

# LET'S LEVEL

*the Official Publication of the Wausau Area Builders Association*



## **NEW HOME SALES UP 7.8% IN FEBRUARY**

It's the highest pace since February 2008: Sales of new single-family homes rose 7.8% last month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 539,000 units from an upwardly revised January reading, according to HUD and Census Bureau figures. —

"Today's numbers are a great start to the spring buying season," said NAHB Chairman Tom Woods. "Hopefully, this is an indicator of how the rest of the year will fare."

"Most sales activity continues to be among existing home owners who are trading up to new construction and taking advantage of low mortgage rates," said NAHB Chief Economist David Crowe. "First-time home buyers remain absent from the market, restricted by tight lending conditions."

The inventory of new homes for sale was at 210,000 in February, which is a 4.7-month supply at the current pace.

Regionally, new home sales increased 152.9% in the Northeast and 10.1% in the South. Sales dropped 6% in the West and 12.9% in the Midwest.

**APRIL 2015  
VOLUME 34 - ISSUE 4**



# **SILENT**



# **AUCTION**

***Thursday, April 16, 2015***

***THE HANGER (VFW CLUBHOUSE)***

Details inside this newsletter

*foundation of*  
**KNOWLEDGE**  
**SESSION 1**

**ELIGIBILITY:**

**ALL MEMBERS ALONG WITH  
UNLIMITED GUESTS**

**COST: COMPLEMENTARY**

**APRIL 16TH - 4:30 PM**

**VFW - WAUSAU**

**SUBJECT:**

Ricky Nowak from the WI State Patrol will be presenting on rules and regulations for Commercial Motor Vehicles in the state of Wisconsin. This session will be an extension of the presentation he made at the March dinner meeting with more opportunity for Q & A.

**Call 715-842-9510  
to register!**



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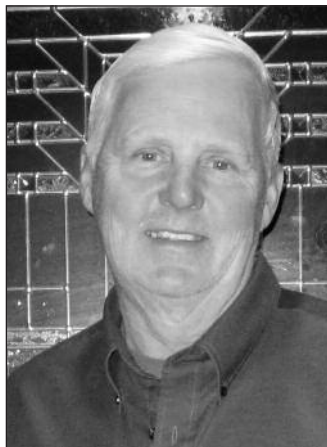
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#### MISSION STATEMENT:

*The Wausau Area Builders Association, chartered in 1967 and affiliated with the Wisconsin Builders Association and National Association of Home Builders, is a professional non-profit trade association. Serving the community we represent the interests and concerns of the consumer, building trades, industry suppliers and all facets of the building industry.*

*The primary goal of our association is to provide quality, affordable housing through community and government involvement, while promoting high standards of professionalism.*

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The March meeting brought us a packed house and some great entertainment. Rodney Ridley did a great job and gave us an hour of laughs. If you weren't able to make it, I hope you will next year.

April is our silent auction at the Hanger (formerly the VFW). This gives everyone a chance at many great items. Come enjoy the entertainment by our famous Larry doing the live auction. Howard Freeman from Macco Flooring is the man in charge of donations. When he and his crew call

please donate and help us make this a great event. April is always a lot of fun and a great opportunity for networking.

We are looking to bring back to life one of the events from the past. Amber Gober from Associated Bank is working on plans for a bus trip. Some of the ideas she is working on is the possibility of a Brewer's game, a parade of homes and a stop at a factory of a home building related product. If you have any ideas or interest in a trip give us a call.

*Sid Sorensen, WABA President*

# JOKE OF THE MONTH

A boy had reached four without giving up the habit of sucking his thumb, though his mother had tried everything from bribery to reasoning to painting it with lemon juice to discourage the habit. Finally she tried threats, warning her son that, "If you don't stop sucking your thumb, your stomach is going to blow up like a balloon." Later that day, walking in the park, mother and son saw a pregnant woman sitting on a bench. The four-year-old considered her gravely for a minute, then spoke to her saying, "Uh-oh ... I know what you've been doing."





