

'I look around and all I see is me. It's kind of embarrassing,' Ken Lester says. 'But it brings back things you've forgotten, people you played with and had forgotten or that you haven't thought about in years.'

## GAMECOCKS

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the basement more height. (The ceiling is about 6½ feet tall.)

For furnishings, a flat-screen TV, two end tables, a baker's rack and a burgundy leather sofa were purchased. (The sofa's not quite garnet, but it's close.) Old chairs were recovered and painted to fit in with the garnet and black theme.

Then it was time for the fun part: digging through all the scrapbooks, photographs, newspaper clippings, trophies and other articles to display.

On the walls going down the stairs are nine framed USC football game programs, including one from the USC-Georgia game Oct. 6, 1962.

At the foot of the stairs is an enlargement of a black-and-white newspaper photo of Lester playing in the USC-UNC game.

All the rest of the photographs and clippings are bordered with suede garnet mats and black metal frames.

Lester's chin strap is included with a framed photograph of the 1961 Carolina football team.

There's a painted football with "Happy Anniversary" written on it, signed by Nell, and a baseball with the notation "Aug. 19, 1955, win over Florence."

There's even a Ken Lester bobblehead doll that Sowards painted with Carolina colors and put the number 88 on it.

The tiny cinder-block bathroom was given a facelift, too. A black denim skirt with red trim was added to the sink, and the room's ceiling was painted to look like the sky.

Lester, an attorney practicing family law in Columbia, said he knew his wife was going to turn the basement into a room for him; but he didn't know the extent of the decorating.

"After a while I didn't want him to see it. He couldn't go down there once we got the carpet," she said.

Lester said he was tempted to peek, "but I didn't."

About a month after the carpet went down, on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, the family had the unveiling, with Lester's mother,



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIM KIM FOSTER-TOBIN/THE STATE

The bathroom in the Lesters' Gamecock room also got a facelift, with its cinder-block walls painted garnet and a denim skirt added to the sink.

two aunts and other friends attending.

"I knew I was getting a big-screen TV and maybe a Bose sound system," he said. But once he saw it, "I kept saying, 'I can't believe it. I can't believe it.'"

Since then, the Lesters have showed off the room to various groups of friends and neighbors.

"Everybody loved it," Nell said. "His friends call it his ego room."

Ken admits it can be a little uncomfortable.

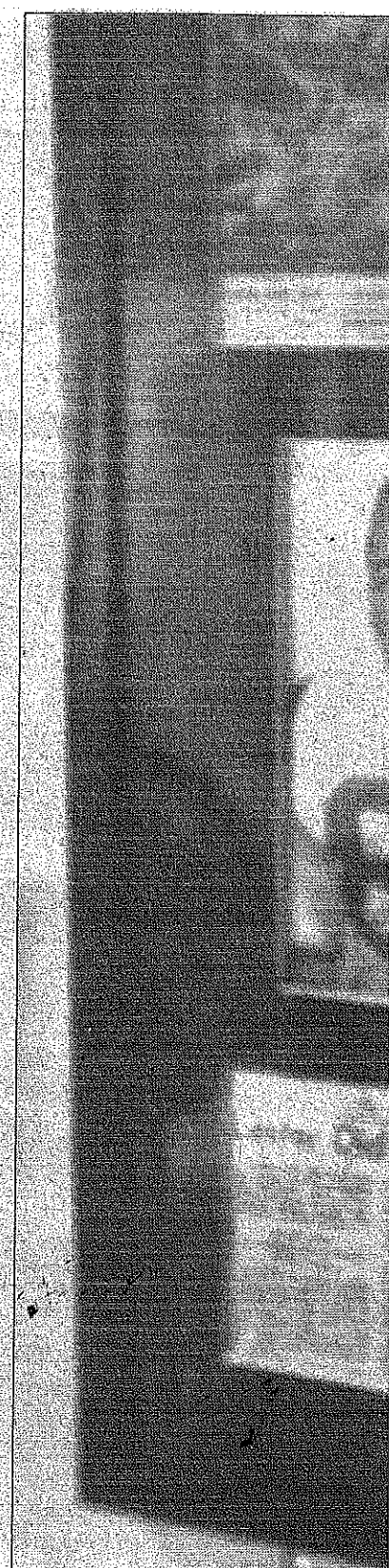
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said. "But it brings back things you've forgotten, people you played with and had forgotten or that you haven't thought about in years."

"Some of my friends have come down here from high school and college. . . . It's a trip down memory lane."

He also spends a lot of time watching the new television — sports, of course.

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### Calendar

Pine Mountain, Ga., is Friday