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President's Message

While we're on the road to economic recovery, we've got some important issues to deal with along the way. Although Americans overwhelmingly oppose any action by Congress to tamper with the mortgage

interest deduction, it is very likely to come under fire as Congress and the Administration move forward with the important task of deficit reduction.

Curtailing or eliminating these deductions would constitute a tax increase on home owning families, particularly those with children, as well as younger households who rely more on mortgage debt as a share of household income to achieve homeownership. NAHB is committed to working with Congress on this important issue.

Financing is the lifeblood of the construction industry. NAHB has compiled resources to help members find acquisition, development, and construction (AD&C) financing and ways to work out financing problems with their lender, along with other useful information to help address the credit crunch. The association continues to reach out to banks, regulators, Washington policymakers and the media to improve the availability of credit for homebuilders.

At the state level, staff are combing through the Governor's housing policy work group report released this week. It's 150 pages. The HBA government affairs committee is developing its list of 2011 recommendations for legislators and regulatory agencies. We'll be gathering together on April 6 for Building Industry Day at the Capitol to speak with legislators and provide them with resources to make sound decisions on housing issues.

We are the voice of the building industry. It's important for all of us to participate in this endeavor. I am asking anyone that can make it to join us at the Capitol. What happens at the state level affects our industry and can help or hinder your business.

At the local level, Jim Williams of TF Buxton has taken on the task of developing a well-rounded and informative program for our monthly membership meetings. Thanks to our sponsor, Kleer Trimboard, we'll be bringing you marketing guru Jay Singer of Neopost USA on January 26 to help you position your company for the 2011 market. We'll have experts answer your legal questions and help you manage client expectations in upcoming months.

I hope to see everyone at the BAEC Home Show at Mohegan Sun January 22 and 23. Each member company is entitled to two free passes, which you can pick up from Dy at the WILL CALL table. You can also download two-for-one passes off the website to give to your staff, family and clients. This is the greatest show on earth and you won't want to miss it!! This is the one show that The Greensulators are always sure to exhibit at. We have always done very well at this show.

If you're not exhibiting, put in some time at the BAEC booth, where home owners visit to locate resources and get answers to their home buying and home improvement questions.

Your 2011 BAEC Member Directory is at the printers and we'll be distributing them at the next general membership meeting. Additional copies can be purchased for \$5.00 each. Carry the directory with you. Do business with a member and refer your customers to fellow members for products and services.

Working together, we can improve our chances to survive the housing downturn and emerge stronger and more resilient than ever. I will bring my commitment to the industry, and to you, the members, to work productively within the HBA federation to find solutions that will put us back on the road to recovery and prosperity.

Warm Regards,

Chad J. Whitcomb The Greensulators Inc. BAEC President

Are You Aware of NAHB's Technical Assist Hotline?

The Technical Assist Hotline is a great resource for NAHB members who have questions regarding building products, techniques, technologies and best



practices. NAHB and the NAHB Research Center have teamed up to provide this outstanding free service that is designed to assist NAHB's builder, remodeler and trade contractor members with hands-on construction issues.

Members can call 888-NAHB-MEM (888-624-2636) from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM EST, Monday through Friday. Alternatively, questions can be submitted online at www.nahbrc.com/techassist.

Technical experts will respond to calls and online hotline inquiries by the next business day. Callers simply provide a specific question, HBA/NAHB affiliation, and contact information in their message. The Technical Assist Hotline is just one more way that NAHB membership pays for itself, so spread the word and make sure to take advantage of it!



Do you qualify your homes for the ENERGY STAR label?

Version 3 of the ENERGY STAR New Homes Program contains some big changes. If you're a home energy rater, HERS provider, builder, or trade contractor (especially HVAC and insulation) who works on ENERGY STAR homes, you need to be aware of what's coming:

- Lower HERS Index
- 4 checklists instead of 1
- Grade I insulation installation
- Mechanical ventilation

2011 is a transition year as Version 2.5 implements some but not all of the changes.



You're Invited! Home & Better Living Show January 22 & 23, 2011

Pick up your BAEC Member pass from Dy's Will Call table and visit www.baechomeshow.com for additional Two-For-One Coupons to share with your staff and families.

