



BUILDERS BEGIN WORK ON CHARITY HOUSE

If things went well for Mark Perlman and Chic Martin this week, they had a real groundbreaking experience.

Perlman is project chairman for the Home Builders Association of Lake County Custom Charity House: Martin will oversee construction. Groundbreaking was to have been in late May, with August 1st being the day the dry wall was to be installed, but work has been delayed while the financial paperwork was put in order. August 1st was to be G-Day, said Perlman in an interview July 24th at his Northbrook home-building company, Empeco Inc., while he awaited a call with final approval from the Bank of Waukegan. The call with approval came about an hour after the initial interview with Pioneer Press and he said at press last week the groundbreaking would be sometime this week.

The home design is the result of a contest HBALC held. The winner was Styczynski Walker & Associates of Willowbrook. The floor plans include a first-floor master bedroom, 3 _ baths, sheltered entry, foyer, living room, dining room, great room overlooking the golf course, kitchen/breakfast room, porch, a study and balcony (with golf course view) off the midpoint landing to the second floor, and three bedrooms on the second floor.

Ivanhoe Estates has 125 lots, about 100 of which have been sold. Perlman is also working on a model at the subdivision, which is in unincorporated Lake County south of Mundelein, and will start another home there soon.

When the 3,684-square-foot, four-bedroom house is finished and sold, Perlman hopes more than \$100,000 will have been raised for Children's Memorial Hospital, the

Juvenile Diabetes Association, and three Lake County charities – Youth and Family Counseling, Omni Youth Services and the Riverside Foundation.

The hospital, which will receive one-third of the profit, is dear to the Perlman family of Buffalo Grove.

“When my oldest son was born, he spent a lot of time at Children’s,” Perlman said. “I have often thought about how I could repay them for what they did. That’s why I came up with this idea two to three years ago.”

When he called the hospital to talk about the project, he was asked “Is your son still alive?” Very much so, Perlman happily could report. His son is a student at the University of Michigan and is talking about law school.

JDF, which will also receive one-third, was chosen because Perlman has a good friend whose son has diabetes. The Lake County charities will split the last third.

Perlman and Chic Martin, president of Chic Martin Signature Homes, have had a struggle getting the project started. They had originally gone to the Home Builders Association of Greater Chicago, where they were members, and Perlman had chaired the Custom Builders Council. Not receiving much support there, they took the idea to the Lake County HBA branch, which offered its support with the proviso that Lake County, charities also would benefit.

“I have gotten a lot of help from the board and people at (HBALC),” Perlman said.

ANNUAL PROJECT

Perlman has worked with Ron Fleckman, HBALC president and president of Cyrus Homes, Evanston, and Tim Aikens of First American Title, Arlington Heights.

“It’s been three of us who have put this thing together,” Perlman said.

“Every year (HBALC tries) to do some project that has some charitable component,” said Fleckman, an Evanston resident.

HBALC’s last effort was the House in a Day, which he termed an entry-level house compared to this one which will be more luxurious.

“Mark Perlman and Chic Martin are two guys who have stepped up and are going to see it through from start to finish. The association is using its efforts to get contributions and that has worked pretty well,” Fleckman said.

Fleckman sees his role in this as cheerleader, spearheading the efforts to get goods and services contributed. That has been a fairly easy job, he said.

“People in industry really step up for this kind of stuff. The board also has stepped up; builders are going to each of their suppliers to get that going.

Aikens has contacts with subcontractors as construction escrow administrator for First American Title, and he has been using those contacts to bring in donations. Like Fleckman, he has good responses.

“People are very interested in this project, mainly because it helps so many worthy local charities,” said Aikens, whose company is donating the title work.

“Everybody I’ve talked to about this knows somebody who has been helped by one of these organizations or have been personally helped by one.”

Support has been in the form of pledges of labor and materials, but Perlman is still looking for some things such as carpentry labor and is confirming pledges received months back.

One big hurdle was paying for the site, but Ivanhoe Estates subordinated the land and discounted the price.

“The property was chosen because of the setting and location and the activity that is generated around golf communities that would enhance the activities for the charities,” said Martin who has been in construction for 31 years and who hoped to begin work the first week in August. “I’ve been involved because it’s a great thing and something to return to our younger generation.”

Bank of Waukegan is seeing them over the next hurdle – money – with a loan at prime and with no points and no fees.

Fund-and supply-raising of this sort can mean some arm twisting, but “we have not had that experience,” Fleckman said, noting a letter he recently has from 84 Lumber saying the company would donate \$6,000.00 in lumber. “Nobody had to call them and do a hard sell.”

Perlman said that will be about half the lumber needed.

Beyond the charities benefiting, Fleckman said projects such as this allow the diverse industry members to work on something together.

Perlman and Martin expect the home to take about five to seven months to build, and it may be used as a showhouse where Children’s and JDF may have benefit events, depending on when the house sells and when the new owners would want to move in.

The past few months have been frustrating for Perlman while the paperwork was being finalized and he was looking forward to having renewed energy for it once the groundbreaking occurs.

“We all have businesses to run and this has been a much more difficult project to manage than anyone had imagined.” Perlman said.

“Someone’s going to get a beautiful house and these five worthwhile charities are going to get a real lot of money from it,” Perlman said.

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