

LET'S LEVEL

the Official Publication of the Wausau Area Builders Association

JUNE 2016
VOLUME 35 - ISSUE 6

2016 SPRING

parade
OF HOMES

JUNE
7-12

details inside



WABA GOLF SCRAMBLE

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2016

10:30 LUNCH/REGISTRATION

11:30 SHOTGUN START

Pine Valley Golf Course

- Cash prizes for scratch and peoria
- 18 Holes with cart
- Beverage tickets
- Subs for Lunch and Steaks for Dinner
- Goody Bags - Door & Raffle Prizes

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Dinner Only - \$15

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*Registration and more
information inside
the newsletter*





801 South 24th Ave.
Wausau, WI 54401
Phone (715) 842-9510
www.WausauAreaBuilders.com

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Vice-President Cory Sillars
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Past President Sid Sorensen
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Through 2018: Roger Lang, Keith Koenig,
Travis Hoffman

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Nominations Arden Emmerich
Parade of Homes Travis Hoerman/Sam McLellan
Personnel James Wanserski
Scholarship Jerry Jarosz
Silent Auction Amber Gober
Golf Outing Phil Pesanka
Sporting Clay Larry Meyer
Website Warren Pope
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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



I would like to congratulate and thank Amber Gober and the Silent Auction committee for all the time and effort they contributed to make our April meeting and Silent Auction a great success! This is a signature event to support one of our main purposes, which is to be influential in the political arena. Proceeds from the evening went to support our WBA Builder-Pac Fund which gives you the ability to influence the politics that affect your business.

We also just had our last meeting of the season at the fabulous Greenwood Hills Country Club, with a super Foundation of Knowledge session before the meeting, and a great relaxing dinner afterward. Thank you Gloria Fenhaus and Alex Forer for planning these activities.

Our next Public event is the 2016 Parade of Homes, with more entrants than we have had in many years. We even have enough interest that there is a second Builder bus running on Monday for us! Last I heard there were still a few seats left. Shout out some thanks to Sam McLellan and Travis Hoerman for heading up the event this year.

Following that will be our Golf outing later in June, please note that your association is subsidizing the cost of member participation in this activity such that your golf cost will only be \$50. Let Phil Pesanka know you appreciate his efforts as chairman.

Don't miss our summer picnic at the Woodchucks, our Events committee, Gloria Fenhaus, has worked hard to plan a great outing for us again this year.

And to round out the summer, watch for the Sporting Clay shoot in August, we anticipate this will fill faster than last year due to our advance partnership with the Never Forgotten Honor Flight. Larry Meyer and Alex Forer get the round of applause for making this fun.

Have a great summer!

Russ Utech, WABA President





MEMBER INFORMATION

NEW MEMBERS

*Blenker Building Systems Inc.
Down to Earth Greenhouse
Maher Water corporation
Solid Rock Builders*

RENEWING

*Cellcom
CertainTeed Corporation
Color Creations LLC
Dombeck Custom Cabinets
Elite Custom Cabinetry Inc.
Furniture & ApplianceMart
Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints Inc.
Johnson Brothers Construction
Kolbe Construction LLC
Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork Co. Inc.
Kolbe Gallery, Central Wisconsin
Marathon County Buyers Guide
Morgan Sand & Gravel LLC
Mystic Tile
Olson Floor covering
Overhead Door
Precision Homes LLC
Re/Max Excel
Ruffi Law Offices S.C.
Scotties Interiors
Virtual Vision
Wilhelm Lumber LLC
Woodstock Hardwood Flooring LLC*

