

Oklahoma Builder

Oklahoma State Home
Builders Association



March/April 2011

OSHBA's

**Kimmi
Houston**

**Chairs the
2011 NAHB
PWB Committee**

**Introducing New
Leaders
and Winners**

**Builder Profile
Da Vinci Homes**



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**Oklahoma State Home
Builders Association**

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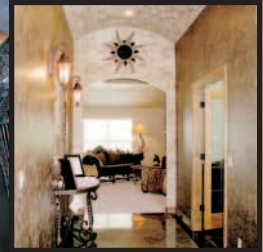
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President's First Word

Mike Herndon

Burning the Midnight Oil

Just a couple weeks as your new president and it's already been filled with travel, education and the hot seat of interview technique training. I just returned from Orlando and the Builders Conference, so now I'm burning the midnight oil to catch up, but it was well worth it.

IBS Recap

We covered about 500,000 sq. ft., filled with state-of-the-art, energy efficient products that any builder would love to work with and your clients would love to have in their homes. Vendors included the new Kohler products with a new ADA

Rising Wall bath. Its simplicity and comfort will certainly be a big splash. Trane also showed off a new state-of-the-art thermostat. And for those looking for tools that are easier to work with and less expensive, we found battery operated drills, rotary hammers, and even finish nailers that are state-of-the-art for the business. And again this year ... energy efficient products made a big showing with window u-values as low as 19 and retrofit lighting that uses less than 15 watts while producing 600 lumens. It's amazing how technology just keeps changing and creating more opportunity for builders to grow their business and still save the customer money.

My first mission, however, upon arrival Wednesday morning, was to survive an all day course called "Interviewing Skills." This was taught by Roy Heffley and Ramona Dubose. Both have years of experience in media. Roy produced national broadcasts for Peter Jennings and Sam Donaldson; he even worked with Ronald Reagan. Let me say it was a humbling experience. The good part was that I learned I wasn't the only Okie or southern drawler in the bunch. Jeffrey Smith from Tulsa was also there. I expected an all-day course and then maybe an interview, but instead we were immediately escorted to a private room with a camera where we were questioned about the latest hot home building issues. We were even cornered with questions such as "Who did you vote for in the last election?," "What about your PAC?" and even "Do Oklahoma builders have the politicians in their back pockets?" Oh, did I mention we were going to be critiqued on the interview responses? Even facial expressions! Overall, I didn't do too shabby. I came up with one or two pretty good answers, but Jeffrey Smith ... hey ... he has interview skills!

Hope all of you caught the first Monday Morning briefing. I gave a summary on what Dr. Crowe had to say and Oklahoma is looking good. All of the indicators are in place and I hope by the time you are reading this, customers are coming through the door.

Hope everyone knew about our OPWB and our associate councils accomplishments. Guys, keep up the good work! You sure make Oklahoma shine at these meetings. Be sure to read Barbara Franks' column in this magazine.

Our #1 Goal

Now about our number one goal for the year—Membership! How many of you local associations have made that list of all possible new members and how many have taken the time to personally invite each and every one? Come on! Let's make those contacts and let them know what we do and how much we need their participation.

Well, I do still have to have sleep and business does seem to require some of my time. So until next time, good luck and May God Bless. **OB**



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Associate's Council Chair Report

Casey Felix

Let Me Introduce Myself



My name is Casey Felix and I'll be serving as your Associates Council chairman for the upcoming 2011 year. I am honored to be serving with such a great group of individuals. Let me start off with a small introduction as to who I am and how I became involved within the industry.

Upon graduating from Oklahoma State University with a degree in finance and an option in commercial bank management, I began a career in lending. I currently serve as AVP, Small Business at Central National Bank in Enid, OK. Part of my role within the bank is to serve the homebuilders in our area with spec house financing. I began attending our local homebuilders association meetings several years ago and have served on their board of directors for the past four years. I also had the privilege of serving as the president of our local association this past year.

A couple of years ago, members of our local association suggested I get involved with the associates council on the state level. I agreed to give the chair a call and find out

what all was involved and see if there was anything I could help with. That was one of the best calls I have made. Not only have I had the chance to educate myself further on state and national issues within the industry, I have had the opportunity to meet wonderful people who I now call friends.

