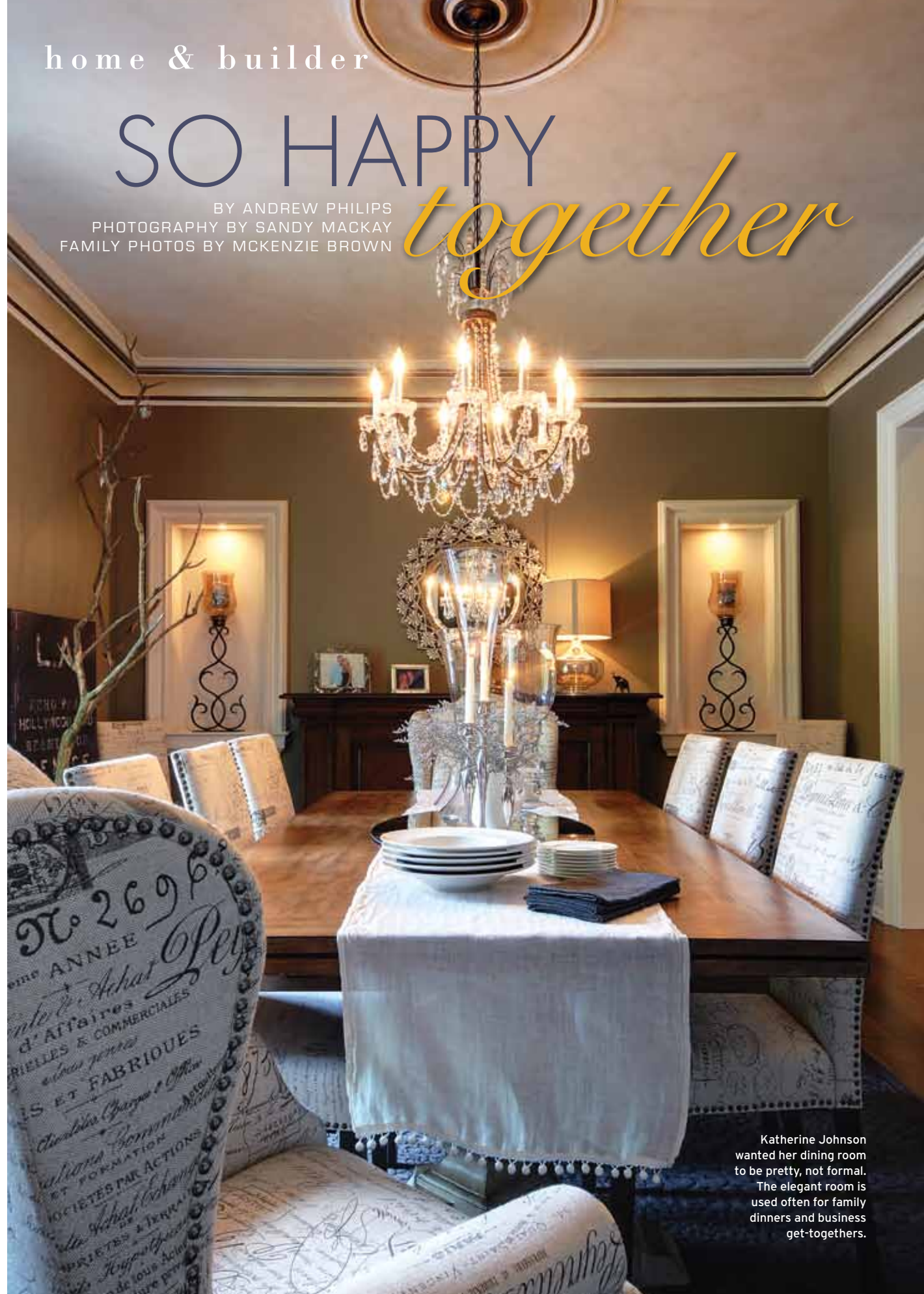


# SO HAPPY *together*

BY ANDREW PHILIPS  
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Katherine Johnson wanted her dining room to be pretty, not formal. The elegant room is used often for family dinners and business get-togethers.



**CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT:** (1) The airy foyer welcomes visitors to the Johnson home. (2) The busy family of four escapes to the luxe living room with its fabulous Georgian Bay granite fieldstone fireplace surround. (3) The backyard is the ultimate playground. (4) The Johnsons: Katherine, Jeff, Jeffrey and Christopher. (5) The wood-paneled office.

To say the Johnsons knew what they wanted in a new custom-built home would be an understatement.

Katherine meticulously sought out ideas over a five-year span on what she longed for in the new, Barrie-area home to share with husband Jeff and their two sons Christopher and Jeffrey.

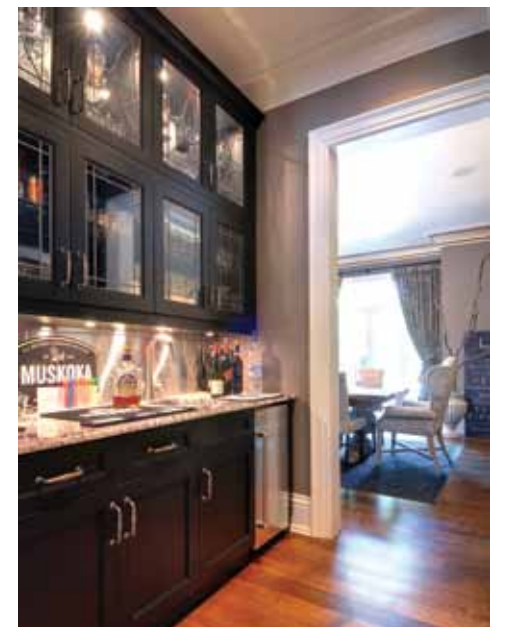
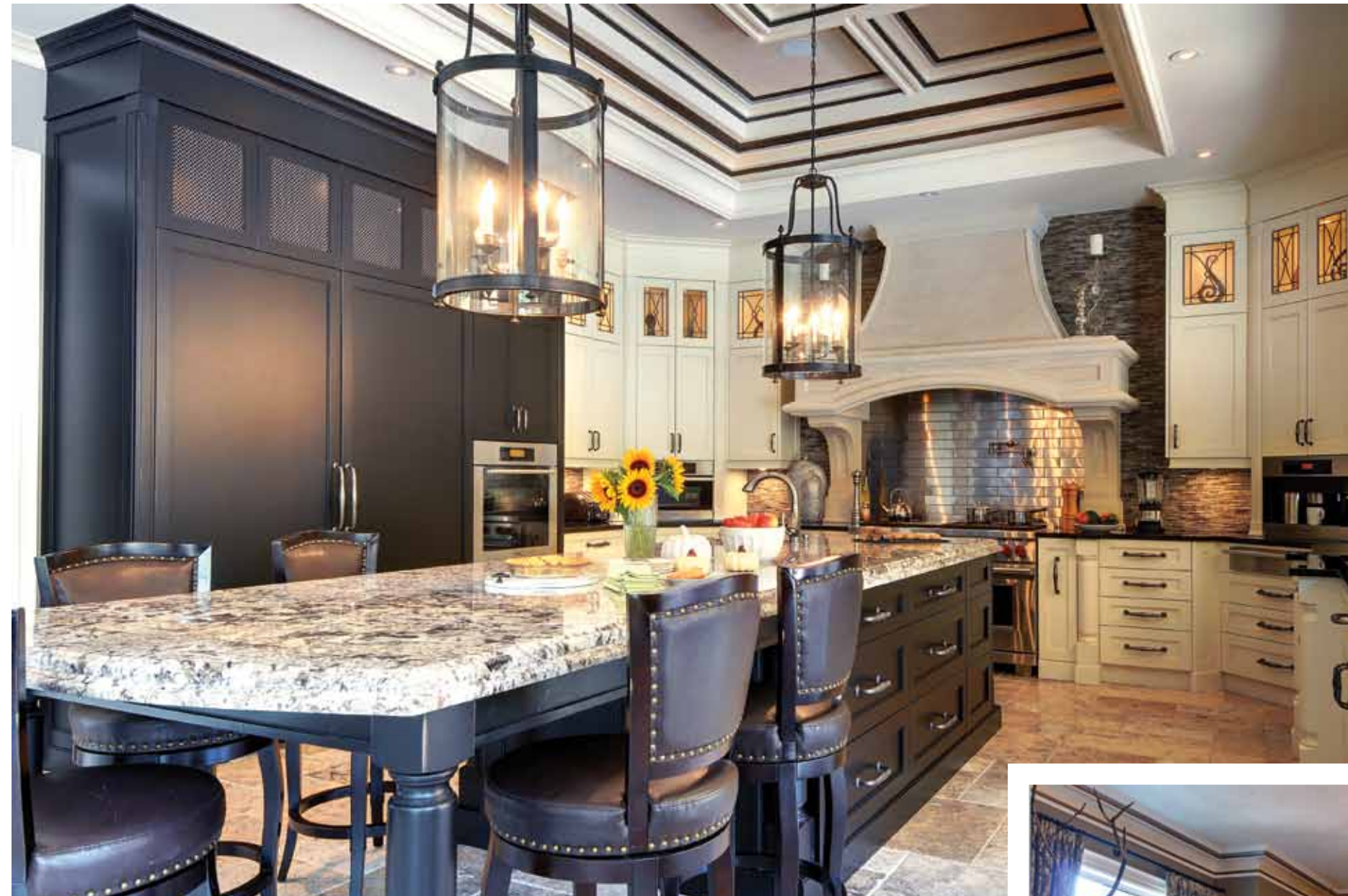
"Jeff and I had spent a number of years building a portfolio of what we were looking for and what we liked," explains Katherine, who works as a nurse practitioner in Toronto while her husband works with **Joe Johnson Equipment Ltd.** "We went to see homes across the GTA and would even go to new home-building sites and explore to gather different ideas and features."

