

**FEATURED
PRODUCTS AND
SERVICES**

FOR AUGUST

Middle Section

**Updated Member
Benefit Guide**

Pull-Out Section at Center

**Wishart named
to commission**

Eric J. Wishart of Civil CADD Services Inc. has been named to the North Kingstown Planning Commission.

**Pandemic brings
mixed results
for construction**

The COVID-19 crisis seems to have sparked an unexpected building and remodeling boom, but that has resulted in higher prices and a shortage of some building materials.

Page 14

**Members: Work
going well amid
high demand**

Adapting to the "new normal," RIBA members continue to report good business amid COVID-19 precautions.

Page 7

**Planning expert
does not see
urban exodus**

See our interview with University of Illinois planning guru Dr. Joshua Drucker on the aftermath of COVID-19.

Page 30

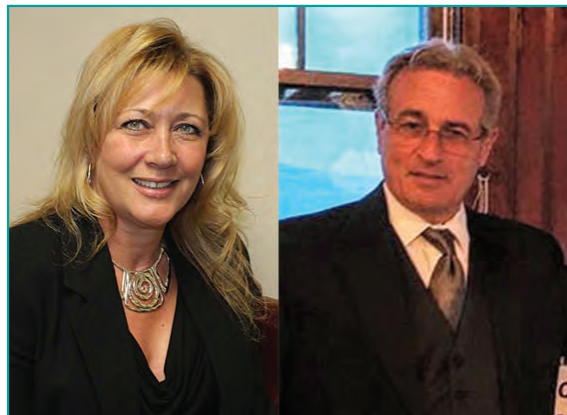
**NO-COST Construction Career Training Programs
in Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing and VOCATIONAL ESL**

**Apply now for September,
send an employee or hire a recent grad**

Find out more about this critical training and hiring pipeline: Listen to RIBA's News and Information Podcast #3 via Apple Podcasts and other major apps, featuring Cheryl Boyd and Ron Caniglia.

"We have created a great training and referral network to connect employers with the skilled workers they need. Folks in our programs and graduates are recruiting for us by sharing their experiences and skills with others. That said, employers should act quickly if they want to send an employee to a no-cost trade-training program," said RIBA Director of Workforce Programs Cheryl Boyd.

see JOB TRAINING...page 35



RIBA Director of Workforce Programs Cheryl Boyd and Workforce Development Committee Chairman Ronald J. Caniglia

Members, employers, participants enthusiastic about RIBA career training

The many RIBA Construction Career Training Program (CCTP) participants have great enthusiasm about their training experiences:



Hector Mojica

• Hector Mojica, graduate of the carpentry program.

"I can testify to that with how much I've learned and how much it impacted my confidence in what I do."

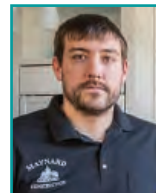
• Mekbul Tahir, graduate of the electrical program:

"The program was very engaging in class along with the opportunities to visit some amazing jobsites which is very important for us to see what we are really getting into."



Mekbul Tahir

The many RIBA members and employers who have used the employer/employee pipeline include:



Jesse Maynard

• Jesse Maynard of Maynard Construction BRC Inc.

"I've hired an employee from the program, formerly from the finance industry, and it has worked out really well. We hired a superstar!"

• Deb Burton of Red Cardinal Residential, LLC.

"Thank You for sending Felicha to me. Working with RIBA has continued to be a great experience!" *Related story on page 24.*

see ENTHUSIASM...page 24



RIBA reluctantly cancels Annual Clambake, Story on page 2

Reluctantly, RIBA cancels 2020 Clambake, looks forward to 2021 event

With virtually no chance that Rhode Island or Massachusetts will permit gatherings of more than 100 people by early August, the Rhode Island Builders Association has reluctantly decided to cancel the Annual Clambake.