NEW APPLICATIONS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

*Hello Members! Time to get ready for our July Picnic Event!! It's another GREAT Woodchucks Game to enjoy!! (WI Woodchucks vs. Lakeshore Chinooks) Our WABA July Picnic will be held on Thursday, July 21st @ the Beautiful (Newly Renovated) Athletic Park, located @ 324 E. Wausau Avenue - Wausau. Here's the scoop! Our Wonderful WABA evening will start in the Pepsi Tailgate Area at 5:35 PM and food & beverages will be served until the end of the 2nd inning! (Game starts @ 6:35 PM with 1st pitch) It's a "All You Care To Eat and Drink + Beer Ticket Package" and it includes: Standard ballpark fare (brats, buns, burgers, hot dogs and chips, sides, Pepsi products, Miller Lite and Culligan water) and a reserved seat game ticket in OUR OWN reserved section, whenever you're ready to watch the game! And the cost to you for ALL of this?? How's \$5.00??! That's right...only 5 bucks per person!! (Children 2 and under/ FREE) Wow! Lets beat our last years' attendance...134 people! So mark your calendars members & guests...and get ready for a fun evening!! Come on out to watch OUR Woodchucks play some great baseball...and mingle with your WABA friends!! It's always a GREAT time!! Watch for your reservation & sign up...and we'll see you all there!! Mrs. Gloria Fenhaus
Director & Chairman of Events*

NEW REP

Alex Martindale is our new rep for the NAHB. She is more than happy to help with any questions regarding member benefits or what NAHB does for its members and the industry as a whole. Please give her a call with any questions or concerns.



**National Association
of Home Builders**

Alex Martindale
Regional Field Representative
(Region C)

1201 15th Street NW
Washington, DC 20005

D 202.266.8638
T 800.368.5242 x8638
amartindale@nahb.org

JOKE OF THE MONTH

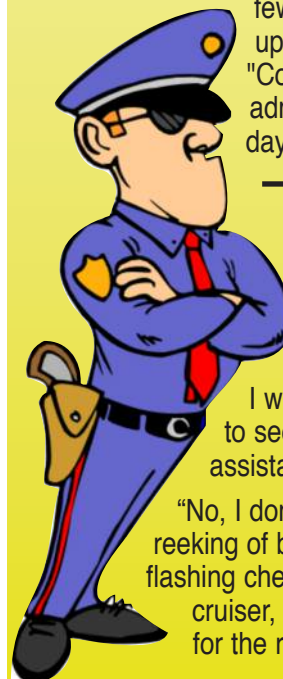
Three nurses went to heaven, and were awaiting their turn with St. Peter to plead their case to enter the pearly gates. The first nurse said, "I worked in an emergency room. We tried our best to help patients, even though occasionally we did lose one. I think I deserve to go to heaven." St. Peter looks at her file and admits her to heaven.



The second nurse says, "I worked in an operating room. It's a very high stress environment and we do our best. Sometimes the patients are too sick and we lose them, but overall we try very hard." St. Peter looks at her file and admits her to heaven.

The third nurse says, "I was a case manager for an HMO."

St. Peter looks at her file. He pulls out a calculator and starts punching away at it furiously, constantly going back to the nurse's file. After a few minutes St. Peter looks up, smiles, and says, "Congratulations! You've been admitted to heaven ... for five days!"



I had just pulled over someone for driving under the influence when another car pulled up behind us. I stopped what I was doing and ventured back to see if the driver needed assistance.

"No, I don't need any help," he said, reeking of booze. Then, pointing to the flashing cherry top on the roof of my cruiser, he continued, "I just stopped for the red light."

JUNE

2016

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



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JULY

2016

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

What's in a name?



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THE MONDAY MORNING REVIEW



Property Rights Bills Become Law

Recently Governor Scott Walker signed two WBA-backed bills to expand landowner property rights in Wisconsin. State Senator Frank Lasee (R-Green Bay) and State Representative Adam Jarchow (R-Balsam Lake) were the co-authors of both bills, and worked tirelessly

to get both pieces of legislation passed to conclude the 2015-2016 legislative session.

One of the bills, Assembly Bill 582 (AB 582), was signed in northwestern Wisconsin at a bill signing that included WBA members Ron Derrick and Scott McCormack. AB 582 has now become 2015 Wisconsin Act 391.

