

FEATURED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR

APRIL

Center Section

Continuing education in RIBA spotlight

State-mandated continuing education for contractors is front and center at the Rhode Island Builders Association in April and May!

Page 4, 14, 21-23

What is OSHA targeting in '17?

RIBA's go-to person for OSHA compliance reveals what the agency's enforcement priorities will be for the rest of 2017.

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A business advocate becomes a public official

What's it like when someone who has worked against overregulation becomes a Rhode Island town administrator?

Page 26

N. Kingstown development is 'women-centric'

A RIBA member builds Reynolds Farm, believed to be the largest residential development in Rhode Island in 50 years.

Page 28

Andersen Corp. takes reins on CTE support in R.I.



Andersen Corp. Territory Sales Manager Donald Hamel, at left, works with career and technical education (CTE) instructors and students during the Treehouse Rebuild at the Boys and Girls Club of Providence in October. Andersen and its Excellence Dealers have become the prime supporters and sponsors of the Rhode Island Builders Association's work-based applied learning projects for students. Story on page 11.

Barriers to Building, Part 4

Are towns, public anti-growth? Planners say yes and no

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Throughout this series, we've presented the home builder's point of view on what stands between them and the production of a reasonably priced housing supply in Rhode Island. Extreme land-use restrictions, inconsistent code interpretations, long wait times and unpredictable inspections are all part of the picture.

There's yet another challenge: Anti-growth senti-

ment in communities, expressed both in public NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard), and what builders see as municipal stonewalling.

To learn more about the municipal side, *The Rhode Island Builder* turned to several local planners for their point of view.

"I don't think that every community is the same, and I don't believe they are all anti-growth," said

see BARRIERS ...page 32

From the Board of Directors

Majority leader: If builders want success at State House, get involved

RIBA very much respected on Smith Hill, Rep. Shekarchi reports.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

As the 2017 session of the General Assembly unfolds on Smith Hill, “the Rhode Island Builders Association is looked at very favorably. That’s because of who you are and what you do for the community. You create value and you create jobs.”

So said Rep. K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Warwick), the hard-working Warwick lawyer and third-term legislator who in November was unanimously elected by his peers to serve as majority leader of the



Rep. K. Joseph Shekarchi, House majority leader, addressed the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors on March 6th.

Rhode Island House of Representatives. He addressed RIBA’s Board of Directors on March 6th.

A friend of the building community, Rep. Shekarchi has sponsored and championed many bills into law, including the exemption of “freeboard” from building height calculation, the inclusion of wetland buffers in the calculation of buildable lot areas, the reform of permit-fee calculations, and the tolling of expiration periods for certain state and local permits.

“In the end, all politics is local and all building is local,” Rep. Shekarchi stated.

He reviewed legislation that RIBA supports, along with other major bills.

“Much general legislation is very revenue-intensive this year, such as the

proposal to subsidize college tuition and also the car tax issue.

“We will know more in the first week of May, when we run the revenue projections and work on the budget.”

Rep. Shekarchi pointed out that huge online retailer Amazon.com has voluntarily decided to collect the 7 percent Rhode Island sales tax, which will produce roughly \$32 million in additional revenue.

Even though RIBA is well thought-of at the State House, he said that the more members who turn out to advocate for the residential construction industry, the better.

“Individually, you need to be involved. Everyone in this association should know who their local and state representatives

see BOARD ...page 33

The Rhode Island Builder

Official publication of the
Rhode Island Builders Association
since 1951

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DEADLINES FOR THE MAY ISSUE

All copy, ads and photos must be to us by

Friday, March 31

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LOOKING AHEAD!

♦ **March 30th-April 2nd: 67th Rhode Island Home Show** - Sponsored by the Rhode Island Builders Association, Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence. Visit www.RIBAHOMESHOW.com.

 ♦ **April 6th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - Week 1/Six Credit Hours if Week 2 Also Completed** - Topics are Introduction to Estimating and Blueprint Reading - Week 1. Details on page 14.

♦ **April 11th: RIBA Monthly Board of Directors Meeting** - 4 p.m. networking, 4:30 p.m. business meeting, RIBA headquarters, East Providence. RIBA members are invited to attend for informational purposes. For more information and to register, contact Elizabeth Carpenter, ecarpenter@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

 ♦ **April 18th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - Week 2/Six Credit Hours if Week 1 Also Completed** - Topic is Introduction to Estimating - Week 2. Details on page 14.

♦ **April 18th: Toastmasters International Presentation on Leadership** - Sponsored by the Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council, RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 6 to 8 p.m.
Details on page 9.

 ♦ **April 20th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - Week 3 -** Topic is Introduction to Blueprint Reading - Part 1. Details on page 21.

 ♦ **April 21st: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours -** Topics are Deck Construction Codes, Advanced Framing and Common Construction Regulations. Details on page 22.

 ♦ **April 26th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - Week 4 -** Topic is Estimating. Details on page 21.

 ♦ **April 26th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours -** Topic is OSHA Safety Review. Details on page 22.

 ♦ **May 3rd: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - Week 5 -** Topic is Introduction to Blueprint Reading, Part 2. Details on page 22.

 ♦ **May 5th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours -** Topics are Confined Spaces, Asbestos Awareness, Mold Awareness. Details on page 23.

♦ **May 8th-9th: OSHA 10-Hour Course** - 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day at RIBA headquarters. Course is FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee. For more information and to register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. Details on page 23.

♦ **May 16th: 4-Hour Lead-Safe Refresher Class** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. \$75 for non-members, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. Details on page 23.

♦ **May 18th: Presentation and Tour at Lighting & Design by J&K Electric** - Sponsored by the Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council, Lighting & Design by J&K Electric, 1253 Hartford Ave., Johnston, 6 to 8 p.m.
Details on page 9.

**More information, registration and payment for most
RIBA events is available at RIBUILDERS.org.**

♦ Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.



Designates a course eligible for Rhode Island state-mandated continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.

S Class will be taught in Spanish.



David A. Caldwell Jr.

President's Message

Rhode Island's past has lessons for the future

Looking around Providence and the cities of our urban core, we can learn a lot about the history of our state. During the turn of the last century, and well into the first quarter of the 20th century, Rhode Island was one of the most prosperous states in America. Some of Rhode Island's most iconic buildings, such as our State House and the Newport mansions, reflect the power and prosperity of the time.

Between 1890 and 1940, the population of the state more than doubled, from 345,508 to 713,346. A great deal of Rhode Island's housing stock in the urban core was built during this period, and it remains today. In Providence, for example, the population increased from 132,146 in 1890 to 253,504 in 1940. To house the rapidly growing workforce, developers of the day built a lot of multifamily properties - including the "triple decker," a remarkably efficient housing option for families.

By 1980, Providence's population had decreased to 156,804, before rebounding to 178,042 in 2010. While the state's population increased from 791,896 in 1950 to 1,052,567 in 2010, the country's population more than doubled, from roughly 152 to 321 million.

What lessons can be learned from these quick studies through our history? First, a growing population of working-age citizens with families played a crucial role in Rhode Island's success in

the first half of the last century. Second, the market provided the housing that the workforce required in sufficient density to make a profit. Third, Rhode Island's housing stock of the time, though now dated and most often in need of renovation, is still very efficient housing stock. And it would appear that we have a lot of empty bedrooms, that is to say, a lot of extra capacity to absorb another generation of families.

I would be prepared to argue strongly that if the population of Providence were to return to 1950s levels at 253,504, coupled with responsible government management, the City of Providence would be well on its way to solving its fiscal challenges.

