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Builders Association**



September/October 2011

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**Oklahoma State Home
Builders Association**

917 N.E. 63 Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405-843-5579 • 800-256-9980

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Mike Means • mikem@oshba.org

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Managing Editor Stacey Tetloff
Graphic Designer Kacy Shoaff
Publication Coordinator John Bitters
Advertising Sales Manager Brenda Poe

Advertising Sales

Marsha Suwinski: (800) 935-1592, ext. 106
marshas@wildblue.net

Brenda Poe: (800) 935-1592, ext. 115
bpoe@printcomm.com

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President's First Word

Mike Herndon

It's Great to be from Oklahoma

by Mike Herndon

If I've said it once, I've said it a hundred times. But I must say it once again... "It's great to be from Oklahoma." Why do I say that? I just returned from a great week with a bunch of great people. The occasion? Our annual State Convention.

The convention is over and I'm back at home. I have another deadline looming but what better time to put my thoughts together about the convention than the day after. What a great turn out with 141 registered, the most attended since I've been involved. As always, we learned a lot from each other, our meetings were very productive and as an added bonus, the food was great! Having everyone in my neck of the woods was very special. I'm always amazed by the amount of knowledge shared and what I learn from each of our meetings. Good times are always had when you're around friends and more so when you have a common goal.

If you missed the convention you missed out on all of the above and one of best tropical pools I've seen. If you want to experience even a little taste of the convention, plan to attend our Fall Board of Directors meeting in Tulsa on October 5. More details on that will be coming soon.

Stay Involved

Oklahomans have always been an independent bunch and our builders are no different. As we continue in this down market each one of you have continued with a positive attitude and in helping our local and state government to prepare for the future. Your continued involvement in all aspects of government is a necessity and one that seems to be understood by each of you. Our speaker Bob Rivinius from California helped to show the importance of involvement and what happens when we don't stay involved. His topic, "Don't let Oklahoma become the next California," was very relevant to what we are experiencing here. It is imperative that we all stay involved and working together.

Well, the phone is ringing (and I am NOT complaining) as that means I have work to do. We all must take advantage of the opportunities around us as we look forward with hope to the future. God bless you all.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

— Winston Churchill **OB**



Vice Chairman/Acting Chair

Vanessa Shadix



Happy Summer from OPWB

by Vanessa Shadix

As most of you are aware, our Chairman Barbara Franks, has decided she was ready for a new adventure in her life and has moved to Austin, Texas. We miss her terribly, but she has promised to visit now and again and assured us that her blood will NEVER change from bright orange to rust!!! We wish her the very best and know how lucky Austin is to get her!

We just completed an incredible three days of OSHBA Convention in Durant, Oklahoma. Mike Means and Kathy Kastner did a wonderful job orchestrating education, business meetings and lots and lots of food. Plans are in the works for the 2012 Convention, so be sure to save some space next summer to attend—it is a "worth your while" event.

Upcoming Events

OPWB held their monthly meeting in conjunction with the convention on Saturday morning. We have a great group

of members and have plans to bring an NAHB certification class to Oklahoma City this fall. Watch your state bulletins for more details.

PWB nationally is very active with our own Kimmi Houston at the helm. Take time to visit the NAHB.org website—link to PWB, and take advantage of the informative and educational webinars being offered. They are available to all members.

Our next OPWB Board meeting will be held via conference call on Thursday, August 11, at 2:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

If you are not an OPWB member and are interested, we have a great membership packet available and I would be happy to send that to you. Please send me an e-mail at vshadix@oldrepublictitle.com. Also, if your local association would like for a group of us to attend your meetings—we'd love to spread the good word about OPWB.

And remember— "make every day as productive as the day before you leave for vacation!" **OB**



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This Ain't Grandpa's Lumber

High-Performance Wood Products Improve Structural Framing

by David Nelson, P.E.

All wood is the same, right? Although wood is one of the most familiar materials in light commercial and residential construction, crews increasingly encounter a wide range of advanced wood structural framing products. These materials' strength and consistency work well for many demanding structural applications, while providing a cost effective alternative to steel. Their working characteristics are often similar to standard lumber, with some important distinctions.

Following is an overview of the performance and working properties of several advanced wood framing materials, along with new ways crews will be seeing framing delivered to the jobsite in ready-to-install kits.

New and Enhanced Wood Products

Beyond the commodity lumber that contractors have used for more than a century, today's structural framing materials include various types of engineered wood products (EWPs) and specialty lumber. Common EWPs include pre-fabricated wood I-joists, parallel strand lumber (PSL) and laminated strand lumber (LSL). Specialty lumber includes products tested and evaluated for greater consistency and warp resistance.