Leverage the value of your trade associates

Now is the best time to improve your trade relationships so they can do more for you and your business.

There are ten pitfalls that lead to ineffective trade relationships. Once you understand these problem areas, you can make your best trades prefer to work with your company first, on time and under budget, guaranteed! This will shorten your work week and increase your profits.

Here are the top 10 trade associate priorities in working with home builders and remodelers, based on discussions with thousands of contractors:

- 1. Finding good builders who will pay on time.
- 2. No work nights, weekends, and holidays
- 3. All change orders in writing
- 4. Clear and concise plans and specifications
- Job sites that are always ready when they arrive to work
- 6. Scheduling issues (they have families too!)
- 7. Skilled labor, which is getting harder to find
- 8. Communication skills, in both directions
- Finding good builders who share their values as it relates to quality and customer satisfaction
- 10. Finding good builders who will pay on time.

Until the market returns, you will be inundated with calls from trade contractors who are looking for work. Most of these are not the great contractors, so be wary of these calls.

Rather than jump at their low prices and offers for impeccable service, spend this valuable time with your proven, trusted craftsmen who have been with you through the good and the bad times and delegate as much as possible to them. They're looking for ways to add value to their relationship with you.

TO DO BUSINESS WITH A MEMBER!

Give the Gift of Knowledge to the BAEC Membership

We're planning to bring a season of outstanding speakers for our monthly membership meetings. Help us make our meetings a success. Sponsor a speaker! Call the BAEC office to get our wish of industry experts!

Thank you, Jim Williams, T. F. Buxton, Networking Committee Chair



Education and Training



Free Webinar to Explore How to Respond to Evolving Buyer Expectations Since the Downturn

A recent survey on home design trends by the American Institute of Architects indicates that buyers will not be seeking the same product mix that builders have previously offered.

To help builders discern what today's buyers want, NAHB's Business Management and Information Technology Committee and Builder Magazine are presenting a free webinar, "New Horizons: Design Trends and Market Trends," from 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 3.

During the webinar, panelists will discuss the effects of the recent downturn on buyer expectations and demands. They also will provide insight into consumer buying trends and how they are evolving.

Attendees will learn how these trends can affect their market and product mix and get pointers on how to stay ahead of consumer trends rather than constantly react and play catch-up.

The webinar is the last of a four-part series, "New Horizons Webinars: Setting a Course for Success in the New Market," which began in September.

For more information and to register, visit www.nahb.org/newhorizons; or e-mail Marcia Childs at NAHB, or call 800-368-5242 x8388, or Agustín Cruz, x8472. The New Horizons webinar series is sponsored by Simonton Windows and Therma-Tru Doors.

Concerned About Lead Paint Rule Liability? Use These Resources

NAHB is providing online resources for remodelers who are concerned about how their businesses will be affected by new requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Lead: Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule and how to best protect themselves from possible legal prosecution and exposure to potential lawsuits. Remodelers can ensure that they are properly instituting the requirements of the rule and protecting their business by knowing the liability issues and the best ways to address them. An extensive list of frequently-asked questions that is posted on NAHB's website provides this information.

One of the major liabilities may rest with the remodeler's contract, which will need to be updated to reflect the rule requirements. To help with this, the NAHB legal team has developed members-only template contract language that can be used for this purpose. Remodelers should also consult with an experienced local attorney for assistance in drafting contracts, because some states vary in their lead regulation and other legal requirements. For more information on the lead rule, visit www.nahb.org/leadpaint; or contact Matt Watkins at 800-368-5242, x8327. For information on legal and liability concerns, contact Amy Chai at x8232.

Green Builder® College Announces FREE Continuing Education Courses Now is your opportunity to earn CEU's online—and for FREE! Simply go to www.greenbuildercollege.com and click on Continuing Education

Not So Big House Essentials



Sarah Susanka provides a succinct analysis of the "not so big" approach to home design that can enrich the under-

standing of all residential building professionals. At the end of this course, you will understand:

- How a "not so big" house fits the way people truly live.
- Why Cultural Creatives represent one of the largest U.S. housing markets, and what these individuals are looking for in a home.
- How space, light and order serve as the building blocks of effective architectural design
- The impact of building better, not bigger!