This year would have marked the 70th anniversary of the event, which attracts over 600 people annually. But RIBA, which reinvented itself and its delivery of member services within a week of the lockdowns this spring, is all about resilience, affirms Executive Officer John Marcantonio.

“Although we must cancel this beloved event for 2020, please know that in 2021 it will certainly return, bigger and better than before,” Mr. Marcantonio comments.

Also looking forward to merrier times in 2021 is RIBA Past President Steven Gianlorenzo, chairman of the association’s



The folks from Douglas Lumber, Kitchens and Home Center enjoy the chow at the 2019 RIBA Clambake at Francis Farm, Rehoboth, Mass.

Programs & Events Committee, who attended his 50th RIBA Clambake in a row in 2019.

“It’s very unfortunate that we’ll have to miss the Clambake this year, but it’s a

different world right now,” Mr. Gianlorenzo says.

“But 2021 is coming, it will be my 51st Clambake, man and boy, and I know it will be a great one!”



The Rhode Island

Builder

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since 1951

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PART-TIME TEACHER NEEDED

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All copy, ads and photos must be to us by

Friday, July 31

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**RIBA welcomes
these new members
and thanks
their sponsors!**

Builder/Remodeler

Joshua Pereira
Joshua Luis Enterprises LLC / DBA The Carpenter's Son
64 Charles Street, East Providence, RI 02914

Subcontractors

Tony Kinsella
OK Fence Co., Inc.
37 Lane - #2, Warwick, RI 02888

Dwayne Babbitt
Babbitt Builders LLC
124 Scapa Flow Road, Charlestown, RI 02813

Todd Lutinski
DryZone Basement Systems
850 Bedford Street, Bridgewater, MA 02324

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these members
who recently renewed!**

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JJ Cardosi Inc.
Lewis Properties Inc.

Asa Hoxie
Michael Crowley
Pedro De La Rosa
Dwayne Babbitt
Janelle Photopoulos
Charles Bowse
Raymond Arruda
Michael P. Winter
Jim McCarty CPA
Robert Dick
Thomas Miller
Thomas Kelly
David Croutear
James F. Gilbert
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John J. O'Neil Jr.
John J. Cardosi Jr.
Jeffrey D. Lewis

see **MEMBERS...**page 8

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Looking Ahead

August 2020

♦ **Ongoing: Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) - Basic Carpentry** - Recruiting continues for a VESL class to begin in September. For details, contact Betty Bernal at (401) 500-9146 or bbernal@ribuilders.org, or register online at <https://ribuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details>. *More information on page 29.*

🔧 ♦ **August 4th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Insulation and Wall Board. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 26.*

🔧 ♦ **August 5th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 1 Credit Hour** - Topic is Construction Safety Protocols for COVID-19. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 26.*

♦ **August 7th: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is "Painting 101." Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 29.*

🔧 ♦ **August 11th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Windows and Doors. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 27.*

🔧 ♦ **August 13th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Advanced Framing/Air Leakage/Shallow Foundations. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 27.*

🔧 ♦ **August 14th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Hardwood Flooring. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 27.*

🔧 ♦ **August 18th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Accounting and Cash Flow. *Details on page 27.*

🔧 ♦ **August 19th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Job Scheduling is the Key to Success. *Details on Page 28.*

🔧 ♦ **August 21st: Continuing Education for Contractors - 3 Credit Hours** - Topic is Kitchen Design and Installation. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 28.*

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

 Indicates a course eligible for Rhode Island and/or Massachusetts continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.

♦ **August 24th: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is the New Home Construction Process. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 28.*

♦ **August 25th: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is Basic HR for Small Construction Businesses. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 29.*

♦ **August 26th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Residential Estimating. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 28.*

October 2020

♦ **October 6th: RIBA Annual Meeting and Election/Installation of Officers** - *Watch your mail and this calendar for more information.*

April 2021

♦ **April 8th-11th: 70th Annual Rhode Island Home Show, Featuring the Rhode Island Flower & Garden Show and The Energy Expo** - Call (401) 438-7400 or e-mail homeshow@ribuilders.org. *Details on page 9 and at RIBAHomeShow.com.*

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Visit RIBAEducates.com for access to 24-7 continuing education not listed above!