The Coming Year

This brings us to today and I am looking forward to the upcoming 2011 year. We start off with the annual IBS Convention in January, which helps us put into prospective what is on the horizon in the industry. Our state associates council has already gathered chairmen for our annual fundraisers and is looking forward to raising funds for scholarships. These funds are not only for our OSU and OU scholarship endowments, but also for our technology centers across the state. The associates council is here to help in any way we can, so I encourage you to contact your regional associate director if there is anything we can assist your association with. **OB**

President of OSHBA Women's Council

Barbara J. Franks

Off and Running



What an exciting year is ahead for OPWB! The installation banquet at the Skirvin was very nice and the first OPWB Special Recognition Award was given to a very deserving Kathy Kastner! She has been instrumental in helping us during our first year and we would not have been as successful without her. Thank you again, Kathy!

We are currently reviewing which continuing education classes need to be offered to OSHBA members. If there are any classes that you would like to see offered, please notify Mike Means immediately! We want to offer the classes you need.

Spring Events

Please start thinking about attending the Spring Board Meeting and our trip to the State Capitol. The date should be set soon (March-April). It is very important that we have a good turnout—our legislators need to know that we are concerned about our industry and we are active in the

political process. If you have never attended the Capitol portion or the meeting, this would be a great year to start. Mike Means always starts us off with a group meeting with a few state leaders giving us an update. Then OPWB plans to have information that will help you find your way around, know which topics you need to discuss with your own legislator and give information about our day. Please join us and we will make sure you feel comfortable with the process!

Congratulations!

Kimmi Houston was installed as the chair of the NAHB Professional Women in Building at IBS in January and made all Oklahomans very proud. Way to go Kimmi! I know she will do an excellent job and will lead us in the right direction.

Congratulations to Vanessa Shadix as she won Member of the Year from the NAHB-PWB! Also, I was nominated and won Member-At-Large of the Year. Looks like Oklahoma is continuing to add to its trophy chest!

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Kimmi Houston: A Nurturing Force

2011 chair wants to 'Pay it Forward.'

by Pat Curry

When members of the Central Oklahoma HB Professional Women in Building Council got word that hospice had been called in for Williamette (Willie) Norman, the council's last living charter member, they made a commitment to take dinner to her family every Wednesday.

The members of one of the nation's oldest councils thought their commitment would last for a few weeks. Instead, it lasted 14 months before Willie Norman passed away.

"She loved hearing about all the changes in the organization and that I would be national chair," says Kimmi Houston, of Edmond, council president in 2009.

That kind of commitment to a council member, to a client or friend comes naturally to Houston.

"I'm a friendly person," she says. "I'm from Oklahoma. We're a very friendly state. Members can just call me and talk to me about anything."

The only child of an oil field truck driver and a stay-at-home mom, Houston was born near Tulsa. In the seventh grade, her family moved to Yukon, OK. (She graduated from high school with country music superstar Garth Brooks and even sang with him!)

"We went through all the trials and tribulations of the oil fields when oil crashed back in the 1980s," she says. "The area just died. Our economy was fragile then as it is now, but we in Oklahoma have been through this before. And I

believe that we are a little more resilient. We do not have the severe meltdowns of the East and West Coast."

With a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Oklahoma, Houston went to work at Hertz corporate headquarters. Twenty years later, she earned a master's degree in management from the University of Central Oklahoma.

After working her way up to a senior position at Hertz, Houston began looking for another challenge. "That's just my personality," she says. "I'm a goal-seeker." It was 1994 and the housing market was doing well. Houston's husband, Kim, owned a drywall company. They decided to build a house.

"We got the lot, picked out the plans and right at the sheetrock stage, it sold," she says. "So we started a second one, got it past the sheetrock stage and it sold. I found I was passionate about it. I really enjoy making someone's dreams come true."

She obtained a line of credit to start Houston Homes. For the first two years, she kept her job at Hertz but realized she wasn't being fair to either her employer or her customers.

"I believe that if you are to do something, you must do it well and with everything you have," she says.

Like most homebuilders, Houston has had to adapt. Building houses is her passion, but while the new construction market is down, she's focusing on remodeling homes. In October, she obtained her Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) designation.

