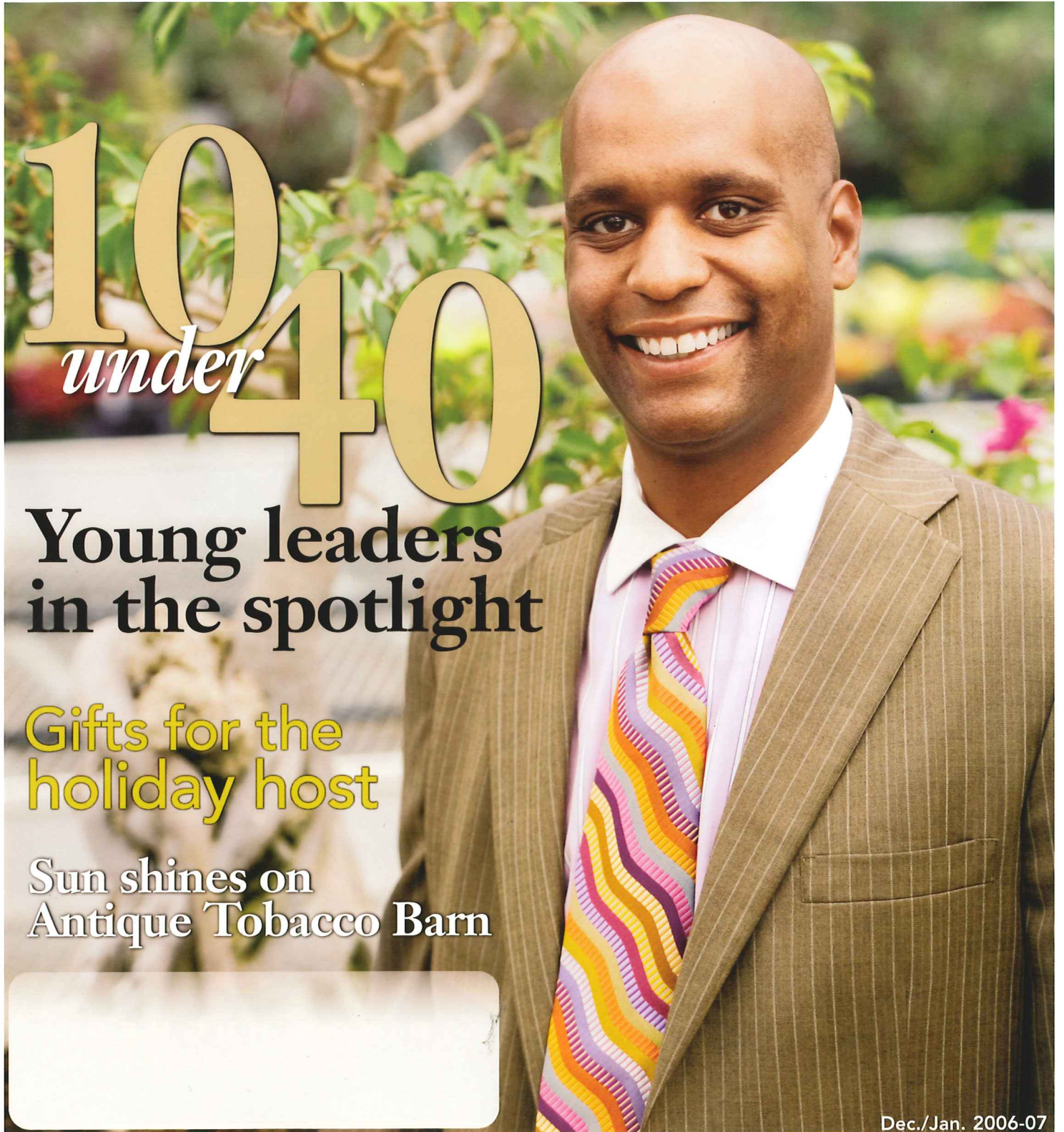


LUXURY LIVING IN THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS

# Blue Mountain

L I V I N G



10  
*under*  
40

**Young leaders  
in the spotlight**

**Gifts for the  
holiday host**

**Sun shines on  
Antique Tobacco Barn**

# Mom-made

Family inspires architect  
Amy Conner-Murphy

*By Melissa Stanz*

**W**alking into the Murphy home in Arden, you might be tempted to think this is a showcase house, the kind where everything has its place and no one messes anything up. But then you hear the dogs begging to be let out, and Rebecca, 10, and Julia, 8, call out for mom, and you know this is a home filled with life, a home where children don't hesitate to run and play both inside and out.



Architect Amy Conner-Murphy designed her family's home in Arden. Photo by Renato Rotolo.



The landscaping on the acre lot is the result of Amy's input and the help of Greenmeadow Landscaping. In the back yard, a waterfall splashes down several levels of stone. The water feature is flanked by Japanese maples. A two-level Virginia fieldstone patio provides room for outdoor dining. A sink, grilling area and firepit add to the convenience of this outdoor room. Handsome boulder steps lead from the covered back porch to the patio.

The home has space for family time, and places for each member to find some peace alone. Amy's office occupies the lower level. Steve, owner of Carolina HR Partners, has his own office/den. "Notice it has doors," he smiled. "Those are for privacy. This is mine and I use it the way I want to."

Upon entering the house, you are first struck by the warm, golden tan interior colors accented by earthy green and red tones. The cherry and oak wood floors add to that warmth. Slate mosaic tiles inset in cherry flooring create a beautiful accent in the foyer floor.

From the custom made mahogany front door, you begin to see the circular flow that makes the house so comfortable. To the right is Steve's office, a cozy, masculine room with all the expected technology. To the left is the dining room, complete with treasured antiques that Amy has collected since college. A large pine pub table seats up to 10 people; a Virginia fieldstone fireplace (half of a double-sided fireplace) includes gas logs. Amy helped set some of the stones surrounding the fireplace and was delighted to find fossil imprints in a few.

"As we were looking through these stones to select the right ones, we noticed some fossils; one had a shell fossil imprint, another fossil looked like a crayfish," she said. "The girls and I were thrilled to find them."

An arched opening leads to the heart of the house — a great room, kitchen and eat-in nook, spaces that flow effortlessly due to an open floor plan and use of the golden wall



A custom-made mahogany door opens into a foyer with tile accents on the floor. Photo by John Warner.

color that ties the rooms together. Wood floors and rich area rugs set off the fireplace, which on this side is wood burning (the other side faces the dining room). Large windows and French doors across the back of the room let in loads of natural light. A muted brocade overstuffed sofa and two black