

The room to live

September 16, 2000 - Herald-Tribune - Harold Bubil

Real estate encompasses a lot of things -- land, structures, buying and selling, taxes and insurance among them -- but it really comes down to just two simple concepts: Place and space. Place has to do with location of a house, while space deals with how we use it.

That lesson was underscored Wednesday when the Home Builders Association of Sarasota broke ground on a house for **Paul Salter** and his family.

Salter is the Sarasota teen-ager who was paralyzed in a football accident last year. Able to move only his head, he is confined to an elaborate wheelchair that requires a lot of space to turn around. The **Salter**'s old house was unsuitable for **Paul**'s needs, so the HBA, led by John King of Rampart Homes, is building a new one at no charge.

It will be built on land that has been in the **Salter** family for decades. The old house, now torn down, was built by **Paul**'s great-grandfather, and **Paul**'s father, Glenn, lived there when he was a boy. "It wasn't much of a house, but it meant something to me," Glenn said at the groundbreaking. "My family has always gathered around this place."

To have the new house built there makes the project even more special for the **Salter** family. But most importantly, the structure will give **Paul** the room to move around, space that he doesn't have in the nearby house where he now lives. **Paul** can only go into two rooms in his current home because of the wheelchair.

"Even though he's a quadriplegic, you still need the room so you don't feel confined," Glenn said. "The worst thing for my son is being in that confined space."

"I have such a big chair and a lot of supplies, so it's really too small for me right now," said **Paul**. The new house, while not overwhelming at 2,200 square feet of air-conditioned area, will have a large suite for **Paul**. There's also a concrete path so he can enjoy the outdoors.

King has secured a good bit of donated materials and labor. But more is needed, including money to ensure that the home will be maintained properly over the years. Checks, payable to Sarasota Bank, **Paul Salter** Construction Escrow Account, may be mailed to the bank at 2 N. Tamiami Trail, Suite 100, Sarasota, FL 34236.

All content © 2000 Herald-Tribune Corp. and may not be republished without permission.