mixture before frozen.

Canning home prepared berry jams and jellies are also a popular means of preserving the summer and fall's juicy harvest. The CES web module includes information and recipes on several popular varieties of berries in the area.

Lewis said a SEARHC grant funded her travel from her home base in Juneau to Petersburg and other Southeast communities this year. Without such grants, she makes it only about once every three years to outlying communities, but she's always available to answer questions about food preservation via phone or email: 907-523-3280 or sarah.lewis@alaska.edu.

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Installing a water shut off valve for your washing machine can decrease the risk of a leak when the washing machine is not in use.

Theft:

Installing security devices like motion sensor lights can deter thieves.

Let your neighbors know when you are out of town so they can alert you to any unusual activity.

Lock common entry points such as garages and screen or sliding glass doors.

Vandalism:

Do not put travel plans on social media sites.

Ask someone to be a caretaker of your property while you are gone- mow the lawn, taking your garbage can to the curb, etc. Vandals are less likely to disturb a home they believe to be occupied.

Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed to increase visibility and decrease hiding spots for vandals.

Wind:

Cut down trees on your property that may have a compromised root system, have rotted, or have other issues that put them at a greater risk of falling.

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*information courtesy of www.afterdisaster.com

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Nostalgia meets efficiency in Knight's design

By MARY KOPPE
AND ORIN PIERSON
Petersburg Pilot

Upon entering Casey Knight's newly built home, visitors are greeted with a flood of natural light entering from a wall of west-facing windows and a sense of spaciousness created by high vaulted ceilings. The design of the space follows and allows for the uninhibited flow of Knight's daily routine, with the master bedroom and bath, kitchen, dining room and laundry all available on the main floor.

In an upstairs loft used as a sitting area and library, the same wall of west-facing windows frames Bear Paw Mountain and surrounding scenery, providing ample wildlife viewing opportunities for those with binoculars in hand. Two bedrooms are tucked in behind the loft and an upstairs bathroom completes the second level as its own unique space in the house.

Knight said the inspiration for this design came from his childhood. "The main plan or goal was to have it be kind of like my childhood home. My mom built this log cabin over on Kupreanof; you would walk in to a big main roof with a vaulted ceiling with a loft area up above," he said.

As a kid in that home, the loft was Knight's domain while the main floor had all the neces-



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Covered outside areas were important to Knight, who included them in his home design. This covered car port also provides easy and dry access to Knight's shop.

sary amenities for his parents.

Failing to find house plans that aligned with this vision, Knight decided to design the plans himself.

"I got one of those 1500 best selling house plans collections,

but nothing I was seeing fit my idea for what I wanted. None got even close," he said, which led him to purchase the Home Designer Suite software. Though Knight hadn't previously done any kind of home design, he was able to teach himself the program and draft plans for the house that fit with his vision.

"It's relatively intuitive and

kind of fun to use," he said.

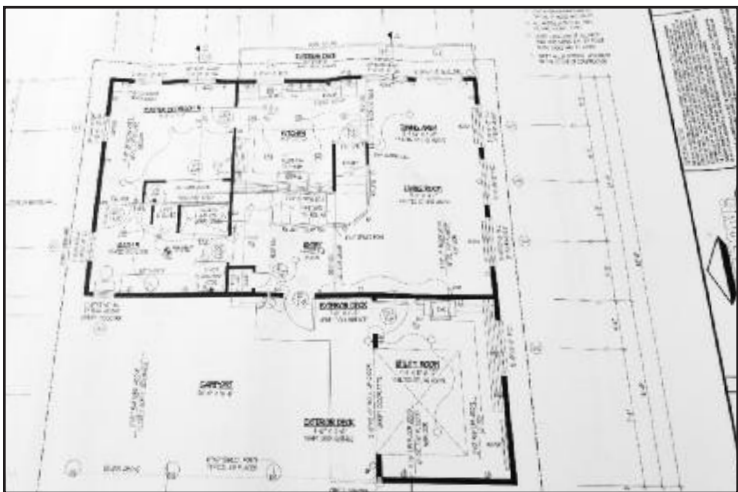
Some of the elements he incorporated into the design were informed by a 1977 book on architecture and design called *A Pattern Language*, which came recommended by architect Dieter Klose.

"The book helped improve the flow through rooms," Knight said, citing as an example an angled wall in the front

room of the house, which he initially designed at a 90-degree angle.

