



Photo courtesy of Cat Berry Photography.

Olde Heritage Builders

Olde Heritage Builders Builds Green Because It's the "Right Thing" To Do

Olde Heritage Builders, in Eastern Wake County, is a family business. Founded in 1984 by George and Betty Ray on a foundation of honesty and a strong work ethic, the company is now managed by second generation homebuilder and unlimited licensed contractor Chad Ray and his wife, Jodi, a licensed real estate broker.

Clearly, Olde Heritage is "family-

run", but dig a little deeper and you'll find that it's also very "family-focused." The Rays believe in the health and well-being of families—not just their own family but also the families of their longtime trade partners and the families of their customers.

Chad says, "As an outdoor enthusiast, I feel strongly about my responsibility to be a steward of the land. And

as a builder, I can get behind building green because a green home is a better built home. We even say it right in our mission statement: 'Build Better, Build Green'. We pledge that every home we build will help protect the environment, will use renewable and/or recycled products, and will be comfortable, durable, highly energy efficient, safe, and healthy."

When Olde Heritage began focusing on more environmentally responsible and health-conscious building practices, one of the first tasks they performed was an inventory of every product they were using. “Everything that wasn’t safe had to go,” remembers Chad. “Now, we only use low- and no-VOC (volatile organic compounds) glues and solvents. Our subfloor is a solvent-free material that carries a 50-year structural warranty. The carpet and carpet padding we use are non-allergic and VOC-free. The carpet itself is actually made from recycled two-liter bottles; people love it because not only is it cleaner and healthier but it comes with a 10-year stain and 10-year tracking warranty that the nylon carpets can’t touch. We’ve also found a safer and healthier paint that looks just as good and holds up just as well as what we used to use. So the best news is that as green building is getting more popular, more and better products are coming out all the time.”

More and better products means that today’s homebuyers don’t have to choose between efficacy and aesthetics. The green homes that Olde Heritage builds now have all the amenities, distinctive touches, and curb appeal of the award-winning homes they’ve been building since 1984. In fact, Olde Heritage has won a Wake County Parade of Homes award every year but one since 1986—over 30 Parade of Homes awards in Wake and Franklin Counties.

“Olde Heritage is unique in that they’re providing a product that people want, but they’re packaging it with some pretty progressive ideas and doing it successfully in a market that, historically, has not shown a lot of interest in green building,” says Bob Kingery of Southern Energy



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Management, a local consulting, engineering and testing firm that certifies every one of Olde Heritage’s homes. “They’ve done a really great job of educating clients in the Zebulon and East Wake areas about the benefits of a healthy house, an energy efficient house, an environmentally responsible house.”

The decision to “go green” wasn’t difficult for Olde Heritage because, as Chad says, “since 1984, our company has been committed to doing what’s right. When, about five years ago, I attended the National Green Building Conference, I connected with people from all over the country that are building homes for the right reasons.

From that day to now, we’ve said that if we’re going to build homes, this is the way we’re going to do it because it’s the right thing to do.”

Take indoor air quality. Citing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Chad explains that asthma afflicts about 20 million Americans, including 6.3 million children. “Statistics like that convinced us that we should be doing as much as possible to improve the indoor air quality in every home we build. That’s why every one of our homes has an air energy intake that performs a complete air exchange every 24 hours. With a system like that in place, asthma triggers in the air—like



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cleaners used in the home, airborne allergens, and chemicals outgassing from building supplies—are being regularly replaced with fresh, conditioned air.”


Or take energy efficiency. Every home that Olde Heritage builds is backed by ENERGY STAR, a program of the EPA and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). “Since we became an ENERGY STAR builder,” says Chad, “we’ve built over 40 ENERGY STAR homes.” Each of those homes has been third-party certified to ensure that it’s at least 15% more energy efficient than homes built to the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Continuing, Chad says, “We use the highest rated window on the market. We seal our crawlspaces. We use advanced fram-

ing procedures to ensure house tightness. We install a radiant barrier roof plywood which reduces the temperature in the attic by 30 degrees. In a 3,000 sq. ft. home—which is about the average-sized home we build—a typical electric bill is about \$320/month. But I can tell you that, time and time again, our homeowners tell us their energy bill runs about \$120/month. That kind of monthly savings can help a family afford piano or dance


lessons, pay down the mortgage, or save up for a nice vacation.”

And there it is again: Evidence that Olde Heritage’s decision to build green is founded on the company’s priority of putting families first. From safer building materials and improved air quality to better energy efficiency and more affordable utility bills, when it comes to doing the “right thing” for families, Olde Heritage is building better by building green.


TBJ



R. Chad Ray
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North Carolina Healthy Built Homes
Family Business
Custom Homebuilder



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BUILDERS, DEVELOPERS, STEWARDS



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