

SUMMER 2019

CONCEPTS



VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER



Lisa Pickell,
President

Last spring, Orren Pickell Building Group embarked on something exciting and a little bit scary—we conducted Voice of the Customer research, bringing

in a research company to interview homeowners at every stage of the design and build process, from every type of project.

We weren't looking for a pat on the back. We were seeking ways to improve.

What did we learn—and what did we do about it?

Enhanced communication, especially at critical points in the process, represented the greatest need. In addition, we were surprised to learn that homeowners wanted us to remain more involved after the project was complete. That sort of insight is worth more than gold to a company that strives to provide exemplary service.

We've already made important changes, including emailing weekly progress updates to each client and enhancing communication through our online portal. There's more on deck, especially for customers who have completed their projects, and much more happening behind the scenes.

The report is detailed and specific, pinpointing a variety of steps we can take to make your experience better. We plan to continue to fine tune our processes and repeat the survey every three years, so we can measure the impact of our efforts and highlight new areas in which to improve.

One thing we heard that made us incredibly happy, though, was that the majority of our customers are likely to share our name and use us again. For that, we thank you. Trusting us with your homes is an incredible compliment.

▼ Think this is amazing? Wait until you see what's inside this incredible Harbor Country estate.



IN THE NEWS



NAMED "BEST KITCHEN REMODELER IN CHICAGO" by CHICAGOARCHITECT.ORG

#1 in Chicago. WOW. It's an honor to have our team recognized and included in such an impressive list. They also named us one of the "Best Residential Renovation Contractors in Chicago."

NKBA INNOVATION + INSPIRATION



Is the official publication of the National Kitchen + Bath Association. Our royal blue Wood-Mode vanity, designed by Krista Benton, was featured on page 70 in the

January/February 2019 issue.

BEST OF HOUZZ 2019 "DESIGN" & "SERVICE"

Thanks to our readers!!

NAMED "BEST HOME BUILDER"

Thanks to 22nd Century Media and the residents of Glencoe, Glenview, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northbrook, Wilmette, Winnetka and for our 2019 "North Shore Choice Award" win.

MEET CAROL AND MIKE BILDER

Carol's sun-drenched art studio pictured below.



AN ARTIST'S HARBOR COUNTRY ESTATE

Designed to bring multiple generations together, this couple's dream home, titled *White Caps and Sunsets*, offers something for everyone. With a long wish list and a clear vision for their home, the owners took years to find just the right lakefront property. Ultimately, they combined two parcels, then worked with the Pickell team to design and build a grand structure of more than 8,000 square feet, in which all primary living spaces showcase sweeping views of the water.

One of the owners, a respected artist and painter, worked closely with the Pickell designers to personalize the home with collected artworks and special touches, such as a blown-glass chandelier that can be lowered for cleaning with the push of a button. In addition, our team constructed a special scaffolding system so she could hand-paint the home's emblem on the chimney that juts out above custom blue roof tiles.

Outside, a pool, fire pit and outdoor kitchen enjoy dazzling views, and a cabana—complete with a kitchenette and bathroom—provides private space for guests.

Inside, the family's love of the water was drawn upon for design inspiration throughout, from the nautilus-inspired spiral staircase to a stained-glass window commissioned for the master bath.

The front door opens to a view of Lake Michigan and leads to a spectacular two-story great room. A grand hallway with multiple ceiling vaults and arched

entryways connects the primary living areas, as does a dual-sided fireplace between the dining room and great room. Even though it's attached to the great room, the open kitchen uses complementary wood millwork and a deeper palette to separate it visually from the other living spaces.

Also on the first floor, the master suite is larger than most apartments. The owners wanted to have their own sitting room, which our team joined with a second two-sided fireplace. Off the gracious bedroom, expansive his-and-hers closets feature custom glass-fronted cabinetry to keep things neat yet easy to find. A dressing area, coffee station and luxurious bathroom with an intricate, custom marble bathtub complete the owners' private space.

The remaining eight bedrooms are thoughtfully placed on the upper and lower levels, including a circular room in the tower with bunkbeds for the grandchildren and balconies for those on the second floor.

Last but not least, a spacious art studio, bathed in natural light, provides areas for both the creative and administrative sides of an artist's life. And a few fun touches, such as a private movie theater (with candy and a popcorn machine) and a Hobbit room under the staircase for the youngest grandchildren, make the home popular with the whole family.



Opposite Page Top: A wall of windows brings the beauty of Lake Michigan into the two-story great room.

Middle: As guests reach the main entrance, they're treated to a glimpse of the lake beyond.

Bottom: The pool and spa sit high above the beach, for an unobstructed view of the lake.

This Page Top Left: A private sitting room within the master suite offers a quiet space to relax.

Top Middle: The open kitchen shifts to a warmer palette to create a cozy atmosphere.

Top Right: The basement movie theater comes complete with a concession stand.

Bottom: A nautilus-inspired staircase



MAGNIFICENT MANOR IN SOUTHEAST WISCONSIN

Never underestimate the importance of confidence and trust between homeowner, designer and builder. That was the takeaway when this Mequon, Wisconsin family felt as though they weren't connecting with their original architect. Before getting too far down that path, they reached out to Orren Pickell, who they'd met at an open house more than ten years before.

The resulting house is nothing short of spectacular, with a unique design and impeccable finishes throughout.

