

Healthy, wealthy and wise

Impressive
Millennium II house
meets special health
standards and
monitors climate,
security, even leaks

The indoor swimming pool is pretty impressive, isn't it? See how glass pocket doors open into the pool room from the living room, kitchen and master bedroom.

The two-story kitchen with its maple cabinets, granite countertops, a sink in each of the two islands and even the manufactured-stone fireplace behind the roll-down television screen is probably to be expected in a home valued at \$3 million plus land.

But this home— estimated at 14,000 square feet on three levels— has more going on behind the scenes than most homes.

It is the first house built in Illinois that meets the health house standards set by the American Lung Association.

This means the indoor air quality of the home is measurably low in pollutants. The most important step in achieving this is choosing the proper heating and ventilation systems.

The training for builders also deals with sealing cracks and holes against moisture and radon, and avoiding materials that give off gases.

The house also has several layers of technology and two backup energy systems to keep it going if the power system fails.



The view across the living room from the foyer of the Millennium II house includes the indoor swimming pool, above and below. The home near Glen Ellyn is the second collaboration for the builder and architect.



The Millennium II house was designed by Bill Styczynski of Willowbrook and built by Scott Sevon of Sevconco in Palatine. Set on almost 2 acres near Glen Ellyn, it sold to an empty-nest couple while it was under construction.

There is a lot to see in this house, and the good news is it will be open to the public for a few weekends.

Sevon said he could build a smaller health house— say 4,000 square feet— for about \$800,000 plus land.



The front elevation of the Millennium II house.

And there are ways to do it more modestly, said Harold Wimmer, executive director of the American Lung Association of Illinois.

The builder also said there are conflicts between “healthy”, defined as clean and nontoxic for humans, and “green”, or good for the environment.

The division usually comes with recycled plastic, which is considered green, but is healthy indoors only if it is encapsulated so gases do not escape, Sevon said.

He did use RoyalWood, made from recycled plastic and sawdust, to make outside pieces like fascia and eaves.

Here are some things you won’t want to miss in the Millennium II house.

Swimming Pool

The main level of the home is mostly two stories tall. When visitors enter the foyer the view straight ahead is dominated by the indoor swimming pool, in its own room of 2,706 square feet.

“We wanted to put the focus on the pool,” said Laurie Smith, interior designer with Piconke Smith Design in Woodridge.

The free-form pool itself stretches from the living room past the master bedroom. A large area of the pool

room that is off the kitchen is called the lanai. That means it’s really a second kitchen for entertaining, and the wide, stamped concrete deck around the pool encourages this.

The poolside bathroom continues the water theme with silver tiles in designs of waves and pinwheels.

The mirror and the leaded window in here are designed with shells and coral. Silestone, a man-made material that is mostly quartz, sparkles on the floor and shower surround.

Besides glass doors to separate the pool area from the rest of the house, the pool has its own dehumidifying system.

Roll-down shutters, similar to ones used to protect against hurricanes in Florida, cover the large windows and sliding doors that separate the pool room from the outside. Here the shutters are used for heat retention and security.

Décor

The living room’s fireplace wall is covered with dark marble tiles of different sizes cut into a dramatic curve.

“We used soft colors and picked up tones from the marble for the finishes and draperies,” Smith said.

Art selected by the homeowner also helped set the scene. For example, the safari theme in the lower level came from a painting.

Much of the furniture is from a company called Kreiss Collection, and is oversized and stuffed and has a California and Florida feel, she said. It is frequently covered in suede since natural materials are considered healthier. Some of these pieces have been purchased by the homeowner.

The dining room table was custom made with a dramatic chipped edge on the glass top. This is from Attention to Detail in Crystal Lake, which also made the etched windows and doors in the home.

Don’t miss the television that shines from the mirror in the master bath.

Kitchen

Another stunning area is the kitchen. The countertops are peach and gray granite, the backsplashes are bronze and ceramic tiles.

It’s a place where a family could curl up and spend the whole winter. Besides the cooking area and an eating corner, there’s the fireplace where a 10-foot-wide screen comes down for the projection television.

Huge 16-by-16-inch ceramic

tiles on the floor look like limestone.

Lower level

The English basement also seems to roll on forever with its own kitchenette, two fireplaces and even a room for putting that's surrounded by golf murals. There's another room to practice driving swings.

Little details go on forever like a cedar closet that is built with concrete to be tornado safe and a vanity crafted of bamboo.

Puka fans electrified in a line on the ceiling add a whimsical touch.

Behind the scenes

Sevon tells everyone who will listen that you can stand at a monitor in any area of the home and read and change the temperature and humidity in perhaps 18 zones.

Lighting, security, telephone, answering machine and music also can be managed from these Crestron screens.

The computer system that runs this costs \$40,000, but like many features in the house it was do-

nated. A \$15,000 layout would be good enough, Sevon said.

Of course, the first question out of everyone's mouth is what happens to all this automation if the power goes out.

Sevon is ready for them.

He shows them a Kohler transfer switch in one of the home's two control rooms, and points outside to the generator.

"If this switch doesn't turn on, it dials out automatically or e-mails the service company and says "Get over here," Sevon said.

Meanwhile a second backup resembling a big battery kicks in and can carry the house for a day.

The home, pool and bath water are heated with three boilers. Water from the boilers flows into tubes in the floor— and the front porch and walk to remove ice.

The boilers also send water to another system called an air handler. In this unit, a fan blows across tubes of hot water. This not only puts hot air into rooms, but also serves to purify and humidify the air.

Oops

Every toilet, sink and ice maker in the house has a sensor. If a leak is detected, the computer turns the water off, sounds an alarm or sends an e-mail either to the owner or those maintaining the house.

Someone's got to clean

The house seems to be built with threes. Three vacuum canisters are in the basement with outlets throughout the house and baseboards that lift for debris to be swept in.

The vacuum exhausts outside, and an air balancing system calls for more outside air to be introduced when a vacuum cleaner goes on.

Etc.

Other areas on the main level are a media room/library, two guest suites with private baths and an office.

A touch of a button prepares the media room for a video, including the lowering of a screen to darken the window. The room is surrounded with bookshelves— complete with rolling ladder. Two rooms— designated as an office and an exercise room— share a bath on the second floor.

Elevator

An elevator is probably more important in this home because the garage is on a separate level from the main floor.

Sevon says the aging of the population means it would be best to have elevators in as many new homes as possible.

The equipment for an elevator with three stops would cost about \$30,000, and the extra construction work needed on a new home would probably add \$10,000, he said.

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The lower level, with stone fireplaces and jungle theme.

