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LIVING ON THE EDGE

*Stepping out of our comfort zone
into unconventional designs*

Stonewood, LLC

TWIN CITIES FIRM ADDS NEW EMPLOYEES TO BUILD ON LEGACY OF SERVICE AND STABILITY

by Rodric J. Hurdle-Bradford



01

The French Provincial exterior is made of cut limestone with an authentic slate roof and copper gutters.

02

Custom-made windows are shown on the exterior of the home, along with wrought-iron railings and limestone patios.

PHOTOS: LANDMARK PHOTOGRAPHY



Rolling Green Residence

Location: Edina, MN
Completed: 2011

stonewood.com



02

As Stonewood continues its fourth-generation legacy as a premier builder in the Minneapolis market, owner Sven Gustafson has shown why he is a leading custom builder in the city by adding new talented employees to his team.

“We believe we have the best team in the area,” he says. “They are fantastic and our talent level is at an all-time high.” Stonewood’s recent personnel additions include a new purchasing manager who had been a homebuilder and is adept at design and construction. In June a staff architect joined and instantly increased the firm’s efficiency in its design processes and protocol.

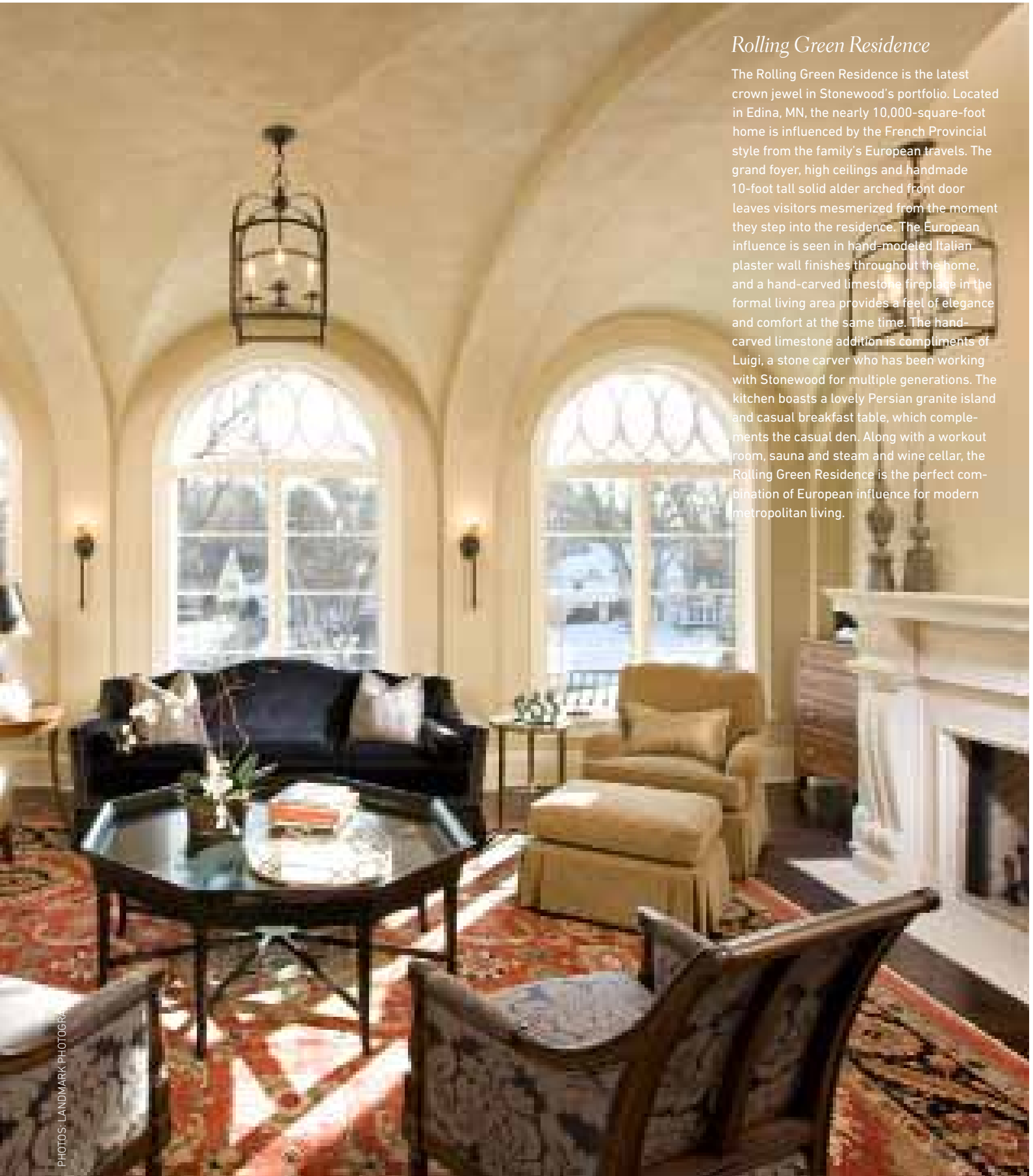
“We have made major enhancements in the implementation of technology in our design process,” says Gustafson. “The extended use of advanced three-dimensional technology has enhanced our creative abilities.” Joining the recent personnel additions is a new project manager that has previously worked in Europe on high-end projects as well as the Colorado and Montana markets.