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Timothy A. Stasiunas

President's Message

Moving on from all the Un-Certainty

Over the past few months, the coronavirus or COVID-19 has dominated not only our lives but these messages as well. I promise this will be the last one, as I am getting weary with this whole topic.

B.C. (Before COVID), I don't think anyone would argue that time flew. Weeks seemed like days, months seemed like weeks, and years seemed like mere months. The older we got, the faster times seemed to fly. I remember visiting an uncle of mine who was in his 90s at the time, and I brought up this same topic.

His response: "Wait 'til you get to be my age! Time passes in the blink of an eye."

At this point, 2020 feels like it's standing still, particularly for the past four months.

I always was certain about many things that happened in our daily, weekly, monthly and yearly routine. As for the Rhode Island Builders Association, I was always certain about our annual meetings, Christmas parties, golf outings, Build PAC fundraisers, Home Shows and what, in normal times, would be coming up next, our Annual Clambake.

These are all things that over the past several months have been overcome by un-certainty. As has been said, "These are the times that try men's souls." But it's also true that "this too shall pass."

As I sit down to write this, it happens to be the Fourth of July, and how appropriate. It gives me the opportunity to put our situation in perspective and to reflect on the positive, particularly with the recent events in our state and country.

Although there are many un-certainties, there are things I am very certain of. We Americans live in the greatest country in the world. In our 244th year since the Declaration of Independence, on July 4, 1776, we have lifted up more people from poverty, regardless of race, creed or color (both at home and abroad), created more opportunity for our citizens, provided for free speech and freedom of religion, than any other nation in all of human history.

We will continue do so because this nation is a beacon of hope to the world.

As members of RIBA, I am also certain of this: Regardless of the challenges we face going forward, RIBA will continue to serve its members in many unique ways. It has transformed itself over the past several months in how we deliver services. Thanks to Executive Officer John Marcantonio, our invaluable staff, and the Board of Directors, we continue to deliver a seamless service on behalf of all our members.

Finally, even though we will miss seeing everyone at this year's Clambake, RIBA will continue to work toward success and prosperity for its members.



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For most RIBA members:

High demand, work going well amid the 'new normal'

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

"Healthy and busy."

That continues to be the general theme from members of the Rhode Island Builders Association as the residential construction industry continues to deal with changes brought about by the COVID-19 crisis.

"I'm happy to say that we, our subs, vendors and clients are all doing well: healthy and busy," Alexander Mitchell of Meridian Custom Homes reported in late June.

"When the seriousness of the pandemic came to light and the shutdown began, we were all beginning to think very defensively. However, not one of our clients had to cancel mid-construction, and very few of our prospective clients put the brakes on," he said.

Meridian continues to have a good conversion rate from prospect to client, according to Mr. Mitchell.

"We are about as busy selling and building as we have ever been. From a production standpoint, we quickly put into place protocols for onsite construction activities. That includes, but isn't limited to, mask-wearing, health questionnaires, restricting the number of people working inside at any one time, etc.," he added.

"RIBA was a terrific resource, providing us with great ideas and guidelines to follow. This has impacted our pace of construction but has allowed us to stay productive."

Meridian hasn't had any real trouble obtaining building materials so far, and Mr. Mitchell expressed positivity.

"There seems to be a pent-up demand for new housing. I believe the lack of good housing for sale, low interest rates and a reasonably good optimism for our country's future all play a role in this," he stated.

Being at a different angle in the residential construction industry, Blakely Interior Design, based in North Kingstown, has its own approach.

"We have certainly felt the impact of COVID-19, causing us to shift some of our business practices to best accommodate this uncertain time," said Janelle Blakely Photopoulos, company principal.