2015 Wisconsin Act 391 forbids a city, village, town, or county from prohibiting or unreasonably restricting the sale or transfer of title to any interest in real property, requires political subdivisions to provide a method for landowners to receive written notice of potential action that may affect the allowable use of the landowner's property, provides that a setback line from the ordinary high-water mark established by a professional land surveyor may be legally relied upon for the purposes of development near a water body, makes changes to shoreland zoning laws related to runoff control structures and utility equipment, and requires an economic impact analysis of a proposed administrative rule to include an analysis of the ways in which and the extent to which the proposed rule would place any limitations on the free use of private property.

The provision above that allows for a professional land surveyor to determine the setback for building and remodeling near a waterway is an issue that WBA has had on its legislative agenda for the past decade.

"Municipalities in Wisconsin must notify our citizens if a zoning change is going to affect the use of their property," Governor Walker said. "This bill clarifies zoning regulations, and makes additional changes to protect the property owners in our state."

In a bill signing ceremony in Green Bay, Governor Walker was also joined by members Steve Atkins, Steve Gryboski, Pat Kaster, and Brown County Home Builders Association Executive Officer Mari Charles. Senate Bill 459 (SB 459) was signed into law, and has now become 2015 Wisconsin Act 387.

2015 Wisconsin Act 387, adds bodies of water that contain a sensitive area to the list of Areas of Special Natural Resource Interest (ASNRI), and requires each waterway listed as an ASNRI to be published on a map on the website of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It also makes changes to areas designated as ASNRIs by removing waters or portions of waters that contain endangered or threatened species or aquatic elements as defined and identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory, as well as waters in areas identified in a special management plan or special inventory study. Finally, the bill also modifies the legal definition of a boathouse so that they don't need to be continuously used for boat storage of a watercraft, and additionally specifies that foundation repair is included under allowable maintenance and repair of these structures.

The provision in 2015 Wisconsin Act 387 that may have the most in-the-field significance is the change to the "practicable alternative" analysis that will require that standard to only apply to property that a landowner currently owns; it will no longer include options on land that someone does not currently hold title to (as was the process before this law change).

Thank you to all of the members and local HBA staff members who partnered with the WBA to help shepherd these two very important bills through the legislative process; it ultimately ended in huge wins for more affordable housing options in Wisconsin.

DSPS Provides Guidance on Foundation/Sill Plate Details in 321.22(10)

Since the revisions to the Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) took effect on January 1, 2016 we have heard back from members that one issue that needed a better solution and guidance from the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) dealt with challenges with the exposure of insulation at the foundation of a home.

WBA reached out to DSPS staff and alerted them to this issue. WBA also worked extensively with member Joe Nagan of Home Building Technology Services on a simple, cost effective solution to this issue.

DSPS has signed off on a solution to this issue that will soon appear in the Uniform Dwelling Code Commentary that will be officially published by the department soon. As an added value of your membership, we were able to obtain an advance copy of that solution that you can access by clicking [here](#).

Advocacy Group Ponders Issues for 2017-2018

In mid-April the WBA Advocacy Group met for the first time since the conclusion of the 2015-2016 legislative session, with an eye on building our agenda for the upcoming legislative session. Even though we are coming off another strong legislative session where we accomplished a great deal, there are always additional issues to cover.

To start our group meeting, we were joined by Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steinke (R-Kaukauna) to get an update from the GOP perspective on the overall highlights from the recently concluded session. Majority Leaders Steinke mentioned the passage of the state budget, Right to Work, closing the skills gap, and modernization of Wisconsin's campaign finance laws as some legislative highlights.

With a look to the general election in November, Steinke mentioned the northwestern part of the state as the key area for assembly republicans. There will be open seats in the 67th (Rep. Larson), 29th (Rep. Murtha), and 30th (Rep. Knudson) assembly districts due to retirements. Other seats in the area are very close in the numbers and will likely be competitive as well, including the 75th (Rep. Quinn), 68th (Rep. Bernier), and 93rd (Rep. Petryk).