Left: Board members of the Professional Women in Building Council of the Oklahoma State Home Builders Association are, from left, Casey Felix of Enid, Mary Beth Smith of Edmond, new chairman Barbara Franks of Stillwater, Vanessa Shadix of Oklahoma City, Gina Cox of Oklahoma and Kimmi Houston of Edmond, immediate past president, who handed over the gavel as she has been elected to chair the national post.

'A Great Group of Ladies'

One of her early steps for growing her business was joining her local HBA. She stopped by the HBA office one day to turn in information about her Parade of Homes house when the board of directors of the Women's Council had just finished meeting.

"They were out in the hallway, getting ready to go into the general meeting and they asked me to stay for lunch," Houston recalls. "I knew several of them from the HBA ... I got involved from that."

Houston became interested in what the council did nationally. When she attended the International Builders' Show, she checked out its meetings.

"I needed the knowledge," she says. "I made a point to take information back to my council. I got a little more involved and soon (1995) was asked to become an area trustee. That's how I started on a national level."

From there, she became a regional trustee, and was elected vice chair last year.

Houston's local council has gained national recognition for its community service. It is involved in Habitat for Humanity's Women Build program. They also participate in a designer show house that raises money for the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, and hold style shows to raise money for scholarships and Build PAC.

Houston also has been instrumental in creating the new Oklahoma Professional Women in Building, a state council that focuses on education and legislation. The council provides all of the state's educational programs, including a business management course, Certified Aging in Place Specialist 1 and 2 courses, and the certified builder program.

The Value of Mentors

After more than 15 years in the homebuilding business, Houston has advice for women entering the industry. Being a woman "has no bearing," she says. "If you have it in you, if you have a passion for it, you can do it."

Houston credits three people who have helped her. Her husband, Kim, is "my biggest cheerleader and my biggest ally," she says.

When she started her business, she got invaluable assistance from a local builder, Jeff Justice. "He was a great

help to me and my husband in trying to get a grasp on building," she says.

She also credits Mike Means, Oklahoma State Home Builders Association executive officer, for mentoring her in the legislative arena.

The Year Ahead

Her year as national chair comes at a time when the housing industry is facing significant challenges. Last fall, the national leadership crafted a proposal "to get us through the rough times, and become stronger in the end," Houston says.

On March 1, dues increase from \$35 to \$50, the first increase in nearly 30 years. "That's only a little more than a dollar a month."

Her biggest goal for 2011 is increasing PWB's local, state and national legislative efforts.

"I'd love to see each ... person more active in legislative efforts," she says. "I encourage every PWB member to contribute to BuildPAC ... I think that voice and message is the heart and soul of the survival of our industry."

NAHB supports the mortgage interest tax deduction, which is being threatened legislatively.

"That deduction affects every family and every homeowner," she says. "If eliminated, it will take the value of being a homeowner away. For most of us, our home is our greatest wealth."

Her second priority is outreach and networking.

"That's what we're put in leadership for," she says. "I've been very fortunate as a leader to have very good rapport with my councils and regions. I want to be a resource."

"We have come a long way from when we were the women's auxiliary and then the Women's Council," she says. "Now we're Professional Women in Building. That says a lot. We are ... business professionals. We're a dominating force. We need to nurture who we are."

Willie Norman would be proud.

Georgia-based freelance writer Pat Curry is managing editor of Building Women.

*Reprinted with permission of Building Women Magazine (Winter 2011 issue), a quarterly publication of the NAHB Professional Women in Building Council. **OB***

OPWB WOMEN'S COUNCIL

Continued from page 5

OPWB Goals

One of our goals in OPWB is to assist OSHBA in obtaining their goals. If your OSHBA committee has an event or project that needs our help, please let us know. We are an active group with a terrific attitude that helps us accomplish whatever we put our minds to—and we want to assist you.

OPWB is also committed to helping with PAC funds. Our goal is to incorporate PAC donations into some of our events throughout the year. Please help us by participating.

Well, we are off and running! Please stay tuned for schedules of classes and other great events and projects that will be brought to you by OPWB. We appreciate your support! **OB**

Introducing 2011's New Leaders and 2010's Winners

The new state officers were installed at the OSHBA annual banquet, held in January at the Skirvin Hilton Hotel in Oklahoma City.



New state builder president Michael Herndon of Kingston, left, and outgoing president Tom French enjoy a humorous moment during the installation ceremony.



