

2007 50+ HOUSING AWARDS



One Cherry Lane
Denver, Colorado

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LEFT: One Cherry Lane in Denver, Colo. took the Silver Award for best 50+ home over 2,400 sq.-ft. RIGHT: La Playa; Courtesy of Vantage Point Photography.



Winners from 45 categories were honored for innovations driving the senior housing market at the 50+ Housing Awards Gala.

BY BRIAN DAWSON, AIA

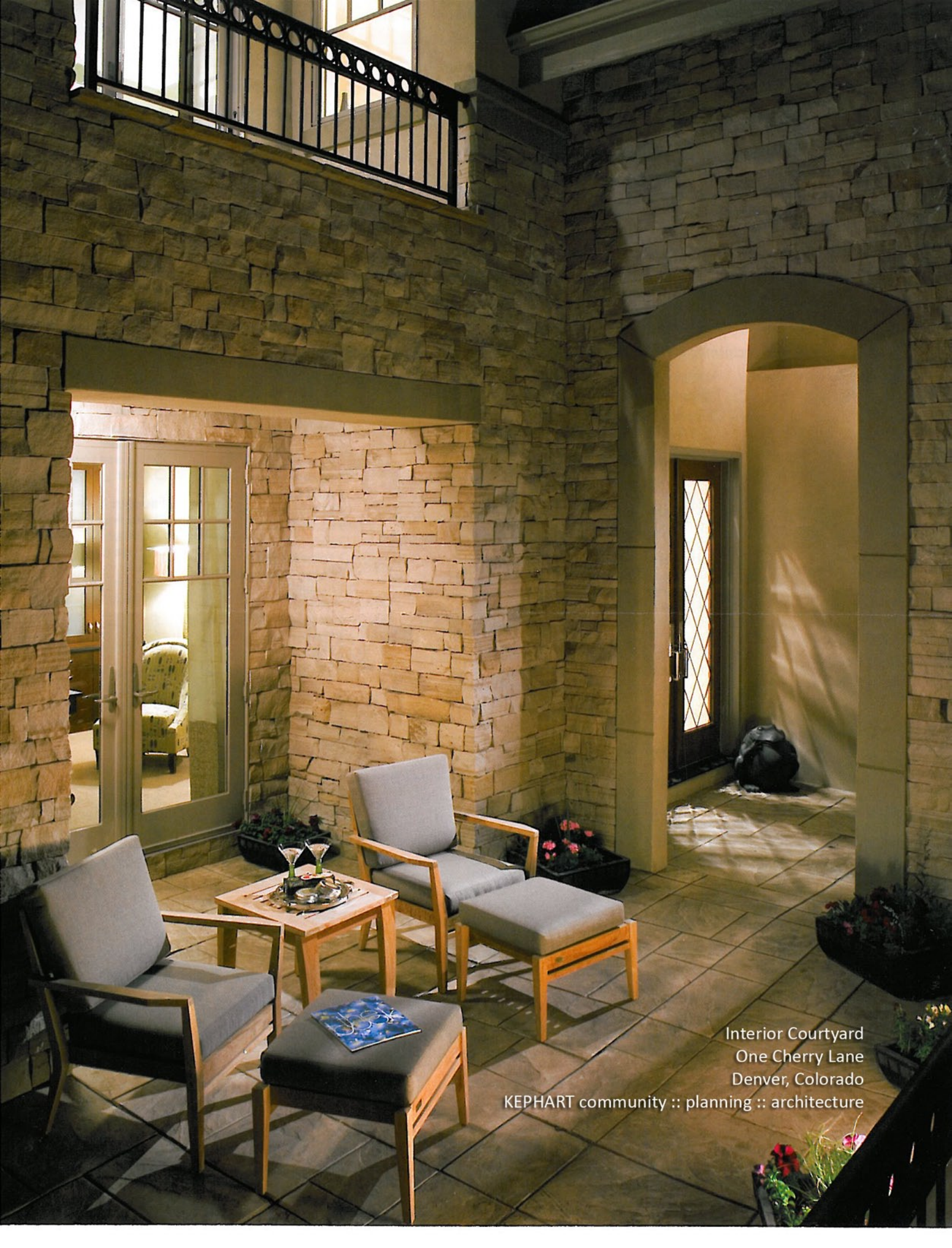
The 2007 Best of 50+ Housing Awards Gala, a well attended and tightly produced evening, was held at the Senior Housing Symposium – Building for Boomers in Denver, Colorado on May 31, 2007. With 45 categories and the Gold winners on stage accepting awards, one realizes just how diverse and wide-ranging our industry has become.

