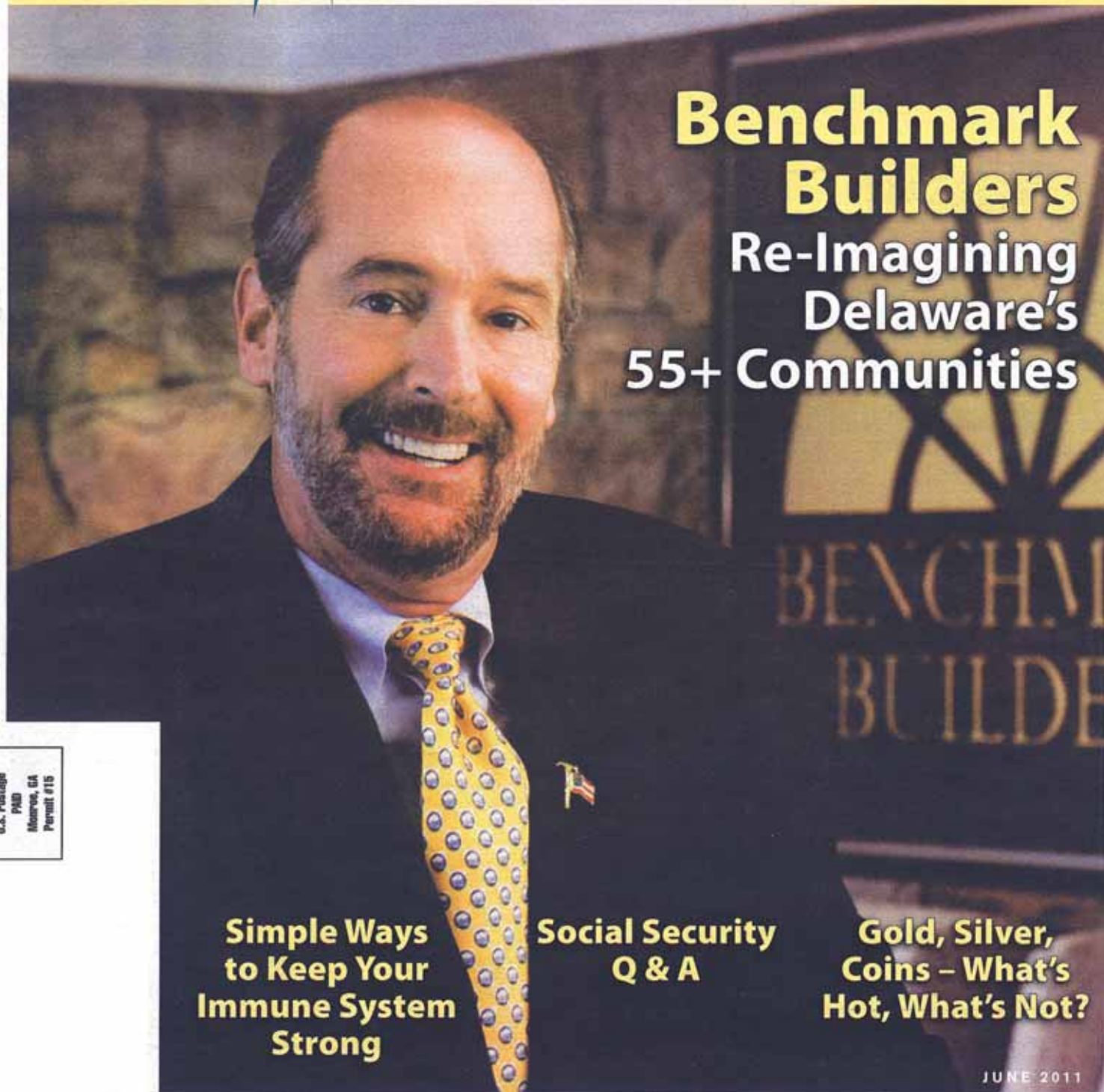


VITAL INFORMATION FOR A VITAL LIFE!



# Vital!

THE MAGAZINE FOR ACTIVE OLDER ADULTS®



## Benchmark Builders Re-Imagining Delaware's 55+ Communities

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Q & A**

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Coins – What's  
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JUNE 2011

# BENCHMARK BUILDERS:

## Delaware's leader in 55+ Communities



**VITAL MAGAZINE:** Why did Benchmark Builders decide to take such a leadership role in what was then the new market of 55+ communities?

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** Well, Delaware has always been a great place to retire, thanks to the state's low income tax and lack of a sales tax – plus the additional tax breaks Delaware offers to those 65 and better. Benchmark Builders realized that the only things missing were communities designed to appeal to those active adults who wanted a home with all the advantages of their current home, but with a lot less of the hassle of homeownership, like the endless yard work and snow shoveling and leaf raking.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** So your communities are bringing in lots of people from other states?

