

Concepts



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The Highest
Appreciating Investment

This spectacular library with floor to ceiling cherry paneling is an example of "quality" real estate. See story on page 8.

Beautiful Architectural Detailing Creates a Storybook Village at the South Shore Club

Charm . . . it is what makes a town a village, a house a home, and a room a warm, welcoming enclave where lifetime memories are made. Nowhere is charm more evident than in the rolling European countryside, where crooked paths, winding roads and centuries-old thatched-roof cottages take visitors on imaginary journeys even after they've returned home. It is this very feeling that Orren Pickell Designers & Builders has set out to create at the South Shore Club, an exclusive vacation community of 40 magnificent custom homes set along the breathtaking wooded shores of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

Some may ask, how can a brand new development, complete with every modern "vacation amenity"—from a resort-style pool to a lavish clubhouse—look like it's been there for hundreds of years? The answer lies in the details. A French farmhouse would not be nearly as enchanting without its eyebrow windows and crumbling stone walls. It is the details that pull on the heart strings, and that will make the South Shore Club look more like a storybook village than the remarkable, modern-day getaway it is destined to become.

"We've sought out the advice of the most talented craftsmen in the field to create this one-of-a-kind community," says Orren

See **ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING** page 2



▲ Your boat or ours? The crisp canopies of the South Shore Club marina and yacht club reflect the charm and elegance that abound throughout the community. Artistic interpretation by Crisostomo Rosario.



2201 Waukegan Road, Suite W-285
Bannockburn, IL 60015

Telephone: 847-572-5200
www.pickellbuilders.com

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Architectural Detailing (from page 1)

Pickell. "We've studied with stone masons, stucco contractors . . . anyone and everyone who is considered to be an expert in recreating this Old World look. I think the results are going to be amazing."

The challenge for Pickell architects did not lie so much in duplicating the style of architecture this project demanded, but rather in planning and perfecting all of the detail work. The architects spent hours learning how to age stone, slate and plaster as well as researching the history of European architecture. "A lot of attention was given to authenticity," says Vice

President of Design Tony Perry. "For example, hundreds of years ago, European builders were really limited to using the materials that were indigenous to their area because of transportation. When making selections for stones, woods, etc., we've been trying to work in this same mindset, even though the world of materials is available to us."

While the community will have some uniformity in order to give it the ambience of a village, each home's exterior at the South Shore Club will be entirely unique, with some designed to appear more rustic and others resembling elegant wine



▲ Situated next to an enormous, clover-leafed, resort-style pool, the exquisite 5,000 sq. ft. subterranean clubhouse was designed by our architects to maintain sweeping lake views from almost every custom home.

South Shore Club Progress and Upcoming Events

- The Vacation House is now under roof, looking more complete every day. The next step is installing the "rough mechanical" aspects, such as heating. This phase is scheduled to be complete by the time you receive this newsletter.
- The Marina is underway! The 2-slip pier and the swim pier have both been installed, moving this amazing Yacht Club to the next step. The piers are ready for the next busy swimming and boating season.
- Community utilities have also been installed, and will be "energized" in the next few weeks.
- The next major South Shore Club event is scheduled for Sunday, October 6th! Mark your calendars for the world's first linen tablecloth "Gourmet Tailgate" party! This fall family event will be complete with pumpkins, hayrides and more. Look for your invitation and more details in the mail!



▲ The Jewel of Lake Geneva. Our stone boathouse welcomes residents ashore and introduces visitors to the natural materials and architectural details that are abundant throughout the community.



Lake Geneva

country chateaus. However, each of these new residences will have an aged appearance achieved through a number of time-consuming and painstaking techniques. Craftsmen will actually take hammers to the stucco, which will have a hand-troweled texture, and then go back to touch it up with sandblasting or even paint to create the crisp shadows that would be evident on an old house. Two tones of plaster will also be used, light over dark, to make it look like it has been patched over time.

Interesting roofs will add further dimension to the homes. They will incorporate a blend of slate tile colors and “swoops”



▲ Perfect for BBQs or just roasting marshmallows, the brand new patio is designed and built to emulate the ruins of a country farmhouse.

