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# DOW-INFLUENCED HOME PART OF SPRING 'PARADE'

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A local builder will showcase his Alden B. Dow-influenced home in the annual Home Builders Association of Midland Spring Parade of Homes.

The home, built by Greystone Homes, follows the unique style of the acclaimed Midland architect. The son of Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow, Alden B. Dow designed more than 100 homes and buildings in Midland.

In all, about a dozen homes will be showcased in the Parade of Homes, which will take place from 1-5 p.m. May 8-9 and May 15-16. The bi-annual event also takes place in October.

Jodi Sasse, executive officer of the HBA, said the event is meant to promote local builders. Anyone who is looking for a builder for a new home or for some remodeling should attend the event, she said.

"It gives them an idea of the different builders' styles," Sasse said. "They also have an opportunity to speak

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with representatives from the building companies about ideas they may have. It's a chance to meet the builders in person and for them to promote their work."

Kelly Wall, owner of Greystone Homes, said people in Midland have a love for and a fascination with Dow homes. And they will see that style in the Dow-inspired Larkin Township home, at 2070 Rolling Ridge Drive. The house has clean lines and is described by Wall as "Prairie style with a contemporary twist."

The Prairie style incorporates low pitched roofs, low horizontal lines and an open floor plan. The style was popularized by architect Frank Lloyd Wright and was used by Dow, who apprenticed under Wright.

In the Greystone home, Dow's influences can be seen in the floating shelves of the living and dining areas, in the steel stair rails that incorporate geometric shapes, and in the squarish shape of the home itself. The shape mimics Dow's unit block system that was comprised of square-faced rhomboid-shaped cinder blocks he designed himself.

One difference is that Wall's homes are built with today's heating and cooling costs in mind. "Our homes are incredibly more energy efficient than anything Dow had," Wall said.

Energy costs were not a concern when Dow was building, he said. And while cinder blocks look good, homes built with them are hard to heat.

Wall says Dow would have jumped at many of today's innovations, like the 5-foot-wide front door that opens on a center pivot. Or the shredded newspaper that is used as insulation, filling every nook and cranny. And the expanding foam sealant made by The Dow Chemical Co., the company founded by Dow's father.

In the kitchen, colorful glass tiles set into a travertine backsplash, as well as stainless steel pulls, give the Greystone house a contemporary feel.

A patio behind the house is a nod to Dow's use of organic architecture, a design style that integrates a structure with its natural setting. The patio is paved with exposed aggregate concrete that, once the property is land-

scaped, will unify the two spaces.

"It's the use of natural material with the idea that your outside spaces will flow into your inside spaces," Wall said.

The exterior of the house looks like it's sided with cedar shingles, but it is actually clad in fiber cement siding that is termite- and water-resistant. Made of cement, sand and cellulose fiber, the siding is more durable than wood.

"The nice thing about it is woodpeckers hate it," Wall said.

Wall's company designs and builds eight to 10 homes per year in all price ranges, many of which are custom built to a client's style preferences. The Parade of Homes helps builders showcase their work.

"We can get people into the homes and they can see the quality and style," Wall said. "They can see what that builder offers."



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