“We are always looking for people to expand our capabilities and bring in new processes,” says Gustafson. “They bring fresh eyes to what we are



Rolling Green Residence

The Rolling Green Residence is the latest crown jewel in Stonewood's portfolio. Located in Edina, MN, the nearly 10,000-square-foot home is influenced by the French Provincial style from the family's European travels. The grand foyer, high ceilings and handmade 10-foot tall solid alder arched front door leaves visitors mesmerized from the moment they step into the residence. The European influence is seen in hand-modeled Italian plaster wall finishes throughout the home, and a hand-carved limestone fireplace in the formal living area provides a feel of elegance and comfort at the same time. The hand-carved limestone addition is compliments of Luigi, a stone carver who has been working with Stonewood for multiple generations. The kitchen boasts a lovely Persian granite island and casual breakfast table, which complements the casual den. Along with a workout room, sauna and steam and wine cellar, the Rolling Green Residence is the perfect combination of European influence for modern metropolitan living.



PHOTOS: LANDMARK PHOTOGRAPHY

03 / The formal dining room has plaster egg and dart crown molding, silk wallpaper, handmade custom lighting, seating for 14, character grade Black Walnut flooring and wainscot. **04** / Caracca marble and Black Walnut custom cabinetry in the master bathroom add a regal feel. French doors on the shower and freestanding tub are warm and inviting. **05** / The family/hearth room off the kitchen overlooks the pool with access to the terrace. Beams in the ceiling are made from oak trees that used to stand on the property. **06** / The interior showcases authentic Italian plaster walls and ceiling finishes. One of seven fireplaces is handmade, built on site and surrounded by limestone.



as well as personality and experience, those are things you cannot teach. We are not arrogant enough to think we cannot make improvements; we have a real team approach to what we are doing.” In recent years Stonewood’s marketing strategy has increased demand and sales by making proactive efforts to communicate the firm’s process with prospective clients. The combination of earned reputation, new talent and transparency in marketing has led Stonewood to avoid the cyclical ups and downs experienced by many Minneapolis builders during the recession.

“We have remained steady with our business because we do not chase trends,” says Gustafson. “We do not build a lot of spec homes; we build custom homes so our clients are trying to avoid trends. Our clients want to build a home that is not easily identified by a certain era in 20 years. It is fun because we end up doing more historical renovation projects instead of running after the latest architectural style or trend.”

The Minneapolis residential real estate market has not faced the valleys and peaks that many of the markets south of the Twin Cities have faced, however in a sign of the times Stonewood has seen an increased amount of projects centering around empty nesters downsizing to custom homes in the 5,000-square-foot range, from a previous residence that usually was double in size.

“We are doing a wide variety of projects for empty nesters,” says Gustafson. “Even though they are the same demographic, they all have different needs, and often their design is based on their personal interests and hobbies.”

With such a wide variety of client needs, Stonewood’s stellar reputation allows them access to Minneapolis’ highest quality of contractors and suppliers, along with stable material prices. One project with a historical angle Gustafson is excited about is the renovation of a Tudor-style home. The challenge of the project allows Stonewood to use its resources and use history to set its own

trends in design. “It is fun to have to figure out how to create things that were hand-carved 150 years ago,” says Gustafson. For future projects, it is important for Gustafson that Stonewood continues to take on projects that are fun for him and his team.

“For the next year we just want to find fun projects that are as interesting as the projects we have done the last couple of years,” says Gustafson. “We want to continue to work for interesting people and do our 12 custom homes every year. Any more than that and we lose the personal touch that our clients love about us.” ■

A MESSAGE FROM STEWART PLUMBING

Stewart Plumbing Inc. was established in 1998. We specialize in plumbing upscale new custom homes. Our pledge is to be fair and true to our customers while establishing lasting relationships by exceeding their expectations and gaining their trust through professional integrity and providing extraordinary service by every member of our plumbing team.



07 / In the backyard, relax in the limestone-lined concrete pool and hot tub. Both the cabana and terrace feature fireplaces. **08** / The kitchen and breakfast room have inset custom-made Black Walnut cabinetry, an Italian plaster ceiling, a handmade durango limestone hood, Black Walnut flooring and a coffered ceiling. **09** / The cabana is beneath the terrace and overlooks the pool, featuring a fireplace, bar, cedar ceiling and limestone flooring. The doors open into a pool changing area, bath and sauna.