The 50+ Housing Awards are divided generally into these two product types: Active Adult (for sale and rent) and Congregate Living/Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs). Marketing collateral is covered in categories honoring: logo design, print advertisements, radio commercials, television commercials, Web sites, direct mail campaigns and brochure design.

The awards gala honored projects from across the United States, Mexico and Japan, with the judges recognizing builders for projects displaying product innovation and those that did an exemplary job of design execution. Projects came in all sizes and configurations: single family, multi-family and high-rise. The exterior elevation styles and interior merchandising were as varied as their corresponding geographic regions.

So what are builders doing that's different? Are there any new trends that seem to be emerging?





Interior Courtyard
One Cherry Lane
Denver, Colorado

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WHAT'S HIP IN THE HOUSING MARKET

We all know the housing industry is going through a period of adjustment. It's no longer a secret that, with rare exception, the nation is experiencing a significant market correction. Has this affected the Active Adult and service enriched markets? Well, yes and no. Buyers of retirement age are putting off decisions to sell their current home until they know the housing market is stable again. They want all the equity they can get and don't want to pay too much for the home they will retire in.

planning and design firm located in Costa Mesa, Calif., was given a Gold award for best "On the Boards Clubhouse" —and awarded largely for "Clubhouse at the Dominion."

Service enriched projects (Congregate Care and CCRC) are evolving in much the same way as the 50+ market. It is clear the winners in these categories are setting the standard for the next wave of communities with resort-style bistro dining complete with gym and spa facilities. The winning projects displayed rich architectural detailing and excellent land planning that encouraged outdoor activities.

The most innovative of all categories was advertising and marketing collaterals. These buyers are intelligent. They respond to bold, sexy and creative ad campaigns. The winners created ads that spoke to the market's interest in lifestyle driven communities. They don't picture themselves getting older and they are not interested in advertising reminding them of this fact. Remember, 60 is the new 40!

Sensitive land plans featuring outdoor fitness paths and pro-



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GHT: The bhouse in n Antonio by /in Pancake wson takes me an ard.
OPPOSITE PG: e front terior urtyard of ie Cherry ne.

The portion of the market wanting or needing daily assistance is growing and is less discretionary about when to move. A quick look at any demographic chart will show you this market segment will grow exponentially over the next 20 years. The need for service enriched projects will soon be critical.

While the general 50+ buyer may be taking a "time out" to wait until the market settles down, there are many who are extremely affluent and want a home reflecting a certain level of financial comfort. This means they are expecting a well-proportioned, open floor plan with premium finishes designed for entertaining. They are not as interested in bedrooms as they are in offices, libraries, media rooms, workshops, hobby centers, wellness rooms and home gyms. Designing a flexible and adaptable plan is the key. While universal design must be a factor in the design of any project intended for 50+ buyers, today's buyers are still too young for it to be a priority.

The current trend toward romantic exterior elevations reflects a young nation desiring a sense of permanence. However, Boomers have less need for the security of traditional architecture and are ready for something new. Builders should feel comfortable exploring more contemporary plans and elevations. Contemporary architecture isn't just for lofts anymore.

Clubhouse design is evolving into a more specialized product type. The judges recognized several projects for their design excellence. Whether the clubhouse is a part of a larger building or a stand alone structure, it's all about creating a resort-like atmosphere. The winning projects demonstrated flexibility in their design that allowed for the reconfiguration reflecting the owner's current interests. Irwin Pancake Dawson, a



mote walking was another growing trend, as well as the continued emergence of quality detailing using better materials, more sophisticated floor plans, and elevations and clubhouses that reflecting resort-style living.

And as for green building? 'Splendido at Rancho Vistoso' was recognized by the judges for efforts to be environmentally friendly. Unfortunately, there are currently no specific categories displaying either passive or active energy conservation, however, a commercial or residential green building category will come.

With 45 categories, there are many opportunities to find one that fits your particular project. Consider entering your project into next year's 50+ Housing Awards and plan to attend Building for Boomers & Beyond: Senior Housing Symposium next May 19 to May 21 in New Orleans, Louisiana. **50**

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