## RENEWING

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# LOCAL COMPANIES PROVIDE DIAPERS FOR SMALL CHILDREN



WAUSAU – Team members from REI Engineering, Inc. (REI) and Northwest Petroleum Services, Inc. (NPS) collected nearly 5,000 diapers and \$300 for the Tiny Tots Closet in Wausau. The collection provides a healthy change of diapers for over 175 children in the community for a month.

Tiny Tots Closet, located at St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Wausau, provides two dozen diapers per month to children from low income families. The diaper pantry is open every Tuesday from 10:00 am to noon. Each child age three and under has access to two dozen diapers per month.

"REI is proud to be a community partner and help enhance and support the needs of our community," states REI President Jeny Nieuwenhuis.



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# DINNER OFFER



The WABA is now  
allowing you, the member, to

# BRING A potential MEMBER to a dinner meeting FREE OF CHARGE!

This offer pertains to the regular dinner meetings with the exception of the Christmas Party and summer picnic.

The potential member **MUST** be a business owner or representative of a business that relates to the shelter industry and each potential member is only eligible to attend one meeting free of charge.



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# SILENT AUCTION

***Thursday, April 16, 2015***  
***THE HANGER (VFW CLUBHOUSE)***

*The committee is looking for donations for auction items.  
 If you have items to donate please  
 contact Howard at HowardF@MaccosFlooring.com*

## **WABA SILENT AUCTION DONATION FORM**

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Retail Value of Item: \_\_\_\_\_

*All items must be registered before the auction.*

\_\_\_\_\_ I will deliver the item to the VFW Clubhouse by 5:30 pm the evening of the auction.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please let this serve as my reservation for dinner

\_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Guest: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I cannot attend and would like someone to pick the item up at my office.

Return by Friday, April 10 to: Wausau Area Builders Association, 801 South 24th Ave., Wausau, WI 54401  
 or email to [www.wausauareabuilders.com](http://www.wausauareabuilders.com)





# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MARCH DINNER MEETING

*Photos courtesy of Kyle VanOrder*



# APRIL

# 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			Membership Committe Meeting at 4:30 pm			
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
		POH Committee Meeting - 12:30 pm Home Show Committee Meeting - 4:00 pm		Board Packets Sent - 5:00 pm		
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
		BOARD MEETING - 4 pm		Membership Dinner		
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
	April Membership Renewals Due				ITEMS FOR NEWSLETTER DUE	
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>		



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# MAY

# 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5 POH Committee Meeting - 12:30 pm Home Show Committee Meeting - 4:00 pm	6 Membership Committee Meeting at 4:30 pm	7 Board Packets Sent - 5:00 pm	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 MAY Membership Renewals Due	19 BOARD MEETING - 4 pm	20	21 Membership Dinner	22 ITEMS FOR NEWSLETTER DUE	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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# THE MONDAY MORNING REVIEW



## **Assembly GOP "Term Papers" become public**

Recently an article appeared in the Wisconsin State Journal highlighting a project that concluded last November where members of the Assembly Republican Caucus provided "term papers" to Assembly Speaker Robin Vos to outline issues they thought should be addressed during the upcoming session.

The exercise of using the summer and fall months to come up with big and small ideas to address during an upcoming session is not new to staff and legislators at the state capitol on both sides of the aisle. When the legislature is out of session and before campaigns really heat up after Labor Day this type of research and brainstorming is a good way to "think outside of the box" and come up with new ideas to improve government.

In addition to providing some input on public policy members of the Assembly Republican Caucus were also asked to provide input on the committees they would prefer to chair and the committees that they would like to serve on in 2015-2016.

You can read all of the term papers here but here some highlights related to housing and natural resources that you might find interesting:

Freshman Representative Terry Katsma from the 26th Assembly District and new member of the Assembly Housing Committee state that "Real estate is a key component of the state's economy. How can the state stimulate economic development in the real estate industry?" Katsma also stated "Now that the housing and real estate industry have modestly recovered from the recession it is important for the industry not to over expand." Finally, Katsma was one of the legislators who requested to be a member of the Assembly Housing Committee.

Freshman Representative Romaine Quinn from the 75th Assembly District stated, "Continue to hold the DNR officials accountable for the decisions and the programs they wish to implement. We also need to do a much better job at brining the public in on some of the decisions in order to realize valid concern, and eliminate needless worry and discussion." Quinn requested and received a seat on the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage.

