

# BUILDING SCENE

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THURSDAY, JULY 1, 1993

## BUILDING SCENE'S NAMES & PLACES

### Building a business park

Plymouth-based R.A. DeMatteo Company, along with Morgan-Mitsubishi Development and Signature Associates, is developing a 393-acre Washtenaw Business Park in Ypsilanti, located off I-94 at Huron Street. Already in place on the site are a McDonald's, the Radisson Hotel and a golf course. The park will feature lots on both sides of Huron. There are currently 23 platted acres with three available lots on the east side zoned commercial. There are 72 platted acres on the west side (12 lots) zoned light industrial, with some retail near the entrance. More than 100 Realtors showed up last Tuesday for re-introduction ceremonies.

### Remodelers certified

Robert Budman of Budman's Home Improvements in Southfield, John Glatzer of A-1 Construction and Remodeling in Warren and Gary Burika of Burke Brothers in Allen Park have gained Certified Remodeler status from the National Association of Remodeling Industry. To gain certification, the trio passed an eight-hour written exam covering 18 different technical and business management areas. They also have to have served the industry for a minimum of five years.

### Building Trade School

Dennis Green Advertising of Farmington Hills has been appointed by the American Building Trade School (ABT) to handle its public relations. ABT operates four schools in the metro Detroit area that train unemployed and homeless inner city men and women in building skills such as painting, roofing, dry wall, masonry and rough carpentry skills. Dennis Green's initial assignment will be to prepare television spots and collateral materials.

### Home building workshops

Builder Jim Nawrot from Livonia will be presenting two free introductory home building seminars in the area. He will be in Bloomfield Hills on July 8 and in Livonia on July 11. He also has scheduled seminars in Flint (July 10) and Ann Arbor (July 13). These workshops are four-hour consumer-based educational programs designed to answer all relative home building questions and teach new and experienced home purchasers how to effectively deal with subdivision builders and contractors. For times and locations, call Nawrot at 313-462-0944, or mail to 16380 Aldrich Ct., Livonia, 48154.

Information for inclusion in this column should be sent to Marilyn Fitchett, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



What a view: Luxury condominiums at Woodlands at Deer Creek in Plymouth Township back up to a 17-acre wooded nature preserve. Said builder, Bill Steiner: "Take a look out there. That, in essence, is a virgin strand of timber. It would have been a crime to go in there and tear it out."

## A 'View-tiful' concept

■ A Plymouth Township couple has succeeded with a rather novel condominium development concept: Less is more — more attractive and more marketable.

By DOUG FUNKE  
STAFF WRITER

Bill Steiner and Carol Bond, owners of Deercreek Building Co. in Plymouth Township, found that with their condominium development — Woodlands at Deer Creek — fewer is better.

The husband-and-wife team plans to build 20 luxury units on just over seven acres abutting a wooded nature preserve at the north end of the subdivision off Powell Road.

They're building only 20 units even though the zoning code allows up to 32.

Fewer upscale detached condos would better fit the existing neighborhood of some 100 large, single-family homes priced at \$300,000 to \$400,000,

the couple concluded.

"We felt what went in here was very important for the overall sub and caliber of houses," Steiner said. "We went backward, so to speak, but we feel we improved."

"These lots all stayed vacant until they saw what we were going to be doing," Bond said of nearby single family houses. "We felt it (32 condos) would hurt single family."

Condominium prices start at \$275,000. There's a \$25,000 premium for lots that back directly to the woods.

The 17-acre woods was another consideration in the decision to actually build fewer condos than was allowable.

"The amount of stripping for 32 required that we'd have to take a great number of trees out," Steiner said.

In retrospect, the developer is pleased with how the condos turned out even though Deercreek wasn't the first choice to build them.

See DEER CREEK, 3F



Interiors: Even the spacious elegance of this room is enhanced by the beauty of the woodlands, woodlands that would have been destroyed if the builders hadn't opted to build 12 fewer condos on the Deer Creek site.

## Builders stay optimistic despite flat 1st quarter

By DOUG FUNKE  
STAFF WRITER

Home building activity through the first three months of this year remained relatively flat, but there were signs of a pick-up in early spring.

Single-family housing permits issued January through March in southeastern Michigan almost mirrored the activity level during the first quarter of 1992.

Some 2,610 units were permitted in Oakland, Wayne, Macomb, Washtenaw (Ann Arbor), Monroe, St. Clair, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston and Genesee (Flint) counties compared to 2,580 units last year, an increase of 1.1 percent.

The three-month figure for 1993 ranked southeast Michigan 15th nationally just behind Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif. (2,662 permits), and just ahead of San Francisco (2,543).

The numbers were compiled by U.S. Housing Markets, a Livonia-based research publication of Lomas Mortgage USA, a national servicer of residential mortgages.

First-quarter activity here also almost mirrored the national trend, U.S. Housing Markets reported.

Builders throughout the United States pulled some 201,800 single family permits during the first three months, a 1.5 percent gain over the comparable period in 1992.

However, the pace quickened in April, the publication reported.

"Buyers warmed out of their winter hibernation and pushed new home sales to a monthly rate not experienced since July of 1989," said Gary H. Kell, executive vice president for Lomas Mortgage.

"It was the best April sales rate since 1987," Kell said. "The buying explosion suggested that consumers may be dropping their defensive posture."

"Much of housing's resurgence in the past year and a half has come from the pent up aspirations of first-time buyers who were frustrated during the late 1980s by double-digit interest rates and inflated housing prices."

"That backlog of entry-level demand has been largely satisfied, and continued progress in the housing market depends on strength in the job market — new jobs being created and existing jobs made more secure by an expanding economy," Kell said.

Fred Capaldi, a Rochester Hills builder and president of the Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan, said he also noticed an increase in building activity here in April.

"I think what really hurt us this year was bad weather — cold, snowy then rain," he said.

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