

Besingers celebrate anniversary by giving away TVs to new buyers



The Besingers are celebrating their 100th anniversary as builders of homes for thousands of Chicago area families by presenting each new home buyer with a gift.

To mark the occasion, the firm is giving away a high-definition plasma TV to every family purchasing a new home at Deerpass Estates during September: Deerpass Estates is a community of homes being designed and built in Marengo.

“We began building homes long before television was invented so the plasma TV symbolizes how far

we have progressed in at-home family entertainment and high-tech amenities over the past century,” said Leonard W. Besinger Jr., Owner and President of Leonard W. Besinger & Associates. “We’re not just designing and building homes. We are creating unique settings to accommodate all the latest technology that can enhance the lifestyles of today’s families.”

Ollie L. Besinger was the first in the Besinger family to build homes back in 1906 and he was succeeded by three more generations of Besingers (Sr., Jr. and III).

In 1937, the family construction business was formalized by the founding of Leonard W. Besinger & Associates, which continued the tradition of designing and building homes.

During the past century, the Besingers have built almost 16,000 homes on both scattered sites and large parcels of land. They have built almost every type of residential structure, from two and three-flats to apartment buildings and luxury designer homes in Illinois, Florida and now New Mexico. In addition, they have built a variety of industrial and commercial structures, from restaurants to shopping centers, department stores and office buildings.

Over the years, the Besingers have owned their own lumber mill, pre-fabricated housing plant, gravel pits, and concrete and asphalt plants.

They have been at the forefront of innovative and creative concepts in housing, from financing and marketing to design and construction techniques.

Before World War I, Ollie Besinger built a new drill hall for the Navy at Great Lakes. At the time, the hall had the largest single-span roof in Chicagoland.

Decades later, in the 1970’s, Leonard W. Besinger Jr. designed and built unique fiber-glass office and school buildings in Carpentersville which gained national acclaim.

Leonard W. Besinger Sr. was one of the founding members of the Northwest Home Builders Association. He is remembered for his achievement of developing and building a community in Carpentersville called Meadowdale, which comprised 6,000 residences in addition to schools, churches, a village hall and a shopping center.

Currently, the firm is developing the Communities of Deerpass in Marengo, a 250-acre total community development, just a few minutes from the Northwest Tollway (Interstate 90), located at Route 176 and Prospect Street.

Two of the communities at Deerpass already have been completed. These include Deerpass Greens, a community of 214 moderately-priced three to four-bedroom single-family homes, and Deerpass Village, a community of 100 ranch and 2-story, two to three-bedroom townhomes.

Now, the firm is building the third community, called Deerpass Estates, an up-scale neighborhood of one-of-a-kind designer homes. Upon completion, it will include 120 affordably-priced 3 to 5-bedroom, single-family homes, spaced alongside winding streets, cul-de-sacs and roundabouts.

Prices of the homes currently range from \$249,900 to more than \$350,000. The sizes of the homes vary from 1700 square feet to more than 3000 square feet while the sites are all larger than one-third of an acre.

Because Besinger is both an architect and builder; home buyers have the advantage of being able to purchase a moderately-priced home created specially for them with all of the amenities they desire. Various styles can be built, from contemporary to English Tudor, Colonial and Georgian. They can be two-story homes, split-levels, or ranches. Customers can include their entire "wish list" of items, subject only to the architectural covenants for the community and their budget.

"If they like, they can have two master suites, five bedrooms or even a four-car garage," said Besinger

The design process involves several meetings between the customers and an experience team of specialists. The team comprises Leonard W. Besinger, Jr., plus the construction superintendent, the sales manager and the engineering staff.

Ideally situated on the edge of Marengo Deerpass Estates is close to many urban facilities while benefiting from the peacefulness of the countryside. It is near excellent schools, shopping centers, churches and other amenities. There is an abundance of recreational facilities in the area, including a new park district complex.

In addition to the designer homes at Deerpass Estates, the firm is in the planning stages for building an even wider variety of housing types in different sizes and price ranges in the Chicago area. Announcements will be made in due course.

Aside from housing, the Besingers recently expanded their areas of operation to include agricultural development. Currently, they are involved in cattle ranching in New Mexico. Also, they are developing a vineyard in New Mexico and hope to have the first bottles of wine ready for marketing in the near future. Leonard W. Besinger, Jr. has a wide range of personal interests, aside from housing and agriculture. He is a small-plane pilot, a deep-sea fisherman, a sculptor, an artist and a car buff.

His son, Leonard W. Besinger III, has branched out into a related housing business. In addition to being a consultant to the building firm for technology and at-home family entertainment centers, he runs his own company, called Plasma Max. The firm is a national distributor, wholesaler and retailer, of high-definition, plasma and flat-panel LCD televisions for residential and commercial applications.