Rhode Island is poised and ready to grow again, both in rebuilding our cities, and growing sustainably in the more suburban communities. Barriers to building continue to have a negative impact on housing, as municipalities continue to believe that the costs of growth are borne at the municipal level but the gains accrue to the state.

As the General Assembly digs into its 2017 work in earnest, RIBA continues to work for solutions to overcome the barriers to building that are so negatively impacting the economic health of our state. Our industry stands ready to produce the housing that the growing workforce requires. The model works, as it did a century ago. Learning the lessons of the past can well inform us as to the decisions we need to make to plan our future.



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Former President Harrington passes at 83

Timothy J. Harrington III, president of the Rhode Island Builders Association from 1982-1984, died peacefully on February 12th. He was 83.

Mr. Harrington was the founder of Birchwood Builders Inc. and built hundreds of homes on Aquidneck Island. Later, he branched into commercial construction and restoration. Upon retirement, he continued to work in real estate.

A graduate of St. Raphael Academy and Providence College, Mr. Harrington, a native of Washington, D.C., served in the U.S. Marine Corps, attaining the rank of captain. In addition to his leadership positions with RIBA, he was a past president of the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick (Providence Chapter), a past president of the Northeast Builders and Remodelers Association of Massachusetts, and a member of the Rhode Island Construction Industry Coalition.

Led RIBA through housing recession

When Mr. Harrington took RIBA's reins on April 30, 1982,



Timothy J. Harrington

the housing market was in the middle of a two-year recession, with a slump in construction, tight money and high interest rates.

"We must be prepared," he told RIBA members as he took office. "It is the responsibility of our industry to lead the economy out of the slowdown."

Mr. Harrington was a 50-year member of Warwick Country Club, having been a past president. He was a four-time club champion.

He also was a past president of the Rhode Island Golf Association, a member of the Kent Washington Association of Realtors™, and a Life Elk of the Tri-State Lodge. He was a past member of the Kent County Hospital Board of Directors.

In addition to his wife of 60 years, Lois, Mr. Harrington leaves three siblings, six children and 13 grandchildren, along with many nieces and nephews.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Buttonhole Golf Foundation, or the Burke Fund. Online condolences may be posted at www.BOYLEANDSONFUNERALHOME.com.



Sponsored by The Tile Shop

Members, non-members enjoy networking

While it was a little unclear whether winter was actually over, nearly 40 members and guests turned out on March 2nd as The Tile Shop generously sponsored an End-of-Winter Networking Night at Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters.

The free event featured sandwiches and salads by Panera Bread, pizza, wine and beer, and there were free giveaways. Representatives from the Warwick-based Tile Shop presented samples of the many products they have to offer.

If you or your company would like to sponsor a networking event at RIBA to showcase your products or services, please call (401) 438-7400 or e-mail egeddes@ribuilders.org.



Members and non-members alike enjoy the food, drink and company at Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters on March 2nd as The Tile Shop sponsors the End-of-Winter Networking Night.

Award-Winning Monthly Magazine of The Rhode Island Builders Association June 2016

Governor addresses RIBA board

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Member Profile: Tom Kelly of Ecologic Spray Foam Insulation

An unlikely path to 'giving'

By Paul F. Eno Editor

Starting out as an accounting student, and not too thrilled about a career therein, Tom Kelly never expected to be spraying foam insulation in people's attics or helping to retrofit shipping containers as office buildings.

"I majored in accounting at the University of Rhode Island because I wasn't sure what I wanted to do," the Jamestown native recalls. "I thought accounting could come in handy in many different fields."

Tom was right. After college, he worked as an internal auditor for Textron, but he didn't like the office environment.

"I was kind of jealous of the people out in the field, working outside with their hands and producing something every day," he remembers.

Then Tom started having some intriguing conversations with a few of his old high school and college buddies.

"Some of them wanted to pursue careers in the trades, and the subject of energy efficiency came up. One of the newest technologies was spray foam insulation. This was a relatively new field with the residential market, at least in our area."

Tom quickly noted that there was high demand for spray foam insulation, but that very few contractors were offering it.

"It seemed like there was a lot of growth opportunity there for a newcomer."

So Tom found a partner, John Peters, who had just finished a stint in the Air Force, and they set about learning the insulation trade, with a special emphasis on spray foam. And it clicked!

They founded Ecologic Spray Foam Insulation Inc. in 2007.

"That accounting background did come in handy after all," Tom says. "At Textron, even though the job had nothing to do with construction, I learned about business structure, and that helped a lot when it came to managing Ecologic."

Tom's parents were teachers, so he's a first-generation contrac-



Tom Kelly, right, and partner John Peters

tor. Still, his dad owned some rental properties, and Tom got his feet wet in the trades by helping with maintenance.

Based in Tiverton, Ecologic today has 12 employees and serves Rhode Island and the Massachusetts South Shore. But Ecologic's crew can sometimes be found in Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont or Maine.

"We mostly stay within an hour-and-a-half radius of our base," Tom reports.

The company's work is largely with custom home builders,

but there is the occasional, and very unusual, light commercial job.

"A few years ago, we were asked to insulate some shipping containers that were going to be assembled into an office building, in the area of the railroad yard in Providence," Tom says. "That was interesting and unique. It was like working with giant Legos™!"

On the residential side, Ecologic has had some high-profile customers who have homes in southeastern New England. These include Boston Celtics General Manager Danny Ainge, Tom Nalen of the Denver Broncos and retired NFL coach Kevin Gilbride.

With 10 years in business, Tom has seen great changes in insulation technology and products.

"When we started, spray foam was new and cutting-edge. We had to do a lot of cold stops at construction sites just to introduce contractors to it and show them what we could do for their projects," Tom says.

"But in recent years, spray foam has gained notoriety and traction. More people are looking for it, and that includes architects, contractors and the homeowners themselves."

The manufacturers are in constant competition for better and more effective products, Tom points out.

Ecologic joined the Rhode Island Builders Association in 2008 because Tom and John wanted an information conduit to the residential construction industry.

"We wanted information about what was going on in the industry, and we wanted to align with some builders and remodelers."

Since then, Ecologic has taken advantage of many other member benefits, along with the networking.

"The networking is great, and we keep up with what's going on in the industry on the macro level," says Tom, who became a member of the RIBA Board of Directors in 2014. "Now our employees attend the free-tuition classes, especially OSHA compliance and code classes. We appreciate RIBA as a very supportive community!"

Find out more at www.ECOLOGICINSULATION.com.



Ecologic Spray Foam Insulation

Principal: Thomas J. Kelly

RIBA member since: 2008

Focus: Residential and commercial insulation

Serves: Southern New England

Founded: 2007

Based: Tiverton, Rhode Island

WDI honors O'Donnell

Carol O'Donnell, owner of CRM Modular Homes and treasurer of the Rhode Island Builders Association, was honored on March 8th by the Woman Development Institute.

Ms. O'Donnell's recognition for "Non-traditional Job" took place at the 17th Extraordinary Woman Award Dinner, held at the Renaissance Hotel in Providence.

The annual dinner celebrates International Women's Day by recognizing Rhode Island women who have distinguished themselves in their fields.

Ms. O'Donnell also is president of RIBA's Professional Women in Building Council.



Carol O'Donnell

Restivo Monacelli gets new look

Restivo Monacelli LLP, a Rhode Island Builders Association member and the association's tax, accounting and business advisory firm, has announced a new brand identity and a redesigned website.