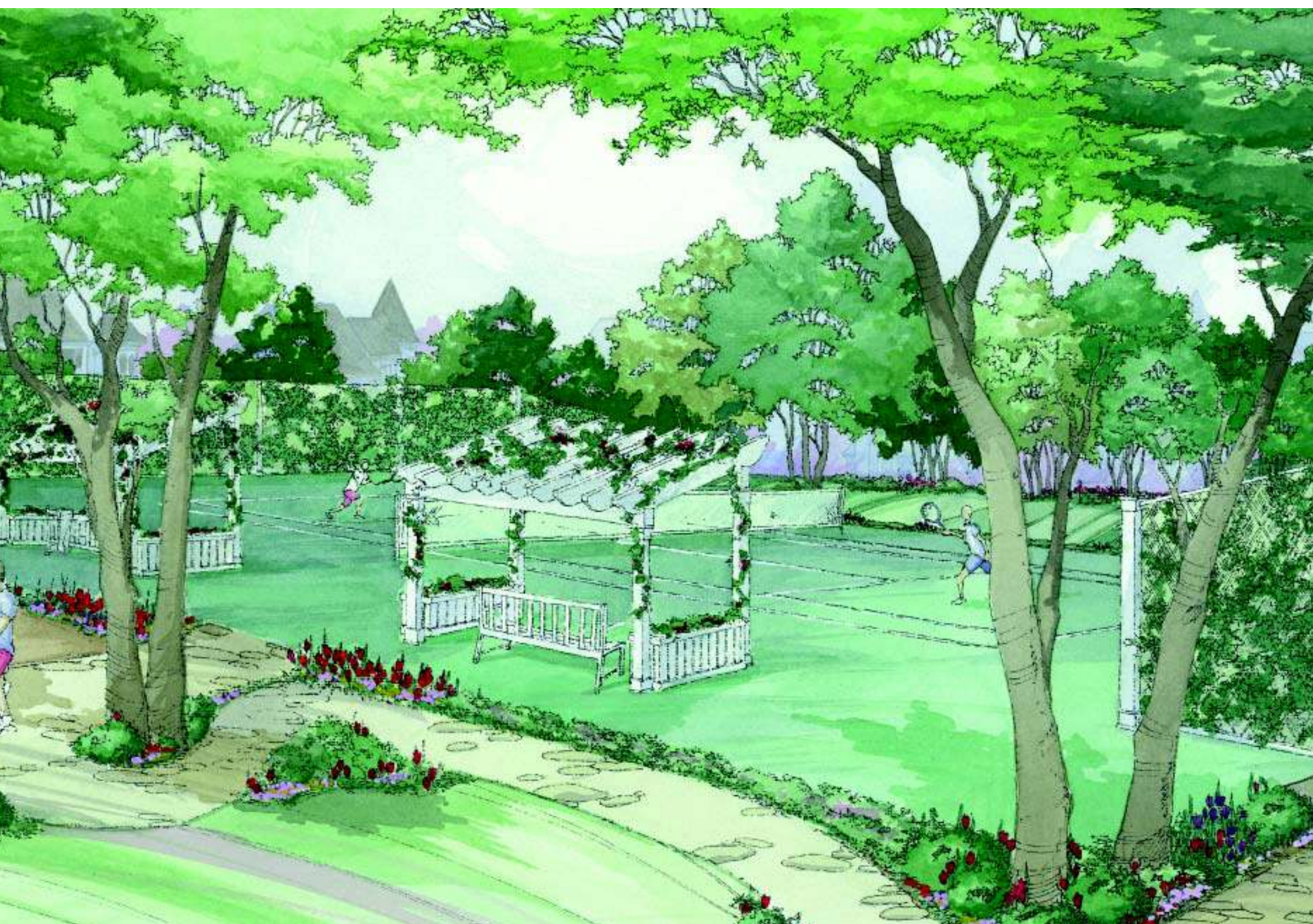
to create an illusion of sagging. The chimneys, too, will be eclectic, with some homes even sporting two different styles! “To add interest, you need balance more than symmetry,” explains Perry. Eyebrow windows with wood and brick molding, windows with real working shutters, and winsome brackets are other ideas that are sure to make their way into designs. Cherry, oak and mahogany accents will add even more style to the brick and stucco fronts.

