

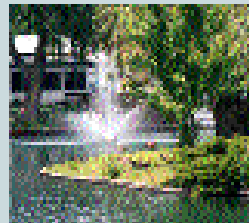
# Community

OF THE YEAR

*Awards*



Palm Creek Golf Resort



## An Attention to Details and Service

Americans have a wide range of options when it comes to where and how they will live...from single-family homes in subdivisions to urban condominiums to homes located on large tracts of land in rural areas to manufactured home communities. Chief among the factors that drive such decisions is the lifestyle offered by each option. With today's manufactured home communities, curb appeal, amenities and attention to customer satisfaction are drawing people who seek to own a quality, single-family home in an organized neighborhood that provides the lifestyle they seek. The winners of this year's Community of the Year Awards have demonstrated that they can provide all these factors, and much more. Read on to see how each community is winning in the marketplace by "doing the right thing" for its residents.



Berryman's Branch



Del Tura Golf & Country Club

### Land-Lease Community of the Year

#### Northeast/Mid Atlantic

#### Berryman's Branch

Vineland, New Jersey

Berryman's Branch is a 309-site community located in southern New Jersey, only 45 minutes from Atlantic City and an hour from Philadelphia. The community features large wooded home sites, lighted and curbed streets, and sidewalks. The community amenities include a clubhouse, community library, Olympic-sized pool, picnic areas, playgrounds, and boat/RV storage.

Home prices range from \$100,000 to \$160,000. Home site fees of \$460 per month include the cost of water, sewer, trash removal, snow removal and property taxes. The community historically is 100 percent occupied and residents of all ages are welcomed, although many residents are downsizing empty-nesters. Berryman's Branch recently completed a 52-site expansion and is working to upgrade the housing stock in the oldest phase of the community through voluntary purchases of existing homes which are then replaced with new

homes (selling between \$140,000 to \$160,000). The two- to four- bedroom homes feature spacious floor plans, which includes gourmet kitchens, vaulted ceilings, Jacuzzi tubs, fireplaces, decks and screened-in porches.

Full-time, on-site management, as well as maintenance staff available 24 hours a day for community emergencies, keeps this close-knit community looking great and running smoothly.

### Land-Lease Community of the Year

#### South

#### Del Tura Golf & Country Club

N. Fort Myers, Florida

Del Tura Golf & Country Club is a land-lease community that has been in existence since 1982. Developed in several phases, today's community includes 573 acres of land, 17 lakes, and 1,344 home sites.

Residents at Del Tura enjoy great Florida weather while engaging in a wide variety of activities, including tennis, horseshoes, fishing, shuffleboard, swimming, ceramics, arts and crafts, and choir. Facilities include a 40,000-square-foot



Willow Lake Estates



Pueblo El Mirage

clubhouse that contains a library, cards and billiards room, fitness center, full-service hair salons for men and women, restaurant, and four ballrooms. A 27-hole golf course completes this scenic community.

Home site fees range from \$565 to \$822 per month and include maintenance and use of all country club amenities. Beautiful, well-maintained homes on pine and palm tree-lined streets make residents proud to call this community home. The community is a “Providence by Hometown America” property that serves the 55-and-older market by focusing on leisure, play, value and convenience. Del Tura Golf & Country Club is a perfect example of Hometown America’s commitment to providing distinguished age-qualified communities. And as their advertising says, “Who knew being 55 could be so much fun?”

### Land-Lease Community of the Year

#### Midwest

#### Willow Lake Estates

Elgin, Illinois

This bustling community is located directly on the historic Fox River with access to boating and fishing for its 55-and-older residents. With meticulously groomed grounds, beautiful homes, and a convenient location, this community caters to retirees seeking an array of amenities and service-oriented lifestyle. Recognizing that this retirement generation is unlike any before it, Willow Lake Estates is providing amenities such as a first-class fitness center open 24 hours a day, and high-speed Internet. The clubhouse is home to resident activity rooms such as a billiards room, library, ceramics room and card room. The clubhouse banquet facilities can host as many as 500 guests. A spectacular view from the clubhouse of the 22-acre Willow Lake is complete with mature Willow, Oak and Maple trees and a picturesque white bridge. Picnic tables can be found in shaded areas around the lake.

Homes begin at \$80,000, with many on lake- or river-water-front sites. Floor plans are designed to maximize space and

comfort, including master suites, roomy kitchens, dining areas and front porches. Fully equipped kitchens with upgraded appliances and islands for extra counter space, hand-laid ceramic backsplashes, French doors, hardwood floors, architectural shingles, and attached garages are some of the features homebuyers will find.

The community is conveniently located a short drive to O’Hare International Airport and downtown Chicago. Excellent shopping, dining and medical facilities are nearby and a city bus stops hourly in front of the community entrance. However, residents never have to leave Willow Lake Estates to have a good time.

### Land-Lease Community of the Year

#### West

#### Pueblo El Mirage

El Mirage, Arizona

This resort-style community, located in El Mirage, Ariz., features a vast array of amenities, ranging from a banquet hall that houses a stage, dance floor, kitchen and outdoor bar and grill to a fitness center with state-of-the-art exercise equipment, changing and shower rooms, and saunas. Several recreation buildings house arts and crafts rooms, a library, laundry facilities, post office, and barber and beauty shops.

