



Architectural
Stone Veneer

Builder — The Information Source for the Home Building Industry

From: [BUILDER 2007](#) | Posted on: December 13, 2007 9:49:49 AM

NAHB and AARP Honor Builders for Universal Design

First Livable Communities Awards spotlight accessibility for all ages and abilities.

By:

[Pat Curry](#)

Two builders, two developers, and a remodeler received the first [Livable Communities Awards](#), presented by the National Association of Home Builders and AARP. The awards, presented Dec. 11 in Washington, recognize homes and communities that are well designed, safe, comfortable, and accessible, regardless of the occupants' age or abilities.

Winning builders John Wesley Miller Cos. of Tucson, Ariz., and Wendt Builders of Snellville, Ga.; developers the Madison Area Community Land Trust of Madison, Wis., and Integral Group of Atlanta; and remodeler Quality Design & Construction in Raleigh, N.C., will also be recognized in the January/February 2008 issue of AARP magazine, which is distributed to 23 million homes nationwide.

"What we want to see is innovation in the marketplace," said Elinor Ginzler, AARP's director of livable communities. "We know from talking to our members that while they want comfort and safety, they don't want a feeling that they're in an institution."

Bill Slease, owner of [Tapestry Custom Homes](#) in McKinney, Texas, and a long-time proponent of universal design, had been preparing his own entry for the competition when he was asked to serve as a judge in the builder category. He was impressed by all the entries.

"Even in some of the more simple presentations, you could tell when you looked at the pictures that the builder's heart was in it," Slease said. "There wasn't one entry that didn't have energy and passion."



Where the winning entries shone through, he said, was in the execution. "Some people understood universal design could be beautiful as well as functional. Those things start to stand out when you line the projects up side by side. The winners had a little more style, taste, and thought."