Pre-fabricated Wood I-joists

Prefabricated wood I-joists—often referred to as TJI® joists—are used in floors and in place of rafters for sloped and flat roofs. Manufacturers make the structurally efficient joists with laminated veneer lumber (LVL) or solid-sawn lumber top and bottom flanges and an oriented strand board (OSB) or plywood web. The engineered materials provide exceptional dimensional stability, which helps the joists resist warping, twisting and shrinking.

Wood I-joists come in long lengths, which help create open floor plans with fewer intervening walls or columns. They have a high strength-to-weight ratio, making them easy to handle.

When installing wood I-joists, placing a dab of adhesive in the seat of the hanger helps eliminate squeaks in finished floors. Nail the hanger in all required holes as specified by the manufacturer and bend the tabs over (on select hangers)

followed by nailing them down. To maintain load bearing capacity and structural integrity, the flanges of I-joists should not be cut or notched.

Parallel Strand Lumber (PSL)

PSL is one of the strongest engineered wood products available. It is made from long, narrow veneer strips bonded together with adhesives using a press and microwave process. This removes natural variations found in trees, such as knots, and creates a predictable and dimensionally stable product.

Ideal for applications requiring long spans or heavy loads, PSL framing members are available up to 60 feet long. Wide-section, one-piece beams eliminate field assembly. Due to the large cross-sections, long lengths and weight, PSL beams typically require a crane to safely place them. In addition, given PSL's density, a nail gun or other powered fastening tool works best.

Laminated Strand Lumber (LSL)

Manufacturers make LSL from long, thin wood strands that are dried and bound with resin. They align the strands to capitalize on the wood's natural strength, resulting in products that are consistently strong and straight.

LSL beams are an economical solution for many light construction loads and spans. Studs made from LSL help create smooth, even walls, and provide a solid base for installation of cabinets, countertops and lighting, and reduce the potential of cracks in finished walls. Framing crews can incorporate long-length LSL studs in walls up to 30 feet high (tall

walls) to avoid hinge points that occur in platform-framed walls. The result is clean wall lines and a stable structure especially suited for large windows. As with PSL, a nail gun or other powered fastening tool makes installation easier.

Specialty Dimension Lumber

In addition to developing new types of wood materials such as EWPs, manufacturers have also used technology to enhance dimension lumber. Advanced



machine grading technologies coupled with visual grading standards help create more predictable, straighter studs and joists than conventional lumber. Some also come with pre-applied mold inhibitors that help keep each piece clean and bright. Specialty dimension lumber provides higher performance than commodity lumber, at a mid-level price compared to EWPs. Crews can cut, nail and drill specialty lumber the same as other lumber.

Ready-to-Install Framing


Other than pre-fabricated rafters and trusses, most building projects use standard-length lumber cut to size on site. Now, to further optimize materials and reduce jobsite labor, more contractors are ordering pre-cut, bundled and labeled framing material kits for other parts of the frame.

Such "ready-to-install" framing is enabled by support services and advanced design software available through building material dealers. One such offering is iLevel NextPhase® Site Solutions, which include a host of specialized framing design and fabrication software and access to equipment. Builders can shift much of the cutting work off site to a lumberyard, where conditions can be more closely controlled. The yard precision end-trims materials (within 1/16 inch) and labels them for easy installation according to detailed framing plans. This can be especially beneficial where experienced framing crews are scarce, or to help overcome language barriers among crewmembers and supervisors.



Conclusion

Given the greater affordability of wood compared to other structural materials, and the availability of high-performance advanced products, wood is regaining popularity in a host of building types. Crews on the jobsite are now seeing this familiar material, with some new twists, in more of their projects.

David Nelson, P.E., is a support engineer for iLevel by Weyerhaeuser. iLevel offers a range of residential, multi-family and light construction structural framing materials, technical support and software, including TimberStrand® LSL, Parallam® PSL, and iLevel Premium® Joists. www.iLevel.com, 888-453-8358. 