Some of the items that the Advocacy Group discussed and agreed should be put on the draft WBA 2017-2018 Advocacy Agenda included:

- Minor clean-up items in the "Right to Cure" law
- Changes to TRANS 233 to allow flexibilities for minor projects in highway right of ways (landscaping, signs, parking lots) that the current rule does not allow
- Find a way to assure that municipalities are not able to use "police powers" to regulate things like shoreland zoning and code changes that exceed the statewide uniform code
- Assure that municipalities are not able to require homes be constructed with new or higher code standards for one and two family homes via a developer's agreement
- Transfer the current duties of the Building Inspector Review Board and the Contractor Certification Council to the Uniform Dwelling Code Council
- Make the statute of limitations 3 years for new construction and remodeling projects

We will again be talking about additions to the WBA Advocacy Agenda during our July 28th meeting, with the goal of presenting the WBA Board of Directors with a final agenda for approval during their meeting on October 6th.

If you have additional suggestions on issues to be discussed during our July 28th meeting, please e-mail them to Brad at bboycks@wisbuild.org.

Speaker Paul Ryan Shows Us the Money

The first full campaign finance report since Congressman Paul Ryan became Speaker of the House Paul Ryan was made available recently, showing a very impressive fundraising effort.

First reported by Wispolitics.com, Speaker Ryan showed a collective fundraising number of \$17.2 million in the first quarter of 2016, with majority of those dollars, \$11.1 million to be exact, going to the House GOP campaign arm.

In a press release promoting the recent huge fundraising haul, Susan Jacobson, Finance Director for Ryan for Congress, said: "Southern Wisconsin residents know Paul and they know what he stands for. The outpouring of support from the grassroots and conservatives has been really encouraging, and Paul is incredibly grateful. Paul will continue to provide principled representation and timely constituent service to the people of the 1st District."

Home Builders, Others File Suit Over Silica Rule

From NAHB: Eight construction industry organizations including the Texas Association of Builders filed a petition for review today of the final crystalline silica rule by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

The affiliated national organizations for these groups—NAHB, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, American Subcontractors Association, Associated Builders and Contractors, The Associated General Contractors of America, Mason Contractors Association of America and Mechanical Contractors Association of America—will join the petition.

The construction industry raised numerous concerns regarding OSHA's proposal, but the agency failed to address many of these issues when promulgating the final rule. In particular, the industry presented substantial evidence that OSHA's proposed permissible exposure limit (PEL) was technologically and economically infeasible.

The groups are concerned that the agency failed to take into account this evidence and moved forward with the same infeasible PEL in the final rule. This and other final rule provisions display a fundamental misunderstanding of the real world of construction. The construction industry petitioners continue to be active participants in the rulemaking process and are dedicated to promoting healthy and safe construction jobsites.

For additional information, contact Rob Matuga at 800-368-5242 x8507.

Brad Boycks

WBA Director of Government and Political Affairs
WisconsinBuildersAssociation@bboycks@wisbuild.org
(608) 242-5151 ext.16

Visit our web site: www.wisbuild.org

MAY DINNER MEETING

Awards were given to Dan Sillars, Larry Meyer and Gloria Fenhaus for recruiting a new builder member.

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WABA Golf Scramble

Friday, June 24, 2016

10:30 Lunch/Registration

11:30 Shotgun Start



Pine Valley Golf Course

- Cash Prizes for Scratch and Peoria
- 18 Holes with Cart
- Beverage Tickets
- Subs for lunch and Steaks for Dinner
- Goody Bags-Door prizes- Raffle Prizes

All Are Welcome

\$50 Per Golfer

Golf only \$35- Dinner only \$15

We will pair you up and put you on a Team
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2 free mulligan's per golfer-*Scramble Format*

Team/Company Name _____ Primary Contact _____
E-Mail _____ Phone Number _____

Player 1:

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Player 2:

_____ ☐ golf only

Player 3:

_____ ☐ golf only

Player 4:

_____ ☐ golf only

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Dinner Sponsor - \$75 _____

Beer Hole - \$150 (includes ¼ barrel- 2 available) _____

Beverage Cart Sponsor- \$75 (Unavailable) _____

Hole in One-4 (\$1,000 value prize by sponsor) _____

Putting Contest - \$75 (\$100 prize by sponsor) _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please mail registration and payment to the above address before June 15, 2016 to secure your spot. To ensure a sign for your sponsorship please have in by June 10th.