Practical Green Building



With a contagious sense of passion and unparalleled candor, Peter L. Pfeiffer, FAIA, takes us to the heart of the building science principles that inform good design for green homes in hot, humid climates.

At the end of this course, you will understand:

- What the End of Oil means for homebuilding
- How to execute sound, elegantly simple, design strategies using available materials
- How air and water dictate good design
- How to communicate the big picture, not just the latest trend, to clients

Greening the Interior



Patricia Gaylor brings over 15 years of green interior design savvy to the table, helping us sort out the differences between the green, and not-so-green,

interior design choices that must be made to complete a sustainable home. At the end of this course, you will understand:

- How to better articulate green issues to building owners
- Which products, appliances and fixtures have an impact on indoor environmental quality
- What materials to look for when considering resource efficiency
- Why the Energy Star and Water Sense programs matter
- How to differentiate your green project from the competition's

SCHEDULING THAT PUTS FAMILY FIRST By Richard T. Pagotto, CGR, CGB

When we're asked to list our priorities in life, why do we always say, "My family comes first," if we don't mean it? If we started our own business with an eye toward dictating our schedule rather than having a schedule imposed upon us, why has that goal been untenable? Why do we feel like titles such as 'Custom Builder' mean 'to give up one's life for our customers'?

These conditions are no longer acceptable in these difficult times. We need to work smarter, not longer and harder. This can be done, and you can actually enjoy the process and create more free time for you and your family faster and easier than you might imagine.

Involve your family in your plan

Putting your family first requires planning. Here are some questions to ask yourself: When was the last time you took a mental health day? Do you have your next one scheduled? If you don't plan it, you won't take it.

Do you have a written list of your life priorities? If you do, have you shared it with anyone? Does it reflect input from your family? If it doesn't, it needs to. They must be a part of this planning process.

Good intentions won't work when planned in a vacuum. Your spouse, your family, your boss, or your partner will always appreciate the openness and consideration you extend to them when planning most anything.

Put it in writing

Getting back to your scheduling problems between home and work, you can implement some quick and easy changes that will put you on the right path starting today. This system will not require an influx of money nor will it require any additional time on your part. You will actually create a shorter work week and see a marked increase in your bottom line profits almost overnight.

To start the process to a better life, both in the office and out, prepare a simple calendar. The trick is to fill in the most important dates first. These dates will include all of the activities for your family — vacations, holidays, PTA meetings, church meetings, HBA meetings, date nights, conferences and conventions — and make sure you add a few 'do-nothing' days as well.

Once these priorities are filled in, the remaining days are the ones during which you must work intelligently, thoughtfully, and efficiently at your real job. Keep in mind, the question of what to do with all your new free time is an easy one to answer. The hard question is how you can develop more free time on a regular, planned basis.

You can put this information in an electronic form as well, but don't skip the paper desk calendar. The reason is that your children can write on it, too. Let's say you have a 5-year-old daughter who wants to make absolutely, positively sure you remember her ballet recital. She knows she can walk into your office any time and write it in bright orange highlighter if she pleases. Some of my calendars are so colorful, I have framed them.

Manage distractions

To manage your time better, you must learn to prioritize your activities. When you are at work, *work!*

Don't fall victim to the dangerous distractions of e-mail, texting or Web browsing, unless it pertains to the job at hand. Multi-tasking compromises your focus on each task and leaves you with diminishing returns, and ultimately, wasted time.

Let everyone know you only check e-mail on your lunch break, or whenever you prefer to set that time aside. Do not check them every time you hear that incessant bell ring. If it's important, they will call you. While there are many benefits to e-mail, I would urge you to recognize that talking on the phone can often be more efficient and a preferred mode of communication. It is more personal, more constructive, and it actually takes less time to accomplish your task.

Also, make a daily to-do list and focus on it. Don't let others distract you from this goal (this goes for your superiors, too). Once everyone learns your modus operandi, they will respect your time and abide by your wishes. In a perfect world, they will soon see how your way is the right way, especially when they start seeing less of you around the office! Make that list every day and stick to it.

