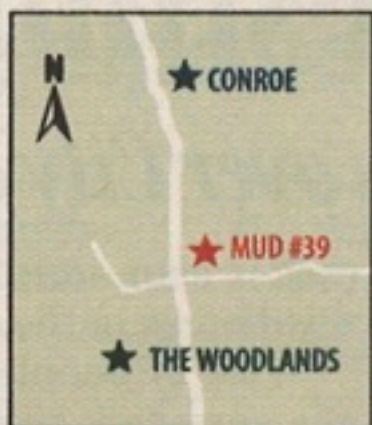


COUNTRY COUSINS:

City of Conroe moves forward with plans to annex part of The Woodlands prompting opposition from affected local residents/**PAGE 2**



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Bigger better for buyers, builders

Outsized extras drive growing market for larger custom homes

BY ALLISON WOLLAM
HOUSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

Hann Builders has constructed a 22,000-square-foot, \$4 million home in Sugar Land that company President Stephen Hann describes as "Vegas."

The swankianda in Sweetwater Estates sports a 22-foot high water wall, 45 television monitors and a dining room with fiber-optic lighting that creates a panorama of shooting stars.

"They got a little carried away and built a one-of-a-kind home," Hann says.

Christopher Sims Custom Homes recently completed an 11,000-square-foot house that features a



MICHAEL STRAVATO/HBJ

Custom builder Christopher Sims: 'These larger projects have a big impact on the economy of the city and keep a lot of people employed.'

SEE BUILDERS, PAGE 47

BUILDERS: Opulent buyer options expand average size of custom homes in Houston

FROM PAGE 1

domed entryway and custom-designed floors copied after those at the Palace of Versailles in Paris.

Sims, who is based in Sugar Land, has accommodated home buyers wanting unusual amenities such as wine cellars and beauty salons equipped with massage tables — even an indoor volleyball court with 26-foot high ceilings.

“We are custom builders, so we aim to please,” he says. “These larger projects have a big impact on the economy of the city and keep a lot of people employed. These types of homes are a driving force in the residential construction market.”

Sims estimates that the size of homes in this specialty market sector has grown by about 50 percent in the past 15 years.