"The rebrand reflects Restivo Monacelli's unique business model, growth and evolution," a statement from the firm said.

"In addition to being certified public accountants with numerous other credentials, the firm is composed of business leaders and entrepreneurs who leverage their depth of expertise across a wide range of industries."

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Leadership is theme for April meeting

WHEN: Tuesday, April 18th 6-8 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy. #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members, \$10 for non-members
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: April 17th
FOR INFORMATION & TO REGISTER: Contact Lorena Voyer at Ivoyer@davittdesignbuild.com

A Toastmasters International presentation on leadership will highlight the April meeting of the Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council (PWB).

Toastmasters International is a world leader in communication and leadership development.

Members improve their speaking and leadership skills by attending one of the 15,900 clubs in 142 countries that make up a global network of meeting locations. This presentation will be an introduction to the leadership program.

Home Show presence

PWB was to be represented at the RIBA booth on the opening night of the 67th annual Rhode Island Home Show, and representatives were to answer any questions about PWB and how to become a member.



Members and guests of the Professional Women in Building Council pause for the camera during an evening of networking and fun at The Tile Shop in Warwick on February 16th.

Insurance spotlight

PWB members and guests were scheduled to meet March 21st at RIBA headquarters for a networking evening and presentation on "How To Get the Most Out of Your Auto and Home Insurance."

The Tile Shop

Over 36 people gathered at The Tile Shop in Warwick on February 16th as PWB held its monthly meeting. The Tile Shop, a new RIBA member, hosted a lovely evening of networking and refreshments, showcasing its many products. There was also a raffle, and winners included: Lindsey Desjarlais of Gilbane Building Co. (iPad

Mini 2). Kate Whitney of Davitt Design Build (\$100 gift card).

All are invited

All are invited to come and network at PWB events. Our members play an important role in the residential construction industry as business owners, designers, administrators, attorneys, real estate professionals and more.

PWB offers many networking opportunities in an environment that's both informative and beneficial for women who want to grow professionally. Join us to learn more about PWB and how to become a member. Men are welcome too!



Professional Women in Building Spring and Summer Events 2017

April 18 Tuesday

Toastmasters International Presentation on Leadership at RIBA Headquarters

May 18 Thursday

Presentation and Tour at Lighting & Design by J&K Electric, Johnston

June 22 Thursday

Topic TBD at the East Greenwich Yacht Club

July - Summer break

August TBD

Home Healthsmith Presentation and Tour – Date TBD

**All Events Take Place 6-8 p.m. Contact Lorena Voyer for more information: Ivoyer@davittdesignbuild.com
Carol O'Donnell, President • Linda Bohmbach, Secretary • Lorena Voyer, Treasurer**



Jobs Bank continues to hum, 217 job candidates so far

Site reaches another new high: 537 employers seek workers.

The online Jobs Bank at www.RCWPJobs.com continues to hum with activity. It also continues to indicate the need for better skills training, and for incentives to get those with skills to stay in Rhode Island so they can build careers here.

As of March 8th, 537 employers and 217 job candidates had signed up for free accounts at www.RCWPJobs.com. There were 59 jobs posted, as opposed to 58 in February and 65 in January, indicating that the job candidates who are available are being hired.

There were 52 resumé remaining online.

The Jobs Bank is a tool created by the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP), with the Rhode Island Builders Association as its hub.

"The Jobs Bank is clearly working," said Cheryl Boyd, RIBA's director of membership and education. "But the number of jobs open, compared with the number of candidates available, shows




how much we need to concentrate on job training, career and technical education, and to attracting young people to choose our industry for building a career," she added.

Whether you're an employer or a job seeker, sign up for a free account at RCWPJobs.com. For more information, contact Ms. Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or cboyd@ribuilders.org.



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Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center students newly certified after successfully completing the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course include Zachary Slobogan, Bryce Carpenter, Devon Rivard, Noah Desplaines, Andrew Parks and Lea Benoit.

Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center (WACTC), the only career and tech school in America that is a registered training center under the EPA's lead Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) rule, has had its second class certified in as many years, Instructor Charles Myers has announced.

The newest class of six students joins nine other WACTC students, who earned their certifications in 2016 and have now graduated.



Andersen Corp, R.I. dealers throw support behind CTE in '17

Six Excellence Dealers supply materials, logistics to hands-on student projects.

By Paul F. Eno Editor

"In 10 to 15 years, people now working in this industry will start to age out, and there is a lack of viable replacements. It's a huge issue."

So said Stephen Rendine, general manager of Douglas Lumber, Kitchens & Home Center, and one of six Andersen Corp. Excellence Dealers who have committed to supporting career and technical education (CTE) in Rhode Island in 2017.

"We have to start driving this conversation about our future workforce, because it won't happen on its own," Mr. Rendine added.

Douglas Lumber and the other five Excellence Dealers, including Arnold Lumber Co., Coventry Lumber, National Building Products, Riverhead Building Supply and United Builders Supply, are



Jay Pires, assistant manager and marketing director at Douglas Lumber, Kitchens & Home Center, an Andersen Corp. Excellence Dealer, prepares to address students and instructors from the New England Institute of Technology as part of the ongoing efforts to develop a skilled future workforce in Rhode Island.

working directly with the state's several CTE programs to provide materials and logistical support for hands-on projects that will help give students the skills they need for high-paying careers in the residential construction trades.

In addition, these suppliers are also

looking for good future workers for their own industry.

"We make it clear to students that careers with us aren't just in sales or driving trucks, but in marketing, human resources, accounting and other areas," said Jay Pires,

see CTE ...page 31

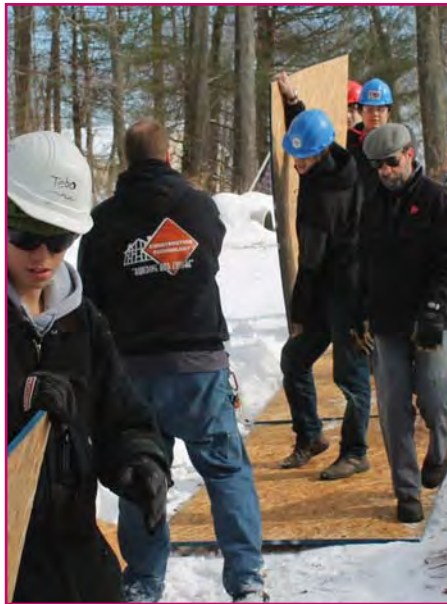
WACTC students build, deliver playhouse to child with cancer



Surrounding little Julia Powers and her parents on Valentine's Day are students, instructors and administrators from the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center. Students built the two-story treehouse based on Julia's own design.



At left, the playhouse before it was moved to Julia's North Smithfield home. At right, students prepare a base for the playhouse.



At left, WACTC students line the way as Julia's mom brings her down the path to where her new playhouse has been installed. Arrangements to build the structure were made by A Wish Come True Inc. through the Rhode Island Builders Association.

With the help of many students and personnel from the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center (WACTC), along with A Wish Come True Inc. and the Rhode Island Builders Association, an 8 year-old bone cancer sufferer now has her wish come true: a two-story playhouse.

"These students gave up much of their Christmas vacation to build the playhouse," said WACTC Instructor Charles Myers.

Julia Powers of North Smithfield was diagnosed last year with osteosarcoma, a rare form of bone cancer. Her wish for her own outdoor playhouse found its way to A Wish Come True, which called RIBA, which in turn contacted Mr. Myers and WACTC.