Philip J Pesanka ***** 715-298-4186 ***** ppesanka@abbybank.com

Committee Chairman

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We Welcome Raffle Prize Donations **OR** Goody Bag Items!!

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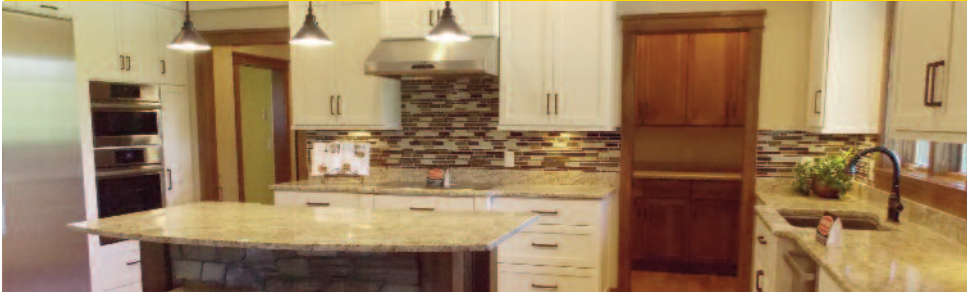
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2016 SPRING

parade OF HOMES



HOME 1

SORENSEN CONSTRUCTION

Address: 207 Freedom Way, Wausau

Directions: From Grand Avenue, head north on 6th Street to east (right) on Franklin Street to south (right) on Freedom Way. Home is located on left side of road.

HOME 2

ROYALTY CUSTOM HOMES

Address: 1700 Wildlife Court, Wausau

Directions: From Home #1 go west on Franklin to North (right) on 6th Street to east (right) on Wausau Ave/Hwy 52 to south (right) on 15th Street. At bottom of hill turn right on Wildlife Court.

**HOME
3**

MORK CONTRACTING & DESIGN, LLC

Address: 3718 N 14th St., Wausau

Directions: From Home #2 go west on Wausau Ave/Hwy 52 to north (right) on 6th St. to east (right) on Golf Club Road to north (left) on North 14th street.

**HOME
4**

DENYON HOMES

Address: 3216 Ridgewood Dr, Weston

Directions: From Home #3 go west on Golf Club Road to south (left) on 6th Street to west (right) on Bridge Street. Cross over I-39 and take the next right (north) on Westwood Drive to west (left) on West Wausau Avenue to south (left) on N. 32nd Avenue to west (right) on Ridgewood Drive.

**HOME
5**

JEREMY VOIGT CONSTRUCTION

Address: 480 Artesian Way, Wausau

Directions: From Home #4 go east on West Wausau Avenue to south (right) on 28th Avenue to west (right) on Hilltop Avenue to north (right) on 48th Avenue to west (left) on Artesian Way.

**HOME
6**

TIMBER RIVER CUSTOM HOMES & DESIGN

Address: 6604 Sarissa Dr., Wausau

Directions: From Home #5 go east on Hilltop Road to south (right) on 44th Ave. to east (left) on Stettin Drive. Go west (right) on Stewart Avenue to north (right) on S. 68th Avenue to east (right) on Sarissa Drive.

**HOME
7**

JIM VOIGT CONSTRUCTION LLC

Address: 7060 Antler Circle, Wausau

Directions: From Home #6 go south on S. 68th Ave to west (right) on Stewart Avenue to north (right) on 72nd Avenue to east (right) on Antler Circle.