Set boundaries

Here's the next gold nugget. Stop working nights and weekends. Easier said than done, you say? I beg to differ.

I wouldn't suggest going cold turkey next weekend, but January historically is one of the slowest months of the year for our business. This is the perfect time to live on the edge and find out if the company will truly go belly up if you go to your child's entire soccer game on a Saturday morning.

Imagine your shock and surprise when you return to work Monday and find out that very important work is still on your desk waiting for you — and the world hasn't ended.

Once everyone agrees on the goal, the path to get there becomes so much easier. Everyone can help one another to achieve their goals when they are clear and concise. Make sure you write them down and each family member contributes. Use a white board and keep it where it can be seen on a daily basis. Allow changes to the plan, but only after a family at which discussions are encouraged and decisions are made as a family by a resounding and unanimous vote of approval.

The greater purpose

You must set an example to others around you. You must 'walk the talk.' In the beginning, you will be in the minority.

Your staff might enjoy Saturday morning catch-ups in the office, but I believe they would all rather be somewhere else. Get off that band wagon. Focusing on relationships and strengthening those relationships is critical. Work can, and should, be fun, but bear in mind the oft' repeated phrase, "In the final days of one's life, no man or woman has ever said, 'I should have spent more time at the office.'"

My advice to you: Love your work, but please love your family more. Once you understand this simple lesson in life everything is possible. As we start this process to improve our lives' today, remember what Walt Disney once said, "All our dreams can come true...if we have the courage to pursue them."

Weak Housing Market Reflected in Kitchen and Bath Design Trends

Even with downsizing, households place priority on sustainability and accessibility by Kermit Baker, PhD, Hon. AIA, AIA Chief Economist

Current kitchen and baths designs stress efficiency and simplicity, as these areas of the home are being somewhat downsized in the face of continued weakness in the housing market. In spite of more pressure on space, residential architects report functions being added to kitchens—such as recycling centers and electronic recharge and storage areas—as kitchens remain the command center of the home. For both kitchens and baths, households are placing a premium on features and products that promote energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, and adaptability in the use of space as seniors and populations with home accessibility concerns are becoming a significant share of household growth.

These are some of the key finding of the AIA's Home Design Trends Survey for the fourth quarter of 2009. With a focus on kitchen and bath design trends, this effort surveyed residential architects on emerging developments they are observing in their work with builders, developers, and households looking to design or remodel their home.

Kitchens take on added functions

Although kitchens and bathrooms remain a central focus of homes, these areas too have been somewhat downsized recently as homes have become smaller and more efficient. Historically, home sizes have shrunk somewhat during economic recessions, but a consensus is emerging that over the coming decade new homes will be smaller on average than they were over the past decade. In the near future, home values are unlikely to see the rapid appreciation that they saw between 1995 and 2005, which was a primary reason that households were looking for bigger and more expensive homes.

As home sizes moderate, space is being used differently. According to the Home Design Trends Survey, 14% of surveyed residential architects reported that the number of food preparation and food storage areas in the home was increasing, while 19% saw them decreasing. This pattern was very similar for the size of kitchens: 14% reported gains while 18% reported declines. Just a year ago, a higher share of respondents felt that the number and size of kitchen areas were increasing than decreasing. Cumulatively, since the Home Design Trends Survey began in 2005, there has been a fairly significant reversal in the growth of kitchen areas in the home.

While space is at a premium in the kitchen as architects need to do more with less space, there are some functions that have retained their importance and others that have even increased in importance. Areas devoted to recycling are growing in popularity according to a majority of residential architects surveyed. Pantry areas, computer work stations, and areas devoted to recharging laptops, cell phones, and PDAs also remain very popular functions within the kitchen. As kitchens continue to be the focus of most homes, integrating the kitchen with family space remains a popular option, as does designing kitchens for accessibility and adaptability.

Sustainability remains a popular choice for products used in the kitchen. Renewable material countertops and flooring are still seen as increasing in popularity by a majority of respondents, with just a fraction seeing either of these products as decreasing in popularity. Drinking water filtration systems and natural wood cabinets are beginning to stabilize in terms of their popularity.