"We did the best we could to get as close to Julia's design as possible," said Mr. Myers, Rhode Island's 2016 Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year, who personally built a table for the inside of the playhouse.

He and fellow WACTC instructor William Esser spent roughly 25 hours turning Julia's drawings into actual blueprints.

"In the end, the playhouse was too heavy for us to load with just my students. I called Stanley Tree and they came right over. We tried to level the permanent site for it but the ground was frozen."

It wasn't just the instructors and students who plunged into the project. Suppliers, school personnel and even a restaurant have pitched in.

"Lowe's donated a lot of framing materials, Beauchemin Lumber gave us some lumber. Material Sand and Gravel donated crushed stone for a base, Harvey Industries donated windows, and Home Depot gave us a \$100 credit for anything we needed," said Mr. Myers.

The playhouse was finally installed in the North Smithfield backyard of the Powers Family on Valentine's Day, to Julia's complete delight. To find out more about Julia and her journey, visit her special Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/JuliasJourneyRI> or <http://www.kennyscoalition.org/juliasjourney>.

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Continuing Education for Contractors

Courses below qualify for state-mandated continuing education requirements for contractors. All contractors in Rhode Island must take five credit hours of continuing education within 24 months of their next renewal date.

Three Credit Hours: Intro to Estimating and Blueprint Reading Week 1 - April 6th

WHEN: Thursday, April 6th, 5 to 8 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST FOR THE 5-WEEK SERIES: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$110 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$110 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.


This will be Week 1: Introduction to Estimating & Blueprint Reading.

Participants will be introduced to the Construction Master calculator and basic construction math. The course also will introduce students to Construction Master Pro calculator, units of measure (linear, area and volume) and lumber pricing.

Various basic calculations will be discussed and practiced in class. Construction Master Pro, model 4065, will be required.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration.

Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. Refreshments will be served at 4:30 p.m.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue. 

Three Credit Hours: Introduction to Estimating Week 2 - April 18th

WHEN: Tuesday, April 18th, 5 to 8 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914


COST FOR THE 5-WEEK SERIES: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$110 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$110 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is Week 2: Introduction to Estimating. Topics include:

- How to estimate for foundations and footings.
- How to estimate for concrete slabs and pads.
- How to estimate sills and floor and rim joists.
- How to estimate subflooring.
- How to estimate wall studs and plates.
- How to estimate wall sheathing.

Participants will be encouraged to ask specific questions for their own needs. You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. Refreshments will be served at 4:30 p.m. For details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue. 

RIBA reserves the right to limit the number of attendees from a single company at courses taught on-site. For all courses, employees must provide proof of employment with a member company upon registration for class to be free of tuition charges.



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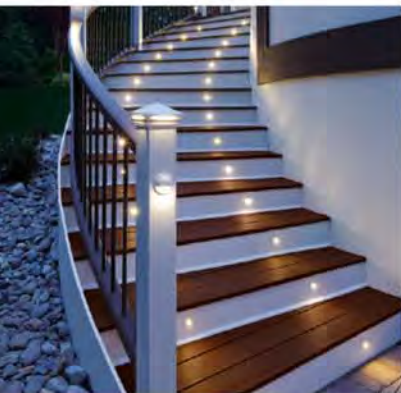
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Continuing Education for Contractors

Courses below qualify for state-mandated continuing education requirements for contractors. All contractors in Rhode Island must take five credit hours of continuing education within 24 months of their next renewal date.

Introduction to Blueprint Reading Part 1

Week 3 - April 20th

WHEN: Thursday, April 20th, 5 to 8 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST FOR THE 5-WEEK SERIES: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$110 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$110 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This will be an Introduction to Blue Print Reading, Part 1. The course will introduce the student to architectural blueprints. By the end of the course, the student will be able to interpret residential blueprints, symbols, dimensions and lines, to create an accurate materials estimate takeoff. You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. Refreshments will be served at 4:30 p.m. For details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.

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Estimating for Contractors

Week 4 - April 26th

WHEN: Wednesday, April 26th, 5 to 8 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST FOR THE 5-WEEK SERIES: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$110 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$110 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This Estimating Class will cover:

- How to estimate ceiling joists, rafters and trusses.
- How to estimate roof sheathing.
- How to estimate roofing underlayment and roof shingles.
- How to calculate materials for gable ends.
- How to calculate rafter lengths for various roof styles.

Participants will be encouraged to ask specific questions for their needs. You must pre-register for this course. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. Refreshments will be served at 4:30 p.m.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.

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Five Credit Hours: OSHA Safety Review April 26th

WHEN: Wednesday, April 26th, 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$15 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$15 materials/registration fee.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Scott Asprey for an "OSHA Safety Review" to improve your knowledge and compliance, and avoid accidents and costly fines, as the Rhode Island Builders Association presents five credit hours of state-mandated continuing education for contractors.

Subjects to be covered in this course will include a review of jobsite safety rules, fall protection, ladders and scaffolding, and confined spaces. You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.

Lunch is included.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.



Introduction to Blueprint Reading Part 2 Week 5 - May 3rd

WHEN: Wednesday, May 3rd, 5 to 8 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST FOR THE 5-WEEK SERIES: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$110 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$110 materials/registration fee.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course is designed to introduce the student to architectural blueprints. Types of prints, symbols, dimensions and lines will be presented.

By the end of the course the student will be able to interpret residential blueprints, symbols, dimensions and lines, for the purpose of creating an accurate materials estimate takeoff.

Refreshments will be served at 4:30 p.m.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.



Five Credit Hours: Codes, framing, regulations April 21st

WHEN: Friday, April 21st, 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$15 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$15 materials/registration fee.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course will cover:

- Deck Construction Codes: Sorting out codes and solutions.
- Advanced Framing: Use less material and less labor.
- Common Construction Regulations and the Regulatory Agencies.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.

Lunch is included.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.



Five Credit Hours: Confined Spaces, Asbestos, Mold

May 5th

WHEN: Friday, May 5th, 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$15 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$15 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Confined spaces, asbestos awareness, and mold awareness will be the subject of this course.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.

Lunch is included.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.



OSHA-10 Course

May 8th-9th

WHEN: May 8th and 9th, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course is intended for safety directors, foremen and employees. It highlights the areas of major safety concerns for anyone on a jobsite.

Each person completing the course will receive a copy of the OSHA Standard 29 CFR Part 1926 and an OSHA-10 certification card.

Everyone working on a municipal or state construction project worth \$100,000 or more must have this card, including anyone involved by contract to provide goods or services on the jobsite, not including people delivering materials and supplies/products to a construction site. Fines can range from \$250 to \$950 per offense.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.

Lunch is included.



Four-hour lead certification refresher course

May 16th

WHEN: Tuesday, May 16th, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. A \$75 charge for non-members and a \$40 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a four-hour Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule refresher class with Scott Asprey of Risk & Safety Management, for contractors who have their lead renovator/remodeler certification and whose certificate is up for renewal.

The class will review lead-hazard controls and update attendees on any changes to state or federal regulations. You must pre-register for this class. In addition, a photo is required for your certificate. Please send a head shot only, similar to a passport photo.

E-mail the photo smccarthy@ribuilders.org at least five days before class to allow for processing. There will be no admittance to the class without pre-registration, this pre-registration photo and payment.

Participants must provide proof of employment with member company upon registration for class to be free.