The results of the couple's research are quite impressive.

From the street, it's clear this two-storey home built by **DreamWood Homes** of Barrie is something special. The exterior features natural Arisscraft stone. *Continued on page 74*







Katherine's kitchen blends style and functionality. Ivory cabinets, top and bottom, line the walls on three sides while floor-to-ceiling chocolate cabinetry hides the large refrigerator-freezer and surrounds the built-in wall oven. The dark cabinetry continues below the granite-topped eat-at island. The professional Wolf range is framed by a custom limestone hood mantel.



"We started building in the fall of 2010 and moved here in May 2012," Katherine says. "There are a few things we would have done differently, but at the end of the day we love our home."

A tour through this immaculate 7,000 sq. ft. home on three acres reveals a beautifully designed and decorated family abode that is all usable, thought-out space and true to the Johnsons' vision.

**Chris Nitsopoulos** from DreamWood Homes says this home was very exciting to build. "It is essential with a home of this size and so many superior finishes that the homeowners know what they want," says Chris, who along with partner **Tino Zarcone** build custom homes throughout central Ontario.

Tino says they were able to meet Katherine and Jeff's high expectations by working together as a team. "Each square foot was meticulously crafted with superior products and we feel we helped create a spectacular show home but also an intimate family home," he says. *Continued on page 76*

Crown moulding in the dining room and the tiered ceiling cutout in the kitchen were painted in dark and neutral tones to match the custom cabinetry. A butler's pantry tucked behind the kitchen has a large wine fridge and ice maker. The pantry leads into the dining room for easy entertaining, where custom drapes from Salnek's finished the look.





A wall of windows in the living room provides an all-inclusive view of the backyard. The grey sectional is big enough for the whole family to chill at the end of a hectic day. **BELOW:** Builders Chis Nitsopoulos and Tino Zarcone of DreamWood Homes say it was a pleasure to raise this incredible home.



Featuring a 26-foot-high ceiling, the foyer affords an ideal view of the home's most spectacular rooms. To the right upon entering, a expertly crafted old-world office features a spectacular, sunken wood-patterned ceiling along with built-in shelving created by **Absolute Cabinets**, a company that also produced the kitchen cabinetry, most of the wainscoting and even the boys' bedroom furniture. Katherine was impressed with the company's use of a special machine that was able to bend the wood to create circular corners. The Johnsons say Troy, Jazzy and David were excellent to work with.

Across the foyer is the oh-so-pretty dining room. With seating for 10 around a dark wood table and high-style upholstered chairs from ELTE,

the room has plenty of neat touches, including two branches from small trees that were originally on the property. Katherine had help designing the room from **Lidia van Zyl Design** of Barrie. "I wanted my dining room to be pretty, but not formal," says Katherine, who points out the dining area is perfect for both family dinners and her husband's business get-togethers.

