

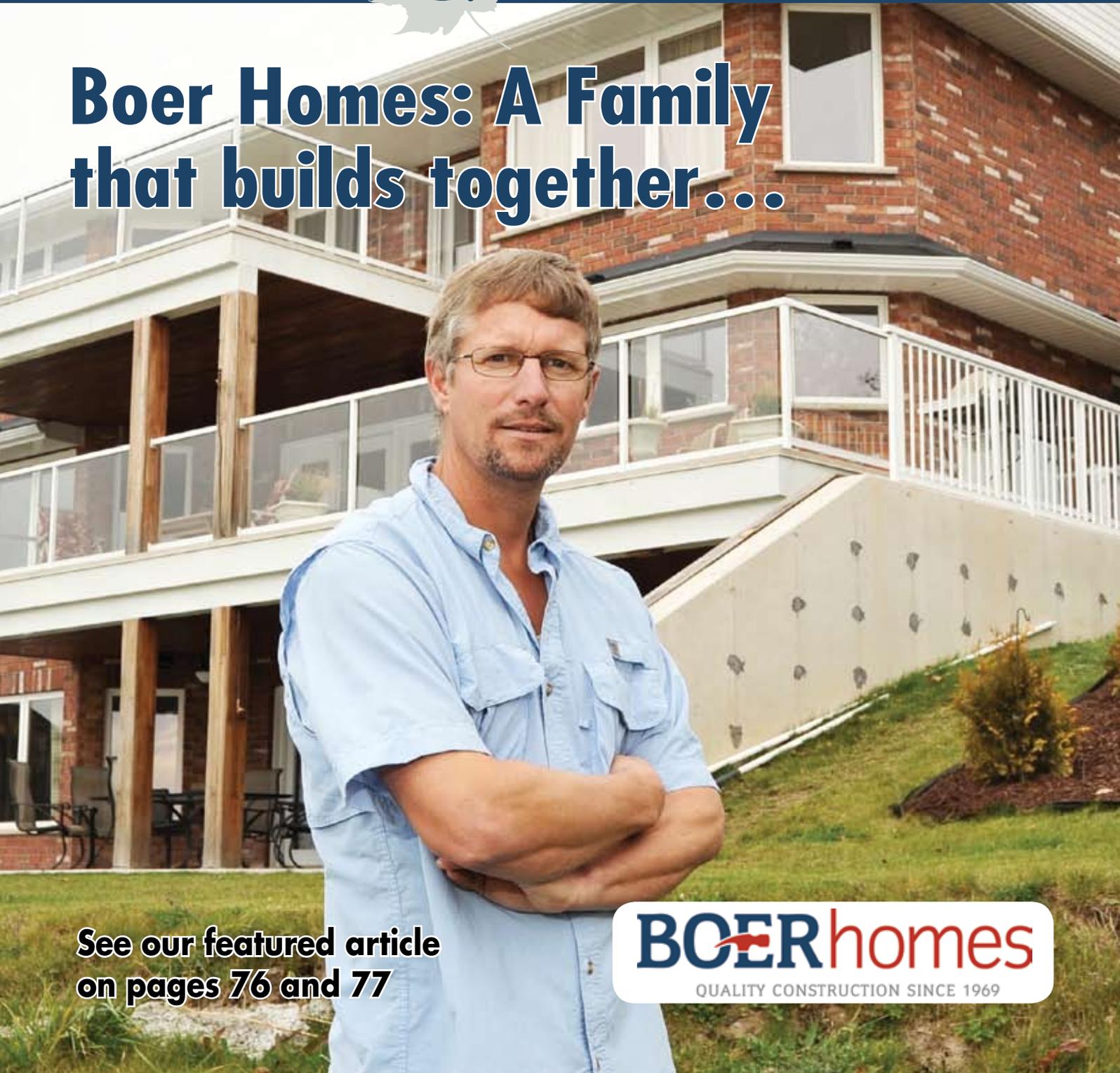
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Boer Homes: A Family that builds together...



