

# LET'S LEVEL

*the Official Publication of the Wausau Area Builders Association*



## *March Dinner Meeting*

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*Thursday, March 22nd*

*At the Great Dane*

*Cocktails at 6 pm, dinner at 7 pm*

**MARCH 2018, VOLUME 37**

### **OUR MISSION:**

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 customer, building trades, industry suppliers, and all facets of the building industry.

CALENDAR OF  
— EVENTS —

*April 26th  
Silent  
Auction  
at Weston Lanes*





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

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Vice-President ..... Kyle VanOrder  
Secretary ..... Shelly Talley-Nelsen  
Treasurer ..... Cindy Zuleger  
Past President ..... Cory Sillars  
Business Manager ..... Cara Spatz

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Russ Utech, Alex Forer, Cory Sillars

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome to March Everyone! What a change in weather this weekend. I write this Monday morning after Old Man Winter took a few gasps, over the weekend. One of the best things I saw this past weekend at the Home Show was the excitement among our members and exhibitors. At the show on Friday night there were numerous exhibitors that commented about how many good leads they had already gotten that night for work this summer. At lunch today I heard a builder

say that there were a lot of people at the show talking about building homes this year, many with lots already purchased. These are all positive signs for our members and the economy in general.

Additionally, we have seen a renewed interest in our organization from Home Show Exhibitors. Another good sign that shows people are starting to see the value of membership for their business.

As we go about our daily routines, let's reach out to our friends that have relationships to the building business and ask them to come to a monthly meeting, or one of our events. I am confident that when people see the new energy, and opportunities to grow their business in this organization, they will see the benefits of being a member.

Join us for the March 22nd meeting, bring a friend. See you there!

*Russ Utech, 2018 WABA President*



*Spring Ahead!!*  
**March 11th**

## Joke of the Month

Why would you never iron a 4-leaf clover?  
It's not good to press your luck



# MANAGER'S MESSAGE

With lots of support from Carolyn, I jumped right into everything here at the WABA office the Tuesday before the Home Show. In my first week, I met many of the WABA



members, got to attend Advocacy Day at the State Capitol, and be a part of the 2018 Home Show. I have enjoyed everything so far and I am looking forward to finishing out my second week here being able to catch my breath and having a chance to set-up my email, pick out a parking spot, and the do the rest of the new job things.

At the Advocacy Day at the State Capitol I learned that there is a wonderful staff at the Wisconsin Builders Association that they are great hosts. I haven't been exposed to politics in this level in the past. I was pleased to learn that the Politicians are more accessible than I would have thought and they seemed to genuinely be interested in the conversations that they were engaged in with Cory Sillars. My biggest take away from that day was if you want things to get changed, speak up because you are heard.

The 2018 Home Show was a blast, I think I successfully wore out a pair of shoes but it was worth it. I was able to meet many people, support a WABA event with Carolyn's help, and learn a lot more about our organization. Shelly Talley-Nelsen did a fantastic job chairing this event, even bringing along some volunteers from home, which made role during the weekend more enjoyable.

I look forward to meeting those of you that I haven't already and getting to know those I have better. With everything on our calendar for the next few months I hope to see many of you in the near future.

With Gratitude,  
~ Cara Spatz, Business Manager

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American Pride  
Budget Blinds of Wausau  
Nelsons Power House  
Red Barn Electric LLC  
Riverbend Rock LLC  
Thorson Painting Inc.  
Zone Garage of Wausau LLC

# MARCH

# 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6 POH Committee Meeting - 12:00 pm Home Show Committee Meeting - 4:00 pm	7	8 Finance Committee Meeting - 4:00 pm	9	10
11	12	13 BOARD MEETING - 4 pm	14 BYOB Committee Meeting - 4:30 pm	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Lunch & Learn	22 DINNER MEETING	23 ITEMS FOR NEWSLETTER DUE	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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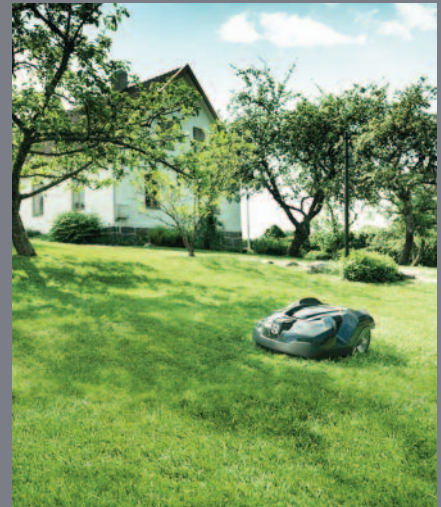
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# SOFTWOOD LUMBER PRICES CLIMB TO RECORD HIGHS

*Reprinted from the NAHB website*

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More rotten news about wood: Largely as the result of the tariffs imposed by the U.S. Commerce Department — and related negotiations among the U.S., Canada and Mexico grinding to a halt — prices for softwood lumber imports have skyrocketed 30% since Hurricane Harvey hit last summer.

