

HomesFriday

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Meritus Homes personalizes ranch home for family

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After living in their two-story Fox River Grove home for more than 30 years, the time came for the Fontana family to leave behind the yardwork, pool and deck upkeep — and stairs — in favor of a more carefree lifestyle.

That's when Renzo and Franca Fontana moved with their son Michael to The Enclave at Mill Creek in the heart of DuPage County.

"We wanted to be closer to our grandchildren in Elmhurst," Renzo Fontana said. "And we were at a stage in life where a ranch was appealing. Our son is in a wheelchair and it was becoming more difficult to get him up and down the stairs, so single-level living was at the top of our new-home wish list."

After casually looking for a house for about a year and a half, the Fontanas got serious about their search when the pandemic caused Franca to be laid off from her job.

"We had planned on moving once we were both retired," Renzo said. "This gave us the push to do it now."

While the couple did much of their home searching online, the sales center at The Enclave at Mill Creek was open so they were able to come out and tour the models. They quickly decided to purchase at the community and from there the homebuying process went remarkably smoothly, they said.

The Fontanas chose a homesite in Phase II that is adjacent to a pond and backs up to the creek, offering them

a sense of seclusion and relaxation. They signed a contract in April and closed on their new home in October ... a few weeks ahead of schedule.

"Everyone at Meritus Homes was extremely helpful and responsive," Renzo said. Plus, the builder was willing to make semicustom changes to accommodate Michael's wheelchair. For example, Meritus built a ramp in the garage, enlarged the doors to Michael's bedroom and bath, and expanded and added a seat to his shower.

Although the Fontanas made some changes to their home, the floor plan they chose — the Waterleaf — already had most of the features they wanted. They were thrilled with the wide hallways that make it easy for Michael to maneuver his wheelchair. In this 2,154-square-foot ranch, the secondary bedrooms and full bath are separated from the owner's suite, allowing privacy for everyone. The family is using the third bedroom as a study where Michael can go to watch television or get on his iPad. The Waterleaf's open-concept layout also is perfect for entertaining.

"We had our first big family gathering recently and the open floor plan made everyone feel comfortable," Franca said. She added that the high ceilings in the family room make the space live larger and expansive windows along with white cabinets make the kitchen feel light and bright. The basement is huge, too, and offers plenty of storage and play space for the



COURTESY OF MERITUS HOMES

Renzo and Franca Fontana chose the Waterleaf floor plan for its open-concept layout and the carefree lifestyle at The Enclave at Mill Creek.

grandchildren.

The Waterleaf, as well as all homes at The Enclave at Mill Creek, is built to the exacting standards that signify a Meritus home. This includes Tyvek house wrap, ice and water shield protection for the roof, a damp-proofed foundation, 40-gallon high-efficiency water heater, R-21 wall and R-49 ceiling insulation, and 2-by-6-inch exterior wall construction.

Interiors have 9-foot first-floor ceilings, Colonist doors, decorative touches such as rounded drywall corners and brushed nickel finishes, central air conditioning, and full basements all as standard features.

Exteriors have classic elements such as brick and stone accents, and some have covered entries or front porches to provide shelter from inclement weather. Front, side and rear yards are fully sodded plus a landscaping package is included with each new home to give it instant curb appeal and complement the established character of DuPage County.

The Enclave at Mill Creek also boasts abundant green space, including Westwood Creek, three ponds and a scenic sitting spot, with more than two-thirds of the ranch-style homes backing to natural areas and open space. For a monthly

fee, the homeowners association handles lawn care for all homesites, as well as maintains common area landscaping.

Coming from McHenry County, Renzo and Franca are impressed with all DuPage County has to offer. Nearby are numerous restaurants, shopping centers and entertainment opportunities, along with forest preserves. DuPage County has very good special needs programs, as well. Living at The Enclave at Mill Creek means that I-355 and I-290, plus Route 83 (Kingery Highway) are all just minutes away, making travel around the suburbs, and even into the city, convenient and easy.

With so many benefits, it's no wonder residents are moving to the community from towns as far away as South Barrington, Palatine, Arlington Heights, Schaumburg and even Chicago.

"The people here are really friendly," Renzo said. "We've mapped out a 3½-mile path through the neighborhood where Franca and I walk and Michael rides his recumbent bike on a regular basis. Everyone who sees us out and about waves and says hi. It's a warm sense of community here."

Meritus Homes is building 87 low-maintenance homes at The Enclave at Mill Creek, with four designs available in Phase II. Ranch plans have 1,603 to 2,154 square feet of living space; two, three or four bedrooms; and two full baths for base prices that range from \$413,400 to \$457,400. Second-story options add 866 to 1,090 more square feet of living space, one or two bedrooms or a loft, and another bath on the upper level. This brings the square footage up to 2,620 to 3,077 with base prices that range from \$496,925 to \$520,650.

The entrance to The Enclave at Mill Creek is on the north side of Army Trail Boulevard at Links Drive. The sales office is at 758 Fairway Drive (enter 601 Army Trail Boulevard into GPS system to find the site).

Two decorated models are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

For more information, call (331) 225-3646 or visit www.MeritusHomebuilders.com.

Tour 2 Decorated Model Homes

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Centrally located minutes from major roads and interstates, The Enclave at Mill Creek is attracting homebuyers from all around Chicagoland who are ready to relax with a carefree lifestyle. There's no snow shoveling or time-consuming lawn care here! Only well-crafted single-family homes surrounded by natural amenities. So no matter where you're moving from, The Enclave at Mill Creek is the popular choice.

Visit The Enclave at Mill Creek Today

(331) 225-3646

Sales office: 758 Fairway Drive, just north of Army Trail Boulevard and west of North Mill Road in Addison.
(Enter 601 Army Trail Boulevard into GPS system to find the site.)