Outgoing state president Tom French of Edmond, right, swears in Jeff Click, left, who joins the leadership team of the Oklahoma State Home Builders Association as secretary/vice president. Center is Brandon Perkins of Tulsa, treasurer/vice president.



Oklahoma City homebuilders Don Chesser, left, and Chuck Robinson were in attendance with more than 120 others at the Oklahoma State Home Builders Association annual awards banquet at the Skirvin. With them are their wives Darlene Chesser and Phyllis Robinson.



'Associate of the Year' Donna Cullins and 'Builder of the Year' Curtis McCarty, both of Norman, were honored by the state builders association Jan. 7 at the Skirvin Hilton Hotel in Oklahoma City.



At the banquet were Tulsans, from left, Bill Butts, Gena and Phil Rhees, and Paul Kane. Butts is vice president/treasurer of the Home Builders Association of Greater Tulsa and Kane is executive director of that organization.



New state leadership for homebuilders: outgoing president Tom French of Edmond, vice president/secretary Jeff Click, also of Edmond; president Michael Herndon of the Kingston area; vice president/treasurer Brandon Perkins of Tulsa.



Kimmi Houston and Jeff Click are taking national and state leadership positions, respectively, representing the homebuilding industry. Houston is the new chair of the Professional Women in Building council of NAHB and Click joins the state leadership board as vice president/secretary.



Stillwater's Roger Roberts, Barbara Franks and Becky Wilkerson, right, celebrate Franks' entry to leadership in the state homebuilders association. Roberts is past president of the Stillwater Home Builders Association.

US Labor Department's OSHA Acts to Protect Residential Roofing Workers

Agency rescinds Clinton-era directive and gives workers more safeguards against falls.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration today announced a new directive withdrawing a former one that allowed residential builders to bypass fall protection requirements. The directive being replaced, issued in 1995, initially was intended as a temporary policy and was the result of concerns about the feasibility of fall protection in residential building construction. However, there continues to be a high number of fall-related deaths in construction, and industry experts now feel that feasibility is no longer an issue or concern. "Fatalities from falls are the number one cause of workplace deaths in construction. We cannot tolerate workers getting killed in residential construction when effective means are readily available to prevent those deaths," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels. "Almost every week, we see a worker killed from falling off a residential roof. We can stop these fatalities, and we must." The National Association of Home Builders recommended rescinding the 1995 directive, as did OSHA's labor-management Advisory Committee for Construction Safety and Health; the AFL-CIO; and the Occupational Safety and Health State Plan Association, which represents the 27 states and territories that run their own occupational safety and health programs. According to data from the department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, an average of 40 workers are killed each year as a result of falls from residential roofs. One-third of those deaths represent Latino workers, who often lack sufficient access to safety information and

protections. Latino workers comprise more than one-third of all construction employees. OSHA's action today rescinds the Interim Fall Protection Compliance Guidelines for Residential Construction, Standard 03-00-001. Prior to the issuance of this new directive, Standard 03-00-001 allowed employers engaged in certain residential construction activities to use specified alternative methods of fall protection rather than the conventional fall protection required by the residential construction fall protection standard. With the issuance of today's new directive, all residential construction employers must comply with 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1926.501(b)(13). Where residential builders find that traditional fall protection is not feasible in residential environments, 29 CFR 1926.501(b)(13) still allows for alternative means of providing protection. Construction and roofing companies will have up to six months to comply with the new directive. OSHA has developed training and compliance assistance materials for small employers and will host a webinar for parties interested in learning more about complying with the standard. To view the directive and for more information, visit http://www.osha.gov/doc/residential_fall_protection.html. Read today's Federal Register notice at <http://s.dol.gov/C9>. Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>. **OB**

Fixing the Crack in the Foundation Repair Business

A proven chemical stabilization treatment that minimizes soil expansion and contraction can reduce callbacks, warranty claims and expand business.

Each year swelling and shrinking clay-based soils inflict over \$2 billion in damage to houses, buildings, roads, pipelines and other structures in the U.S. alone. Such swelling clays, which occur in 48 states according to a U.S. geological survey, can also “crack” the bottom line of foundation repair companies in the form of costly unpaid callbacks and warranty claims.

