

IDAHO STATE JOURNAL

NEIGHBORHOOD
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West Side noted for best old homes

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POCATELLO — Standing in her living room, Kathy Morter points to her intricately laid wooden floor.

Morter, who lives at 907 W. Center St., said her living room floor used to be carpeted. The

ONLINE

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wood was installed after her husband, Glenn Harvey, moved into their home about 22 years ago.

Such rehabilitation projects are

commonplace among the homeowners in the historic neighborhood in which Morter lives, and

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they haven't gone unnoticed. In fact, the Gate City's West Side was recently recognized by This Old House magazine as one of the 51 best old neighborhoods in the U.S. and Canada.

This Old House, which focuses on home improvement and remodeling, based its selections on architectural diversity, craftsmanship of the homes and the preservation efforts in the area, among other criteria. The publication selected one historic neighborhood for each U.S. state and Canada.

Other restorations to Morter's home were done on her porch. For example, she and Harvey re-installed three columns that formerly

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— JONI BATEMAN, RESIDENT

stood in the corner of her porch. She said the house had the columns when it was built during the early 1900s, but adds that those distinctive structures were later removed and replaced with one metal column.

"They had one metal column that went down from the roof to the floor," she said, "and it really looked ugly."

Harvey has been involved in multiple West Side neighborhood rehabilitation projects, but nowhere has his work done more to bring

back the past than in his own home.

"When Glenn first saw this, he knew the moment he walked in that he wanted it," Morter said. "He saw what it could look like if he returned it to its original (design)."

Other criteria that This Old House used to select its best old neighborhoods included walkability, safety and community.

Joni Bateman, who lives at 856 W. Center St., notices the differences between West Side and

some of the other neighborhoods in Pocatello. She moved to her home in West Pocatello about five years ago after spending about 14 years on the east side of town.

"It's like being in an absolutely different part of town," she said. "We love being within walking distances of Old Town. It's very diverse, and we often have neighborhood parties during the summer."

While preservation efforts have succeeded in sustaining original architecture, Bateman believe the houses in West Pocatello have even more durability than some of the new homes being built throughout the city.

"All the homes built before the 1950s had solid wood floors," she said. "They're very solidly built with craftsmanship."