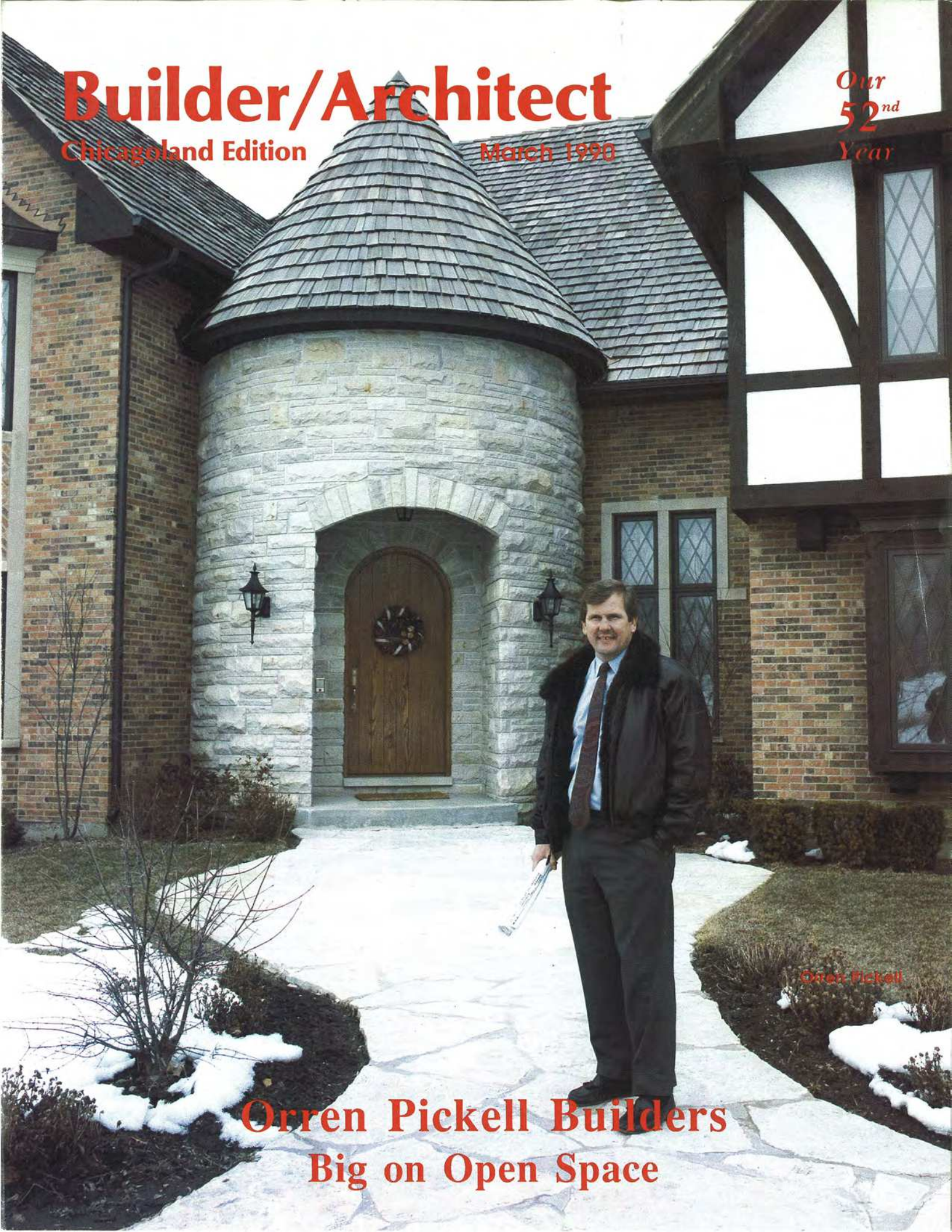


Builder/Architect

Chicagoland Edition

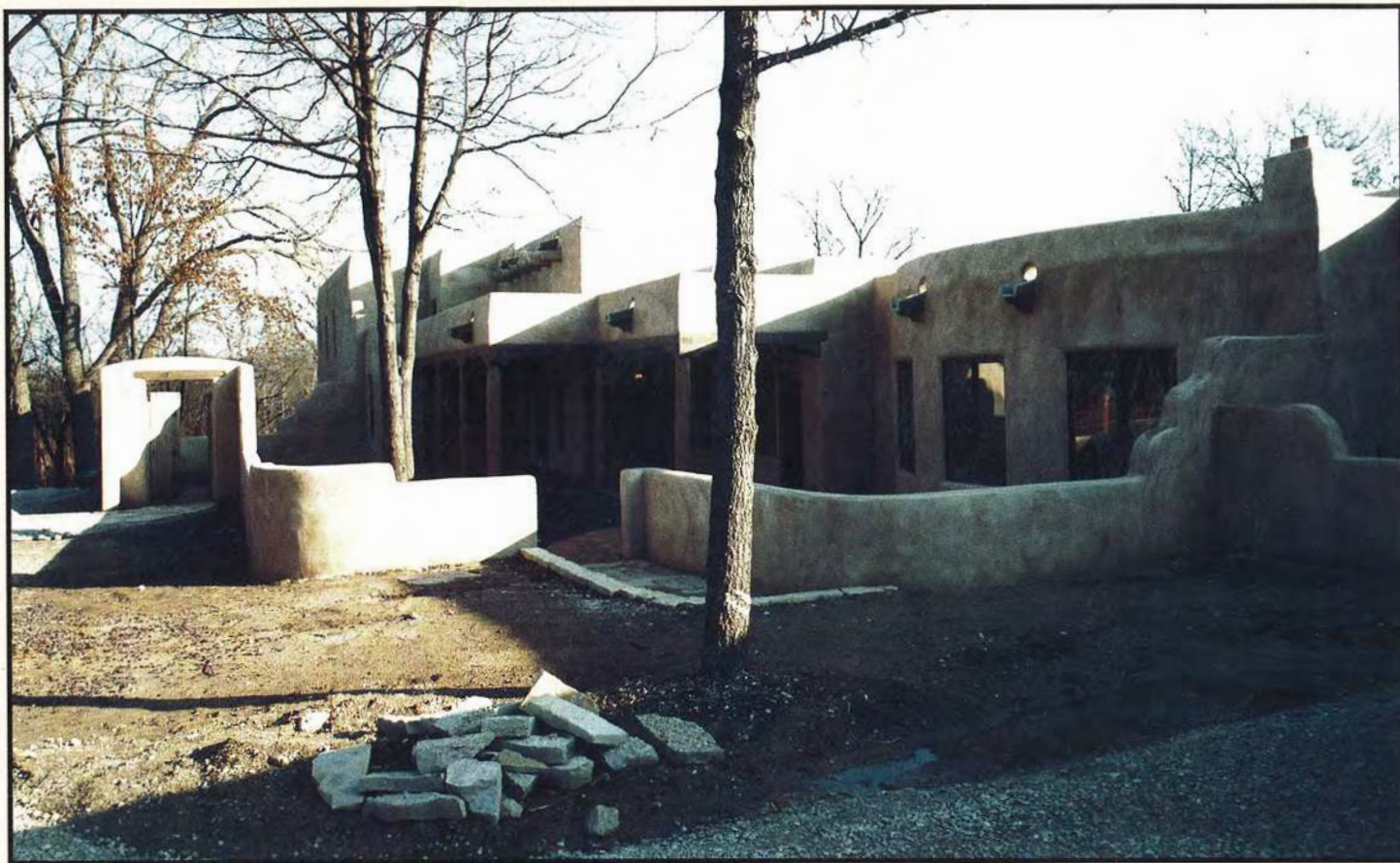
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Our
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Year



Orren Pickell

Orren Pickell Builders
Big on Open Space



Cover story photos by Dick Klein Photography, Chicago, Illinois.

Orren Pickell Builders Big on Open Space

By Allen Thomas

Whatever happened to the small and humble home?

Families used to congregate in "the den" or "the rumpus room"—rooms that were viewed as spare rooms, and typically located in far corners of the home, or even the basement. No more.

Asserts Orren Pickell, president of Orren Pickell Builders, "There's no doubt that large, wide open living spaces are fast becoming a popular trend. Quite often our clients create these design opportunities through the simple statement of their lifestyle needs."

A sprawling Santa Fe-inspired ranch was the request of a couple who happen to own a Southwestern art gallery in Evanston and whose close friends, coincidentally, reside in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

These art aficionados wanted their home oriented around their distinctive art collection and its "gallery type" display.

