

Historic, but still home

(continued from page 3)

that goal in mind, the Dautberts opened up walls in the interior and transformed a series of small parlors into a large parlor, an office, and a large waiting room.

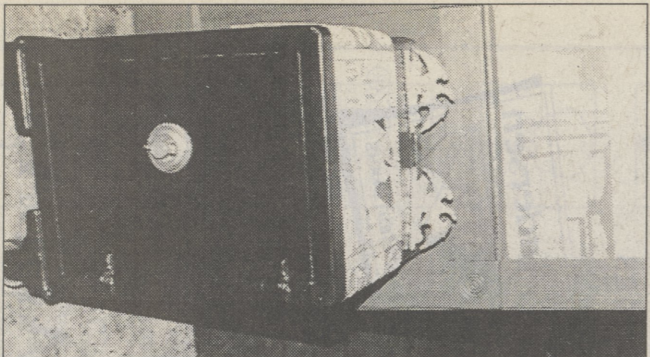
Despite the amount of construction, the Dautberts maintained the accents of the pre-Civil War home. Floor-to-ceiling windows abound on the first floor. They had to be finished with skyscraper windows," laughs Jim Dautbert. Green washcoating and thick oak moldings trim doors and walls. Pocket doors slide into the walls.

The original - and still working - stove is the focus in the kitchen. Made in Danville in 1911, the "Queen Beaver" is a highlight of the house and serves as a cozy gathering place through the winter. Several of the original built-in cabinets have been maintained, and are now painted green.

The house now has four bedrooms - they expanded a small bedroom by opening up another. A full walk-in attic is on the third floor. The front grand staircase, with its giant ball finial, is supplemented by a back staircase connecting through to the kitchen.

The exterior of the home features many touches that remind visitors of the heritage of the area. Serene white wicker furniture rests on the front porch, and an old dynamite box, painted fire-engine red, serves as a planter. Weathered bricks from an old chimney line the flower beds.

Belles Construction did much of the work on the house, and Bob Belles entered the exterior of the house in a



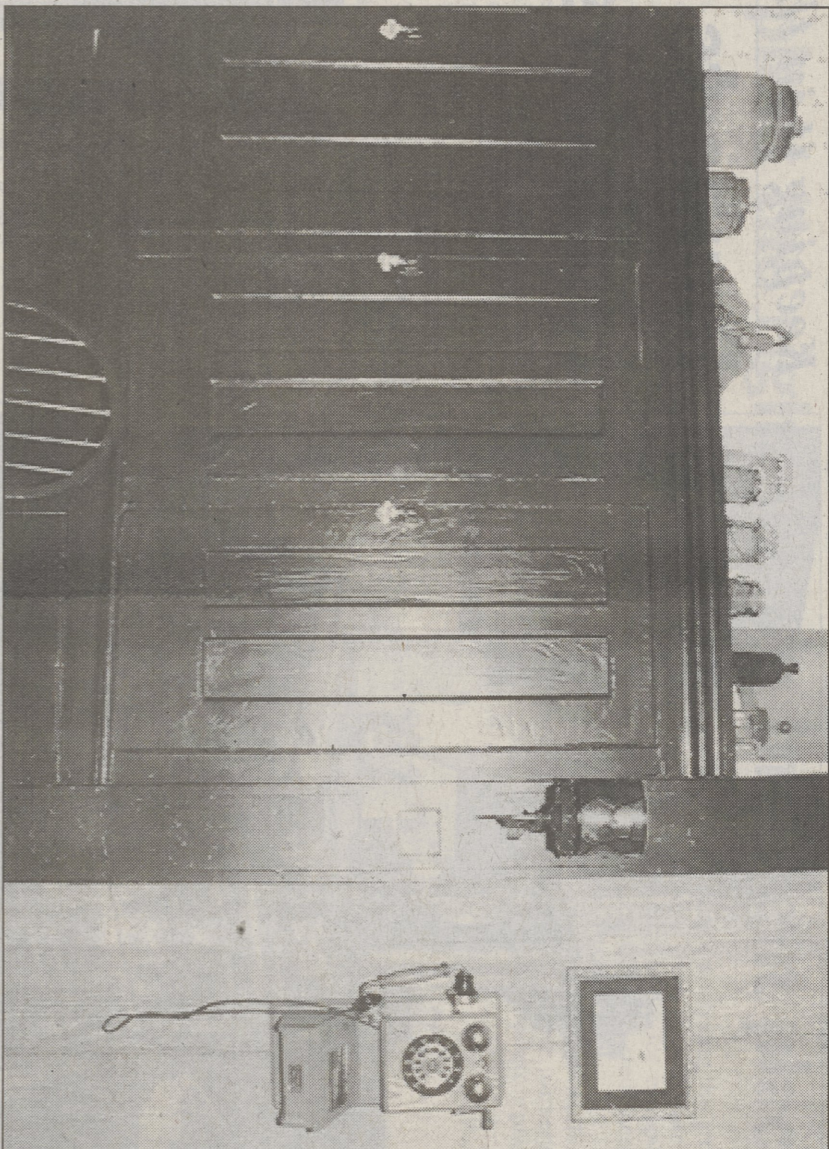
Joy Dautbert's father's safe is displayed by some of the original cabinetry. It's appropriate, since she is the Franklin Twp. tax collector.