The problem: Mechanical stabilization with support piers, a primary foundation repair technique, can keep a home from sinking when clay soil dries and shrinks but cannot keep wet expanding soil from lifting a home off its piers. Clay soil can, in fact, expand up to 15 inches when wet in some cases, often resulting in seasonally recurring cracked walls, stuck doors and windows, and other foundation-related problems.

While good engineering still applies, including proper drainage, soil compaction, a rigid foundation, and support piers when needed, a proven chemical stabilization treatment that minimizes soil expansion and contraction can reduce foundation repair companies’ callbacks and warranty claims, as well as expand their remediation market and profit margins.

“If clay soil is moving a home’s foundation with seasonal expansion and contraction, it can look like the support piers aren’t working,” says Tommy LaLonde, PE, a civil engineer and owner of Lee Engineering, a Dallas, Tex.-based company with expertise in drainage, irrigation and foundation preservation. “That’s when the callbacks and warranty claims start, which can eat into a foundation repair company’s job schedule, profit margin, and reputation. We address the real problem of seasonal foundation movement, expansive clays, by introducing chemical stabilization with Condor SS.”

Solving the Clay Soil Problem

Although chemical stabilization has been used for years, some chemicals leach or are simply not effective. With substances like lime and potassium chloride, the potential for environmental damage is a major factor when weighing the decision to inject these chemicals into the ground.

The expansion and contraction of clay soil, however, can be minimized to a safe range of typically less than 1-inch Potential Vertical Rise (PVR) by injecting Condor SS - Soil Stabilizer, an environmentally friendly ion-exchange medium developed by Wilsonville, Ore.-based Earth Science Products, into the ground under a foundation when used for remediation. Condor SS, a concentrated, water-soluble sulphated oil chemical that meets the U.S. EPA’s requirements for drinking water when used as directed, has stabilized over a billion cubic feet of soil on five continents with zero product failures to date, according to its manufacturer. With over 30 years of performance, it has a



Each year more monetary damage is caused from expansive soils than in all other natural disasters combined in this country. Condor SS permanently stops expansion without harming the environment.

proven history longer than any other ion exchange product on the market.

Swelling in clay soil is caused when clay attracts and retains water. This happens because tiny, but powerful, electrical charges present in the soil attract the moisture. Condor SS neutralizes this problem by introducing ions with an opposite charge from those in the clay. Once the ions in the clay have been neutralized, the clay releases the water, which runs off and evaporates naturally. As the structural weight of a home and its foundation compresses clay soil, passages in the soil that previously carried water collapse, giving it greater structural support over time; ultimately its support value can approach that of bedrock.

So far Lee Engineering has expanded its chemical stabilization business in the residential remediation market almost entirely by word of mouth, to the tune of about 300 homes in the past two years.

“Pro-active builders who want to lower the risk of warranty claims, lawsuits, buybacks, or other problems caused by seasonally expanding and contracting clay soils have approached us for chemical stabilization remediation,” says LaLonde. “Many times chemical stabilization can be a solution by itself, or it can be used in conjunction with support piers as sort of an insurance policy against the rest of the house moving.”

According to LaLonde, a growing number of builders are choosing to inject the chemical stabilizer under pools, sports courts, driveways, and sidewalks to prevent the potential cracking, crumbling, or raised uneven surfaces that could result from building over seasonally expanding and contracting clay soils. Lee Engineering is a licensed applicator of the Condor SS chemical stabilizer, which typically uses equipment a contractor would use for water injection.

Despite Lee Engineering’s growing chemical stabilization remediation business in a tough economy, LaLonde foresees even greater business growth when the economy begins to pick up again. The success of previous commercial chemical stabilization projects by other contractors indicates that he may be right.

For instance, before construction began at the Ted Arendale Ford dealership in Arlington, Tex., pre-injection testing revealed soil swelling potential as high as 10%. By using Condor SS chemical stabilization instead of conventional methods such as excavating existing soil and

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State Rep's Report

Brandon Perkins

It's a Two-Way Street

I thank you for allowing me to serve you as your state representative. Taking the place of Phil Rhees will be tough. I am no Phil, but I will do my best to fill his shoes adequately. Luckily, as my first duty as state rep is to write this column, please keep in mind this letter is due one day before my first official meeting and one day after landing in Orlando for the International Builder Show, which is where I gained some of the below information. Somehow I believe your previous state rep was either tired of writing his column OR is smarter than I ... Phil, hum? ...

