



Tish Leizens, left, is editor and publisher for Our House magazine, while her husband, Ed, serves as circulation director. Bushkill couple launching home décor magazine

[Wayne Witkowski](#)

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Early this year, Tish Leizens had a career goal while editing the textiles page for Home Furnishing News magazine of New York City.

The Bushkill resident wanted to launch her own quarterly magazine that would display upscale furniture and household accessories for every room for affluent consumers interested in home decorating, gardening, traveling and outdoor sports. She started on her mission a year ago and by February, she had to leave her job with the Conde Naste publication.

"I've been working on it from 8 in the morning until 11 at night," said Leizens.

That dream will be unveiled in March when Our House magazine goes out to an anticipated 8,000 subscribers with a circulation of 16,000 and is presented at the Homebuilders Association show at Split Rock on March 10-11.

"I realize this area is more tourist-driven, but I wanted to come out with something to bring back to the area," said Leizens, the editor and publisher.

Her husband, Ed, is circulation director. He is head of security for the New York Science, Industry and Research Library in Manhattan.

They plan to present a high-quality selection from manufacturers around the country. The first issue is 64 pages. A Web page also will have links to many companies.

"It's about creating beautiful spaces and guiding readers where to find the right products and services," Tish Leizens writes in her introductory press kit. She said that much of the product lines offered are home décor merchandise and a possible column on antiques.

"It's a concept of a national magazine coming to a local market. So far it is well received," said Leizens, who said her potential readership extends along the Delaware River through the Poconos and parts of the New Jersey Highlands region and the Catskills in New York. She joined the Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce last week.

With the homebuilding market cresting to record highs this year, she felt it was a good time to tap into the home décor market. "We see a lot of opportunity here. We're doing this at the right time," she said.

Leizens commandeers a staff of 12 workers from her office at her home in Saw Creek Estates, where she has lived for the past six years, including six freelance writers from New York City; Atlanta; Orange County, N.Y.; and Luzerne County. There are two salespeople — Darlene Salzano, advertising director, based in Belvidere, N.J.; and Pat Kobela from KK Media Partners, based in Mountaintop; as well as an art director and copy editor, both based in New York City.

As for the advertising end of operations, Leizens said it is "very challenging. We need to get that worked out."

But Leizens says she has "three good consultants" in John Drugach, based in Mountaintop, who helped launched Eating Well magazine nationwide; Warren Shoulberg, based in New York City, editor and publisher of Home Furnishings News and Home Furnishings Now, a trade and consumer publication; and Howard Geltzer, based in New York City, originally from Hazleton, a retired marketing practitioner associated with SCORE, sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Drugach and Geltzer input on marketing, and Shoulberg advises on the editorial side.

Leizens draws on 20 years of journalism experience that started long before she came to the United States from her native Philippines nine years ago. She worked previously in the newspaper field as a columnist for Gulf News, serving Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, and for the Straits Times in Singapore. "I always was a journalist," she said.

Leizens is writing an article for the first issue, interviewing actress Jane Seymour on her bedding and accessories product line.

Her target audience in 10 counties of 1.6 million people includes Pike and Monroe, the two fastest growing counties in the state; Orange County, the fastest growing county in New York; and Warren, the second fastest growing county in New Jersey. Carbon, Wayne, Northampton and Lehigh counties are included in the Pennsylvania region.

There are 8,000 copies to be sent to households exceeding \$175,000 in income a year, with most ordered from New York City and the New York counties of Orange and Rockland. The rate is \$15 per year, and subscriptions can be requested by calling 1-800-654-4467 or visiting www.ourhousemagonline.com.

"The number of paid subscribers currently is insignificant, but I can tell you we are encouraged that they are paying for two years and not just one year," said Leizens.

Leizens plans for each issue to have a photo essay of a spotlighted house in the region as well as a vacation spot.

The maiden issue will feature a charming country home in Dingmans Ferry; an artist in Bethlehem; a lobster bake along the New Jersey state line; a day trip to Warwick, N.Y.; as well as golf, hiking and trends in color and fabrics for 2007.

At first, Leizens said, the magazine was designed to serve consumers and furniture companies in the area before it was broadened.

"We weren't sure how much this area can support it and felt the people here are underserved," said Leizens. "We are going along the Delaware where you can get into three states. We want to reach different consumers.

"Our goal is to have national distribution in the next five years," said Leizens.

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT:

€ Our House is a regional magazine reaching northeast Pennsylvania, primarily the Poconos, Northampton, Lehigh in Pennsylvania; as well as counties Sussex and Warren in New Jersey; and Orange Hudson Valley and Sullivan Catskills counties in New York that are along the Delaware River.

€ Focused on home and leisure

€ Consumer magazine that is subscription based

€ Upscale presentation, editorial and photography driven

€ Editorial mixes local, regional and national features, such as one featuring award-winning actress Jane Seymour, who has a home furnishings business.

WHAT MAKES IT CHALLENGING:

€ To connect with businesses that see value in advertising in an upscale magazine that will increase economic activity, reach out to a targeted audience and raise the profile of the Poconos. The magazine provides information on where to buy products and find services for the home. It gives ideas on what to do for leisure activities.

ABOUT THE FOUNDERS:

Leticia Leizens has been a journalist for more than two decades. She started as a newspaper journalist and worked for a number of publications in the Philippines, including Manila Chronicle and Manila Times. She worked as a correspondent and columnist for Straits Times headquartered in Singapore and Gulf News headquartered in Dubai, United Arab Emirates before moving nine years ago to the United States. In the U.S., Leizens worked for trade books in home improvement and home building. She was most recently group editor of textiles for Home Furnishings News, a Conde Nast publication.

Edmund Leizens is head of security for the New York Science, Industry and Research Library and was formerly a branch manager for Brinks, based in Washington, D.C.; and Wells Fargo, based in Raleigh, N.C.