"But I realized that when you came in the front door there would be a big wall just blocking off the room," which led him to change the wall to a 45-degree angle. "So now you come in, the door swings in and you've got the whole well lit

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ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

A look at the first level's floorplan reveals the deliberate flow through the rooms. A person can start in the kitchen and walk in a circle, through every room on the ground floor, and be back in the kitchen.

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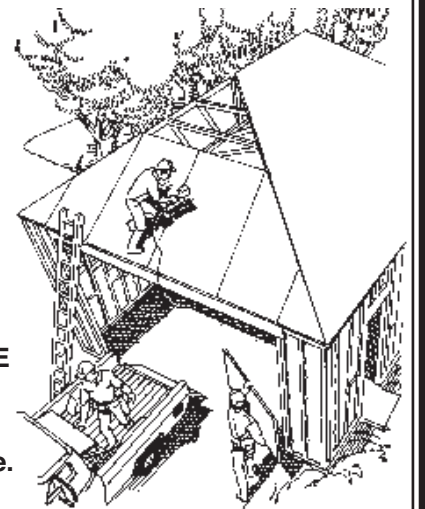
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Knight



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Knight built a custom spice rack with leftover trim and salvaged pieces of wood, which he remembers as one of his favorite parts of the home-building process.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Knight demonstrates the functionality and flow of the kitchen in his new home. It was designed to have enough space for two people to cook comfortably together.

Continued from page 6

main room open in front of you," he said.

The main floor is designed for convenient flow through the space, with two paths in either direction from any one room to another. The flow through the kitchen is also designed to optimize the efficiency of the cook's routine: the placement of the fridge, the knives mounted on the wall above the chopping counter, the position of the big sink, oven and stove, are all designed for comfort and efficiency, a luxurious assembly line.

Knight's design was also influenced by the peculiarities of life in Southeast Alaska, including winters where light



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Knight's home design was inspired by his childhood home, which included an upstairs loft and children's area. The loft in Knight's home functions as an office and sitting room and has great views of Bear Paw Mountain through the high west-facing windows.




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becomes a precious commodity and year-round rain.

"We have this huge west facing wall of windows, to capture that evening light, especially in winter," said Knight.

While Knight can enjoy the evening light in the main rooms in the evening, he can also wake with the sun through natural light coming through east-facing windows in the bedroom.

As a novice home designer, Knight said builder Gary Aulbach, of Alpine Design and Construction, provided direction on the technical aspects of the house.

"I'd take my designs over to Gary, and he's say 'well you might want to think of this or that,'" Knight said. "A lot of his recommendations have to do with realities. I had this abstract idea of a house with these basic floor plans and he'd let me know, well you can't really do this, you can't do that."

Aulbach also helped Knight with things like where to place


the water heater and how to build a support for the upstairs bathroom, the post for which later improved the look of the staircase.

"When I was designing it I just thought, 'well I want a bathroom upstairs and here's the natural place to have it,' and I didn't really think about how it was going to be supported," he said. "But it is kind of cool how this ended up. The post looks like it's part of the staircase. The rails of the staircase were more or less chosen to match the post."

Fir wood is found throughout the house, including as the stair railing and window trim, and was one element that Knight said transformed the space into a homier environment during construction.

"When the staircase wood got put in, that really changed the room," he said. "Before that it looked like a hospital."

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Knight

Continued from page 10

Once Knight's plans were drafted, they were sent to Armstrong Homes, based out of Auburn, Wash., who fine tuned and returned framing plans for the home. Armstrong also pre-fabricated the walls, which were delivered in panels and nailed together on site. Aulbach and his crew were the builders on the project, though Knight installed the plumbing and the floors.

"The floors are Cali Bamboo, a pretty new product that you click together, no nailing," Knight said, adding the entire downstairs flooring took just two people and 12 hours to install.

"We're really happy with it," he said.

Knight said the design for the plumbing was the most challenging part.

"Like everything other than rocket science, it wasn't rocket science," he joked. "It's lots of very slow thinking it out."

He chose PEX piping for the plumbing for its cold weather resistance and simplicity to install, especially compared with copper piping which is difficult to bend.

The house is heated by a heat pump and heated tile in the master bathroom and entryway. Each bedroom also has a small resistance heater. Nordic Electric did the electrical work in the house.

