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## AN INSIDE LOOK

**I**t doesn't take much to realize when a home is no longer working for you. Whether it is the addition of a new family member, young children becoming teenagers, teenagers growing up and moving out on their own, a new marriage, or divorce, the changes in our lives often require changes to our home. Sometimes that means a remodel or addition to the existing house, and sometimes an entirely new space is called for.

Recently, I spoke with Roy Childs, who has been an agent for the company for more than five years. Currently, Roy's office is located within the townhome and villa division of Cattail Creek at 192nd and Q streets.

Although other builders and communities may use the terms differently, Roy tells me that in a Celebrity neighborhood, a townhome is an attached home, while a villa is detached. Both types of homes are built in the same area, depending on the needs of buyers.

"Another difference in a Celebrity townhome," Roy says, "is that when a buyer purchases a Celebrity townhome or villa, they own everything about it from the land to the walls and everything in between. Generally, with a condominium, only the interior air space is owned by the buyer."

Celebrity's popular slogan, "Yes! It's all included!" is an important selling feature that incorporates single-family homes, townhomes, and villas. Roy says that other builders use a "loaded-up" model home for prospective buyers to tour before explaining that the price is actually for a stripped-down version. Then, when all of the features of the model home are added back (or whatever features the buyer decides to add), the price increases dramatically.

Celebrity continues to rework their offerings, keeping up with what buyers are looking for and what is new in the market. Currently, some of the "it's all included" items are: a gourmet kitchen package with appliances by GE, including a self-cleaning range with ceramic cooktop; a PowerScrub dishwasher, microwave, and refrigerator in white, black, or stainless steel; an extra-large capacity washer and dryer; 2-inch decorator blinds; ceramic tile backsplash in the kitchen; Aristokraft cabinetry; raised-panel interior doors with brushed nickel lever hardware; a gas fireplace; two ceiling fans; hard-surface counters in the main and master bathrooms; full sod; a landscaping package; a garage door opener; and more. Celebrity also includes their own energy value package, which consists of a higher-efficiency furnace, low-e insulated windows, and more.

In addition, another selling point for the townhomes and villas is that the homeowner's association in these neighborhoods provides lawn care (including professional mowing and fertilization), trash and snow removal, and exterior painting. Homeowners can add their own gardens and landscaping, as approved by the neighborhood architectural committee. There are no additional rules or regulations about pet ownership as long as homeowners abide by county laws—although exotic pets are generally not allowed.

I asked Roy about the types of clients he normally sees and what usually suits their specific needs in a Celebrity townhome or villa. He tells me that while many people find these homes suitable for their needs, he does see a few specific groups of buyers over and over. "I see young single people and couples fairly often—busy people who may work odd hours and don't want to mess with snow removal and maintaining a lawn. They prefer to spend their free time on other things."

Roy says that he also sees a number of divorced women who are used to living in a house (rather than an apartment or condominium), but they too do not want to deal with snow removal and general yard maintenance. Older couples also make up a large part of Roy's clientele. They are downsizing and wanting to move into a home that is easier to live in, such as trading in steps for a one-level ranch-type plan.

While many home-buyers like to choose their own plan, lot, and neighborhood and be involved from the very beginning, sometimes homes are available to move into immediately. Roy says that they are able to help all kinds of buyers get into their new homes. They have a preferred lender with numerous loan programs. From first-time home-buyer's programs, to programs with little or nothing down, there is an option for nearly everyone, Roy states.

Roy walked with me through the villa model at Cattail Creek. Tastefully decorated, I found it to be welcoming and comfortable. The living spaces are open to each other, giving a feeling of space and flow. Like many other popular plans, this one includes thoughtful touches such as a laundry room between the garage entrance and the kitchen, higher counters in the master bathroom, and an optional third bedroom and bathroom in the finished basement. There is a deck off the kitchen, and a sliding glass door with a patio off of the basement living area. Roy discussed how nice it is to have a jetted bathtub with a window

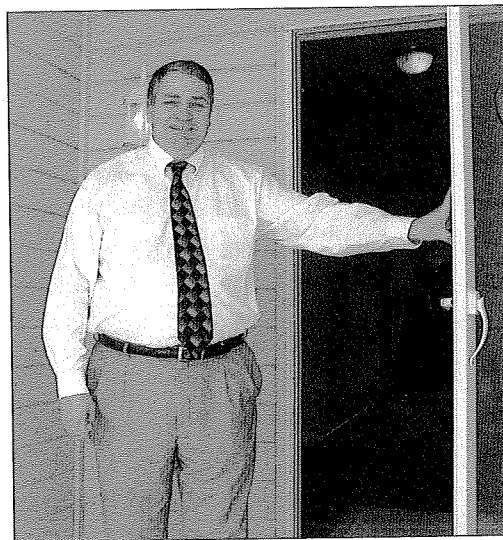
in the master bath along with a large window to let in natural light. Other nice features in the master bathroom include a walk-in closet and a separate room with a toilet and shower (for privacy, as well as keeping the heat and humidity enclosed and away from anyone else getting ready in the other room).