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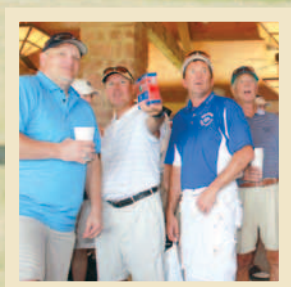
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2011 State Convention

O SHBA leaders and guests had a great time of education, golf and fellowship at the annual state convention. Most of the locals were represented and, despite the heat, found time to cool at the pool and relax. The state board of directors meeting was held and the overall mood was optimistic. **OB**

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10 Good Reasons to Use Written Contracts with Subs



by Sean Paul Rieger

As a lawyer, I have counseled builders many times on the importance of using written contracts in all aspects of their business. The advice is just as important

as it concerns the agreement between a builder and its subcontractors. One must remember, if a dispute arises when there is no written agreement, then attorneys, arbitrators, judges, or juries are left to merely guess as to what the parties intended toward each other. It is not advantageous to find yourself on the wrong end of a bad guess. Therefore, avoid that possibility by having a written subcontract agreement that includes important provisions such as the following.

Scope of Work

It is important to have clarity as to scope of work, such as materials expected to be provided, what level of quality, and what quantities are expected. Many disputes in construction claims can be traced back to a miscommunication between the parties as to the quality of the project that was expected to be delivered.

Identity of Sub

It is important to know who you are hiring as the sub that will do the work. It helps to have all of the identification names of the persons of authority and entities that you are dealing with, particularly in the event that something goes wrong. You should also establish whether the sub is allowed to further sub out portions of the work, and sometimes important to clarify allowable suppliers.

Warranties and Codes

Sub contracts should explicitly set forth the codes, specifications, warranties,

covenants, and any other requirements that are important to the applicable trade at work. If you have these standards laid out in a written contract, then you have the tool you need to hold the sub accountable to it, and not be left holding the bag for their questionable work when the owner or buyer later disputes.

Payment Terms

Set forth the payment terms in writing and make sure that they are compatible with how the owner is going to be paying you on the project, or how the lender will be issuing draws on the project. Make it clear that you can withhold payment or terminate their work for poor quality work, or untimely work.

Change Orders

Change order procedures need to be fully explained, and you should not deviate from procedures for them as defined in your contract. One of the most common mistakes in construction contracts is to have change order procedures laid out in the contract, but then never follow them. Write the contract to fit exactly with how you like to practice change orders and how best protects you from being taken advantage of by a sub with a big bill that was not expected or authorized. A sub should be required to obtain contractor approval, in some verifiable form (email, fax, text), prior to proceeding with work.

Lien Release Obligations

The contract should require the sub to execute lien releases throughout the work as it progresses and as they get paid. No payment to a sub should be made without a release being provided in return. Also a stamp for checks written to subcontractors can be used as an accord and satisfaction. The stamp can basically be a release and statement that in return for cashing the check, the payee admits that they have been fully paid and that there are no pending claims.

Default Paragraph

A well-written default paragraph can clarify important issues such as a requirement for arbitration in the event of dispute. In addition, the default provision should allow for other protections such as: attorneys' fees to be paid for by the sub (both before and after litigation fees); choice of forum and venue to assure that

arbitration or litigation stays local; limitation on types of damages that can be claimed and barring consequential and special damages.

Delay Damages—Time

This is an area where big damages awards can be rendered against builders. Therefore, use a contract to place any such obligations on the sub that might be responsible for the delay. You have the power in a contract to establish time frames and liability upon the subs as they may be responsible for various aspects of the work.

Indemnity and Insurance

A contract can require the sub to indemnify the contractor for defective work. This can protect the builder long after the work, and even into the warranty period. Additionally, the contract should obligate the sub to provide liability insurance that names the builder as an additional insured and protects them against injury claims on the site.

Protect Yourself

There is a wide range of issues that can be covered in a written contract with the sub—the above is just a start. Builders can protect themselves greatly from taking some time to develop a contract with their subs. The contract can be a repeatedly used form that works across the board with all subs or can be specific to each, whichever works best for the situation. The freedom to contract is alive and well in Oklahoma, and it is to the builder's benefit to take advantage of it. Without a written contract it is anyone's guess as to how others will decide in judgment as to what was intended to occur between the parties.

SEAN PAUL RIEGER is an attorney and an architect. Sean's practice is dedicated to providing legal services primarily in the following areas: real estate, construction, zoning, land use, property, development, landlord-tenant, property associations, contract, business entities, and related civil litigation. You should always consult an attorney directly for legal advice, as every legal matter can only be addressed after its unique facts are fully known and considered. Copyright 2011, Sean Paul Rieger **OB**



Associates Council Chair Report

Casey Felix

End of Summer



by Casey Felix

They say that the days get longer with summer time but I think the time is going by faster than ever. We're nearing the end of summer and hopefully this extreme heat. We're home from the OSHBA Summer Convention and what a great time was had by all! Attendance was fantastic and everyone seemed to really enjoy all the networking and education classes provided.