**HOME
8**

PRIME DESIGN CONSTRUCTION LLC

Address: 1710 Sonnentag Rd., Marathon

Directions: From Home #7 go south on 72nd Ave to west (right) on Hwy 29 to south (left) on Hwy 107 to west (right) on 3rd Street. Head straight onto Sonnentag Rd.

**HOME
9**

JEREMY VOIGT CONSTRUCTION

Address: 262 Beans Eddy Rd., Mosinee

Directions: From Home #8 go south on Hwy 107 to east (left) on Hwy 153 to south (right) on South Range Line Road to South (left) after bend to Beans Eddy Road.

Alternate Directions: Hwy 29 east to I39 South to west on Hwy 153 through Mosinee.

**HOME
10**

TRIM CRAFTERS LLC

Address: 11410 Timber River Trail, Wausau

Directions: From Home #9 go north on Range Line Road. Cross over Hwy 153 and continue north to west (left) on Main Street/Hwy B to north (right) on Hwy KK/Bittersweet Road to east (right) on Whisper Road to south (right) on Timber River Trail.

HOME 11

TRIM CRAFTERS LLC

Address: 2507 Juniper Lane, Wausau

Directions: om Home #10 go north on Bittersweet/Hwy KK to east (right) on Juniper Lane.

HOME 12

KOLBY CONSTRUCTION LLC

Address: N4718 Hwy OO, Eland

Directions: From Home #11 go east on Juniper to north (left) on Magnolia to east (right) on Hwy N to right on Rib Mountain Drive. Take I-39 south to Hwy 29 east. Take 29 east to north (left) on County Road D to east (right) on County Road OO.

HOME 13

TLD CONSTRUCTION

Address: 7115 Kiowa Ln., Weston

Directions: From Home #12 go west on Hwy 29 to north (right) on Camp Phillips/Hwy X to east (right) on Ross Avenue. Head through the roundabout and go south (right) on Riverbend Rd. to east (left) on Kiowa Lane.

Alternate Directions: Hwy 29 to north on Hwy J to west (left) on Gusman Road to south (left) on Kramer Lane to west (right) on Kiowa Lane.

HOME 14

DENYON HOMES

Address: 7203 Executive Ct., Weston

Directions: From Home #13 go west on Kiowa to north (right) on Apache Lane to north (right) on Estate drive to east (right) on Executive Court.

Alternate Directions: Ross Avenue past roundabout to right on River Bend Drive to left on Apache Lane to left on Estate Drive to right on Executive Court.

HOME 15

TIMBER RIVER CUSTOM HOMES & DESIGN

Address: 7207 Executive Ct., Weston

Directions: From Home #14 home is two homes to the left.

Alternate Directions: Ross Avenue past roundabout to right on River Bend Drive to left on Apache Lane to left on Estate Drive to right on Executive Court.

HOME 16

BUCKTRAIL BUILDERS LLC

Address: 7209 Executive Ct., Weston

Directions: From Home #15 home is one home to the left.

Alternate Directions: Ross Avenue past roundabout to right on River Bend Drive to left on Apache Lane to left on Estate Drive to right on Executive Court.

HOME 17

LARRY MEYER CONSTRUCTION

Address: 1912 Hidden Trail Dr., Wausau

Directions: From Home #16 Riverbend Road to west (left) on Ross Avenue to north (right) on Northwestern Ave to east (right) on Milwaukee Ave to right on Hidden Trail Drive.

Alternate Directions: Grand Ave to right on Townline Road to right on Northwestern Avenue to left on Milwaukee Avenue to right on Hidden Trail Drive.



SPORTING CLAYS SHOOT

FRIDAY AUG. 19, 2016

WAUSAU SKEET & TRAP CLUB, BROKAW

Registration 8:00 am

Shotgun Start 9:00 am (Rain or Shine)

\$75 per shooter - \$350/5 person - \$425/6 person

Single entries accepted - teams will be assembled

REGISTRATION FEE INCLUDES:

16 Sporting Clay Shooting Stations • Lunch and Refreshments

Raffles will be available for an additional cost.

