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# **HOME IMPROVEMENT** **GREEN THEN, GREEN NOW**



The LEED-certified home at 864 Lakeshore Blvd. in Incline Village is shown.

Photo by Vance Fox

**BY ADAM ROBB**  
Special to the Bonanza

After Alan Richards finished college on the G.I. Bill, he headed straight to Yosemite and began working for the park system, building many of the trails and bridges used by visitors today.

As Alan recalls, "I had gotten out of the Army and finished college and had no real direction. This was an interesting time in America as Vietnam was finally over, yet the repercussions on our culture were still being felt," he said. "For myself, I had an inexplicable draw to learn from Nature and live in Nature as one of my favorite beat poet Gary Snyder wrote about. It was my time in Yosemite where I really first started to build structures and these structures existed in-tune with the surroundings in which they were created."

Alan moved on from Yosemite with childhood friend and fellow contractor Ted Guzzi.

"Ted and I grew up in Sacramento and had worked on trail crew together. We headed to Tahoe because we had some

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friends there that could get us jobs as apprentice carpenters," he said. "I worked for some of the original fine-home builders in Incline Village, first, as an apprentice, then years later as a foreman."

It was Jack Franklin to whom Alan attributes much of his learning.

Alan remembers: "Franklin was old-school before there was old school. He built some of the finest custom homes back in the 70's and early 80's, and his attention to detail is becoming a lost art."

After earning his stripes as a carpenter for over 10 years, Alan struck out on his own starting A Richards Built Home.

He says: "I wanted to build homes that felt like they belonged where they stood. We live in such a beautiful place, here in Tahoe, and it always seemed like an insult when I'd see a building or structure that

## vision | craftsmanship | detail | artistry

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an overused term that sadly today usually means a lot of square footage, a lot of sheet rock, and a lot of price.

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Because fine homes aren't created on an assembly line...

*they're created with heart.*

committed to building  
LEED®-certified homes



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# HOME IMPROVEMENT

was so out of tune with its surroundings, so I always sought out architects and clients who shared the same vision."

Most recently, a LEED Certified home was built at 864 Lakeshore Blvd. in Incline Village.

"The homeowners had approached me through a mutual friend, and had been in a home I built that was featured in several national home-building magazines," Alan said. "They wanted to combine the craftsmanship that they saw in that home with LEED Certification."

Alan's oldest son, Adam Robb, was project supervisor for the Lakeshore home. Adam is a LEED Accredited Professional and describes some of the green initiatives used in the home:

"First off, the home was built on previously developed land, which is recycling in itself, recycling land. The log and lumber package was milled to specific lengths, reducing waste. We used recycled barn wood for various interior applications and we finished the barn wood with an extremely low VOC wood finish comprised mostly of natural waxes. In fact, all paint was of extremely low VOC content, meaning the carcinogens that most paints emit over time are not a concern in this home. Hydronic heating was used with warm board sub-floor panels that evenly distribute the heat throughout the floor. We sealed all penetrations in the building envelope with expanding foam and silicone prior to drywall and insulated the home with blown-in optima insulation. It serves no purpose to use efficient heating if the heat is simply lost to the outside. The landscaping is all non-invasive drought-tolerant plants,



**TOP: The LEED home on Lakeshore Boulevard features a stunning living area.**

**RIGHT: The home features a very unique bathroom design.**

Photos by Vance Fox

which means the home owners won't waste a ton of water keeping plants alive that don't belong in this region. One of the things I'm most proud of, however, was recycling over 17 tons of waste, or 75 percent of the total waste on the job. None of these strategies are necessarily easy to implement as they require planning and diligence throughout

the project, but there is no doubt to the long-term benefit of this extra effort." To see the entire list of green building strategies and more photos of this project, please visit <http://sites.google.com/site/falleed>

— A Richards Built Home is located at 876 Tanager Street, Incline Village. For information, call 775-831-6126.

