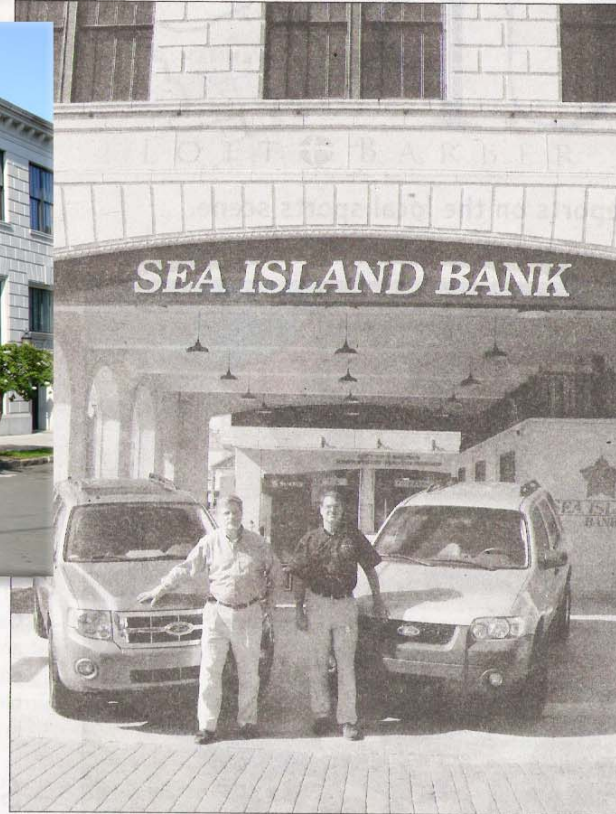


Architects put sustainability principles into action



Special to the Closeup

Architects Forrest Lott, left, and Scott Barber of Lott+Barber have both switched to hybrid vehicles as part of a growing commitment to incorporating sustainable practices into their daily lives.

FOR THE CLOSEUP

Going “green” isn’t just a trendy marketing strategy at Lott + Barber, Inc., a sustainable architectural and community planning firm in Savannah. It’s a way of life embraced by two of the company’s principals, Forrest Lott and Scott Barber.

Between recycling, reducing paper documents, walking to work and taking the stairs instead of the elevator, Lott and Barber each conscientiously work to reduce their impact on the environment.

Prompted in part by the American Institute of Architects’ new Walk the Walk campaign and in part by rising gas prices, the firm actively seeks ways to reduce its environmental footprint.

Switching to hybrid vehicles has given the Savannah architects another way to model a more sustainable lifestyle as well as save money.

“We preach sustainable practices so I decided that when I needed to replace my old car, I should switch to a hybrid,” Barber said, adding that Lott made the same decision soon after.

Lott and Barber both chose Ford Escapes, a hybrid SUV which suited the boating enthusiasts’ active lifestyles.

“It’s almost like driving a big electric golf cart around town,” Barber said. “This car only uses the power I need.”

Lott first became aware of the opportunity to protect the environment by sustainable building practices while a student at Auburn University in the 1970s and has incorporated sustainable building techniques into his practice for decades.

The building in which Lott + Barber’s office is located actually tells the story of one of the city’s most successful sustainable building practices.

The building, which was constructed in 1924, reused the basement of an old grocery store that was built in the 1860s and had several uses before becoming leasable space.

To enhance the environmental friendliness of the building, the company changed its lighting to compact fluorescents, installed programmable thermostats and switched to a highly efficient air-conditioning system.