Five or Six Shooters per Team / 100 Rounds per Shooter

Side Events Available: Fur & Feather, Flurry - \$5 each

Bring your own shells – 5 or 6 boxes of shot size 7-1/2, 8 or 9 only

Personal Four-wheeler transportation is allowed.

EYE AND EAR PROTECTION REQUIRED - NO EXCEPTIONS!

Business Name: _____ Phone: _____

Shooter #1 _____ Phone: _____

Shooter #2 _____ Phone: _____

Shooter #3 _____ Phone: _____

Shooter #4 _____ Phone: _____

Shooter #5 _____ Phone: _____

NO RESERVATION IS SECURE WITHOUT FULL PAYMENT

96 SHOOTERS MAXIMUM

Mail Registration with payment to:

PO Box 1241, Wausau, WI 54402

Call Larry Meyer with questions at 715-848-0518

or email larry@larrymeyerconstruction.com



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SAFETY

Article courtesy of NAHB Now

NAHB Hopes to Improve Fire Reporting System



The National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) wants NAHB to help improve a tool that both associations hope will better pinpoint how and why fires start and spread — and thus further reduce the number of annual home fire fatalities.

NAHB will be happy to help, Second Vice Chair Randy Noel and Construction, Codes and Standards Committee leaders told NASFM officials when they met in Washington earlier in May.

The U.S. Fire Administration maintains the National Fire Incident Reporting System so fire departments and other first responders can submit reports. Participating fire departments report about 22 million incidents and 1 million fires every year, which officials estimate represent about 75% of all reported fires.

The data is valuable, but NAHB has long maintained that it could be better, especially when it comes to home fires. For example, fire departments currently aren't required to include the age of the structure in which the fire took place. Age helps investigators determine the prevailing building code at time of construction, likely materials and a host of other valuable information.

In cases where the age of the home is known, the data overwhelmingly points to older homes, which are more likely to have outdated appliances and heating systems that can spark a fire.

Insurance companies also collect fire statistics, and including that additional information in the national database would also be helpful, Noel told the fire marshals. But unfortunately, that data is proprietary to those companies and cannot be included.

For additional information on home fires and building codes, contact Dan Buuck at 800-368-5242 x8366.



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Member to Member Discounts

“The Membership Committee is seeking your help to increase the benefits of a WABA membership by starting a Member to Member Discount section in the monthly newsletter. Is there a discount that you currently offer or would be willing to start offering to fellow WABA members? Member to Member discounts can help to grow an association in many ways. By contributing to this practice you will increase your network of Builders and Associates, increase your exposure through free marketing in the newsletter and increase your sales. Please take part in this exciting new promotion by sending in this completed form.

Thanks, WABA Membership Committee"

- Add value for all WABA members
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If you would be interested in a complimentary listing on our Member to Member Discount page, please complete & return.

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Return to: Carolyn@wausauareabuilders.com, 801 S. 24th Avenue, Wausau, WI 54401

YOUR MONEY

Article courtesy of The New York Times via Housing Headlines

Tips for House Hunting in a Seller's Market



A lack of homes for sale in many parts of the country is making house hunting a challenge this spring, especially for first-time buyers.

Tight housing inventories have pushed up home prices in many metropolitan markets, creating bidding wars for some properties, real estate experts say.

Real estate is highly local, of course, and trends range by city and by neighborhood. But nationally, home prices in March were up nearly 7 percent from a year ago, and up 2 percent from February, according to the latest data from CoreLogic.

The dearth of inventory is particularly acute for entry-level homes, said Svenja Gudell, the chief economist at the real estate website Zillow. "First-time homebuyers are having a tough time," she said, "because so few homes are available."