An HRV system lends to the energy efficiency of the house and keeps moisture down which has another benefit: "It's nice



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

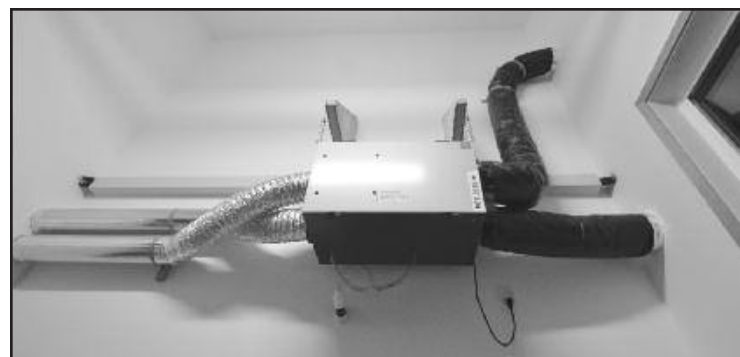
Honey the dog shows off the fir staircase that leads from the spacious, open first floor to an upstairs loft.

for all the wood. You don't get the swell and shrink."

Knight's watched and participated in the home taking shape since Reid Brothers Construction broke ground on the pilings and foundation for the house last October. Work continued steadily since then and in recent months he's been settling into his new home. In

addition to avoiding the headaches that can go along with buying an older home, Knight said he gets to enjoy the sense of accomplishment that comes from designing and building a home.

"You get to take pride in what you've made," said Knight.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

An HRV system increases the energy star rating of Knight's new home. It also helps regulate the moisture in the home, which will preserve the long-term integrity of the wood used throughout the house.

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Beyond cats and dogs: Homeowners keep chickens as pets and livestock

By **MARY KOPPES**
Petersburg Pilot

Many are familiar with the image of a homeowner being greeted by their dog's wagging tail or their feline's purr upon arriving home, but increasingly people are being greeted by feathered friends as well.

Laying hens, and the occasional rooster, have become increasingly popular in Petersburg in recent years. They straddle the line between pets and livestock, providing fresh eggs to their owners but also entertainment, companionship and life lessons.

Despite having a tiny backyard, the Case family was inspired after a trip to Hawaii to get their first small flock of backyard chickens. The animals have since become part of eight-year-old Iris' routine: she collects the eggs and feeds the chickens daily.

"It's an awesome chore for Iris to take care of the chicks and



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Iris Case inspects an egg she just collected. By looking at an egg's color and size she can tell which of her five hens laid the egg.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Five of the Case family's hens clean themselves off with a dirt bath. Having access to dirt or "dust" is one way chickens fend off mites, which can be deadly to birds.

the big chickens," said Carey Case, Iris' mother.

Iris has named each chicken—Big Mama, Popsicle and

Brownie, among them—and can identify which hen has laid which egg by looking at its color and size. Different breeds lay different colored eggs ranging from the Aracana's blue or blue-green

eggs to different shades of brown produced by Buff Orpingtons and Gold Sexlinks and, less commonly, white.

The Case family has a variety

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13. Clean lint out of refrigerator coils and out of dryers.
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Animals

Continued from page 10

of breeds in their small flock and a springtime chick purchase added two layers known to produce up to 250 eggs a year. The chicks are expected to start laying this fall and will produce eggs regularly for about three years.

This summer the Cases have been collecting three to five eggs per day from their five laying hens, but as daylight decreases and winter takes hold, egg production will decrease. The Cases will put a light in the hen's coop to help keep production up over the winter, a technique also used by Lisa Nilsen who's been raising chickens for the past couple of years on her property at Papke's Landing.

Nilsen has 28 chickens currently. The majority are hens but one rooster keeps watch over the flock and recently fertilized his first two eggs, which hatched this summer.

The chicks are being cared for indoors to stay dry, warm and protected. Both Nilsen and Case said protecting the animals, as chicks or adults, is important.

"Definitely make sure your

coop is animal proof," said Case, whose hens' coop is inside their fenced-in yard.

Nilsen keeps her birds in a large run enclosed with netting to keep eagles out. It's attached to the coop, which contains nesting boxes where the hens go to lay and Nilsen can easily access the eggs from outside.

"Some people have problems with mink, but we've never had them killed by that," she said. "But a lot of the dogs around here are chicken killers," which is why she keeps them enclosed.

Case's chickens split their time between their hen house and their backyard, and they've been working to socialize their new Labrador puppy who gets supervised time with the birds.

Other possible dangers to chickens include mites, which are mostly prevented by dusting, an activity the birds voluntarily do to clean themselves. This can be tricky in the often-wet climate of Southeast.