As you know, it is my job as state representative to both deliver NAHB information to you and also carry your suggestions back to NAHB. This is a two way street. I promise to boil down the important topics and best keep you apprised of the things that will affect Oklahoma. BUT, it is up to YOU to communicate with me, tell me your thoughts, ideas and concerns, so that I can take them to NAHB.

Addressing the Issues

A few of the important issues at hand are:

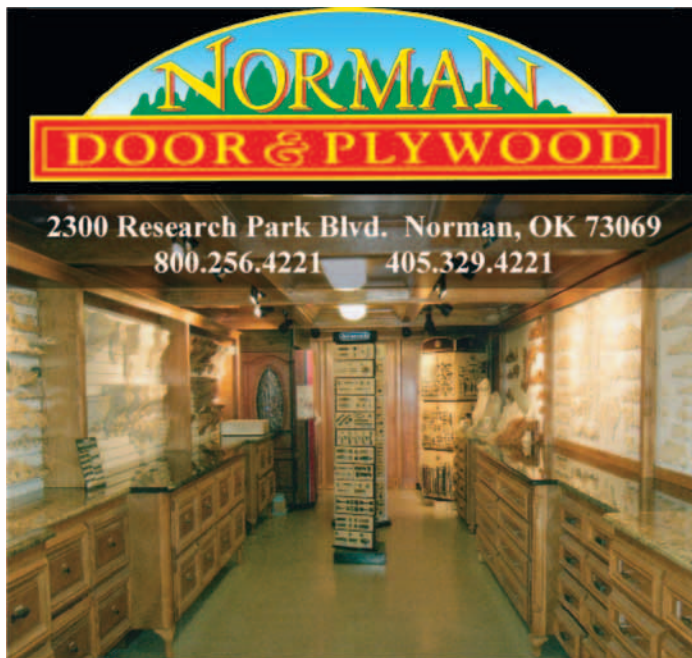
- **AD&C:** Without financing, very few, if any, of us would be in business or have a job. Much discussion was had surrounding the difficulty and possible disconnect between the banks, regulators and the fed. It seems all are tired of "we hear one thing in D.C. and another from our bankers," and the banks saying "the regulators are making me do it." The NAHB Board made addressing AD&C a priority for NAHB and our leadership has been working diligently to help get "all parties to play from the same playbook."
- **Fiduciary Duties:** Not to go into gory details, but if your board members have not/do not sign a "Code of Ethics" document that includes their fiduciary responsibilities to your local association, you need make it happen. AND, I hope your local has a grievance procedure in place if someone violates their fiduciary responsibilities.
- **Low Appraisals:** NAHB has just completed its 3rd Appraisal Summit that brought the Appraisal Institute to 1) ensure the fed come out with a clear mandated rule on appraisals that all parties can agree on, and 2) ensure that all parties fully understand the specialty of appraising new construction.

Helping Yourself

What can you do to help your appraisals?

- Help yourself by helping the appraiser ... most appraisers today are under such a short time line that they only look at sales that are recorded in the MLS. A lot of new construction never makes it to the MLS; therefore, you should talk to other builders to see what they have sold ... this will be beneficial to both of you. Then, access courthouse records and see what other sales have been recorded.

- Go to nabh.org and in the search engine type in "appraisals." Then click on "capturing new home sales information for use as appraisal comparables." Go to the last sentence in the second paragraph and click on the highlighted area. An appraisal form will now appear with one column. This is the same information the appraiser gathers. Fill this form out for each sale you can find. Then take a picture of each house that has sold and attach it to the form. When the appraiser comes to appraise your house, give him/her this information and tell them that this is some information you have gathered that you thought they might find helpful. This is legal and greatly appreciated.
- Last but not least, make a list of all of the upgrades you have put in your house that might not be in a comparable sale. Meet with the appraiser and explain all of the pluses your house has that may or may not be seen by the naked eye. Once again, I thank you and please call me with your thoughts. Cheers! **OB**



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Tony Foust

DaVinci Homes

by Stacey Tetloff

Family and tradition are the two driving forces behind Tony Foust's love of building. Given the opportunity to treat a client like a customer or a family member, Foust welcomes the chance to increase his extended family to include his homeowners.

