

# Architecture changes the skyline

BY SCOTT HENSON  
Staff Reporter

Above Filmore Street, along its skyline of trees and older houses, stands an angular, three-story apartment complex with a gray-tiled facade, terraces confined by bright orange and yellow guard rails and a dramatic outdoor lighting scheme for nighttime viewing.

This property is among a few of the recent, more contemporary additions to Kirksville's landscape, designed and built by a local, family-owned company called Wagner Enterprises. To stand apart from local architecture, the Wagners have decided to bring metropolitan, European design ideas from their travels across the Atlantic to Kirksville's rural setting.

Lynn and Jim Wagner began Wagner Enterprises in 1985 when they rented out two apartments above a clothing store they formerly owned on Washington Street. Since then, Lynn said, they've moved on to renting out more apartments, and seven years ago, the company started designing and building a new property every year.

Nolyn Wagner, Lynn's son and Wagner Enterprises' self-taught project designer, said the first structure his parents asked him to design for them was "basically a box" in terms of style — similar to many of the buildings found in Kirksville at the time. His "outside of the box" design took shape about six years ago when his parents allowed him creative freedom with the

company's building plans.

When he began following his vision to design each subsequent building, he said the positive feedback he's received from his market, a majority of which consists of Truman students, has encouraged him to take these concepts even further throughout the years.

"I've always been the type of person who's wanted to do something different," Nolyn said. "When I saw positive response ... It makes me want to do something more eye-catching — whether it be with colors or lights. I've got so many ideas in my head right now for up-and-coming buildings that sometimes I feel they maybe even too over-the-top for right now, for where we're at in time and in a rural community."

The end-goal of his design work, he said, is re-thinking what he calls the "box-with-a-peaked-roof" design to build homes that aren't readily identifiable as homes at all.

"If I can get it to a point where a person comes up to a place and says, 'This is where I live,' and [others] are kind of set back like, 'Well, that's not a house,' then I think I've accomplished what I wanted to accomplish," Nolyn said.

Many of Nolyn's designs are influenced heavily by modern European architecture, he said, especially what he finds in Iceland. He and his wife, an Iceland native, visit the country at least once a year. The vivid colors frequently used in Icelandic home designs, for example, can be found on many of the Wagners' properties, including the facade of bright red panels facing the corner of Wabash and Michigan streets on Wagner Enterprise's most recently completed duplex.

Nolyn said gathering ideas like these and remembering them requires frequent

travel within the U.S. and across the Atlantic and a lot of photography.

"My wife does get a little sick of that sometimes," he said. "She's wanting pictures of us [on vacation], and I'm taking pictures of architecture."

Lynn said that while Nolyn has only been able to develop his design ideas during the past few years, his taste for architectural ingenuity began at an early age.

"When Nolyn was a little boy, his favorite toy was Legos," Lynn said. "The patterns or designs you would normally make, he'd never pay attention to those. He would just build and build and build."

A few of the designs Nolyn has presented to his family have been filed away for later consideration because Lynn said while they might be appropriate in urban centers like Chicago, they are too metropolitan for Kirksville's more rural, aesthetically conservative tastes. She also said a few designs, which draw inspiration from southern Spain and the southern United States, would not be suitable for Kirksville's snowy weather.

"Some of the things we pull from the Houston area and southern parts of even our own country, it doesn't work because of our heavy amounts of snow," she said. "Some things that we'd like to use, we're just a little concerned about what kinds of products are we going to use that works within the elements."

Nolyn said pushing the envelope also can push the company's budget. To fulfill Nolyn's vision, which often involves expensive glass accents, exotic woods and hand-

made trim, the family either hand-makes their interior fixtures, has items that aren't locally available shipped to them, or travels to Ikea stores in Chicago and Houston to make purchases.

Expenses like these are reflected in the rental price for the some of the properties. Senior Elizabeth Brewster said she pays \$325 a month, while her roommate, a dog owner, pays \$360 for their apartment on Filmore Street. Brewster said that while she sometimes thinks she's paying too much for a space that is only 750 square feet, finishes like hardwood floors and modern Ikea fixtures make their rent payments worthwhile.

Brewster, who hails from Kansas City, also said living on the top floor of a high-rise apartment in Kirksville makes her feel connected to the metropolitan environment from which she came.

"It's like home," she said. "It's like something you could find in Kansas City."

Changing the architectural landscape of Nolyn's hometown has been rewarding for him, he said, and the reactions of Kirksville residents, both good and bad, has shown him people are starting to think twice about what a home can look like.

"I love hearing people say, 'Man, that's just so cool,' or 'It's different,'" he said. "I even get a thrill when people say they don't care for it just because it's not everybody's cup of tea and I don't expect it to be, but it made them look for just that moment in time."