RIBA advocacy is a great member benefit, but your help is vital



Steven Carlino

We are nearing the midpoint in the 2017 session of the Rhode Island General Assembly, and the Rhode Island Builders Association continues to work for legislation that will benefit the residential construction industry.

This is one of your greatest benefits as a member, though you might not see it directly. You see it when you find it a little easier and a little cheaper to do business because a legal or regulatory burden has been eased or removed.

Sometimes you see the benefit when something doesn't happen -- a new tax or regulation you might not even have known was pending.

Many people, including many of our members, don't realize the hundreds of bills introduced in the legislature each year. Nevertheless, we monitor each and every one that concerns our industry.

Not only does RIBA manage to track hundreds of bills, but our members provide feedback to lawmakers and testimony before committees. In turn, we feed information back to our own members and our RIBA committees.


RIBA cannot carry on a successful advocacy program without you, however.

Rep. K. Joseph Shekarchi said it best

when he addressed our Board of Directors on March 6th:

"Individually, you need to be involved. Everyone in this association should know who their local and state representatives are. Even more importantly, they should know who you are. Let them know you're in the construction industry and that you live in their district."

Related story on page 2.

To help, call RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400. 



Roland J. Fiore

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OSHA silica rule looms on the regulatory horizon

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Contractors need to be on the watch for the new silica rule, probably the biggest change coming in 2017 from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

That's the word from Cheri Walton, president of Risk and Safety Management (RSM), the Rhode Island Builders Association's go-to member for safety education and OSHA compliance.

"The silica rule (the Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction) will be huge for contractors, as far as compliance is concerned," Ms. Walton said. "The final silica rule for construction takes effect on June 23rd."

The silica rule's key provisions include:

- An exposure limit for crystalline silica.

It will be the employer's responsibility to prove that they're under that limit.

- A requirement for air monitoring, and OSHA can provide a list of specific control measures employers should take to keep airborne silica levels below the limit.

"These measures should keep you below that limit. But let's say you're cutting concrete," Ms. Walton explained. "You might put a worker in a dust mask and use water, then you hire a testing company to monitor the worker's air flow for eight hours. This will be burdensome."

"The good news is that, for companies



Cheri Walton

What will this rule mean for inspections?

"My understanding is that OSHA has to have reasonable cause to believe that you're over the silica limit," Ms. Walton said. "Say someone drives by your jobsite and reports a cloud of dust. That will trigger an inspection. And again, it will be up to you as the employer to prove that you're not above the limit."

Beyond that, it was unclear as of this writing just how OSHA planned to handle enforcement of the silica rule.

"If, during an inspection, OSHA representatives see someone cutting, the worker is wearing a mask, and things seem to be under control, I don't think this would result in a citation," Ms. Walton said.

"That said, the company owner should always be prepared to provide test results to an inspector."

For the silica rule, OSHA has an online compliance guide for small businesses at www.OSHA.gov/Publications/OSHA3902.pdf. OSHA was scheduled to have a con-

we've talked with that are already taking these control measures, silica levels have been well below the limit. But it's that initial testing that everyone will have to do."

densed version of this 103-page document available in early March, and Ms. Walton will send this to any RIBA member who requests it. Contact RSM at (401) 884-0430 or riskandsafetymanagement@verizon.net.

Other enforcement emphases

"OSHA's maximum fines increased to the tune of 80 percent across the board in August 2016," Ms. Walton continued. "Spring and summer are coming, and contractors will see OSHA inspectors around."

In early March, it was too early to tell whether President Donald J. Trump's policy of regulatory rollback would affect OSHA enforcement policies, according to Ms. Walton.

"With each administration, the way OSHA operates does change. Maybe that's why OSHA has been relatively quiet lately."

No matter what the administration's policies turn out to be, Ms. Walton emphasized that OSHA's bread-and-butter safety issues will continue to be critical.

"Falls are the number-one killer on construction jobsites," she pointed out. "Fall hazards will continue to be a huge emphasis for OSHA, especially when it comes to residential roofers and others on jobsites when there can be overnight freezing in early spring."

For more information, call RSM at (401) 884-0430.

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Gary Ezovski

North Smithfield Town Administrator

GARY EZOVSKI was elected North Smithfield town administrator in November 2016. A civil engineer by profession, Mr. Ezovski owned Lincoln Environmental, an engineering and science firm, for many years. A longtime advocate for reduced regulation, he chairs the Regulations Subcommittee of the Rhode Island Small Business Economic Summit. A lifelong North Smithfield resident, Mr. Ezovski served on the town's Water Authority, Sewer Commission, Planning Board, Fire Study Committee, School Building Committee and School Committee. In addition, he is a past chairman of the Board of Directors of the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce.



THE BUILDER: It's not every day that a small-business advocate, who has worked for less regulation, becomes a municipal chief executive. What has the transition been like for you?

EZOVSKI: Some aspects have been fun. I find I can have an impact on some of the simple matters that come through. For example, I was just out with the chief of police and the director of public works to try and come up with some ideas for improving some traffic problems. Those are the most frequent issues I've had to deal with in the three months I've been here.

As a business advocate, I've focused a great deal on regulation, and not so much on taxes. So I'm trying to learn as much as I can, as quickly as possible, about taxes and how the whole budget process works. I have until March 13th to get my recommendations to the Budget Committee.

So it's a race to try and do that while getting up to speed on so many other challenges and opportunities. I describe to folks that it's like playing a never-ending game of Whack-a-Mole[®] with two mallets. It's a challenge every day, with new things popping up all the time, including multiple personnel-related issues.

On the regulatory side, our longtime town planner (Robert Ericson) decided to retire at the end of my predecessor's term, so I was challenged with hiring a new planner, which happened pretty quickly, with Tom Kravitz coming over from Burrillville.

Tom's doing a great job. He has the right balance, the kind I always like to see in the regulatory community. He won't invite people in to pave the town, but he recognizes the need for a regulatory atmosphere that's – as we say so often – clear, predictable and reliable.

In fact, one initiative we're working on with the Town Council is updating our tax stabilization ordinance. This has been a relatively complicated process that told businesses: If you expand

or build a new facility in town, we'll mitigate your tax burden by, effectively, ramping it up over a number of years.

We had three different levels of participation, and different schedules. People were sometimes confused by it. So we're cleaning that up so it will be more in concert with what some 25 other communities have done. We had a first hearing on that in February.

We meet with business people, win their confidence, and assure them that we want them here. And

we want to make it as easy as we can for them to expand. So that aspect of things has been encouraging for me.

You get elected, inaugurated, and there's no handbook other than the Town Charter and the ordinances, and you step in with your own ideals. A big part of my reason for running was to encourage a respectful approach to government, where people talk with one another, with the goal of achieving outcomes that are efficient and effective. So far, we've been able to communicate internally and with the council in ways that I believe are better than they have been.

We're working together.

THE BUILDER: From your new viewpoint, what are the greatest local barriers to building in Rhode Island communities?

EZOVSKI: The time it takes to move things through the process is a challenge. Here in North Smithfield, I'll try to make sure that, as developments are proposed, they get heard as quickly as possible. That's one reason I was enthusiastic about bringing Tom Kravitz in, because he shares that view.

Even if the answer is "no," let's tell applicants quickly. We don't have to put people through many months or years of anguish to get to a result.

We're not trying to shut down public debate or opinion, but it needs to happen in a timeline that's considerate both to people who want to comment, and to the applicants who need to hear the comments so they can make their plans better.