national contest by the manufacturer of the siding used. The Dautberts won the "Achievement Award" and have been featured in advertising brochures for CertainTeed Siding.

The exterior's facelift was also featured in the November 1997 issue of *Quintified Remodeler Magazine*.

To date, the Dautberts estimate that they have spent a total of \$50,000 on the outside and \$50,000 on the inside, and they feel it has been money well spent. "It definitely exceeded what we had initially planned," says Joy. But quickly adds Jim, "You've spent the money, but it's not really gone." Their memories are all around them.

Wood cabinets original to the home have been painted a gloss green.
Post photos: CHARLOTTE BARTZKE



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Great lawns can be a high-return investment

Many home sellers are finding that the old adage, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence," can translate into faster sales and higher profits when it's their grass that is the greenest.

According to the Chicago-based non-profit Turf Resource Center (TRC), a well-planned and well-maintained landscape can add between 5 and 30 percent to the value of a home. And it's the lawn portion of the landscape that can impress or depress potential buyers most easily.

"The lawn is the welcome mat to the entire property," points out Doug Fender, executive director of TRC. "Call it curb appeal or first impressions, but whenever prospective buyers drive up to a house, it's the lawn that first catches their eye. If it looks well cared for, buyers will almost automatically conclude that the entire house has also been well cared for. If the lawn looks shabby, they may choose to keep driving."

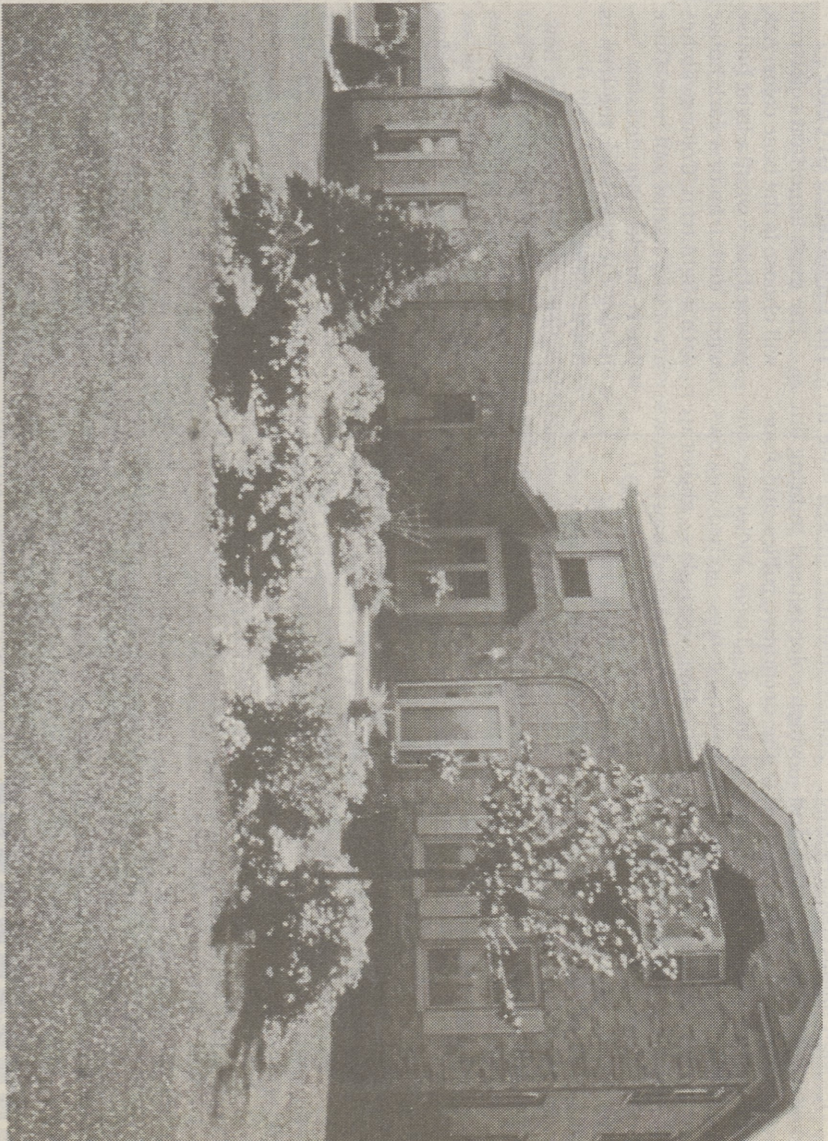
Real estate industry studies have documented that similar homes in the same neighborhood will sell for different prices if one is enhanced by a stronger first impression because of landscaping.