The Associates Council once again did an outstanding job with their Table Top and Silent Auction Event. We appreciate everyone who participated in the events and helped

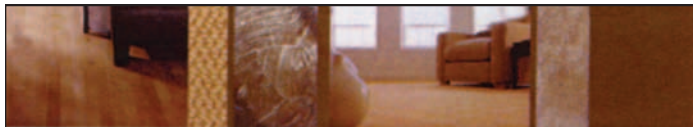
raise the funds needed to provide for deserving young people. Funds raised will go towards the educational scholarships to area vocational schools along with adding to our OSU and OU endowments.

A big thank you goes to Donna Cullins and Vanessa Shadix on their contributions to these events. Without these ladies and their hard work, the fundraisers would not have been such a success. I appreciate all the Associate Council members that came to the summer convention and helped with all our activities. I look forward to seeing each of you all at the Fall Board meeting. **OB**



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Green Summit Kicks Off with Statewide Code Changes

Higher standards in energy efficiency mandated

Changes to the International Energy Conservation Code and the effects those changes will have on Oklahoma builders is just one of the reasons to attend the third annual Green Building Summit in September, said Todd Booze, chairman of the OSHBA Green Building Commit

The third annual Oklahoma Green Building Summit (<http://www.okgreenbuildingsummit.com>) is scheduled Sept. 27-28 at the Reed Center in Midwest City, and is organized by OSHBA, Oklahoma City Metro Association of Realtors and the Association of Energy Engineers.

"This is the best opportunity not only for builders, but architects, engineers and realtors to come and learn what the changes to the IECC are and how to implement them," Booze said.

"There are a lot of changes to building practices coming out of this code and the Green Building Summit provides an opportunity to come understand what those are and how they will impact us in Oklahoma."

Specifically, much more stringent standards have been adopted in regard to energy efficiency related to construction and workmanship. These include such elements as envelope air sealing and water-resistant barriers, and builders will need

to understand what products will be suitable to meet these standards. The code workshop will begin at 7:30-8:45 a.m. Sept. 27 and will be presented by Kelly Parker, president, Guaranteed Watt Saver Systems (GWS).

Another reason to attend is to hear from the nation's leading expert in green building and energy efficient construction, Joe Lstiburek, Ph.D., P.Eng., and ASHRAE Fellow. Lstiburek is a principal of Boston-based Building Science Corp., and is a Fellow of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

"Joe is one of the founders of building science in the country," Booze said. "He is going to talk to us about problems he sees in building and construction related to incorrect and inefficient design which will be good for architects to hear. People will be able to come and learn how one component in design has an effect something else."

While green building by definition is a lot of things, Booze said energy efficiency requirements are at the forefront right now as the new code requirements are focused on energy and durability.

Booze expects to see a strong showing of Realtors at this year's summit.

"Oklahoma City Metropolitan Association of Realtors, which is helping organize the 2011 summit, has a green resource council and are really pushing their membership to come," he said. "The summit will benefit Realtors and their understanding of green homes and how they fit with their customers in the housing market."

The third annual Oklahoma Green Building Summit (<http://www.okgreenbuildingsummit.com>) is scheduled Sept. 27-28 at the Reed Center in Midwest City, and is organized by OSHBA, Oklahoma City Metro Association of Realtors and the Association of Energy Engineers.

Conference sponsors are American Electric Power, Climate Master, CenterPoint Energy, Dow Building Solutions, Forest Building Materials of Oklahoma City, Masco, Morrison Supply Company of OKC, Tyvek, ONG and OG&E. Dolese is exhibiting sponsor and Kirkpatrick Bank, WebRevelation and GWS are contributing sponsors.

Registration is open for Oklahoma Green Building Summit 2011, Sept. 27 and 28 at the Reed Center in Midwest City, presented by the Oklahoma Home Builders Association, the Association of Energy Engineers and the private consulting firm Guaranteed Watt Saver Systems of Oklahoma City.

For registration information, visit the Oklahoma Green Building Summit 2011 website at www.okgreenbuilding-summit.com, or call the Oklahoma State Home Builders Association at (405) 843-5579 or toll-free at (800) 256-9980.