This blending of materials will prevail throughout the entire community. Wrought iron will be used instead of wood rails on some decks as well as for the quaint address signs and enchanting gas lamps, which will take the place of street lights. Cobblestones will add further character to the winding roads, walkways and whimsical bridges, being used at all intersections and key points of access.

This same approach to style is then echoed in the subterranean clubhouse, which is made entirely from stone and glass and built mostly underground to leave the incomparable lake views unobstructed. The clubhouse even features “cottage ruins,” an area on the roof for barbecuing that actually looks like an old farmhouse that fell down years ago. Palladian arches, French doors, stone pillars, a clover-leaf shaped pool . . . the list of special features goes on and on. Even the pump and well houses look like tiny little cottages, complete with swooped slate roofs and miniature brackets.

To learn more about the South Shore Club, call (847) 572-5248 for your private appointment. Or, research it on the Web at www.thesouthshoreclub.com.

Below: The Har-Tru® tennis court is just the beginning. Residents will also enjoy the ivy-covered trellis, winding walking paths through the forest, and the tailored luxury of their own custom homes. From the professionally manicured lawns and gardens to the slate roofs, the details of the South Shore Club bring a world of charm into your life.







Values: The Single Thread that Weaves Through Our Company

As a design/build firm, Orren Pickell Designers & Builders, more than anything else, is a team. We have architects, craftsmen, marketing and sales professionals, construction superintendents, estimators, etc., all working hand in hand, day in and day out, to make sure every original Pickell, be it a magnificent new home or an exquisitely remodeled residence, is the very best it can be.

Some may question how all of our people and departments can operate with a single purpose, vision and goal in mind. The reason we can accomplish this is quite simply our values. Our values are the single thread that weaves through the many fabrics of our company, binding us together and keeping our focus constant and clear.

Our values begin with our mission statement, “to be the very best at what we do,” and these words are reflected in every aspect of every job we undertake. Pickell architects don’t just want to set new standards in design when they embark on a new project. Rather, they customize and personalize every house to match their clients’ specific needs and lifetime dreams. Similarly, the Pickell team is not just service oriented. We are service obsessed, caring for our homeowners long after the sale is complete and the home is built. Throughout the design/build process, we wrap our arms around our clients, working hand-in-hand with them to find the perfect site, helping them visualize their home during the architectural phase, making sure they stay within their budget, closely guiding them even in those areas that are outside of our company, such as interior design

and landscaping, and watching their dream home materialize during construction. Our trim carpenters are hand-picked and trained in-house to ensure the finest quality. We make a difference by taking everything we do one step further. Every thought and action has one purpose: to benefit our clients.

Oftentimes, people think that because we offer all of these benefits, working with Pickell will be more expensive. On the contrary, having experts on staff for each and every step of the design process saves our clients money. How? Unlike so many smaller architectural and/or building firms, we never need to go outside our company to find the expertise we need. We depend upon ourselves and our proprietary processes and technologies. This level of commitment shows in our designs, costs, timing, and all the way through to the financial stability of our company.

We believe it is these values that led to our company being named the nation’s 2001 Custom Home Builder of the Year by *Custom Home* magazine (the only Midwestern firm ever so honored), and to our Design Group winning more awards than any other residential architectural group in the state. More importantly, it is what has built unmatched customer loyalty, with our clients referring their friends and family members to us, and coming back to us again and again. They, as well as our employees, vendors, and subcontractors, make up the Pickell family, and that’s why our values will continue to weave together the many varied fabrics of our company, year, after year, after year.



▲ The tangible value in every Pickell home comes from the company’s integrity, quality, pride, teamwork, and commitment. **Clockwise, from left:** The majestic details of this Barrington Great Room—20’ beam ceilings, paneled pilasters framing the entryway, a carved limestone fireplace, custom cabinetry, etc.—were designed into the home by Pickell Design Group architects who have been given the freedom to do their best work. The custom cabinetry by CabinetWerks in this authentic, pub-style bar didn’t just happen. It is personality expressed in wood—pure talent, pride, and commitment. The crown ceiling details and trim framed mirrors in this washroom came from Pickell teamwork. Finally, the stunning details throughout this Glencoe kitchen by CabinetWerks (Wood-Mode fine custom cabinetry) prove again that we are the best at what we do . . . and that’s our mission.