Palm Harbor and Laurel Creek Homes provide 12 spacious floor plans from which to choose that include features such as front porches, vaulted ceilings, walk-in closets, tile showers, custom cabinets, and garages. Home prices begin in the high \$70’s and go up to the \$140’s. Square footage ranges from 747 sq. ft. to 1,680 sq. ft. Site rents range from \$316 for smaller homes to \$550 for larger homes, and include city taxes, water, sewer, garbage removal and complete landscaping maintenance.

Family-owned and managed, this 55-and-older community is operated with the goal of providing the ultimate in active resort living. The gated and secure community provides the beauty and luxury of country club living combined with the affordability found in manufactured homes.



Palm Creek Golf Resort



Creekside Village

### **Best New Land-Lease Community of the Year** **Palm Creek Golf Resort**

Casa Grande, Arizona

This new land-lease community is truly a first-class resort, surrounded by plush landscaping, an 18-hole golf course and scenic views of the surrounding mountains. This 55-and-older community features luxurious facilities and amenities that include seven tennis courts, a swimming complex, a manicured lawn bowling facility, a radio-controlled flying field, and a regulation softball field, just to name a few. Activities such as dancing, games, crafts, language classes and entertainment events are advertised on a community television channel. Community-wide, high-speed wireless Internet also helps keep everyone informed.

The gated community, which was once an RV and “park model” resort, now offers specially designed Palm Harbor homes to meet the needs of its active residents. Most floor plans offer two bedrooms and two baths and feature ceramic tile flooring, inviting front porches and large living areas. Home site fees range between \$3,300 and \$3,936 annually and include water, sewer, garbage removal and basic cable. Only electricity and telephone are billed separately.

The charming homes and exciting lifestyle provided by Palm Creek gives residents a whole new lease on life. The resort serves both as a weekend/vacation getaway to some, or a place to call home for others.

### **Best Manufactured Home Subdivision in the U.S.** **Creekside Village**

Los Gatos, California

The successful redevelopment of the Los Gatos Mobile Home Park resulted in Creekside Village, a new state-of-the-art manufactured home subdivision. It features single- and two-story manufactured homes provided by Marlette Homes of Hermiston, Ore. These homes, accepted by the market as comparable in quality and amenities to site-built homes, sell from \$900,000 to over \$1,000,000. Today, the redeveloped commu-

nity is a 70-home, resident-owned development.

Homes are augmented on-site with garages and cabana rooms. All homes are placed on permanent stem-wall foundations, and include interior features such as hardwood floors, stainless steel appliances, granite counter tops, tile backsplashes, tile bathroom floors and showers. Creekside Village features a clubhouse with a pool, spa and exercise room and the rare opportunity to live within walking distance to all of the downtown charm of Los Gatos.

## **Retail Sales Center** **Center** **OF THE YEAR** *Awards*

### **Winning Through Attention to the Customer**

How can you successfully compete in a highly competitive housing marketplace? How can you distinguish yourself from others who are vying for the same customers? According to the winners of this year’s Retail Sales Center of the Year Awards, it comes down to a simple answer—paying attention to customers and exceeding their expectations. Each and every winner has taken that extra step that puts their customers first and ensures that they have a pleasant buying experience. Coupled with responsive and responsible customer service, these winners distinguish themselves with prospective buyers and build a winning formula for success in the marketplace. Read the following profiles and see what you can bring back to your day-to-day business practices.



Oakwood Homes - Glen Allen



Home-Mart, Inc.

## Retail Sales Center of the Year

Northeast/Mid Atlantic

**Oakwood Homes**

Glen Allen, Virginia

Oakwood Homes of Glen Allen, Va. is located on a very busy major highway. The retail sales center uses the majority of its advertising budget on improving the curb appeal of the sales center. General Manager Shawn McCavanaugh says, "I believe that a beautiful sales center is your best advertisement. Due to our outstanding curb appeal and excellent service, we have all the business we can handle through walk-ins and customer referrals."

The sales center is organized like a neighborhood, with customized features, such as covered porches and brick stoops. Homes are set on brick foundations, surrounded by beautiful landscaping. Inside, homes have been tastefully furnished and decorated. Custom window treatments, tile and wood floors, faux painting, granite and marble counters, and accent columns are just a few of the finishing touches used to help customers visualize their next home. The sales center offers rich décor packages and many customer options that neither the factory nor the local competition offer.

Another distinguishing feature of this sales center has to do with the systems for the sales process, as well as for financing, coordinating construction, and handling of service requests. Every system has been put in place to ensure that every customer has a pleasant buying experience from beginning to end. McCavanaugh said, "With the sheer number of customers we see every week, having systems in place is a must. Our sales people have a clear system of follow-up to ensure that nothing slips through the cracks."

Top that off with an award-winning sales staff and service department and it's easy to see why this retail sales center has been awarded MHI's Retail Sales Center of the Year for the Northeast/Mid Atlantic Region. McCavanaugh said, "In my area, not only are their other manufactured home sales centers, but there are numerous site builders as well. We constantly have to be changing, improving, and implementing new ideas. If not, others will surpass us."

