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Lee Wetherington Companies sees signs of market rebound

Local builder hires new sales associate, cuts inventory of existing homes, continues to win awards

SARASOTA, FL—The housing market appears to have begun its rebound according to Lee Wetherington, president and Founder of Lee Wetherington Companies. "When the downturn started, we had 38 inventory homes," he says. "Now we're down to five and we've even hired a new sales associate, Carol Gooding."

New York native Carol Gooding has sold new homes in the Sarasota area for the past 16 years. She holds a B.F.A. from Parsons School of Design and had been vice president of sales & marketing at New York-based W.B. Wood, providing furniture and interior design services for a number of large clients including the World Trade Center, American Express, Goldman Sachs, Sherson Lehman, World Trade Center and Citicorp. Gooding is based in the award-winning Sarezzo model in Lakewood Ranch's Country Club East and can be reached at 941-373-3867 or cgooding@lwhomes.com.

After all the problems of the past two years, it's gratifying to see buyers returning to the market," Wetherington says. Lee Wetherington Companies is a survivor of the recent housing debacle, during which many established builders disappeared from the market. What's more, the company that was named "America's Best Builder" by *Builder Magazine* and the National Association of Home Builders has continued to win awards. Among its 2009 honors:

- Ranking at 52nd place in **Biz-941 Magazine's 2009 Top Companies** list of businesses that gross at least \$20 million annually.
- "**Best Home Builder**" in the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* "Readers' Choice" Awards for the 18th consecutive year.

- SEBC's (South East Builders Conference) **Aurora Award** for excellence in Green Construction to the Lee Wetherington Homes' Serena 2368.
- **EnergyStar** ranking as #1 in the Sarasota/Manatee area and #35 in the state in volume of certified homes.
- **"Best of Sarasota"** Award in the Single-Housing Construction category, U.S. Commerce Association.

Part of the reason for the many awards is perhaps the builder's attention to detail. Ken Shanahan's experience is a recent example. In August, Ken and Katina Shanahan bought an inventory home, the Castella Rossa, at 16015 Foremast Place in the Lake Club at Lakewood Ranch. "We had owned a beautiful home in Purchase, New York, so we know about quality," said the retired corporate executive. "Our new home was completely finished, but what impressed us most was the phenomenal attention to detail in working through the punch list. We're very, very happy with the quality."

For further information about Lee Wetherington Companies, visit www.lwhomes.com, call 941.922.3480 or write to info@lwhomes.com.

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Lee Wetherington Companies currently offers award-winning, EnergyStar. GreenBuild certified homes in several Sarasota and Manatee County communities at prices from the high \$200Ks to over \$1 million. In Manatee County, the company builds homes in Rye Wilderness, 2.4 miles north of SR 64; and several neighborhoods in Lakewood Ranch: Country Club East (Leopard Creek/Valdarrama, Camargo/Royal Valley); Greenbrook Preserve, Greenbrook Ravines and The Country Club (Highfield, La Cantera). In Sarasota County, the builder offers homes in The Founders Club, an enclave of exclusive homes and private golf course on Fruitville Road three miles east of I-75; in Willow Chase, on Laurel Road in Venice; In addition, Lee Wetherington Homes works with owners to build one-of-a-kind homes on privately owned (non-development) homesites in both Manatee and Sarasota County.