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** A good number, yes. But you might be surprised to learn that when most of us move into a new home, the move is not that far. Census data show that in 2009 over 67% of those who moved stayed within the county that was currently their home. This seems to be especially true in the active adult market, where homebuyers have a long established relationship with their community.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** Then you're saying that the majority of those moving to one of your 55+ communities already live in Delaware.

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** Yes. We've discovered that many of those looking to simplify their life by moving into one of our active-adult communities come from within a 10-mile radius. They put an extra value on their existing friends, places of worship, favorite restaurants and trusted physicians –

Much has changed over the last decade since Benchmark Builders created some of Delaware's first age-restricted communities. Today those looking for a 55+ community will find more choices than ever – in location, in design and in pricing. Currently Benchmark Builders has three 55+ communities, *Milltown Village* and the *Village of Long Creek* in New Castle County and *The Village of Eastridge* in Kent. We recently had a chance to sit down with Steven Bomberger, president of Benchmark Builders, and talk about the company, its history – and its future!

relationships that may have been forged over many years. Another surprising thing was the number of people who relocated to such retirement meccas as southern Florida, Arizona or New Mexico that later opted to move again – this time back home. For some people it's that the separation from friends and family has proven to be a greater hardship than they anticipated. For others, the climate was unsatisfactory. Plus Delaware has a good reputation for quality medical care and lots of cultural and recreational opportunities.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** I would imagine that another reason Baby Boomers may decide to stay in Delaware is the quality of 55+ communities available from Benchmark Builders.

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** Yes. When we began designing these communities we asked ourselves, "What do WE want in a 55+ home?" First off we wanted a home that would retain all the advantages that come from single-level living while not confining itself to one floor. These innovative floorplans have proven to be very popular with our homebuyers.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** I think it was also one reason why Benchmark Builders has been honored with numerous awards over the company's 23-year history. You yourself were recognized as Homebuilder of the Year in 2009 by the Home Builders Association of Delaware, for the second time, no less; the first time being in 1999.

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** Yes, that was quite an honor. But I see it more as an award for everyone at Benchmark Builders. Our commitment to our customers is second to none. That's why we've had a rating of A+ by the Better Business Bureau since 2003.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** After building more age-restricted communities in Delaware than any other builder, what are some of the characteristics that

you apply to your 55-plus communities?

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** A convenient location is the first thing everyone considers and we have some of the best. Not only are all three of our 55+ communities near great shopping, cultural and recreational opportunities, they still retain a feel of being away from the daily hustle and bustle. The most impressive design feature is how we reimagined these floor plans for single-level living, while allowing for such niceties as a second-floor loft, extra bedrooms and additional storage areas. These are energy-efficient homes, with a bevy of upscale amenities, like a lavishly appointed owner's suite, 9' ceilings on the first floor, and a spacious kitchen that any chef would love. We didn't neglect the exterior designs of these homes either; they all





have a wonderful sense of character and great curb appeal. Rounding out the attractions are the village-like settings of these communities with plenty of professionally landscaped open space for a walk or jog, not to mention a fully equipped private community clubhouse.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** At your community of Milltown Village, I don't know what I was more impressed by, the beautiful homes or the beautiful view of Pike Creek Valley.

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** The view is spectacular and the European-inspired homes fit right in! Homeowners here enjoy more than 50 acres of trees and open space plus a view overlooking the Pike Creek Valley that's spectacular. It's a one-of-a-kind masterpiece.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** Benchmark Builders has been a leader in building green homes in 55+ communities.

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** Yes. The Village of Eastridge in Clayton, Kent County, and the Village of Long Creek near Newark offer certified green homes at a great price that allows the new homeowner to start saving immediately on heating and cooling costs. Not only is a green home, in my opinion, the environmentally responsible thing to do, it is also more comfortable to live in and usually gets a premium when resold!

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** How can our readers get more information about your communities or schedule a visit?

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** Well, there's plenty of information about all our communities on our new web-

site. Each community has a full gallery of photos that will certainly whet anyone's appetite for a visit! You can also find the hours we're open, the address, phone number and directions, of course. These are homes that warrant a visit.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** Right now it's a buyer's market when it comes to a new home. How much longer do you think that will be the case?