It's no surprise that Foust's enjoyment in building relationships with his clients is one of the biggest reasons for his success. "The key is really in the relationships we build with our families," he explained. "Many of the families I build homes for become life-long friends, and we meet up for lunch and to catch up."

Home Is Where the Heart Is

Foust started out in the building industry doing residential construction while he was in college studying finance, and after leaving went to work for one of the largest builders in the Fort Worth area. After working in the building industry for over a decade, Foust founded Da Vinci Homes in Oklahoma, keeping with his own family tradition of building foundations in the state.

Da Vinci Homes has been creating masterpiece homes for families for almost a decade. Foust has a true love and passion for residential building, and that is the company's main focus. In addition, Da Vinci also creates a few inventory homes.

"Most of our projects have been large estate homes," Foust said. The projects are well-suited for Foust, who looks forward to spending one-on-one time with clients to make sure that every detail of their new home will help families create memories for generations. Foust explained, "I have a unique philosophy when it comes to building a home ...

I want my homeowners to feel their home is a great place to be from and I want them to look forward to going back."

His belief that a home is the heart of the family, whether it's a first home or a dream home build, motivates Foust to go the extra mile for each and every client. Da Vinci Homes is committed to delivering exactly what its homeowners have always dreamed of. Every home is something special. "There's something unique about every home, because there's something unique about every family," Foust said.

Lifelong Learning

One way Foust is able to deliver on unique homes built for a lifetime is with his own dedication to education and certifications. In addition to being a Certified Professional Home Builder, Da Vinci Homes is also a Certified Green Professional and is working toward becoming a Master Certified Green Professional through the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

The International Builders' Show is one of the places Foust has taken advantage of the opportunity to learn more about green building and other areas of the industry. "I just finished a brand new course at IBS for project management of green home builds," he said, "and it was extremely beneficial in learning how to incorporate all green into a project." Foust also noted the importance of the local, state and national builders associations for providing important educational opportunities to builders. The opportunities mean that he is able to continue learning.

Foust knows how important it is to continue to take classes in the building field to stay on top of all the emerging trends and innovations in home building. It's one of the ways he is able to give back to his homeowners.

Thousands of Voices

Education is an important element in helping to overcome some of the challenges homeowners face today. Green building in particular can help a homeowner save money in the long run. Foust explained that homeowners looking to invest in their new homes to save money reap many benefits from green building. He noted that one of his 2700 square foot model homes had a recent electric utility bill of only \$19. "It's amazing to be able to see the return on your investment immediately. That's savings!" Foust said.

With the economic state of the nation today, getting homeowners to realize those benefits and make the investment upfront in order to gain the long-term savings is a major challenge. The rising cost of prices is one of the reasons for builders to unite and join forces with the builders associations.

"In today's time, everything we hold near and dear as an industry is coming under attack. There are constantly changing rules and policies that affect every day in a builder's business. We have to stand together to keep things affordable for families," Foust said. As layers and layers of regulation and legislation are added on to the building process, the cost of a home continues to increase and takes dream of homeownership away from many people. "One voice crying in the woods might get heard," Foust explained, "but thousands DO get heard."

Generations to Come

For Foust, protecting families drives him to be active in the builders association, but he is also protecting his own family. While he is a first generation builder, his dream is for his children to have the opportunity to work in the industry that he loves and in the business he has worked so hard to build and keep through the challenges.

Protecting the building industry means involvement to Foust. He is currently serving as the president of the Builders Association of South Central Oklahoma (BASCO), for which he also serves as chairman of the Education Committee and on the Board of Directors. Foust is also on the Board of Directors for the Oklahoma State Home Builders Association (OSHBA) and for the NAHB. He also served as the 2010 Festival of Homes Committee chairman, and is an accredited instructor through the NAHB for Certified Green Building. Foust is also chairman of the OSHBA Professional Builders Committee, as well as serving



on the Single-Family, Small Volume Committee for NAHB. The latter represents 70 percent of the members of the national home builders association.

One of the best things a new home builder can do is become part of the builders association, Foust believes. "If you get involved, there are a myriad of benefits from mentoring to education. It's in your best interest to do that and help your business in the future," he said. Building relationships with other builders is an important component to that equation.