A butler's pantry/bar leads to a wide-open kitchen, with French Pattern Travertine flooring. In this room, any chef would be more than pleased to create his or her favourite epicurean delights. Featuring stainless steel Miele and Wolf appliances, including a six-burner range top and double refrigerator/freezer, the kitchen also has a four-by-15-foot island, making it the ideal spot to prepare and then eat a meal.

*Continued on page 79*



The extra-wide staircase with iron railings leads upstairs to the boys' rooms, which are decorated to suit their personal interests.







The kitchen opens into the family room, which features a large 56-inch gas fireplace (Mark Bratty Concord Fireplaces) surrounded by Georgian Bay granite fieldstone. A refurbished barn-beam mantel was taken from another barn owned by the Johnsons only five lots away to give the fireplace a focal point with local splash. This room is the spot for the family to gather and relax together. A massive wall of windows reveals the fantastic playground outside.

The home has several other natural gas fireplaces (all from Concord Fireplaces), including one in the first-floor master bedroom that has a cosy sitting area along with vaulted ceilings, two walk-in closets (Absolute Cabinetry) and a patio walkout.

There's also a fireplace in the nearby master bathroom along with a TV, jet tub, dark maple vanities, a natural stone floor and a shower area that's easily as large as a nearby powder room. "You can watch TV and see the fireplace from the tub – this is my little piece of paradise," laughs Katherine.

Custom drapes throughout the home were created by local designer **Judy Salnek** of **Salnek's Custom Window Treatments**. Many of the high ceilings were painted by Aurora's Lucy Lown, who manages to create a dreamlike quality with canvasses resembling wispy clouds, while **Steve Lynds** painted the walls in greys and warm earth-tones.

Other companies involved in bringing the project to fruition and should be complimented include: **Northern Plumbing Systems**, **Wicklum Plaster and Stucco**, **The Design House**, **Barrie Bobcat & Landscaping** and **High Definition Home Systems**, which completed the home's high-tech automation system.

Flooring in the home by **Barrie Flooring Centre** is equally impressive, from the marble inlay floor in the foyer that's partially covered with a stylish Oriental carpet to the quarter-cut, white oak that adorns much of the home.

The second floor features several more bedrooms and bathrooms as well as a long family/playroom where several guitars are on display and

*Continued on page 80*



The master suite includes substantial walk-in closets and plenty of sparkle. The room has a sitting area facing the fireplace with limestone surround. The en suite has a jet tub and a huge glass shower with a view of the fireplace and TV on the opposite wall.



Back outside, a sitting room with patio furniture sourced through Lisa Harrison of Added Appeal sits under a majestic covered porch. There's a putting green just outside the door of Jeff's "man cave" and a tennis court that is converted into an ice rink with arena boards during the winter months.





The loft above the garage (top left) is where Christopher and Jeffrey hang out with their friends when they're not playing outside or working out in the basement gym.

ready for picking by either Katherine or her two sons. She adds, "It's also a good spot for our sons when they have sleepovers. We've had a whole hockey team up here."

Sports seem to play a big part in the family's life with a fully-equipped gym located in the basement along with an indoor "dry-ice" skating/shooting pad.

The big backyard features an in-ground pool from Barrie's **G & G Pool Service and Renovation Ltd.** accompanied by neat decorative stone touches by Barrie's **Dearborn Designs**, along with a tennis court that doubles as a hockey rink in the winter, complete with real arena boards. Topping it off for summer is a seven-hole artificial grass putting green for would-be duffers and the boys to practise.

There's also a hot tub, pool house and a majestic stone fireplace for warming up in comfort while enjoying those chilly autumn nights.

A large attached four-car garage sits prominently beside the home, providing easy access and leading into the home's large mudroom where

Katherine insists hockey players, 13-year-old Barrie Colt Christopher and 11-year-old North Central Predator Jeffrey hang their sweaty gear after a game.

A separate two-storey "man cave" behind the home is almost done. "This is Jeff's play area," claims Katherine. "It features three large-screen televisions to ensure not an ace, goal or touchdown is missed. There's room for sports cars and has a granite bar, a poker table, a games area on the second level and some of the coolest trophy, fresh-water fish, caught by the Johnson boys.

