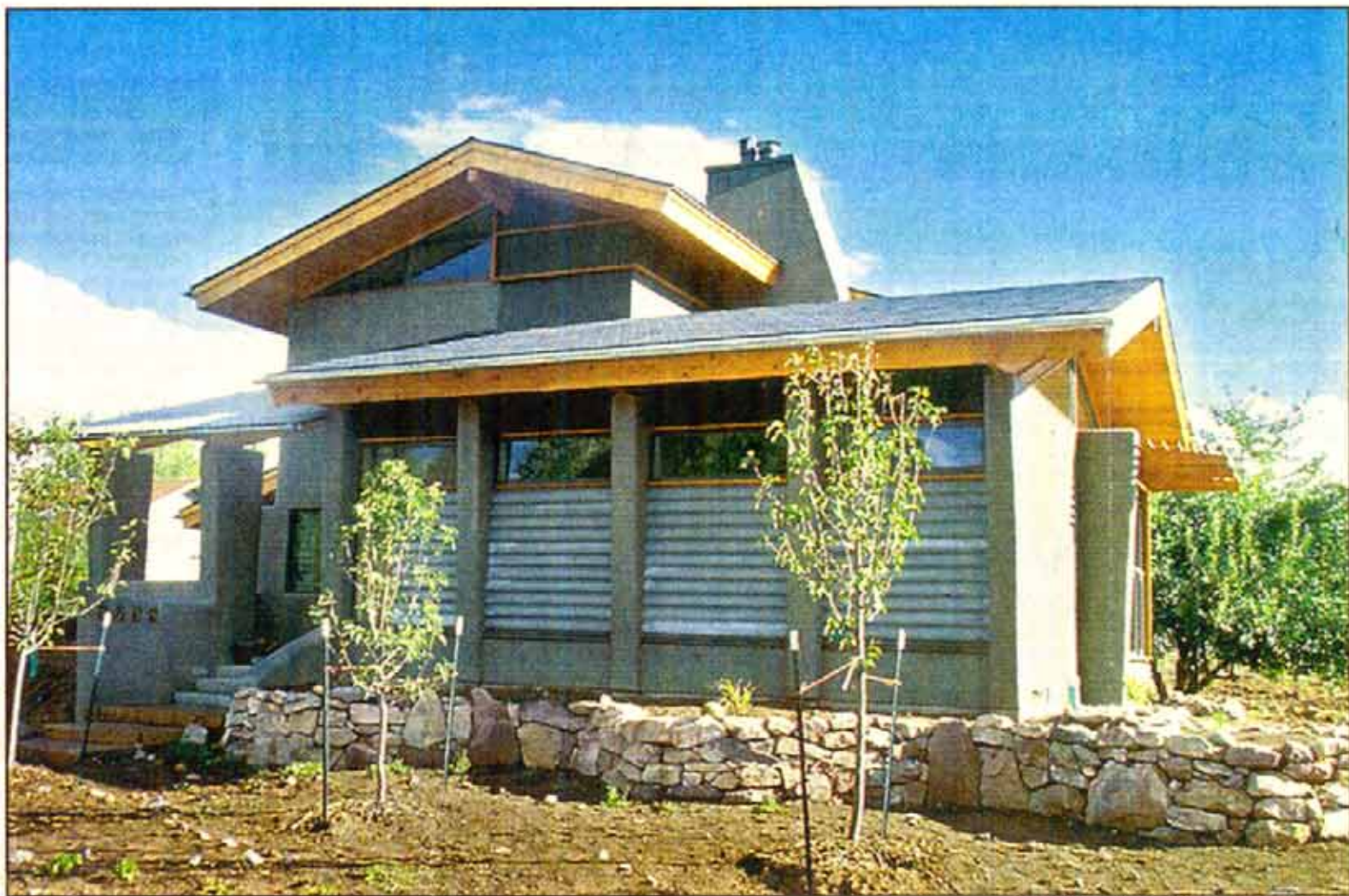


# PORTRAITS

1D • DAILY CAMERA

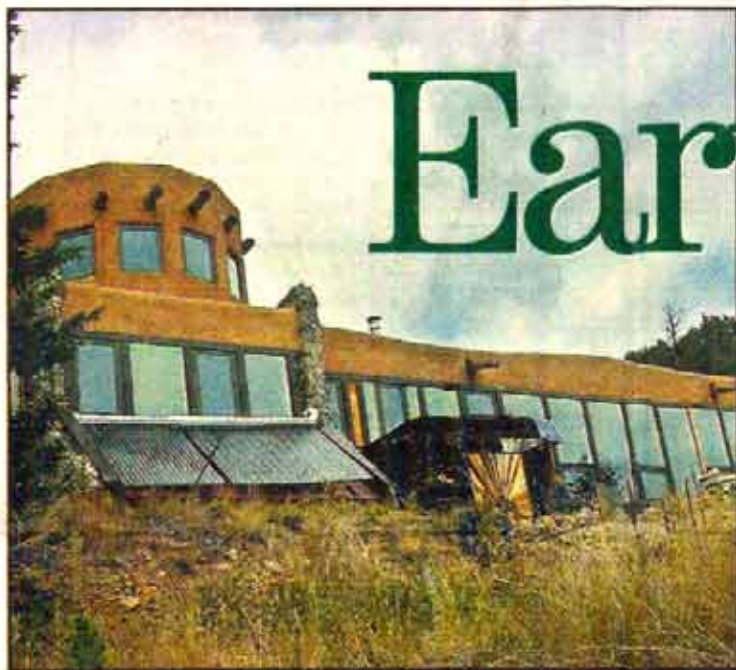
HOME & GARDEN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2001



Photos courtesy of the Boulder Energy Conservation Center

The Barrett house, which is located on the edge of the Community Gardens in North Boulder, uses high insulation, thermal mass, high-performance glass and an active solar water heating system among other environmentally conscious strategies.



The Callahan home includes passive solar heating, a gray water planter bed, solar and wind power.

## Earth-friendly Tour showcases solar, green-built homes

By Lauren Gullion • For the Camera

### IF YOU GO

**WHAT** • Boulder Tour of Solar and Green Built Homes 2001

**WHEN** • Saturday; registration 9-11:30 a.m.; tour 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

**WHERE** • Tour starts at the Boulder Energy Conservation Center, 1702 Walnut St., Boulder

**TICKETS** • \$6 per person or \$10 per carload

**CALL** • (303) 441-3278

**TOUR EXTRAS** • **Alternative Home Financing**, 10 a.m. - 11 a.m., A workshop hosted by SpiritMoney Mortgage to help people find creative ways to pay for green building.

**Adobe Block Manufacturing Demonstration**, ongoing during tour hours, A demonstration hosted by Mudworks to show people how easily adobe bricks can be made. Adobe building is an affordable material for ecological and energy efficient housing. **Electric Vehicles**, ongoing during tour hours, The local owners of two electrically powered vehicles will put their cars on display.

In David and Betzi Barrett's new home, the kitchen floor is made out of cork. The second-floor sun decks are built from a mixture of wood bits and plastic. And the main walls are made of Cempo recycled polystyrene and cement.

The materials might sound strange, but people walking by in the neighborhood have already noticed the house's aesthetically pleasing and interesting look. The Barretts, who are also the home's architects, are delighted with their new, ecologically conscious, energy-efficient home.