Processes, from both local and state perspectives, are still complicated, but we're trying to do our part in North Smithfield as much as we can. For myself, I'm still active with the Small Business Economic Summit, the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, and the Rhode Island Business Coalition to try to keep my finger on the pulse of what's happening statewide.

Staying involved like that, I receive valuable information, and we can take advantage of opportunities as soon as they happen.

see *INTERVIEW...next page*

INTERVIEW...from previous page

Or we can be a voice at the table to encourage the right things to happen. It's a long-term challenge, and I have seen the ongoing "Barriers to Building" series in *The Rhode Island Builder* and I try to read them all.

THE BUILDER: What are North Smithfield's concerns about residential growth issues? Does the town want to grow?

EZOVSKI: Unfortunately, growth proposals individually become the reason most people speak out. It's not about how many houses or businesses we think we should have. It's about the construction that's happening next door or across the street. That's what brings people out to offer their opinions.

Does North Smithfield have room to grow? Yes, we do. I'm actually trying to improve access to land that I think can be very important to new commercial activity in town. It's an opportunity to create hundreds of jobs.

With our presence on Route 146 and proximity to the Massachusetts Turnpike, it's safe to say we have access for millions of people, a big labor pool.

There's room for appropriate residential growth too. In the Dowling Village area along 146-A, there's an 80-unit apartment complex likely to start soon. And we have many infill lots available for residential building. We do have land that subdivisions can happen on.

There are a lot of things happening.

THE BUILDER: Would North Smithfield benefit from sewer and drinking-water infrastructure expansion? What are the challenges there?

EZOVSKI: The challenges are financing, especially with drinking water. And also for sewers. Thirty or 40 years ago, when I was on the North Smithfield Sewer Commission, we had substantial federal and state support for creating the backbone of the sewer system that we have in town now.

Those extensive resources just aren't there today. There are some grant funds, and some financing is available through the state's Infrastructure Bank. But on a per-house basis, sewer and water projects are very expensive. Especially when the densities are lower, as they are in much of North Smithfield.

If you have to lay 1,000 feet of pipe to hit two houses, as opposed to the same length to hit 10 houses, the financing gets very difficult. That said, we do need to expanding our drinking-water system to some residences that have some issues with ground water.

We're now looking at a sewer district for a portion of Slatersville that would affect one planned subdivision, and would eliminate a need there for septic systems. There's a neighborhood meeting coming up on that. So we could be looking at the first major sewer expansion in quite a few years.

We'd also like to see water and sewer expansion in our Route 146 business corridor. That could encourage the right kind of development there.

Our drinking-water system is a little complex, though. It comes from the treatment plant in neighboring Woonsocket, and that water originates in a reservoir in North Smithfield!

THE BUILDER: Where is the school population going, and how is this affecting growth decisions?

EZOVSKI: A good question, and I've been involved in those discussions since the mid '80s, when I was part of the building needs-assessment committee that recommended construction of what ultimately became North Smithfield Elementary School.

I learned then how they look at population statistics, and then try to forecast student realities. It's been frustrating for me because I've been looking for birth rates in town so that can be part of the growth discussion. Until the early 2000s, when I was on the School Committee, it was easy to get that information. The town clerk had it. Today, the clerk's office is no longer responsible for collecting that data. It's collected by the state Dept. of Health.


In fact, I've been trying to get a sense of what's happened over the past 10 years when it comes to birth rates, a good indicator of future school population. Birthrates from 2012 will likely indicate the size of the pre-k and kindergarten classes in 2017. But I can't get that information! I've exchanged e-mails with the Dept. of Health, asking for the data. I get e-mails back, asking what I'm looking for. I don't know how many ways I can say it! But I'll get the information eventually, and then I can better answer the question.

My expectation is that, from 2008 through '14 or '15, there was a depression in those birth rates, which is typical in economic recessions. That's almost always the case.

We also have the millennial generation delaying having children. Some of them are in their early 30s now, and I'm seeing circumstances that affirm that.

Based on a bond passed two years ago, we do plan to pull the students out of one school (Dr. Halliwell School) and tear down the building.

We are struggling with the student scenario, and perhaps the whole state its. There have been substantial declines in (student) populations in some communities. I think Warwick has dropped 30 percent. We haven't seen that kind of drop in North Smithfield, but we have seen some. What the student population will be going forward is the real question. If we pack students into the buildings we have left, and the population increases through birth rates or people moving in, then what?

Education is probably the single most important issue we face. In any community, it carries over into the value of our homes. 



Reynolds Farm

North Kingstown development thought to be R.I.'s largest in 50 years

Hugh Fisher takes 'TNDs' to the next level.

By Paul F. Eno Editor

Finding enough adjectives to describe Reynolds Farm in North Kingstown can be challenging, but “woman-centric,” “surprising” and “happy” would certainly be among them.

Regardless of how one describes it, Reynolds Farm, one of the largest and most successful residential developments in Rhode Island in the last half-century, is unusual in another way: It’s embraced by town officials. To explain such an all-around positive result for a residential development, we have to look no further than the unusual and positive man who’s doing the developing.

“I grew up a welfare kid in South Providence, and my four siblings and I eventually ended up in the Manton Avenue projects,” said Hugh A. Fisher of h.a. Fisher Homes. “Dad was a union carpenter, but the only wood I’m good with is a #2 pencil.”

Having to grow up in survival mode, Hugh realized that he had to keep a positive spirit and capitalize on what he was good at: math and, eventually, business and sales.

“I became interested in real estate and housing,” Hugh recalled. “People lived and worked in cities, of course, but after World War II we decided to put houses on big lots, and people moved to the country.”

Hugh knew from the start that this was an inefficient use of land and resources.

“Finally, there was a movement back to traditional neighborhood developments (TNDs). That movement is still strong, and I love it. And it’s not a new idea: Providence is one big TND!”

Meanwhile, Hugh got into real estate, then construction, building his first home in 1976. But



Hugh Fisher of h.a. Fisher Homes can't wait to show off Reynolds Farm during a February visit by The Rhode Island Builder.

the TND idea received new emphasis with the rise of the Smart GrowthSM movement in the 1990s. Among other things, smart-growth advocates called for mixed commercial and residential development in new and existing “village centers,” along with higher densities to preserve green space and make the most of infrastructure.

“In the early 2000s, I built a condo development in Conimicut, an old village with storefronts and apartments above. I wanted the look of a TND, and with condos, it’s all about the look. So we did a TND, and the city loved it,” said Hugh, who has built over 1,400 homes across Rhode Island.

Women-Centric Design

Reynolds Farm is the latest and greatest expression of Hugh Fisher’s love of the TND, and the latest of several women-centric developments he has created.

“Builders and developers have to realize that women directly purchase or have a controlling influence in the purchase of 91 percent of all new homes,” Hugh pointed out. “All my homes are designed by women, from a woman’s point of view. There are design concepts men usually wouldn’t think of.”

Women-centric design isn’t cookie-cutter, Hugh emphasized. It includes the unique blend of characteristics that make up a particular woman’s persona. This is expressed in the design stage through planning exercises, design ideas, and specific products and materials. Hugh’s design staff, headed by his daughter, Sarah, even has female buyers take the “Livability At A Glance” and “Finally About Me” surveys.

In addition, women-centric design concentrates on factors like entertaining, storage spaces, and “de-stressing.”

see **REYNOLDS FARM...**page 30



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Developer Hugh Fisher builds on the principle that "design is everything." Every home at Reynolds Farm is different.



North Kingstown Building Official Gary Tedeschi, left, has high praise for Reynolds Farm.