## Retail Sales Center of the Year

South

**Home-Mart, Inc.**

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Home-Mart, Inc., established 19 years ago, attributes its success to three key factors: providing a non-threatening shopping atmosphere for customers; providing homes that give excellent value; and ensuring that every customer is satisfied with their home purchase. And customers at Home-Mart have a solid reason to believe they will be treated with excellent customer service. In 2006, the Better Business Bureau presented the retail sales center its "Excellence in Customer Service" Honor Roll award. But that's not enough for Home-Mart. It hires a company that specializes in determining customer satisfaction with homebuyers to independently measure the satisfaction level of every customer.

Home-Mart's unique marketing style also plays a significant roll in its success. When a customer drives by Home-Mart, professional signage projects an image of permanency and stability. Its radio jingle, which promises "Open Doors, Posted Prices, Shop with Ease at Home-Mart," has such strong recognition in its market that Home-Mart secured a national trademark for its marketing statement. The company also has displayed a home at the Oklahoma State Fair for eighteen consecutive years, providing valuable exposure for the industry and its business.

Home-Mart has a fully functional Web site that has generated a significant number of leads and sales over the years. Each inquiry is personally responded to by email within 24 hours of receipt. After the sale, Home-Mart's Web site is equipped with a service request icon where customers are encouraged to submit their requests via email. That provides both the customer and Home-Mart with the benefit of documentation of every request.

A sales force that receives regular weekly training, as well as specialized training from outside sales consultants, also contributes to Home-Mart's success. In addition, all sales staff members have earned the Professional Housing Consultant (PHC®) designation from the Manufactured Housing Educational Institute (MHEI®).



Holiday Homes



Oakwood Homes - White City

## Retail Sales Center of the Year

### Midwest

#### Holiday Homes

##### Walton, Kentucky

Holiday Homes in Walton, Ky. occupies a prime location between highways I-75 and SR 25, making it one of the most recognizable sales centers in the Midwest. Visible from the highway, a two-story modular home attracts significant traffic to the sales center. Once there, visitors can see over twenty manufactured and modular homes that are attractively landscaped, heated and air conditioned, and decorated by Holiday Home's full time decorator.

Holiday Homes places many of its purchased homes in its own Holiday Parks' land-lease communities of Hickory Hills and Derby Hills, along with other land-lease communities. In addition, Holiday Homes can offer a variety of fee-simple subdivisions such as Bluegrass Estates, Eagle's Ridge and Willow Pointe. In all, Holiday Homes has seven land-lease communities and 18 fee-simple subdivisions in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana to offer its customers.

Holiday Homes is one of the most recognized brands in the tri-state area, utilizing television, radio, newspaper, billboards and special promotions to attract new customers. Holiday Homes does extensive market research, including consumer focus groups as well as quantitative and qualitative research. This research has enabled Holiday Homes to position manufactured housing as the leader in the affordable housing market in its market area. The Internet has become a key tool in attracting new customers. An award-winning Web site found at [www.holiday-homes.com](http://www.holiday-homes.com) showcases inventory, offers pre-financing applications, and provides extensive industry information.

Holiday Homes invests in the continuous training, education and personal growth of its personnel in all departments to ensure success in the company's goals and future growth. In addition, the retailer has a "Quality Improvement Program" that has a goal of reaching 100 percent customer satisfaction. Its Mission Statement sums all this up: Satisfied Customers=Fulfilled Employees=Company Success.

## Retail Sales Center of the Year

### West

#### Oakwood Homes

##### White City, Oregon

Oakwood Homes of White City, Ore. is located on a busy highway with lots of local competition. But this doesn't cause concern. Customers of this retail sales center keep coming back and referring their friends because the company always put the customer first. "Even if we cannot sell them a home, we take time with each customer to do what we can to help," said general manager Ken Outlaw.

With professional signage and well-manicured lawn areas, the retail sales center faces the highway with several large multi-section homes and a recently added log home. The staff says many customers are attracted to the sales center just because of the unique log home. All homes are decorated and beautifully landscaped, and the staff loves to decorate for holidays. All together, the sales center provides an inviting environment that outshines its competition.

Holidays provide special promotional opportunities. For Halloween, sales representatives present every customer with a free pumpkin just for stopping by. At Thanksgiving, a drawing is held for a free Thanksgiving dinner. During its Christmas promotion, the sales center sold \$3,000 appliance packages for \$999 and generated eight additional home sales. And in an effort to provide customers with a stress-free and honest buying environment, the sales center posts all prices for its homes.

Ken Outlaw says that the sales center's one true competitive advantage is its customer service and its sales team. The sales center's mission is to do whatever it takes to make each and every sale special. The staff calls every customer after the sale to get feedback on how they can better serve the customer and improve the home-buying process. And the results of this commitment to customer satisfaction are numerous company Customer Service Index (CSI) awards. "We are most proud of our CSI awards," says Outlaw. "To me, the most rewarding thing is a customer who buys a home, and then comes back to the sales center just to visit. This means that we've really done our job well." ■