Nationally, 6 percent fewer homes are on the market compared with a year ago, and there are 10 percent fewer entry-level homes, according to March data from Zillow. Some markets are particularly tight: Portland, Ore., has 40 percent fewer entry-level homes, and Charlotte, N.C., has 35 percent fewer.

The reasons for the tight inventory vary, Ms. Gudell said. In some areas, homeowners are still underwater — meaning they owe more than their home is worth — so they are unable or unwilling to sell until prices rise more and they gain equity.

In other markets, the lack of new home construction is contributing to the problem. Homeowners who want to sell their homes and trade up can't find a suitable new home, so they stay put — keeping their property off the market.

The lack of homes on the market has also helped raise rents, so investors who bought single-family homes during the downturn are making good money renting them out and aren't in a hurry to sell, said Greg Jaeger, president of USAA Residential Real Estate Services, a brokerage affiliated with USAA Bank.

Lee Ritchie, a real estate agent with Re/Max Metro Plus in Columbus, Ohio, said inventory in the city was generally low, especially in downtown neighborhoods where people can walk to parks and shops. "It's multiple offers on every property," she said. She said she spent a lot of time explaining to buyers that they should make their best offer right away, and move quickly if they see a home they like. "Sometimes," she said in an email, "a buyer has to lose a home or two before they really comprehend how aggressive they need to be in order to win."

Many markets are favorable for sellers. Kim Stone said she was thrilled to have several inquiries about her family's two-bedroom, two-bath home, in a desirable neighborhood near San Antonio, within hours after it was listed in March. The house was made available on a Thursday, shown on Friday and went under contract that weekend to an all-cash buyer — for 10 percent above the asking price. She, her husband and their two children are now living in an apartment while their new home is under construction.

Buyers, though, may have to be patient. Kat Doucette, a real estate lawyer in San Antonio, said she and her husband searched for months before buying in an up-and-coming part of the city known as Southtown. Many properties were overpriced, she said, given the renovations needed. “I did a lot of research,” she said. The couple finally bought a home last August and are in the midst of adding a bathroom. Her advice? Know what you are looking for and be ready to pounce when you find it, but “don’t pay too much.”

Here are some questions and answers about buying a home this spring:

■ *What can I do to prepare to buy a house in a tight market?*

Get preapproved for a mortgage, so the seller knows you are serious, and make sure you have a preapproval letter, rather than one saying you are merely “prequalified,” said Tom Salomone, president of the National Association of Realtors. “There’s a big difference.” Prequalification may be based on verbal information given by the borrower, he said, while preapproval means the lender has run a credit check, verified your income and has authorized a loan for a specific amount of money.

■ *Are there other ways, besides price, to make my offer attractive?*

Putting down as large a deposit as possible shows you’re serious, Mr. Salomone said. And agreeing to requests that reduce hassles for the seller can help, too. For instance, if the seller asks to leave behind a backyard swing set, you may want to agree — even if your children are too old to play on it. “Let them leave it, and you can take care of it,” he said. “It may be advantageous.”

In areas with extremely low inventories, buyers may have to go further. Traditionally, a home inspection is done after an offer is made and accepted. Contracts typically contain language allowing the buyer to negotiate repairs if the inspection turns up problems. In some tight markets, like Seattle, buyers are having homes preinspected at their own cost, seeking to appeal to the seller by making an offer without a contingency clause, Ms. Gudell said. That can get expensive if shoppers end up making multiple offers; inspections can range from \$150 for a basic walk-through to \$800 or more for a detailed inspection.

■ *What’s happening with home mortgage rates?*

One bright spot for house hunters is that mortgage rates are remaining low. The average rate on a 30-year fixed mortgage was 3.61 percent for the week that ended May 5, according to Freddie Mac. Shoppers seeking home loans, however, should be prepared to provide detailed financial information because of tougher requirements since the financial crisis. “Much more documentation is needed,” Mr. Salomone said. To minimize delays, he said, have tax returns, pay stubs and W-2 forms on hand when you meet with your lender.

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