At the Reynolds Farm Design Center, designer Sarah Fisher, Hugh's daughter, at right, reviews plans with Anne Powers and John Lotocki.



Hugh checks in with master stonemason Tony Andrade, who is hand-crafting a facade on one of the units at Reynolds Farm.



Hugh is the first official Women-Centric Builder in Rhode Island. He stresses that women are major home buyers and make critical decisions in joint home-buying. "All my homes are designed by women, from a woman's point of view," Hugh says. "There are design concepts men usually wouldn't think of."

REYNOLDS FARM...from page 28

"We look at the buyers' needs not only for today but for the future," Hugh said.

So successful has he been with this concept that he became the exclusively-licensed Woman-Centric Home Builder in Rhode Island, by Women-Centric Matters®, in 2007.

To see all this for ourselves, *The Rhode Island Builder* visited Reynolds Farm on February 3rd, noticing several things as we arrived. Every home is different in design, materials and even color. There are single-family units and a variety of condos. There is a central, town-green area with a large, attractive gazebo, and more to come.

Arriving at the sales office and model unit, we received the grand tour from Hugh himself. We learned that Reynolds Farm has roughly 230 units to be built or currently under construction on roughly 100 acres off Post Road. Among these are or will be 200 single-family homes, 18 single-level condominiums or cottages, and 24 "live-work" units with home office spaces.

"Women-centric is a tool like any other. If you don't use it correctly, it won't work," Hugh explained as we explored the model unit, with its spacious storage areas and other design features that would zip right over the heads of most males.

"These factors never went over my head," Hugh quipped. "My mother-in-law (the late and noted designer Verlie McNorton of Orlando, Florida), my wife and my daughter were always into home design and have been a great influence on me."

The women-centric concept and how Hugh uses it has drawn attention from around the world, including media, along with design and architectural students from as far away as Japan.

Entering the Reynolds Farm Design Center, we found Hugh's daughter, Sarah Fisher, vice president of marketing and design for h.a. Fisher Homes.

"I walk through every single design choice with every single buyer," explained Sarah, who has been helping with her dad's business since high school. After college, Sarah grew into her full-time responsibilities in the business in 2008.

As to design in general at Reynolds Farm: "I look at the whole picture before we even put a shovel in the ground," Hugh said. "We do background work on the neighborhood and plan accordingly. Design is everything, and the design of each of my homes is different. We're always pushing the envelope."

One way Hugh pushes the envelope at Reynolds Farm is by building some units with "casitas," or small, unobtrusive in-law apartments.

"The town allowed us to build these small apartments with side entrances on some units," Hugh said. "I believe it contributes to aging-in-place with grace."

Stopping in front of one home, Hugh pointed to the unobvious casita entrance toward the back.

"You'd never know from the outside this was two units. The town loved the idea, and the planners realized it was forward-thinking. It allows greater density without it looking denser," he stated. "If you don't use the casita for an in-law or a live-at-home adult child, you can rent it, as long as the owner lives in the main unit."

At the same time, Hugh emphasized that none of this envelope-

pushing was easy.

"This development was 10 years in the making, and I didn't buy the land until all the basic approvals were in place," he recalled. "But they didn't know me here in North Kingstown. And every town has had bad experiences with builders and developers who haven't done what they've promised."

Hugh had to do a lot of convincing, including taking North Kingstown officials to see his successful TNDs in Warwick. The officials were impressed.

"My overall goal is to build homes to the highest standards. This increases the property values of both our homes and the surrounding neighborhoods."

Happy residents

Prices at Reynolds Farm range from \$389,900 to \$600,000-plus for single-family homes and \$319,900 and up for condos. The personalized design services are included in the price. And how are sales going?

"We have 20 families living here already, and we have another 22 more units under construction," said Hugh. "You don't often see that in Rhode Island, especially in a large development."

In fact, Reynolds Farm is believed to be the largest residential development in Rhode Island in 50 years. Residents range all the way from young professionals to retirees in their 80s.

As we walked toward the central gazebo with Hugh, every resident who drove by smiled and waved, and some took the time to exchange pleasantries with him.

"It's a happy group!" he declared.

One happy guy appeared to be North Kingstown Building Official Gary Tedeschi, who happened to arrive for two inspections while we toured.

"This is a very nice project. It's well planned and well executed," Gary told us.

Hugh sees Reynolds Farm as a statewide, if not nationwide, model for residential development in the 21st century. "This is a model for every town because seeing is believing!" he said.

Find out more at www.HAFISHERHOMES.com/reynolds-farm/.



RIBA members urged to support Special Olympics

On Friday, June 2nd, 1,500 athletes will march into Meade Stadium on the campus of the University of Rhode Island to kick off the 49th annual Special Olympics Rhode State Summer Games. It will be a weekend of athletic competition, social interaction and health screenings.

Special Olympics Rhode Island seeks your financial support to offset expenses for the weekend. The total cost exceeds \$140,000, including housing, food, sound, staging, maintenance, lifeguards, tents and awards.

If you are so inclined, please forward a donation to: Special Olympics Rhode Island, 370 George Washington Hwy., Smithfield, RI 02917

-Dennis J. DeJesus, CEO

CTE...from page 11

Douglas Lumber's assistant manager and marketing director.

Pulling it all together with the dealers is Donald Hamel, Andersen's territory sales manager.

"The intent is to invest in our future workforce, whether it's in the construction trades or in the retail lumber and building materials industry. Many young students don't know about the opportunities in the retail side of the construction industry," Mr. Hamel said.

Overall, Mr. Hamel cited an aging workforce.

"A major issue facing our trade professionals is the lack of a skilled workforce, as well as an aging current workforce. The future of our industry relies on a workforce with the appropriate skill sets to add value to our businesses and to the construction trades in Rhode Island," said Mr. Hamel.

"We can talk about the problem or we

can invest in the solutions to create plans and programs that make our workforce the best in the nation."

Hands-on education

As an example of this support for CTE students, the 2016 Home Show featured a solar-powered tree house built by 220 students from 20 different schools. Some of those students have graduated and are now working in the field.

"The media coverage of this kind of workforce development in Rhode Island has gained national attention," Mr. Hamel said.

At the 2017 Home Show, scheduled for March 30th-April 2nd at the Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, over 300 of the state's CTE students, under the eyes of their instructors and trade professionals, were to be involved in building and/or staffing attractions such as "Main Street USA," The Home Technology Experience, the Designers Show House, Landscape Solution Centers, a solar-powered greenhouse

and more.

Mr. Hamel emphasized that media outlets follow the students' activities for months leading up to the Home Show.

"Also in 2017, Norm Abrams and the crew from *This Old House* will be involved with CTE and the Rhode Island Builders Association," he said.

Look for more information on that exciting development in our May issue.

"We want to see more opportunities created within our state's schools," Mr. Hamel said.

"In 2017, we will continue to work in collaboration with RIBA, the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership, the schools, and our Andersen Excellence dealers to continue to build our future workforce."

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder* for in-depth feature stories on the Andersen Excellence Dealers and the work-based learning projects they will support as the year unfolds.

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BARRIERS...from page 1

Warren Town Planner Kate Michaud, AICP.

"That being said, there's a lot of pressure from the taxpayers to manage expenditures. Due to Rhode Island's heavy reliance on property taxes, property owners feel the impact of any increases."

Despite declining student populations and closing schools in many communities, Ms. Michaud still sees concerns about education costs.