Remodeling

Remodeling Brings New Life to a Home

At some time in our lives, all of us have spent time imagining the home of our dreams. Our minds drift as we envision that gorgeous French Country kitchen or cozy cherry wood library.

But many people then think about their school districts, lifelong neighbors and family memories. Often, these people and places are as much a part of the dream home as any room or house. These homeowners realize that, for them, remodeling is the ideal solution.

For some, change involves simply updating or enhancing a few rooms. Others may desire a complete renovation or restoration, with sizeable additions, walls knocked down, or architects reworking the entire flow of the house. Whatever the case may be, remodeling, be it a large or small project, can have a dramatic effect on a house, and can greatly increase its value.

"Many people believe that remodeling simply won't produce the same results as building from scratch," says Greg Schaar, Orren Pickell Designers & Builders' Remodeling Division Manager. "But the results sometimes have even greater impact, as they give something old and outdated a brand new life."

"People also have the idea that remodeling is this treacherous experience, with budgets that go sky high, intrusive workmen at the house day and night, and month after month of general inconvenience," adds Tom Koutny, Remodeling Group Sales Associate. "In fact, our homeowners are constantly surprised at just how easy the process can be. And they are always amazed by the results!"

The Remodeling Group actually grew out of a demand from Pickell clients. They sought the same quality offered by the

company's Custom Home and Design Groups, but in a remodeling capacity. Many were looking to add features to their homes that weren't in their original budgets, such as a beautiful sunroom or spectacular swimming pool. To accommodate their needs, we put together a top-notch staff of talented experts, all of whom have years of experience working on detailed remodeling, renovation and restoration projects.

"Remodeling offers a unique set of challenges. Unlike a new house, you're not starting from a clean slate, so it really takes a special expertise," says Schaar. "People working on these projects have to be constantly aware of things like, 'Will the addition flow with the rest of the house?' or 'Can I knock that wall down to expand the breakfast room?' Our staff makes it their job to have answers to those questions before they're even asked."

Koutny says that the Pickell Remodeling Group is at least 30% faster than its competitors because all the talent is in place, helping the job run more smoothly. "Many people will go



Before



Before



Before



After

Believe it or not, this is the same home. We only wish we had the space to show you photos of the inside of this completely remodeled masterpiece.

straight to an architectural firm when they decide to remodel," he says. "The problem is that some architects may be great at design, but they often have no clue as far as costs or other key components of the project. That's why having our own in house architects, who are tied directly to the construction process, are such a valuable asset." He adds that Pickell's size and reputation "give us priority status with some of the best subcontractors in the state. This speeds up projects and allows the company to negotiate the best value possible for our clients."

The Remodeling Division is made all the more efficient through the use of customized computer software, which keeps the team updated on *exactly* when everything is going to happen, from design, to excavating, to the day the kitchen sink is going to be installed! "Client changes are also easily accomplished because this system is in place," adds Schaar. "Plus, it keeps everyone informed, which is especially important with a remodel project. It's comforting for our homeowners to know who will be in their home and at what time. This daily contact really makes a difference."

Seeing is believing. Remodeling projects like those shown here prove that custom quality can be a part of any house—new or old. For more information on the Remodeling Division and its many services, please contact Tom Koutny at (847) 572-5287.



Before and After

One of the remarkable aspects of remodeling is how it can totally transform a room, and the kitchen of this Northfield residence is a perfect example. The original kitchen (photos on left) was very dark and enclosed, with peninsulas and cabinetry that obstructed people's views as well as their walkways. The homeowners wanted to "brighten it up," making it a functional but beautiful gathering place for family and friends. The end result is stunning. The Wood-Mode cherry cabinets with a dark glaze finish and European country knobs definitely take center stage, yet do not overwhelm the space. Meanwhile, the breakfast room opens to the kitchen. The tumbled golden sand backsplash and floor tile adds even more richness of texture and color. Other features include black granite countertops, a beautifully detailed island with hand-carved corbels on the overhang, top-of-the-line appliances, and a useful desk and china hutch.

Before and After

The living room of the Turn of the Century House in Kenilworth was in a catastrophic state before the Orren Pickell Remodeling Group took command. It was transformed into pure elegance. Even the floor was raised 1/30" per day for 30 days, to level it with the rest of the home.



