

# The ultimate in man caves

Remodel project with lounge, home gym, media room wins annual HOBI award

By Allison Brophy Champion

A longstanding Greenwich construction firm recently won a double heap of industry accolades for its creation of the ultimate man cave in a previously award-winning residence in Darien.

Hemingway Construction received the prestigious 2012 Home Building Industry Award of Excellence for Best Lower Level Remodel at the annual ceremony in November of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut.

The honor was bestowed for the local firm's transformation of an unfinished ground floor in a home it built in 2008 into a meticulously detailed media room, bar, billiards room, lounge, gym and more. That same home on Holly Lane in Darien won the HOBI Award that year for Best Spec Home (\$4 million to \$5 million price range) in Connecticut.

In undertaking the remodel, it was a priority to build an avid sports fan his own specially customized space below a first-floor family room occupied by children, said Hemingway Construction President Peter Sciarretta.

"This place to retreat is equipped with a full bar and Kegerator, billiards table, barreled ceiling wine cellar, wine-tasting area, gas fireplace, ceiling beams, bookcases and gym," he said. "The entire space is made to entertain, but is built with the warmth of a gentleman's quarters."

The hard cost per square foot of the rehab was \$460 and included spray foam insulation for the



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Hemingway Construction has received a prestigious award for this renovation, resulting in a true "gentleman's quarters."

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# Gentleman's quarters' gains honor

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entire lower level to soundproof the area from the rest of the home. The walls in every room were plaster finished.

The media room for sports-viewing enjoyment in the expansive man cave features a wall of Apple TV screens capable of airing as many as five different games, in addition to audio automation equipment, wall-mount touch screens, an eight-zone amplifier, a multi-tuner and a 16-disk port. Recessed down lights in the media room complement antique heart pine exposed ceiling beams and rugged custom shelving.

A wine cellar on this lower level provides all-heart redwood pine racks for 1,070 bottles, racks for individual or large bottle display, curve bottle display cabinets, a cooling and climate control system, and limestone flooring.

In addition, a wine room offers stunning vaulted ceilings with herringbone mosaics in golden walnut, a limestone fireplace, old glass ceiling lanterns with dark brass, ironware light fixtures from Australia and antique heart pine exposed ceiling beams.

A well-equipped bar offers an under-counter draft beer chiller/dispenser, an ice maker and a stainless steel dishwasher.

The billiards room is both warm and elegant with its exposed ceiling beams, paneling and white oak planks similar to features contained in the lounge. Continue along to enjoy a gallery space offering bronze sconces in brushed silver brass and recessed down lights with custom finish reflector for proper artwork viewing. The man cave powder room has a polished hexagon border with boneyard brick inlays and elegant door hardware.

In the gym are two walls of mirrors and ample cabinets, while an additional craft room provides seven-foot cabinets with glass doors and a gift-wrapping station with wooden counter top.

Sciarretta said the project



**Top:** Decorative lighting illuminates the all-heart redwood pine detail, as featured in the staircase and the exposed-beam ceiling. **Bottom:** xxxx

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was accomplished using creative methods and the highest standards of construction, and it shows, as recently acknowledged at the 19th annual HOBI Awards attended by 700 industry professionals.

The HOBI Awards represent the best in the Connecticut housing industry, recognizing excellence in new construction, land development, remodeling, sales and marketing, and home financing with winners selected by a panel of expert judges, according to [www.hobiawards.com](http://www.hobiawards.com).

The housing industry is back in Greenwich in a big way, noted Joanne Carroll with JMC Resources, producer and chairman

of the awards program.

"After six years of negative news, isn't it great to hear housing is now the bright spot in the economy? And we are! Housing is on the rebound," she said at the November ceremony, according to [hobiawards.com](http://hobiawards.com).

Salvatore Sciarretta, Peter's father, started Hemingway Construction in Greenwich in 1972 after spending his childhood in Minturno, Italy. The homegrown business remains in the family, producing quality projects throughout the area.

For information on Sciarretta or Hemingway Construction, call 203-625-0566 or log onto [www.hemingwayconstruction.com](http://www.hemingwayconstruction.com)

## THE LIST

### HIGHEST FOR SALE

#### GREENWICH

- 11 Langhorne Lane: **\$20 million**
- 41 Alpine Road: **\$19 million**
- 44 Mooreland Road: **\$17.2 million**
- 11 Hurlingham Drive: **\$16.3 million**
- 190 North Street: **\$14.8 million**
- 50 Lafrentz Road: **\$13.9 million**
- 88 Conyers Farm Drive: **\$13.5 million**
- 16 Hurlingham Drive: **\$13 million**
- 76 Winding Lane: **\$12.8 million**
- (tie) 5 Old Round Hill Lane: **\$12.8 million**
- 38 Round Hill Road: **\$12 million**
- 39 Vista Drive: **\$11.9 million**
- 69 Dingtletown Road: **\$11.8 million**
- (tie) 32 Lower Cross Road: **\$11.8 million**
- 12 Meadowcroft Lane: **\$11.6 million**
- 38 Parsonage Road: **\$11 million**
- 131 Old Mill Road: **\$9.8 million**
- (tie) 309 Taconic Road: **\$9.8 million**
- 44 Close Road: **\$9.5 million**
- (tie) 41 Meadowbank Road: **\$9.5 million**
- 45 Farwell Lane: **\$9.2 million**
- 35 Andrews Farm Road: **\$9 million**
- (tie) 31 Vista Drive: **\$9 million**
- (tie) 895 Lake Ave.: **\$9 million**
- 55 Burying Hill Road: **\$8.8 million**
- 516 North St.: **\$8.5 million**
- 47 Round Hill Road: **\$8.2 million**