Reports have also shown that the return on a landscape invest-

ment can range from 100 to 200 percent, compared to a 20 to 50 percent return for swimming pools or a 40 to 70 percent return on decks.

"With this knowledge," Fender suggests, "homeowners can very seriously consider replacing their old lawn with a new one as part of their sales preparations. A beautiful new lawn... especially one that takes advantage of the immediacy of turfgrass sod... can be enjoyed before the house sells; the return should sell faster and the return on investment for the new lawn is almost assured." Homeowners should also consult with real estate professionals to determine if the cost of a new lawn installed immediately before a sale can be used to reduce any capital gains taxes.

While selection, location and maturity of trees and flower beds are important to landscape features, so too is the design and layout of the lawn. "Turfgrass is more than just an eye-appealing home landscape feature and it should be more than an afterthought," says Fender. "It can provide important environmental benefits including controlling erosion and preventing dust problems. Lawns also provide a low-cost and safe recreational surface that is important to both physical

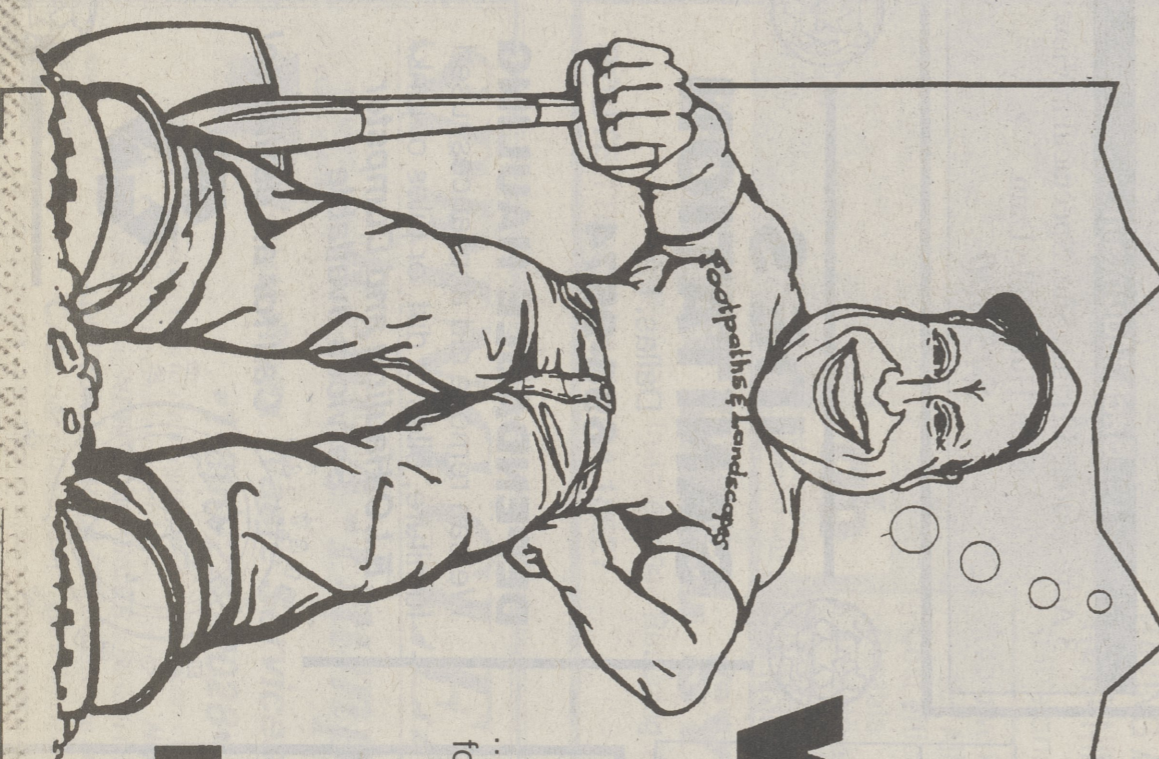


An attractive house is made more appealing with a well designed and properly maintained lawn.

and mental health." For free information about establishing lawns, installing

turfgrass sod or the environmental benefits of properly maintained lawns, contact the Turf Resource

Center at Dept. HI-6, 1855-A Hicks Road, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008.



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