Katherine says she's ecstatic with the work of both the DreamWood team and the many tradespeople who worked on the project. "If you treat your trades well, they'll treat you well," she says. "We are very happy with the excellent work. Building a new home is not a simple task. We said we would only do it once and saved and researched for five years and then it took us almost three years to complete. But because of the people and the new friends made along the way, it's been a truly worthwhile journey." **OH**

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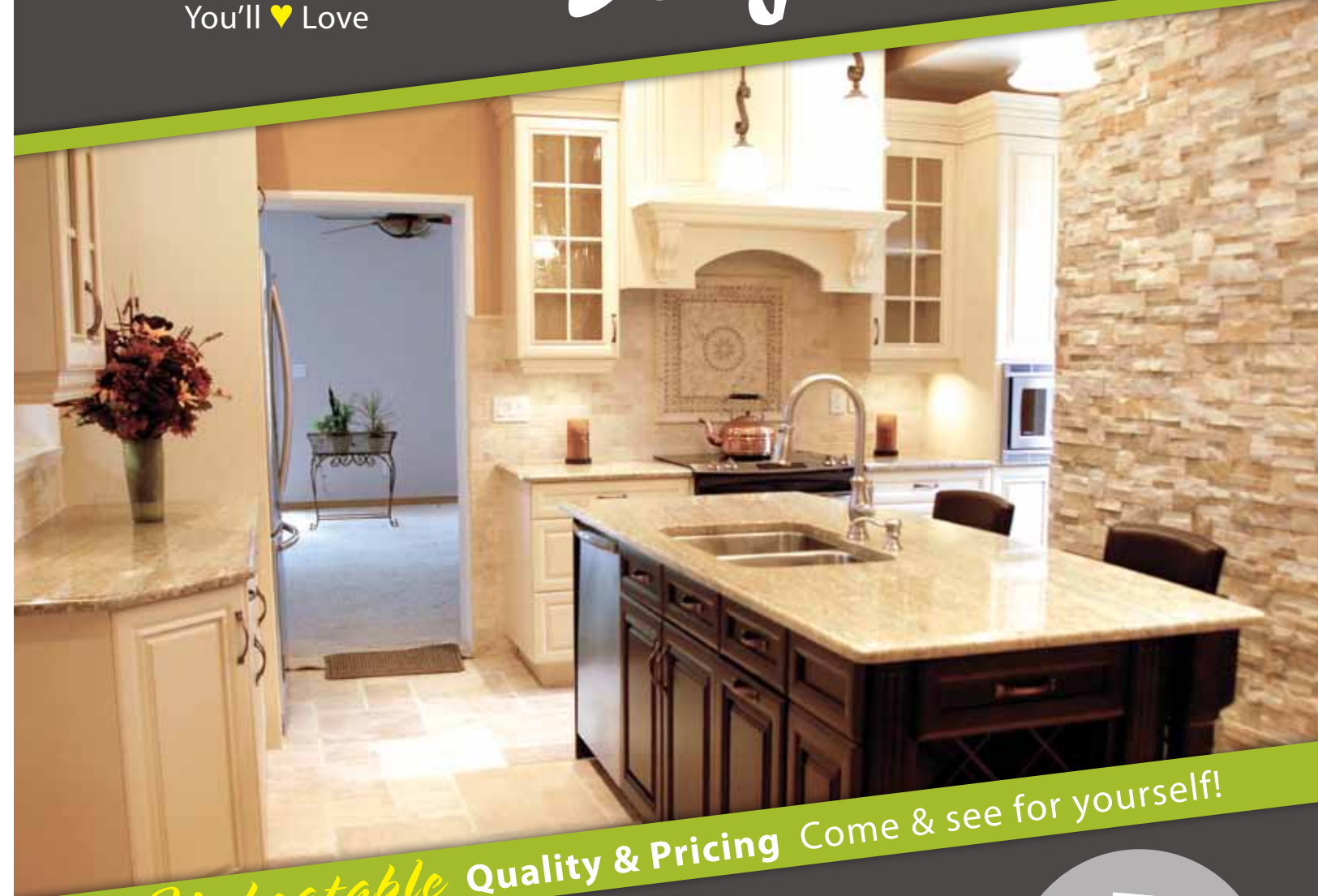
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