“This was the highest week-end futures price we have on record, dating back to January 1995,” said David Logan, director of NAHB’s tax and trade policy analysis. “There was a short reprieve for price increases following the hurricane, but prices have risen sharply this month.”



Unlike lumber, OSB prices had been steadily declining in recent months. However, those declines came to an end last week when prices jumped 6%. The good news is that those increases are expected to be short-lived.

The near-term outlook appears uncertain, as softwood lumber negotiations seem to be at a stalemate. Canada has filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization as well as the NAFTA arbitration panel, accusing the U.S. of violating international trade rules.

“Using history as a guide, the most likely path forward is a lengthy litigation process during which lumber prices remain high,” Logan said. “Futures prices for 2018 delivery have increased substantially in recent weeks, suggesting that financial markets believe negotiations will be prolonged.”

For more information, go to [nahb.org](http://nahb.org) or [housingeconomics.com](http://housingeconomics.com).



# SHOPPING FOR A HOME?

## IT WILL TAKE A LOT LONGER THAN YOU THINK BECAUSE HOME PRICES ARE OVERHEATING

*Reprinted from Housing Headlines courtesy of CNBC*

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Homes today are selling in about 40 days on average, almost two weeks faster than a year ago. But it is taking a lot longer for shoppers to find a home to buy.

Two-thirds of buyers are shopping for more than three months before signing a deal, according to a new survey from the National Association of Home Builders. Why so long? They can't find a home they can afford.

Forty-two percent of buyers surveyed said prices were out of reach for the homes they wanted. Home prices have been rising at a fast clip in the past year – faster than income growth and inflation. The primary reason is a lack of homes for sale, especially lower-priced homes.





"It's the inventory problem that we're having out there that is causing these long delays in pulling the trigger," said Rose Quint, assistant vice president for survey research at the NAHB. "It's lack of affordability, although the other problems are serious as well."

About a third of those surveyed said they couldn't find a home with features they wanted or in a neighborhood they wanted. Back to prices though, 27 percent said they kept getting outbid on their offers. Bidding wars are now the rule, not the exception, in most major U.S. markets.

Home prices rose in 92 percent of the nation's measured housing markets at the end of last year, according to the National Association of Realtors. Twenty-six markets (15 percent) saw double-digit increases in prices. That was more than in the third quarter.

"These consistent, multiyear price gains have certainly been great news for homeowners, and especially for those who were at one time in a negative equity situation," said Lawrence Yun, chief economist for the Realtors. "However, the shortage of new homes being built over the past decade is really burdening local markets and making home buying less affordable."

The lack of supply should benefit the homebuilders, and it may be already. Mortgage applications to purchase a newly built home jumped 18 percent in January compared with a year ago, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association.

"This complements other positive news on U.S. job growth suggesting that economic fundamentals are strong," said Lynn Fisher, MBA vice president of research and economics, in a release. "Based on applications, we estimate that new home sales were running at a pace of 700,000 on a seasonally adjusted annual basis – the highest such estimate in our survey which began in 2013."

The jump in demand is sizable, but the number of new homes for sale is still below historical averages and far below the number needed to satisfy both new and pent-up demand. The largest generation, millennials, are now moving into their homebuying years in force, but clearly not finding what they can afford.

"The whole industry has been clamoring for builders to increase their production, but they're trying," said Quint. "The prices of lumber and labor and land are increasing so fast, they're constrained at the bottom, at how low a price they can really achieve."

The NAHB is predicting a 5 percent increase in new home construction in 2018 compared with 2017. The market could absorb far more, not just in major metropolitan areas, but across the nation.

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Going...  
Going...  
Gone!



**April 26, 2018**

## Silent & Live Auction

The annual  
**WABA Silent Auction**  
will be held  
**Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2018**  
**Dale's Weston Lanes**

This is a **HUGE** event for  
WABA and we need all the  
participation we can get.

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

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☐ I will drop off item at WABA office on or before April 25<sup>th</sup> (preferred)

☐ I will deliver the item to Dale's Weston Lanes by 5:30pm the evening of the auction

Please return form by, Friday April 13<sup>th</sup> to:

**Wausau Area Builders Association**

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# ADVOCACY DIGEST



## **Development bill moves through assembly committee**

A bill authored by State Representative Rob Brooks was recently amended and voted out of the Assembly Committee on Housing and Real Estate and can now be taken up for a vote by the full state assembly this month.