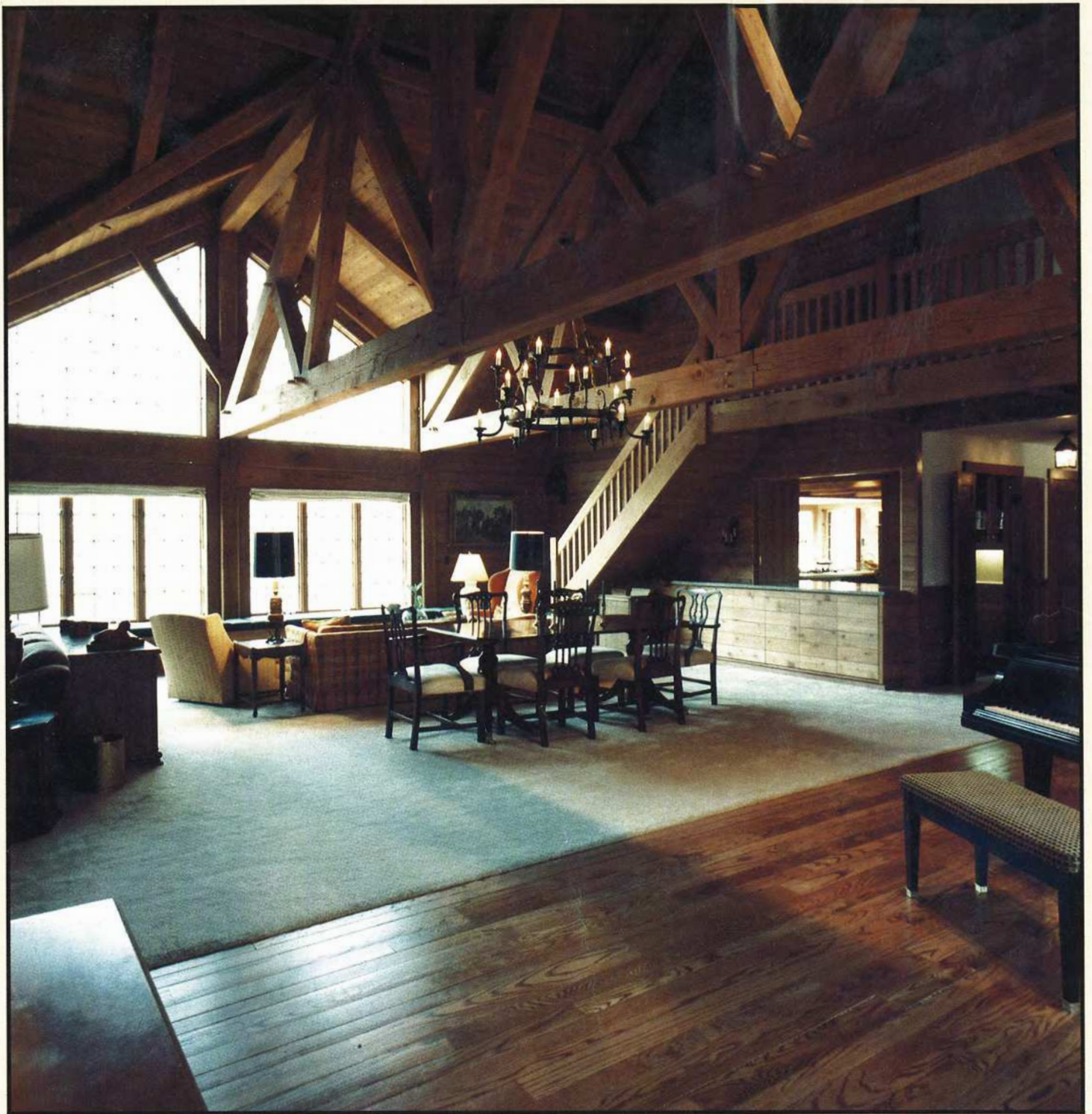
Once the "open space" design parameters were set and the floor plan approved, the fun began.

The building itself had to be "sculptured" from three layers of stucco. In addition, the

fireplaces needed to have rounded corners to maintain the flowing Santa Fe feel.

Of particular note are the ceilings in this one-of-a-kind Midwestern marvel. The ceilings are comprised of logs and branches, known as vigas and latias; these are beams made entirely of unadulterated fir and aspen logs that have been stripped of their bark and laid in a herringbone pattern.