WBA member and State Representative Bob Kulp from the 69th Assembly District stated he wanted to "draft legislation that reaffirms the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as the sole environmental regulator."

The member of the assembly that had the most to say about housing and real estate was freshman State Representative Scott Allen from the 97th Assembly District when he stated some

of his major concerns as "fairness in code compliance and enforcement" and "protection of private property rights including the right to rent one's own property." Representative Allen is now the Vice-Chair of the Assembly Housing Committee.

Other members who requested and were placed on the Assembly Housing Committee by Speaker Vos were Chair John Jagler of the 37th Assembly District and Representative Dave Murphy of the 56th Assembly District.

## **Senate Democrats announce "Wisconsin Families First" Agenda**

The Wisconsin Families First plan focuses on growing Wisconsin's economy by investing in families, businesses and public infrastructure. It will provide greater protections for Wisconsin students, promote good jobs, strengthen health care and invest in local communities.

"We are focused on addressing the issues that matter most to working families, children and seniors in our state," said Senate Democratic Leader Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). "It's time to get to work, tackle the tough issues and do the job that voters elected us to do."

Several legislative proposals to encourage job creation, increase family wages and strengthen local communities have already been proposed by Senate Democrats. Over the coming days and weeks, they plan to introduce additional legislative proposals as part of their Wisconsin Families First agenda.

## **Victory in Sheboygan**

Recently we received word that the City of Sheboygan was in the process of revising their local ordinance that requires contractors to pay fees and take a test that exceeds the provisions of state law on the matter.

Early in the summer of 2014, we sent a letter to Sheboygan's mayor making him aware of the Wisconsin Attorney General Opinion that was issued on the topic saying that locals could not exceed state law on the matter. After receiving no response, we followed up with a letter to the Sheboygan City Attorney that referenced the Wisconsin Attorney General Opinion in addition to a letter from the legal counsel at the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) that specifically addressed Sheboygan's ordinance and offered to work with them to change the ordinance.

The City of Sheboygan is proposing a change to their ordinance that will exempt anyone who has a valid state credential, which is a big step in the right direction. One big question remains... if someone goes to pull a permit in Sheboygan and they do not have the state credential but have the Sheboygan requirements, would they issue the permit? If yes, that is against state law which requires the state credential to issue the permit.

We continue to talk with DPS and the Sheboygan County Home Builders Association on this matter in the hopes that all of the language could be eliminated from the ordinance.

## Elections have consequences: MN vs. WI

The term “elections have consequences” may be overused, but recently while reviewing articles from other states on housing issues, some news from Minnesota can be used as a good example of the old adage.

It was reported that the Builders Association of the Twin Cities (BATC) filed a lawsuit against the State of Minnesota against the new code mandating fire sprinklers in single family homes that exceed 4500 square feet (with basements included in the square footage).

In addition to the lawsuit against the fire sprinkler mandate, BATC is also filing a lawsuit against the state objecting to new energy efficiency standards in the one- and two-family building code.

Fortunately we do not have these serious challenges in Wisconsin. There has been no effort to mandate fire sprinklers in residential structures and even if there were, it would be greeted unfavorably by the legislative majorities in Wisconsin.

On the energy code issues, the Dwelling Code Council discussed these changes in early 2014 and decided that the changes provided very little in energy efficiency gains and would have cost the average homeowner in excess of \$5000 per home. This change was unanimously rejected and is not part of a code package that is still making its way through the process.

### WBA Advocacy efforts' effect on business...we need your testimonials!

Sometimes it is tricky to boil down why WBA's advocacy efforts are important to members and nonmembers alike in a few key talking points. One way to do that quickly and easily is by getting personal testimonials from members and Executive Officers from across the state on how recent WBA advocacy efforts have had a positive effect on their business and helped to improve housing in our state.

### We have an incredible story to tell and we need your help to do it!

We already have some good examples of personal testimonial from builders, developers and Executive Officers, but we need more for an upcoming article in the WBA Badger Builder on this important topic.