"I really want to make a little barn so they have a dry spot too because the worst part is just how everything stays so wet," Nilsen said.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Lisa Nilsen has several different breeds of laying hens. She said she doesn't keep track of which breed is which, but enjoys getting multicolored eggs everyday from her variety of layers.

Many breeds of laying hens will produce eggs for two to three years. Molting, the loss and subsequent regrowth of feathers, coincides with a stop in egg production. However, some hens will molt, stop producing eggs, regrow feathers and begin egg production again.

At the end of their egg-producing, chicken owners must determine appropriate action. This is perhaps the area where it's most apparent that chickens aren't just farm animals. They often become part of the family.

"Big Mama's gonna get a pass, an old age pass," said Case. Her husband, Ben, routinely butchers ducks, fish and game at the house, but she said with the chickens it's different.

"Iris is used to seeing things get butchered, but it's a little different when you've raised the thing," said Case.

Nilsen said she's dealt with her animals being killed, though it's been difficult for her, and she does not plan to butcher her hens.

"I could never butcher an animal," she said, adding that

she'll let her birds age out.

One technique for dealing with aging chickens is to have someone else butcher and eat your birds. The Cases' have a few of a friend's chickens in their freezer, and Nilsen said she once gave away several roosters which were butchered and used for meat.

Luckily that decision only comes once per bird, while the rewards of raising chickens can be reaped daily.

"We can't even remember the

last time we had to buy eggs. That's cool," Nilsen said.

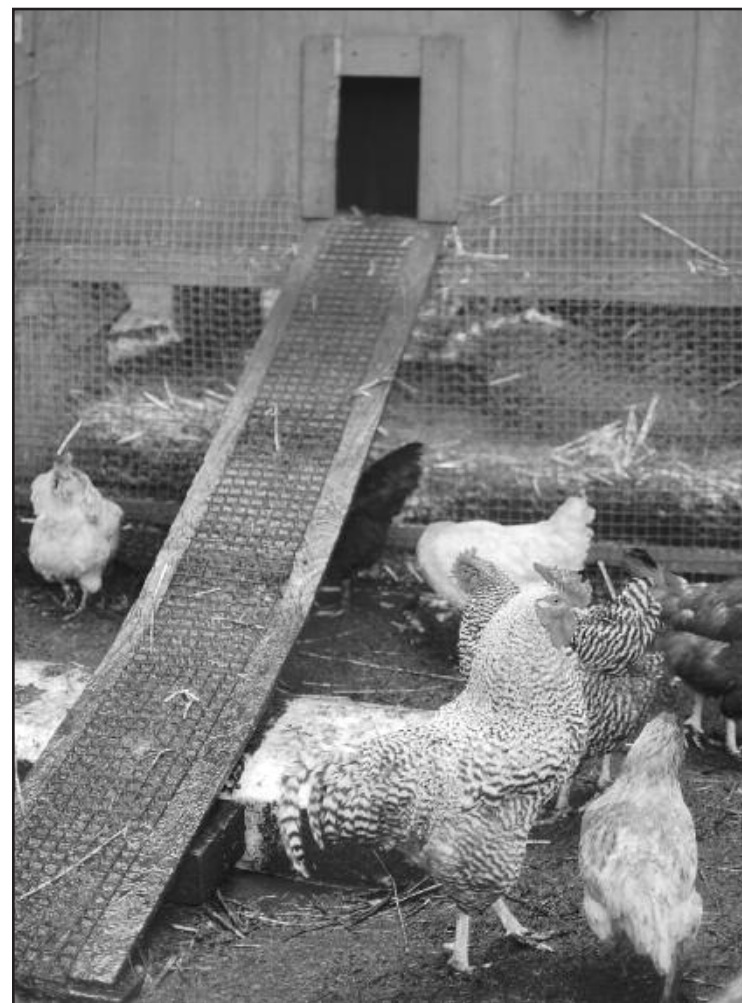
"It's really fun to have the fresh eggs," said Case. "We like to make big egg breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday."

And chickens may just be the gateway animal. Despite their small backyard the Case family cares for a flock of chickens, a rabbit named Spot and two dogs. The Nilsen family has plenty of space to house their 28 chickens and one duck along with two pet goats, a dog and a cat.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Lisa Nilsen holds a day-old baby chick that hatched from one of two broody hens who'd been sitting on eggs in her hen house. Nilsen has a system for collecting eggs that includes avoiding those underneath broody hens that might be fertilized.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

A small ramp helps Lisa Nilsen's flock of 28 hens move from their hen house to an enclosed run outside where they spend their time stretching their legs and digging up the earth.

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