

GM HOMES

CREATING A BUZZ

By Kerri White

We hear so many buzz words nowadays that all it leaves is a hollowed ringing in our ears. You can only hear the phrases 'quality' and 'outstanding customer service' so many times before it becomes empty noise, devoid of the meaning it once held. So if you're a business that does, in the purest sense of the terms, excel in quality of work and customer service, what do you say to cut through the static? How about saying - Nothing.

At GM Homes they let their work and customers do the talking, and with nearly 90% of their business coming from referrals, the talk must be good. GM Homes specializes in building custom homes that range from \$150,000 to \$1.5 million. They have branched out all over Lower Michigan and Elkhart County. Owned and operated by Gene Miller and his wife Jenny Miller, GM Homes has created quite a buzz in the home building industry.

Your home is only as good as the one who builds it. It only makes sense then to find a builder you trust, who holds a strong work ethic and a get-it-done at-

titude, and who makes you feel comfortable. Chris Pucalik, who will be moving into her GM home this coming week, has already recommended GM Homes to her friends. She couldn't say enough about GM's willingness to go above and beyond the status quo, to build a 'quality' home, and complete building in a timely fashion. "From the get go, I was surprised how quickly the job was being done - but I could tell it was being done right," began Pucalik. "One thing I've learned is that there's Eastern Daylight Time, Eastern Standard Time, and then there's Gene (Miller) time. I've wondered if I needed to move my watch back by two weeks just to keep up with him! He'll do everything he can to make sure the job is done on time or before, without cutting corners." She continued by saying, "Quality is a buzz word, but Gene backs up what he says. He doesn't just give you lip service. If he tells you something, you can consider it done. Gene's always on top of the job."

From the beginning of the design to the final walk through, Miller and his team work closely with the homeowner.

Customers can work with GM Homes to decide on the land they want to build, the design of their home, and can even

receive direction from GM Homes when searching for financing assistance. Because GM Homes is a custom home builder, the customer can design the home they've always wanted. Bring a blue print or bring a sketch you drew on a cocktail napkin the night before, GM Homes is happy to work with the ideas and concepts envisioned by the homeowner. For those that need a bit more guidance, GM Homes also offer a library of floor plans that can easily be modified to suit one's individual taste.

Don't mistake GM Homes for an outfit that you see once and then never hear from again. When the building process begins, GM remains in close communication with the homeowner on a weekly basis. Several walkthroughs during construction also occur and after building is complete, there is a final walk through to ensure that customer expectations are not only met, but exceeded. After final adjustments are made, the keys are turned over to the homeowner. GM also offers a one year warranty and will return and fix repairs that are due to house settling. "Our goal is to have a completely satisfied customer at the end of the project," stated Miller. "When they move in, we want them happy. It's the most important thing to us."

You get what you pay for and Miller strives to build homes that stand the test of time. Quality usually boils down to experience and knowing how to address problems when they arise. "A customer's largest investment is often times a home," Miller explained. "There are building issues that come up every time. You need to know how to address them and make it as un-stressful for the homeowner as possible. Another issue to look at is cost. You might have a builder price out a home 10,000 dollars less than other builders, but you might be getting fewer materials, a lower standard of quality, and an inaccurate pricing scale - meaning that the price might unexpectedly go up. My advice: If a customer wants to feel comfortable with the decision they've made, they need to choose a very reputable builder, whether me or someone else. If you think you're



saving a lot of money -that could be a very bad thing."

An active member of the Builder's Association of Elkhart County, Miller conducts business with suppliers that are also members of The Association. He believes that active participation in The Association indicates a commitment to higher standards. To ensure quality for every aspect of the building process, Miller hires a specialist for each individual house building project. That means Mr. Jack-of-all Trades won't be learning how to install hardwood floors in your dining room. "I work with specialists," said Miller, "because they do it every-day. No one knows their job better than somebody that's doing that skill on a daily basis. They know all the tricks."