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Illustrator: Crisostomo Rosario
Photographer: Linda Oyama Bryan
Interior Designer: Marsha Jones (photos page 1, 4, and top two photos on page 5).

For more information, visit our website at www.pickellbuilders.com or call us at 847-572-5200. Our fax number is 847-572-5299. Our email address is info@pickellbuilders.com

Quality Real Estate: The “New Great Stock”

by Orren T. Pickell

Looking for a stable investment, a “new great stock,” that is all but guaranteed to give you a large return on your investment? If you think this isn’t likely considering the current economic climate, think again. Today’s “new great stock” is *quality real estate*.



▲ Orren Pickell

As an investment, real estate has beaten the stock market hands down over the last 100 years.

While property prices during economic booms may go up and flatten out during less prosperous times, the difference is that prices on *quality* real estate in the Chicago area have never dropped, and smart investors have recognized this again and again over the years.

Take the stock market crash in 1987 for instance. I’m sure you remember Black Monday . . . people actually thought the economy was going to die! Of course, this didn’t happen, but what did occur was a flight into more stable investments with prices on some *quality* real estate actually doubling in six months time following this event!

Now, with the economy wavering, as my advisors told me it was bound to do, and adjustable rates under 4%, people are again putting their money into classic stocks, one of which is *quality* real estate. They’re building new, remodeling or even buying second or third homes because they know it will be as close to a guaranteed way to make money as anyone will find over the next decade.

This is one reason we chose to embark on our latest project, the South Shore Club, a community of 40 exquisite custom vacation homes set on the beautiful shores of Lake Geneva. If you have money to invest, why not put it into a second home of equal quality to your main residence, a place that both you and your family can enjoy? Every detail, every aspect of this incredible vacation getaway will be top of the line. Best of all, homeowners won’t have to deal with maintenance . . . that’s our job. We’ll clean the pool, stock your refrigerator, clean the jet ski . . . while you relax, enjoy your home, and watch your investment appreciate!

If you’ve noticed, I purposely used the word *quality* again and again before “real estate” because quality really is the key. Following the 1987 stock market crash, only the *best* properties doubled in value. The reason is that people naturally gravitate toward real quality because they know it is a timeless, stable, and consistently appreciating financial investment.

This is why our company puts so much emphasis on perfecting every last detail that goes into our homes. We want the cabinetry to be beautiful, the architectural design to be extraordinary, but we also want the floorboards to be laid just right and the plumbing to be expertly installed by the most experienced hands. Every screw, every nail, every detail, has to be just so, and this is what sets us apart from the rest. It is also what will protect our clients’ investments.

Remember, though, location is a big part of quality. You want the best product *and* the best land . . . a very important



▲ **Have your stocks and bonds done as well?**

Our concept house, the Jewel Box (top photo), in Lake Forest, sold at full price in September, 2001. It went under contract (the original owner has been transferred) in August, 2002, after being on the market for three weeks. The listing price was \$230,000 over the original price.

Meanwhile, the Turn of the Century House in Kenilworth (bottom photo, above), our remodeling concept house that sold at full price 2½ years ago, resold in 1 year for \$676,000 more (a 32.2% increase).

Original Pickell homes are appreciating assets.

combination because that way there are no exceptions when it comes time to sell.

If you already have a home you love on a fantastic lot in a great town with great neighbors, but the house is starting to show some wear and tear, our Remodeling Group can come in and make any room (or even the whole house!) a showplace. You then get to stay in your current, comfortable neighborhood surrounded by all of your lifelong friends, and your house simply increases and increases in value!

What’s more, I honestly believe there is no better place in the country to invest in *quality* real estate than our area of operation: The Chicago area and Lake Geneva. Real estate values here may sometimes flatten for a short while, but then they quickly seem to go up. It’s like clockwork. Do you know that in 1985 in Lake Forest, the highest price on a home was around \$575,000?! Now, the lots alone are worth more than a million!

I really urge you to take advantage of the great lending rates currently being offered. Whether you’re thinking of building new, remodeling or purchasing a vacation residence, now is the time to consider more quality real estate. If you think you’re paying top dollar now, just wait! In the years ahead, prices are just going to go up. If you build your dream home now, not only will you make a fantastic return on your money, short term and long term, but you’ll enjoy a lifetime of memories as well.