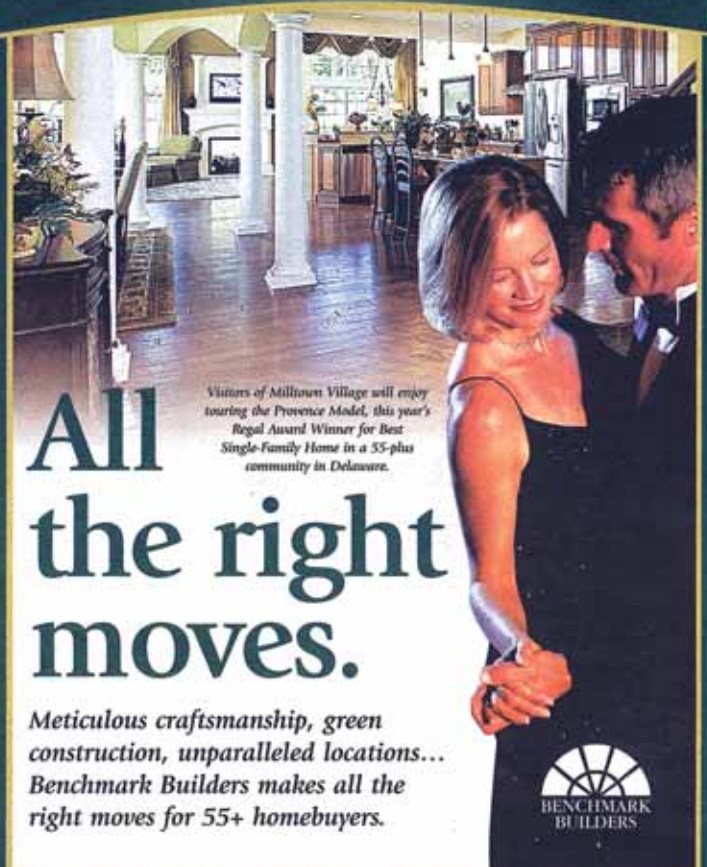
**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** For anyone thinking of buying a new home, the market will not get any more favorable than this. Interest rates are as low as they will go and are already beginning to creep up. The backlog in homes has diminished significantly while builders, ourselves included, are offering incentives to those ready to buy. Even selling your existing home is easier now if it is priced realistically – and what you may give up on your selling price will be more than recouped by the savings you'll realize on your new home.

**VITAL MAGAZINE:** All your communities so far have been in Delaware. Any plans to expand into other states?

**STEVEN BOMBERGER:** No, not really. One of our greatest strengths is the fact that we're a local builder. We live in the area and really love Delaware's many attractions. Many of our kids go to the same schools as the people who live in the communities we've built. We shop in the same stores, eat in the same restaurants. We're your neighbors.

For more information, or to schedule a visit, visit [www.benchmarkbuilders.com](http://www.benchmarkbuilders.com) or call 302-995-6945.

BENCHMARK FOR QUALITY



**All the right moves.**

*Visitors of Milltown Village will enjoy touring the Provence Model, this year's Regal Award Winner for Best Single-Family Home in a 55-plus community in Delaware.*

*Meticulous craftsmanship, green construction, unparalleled locations... Benchmark Builders makes all the right moves for 55+ homebuyers.*



EXCEPTIONAL 55+ COMMUNITIES IN DELAWARE:



**MILLTOWN VILLAGE**  
PIKE CREEK, DELAWARE • 302-366-1515

Surrounded by 50 gorgeous acres of forests and open space, this one-of-a-kind community offers a diverse choice of European-inspired single-family and carriage twin homes starting in the \$400s.

From I-95 in Delaware: Take Exit 4B and follow Rte. 7 North for 3.5 miles and turn left onto Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2). Proceed 1.6 miles and turn right onto Pike Creek Road. The sales center is on the right.



**VILLAGE OF LONG CREEK**  
NEWARK, DELAWARE • 302-838-7925

Unparalleled location with easy access to everything, plus the peace of mind that comes with a certified green home. Wide selection of 2- and 3-bedroom ranch homes from \$299,500.

From I-95 in Delaware: Take Exit 1A (Rte. 896 south/Middletown), turn right onto Rte. 40 and, at the next intersection, turn left onto Old Rte. 896. After 1/3 mile, the community entrance will be on your right at Paxson Lane.



**VILLAGE OF EASTRIDGE**  
CLAYTON, DELAWARE • 302-659-3783

Certified green homes perfectly situated in the tranquility of a small town in Kent County. Re-imagined ranch homes with 2 and 3 bedrooms attractively priced from the \$235,000.

From Delaware Rte. 1, take the South Smyrna Exit (Exit 114). Left onto Rte. 13 south and follow for approximately 1 mile to Brenford Road. Right onto Brenford Road and follow for 2.5 miles. Sales Center will be on the left.



For more information and directions, visit us online [BenchmarkBuilders.com](http://BenchmarkBuilders.com)

