

# OnSite

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## Smart Carr

Tom Carr opens up about life after CarrAmerica | By Sarah Krouse, Page 20

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Casa Grande: Immigrant-advocate CASA de Maryland restored Langley Park's McCormick-Goodhart Mansion. Photos by Ken Wyner

# Home sweet (restored) home

**J**UST A FEW years ago, the McCormick-Goodhart Mansion in Prince George's County was boarded up and in disrepair. Now, the newly restored historic property houses immigrant advocacy group CASA de Maryland.

The 19,000-square-foot, three-story Georgian Revival mansion in Langley Park, erected in 1924, was once owned by the granddaughter of Robert McCormick, who helped invent the mechanical reaper. It's had several lives since: a seminary for a Canadian Catholic order, a Montessori school and a child care center. Roanoke, Va.-based Sawyer Properties Inc. donated the property to CASA de Maryland in 2008, the year it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Bucher/Borges Group PLLC, which has offices in D.C., Fairfax and Easton, Md., was charged with the tedious task of transforming the water-damaged and vandalized property into an administrative and social services center. The project had dual goals: historic restoration and energy conservation.

"It was an Olympic wrestling match between those two things," says Bucher/Borges' Ward Bucher, who managed the design. "There are a lot of things you might do to make it energy efficient that would look bad in a historic building. We had to do some creative things to make both work."

The project – which earned federal, state and local historic tax credits – was designed to get the Green Building Council's Gold certification for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

Latin American culture is weaved throughout the site, including the multipurpose room, which conveys the world tree concept of several religions and mythologies. Four columns represent the shafts of the tree; the ceiling's grid pattern represents the interwoven branches; and a green roof symbolizes the leaves.

CASA de Maryland, founded in 1985 by various U.S. and Central American congregations, works to improve conditions for low-income Latino families. Today, it also helps other groups, including French-speaking immigrants from Africa.

The four-year project cost about \$12 million, more than half of which was funded through tax credits.

– Tierney Plumb



Top: The lobby at CASA de Maryland's new center is made of oak linenfold panels. The alcove near the fireplace was burned out before the restoration. Bottom: The original hand-carved oak staircase, with new brass rails, leads to the second-floor offices.