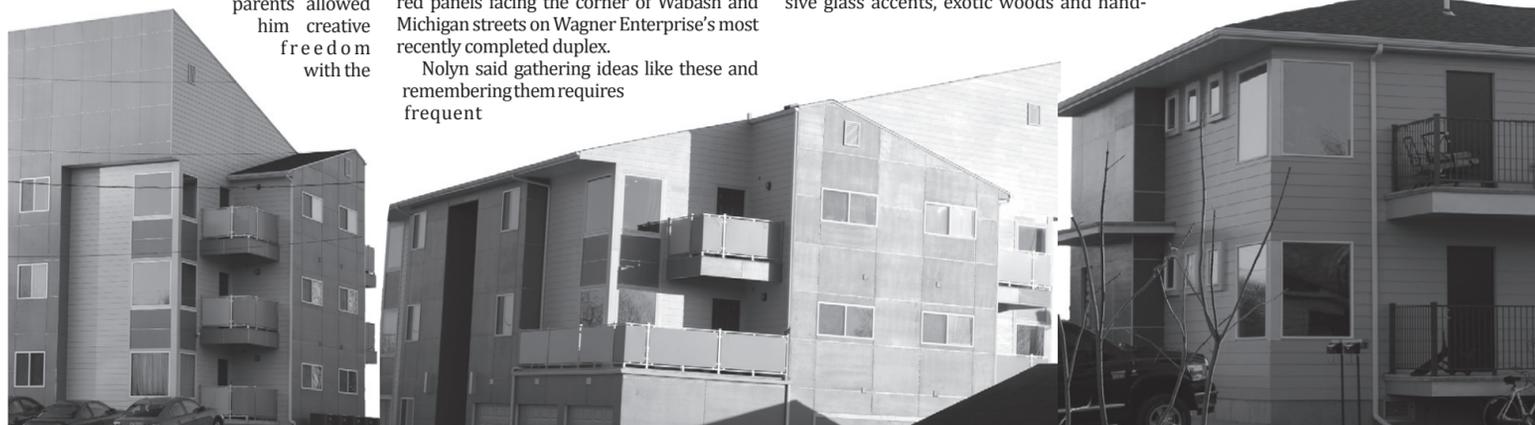


Photo illustration Sonny Phan/Index

Wagner Enterprises, a local, family-owned company, modernizes Kirksville's look with contemporary building designs, such as the apartments above.

# Friendship is more than clicking accept



BY KATHLEEN BARBOSA  
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Do you want to be my friend? With my Facebook friend count reaching more than 1,550, I think it is fair to say I have tons of people I call friends. And I'm looking for more. I mean, why not? Being a friend is simple, I keep up a "friendship" with more than 1,500 people online alone, so I definitely can manage a few hundred more. Just kidding.

Simply clicking "accept" does not make these people my friends. If we are friends, what does that even mean?

In kindergarten, a friend was someone who you parked your mat

next to during naptime. In middle school, a friend was the one person who was more awkward than you. And in high school, a friend was anyone who hated the same people you hated.

A friend is noun meaning "a person who knows, likes and trusts" or "an acquaintance" according to Webster dictionary. If that's all it takes to be a friend, I gladly will be anyone and everyone's friend. Why not? Being a friend today doesn't mean anything. You virtually can know nothing about someone and still be their friend. After all, we have Facebook to remind us when our friends' birthdays are, who they're dating and how we know them.

Friendship should be more important than that. To me, friendship should be the most important relationship in our lives. Friendships outlast romantic relationships, and unlike family, we choose to associate ourselves with the people we call friends. But the lasting friendships don't and shouldn't come easy. True friendship takes work, and the fact that we dilute this relationship down to a digital

confirmation is sad.

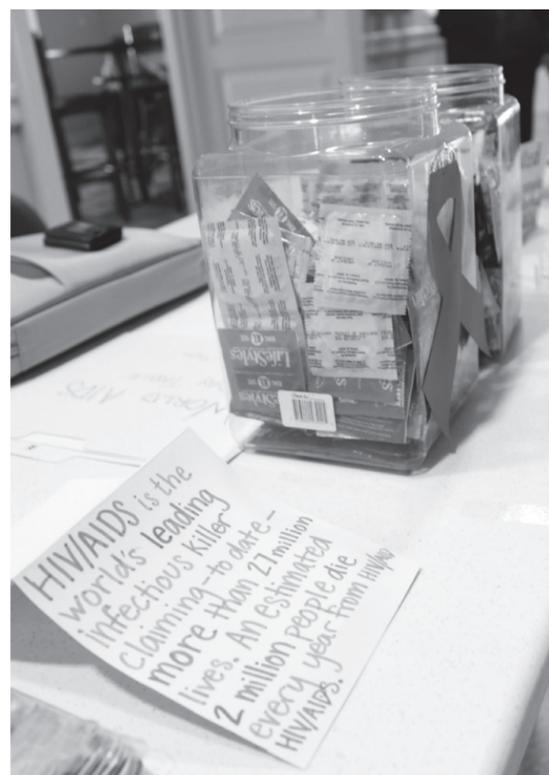
So maybe every one of my Facebook friends isn't a true friend. But then what makes a friend?

A friend is someone like Alice Villahermosa. Alice is a family friend who passed away last week, and while attending her funeral during Thanksgiving break, I saw dozens of her friends drop a pink flower in a vase before the funeral began. These people were not related to her but they were joined in a bond stronger than family. These people were touched by Alice and kept a lifelong bond with this woman through her 80 years. That takes a tremendous amount of work, but I am willing to bet if you ask any of them, it was worth it.

That being said, it is unrealistic to be this good of a friend to everyone. We simply aren't made to be lifelong friends with everyone, and we won't stay in touch with everyone in our graduating class forever.

So while I am not completely sure what a friend is, I'd like to be yours, but think carefully about the commitment you are about to make before you send the request.

## World AIDS Day Dec. 1



Lindsey Borgna/Index

Students from the Nursing Student Association offered free condoms in the SUB on Tuesday. The table was set up to raise AIDS awareness and the number of deaths the syndrome causes.

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