This is Celebrity's 30th year of operation in Omaha. Prior to working for Celebrity Homes, Roy says he sold wholesale building supplies. When he was first introduced to Celebrity Homes, he noticed that they are a builder who does things right: they use energy-efficient products and techniques, and they pay attention to details that are not necessarily obvious but are important just the same. Roy says he appreciates seeing customers return to the company for their second and third homes because of the positive experience and quality product they have enjoyed in the past.

For more information, you can find Celebrity Townhomes online at [www.celebrityhomesomaha.com](http://www.celebrityhomesomaha.com) or call 896-6800. Celebrity model homes are open in neighborhoods across the city Monday through Thursday from noon to 7 p.m., Friday from noon to 6 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m.

## CELEBRITY HOMES

By Julie Kuntze



Roy Childs, New Home Consultant

# BIG THANKS, DAD

By Janet Van deWalle

**J**une is the month for recognizing those in our lives who are fathers. When I was a kid, this was a big day in our household. My dad, Al, always made sure that he was appropriately honored—as he should have been!

**"Children learn to smile from their parents."**  
—Shinichi Suzuki

Al was the father of six kids, and he also happened to be an entrepreneur. He worked harder than any person I've ever known. He ran his home improvement company from a small office in our garage. He would get up early and meet his competitors (who were also his friends) for a cup of coffee. They would discuss "how business was." Although they all knew that at times business was slow, they continued to meet, discuss, and be terrific friends and supportive to one another.

**"My father always used to say that when you die, if you've got five real friends, then you've had a great life."**

—Lee Iacocca

He would then head to the "office," where he would look at his books, run the numbers, and organize the crews that were going to do each of the jobs. At night, he would go out on "calls" to see whether he could help a homeowner find the right home improvement project for their home.

For a few short months, when I was in my late 20's, I worked for my dad. I quickly realized that we were far too much alike to work in that small office space together. What this experience did allow me to do, however, was to see just what a wonderful man my father was.

**"Any man can be a father, but it takes a special person to be a dad."**  
—Proverb

Being the single wage-earner for all of us had to have been a huge challenge. Looking back, I really don't know how he was able to do it. Did we see him stressed at times? Of course. Did we also see him scared and depressed? Who wouldn't have been!

**"We never know the love of our parents for us till we have become parents."**  
—Henry Ward Beecher

My dad died in 1991. He was young—just 67.

**"Old as she was, she still missed her daddy sometimes."**  
—Gloria Naylor

My dad was a big, tall man—his nickname was "Big Al." One of the most treasured legacies that he left me was knowing the value of laughter. When my dad laughed, his whole body laughed with him. He didn't hold anything back. He could be goofy and crazy at the drop of a hat. He loved to tease all of us kids—and my mother Anne—all the time. The eight of us laughed often—what a great way to grow up!

**"My father was always getting excited about something. It's genetically inside me somewhere."**  
—Nicolas Cage

Al also was the person that I learned my sense of ethics from. He taught me how to be an entrepreneur. He taught me about "the Golden Rule. He taught me to always do what I said I would do. He taught me to treat customers like the gold that they are. He taught me how to keep going even when you don't think you can take it any more. It is because of his influence that I am the person that I am today. Dad was a very cool man. Thanks Big Al!

**"He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it."**  
—Clarence Budington Kellam **WE**

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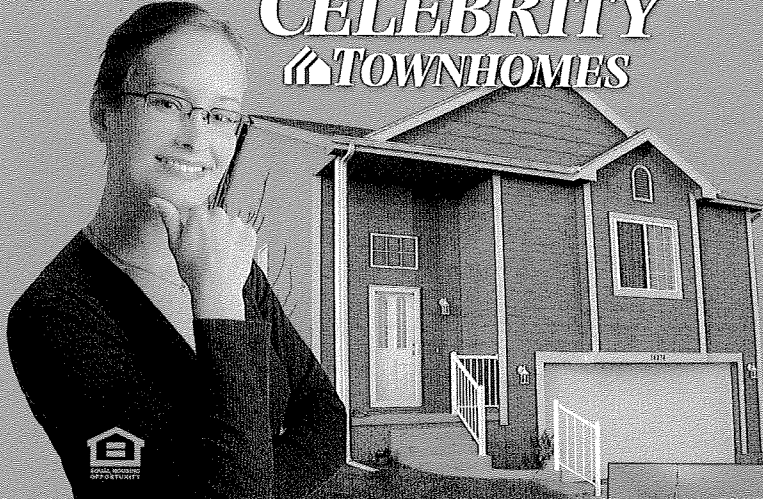


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