"The Blakely team began working from home in March, and we all just returned to the studio at the beginning of June. In order to keep momentum on our current projects and manage our clients'

expectations, we continued to move forward with all projects to the best of our ability during our work-from-home time by transitioning from in-person meetings and site visits to virtual video calls, instant messaging and voice messages," Ms. Photopoulos added.

"When the pandemic hit, we were in the middle of expanding the design studio, which provided both a challenge and a blessing for managing the project. We were all grateful for the timing of working from home because that meant we wouldn't be disrupted by construction in the studio, but it also posed new difficulties

in scheduling the trades to safely complete their work to keep us on schedule," she said.

"Now that we're back in our 'new' studio, we're diligently working on getting re-organized, tying up loose ends because of COVID-19 delays."

Blakeley also saw some glitches when it came to materials.

"As far as client projects are concerned, we saw the biggest impact in the availability and deliverability of items. A significant number of vendors we order from temporarily closed, understandably so, including our drapery workroom. This meant that none of our custom draperies would be ready for upcoming installations."

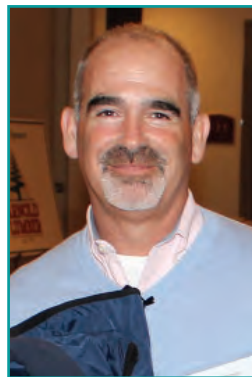
Nevertheless, the company completed some partial installations on time with materials at hand, according to Ms. Photopoulos.

"This felt great because we were providing our clients a safe and relaxing space to quarantine in. We wore our masks, kept plenty of distance from each other, and sanitized everything!" she said.

"During this uncertain time, we are reminded what an honor it is to design a home that speaks to our clients' souls and provides comfort because now more than ever it can be transformative for our everyday lives. Although we've seen a decrease in lead calls compared with our first quarter, we've been thinking outside the box to gain new clients and are using this slower time as an opportunity to prepare for a busy fall."

Blakeley published a blog post in April to offer a view of how the business was running during COVID-19, including how the company was managing its 10 in-progress projects. Find it at blakelyinteriordesign.com/managing-my-interior-design-business-during-covid-19/.

The Rhode Island Builder would like to hear more member stories about dealing with the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath. Contact the editor at builder@newriverpress.com.



Alexander Mitchell



Janelle Photopoulos

Report from Jamestown and Burrillville:

Builders busy, inspections keeping up, but material shortages are a glitch

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Residential construction in Rhode Island is pretty healthy, with inspections and approvals proceeding, according to the building officials *The Rhode Island Builder* continues to informally survey.

"As you can tell by the shortage of pressure-treated (PT) lumber, the outside building projects are high," said Jamestown Building/Zoning Official Chris N. Costa. *Related story on page 2.*

"Many homeowners who are working from home are deciding to have those long put-off projects done, so they can be on-site or they are doing it themselves. Jamestown has seen an increase in the smaller projects and still a good amount of new construction," Mr. Costa said.

"As far as inspections, if I feel (the health crisis) puts one of my inspectors (at risk) or they feel uncomfortable, we will use photos and video inspections."

The industry is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed in Burrillville too, according to Building Official Joseph Raymond.

"I believe that, contrary to what I and many other people thought would happen during this pandemic, you will find that the building business is booming at this time," Mr. Raymond said in late June. "Obviously, we have to be careful for our customers and ourselves to continue doing business and not make things worse."

Burrillville allows permit applicants to come to Town Hall by appointment, but most permits are being handled through the statewide e-permitting system, according to Mr. Raymond.

"For the majority of permits, I will go over what's being done with the contractor or the homeowner, and e-mail a permit application to them with the things that we can handle much quicker for them (such as map/lot identification, type of construction, etc.) already filled in. I then underline the required info I need from them, as well as their signature. The cost for the permit is noted, and the individual then finishes the permit and sends it by mail to me, along with a check for the permit," he explained.

