

Concepts

Celebrating 30 years of innovation and quality.



Above: Nestled amid the forests of Riverwoods, this exquisite Southwestern-style contemporary home won a 2004 Gold Key Award. Pickell won ten Key Awards in 2004.

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Introducing Our Newest Concept House: Easy Elegance

More homeowners are overwhelmed with managing the competing demands of business, family, home, entertaining and everyday life. The design/build team at Orren Pickell Designers & Builders has responded to today's hectic lifestyles with our latest concept house, Easy Elegance, a customized estate for work and play.

Located at 1768 Reserve Court in Highland Park, this fabulous 4213 sq. ft. (excluding the lower level) home will be open for six weekends, Saturdays & Sundays only, January 22–February 27, 2005, from 1–4pm and by private appointment.

Complete with an open floor plan, first-floor master suite, and flexible multi-use spaces, the floor plan for the Easy Elegance concept house adjusts to the ever-changing needs of a modern family. Like every Pickell home, this house is constructed of the finest materials with gorgeous finishes and custom details. With both large and small spaces, this home is perfect for casual living and entertaining at home.



Above: The Easy Elegance House, 1768 Reserve Court, Highland Park



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First OPIF Homes Near Completion

Great houses, great locations, great values!

For years, prospects who have wanted Orren Pickell homes but couldn't quite afford them have been asking the same question: why can't you build smaller and simpler homes that still have Pickell quality and style? A year ago, we tested out an answer—we built a spec house, The Cornerstone, in Highland Park. The house sold weeks before it was finished! Based upon that success, we created the Orren Pickell Investment Fund (OPIF) and invited clients and employees to join it. The response was overwhelming, and the fully funded venture began buying land and designing and building homes meant to sell at market-driven price points. The first five are shown here. For more information or an appointment, please call our Sales Department at 847/572-5200.



The Manor, 1502 Scott, Winnetka
\$1,595,000, including land.



The French Villa, 948 Marion,
Highland Park
\$1,275,000 including land.



The Coastal Cottage,
351 Bluff, Glencoe
\$1,650,000, including land.



The Tuscany, 1508 Scott, Winnetka
\$1,675,000 including land



The Parisian, 1496 Scott, Winnetka
\$1,695,000, including land

Vacation Home Division Flourishes With the Changing Seasons

Our growing Vacation Home Division has been busy with exciting developments throughout the Midwest.

Southern Wisconsin—Pickell designed and built several magnificent homes on the shores of Lake Geneva and Powers Lake last summer and more are scheduled for 2005. The new CabinetWerks showroom opened in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward as well.

Lighthouse Dunes—Fans of Lake Michigan will be pleased to learn that OPDB is building beautiful beachside homes in Michigan's popular St. Joseph area. An easy hour and a half drive from Chicago, these custom homes can also be enjoyed year-round. Lighthouse Dunes is located on Ridgeway, the city's most prestigious street, next to the beach, marina, yacht club and a historic lighthouse. Marvelous antique shops, artisan studios and gourmet stores are also nearby.

Stone's Throw—OPDB has partnered with interior designer and developer Susan Fredman to build a community of charming country cottage homes in the heart of Michigan's Harbor Country. A unique enclave in the woods and near the shores of Lake Michigan, Stone's Throw is the perfect retreat for summer sun, fall color, winter fun and more!



One of the many cottages completed at Stone's Throw



On the shore at Lighthouse Dunes



New CabinetWerks showroom in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward.



"The Loft" display at CabinetWerks Design Studio in Milwaukee.

This photo was taken in Glenview, not Tuscany! Mention "Flight" on the North Shore and undoubtedly anyone will recognize the name of this hip new restaurant and wine bar that is causing quite a buzz. Steve Herzon, one of our clients, owns this new hot spot. We recently completed his private residence (shown above), a haven from the demands of the hopping hospitality industry.

Pickell Establishes "Good Neighbor" Ties Before Homeowners Move In!

We realize that your builder's behavior directly relates to your new neighbors' first impression of YOU. One of the challenges of building a home in an established (and often quiet) neighborhood is the disruption that construction incurs. At Pickell, we spend a large percentage of our time in the planning phases of each project in order to anticipate any problems and to ensure that your project is completed on time and within budget.

Care is taken to prevent any structural problems within the home, the property, and adjacent properties. Recently, Dennis Ward, President Emeritus of Orren Pickell Designers & Builders, spotted a potential water problem for neighboring properties. At our company's expense, Ward built a retaining wall with catch basins so that any water from the client's property would not seep into the neighbor's yard. Both homeowner and new neighbor appreciated this extra effort!

Warren Schwartz and the Maintenance Department at OPDB also consistently help our clients be great neighbors. Addressing issues before they become problems ensures that Pickell homes age gracefully, adding value to the entire neighborhood.

Spring Maintenance Tips

Preparing for spring-cleaning and home maintenance need not be a headache. Here are some tips to give you a jump-start before the first buds of spring appear:

- Check to make sure caulking is intact.
- Schedule an appointment to clean out gutters and downspouts. Also inspect all spikes, straps, and clips to ensure that they are tightly fastened.
- Inspect your grading to ensure it's sloping away from, not into, your home.
- Test your battery backup sump pump to make sure it's fully operational.
- Replace smoke detector batteries.

Our Maintenance Department is always here to help you. For information on our home maintenance plan, and how we can maintain your home year round, call the Home Maintenance Department at 847/572-5200.

