

DON'T MISS THE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPER CONFERENCE, SEE PAGE 168

ADAPTIVE REUSE
THREE PROJECTS TURN
OLD INTO GOLD

See page 152

Builder

hanley wood

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME BUILDERS

AUGUST 2006

ROUND
5

Sweat the small stuff.

Leaving aside who or what the competition may be, good design sells. Never underestimate the difference that a small detail can make—whether it's an unusual front door, an arched header, or a knee wall with fine millwork to make one room extra special.

"If your budget is under \$300,000, most builders will make you feel like you are lucky to be getting a house at all," notes **Dominick Tringali**, an architect in Bloomfield Hills, Mich. "In a soft market, you want to make the everyday home buyer feel like they are a custom home buyer." That includes first-timers, who now account for roughly two of every five home sales, according to the NAR.

Small, well-thought-out details can be a tipping point for shoppers who are on the fence about whether to buy new, Tringali states, and they don't have to cost a fortune. Plans that his firm has recently designed for Michigan builders such as Mocerri Development, Ivanhoe Huntley Homes, Singh Development, and Cohen Associates have beat the com-



LITTLE JEWELS: Homespun details such as decorative porch railings, exposed rafter tails, and variegated cladding can make a big statement in a small house, as evidenced by these gems, designed by Tringali and built by Tennant Development in Bend, Ore.

petition with features such as 10-foot ceilings, niche storage spaces, display alcoves, and more natural light than the average resale home.

"The natural-light advantage is something that's easily achieved by taking your typical 6-foot windows and adding

transoms to the tops of them, creating more wall space to elevations to make room for larger windows, or designing ceilings to add skylights," explains Tringali. "These are all cost effective and make a big difference in the overall presentation" of a house. (see page 112)

When times get tough, the tough get scrappy. Builders share their best tips for keeping fit, profitable, and competitive in a down market.

BY THE BUILDER STAFF

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JONATHAN BARKAT