Please take five minutes to write up a few sentences on a recent WBA advocacy provision that made a difference to your business and improved housing in Wisconsin. From the improved wall bracing rule, changes to DATCP, or the changes that allow a developer to use a bond over a letter of credit when dealing with a municipality, we need your stories!

### Update on more uniform commercial building code

2013 Wisconsin Act 270 established the Wisconsin Uniform Commercial Building Code. The previous Commercial Building Code acted as a minimum standard and allowed municipalities to enact local ordinances to supplement the Code. The Wisconsin Uniform Commercial Building Code replaced the previous Commercial Building Code and eliminated municipal variations. However, Act 270 allowed municipalities to submit ordinances relating to fire detection, prevention, and suppression to the Department of Safety and Professional Services for review and “grandfathering” into Wisconsin Uniform Commercial Building Code if the submitted ordinances went above and beyond the provisions included in the Wisconsin Uniform

Commercial Building Code.

The Department of Safety and Professional Services has completed its review of all municipal ordinances submitted under Act 270. The results are posted for public reference on the Department's website.

The Wisconsin Uniform Commercial Building Code went into effect upon publication, April 16, 2014. The grandfathered ordinances will be in effect as of the date of posting, January 26, 2015. No municipal commercial building ordinances, including those now grandfathered by the Department, were in effect between 4/16/2014 and 1/26/2015. Any commercial buildings permitted during that time are required to comply only with the Wisconsin Uniform Commercial Building Code.

### Walker makes another move towards running for president

On the heels of a well received speech in Iowa comes the announcement of a political organization by Governor Walker to continue his move towards running for President in 2016.

The 527 organization is called “Our American Revival” and is being lead by key Walker advisor Rick Wiley.

With the launch of Our American Revival came what some are calling Governor Walker's first commercial for the Presidency. The video promoting the new group can be viewed here.

Brad Boycks

WBA Director of Government and Political Affairs

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## NEW MARKETING AND SALES COURSE FOR BUILDING PROFESSIONALS

The days of “build it and they will buy” have become a thing of the past. Today, customers are much more demanding and selective, and thanks to the world of technology, they are also well educated.

Big companies have the budget and staff to do the kind of advertising, media and public relations outreach it takes to drive consumers to buy. Though more constrained, smaller companies also have to market their services, but they may not know what to do, when to do it or how to tell if it worked.

How do you stand out from the crowd and make your brand relevant?

The first step is to take the newly revised Marketing and Sales for Building Professionals **online course** from NAHB Education. For three consecutive Tuesdays (April 7, 14 and 21) from 1-3 p.m. ET, experienced co-instructors – Beverly Koehn and Dianne Beaton – will overview the tools available today to help you build your unique brand and a positive reputation.

After this course, you'll be ready to effectively engage and motivate potential customers, clients and referral partners to choose your product or services.

More specifically, participants will learn how to:

- Gather and organize market data
- Use market information to determine the most profitable locations, types and pricing for new home construction
- Describe methods for generating and



attracting buyers for your product

- Identify an effective process for selling your product to customers

This course offers six continuing education hours and counts toward the Certified Graduate Builder (CGB) in the Sales, Marketing and Land section and the Certified Graduate Remodeler (CGR) in the Marketing and Advertising section.

Make sure to register by April 6. After April 6, there is a \$50 cancellation fee. To register: <http://www.nahb.org>

# COMMITTEES UPDATES

## EVENTS

April 16th Dinner Meeting is our "Silent Auction"...and will be held @ The Hanger (formally VFW)  
May 21st Dinner Meeting (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE) will be held @ The Elk's with "Entertainment of a

Magician" and July 30th Thursday Night (Budgeted under the WABA Picnic)...will be the "First Ever"...Tailgate Event starting @ 5:35 through 7:35 "ALL YOU CAN EAT & DRINK for 2 hours" with the Woodchuck Game starting @ 7:05 PM. Then the WABA will

have reserved seating for our entire group in the stands, to watch a great Woodchuck game!! More info. later...So Please Mark Your Calendar's!!  
Director/ Chair of Events, Gloria J. Fenhaus

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## WHEDA Development Training Program

Learn about developing affordable rental housing in your community. Hear from Wisconsin industry leaders about the many facets of affordable housing development including market demand, planning, financing feasibility, funding sources and much more!