Source: Town records and [ct.blockshopper.com](http://ct.blockshopper.com)

## SOUND OFF

**Q:** What is the best approach to pricing my home?

**A:** Pricing is the most important factor in getting a home sold. Overpricing will generate less money in your pocket because today's buyers are well-informed regarding value and will not look at homes that they perceive to be overpriced. A better approach is to be right on the number, which will generate traffic and offers.

Pricing a home correctly is a multifaceted approach. I look at comparable homes as close as possible to your home that sold recently and make adjustments for the differences. Another way of looking at current market value is to look at the statistics: look at how the market has changed since the current owners bought it and take into consideration the improvements they have made. Looking at prices per square foot and based on assessed value sometimes helps, depending on condition. The bottom line is to be extremely well-informed about all these factors that influence the market value of your home at any given time.



Fortunately, the market in Greenwich has been stable for a while now and we see improvement in the number of transactions and a shorter market time. Recently, I have been involved in several multiple offers, full-price and over-asking sales situations, which is something we have not seen for several years. Inventory is low in certain price points and buyers are aware and making offers accordingly. It's making our market vibrant again!

— Marianne Broekmeijer, William Raveis Real Estate, Greenwich, 203-913-6068

## MARKET WATCH

Neighborhood	% for sale	Median sale price	# of sales
Belle Haven	2.86%	\$4,525,000	17
Byram	1.63%	\$500,000	35
Cos Cob	0.89%	\$856,000	76
Downtown	1.97%	\$925,000	66
Glenville	1.2%	\$634,508	22
Mianus	0.98%	\$1,237,500	14
North Greenwich	4.99%	\$1,700,000	43
Old Greenwich	1.98%	\$1,327,500	108
Pemberwick	1.19%	\$542,500	37
Riverside	1.7%	\$1,600,000	121

Source: Town records, Move.Inc and [ct.blockshopper.com](http://ct.blockshopper.com). Data tracks the last 12 months.

## AGENT PROFILES



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

This six-bedroom home in Greenwich was recently sold by Kim Gershuny for \$5 million.

### Kim Gershuny, William Raveis Real Estate

Kim Gershuny grew up in the Westlake area of Valhalla in New York. She moved to Greenwich in 2000, where she lives with her husband and Petite Bassett Griffon Vendeen.

"This is a very fancy name for a very happy French hound" Gershuny said.

Her family includes three grown stepsons and four grandchildren. She became involved in real estate four years ago and became a Realtor after being out of the retail and marketing world for several years.

"I am involved in all areas of residential real estate in Greenwich and Old Greenwich," Gershuny said. "It is important in real estate to keep your radar open and gather information to pass along to your clients who are very savvy due to the varied and available technology."

In her spare time she enjoys cooking and gardening. She is also a big fan of the New York Rangers and loves to watch games when not working with clients.

**Lives:** Greenwich  
**Office:** Greenwich  
**Expertise:** Residential

**Contact:** 203-561-7107 or [kim.gershuny@raveis.com](mailto:kim.gershuny@raveis.com)

**Last sale:** A six bedroom, seven full and three half-bath home located in Greenwich. It sold for \$5 million.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alison Farn-Leigh placed renters in this five bedroom home in Old Greenwich for \$9,700.

### Alison Farn-Leigh, William Raveis Real Estate

Alison Farn-Leigh is a Greenwich native who lives in Old Greenwich with her husband and three daughters.

"Whether working with a developer or a young family looking to move to town, I believe my success is based on my ability to understand the needs of my clients," Farn-Leigh said.

Prior to real estate, she was the owner/operator of a luxury cosmetic distribution company for 22 years. Farn-Leigh is currently working with a dynamic investment group that is developing residential real estate on the eastern end of Greenwich.

"We constantly evaluate properties and make decisions to develop them as if we were doing the project for ourselves," Farn-Leigh said. "We all have a sense of responsibility to the community in which we live as well as a strong understanding of and appreciation for it."

When not working in real estate she enjoys traveling with her family, skiing and all things aquatic.

**Lives:** Old Greenwich  
**Office:** Old Greenwich  
**Expertise:** Working closely with clients to understand their specific needs

**Contact:** 203-667-7832 or [alison.farn-leigh@raveis.com](mailto:alison.farn-leigh@raveis.com)

**Last transaction:** A five-bedroom, three-bath home located in Old Greenwich. It is currently being rented for \$9,700 per month.