"In many communities, education is the largest share of the budget. From my experience in another town, whenever a larger subdivision or development was proposed to the Planning Board, the superintendent of schools would send them a letter telling them how much each child within that development would cost taxpayers. Sometimes the numbers were staggering," she added.



Kate Michaud

"As the number of students declines (with an aging population and smaller families), the divided average cost per pupil increases, making the perceived problem worse."

Report presents broader picture

An opposing view is set out point by point in a report from the Center for Global and Regional Economic Studies at Bryant University, released in May 2015.

According to the report, *The Economic Impact of School-Age Population Loss on Rhode Island's Economy*, keeping children out of a community to save on education costs not only doesn't work, it backfires in the economic long run.

"Spending among households with school-age children has a significant impact on economic activity, and it generates significant tax revenues for cities and towns in Rhode Island," said Bryant University economist Edinaldo Tebaldi, who co-authored the study with colleague Jongsung Kim.

The report agreed that the decline in the state's student population creates more cost per student, but pointed out that the overall economic repercussions go far beyond that.

"Along with virtually non-existent population growth since 2000, Rhode Island has also seen a marked decrease in its school-age population, those under 18. This loss of population resulted in decreased economic activity statewide and contributed to a significant increase in average spending per student enrolled in K-12 public schools," Dr. Tebaldi stated.

Rhode Island's school-age population decreased by 35,417 from 2000-2013, according to Drs. Tebaldi and Kim.

"This reduction negatively affects economic activity because it reduces household spending on local businesses and services," Dr. Tebaldi said.

The logical conclusion: Rather than keeping families out, encouraging them to move in will reduce per-student costs and have broad benefits for the local and state economies.

The report indicates that the state benefits more from population growth than municipalities do, but that this can be mitigated by

making school districts more efficient. Policy makers can optimize school enrollment through higher-density housing, local education consortiums and district consolidations when feasible.

"The number and size of our school districts is inefficient. If the right structural changes are made, towns as well as the state can benefit from population growth," said RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio, who served as North Smithfield Town Council vice president for seven years.

"If a declining school-age population was key to economic success, areas that have significant population growth would be financially distraught and areas that have a declining population would be financially strong. And just the opposite is true," he added.

Anti-growth, anti-child sentiment began in the early 1990s, when the state restructured its school-funding formulas, putting more of the burden on local school budgets, according to Mr. Marcantonio.

"Twenty years later, this has created local incentives not to grow. We have to turn this around so our towns can grow. Rhode Island already has an aging population. We need school-age children."

Better information flow suggested

In Ms. Michaud's opinion, anti-growth feeling can be mitigated, at least to a point, by a better flow of information to and between officials and the public.

"It's my experience that the public wants information, and they want it as early in the process as possible. They want to know how they will be affected by changes in their community," Ms. Michaud said.

"They want to know that things are being handled properly and that the process is transparent. In the absence of information, assumptions will be made and fears can take over."

Providing information and ensuring transparency needs to be a joint effort between the public and private sectors, she emphasized.

The welcome mat

As long as a developer does his or her homework, Lincoln is by no means anti-growth, according to Town Planner Albert Ranaldi, AICP.

"In Lincoln, we encourage developers to meet with our team as soon as a project is identified. Our town planner, our in-house town engineer, zoning official and public works director will sit down and review potential projects at no charge to the developer," Mr. Ranaldi explained.

"Usually, a pre-application meeting can be arranged within the same week of the initial contact with my office. We put all our concerns on the table during this meeting. If we see something that could be difficult to overcome, say meeting our parking requirements or the DEM stormwater regulations, we will ask the developers to provide us with enough conceptual information to prove that their project can meet the regulations. Developers are welcome to come back for as many additional meetings at no charge."

Once these concerns are addressed "in a conceptual manner," the project usually flows smoothly through the Planning Board's and, sometimes, the Zoning Board's review and approval stages, according to Mr. Ranaldi.

see *PLANNERS...next page*

PLANNERS...from previous page

"If a developer has assembled a team of professionals, the project will usually take about five to six months to go through the review and approval process. In my 15-plus years working for the Town of Lincoln, I have seen a number of large, complex projects receive approvals within this short time frame. It's all about teamwork on the developer's side as well as the municipality's side."

Mr. Ranaldi stressed that the town is bound by state mandates.

"We are very aware of the costs of development, and we work very hard to expedite our review process. However, developers need to understand that there are state-mandated requirements for the review process that we must abide by."

In some communities, it isn't necessarily anti-growth feeling that holds up developments, but ill-prepared developers, according to North Smithfield Town Planner Thomas J. Kravitz,

"In my experience, it hasn't been the Planning Board that holds things up, or at least I haven't been told such anyway. I have seen situations where a developer's design professionals perhaps take on too much work and are not performing quickly, or a state or local agency isn't acting quickly enough," Mr. Kravitz said.

Mr. Kravitz emphasized that everyone has to follow the rules.

"The legal framework is what it is for all of us in all industries, and I simply feel that success has more to do with or without the presence of assiduous working people who have common sense."



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Anatomy of a NIMBY

Regardless of how easy a municipality makes the developer's path, there is always NIMBYism. According to a February 23rd article by urban studies theorist Richard Florida, in *Atlantic Monthly*, to overcome NIMBYism, we must understand what drives it.

"NIMBYism and land-use restrictions are the culprit behind everything from growing income inequality to shrinking affordable housing, productivity, and innovation," Dr. Florida wrote.

"Resistance isn't just triggered by residents trying to prop up home values or protect neighborhoods from things they don't like—it's the product of policies...and a regulatory system that encourages...opposition."

To combat NIMBYism, Dr. Florida suggested addressing residents' concerns head-on, echoing Ms. Michaud's call for better information flow.

"Even if the economic arguments about the costs and negative consequences of NIMBYism reflect sound economic logic, they amount to little if they fail to address the very real concerns of neighborhood groups. Most regular citizens and neighborhood residents don't think like dispassionate economists."

NIMBYism involves direct concerns about traffic and parking, strains on municipal services that could raise taxes, threats to the environment, loss of neighborhood character, and a negative impact on historic and architecturally significant urban neighborhoods.

See Dr. Florida's entire article at <https://www.citylab.com/housing/2017/02/california-land-use-housing-affordability/517320/>.

Next month we'll look at Rhode Island's drinking water and sewer infrastructure issues as barriers to building.



BOARD...from page 3

are. Even more importantly, they should know who you are. Let them know you're in the construction industry and that you live in their district." He assured members that, at the State House, "my door is always open."

In other matters, Executive Director John Marcantonio offered his review of the RIBA legislative agenda. On the Home Show, he reported that "sales of exhibit space have already matched last year's very successful numbers, and we still have a month to go."

Mr. Marcantonio, Education and Workforce Development Committee Chairman Robert J. Baldwin, and Home Show Committee Chairman Louis Cotoia offered a complete update on RIBA's involvement with, and support for, the state's career and technical education (CTE) programs.

They particularly emphasized student involvement with the Home Show, along with future plans to develop the programs, attracting more students to them and to careers in the industry.

Mr. Cotoia recognized Andersen Corp. and its representative, Don Hamel, and dealers Arnold Lumber Co.; Coventry Lumber; Douglas Lumber, Kitchens and Home Center; National Building Products; United Builders Supply, and Riverhead Builders Supply for their collective support of CTE in 2017.

RIBA members are invited to attend the public portion of the monthly Board of Directors meetings, which usually take place on the first Tuesday of each month at RIBA's East Providence headquarters. Please call (401) 438-7400 for information.



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