Bathrooms emphasize sustainability rather than glitz

Trends in the number and size of bathrooms in homes are similar to kitchen trends, although more respondents reported that both the number and size of baths is increasing. Just 17% of respondents reported that the number of bathrooms in homes was still increasing, while 8% saw a trend toward fewer bathrooms in homes. Percentages were similar for the size of bathrooms. Both the number and size of bathrooms saw peak growth rates in 2006 according to previous AIA surveys, with the pace slowing significantly over the past three years.

With bath sizes stabilizing in homes, there are fewer features being added. However, a majority of residential architects report that interest in radiant heated floors is increasing due to energy efficiency and comfort considerations. As with kitchen design, residential architects report that households remain interested in accessibility and adaptability in their bathrooms.

Energy efficiency, sustainability, and accessibility are also key themes in popular bathroom products. Water-saving toilets in general and dual flush toilets in particular are seen as increasing in popularity by a majority of architects surveyed. Along with light-emitting diode (LED) lighting, these three product lines are seen as increasing in popularity even as households are generally scaling back on their investment in housing. Doorless and no threshold showers, as well as hand showers, are bathroom products that promote accessibility and that are remaining popular according to residential architects. Other upscale bath products are not faring as well in this new cost-conscious housing environment. Both steam showers and towel warming drawers/racks are reported to be declining in popularity by about a third of respondents.

Older Workers Reinventing Themselves

mber of

Between 2008-2009 the number of self-employed older Americans rose by 5% among 55- to 64-year-olds, and entrepreneurs over the age of 65 increased by 29%. A number of causes seem to be at play. While the unemployment rate for workers 55+ is 7% (less than the national average of 9.9%), older workers tend to be out of work for longer periods. Another reason for the uptick in entrepreneurial activity in this group appears to come from a willingness to make sacrifices that will turn a passion into a way of life.

Page 6 The Straightedge



HBA of Connecticut News



Connecting the world to housing solutions









Building Science & Green Building Seminar

February 9, 2011, 8:30-4:30 Crowne Plaza Hotel 100 Berlin Road Cromwell, CT 06416

Breakfast & Lunch included

The Building Science and Green Building Seminar is designed to teach the fundamental principles which govern all high performance/green building standards and programs and is a perfect supplement to those building to the National Green Building Standard. Certified Green Professional (CGP) Designees will find it a valuable companion to their education.

We're able to offer a very low registration rate due to our generous supporting sponsors (breakfast and lunch included with your registration):

HBA MEMBER: \$30 NON-MEMBER: \$45 HBACT GREEN HOMES COUNCIL MEMBER: \$25

A link to the registration form is at www.hbact.org, or call the HBACT office at 860-216-5858.

Sponsored By













OSHA Withdraws Interim Fall Protection Guidelines

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has officially withdrawn its interim enforcement guidelines on fall protection for certain residential construction activities, effective as of June 16, 2011. The directive — "Plain Language Revision of OSHA Instruction STD 3.1, Interim Fall Protection Compliance Guidelines for Residential Construction"— was first issued in 1994, and ever since, it has caused significant confusion among home builders regarding what fall protection methods and systems must be used to comply with OSHA standards. This confusion has resulted in a less-safe work environment for employees on the building site, which is why NAHB and the OSHA Advisory Committee

on Construction Safety and Health supported the move to rescind the interim guidelines. Instead, NAHB successfully urged OSHA to follow the fall protection regulations in OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1926 Subpart M, which allow residential construction employers some flexibility in providing fall protection systems. We believe that this action will ultimately make it easier to understand what's necessary to achieve compliance, will ensure safer worksites, and will reduce the occurrence of costly accidents that can make home building more expensive.

Hike in Drywall Costs Expected to Hammer Builders

Major drywall providers reportedly have planned a 25% price increase for around this time. According to a report in Hanley-Wood's ProSales Online, a Nov. 3 announcement by USG Corp. of a price increase was followed by similar announcements by CertainTeed Corp., National Gypsum Co., Lafarge and Temple-Inland, Inc. USG, which reported \$297 million in profit in the boom year of 2006, sustained huge losses in 2010's first three quarters — including \$100 million in the third quarter — reflecting "continued weak market conditions and extraordinary low shipping volumes," said William C. Foote, the company's chairman and chief executive officer.