"People say they don't want to build their house out of old McDonald's boxes, but look how beautiful it is," Betzi says.

The Barrett Garden House

is one of 15 sites on Saturday's Boulder Tour of Solar and Green Built Homes. This is the fifth year the Boulder Energy Conservation Center has organized the tour, which aims to educate about building or remodeling homes in a way that saves energy and has a minimum impact on environmental resources. After paying the tour fee, participants will receive a booklet with descriptions of each site. Tour participants can then visit the 13

The tour showcases a wide variety of building strategies and materials to address environmental issues.

homes and two businesses, where they will be able to walk inside to check out details and ask questions.

One of the first aspects many people are curious about is the cost of building or remodeling with solar power and Earth-friendly features.

Green building tends to cost more than a regular home improvement project, because the techniques are still not widely used.

"As soon as you break convention it takes more time, and so it costs more," David says.

It was sometimes a challenge for him and his wife to find subcontractors for the house's unconventional projects, but they say the extra costs likely will pay for themselves over time.

"Both in terms of numbers

and spiritually," David says.

By installing such details as active solar hot water heaters and high insulation, the Barretts will save money on utilities bills each month. In addition, David feels the "building green," or ecological and energy-efficient, approach gives personal satisfaction. He sees green building as a way to think about your relationship with the environment.

The tour showcases a wide variety of building strategies and materials to address environmental issues. Organizers hope the assortment of concepts will give each person a chance to consider green building in a way that is comfortable for him.

"Hopefully there are ideas that fit every taste," says the Boulder Energy Conservation Center's executive director, Mona Newton.

The tour includes a variety

Please see TOUR on 4D