The natural stone exterior evokes a country English manor complemented by hints of a Cape Cod heritage, with bedrooms nestled under the cedar shake roof. An H-shaped floor plan lends symmetry to the matching gables flanking the main entrance, and allows windows to saturate the interiors in natural light from multiple directions. An expansive lawn and paver driveway complete the manor feel.

Initially, the homeowners anticipated a home of around 8,500 s.f. But once the family's wish list was accommodated, the six-bedroom, six-full-bath design comprised 9,200 s.f. in the first and second floors, plus a 3,000 s.f. finished English basement.

room and friendly, more casual applications elsewhere.

The formal library and lower-level spaces draw upon similar lines and millwork profiles as the main living areas, but bring in natural wood for a warmer effect. The basement, for example uses caramel-colored knotty alder throughout the family room and game room. In addition, the basement is home to a workout room and western red cedar

sauna, as well as a wine cellar and tasting room with custom cabinetry and bottle storage.

The owners are thrilled with the home, saying, "Hats off to the Pickell Group for meeting the lifestyle we were trying to achieve. Everything was first class—all first-rate professionals, from the design and framing teams to the exterior stone and finish millwork teams. This is a firm that puts the customer first and overdelivers."



The first floor is open and gracious, with a sprawling great room that leads out to the covered terrace. White-painted millwork, arched openings, beadboard and wainscot are applied with slight variations throughout the great room, dining room, kitchen and sun room, creating cohesion as you move from one area to the next. A gold, red and blue palette also appears throughout, with a more formal interpretation in the dining



Opposite Page Top: Rich and inviting, the formal library is a masterpiece of custom millwork.

Left: The great room establishes the gold, red and blue color palette used throughout the home with a variety of complementary textures and patterns.

This Page Left: The sunroom emphasizes blues and yellows for a bright, friendly effect.

Right: Painted white doors unify cabinetry and appliances, and lets a showstopping copper range hood pop.

Bottom: Natural stone and a cedar shake roof call to mind an English country or Cape Cod aesthetic.



Susan Hamilton,
Sales Associate



Kevin Batz,
Vice President of
Construction



Kurt Savageau,
Trim Carpentry
Superintendent



Krista Benton,
Lead Cabinet Designer





Top: The exterior pays homage to the homeowner's East Coast childhood.

Middle: Even the chicken coop fits the gentleman farmer feel.

Bottom: Reclaimed timbers complement the owners' antiques and keep the home from feeling too formal.

NANTUCKET STYLE COMPLEMENTS A GENTLEMAN'S FARM IN NORTHWEST INDIANA

This family came to the Pickell team ready to create their dream home. Their goals? To honor her East Coast roots and his desire for a "gentleman's farm" feel, complete with a chicken coop for a daily supply of fresh eggs.

It took some time to find the right parcel of land—one that afforded a nice balance of privacy and views—but the family's efforts paid off. Upon seeing the wooded, ten-acre parcel, the Pickell team recommended situating the home at the high point, in order to maximize the expansive vistas on all sides.

Our team incorporated architectural details such as a cupola and shingled exterior, to provide the Nantucket aesthetic the family wanted to bring to the Midwest. Inside, the interior has the warm, lived-in feel they desired.

Broad pine planks, rough-hewn beams in the dining room and reclaimed timbers in the family room add to the farmhouse character and complement the family's rustic American antiques. However, custom cabinetry and an open first-floor plan make the home eminently livable today.

An eat-in kitchen, formal dining room and living room flow easily from one to another, creating an ideal space for entertaining. In addition, the first floor features an expansive master suite with indoor and outdoor showers, office space, and a large mudroom centered around a vintage workbench.

The lower level is home to an antique bar the owners found in a shop in Indiana, as well as a gym and a soccer practice area (complete with reinforced drywall to prevent damage). Three more bedrooms complete the layout upstairs.

Throughout the interior, warm colors, extensive wood, natural light and comfortable furnishings make the 5,000 home feel friendly and intimate, just as the family dreamed of.



Top: The home was positioned at the high point of the property to maximize privacy and views.

Left: Custom cabinetry and a broad pine plank floor make the kitchen a perfect combination of old and new.

Middle: Minimal embellishment in the dining room allows the wooded property to take center stage.

Right: An antique work bench and herringbone brick floor create a distinctive home office.

Bottom: While browsing antique shops in Indiana, the homeowners stumbled upon a bar they simply couldn't pass up.



ENLIGHTENED GOLD COAST LIVING

When built, this condo was the height of luxury. But the dark, divided design was ready to be reimagined into an open, sunlit space that celebrates its Lake Michigan outlook.

The brief? Bring in as much light as possible, add low-profile ceiling lighting without reducing room heights and upgrade everything.

After taking the space down to its bones and removing the wall between the kitchen and living room, the condo was transformed into a modern work of art. A massive island now delineates spaces while making the kitchen much more welcoming and usable. Hardwood and custom cabinetry are luxurious yet practical. The master bath was reworked to open up the bedroom. And the addition of sliding doors and transom windows in the study give the space a more open, airy feel. Perfect.

Right: Thoughtful updates modernize the living area and bring the city and lake views into focus.

Below: Removing the kitchen dividing wall created a giant blank canvas bathed in natural light.



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Your master bath may offer more opportunities than you realize. Before you grab a sledgehammer, read these dos and don'ts.



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Find out why

some homes' first impressions work, and some fall flat. Take a look from a designer's point of view.

How to Build a House with a Builder: Five Tips on Building Your Dream Home



Make sure everyone is on the same page to ensure that you get everything you want in your home.



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