For a listing of National Association of Home Builders Certified Green Professionals in the state, go to: www.oshba.org/html/green_builders.php. **OB**

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State Rep's Report

Brandon Perkins

National Association Happenings

by Brandon Perkins

To all my colleagues and friends that attended the OSHBA Summer Convention let me express my apologies for missing. NAHB had scheduled their summer executive committee meeting at the exact same time. Let me share with you some of what is happening with our national association.

First, if you haven't already, make plans to attend the NAHB Fall Board of Directors meeting in September. It will be in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and as we are sitting in 100+ temperatures (as I write) the sound of 86 degree weather sounds good. I am sure by September it may even be in the 70's. But besides possibly cooler weather, the discussions and decisions made as to the future of our association are very important and you will want to ensure your voice is heard. If you can't attend, drop me a line and let me know what you think.

Support and Involvement

Speaking of our association, more than ever we need your involvement on the committee level. If you have ever thought of serving on a national committee, beginning August 2 you can go online to www.nahb.org and sign up. I encourage you to do so.

Lastly, I want to thank all of you for your continued support of Build-PAC. As I also wear the hat as your trustee I appreciate how much support my fellow Oklahomans give. The success of the poker run at convention to the continued renewal of all our club members does us well in the national picture. We are in a struggle of ideas and we must continue to support those who support housing.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our own state fall board of directors meeting in October. Until then, let me know if there is anything I can do to assist your local associations. **OB**

Green Summit, Sept. 27-28

The third annual Oklahoma Green Building Summit (<http://www.okgreenbuildingsummit.com>) is scheduled Sept. 27-28, and is organized by OSHBA, Oklahoma City Metro Association of Realtors and the Association of Energy Engineers. Online registration is available. Cost is \$50 each day or early-bird fee of \$75 for both days.

Tuesday, Sept. 27

- 7:15-9 a.m. Check-in
- 7:30-8:45 a.m. *Understanding the New Oklahoma Residential Building Code: What's in it?*
Presenter: Kelly Parker, P.E.,
President, Guaranteed Watt
Saver Systems
- 9:00 – 9:15 a.m. *Welcome*
- 9:15-12:30 *"CSI – Construction Scene Investigation for Building and Real Estate Professionals"*
Presenter: Joe Lstiburek, Keynote,
Ph.D., P.Eng., ASHRAE Fellow
Principal, Building Science
Corp., Boston
- 12:30-1:30 Lunch Provided
- 1:30-4:30 **Builder Breakout**
"Hard-Core Building Science for Building Professionals"
Presenters: Joe Lstiburek,
Realtor Breakout
"Sticks and Stones of Homes":
Basic building technologies for
Realtors, including foundation,
windows, insulation

Wednesday, Sept. 28

- 8:00-8:30 Check-In
- 8:30-noon *Commercial Green Building: What Works*
Presenter: Joe Lstiburek
- 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Panel TBA





Edwards Custom Homes, Inc.

Clark Edwards puts his customers first, building his reputation on high quality and making friendships in his hometown.

by Stacey Tetloff

Clark Edwards was fortunate at a young age to figure out what he wanted to be when he grew up. His dad, an Enid area real estate agent, exposed Edwards to the building industry, and the fascination began. "I was lucky that I knew what I wanted to do at a young age," he explained, "and I have been very driven to accomplish my goals and take a lot of pride in what I do."

Throughout junior high and high school, Edwards took woodworking courses, and after starting college he spent his summers learning the trade aspect of the business. He worked a variety of jobs to get all of the practical knowledge he could in everything from painting to carpentry for remodelers and construction companies.

There's No Place Like Home

After graduating from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in construction science, Edwards worked for Streetman Homes in Austin, Texas for six years. His ultimate goal, though, was always to return home to Enid. "I'm the third generation of my family

in Enid, and this has always been my home," Edwards explained. "I'm one of those people that believes that one place is home. After going to school, I worked hard to get back here."

In 2007, Edwards founded Edwards Custom Homes, Inc., and has fulfilled his dream of working in the Enid community, building over 85 homes so far. His ties to the community are the cornerstone of his customer service philosophy.

Customer Service First

Edwards believes that focusing on customer service is one of the best investments to make in the building industry. "My mentor used to tell me that when I listed out my priorities for the day, to take care of customer service first, closings second and daily business after that," Edwards said. He built his business on that idea.

Being customer friendly is extremely important to Edwards. One way to do this is to make sure that all of the choices that are needed are made before actual construction begins. "I learned from the builder I worked for in Austin that making

all of the decisions before building means faster construction," Edwards explained. This not only makes the house go up quickly, but also makes the building process easier for homeowners. "By making all of the choices up front, we're also able to create a very accurate budget," Edwards said. "That means not a lot of cost surprises for the customer or me during the building process."

