

Put Parade of Homes on your calendar for June 21-29

Some people make a holiday of it; some people plan their annual vacation around it. "It" is the Home Builder's Association's Parade of Homes, scheduled for June 21-29.

Only a licensed builder with a new home (that has never been occupied) may participate in the Parade of Homes, said Mark Williamson, chairman of the organizing committee.

"The parade runs two weekends and the week in between," he said. "It's amazing to hear the stories about the people who plan their whole vacation around this."

Because there were 20 homes on the parade last year, and will probably be more this year, most attendees are not able to see all the homes in one day.

"A ticket will get you into all the homes, so you can spread out how you would like to see them," Williamson said.

Upon purchase of a ticket, the HBA will provide you with a map to the homes and a description of each property.

"The map has colored dots to signify the locations of the homes. We set it up — beginning at HBA headquarters on Veteran's Drive — to make it the



Last year's Parade of Home "People's Choice" winner, R. Widing Construction, Inc.

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shortest driving distance," said Williamson.

The variety of homes will surprise some first-time visitors. Different floor plans, different builders, different styles — a little of everything is included. Some are furnished, others aren't. But according to Williamson, a tour host staffs each home.

"It's nice because the homes are all hosted by non-profit organizations," said Williamson. "That gives the builders the free-

dom to float around and answer people's questions.

And visitors aren't just looking at homes; they're actually judging the ones they like best.

"After people are done seeing all the homes they're going to see, they're encouraged to vote on their favorite. That home is given the 'People's Choice' award," said Williamson.

One homebuilder who is certainly returning to the parade is the winner of

last year's "People's Choice" award, Roger Widing, owner of R. Widing Construction.

Builders are represented throughout the HBA's five-county coverage area.

"This is a showcase of workmanship as opposed to a sales pitch," said Williamson.

With plans for June's Parade of Homes having begun last October, the planning committee is sure that this year's event is going to please everyone.

"Over 2,000 went through the Parade of Homes in 2002," said Williamson. "We're sure there will be even more going through this year."

Tickets can be purchased in advance — at a reduced cost — at HBA headquarters. Otherwise, they may be purchased at any of the tour homes during the actual home tour.

While plans are still underway to make this the biggest home tour ever, Williamson is sure that people will be pleased with the variety of homes that are offered.

"We have houses from Glen Lake to Shanty Creek and everything in between," he said.

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