Assembly Bill 770 was amended in committee and passed with a 6-3 vote (all republican members voting

yes, all democrats on the committee voting no). The changes contained in the committee were mostly technical in nature and several of them were made to try to get groups that lobby for local units of government to switch their position from "opposed" to "neutral". With the passage of the substitute amendment, the Wisconsin Towns Association and the Wisconsin Counties Association have formally changed their position on the bill to neutral. We continue to have conversations with the Wisconsin League of Municipalities on changes that would hopefully get that group more comfortable with the legislation becoming law this session.

If passed, the revised version the legislation would still provide clarity to the state statute that allows for bonding on the surety provided by a developer on infrastructure that is dedicated to a municipality, allowing greater transparency for establishing parks in the same process that is used for other impact fees, and making sure that developer agreements cannot mandate code provisions on homes that exceed those in the Uniform Dwelling Code.

For a summary of all of the provisions contained in the now amended version of this legislation click here <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/related/lcamendmemo/ab770.pdf>

We are hopeful that this legislation can be passed by the state assembly and state senate before the calendar turns to March 2018.

## **NAHB Advocacy: Money in Your Pocket**

NAHB economists have put a dollar value on selected member benefits and advocacy victories achieved in 2017. Add it up, and you get an average of \$7,500 per housing start for a typical builder.

That figure demonstrates just how much value NAHB delivers for members: the value per housing start a typical builder will see in 2018 as a result of key NAHB advocacy victories in 2017. Some members will experience more of these benefits than others.

Here are some of the advocacy victories that contributed to that number.

## **OSHA Suspends Enforcement of Onerous Beryllium Rule.**

Estimated value: \$2.03 billion (\$1,600 per housing start). On Jan. 9, 2017, OSHA published its final rule on Occupational Exposure to Beryllium. Even though the proposed rule did not apply to the construction industry, the final rule did. NAHB filed a lawsuit

challenging OSHA's authority to issue such a rule under these circumstances. In response, OSHA announced that it would stop enforcing the rule in the construction industry.

## **Preservation of Lower Cost Options in Building Codes.**

Estimated Value: \$1.26 billion (\$1,000 per housing start). NAHB was successful in keeping a number of costly provisions out of the 2015 versions of the International Residential Code and International Energy Conservation Code. Defeated proposals include: Fenestration-U-Factor in Climate Zones 5, 6, 7 and 8 increased to triple pane levels; a high-efficiency water heating equipment requirement; and requirements for new homes to facilitate future solar energy system installations.

**Tax Reform: Reductions in Builder Taxes.** Estimated value: \$1.51 billion (\$1,200 per housing start). NAHB was involved from start to finish in the legislative debate over tax reform. On the business side, NAHB worked to reduce taxes on business, including reductions for pass-thru entities, which resulted in lower tax rates and a special pass-thru deduction intended to benefit small business.

**Tax Reform: Private Activity Bonds.** Estimated value: \$991 million (\$800 per housing start). House-passed tax reform legislation followed early tax reform plans by eliminating the tax-exempt status of private activity bonds (PABs). NAHB worked hard to demonstrate the importance of PABs to the housing market, especially the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, and the final bill preserved PABs.

## **Tax Reform: Protection of Builder Interest Deduction.**

Estimated value: \$884 million (\$700 per housing start). The 2016 Better Way Tax Reform blueprint (published by the Ways and Means Committee as an initial draft of tax reform) proposed to eliminate any business deduction on interest paid on business loans, including acquisition, development and construction loans. Because of NAHB's advocacy efforts, the final tax reform legislation includes a special exemption for real estate businesses from the interest deduction limits imposed on the rest of the economy.

**Elimination of Seriously Flawed Duct Proposal.** Estimated value: \$867.4 million (\$700 per housing start). NAHB, along with HBA leaders in California and Nevada, strongly opposed a proposed change to the 2018 edition of the Uniform Mechanical Code (UMC) that would have limited the length of flex duct to five feet in residential applications. Recently, the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials announced that it has decided not to approve this change.

Brad Boycks

WBA Director of Government and Political Affairs

Wisconsin Builders Association@bboycks@wisbuild.org  
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us to see that others share  
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Thank you from  
The bottom of our hearts  
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# HOME SHOW



The 2018 Home Show has come and gone and we had another great turnout! This year we had all of our exhibitors in one room and was able to squeeze more booths in that room instead of having them separated.

While I believe we can improve on things every year, I received a lot of compliments and positive feedback from our vendors. One of the new things we did this year was have an Exhibitor Lounge. This allowed our vendors to have a place to grab a snack and something to drink or just sit back and relax. It was a hit!

Thank you to all of our exhibitors for participating in this years event! I have commitments from many of you to participate again next year. Please contact me if you'd like to reserve your booth space.

