

A Modern-Day Mt. Vernon

By Tracy Dickinson, Photography by John Johnson



K & V Homes' interpretation of Colonial design includes brick and shutters on the exterior, and a comfortable family room with two-sided fireplace inside.

If George Washington were building his beloved Mt. Vernon today, he'd want to hire K & V Homes of Waukee. Their interpretation of Colonial style at Ankeny's Prairie Trail development has the feel of a classic, centuries-old home, but it was designed for a 21st-century family.

"That's one of the things that's a big deal for us," explains partner Dean Vogel. "The homes we build are laid out for families, for the way people really live." Vogel and Colin King, the "K" of K & V Homes, have known each other since high school and have been in business together for more than a decade. That long-term approach has carried over into the homes they build—and the company's entry in HomeShowExpo 2008 is a perfect example of that.

The home's stately exterior and many traditional features, such as cherry cabinetry and painted paneling in

the formal rooms, pay tribute to the Colonial era. But modern amenities, from stainless-steel appliances and granite countertops to the whole-house automation system and theater room, bring the design in sync with contemporary living.

A covered back porch shares a fireplace with the family room, which has the floor-to-ceiling book shelves of a New England-style home but the casual atmosphere of a modern-day great-room. Even the formal rooms have a relaxed feel, due to the open layout on the main level and the rustic hardwood floors.

"Barnum Floors custom-finished these floors," says Vogel. "When we met with them to discuss the home and the look we wanted, they suggested this quartersawn oak. It's all hand-scraped on the edges and given this dark finish. Then they came out and cut and assembled it on-site." The result is a rich, aged appearance that wears

Clockwise from top left: Designed for a family and all their activities, this home offers intimate sitting rooms, a well-appointed kitchen, an elegant office/den and both formal and informal dining areas.



well and complements the custom glazing on the kitchen's cherry cabinets and the painted trim in the dining areas.

The home's four bedrooms are all on the second floor in keeping with the Colonial style, but the layout here is uniquely modern as well. In addition to a master suite featuring a spacious bath with custom furniture-style cabinetry, there are a second bedroom with its own bath and two more bedrooms that share a Jack and Jill bath.

Another unusual touch, notes Vogel, is the kids' room, tucked back in a corner and accessible only from the children's bedrooms.

"We wanted to create a place for the kids to share that was just theirs. It could be a play room or, for older kids, a study area for working on the computer or doing their homework."

The kids also have their own space on the home's lower level, which is dedicated to relaxation. A theater room, game room, and a bar with glazed concrete counters dominate the entertainment focus of this area. A separate kids' playroom with a nook for a Nintendo Wii system allows the younger family members to play without disrupting the adult activity.

"The bar area was a lot of fun to design," Vogel grins. "I'd seen waterfalls behind the bar before, but I wanted to try



something different.” He succeeded fantastically with lighted waterfalls flowing inside the bar’s two counter-to-ceiling pillars. And stained-glass inserts on the back wall above the dark-finish display shelves are reminiscent of Colonial New England pubs.

Vogel had also been eager to use a whole-house automation system and found this was the ideal home to do that. “The Control 4 system installed by Digital Residence allows the entire home to be controlled from a remote anywhere in the house,” Vogel explains. The system can adjust everything from televisions and DVDs to lights and thermostats throughout the home. It can even be accessed via the Internet, so the homeowner can check the system from work or while on vacation.

George Washington once advised, “Associate yourself with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation.” That’s another reason he’d be working with K & V Homes if he were designing Mt. Vernon today. **WH**



Above: In the master suite, colors and trim details give a sense of quiet elegance. **Right:** Colorful children’s rooms share a bath and a private playroom/study. **Top right and far right:** On the lower level, a stepped theatre room and pub-style bar are the main attractions.