See our featured article
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BOER HOMES

A Family that builds together...



By Michael McKay

It is common practice in the construction industry for a father to pass down the love of building to their sons and sometimes their daughters. It's almost like there is a home building gene being passed down through the generations; the Boer family seems to have this gene coursing through their blood. Their inherent dedication to the home building industry in the Port Dover area has kept them busy in even the hardest economic times.

In 1969 Clarence Boer and his wife Gerdy established Clarence Boer Construction and worked hard to build a construction business by providing tremendous customer service and quality workmanship. Clarence eventually included his son Henry after he spent many summer holidays learning the business and completing trade school obtaining a carpentry license. In 1992 Henry took over the business and established Boer Homes as an offshoot of the original company in 1995. Henry's wife Christine and Uncle Keith and his cousin Ryan also work for the business along with Clarence who still is involved with the everyday business of the company. An apprentice, Jon Fabian rounds out the workforce.

"I don't do as much of the physical labour anymore," says Henry, "I guess I do the organizing. I seem to spend most of my time in the truck going from project to project or on the phone. I must say I have a heavy reliance on Uncle Keith. He's been with the company for 42 years and is responsible for all the quality trim work that we do. He is invaluable



as a supervisor and is someone I can rely on to take the reins when I'm out of town or on vacation."

Henry does all the designs and drafting for each home. For the custom homes he works closely with the client in order to include the features they desire. The company also offers and in-house designer; licensed designer Debbie Boer will work with the client to choose everything from cabinet fixtures to lighting solutions.

"When doing custom homes we take the client through every stage of the process," says Henry, "we want to know even the most elementary things such as where they want a plug; we want to know what fixtures they desire, and most importantly we want them to see the actual rooms so that there is a minimal amount of changes."

Three of their custom homes are pictured in this issue. The two in Port Dover presented the greatest challenge to the company.

"One was built on the river and the other on the lake front," says Henry, "because they were built into the banks, they presented a lot of structural work before we could even complete the designs."

The focus of their work tends to be Norfolk County in the Port Dover area, although they are now making in-roads into Haldemond County in the Hagersville area. The company is extremely busy and currently has a number of projects on the go including Pineridge Estates and Dover Landing in the Port Dover area. They also



have a project on the go in the town Simcoe in Harvest Glen.

The majority of their sub-division projects are geared towards active retirees. The single level homes are perfect for city dwellers looking to retire to quieter communities in and around the Port Dover, and Hagersville area. Their custom homes are often lakefront homes or country estates and are geared towards the customer's preferences. Many of the lakefront homes involve tearing down old existing cottages and building custom homes.

"We do about a 50/50 split with regards to custom homes and sub-divisions," says Henry, "at the moment we are doing something that is quite unique for us; an eighty-five unit townhome development in Hagersville."

Ryan is the on-site supervisor at the Hagersville project and it is coming together very smoothly.

"We are anticipating a great response from the townhome project in Hagersville," says Henry, "we just got the model home finished last week and we've already sold nine units."

Boer Homes has embraced the green building movement and have equipped their homes with many of the features that make for an energy efficient home. Features such as Low-E windows, R-22 exterior insulation, R-50 insulation in the ceilings, high efficiency natural gas furnaces/water heaters, Cladmate outer insulation, heat recovery ventilation units, insulated exterior doors, and extra resilient weather stripping. Last year, they did two houses with an air source heat pump that works through removing the heat from the air from up to minus 17 degrees Celsius. They have both proved to be very efficient and the customers have been very satisfied with the systems.

"John and Ryan have both been going to Energy Star courses to keep us ahead of the game," says Henry, "With the Building Code changing in 2012 and becoming more in line with green building practices, we see their continued training as keeping us ahead of the game."

Boer Homes success has mostly come through word of mouth. "Most of our custom homes come to us through referral," says Henry, "we do some advertising, but we've had such success throughout the whole area that we've found that even during this economic downturn we've been busier than ever."

For more information on Boer Homes go to: www.boerhomes.com



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