I would also like to thank all of the volunteers that helped out in this years show....from ticket takers, to setting up or taking down tables, or transporting items from the WABA office. Lastly a big thank you goes out to my committee members. I appreciate all of the time and effort you put into planning this show with me.

Planning for next years show has already begun. If you'd like to participate and be a part of our committee, I'd love to have you! Our next meeting is Tuesday, March 6 at 4:00PM at the WABA Office.

Shelly Talley-Nelsen, Home Show Chair







# PARADE of Homes



*The 2018 Parade of Homes will be held June 5-10.*

*If you are interested in advertising in the parade book  
please call Cindy at 715-443-3032 or you may email her at  
cindy@colorcreationsllc.com*

*Ad copy in a pdf, eps or jpg format should be send here as well.*

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## NON-MEMBER

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## AVAILABLE SPONSORSHIP

*Take advantage of these Parade of Homes Sponsorship Options! These are available for WABA members only. The options will be available to associate members only until April 1st.*

## BUS TOUR LUNCH SPONSOR

(1 available) - \$500/in kind

- Company name/logo displayed on lunches for pre-parade builders tour
- Chairman acknowledgement and opportunity to address the participants
- 2 Complimentary tickets for pre-parade builders bus tour
- 2 Complimentary tickets to the WABA Parade of Homes
- Complimentary 1/4 page color ad in parade magazine.

## BUS TOUR BEVERAGE SPONSOR

(1 available) - \$500/in kind

- Company name/logo displayed on coolers for pre-parade builders tour
- Chairman acknowledgement and opportunity to address the participants
- 2 Complimentary tickets for pre-parade builders bus tour
- 2 Complimentary tickets to the WABA Parade of Homes
- Complimentary 1/4 page color ad in parade magazine.

## APPRECIATION DINNER

(1 Left) - \$250

- Company name/logo displayed at annual parade builders appreciation banquet
- Chairman acknowledgement and opportunity to address the participants
- Invitation for 2 to the annual parade builders appreciation banquet



## TICKET SPONSOR

(1 Left) - \$350

- Company name/logo on the back of a percentage of the parade tickets
- 2 Complimentary tickets to the WABA Parade of Homes

## ARTICLE IN PARADE BOOK

(3 Left) - \$100

If you have or will be purchasing a 1/2 or full page ad in the Parade of Homes book you are eligible to purchase an article page for an additional \$100. These pages are information for the public and are not to be used for advertising but do include 1 or 2 pictures & your logo.

## BUILDER SPOTLIGHT

(Builders Only) All bids are due on March 2, 2018.

**For any of the above sponsorships please call Cindy at 715-443-3032.**

# 2018 PARADE OF HOMES BUILDERS

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*Sorensen Construction*

*Timber River Custom Homes & Design*

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**2ND HOME CONTRACTS  
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## Wausau Area Builders Association

# SHIRLEY KRUESEL SCHOLARSHIP

### Eligibility

The Wausau Area Builders Association is proud to offer scholarships given annually in honor of Shirley Kruesel, who was the executive officer of the Association from 1990-2012. Students must meet the following criterion to apply for consideration:

- Graduating senior from a high school located in a community currently served by the WABA including but not necessarily limited to Antigo, D.C. Everest, Marathon, Medford, Merrill, Mosinee, Newman, Northland Lutheran, Stratford, Spencer, Wausau East, Wausau West, and Wittenberg-Biramwood;

- Who has demonstrated community service and involvement;

- With a GPA of 2.5 or greater.

- Students planning a career in the shelter industry are especially encouraged to apply.

- Students whose parents and/or grandparents have an association with the WABA are especially encouraged to apply.

### How to Apply

Students interested in applying for a scholarship can register and apply through the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin's (administrators of the scholarship fund) electronic filing system found at: [www.grantinterface.com/cfon-cwscholarships/Common/LogOn.aspx](http://www.grantinterface.com/cfon-cwscholarships/Common/LogOn.aspx).

### Selection and Review

Applicants qualifying for consideration, based on the eligibility requirements stated above, will be judged by the selection committee in the following priority levels for scholarship award:

Level 1-Student planning to go in to the building shelter trade whose parent or grandparent has an affiliation with the WABA, and has demonstrated community service and involvement

Level 2-Student planning to go into the shelter trade with demonstrated community service and involvement

Level 3-Student whose parent or grandparent has an affiliation with the WABA, going into any field of study, and has demonstrated community service and involvement

Completed applications must be submitted electronically by **March 31** for review and final selection.



3200 Hilltop Ave., Wausau, WI 54401-4026  
Telephone 715/842-5663 Fax 715/842-7051

[www.womenscommunity.org](http://www.womenscommunity.org) [facebook.com/womenscommunity](https://facebook.com/womenscommunity)

*We Listen, We Support, We Transform Lives*

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January 26, 2018

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