Serving others through a strong work ethic was engrained in Miller from an early age. His father owned a hardware store for 25 years and Miller recalls his time as a child observing how to treat customers. "I would observe an employee exercising poor customer service as my father demonstrated great customer service. It was engrained in me from that point that you have to treat people with respect and go out of your way to help them." Because of lessons he learned from his father, Miller is actively involved with every home GM builds. He carries his cell phone with him at all times and is quick to address any problems his clients might have. Chris Pucalik recalled how promptly Miller replaced a flawed granite counter top. "I told Gene that I didn't think that the counter top was going to work," Pucalik recalled. "Ten minutes later, Gene called me back to tell me that a new piece had been ordered and would soon be installed."

GM Homes builds 15-30 homes a year. They have a new neighborhood called Songbird Meadows that will have large estate style lots and will be operated by restricted architectural approval. They are also now in partnership with the Chelton Glen development. "Quality is an overused word," concluded Miller. "My goal is for those that walk in our homes to know what they can expect and exactly what we stand for."

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CHELTON GLEN

By Kerri White

Building your new home can be a breeze with Chelton Glen Development. It can be unsettling going through the construction process but Mike Anderson at Chelton Glen has taken steps to give the new homeowner peace of mind before, during and after the construction of your beautiful new home.

They've stopped making it." Seeing an investment opportunity, Anderson took it. With Timber Ridge and Pheasant Ridge developments on either side, Chelton Glen keeps good company. "Elkhart East is a planned community," Anderson began, "so there are no surprises in what type of construction can

ing it. Architectural controls also safeguard the homeowner and keep them informed throughout the building process. "Through our attention to detail, landscaping features, and high standards in architectural control guidelines, we've made the home building experience easier for the homeowner," stated Anderson. "When a builder commits to these guidelines, I'm guaranteed that there will be a good quality home built on the land."

Anderson understands that one of the most significant investments one can make is on his or her home. He takes pleasure and pride in being the vehicle that assures homeowners a beautiful piece of land and a well built, affordable home. To further ensure excellence, Anderson prefers to work with builders that are members of the Builder's Association of Elkhart County. "I want people to be assured that they are working with a great developer and a great builder," Anderson remarked. "GM Homes is one of our favorite builder's, but we're open to all builders that follow the guidelines we've set out. GM builds a quality home, each home having a distinctive feature

that catches your attention." For viewing and for sale, GM Homes has recently completed a model home in Chelton Glen.

Anderson went on to further explain his commitment in seeing Chelton Glen live up to his high standards. "This is our baby," he said. "This is the only development we're doing and so we're putting all of our effort into this one project. Some developments go up so fast. We spent a great deal of time planning so that there wouldn't be problems in the future. We pay attention to detail, working with builders that build a quality product and setting up an area with a beautiful landscape package that grows with the community."

With beautiful land and guaranteed measures that ensure a well built home, Chelton Glen offers the homeowner many appealing features and especially peace of mind throughout the home building process. There's no better time to invest in your future at Chelton Glen in scenic Elkhart East. Enjoy the peaceful country breeze as you delight in building your future in Chelton Glen.



At Chelton Glen, houses are nestled in a country setting. The area is lush with greenery, abundant with deer and other wildlife, and surrounded by picturesque oak and maple trees. Over two years of planning went into the development of this landscape, according to Chelton Glen Owner Mike Anderson. Wanting to develop the land with atmosphere in mind, Chelton Glen has a landscaping design package for each home. The development is located just east of County Road 17 in Elkhart, but is not on the main road. "It has a country charm with city conveniences," added Anderson.

Mark Twain once said, "Buy land. take place. The strict zoning enforcements secure your investment. This is the best time to plan for your future because once these lots are gone, they're gone."

With as much time spent on simply planning the landscape and layout of the land itself, it's no wonder that as much attention is given to the homes as well. Builders are required to adhere to strict architectural control requirements and must submit two sets of plans before building. Chelton Glen works closely with the builder to ensure that every home compliments the land as well as the other homes surround-

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