In 2009, production of drywall industry-wide was almost half that of 2006. USG said its third-quarter Sheetrock brand drywall price was \$114.45 per 1,000 square feet about 11.4 cents a square foot. In 2004, the price was \$132.50 per 1,000 square feet. According to NAHB, a 2,272-square-foot new home uses about 8,100 square feet of drywall for walls and ceilings, or about \$927 worth. An increase of 25% raises the retail material price to \$1,158. If you are already working at razor-thin margins, even \$200 more, multiplied by the number of houses built, can hurt. "Builders just cannot pass the additional cost on to home buyers," said NAHB economist Bernie Markstein, who noted that drywall producers had already tried to raise prices twice this year and rolled them back when demand eased. South New Jersey builder Bruce Paparone agreed, saying that his firm would "have to swallow hard" in the face of materials price increases. "There is very little room in our pricing today," Paparone said. "When we get our opportunities with a customer, we try to emphasize the huge differences in energy-efficiency, room sizes and kitchens of new homes vs. those built 15 years ago." Paparone said his chief competition is the resale market, which has more flexibility in pricing than new construction has.

Martha Stewart Goes Green



Martha Stewart Omnimedia (MSO) and KB Home (KBH) will launch a line of green homes. The announcement was made in conjunction with Builder magazine. The project is officially known as the "KB Home GreenHouse: An Idea Home Created with Martha Stewart."

The concept was unveiled ahead of the NAHB International Builders' Show. The homes are billed as operating on "netzero energy." KB Home said, "It is the company's first netzero energy home, meaning it is intended to produce more energy than it consumes over the span of a year." Stewart added, "We were happy to be a part of this project with KB Home. It allowed us to build on our already successful partnership by creating the ultimate 'green' home that is not only environmentally friendly, but also beautiful, functional and affordable." The residences have been labeled as a "Maximized Energy-Efficient Homes" by the U.S. Department of Energy.

The new houses will use solar panels and rain collection devices to be self-sustaining from an energy use standpoint. Prices for the homes will begin at about \$200,000.

Stewart's company needs a lift -- badly. The firm's shares trade at \$4.09, near their 52-week low. The company lost money in the third quarter due primarily to trouble in its broadcast division. KB Home is not much better off. Its stock traded at nearly \$80 five years ago. The housing and real estate slump have taken the price down to about \$12. The home builder recently released weak earnings and poor

There may be little demand for the new green homes. That is to a large extent because the housing market is so badly off. It may also be that buyers may be suspicious about whether a green home will really work, and whether the new technology operates as advertised.



"Even if you fall on your face, you're still moving forward."

-Victor Kiam



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has brought color to the BAEC world of news!

BAEC is the recognized source of quality building services and information. We build neighborhoods and improve the communities in which we live and work.

JANUARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



In 2011
With Sales Guru
Jay Singer
Of Neopost USA

January 26, 2011 5:30 PM Modesto's Restaurant



Join us for finger foods, cocktails, and information you can use in your business!

BAEC members \$20.00 (billings at \$25.00)
Non members \$30.00

Please register by Friday, January 21, 2011

Call 860.859.3518 for more information or to register!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 2011

Sat. 22nd

10:00 AM 9:00 PM

Living Show,
Mohegan Sun Arena

Sun. 23rd

10:00 AM 5:00 PM

Living Show,
Mohegan Sun Arena

Living Show,
Mohegan Sun Arena

Wed. 26th

5:30 PM

General Membership Mtg.

February 2011

Tues. 1st	6:00 PM	BAEC Board Meeting
Thur. 3rd	6:00 PM	HABCT Developers Council
Wed. 9th	8:30 AM	Building Science & Green
		Building Seminar, Cromwell
Fri. 11th	6:30 PM	HBA of New Haven presents
		"Bob Wiedenmann Jr. Roast"
		II Monticello, Meriden, CT
Thur. 10th	6:00 PM	Membership Comm. Mtg.
Wed. 23rd	5:30 PM	General Membership Mtg.

For more information visit our calendar at www.BAEC.net