Builders who have been in the business for years and through generations are available for mentoring and advice. "If you are a young builder, then become a member," Foust said. "Get active and build relationships with fellow members. You will have created a network of endless information and advice available to you. As your business grows, you have the opportunity to give back, too." **OB**



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New Things Are Happening

Here is hoping that your Christmas and New Year were special and blessed. Mine was absolutely terrific as we had our children and grandchildren together for Christmas for the first time in about six years. Except for all of us catching a cold, it couldn't have been any better.

Well, a new year is upon us so that means new things happening ... let's get started.

Leadership Changes

Of course, by now you know that Michael Herndon from the Southern Oklahoma HBA is this year's president. Joining him on the ladder is Brandon Perkins (HBA of Greater Tulsa) and Jeff Click (Central Oklahoma HBA). But there are a couple of other changes that you may not be aware of. First, Phil Rhees has relinquished his role as state representative. Brandon will take over and wear two hats this year. The reason is that Phil will be the Area 11 National Vice President. It has been a few years since someone from Oklahoma has filled that office. Also, as you can see by the enclosed article, Kimmi Houston is now the national chair of the NAHB Professional Women in Building! But there is one more change ... after five years, Joe Robson is no longer a senior officer of NAHB. His year as immediate past president is up. As Joe mentioned to me at breakfast during IBS, he joins the ranks of "has-beens!" But I know Joe, and he won't disappear. He will still be able to help us all on the national scene. We are all indebted to his service at the helm of NAHB.

New Legislation

The legislature will have been in session about two weeks by the time you read this. With the mood of the electorate

(against more government) and the newly elected senators and representatives, it will be interesting to see what type of legislation will be gathering the attention. Again, I predict that workers compensation reform and tort reform will get the lion's share. My hope is that other issues will get the attention they deserve. What do I mean by that? Well, I mean our impact (or development) fee bill, for example. This is a common sense measure that has been held up for two years. This bill requires sound fiscal management and accountability. It makes local government justify the fee, if any is collected, and account for how it is spent. I encourage each of you when talking to your own elected officials to ask them to support this vital legislation.

Another way you can help is to be sure you are receiving our e-mails. If you haven't received an e-mail from the state association in the last month, then guess what? We don't have your e-mail. I have done a couple of statewide mass e-mails to the whole membership. I already know that I have more members than I have e-mails. If you haven't received one, send an e-mail to info@oshba.org and ask to be signed up for the statewide e-mails.

Annual Award Winners

I would like to end by offering congratulations to our latest honorees. Curtis McCarty was honored as our 2010 Builder of the Year and Donna Cullins was honored as our 2010 Associate of the Year. They are two outstanding individuals who give so much for the association and to the industry. If and when you see either of them, be sure to tell them congratulations.

That's all for now. Here is hoping your 2011 is a great year. Let me know if the state office can be of any help. Until next time ... **OB**

FIXING THE CRACK

Continued from page 10

replacing it with select fill, post-injection testing revealed that soil swelling potential had been reduced to less than 1%. The contractor saved over \$150,000.

On another occasion, a 145-acre mixed-use site in Texas called Frisco Square used chemical stabilization. All of the building pad sites, driveways, walkways, and parking lots were stabilized with Condor SS while under construction. The chemical stabilizer allowed the project to function as though clay soils were not present, resulting in smooth streets and curbs, healthy landscaping and a distinct lack of the usual problems associated with the swelling and contracting of clay soils.

"For companies willing to branch out, chemical stabilization of newly constructed commercial properties will

be an even bigger business opportunity than remediation," concludes LaLonde. "It's easier to apply, more effective, and of course more profitable when applied to larger areas. Preventing excessive clay soil expansion and contraction at the start of a project, rather than remediating at the end is often a better choice for everyone involved, be they builders, owners, tenants, or foundation preservation companies."

Besides residential remediation projects, Condor SS has been used for the chemical stabilization of clay soils at Dallas/Fort Worth Airport, the Veterans Administration, the U.S. Forest Service, as well as many city, state, and national entities.

For more info, including a U.S. map of areas high in clay soils, and instruction on how to tell if you have clay soil, visit <http://earthscienceproducts.com>; call 1-503-678-1216; e-mail info@earthscienceproducts.com; or write to Earth Science Products, P.O. Box 327, Wilsonville, OR 97070. **OB**

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