



CHANGES AFOOT IN  
THE STILL EXCITING—  
AND ALWAYS  
CHALLENGING—  
CUSTOM  
HOMEBUILDING  
INDUSTRY  
BY ERIC PICKELL

Following a three-year stint in outside sales in the Chicagoland area I returned to my homebuilding roots. Like my sister, Lisa, we grew up in the business, under the guidance of my mom, Tina, and my dad, Orren Pickell, who started in the industry 40 years ago. I guess you could say homebuilding, remodeling and maintenance are in my blood. For the past two years, I've been leading the Remodel Lite division of Orren Pickell Building Group, and, without a doubt, it has proven to be the best classroom I've experienced.

I've always enjoyed being around my family and to work in the business with my sister and parents is not just a privilege but continues to be an honor. While my other colleagues may not share our last name they, too, are part of a family that's dedicated to providing our customers with the highest quality work and a level of trust inherent in everything we do. Whether it's to change a light bulb for a longtime client or remodel a kitchen for a growing family in a house we built years ago, Orren Pickell Building Group instills an unmatched level of expertise and integrity into every project.

Our Remodel Lite division serves as a branch of our Maintenance Group. Together, we help keep each custom home we build in optimum condition inside and out. Knowing that we've taken care of a client in the past by building the home of their dreams makes the relationship with the homeowner strong, one that is steeped in some history. We also embark on projects of a higher scale like the aforementioned kitchen remodel, small additions, bathroom and basement renovations, screened in porches, you name it. That's probably one of the best parts about my role here: I get to work on an amazing array of projects encompassing a wide range of styles from an in-law suite addition, to creating a basement man cave complete with a cigar lounge and wet bar.

The team we've assembled to manage these projects is, in my humble opinion, the best in the business. First of all, my dad is still involved in a big way, and those forty years of experience seep through everything we do at Orren Pickell Building Group. We've been known for years as an honest firm that not only delivers what we promise, but also does so with

care and concern for the client, maintaining a steady presence throughout each phase of a project.

Clearly, anyone in the remodeling industry knows what a huge disruption these projects can be for a family. In many cases, we are literally tearing up someone's home and even though the plans show a pristine and stunning finished product, the process is not always easy. Delays occur, surprises are discovered behind walls, client emergencies arise—life in general has a way of altering the process, which can generate stress. Orren Pickell Building Group's collective years of experience, commitment to doing things right, and natural affinity for shepherding clients through the process allows us to minimize the worries accompanying a remodeling project. By being available 24/7, we're here to assure, encourage, support and otherwise let our clients know that regardless of any problems that arise, we will get it right. Too often in our fast-paced, social media and online obsessed world, customer service fades into the background. For our company, customer service is the number one focus every day. Without an emphasis on serving the client we wouldn't be who we are. I believe much of our success over the years can be attributed to our constant nature to raise the bar, to always do our best to exceed our customers' expectations and, frankly, our own.

We're very fortunate to have won several awards over the years and that kind of recognition is priceless. This year, for example, the Orren Pickell Building Group received the incredibly prestigious "Best of Houzz 2015 Award" for Design. We were chosen from among 500,000 top-rated home building, remodeling and design professionals in the U.S. and around the world. That's an awesome honor but also a reminder that we have a responsibility to maintain the high standards that helped us obtain an award like this one in the first place.

I think what keeps us moving forward with strong innovation, unsurpassed problem-solving skills, and a solid and steady work ethic is the team we've assembled. Without the team my father has brought together over the years, we wouldn't be the well-known and trusted custom home builder to which many clients turn to year after year. We have subcon-

tractors who've been working with us for over 30 years. This invariably translates from our trust in them and them in us, to the trust we've built with our clients. We all know in this business, without trust you're dead in the water. If there's a problem, we'll fix it. If there's a question, we'll get the answer. If there's an odd request, we'll do our best to accommodate that. Why? Our clients expect that from us as much as we expect it from ourselves.

We're lucky to be working in so many areas of the Midwest. While much of our work takes place in Illinois, we also have projects going on in Indiana, Wisconsin, and Michigan. By working in multiple states, we have to be cognizant of different building code. Despite these challenges, we have the expertise and knowledge to achieve outstanding results.

Sometimes I'm asked about what I like best about my work. If I had to name three things I'd say this: 1) I love interacting with our wonderful clients; 2) I really enjoy the transformations that occur during the design and construction phases; 3) Then, of course, the client's reaction to the finished product. Furthermore, I am blessed and honored to be surrounded by the Orren Pickell Building Group team; I couldn't ask for a better group of people to work with. All of these factors contribute towards making the construction industry exciting to work in.

This has been a busy year for me outside of work as well. I was recently married to my wife, Megan, in April. We purchased a fixer-upper of our

own, where both of us grew up in Libertyville allowing us to live close to both of our families. We spend as much time as possible with family, friends and our dog, Max. I also love to travel, sail and be outdoors.

#### About Eric Pickell

After three years of working in outside sales in the Chicagoland area, Eric has returned to Orren Pickell Building Group to develop the Remodel Lite division. He spent a year as a construction leader in AmeriCorps for Sussex County Habitat for Humanity in Delaware. Eric uses his knowledge of sales and construction to help you through the remodeling process. His primary objective is to make the building process as smooth for you as possible while exceeding your expectations. He strives to make every project an enjoyable experience for our clients and our company. Eric graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Purdue University in 2009. Eric loves working with his hands, travels as much as he can and enjoys gatherings with friends and family.

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