

# Sarasota **HOMES** & Gardens

PELICAN PRESS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT • PUBLISHED EVERY OTHER WEEK

## Gladstone Park:

# visions of green building

BY KAREN MAMONE

When the name of your company is Vision Homes, folks expect to see something a little different.

And true to its moniker, the Sarasota-based company headed by second-generation builder Mike Padgett is making a name for itself as a green builder – one of the region's leaders in energy-efficient construction and technology.

Last year, Vision won a passel of awards for its efforts: three Grand Auroras and four Auroras at the 27th annual SEBC (Southeast Building Conference), which covers 12 states. A member of FPL's Buildsmart Program and the Florida Green Building Coalition, Vision was recognized for using the latest technologies to reduce energy consumption, conserve resources and promote indoor air quality.

When the company was founded in 1999, said owner/vice president Padgett, "Our focus at the time was just trying to be a cutting-edge builder."

"When we started, the building code required a 10-SEER (seasonal energy-efficiency ratio) air conditioner and clear-glass, single-pane windows. We immediately started with 12-SEER as a standard item, and tinted windows as standard. Since then we have gone to a 13-SEER with tinted and insulated windows as standard."

Vision has moved beyond that innovation to a sealed roofing system with "Icynene" insulation and a host of other green features.

In one of Vision's newest communities, the 16-unit Gladstone Park on Beneva Road, Icynene and green-building features are standard, as well as hurricane-resistant measures, and ways to conserve energy and meet household needs with the most advanced technologies.

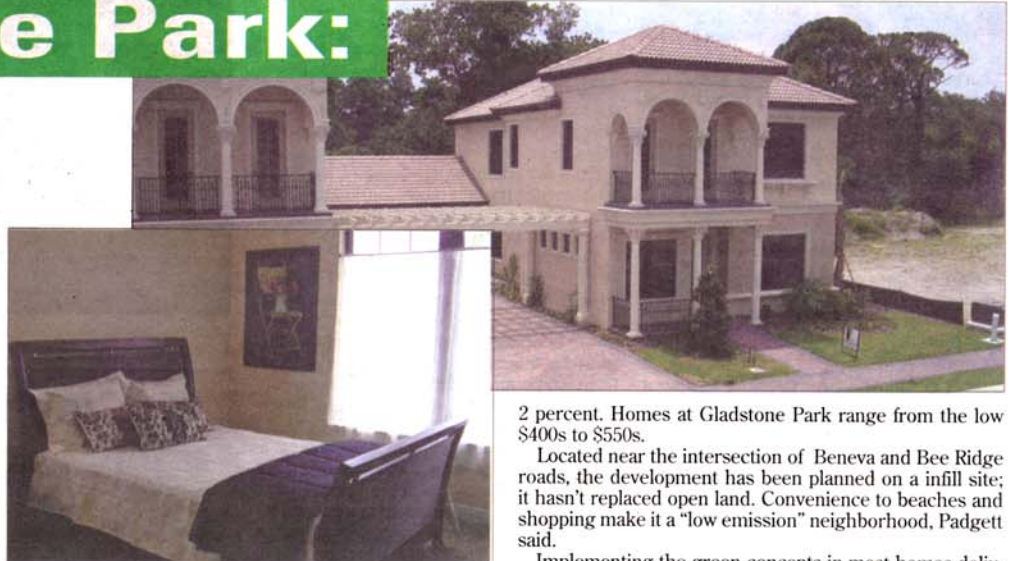
Its Gladstone Park houses – one- and two-story townhouses and detached homes ranging from about 2,000 to 2,850-square feet – also have Lennox Pure-air HVAC systems that will absorb microscopic dust mites and mold spores, bacteria and viruses.

In homes with carpeting, for example, Vision is using Mohawk "PET" carpeting, which is made from recycled 2-litre Coke bottles, as well as tile and the increasingly popular bamboo flooring. Low-VOC (volatile organic compound) paints cover all of the wall surfaces.

The house is also an exercise in storm-proofing. It has solid-concrete block walls and a concrete ceiling. All of the windows are impact-resistant.

The homes also have 100 percent energy-saving fluorescent lighting, and Energy Star appliances that conserve energy. The homes' air handlers are located inside air-conditioned space, and recirculating water systems quickly provide hot water at the tap, eliminating the waste of unheated water.

All of the landscaping is native, with less than 50 percent of the landscaped area covered with drought-toler-



ant turfgrass, to reduce the need for irrigation. Plants are grouped according to their watering requirements, and the irrigation system is zoned and balanced for efficiency.

Other water-saving features include pine-straw mulch installed to a depth of 4 inches, a non-irrigated natural habitat at the rear of each home, flapperless toilets, low-flow fixtures, and shut-off valves at each toilet and sink.

All of these features, Padgett said, have been included in a package that creates a quiet, gracious, airy home (10 feet ceilings in all and a 20-foot great room in some models) in which the green certification process has increased the selling price of the homes by only about

2 percent. Homes at Gladstone Park range from the low \$400s to \$550s.

Located near the intersection of Beneva and Bee Ridge roads, the development has been planned on an infill site; it hasn't replaced open land. Convenience to beaches and shopping make it a "low emission" neighborhood, Padgett said.

Implementing the green concepts in most homes delivers a payback within a few years through reduced utility bills, insurance costs and tax incentives, he said.

And that doesn't even include the benefit of preserving the planet for future generations.

▼ A model and sales office is open at Gladstone Park. Contact Vision Homes at 377-7773 or log onto [www.visionhomesflorida.com](http://www.visionhomesflorida.com).

(Clockwise from upper left): A bedroom awaits potential buyers; the Vision Homes model; a view of the living area.