To further drive his idea that happy customers equal a secure future, Edwards also invests in top of the line materials. "I spend a bit more on the materials," he said. "It's easier to make homes special with high dollar tile, wood floors, granite throughout the house, and better door knobs and light fixtures." For Edwards, it's one way to stand apart. As one of the newer builders in town, he knows that he has to work hard to stand out, and focusing on high quality is one of the best ways to create a buzz.

Making Friends

Edwards' reputation for high quality is one of the foundations his reputation in Enid is built on, and his relationship



By All Means: Executive Officer's Report

Mike Means

Turning Optimism into Reality

by Mike Means

Our official state vegetable is a fruit. Out of all the things I could have taken away from the recent state convention that is what has been on my mind. And it took a Californian to tell me that. Our state vegetable is the watermelon. Go figure!

Instead of learning improved ways of framing a house cuts lumber costs while enhancing the ability to insulate it, thus making it more comfortable for the future homeowner's pocketbook, I've got watermelon on the brain. Instead of thinking of creative ways to look at the ordinary and see the extraordinary all I can see is a juicy slice of watermelon and thinking "this is a vegetable?" Oh well, look on the bright side, I now know of one more way I can get my grandkids to eat their veggies! Hmm, maybe it is just a matter of perspective.

An Interesting Perspective

Speaking of perspective, Bob Rivinius (former CEO of the California HBA), gave us a good one on how things

with his subcontractors has helped him make that possible. "We are so fortunate in Enid," he said, "to have a lot of high quality craftsman still in town that are very good at what they do. Most of them are third generation, working the same trades their fathers and grandfathers worked." All of that family history means highly qualified work is available for Edwards to utilize.

And he doesn't take it for granted. "I believe in building good, one-on-one relationships with craftsmen," Edwards explained. "I like to have a friendly relationship with each one. That's what works best for me." Making these friendships is at the top of the list of what he most enjoys about what he does.

A Blank Canvas

Those friendships go a long way in helping Edwards deliver complete satisfaction and happiness to his customers. For him, there is no better sense of pride and satisfaction than having a walk-through with a new homeowner and seeing how happy they are with their new home. "You start with an empty lot, and you aren't sure

what kind of house is going to go on it," Edwards said.

"You design and build the house, work with professional decorators to add the finishing touches, and get to see it all come to completion."

Stay Informed, Stay Relevant

New homeowners benefit from the interest Edwards places not just on the construction of the home, but on the decorating as well. "I subscribe to eight different magazines to see what the new styles are and to keep the decorating and interior relevant to today," he explained.

Being informed on all aspects of the home building process is a priority for Edwards. As a Certified Professional Builder and Certified Green Professional, he is able to create homes that aren't just aesthetically pleasing, but financially appealing as well. Customers benefit from his ability to take the little steps needed to maximize energy efficiency, keeping construction costs affordable and providing long-term energy savings.

Edwards also thinks it is very important to take advantage of the

happened in California to make it so difficult on builders and developers. It was a good warning for us all to be involved in every aspect of our government—from the schoolhouse to the state house to the White House to the outhouse! Well, maybe not the outhouse, but sometimes it is hard to make a distinction! The lesson learned in California is that public employees (sometimes known as bureaucrats) can look for ways to survive and thrive by making more regulations and burdens on businesses. I am not saying that they all fall into that category, but the lesson from California is to be aware of what is going on around you.

We have a lot of issues facing us and most will be discussed at our Fall Board of Directors meeting on October 5 in Tulsa. If you have an issue causing you concern be sure to attend or let your local leadership know so they can come prepared.

The economic climate in Oklahoma causes one to be optimistic. Let's turn our optimism into reality.

Until next time, Mike Means, State EO. **OB**

educational opportunities offered by the national, state and local home builders associations to stay informed. He takes classes, attends the International Builders' Show in Orlando as much as possible and attends the state home builders conventions as well.

Those conventions give builders a lot of great information, and Edwards also believes in the importance of the other benefits of association membership as well. "To improve and advance your business and do better, you have the opportunity to talk with other people in the business. I really enjoy the camaraderie with not just builders but associates, too."

Protecting the building industry is another essential benefit of membership. "The political action committees give us a voice. That's why we all need to stay active in our organization and promote what is beneficial for clients and builders," Edwards said. "The associations work hard to make sure our voice is heard on the local, state and national levels." **OB**

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