Pickell notes that families today are extremely mobile; each family member having their own particular daily agenda. When these dynamos finally do as-



semble as a family unit, they want to do so in an "open space" area of the home that offers as many personalities as there are family members: a music area, a conversation area, dining, media centers, room to entertain . . . room to grow.

One particular "open space" is characterized by the traditional rustic post and beam construction. This home was designed to be similar to a log cabin often visited by the Orren Pickell Builders client. It is interesting to note that this particular design

had been in the planning since the early 1980's. The 45' x 32' "lodge" area combines the living room, dining room, and family room. It is this "lodge" area that the owner felt would be the center of family activities.

This area is unique in that it

incorporates all of the family's special interests. Witness the pipe organ and baby grand piano that decorate the musical areas of the "lodge"—a tribute to the musical propensity of the "Mrs." Additionally, Orren Pickell Builders constructed the eating area with a focal point fireplace and an indoor barbecue area.

Another Orren Pickell Builders custom built home reflects the open, unabashed style of its



homeowner.

The open area, a spacious 30' x 46', includes the kitchen, informal eating area and bar which flows freely into the expansive family room.

Here Orren Pickell Builders created an ideal setting for informal and sometimes irreverent entertaining, replete with areas set aside for sessions of witty repartee.

Note the visual intercourse between the forest preserve backdrop and the eight sets of large sliding doors and screened-in porch.

Pickell continues, "If the areas are well thought out, they more than justify the effort by all. We find there are many ways to accomplish the illusion and reality of these large, centrally located spaces."

Pickell, whose firm collaborates with a number of regionally

known architects to develop these open spaces for their clientele, states, "In the homes we build, wide open spaces are made livable because of the features and finishes we employ."

required to eliminate, consolidate and integrate ideas on a traditional floor plan. In some cases, owners must increase their budget in order to accommodate their quest for individuality and

Pickell suggests eliminating one to two traditional home areas that can be easily consolidated into the general flow of the central open space.

"These are areas which often are the scene of much family interaction, so why not consolidate one or more of these areas into one central space. After all, final interior design and furnishing clearly defines specific areas within the main open space," remarks Pickell.

Huge voluminous ceilings, bay windows, walls of windows, and focal point fireplaces which are integrated into the open space add to the personalities such spaces require. In addition, specialty architectural features give each home "Picture Perfect Panache."

Orren Pickell Builders has clearly maintained a competitive edge in the open space wars.



According to Pickell, "We need to make a statement about open space . . . clients' needs must be met regardless of the time my company spends determining how to accomplish each of our client's directives."

It's true. These wide open spaces are becoming more popular than ever. *Professional Builder Magazine* reports that one of the top requirements and preferences of home buyers today is the family room—a large, wide open family room.

However, there are trade-offs in accomplishing the quest for space. Orren Pickell Builders contends that regardless of a client's demands and budgetary limitations, there are many ways to accomplish the design objective.

In home designs that require large "open spaces" owners are



"open space."

Pickell states, "My three objectives are to eliminate, consolidate and integrate. Once we can all agree upon this, the sky's the limit."

Many builders are not aware of the vast number of solutions available to them design wise because, in the end, cost is always a consideration.

Comments Pickell, "Sure, it



would be great if every client had an unlimited budget when it came to designing and building their home. But that's not the case, that's not reality, and that's not the scenario I've geared my company toward."

To be sure it takes an astute builder and architect to bring the project needs in on budget. Pickell believes that today's architects must be "receptive to the issues of open spaces, while being sensitive to the finality of the financial ramifications."

Concludes Pickell, "We must not design and build big for the sake of big. When the need arises

we must design and build open spaces in a responsible manner, for it is our clients today that will build our future."

Orren Pickell Builders is one of the most respected names in luxury custom home building on the North Shore and the greater Lake County area. Build-to-order home styles have ranged from traditional Santa Fe architecture, to the contemporary and stately manors, to sprawling rustic lodge styles.

In over a decade of designing and custom home building experiences, Orren Pickell Builders has built homes from 2,000 to

10,000 square feet, many of which have wide open spaces and/or pool and spa areas.

Continuing education, market research, the sensitivity to market needs, plus an exceptional feel for design has made Orren Pickell Builders one of the most sought after builders in the area today.

Orren Pickell Builders is located in Vernon Hills at One Hawthorne Place, 175 East Hawthorne Parkway, and can be reached at (708) 816-7773.

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