In the Giving Spirit
Like so many of you, we at Orren Pickell Designers & Builders support and work with many charities throughout the year. Tony Perry, Senior Vice President of OPDB, spearheaded a special project in 2004 to refurbish Belfort House, a residential facility for at-risk youth aided by the Teen Living Program in downtown Chicago. Working with Heartland Alliance's Design For Dignity, our Design Department dedicated hundreds of *pro bono* hours for this important cause. Perry and his team expanded the 8-flat facility to house 36 young adults instead of the original 12. With a fully equipped kitchen donated by Wood-Mode Fine Custom Cabinetry and KitchenAid appliances, Belfort House is a warm and welcoming refuge for the teens and staff living there.

Our Staff

EXECUTIVES

Orren Pickell, President & CEO
Dennis Ward, President Emeritus
Tony Perry, Executive Vice President

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Tina Pickell

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Concepts is published by
Orren Pickell Designers & Builders,
200 Tri-State International, Suite 200,
Lincolnshire, IL 60069.

Designer: Allegro Design Inc.
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Easy Elegance (from page 1)

"This is a great example of tailoring a house to a client's specific needs," says Wendy Cohen, Pickell's Vice-President of Sales & Marketing. "It allows our homeowners, an active couple, to live their lives in comfort and balance. What's more, it's filled with romance! This is an oasis filled with rich woods, cozy spaces, and unique architectural details—it's the perfect retreat!"

Even the habits of the loyal and loving family dog were considered during the architectural design process. "In order to create the perfect 'look-out' for Lucy," Cohen explained, "the main staircase was designed in a U-shape to accommodate a special landing and tall window. Just below the window is a ledge built to Lucy's size."

Directions: Rt. 22 to Ridge Road. South on Ridge Road to Reserve Court. Right to 1768 Reserve Court. All proceeds from the suggested \$3 per person donation will benefit Highland Park Hospital.

Building or Remodeling Your Home Should Be a Great Investment, But There Are Hidden Risks!

By Orren T. Pickell

Even after 30 years in the home design, building and remodeling business, I am amazed that many intelligent and knowledgeable people fail to recognize the substantial risks inherent in building or remodeling their home. Principal among these are the thorny issues of mechanics liens and homeowner liability for injuries sustained on the job, as



well as poor quality of workmanship.

These risks extend not only to the current homeowner, but can legally attach to the home itself, making home sale difficult; hence "Buyer Beware" has now become "Seller Beware," as buyers have recourse

to sellers for mechanics liens, poor workmanship, and claims by subcontractors resulting from injury on the project. Knowing of and addressing these issues in advance are critical. I call this "risk management for your home."

Even if the homeowner has paid the general contractor per the terms of their contract, any unpaid subcontractor can file a mechanics lien against your property. This extends to first, second and third-tier suppliers. Remodelers are people—people who can get sick, go bankrupt, or are sometimes just plain dishonest. In every case, the result can be that they don't pay their subcontractors' bills! So, the bills get paid *twice* by . . . you guessed it . . . the unsuspecting homeowner (by law in Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and many other states). Reputable, established remodeling firms prevent this by paying their bills and obtaining waivers from subcontractors as the work progresses and the subcontractors are paid out. The vast majority of remodeling companies are small and don't have the staff or the processes in place to obtain waivers from their subcontractors. Hence, the homeowner's only solution is to hire a remodeler who demonstrates upfront that they will obtain these critical waivers, one who has a history of avoiding mechanics liens, since your homeowner's insurance policy doesn't cover the costs associated with these liens.

Please Send Us Your Email Address!

This is the last Concepts newsletter you will receive via "snail mail." We're launching our high-tech interactive electronic newsletter with video and audio capabilities this spring. OPDB clients will now be able to read Concepts online and download information to PDAs and cell phones.

Please send your email address to:
concepts@pickellbuilders.com. Thank you!

In addition, the issue of homeowner liability should be addressed in every remodeling project. Many homeowners fail to recognize that they have liability for injuries to workmen on their property *unless* the remodeler and each of the subcontractors carry insurance for such injuries. It is therefore very important to obtain from everyone working on the project proof of insurance in the form of a Certificate of Insurance. Established and reputable remodelers only work with those subcontractors who can provide such certificates. It is the responsibility of remodelers to obtain them in order to protect the homeowner. If you have questions about that insurance process, don't hesitate to ask *your* insurance carrier to address them independently.

The issues of mechanics liens, homeowner liability, and insurance in the building and remodeling business are complex. As a homeowner considering building or remodeling, your best way to ensure that you are protected from harm is to raise these issues with potential contractors *upfront* and to select only a builder or remodeler who has the reputation, experience, staff and procedures in place to provide you with that protection. In the end, the builder or remodeler who offers only the best price for your project may well be offering the highest price. Get the answers in writing: reputable contractors have reliable written statements and warranties covering these issues.

Given these and many other issues, building or remodeling your dream home can be a joy . . . or a nightmare. As with most things, go with quality and reputation, not just price. Quality contractors have invested a great deal in establishing themselves in the marketplace and work hard to protect their brand. That brand is a promise, and especially in remodeling, a good reputation is worth its weight in gold. It is your final safeguard.

For more information about the Remodeling Division at Orren Pickell Designers & Builders, contact Tom Koutny at 847/572-5200 or visit us online at www.pickellbuilders.com.