**April 15-16, 2015**

8:00AM-4:30PM

**April 17, 2015**

8:00AM-3:00PM

WHEDA Milwaukee Office

*140 S 1st Street, Milwaukee, WI 53204*

**May 20-21, 2015**

8:00AM-4:30PM

**May 22, 2015**

8:00AM-3:00PM

Northcentral Technical College

*1000 W Campus Drive, Rm CBI 110*

*Wausau, WI 54401*

For more information and to register visit  
[www.wheda.com/developmentprogram](http://www.wheda.com/developmentprogram)

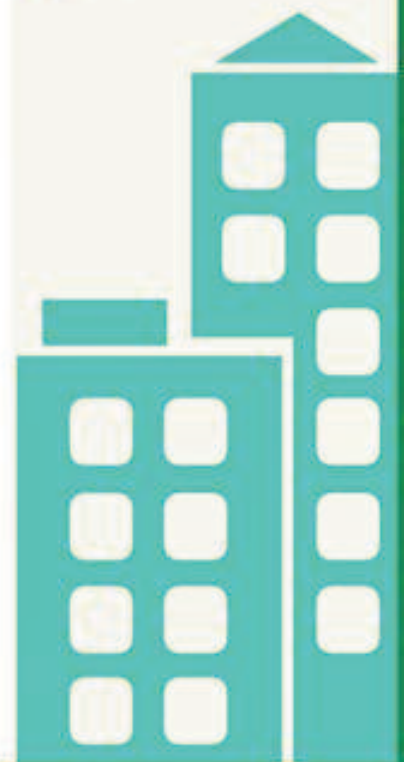
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February 8, 2015

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Friends  
Wausau Area Builders Association  
801 S. 24th Avenue  
Wausau WI 54401

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your recent donation of prepared food for the clients at The Women's Community.

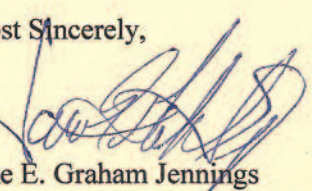
Your donation is greatly appreciated and very gratifying. Your continued support is invaluable.

Your donation is tax deductible and this letter serves as your official receipt of your donation. No goods or services have been provided on behalf of The Women's Community, Inc. in consideration for this contribution.

The Women's Community is a vital part of our community, providing services to victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. Just a few of the things we do are providing lifesaving shelter for women and children escaping abusive relationships; legal advocacy through the court systems, 24 hour crisis intervention, community education in schools, businesses and churches, advocating for victims of domestic violence in later life, and our Healing Through Art Program.

Your gifts help us to continue to offer services to anyone in our community who needs them. On behalf of our Clients, The Board of Directors and The Women's Community staff, we THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts for your support.

Most Sincerely,

  
Jane E. Graham Jennings  
Executive Director





## APRIL IS NEW HOMES MONTH!

*Taken from Home Building, Sales & Marketing, March 2015*

Each year, NAHB provides an online toolkit of resources to help members promote the advantages of newly constructed homes during New Homes Month in April. Resources include consumer articles, print ads, website banners, radio spot scripts, talking points, and a news release template that are available to download and customize for local use.

Some highlights of this year's resources include:

- Updated print advertisements that promote the benefits of homeownership
- News columns covering a variety of topics that you can use for your website or newsletter, including the value of homeownership and the latest design trends
- A customizable press release on the advantages of newly built homes
- Sample social media posts that you can use on Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms
- A brief video promoting the outstanding features and value of new homes

You can access the New Homes Month Toolkit at [nahb.org/newhomesmonth](http://nahb.org/newhomesmonth), or contact Anne Baker for more information at 800-368-5242, x 8447.

## In need of **MORE SPACE?**

If a new home is in your future, contact the experienced mortgage lenders at Peoples to help explore your options.

### Financing Options

- Fixed Rate
- Adjustable
- Vacant Land
- Seasonal Properties
- Construction Loans

### Specialty Programs

- WHEDA
- USDA Rural Housing
- Federal VA
- FHA
- Condominiums



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