"We follow up here when it arrives in the mail. Currently, the mail is very slow. The date between the stamp from the post office and when we receive it can be more than a week, then I give the owner or contractor verbal approval to start the work prior to receiving the permit, which we send back to them from the office once we get their application, which can again take another week."

Inspections are being done with great care, according to Mr. Raymond.

"Certain inspections that can be easily verified have been combined to lessen the number of visits to the property," he said. "We've had the same inspectors for the last 25 years that I have been working here, and the plumbing/mechanical inspector as well as the electrical inspector have been here for many more years. Having worked together for such a long time, we know in most

instances what the other will be looking for during inspections. Because of this, we can verify for each other that certain things were done."

Burrillville inspectors tend to work early in the morning or, as the days are longer, later in the evening, when sites are vacant or have a limited number of people present, Mr. Raymond indicated.

"Of course, we use masks and separation to keep ourselves and our customers as safe as we can when someone is there. For our customers, the contractors and homeowners, this has been working, and I continually check with them as to whether they have any other suggestions. We all have to make this work."

In agreement that permitting is proceeding apace is Deputy Director Julietta Georgakis of the Dept. of Business Regulation.

"Construction seems to be doing surprisingly well! We've had more permits pulled these last few months than we had before the pandemic," Ms. Georgakis said.

Acting State Building Commissioner James Cambio echoed this.

"We have seen a significant number of permit applications over the past few months, and our inspectors continue to be very busy. I haven't been made aware of any issues out there. All seems to be going very well," Mr. Cambio said.

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MEMBERS.from page 3

Malone Carpentry
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N&D Builders Ltd.
NAP Construction
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Obituary

Andy Thomson, longtime RIBA safety consultant, 82

Andrew Nathaniel "Andy" Thomson Jr., founder of Risk and Safety Management (RSM) and the Rhode Island Builders Association's safety officer for many years, died June 22nd at the Camden Clark Medical Center, Parkersburg, West Virginia. He was 82.



Andy Thomson

A native of Rochester, New Hampshire, Mr. Thomson graduated from Gilmore College in California and Keene State College in New Hampshire, then served in the U.S. Marine Corps as a criminal investigator for 20 years. He founded RSM in 1995, specializing in jobsite safety on construction sites and in mines.

Mr. Thomson retired in 2016, turning over East Greenwich-based RSM to his granddaughter, Cheri Walton, also an active RIBA member. He and his wife, Betsey, relocated to Pennsboro, West Virginia, to be near family.

An avid reader and traveler, and a devotee of western films, Mr. Thomson was a lifetime member of the Marine Corps League. Along with his wife, he is survived by two sons and a daughter, a brother, nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

"There are not enough kind adjectives that I could use to fully describe the amazing man my Grandpa was," Ms. Walton said.

"For anyone's path he crossed, he had a positive impact - people others would probably pass by without a thought. He would not only lend an ear but also a hand," she added.

"He taught me how to drive, saying, 'If you can drive and park this Tundra truck in Boston, you can do it anywhere.' He gave me my love of reading. He always told the best stories and, boy, did he have an arsenal of them as a Marine."

Mr. Thomson always encouraged his granddaughter to work hard in school, Ms. Walton recalled.

"Every grandchild used to get \$5 for getting an A on their report card. He showed me patience, hard work, empathy, sarcasm, and let's not forget all the best diners. If you ever had a lunch meeting with him, you know what I mean."

She described RSM as her passion in life.

"He guided me in the field of safety consulting and OSHA informal meetings. I have each case that he did in a huge binder that he labeled for me, 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.' He stayed behind by himself to ensure I was fully equipped to run the business and entrusted me with his legacy. He reminded me that he was just a phone call away.

"He was a gentleman and guiding light, whether it was within the construction industry, family, or for anyone who asked. He was selfless, honest, and genuinely caring."

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.McCulloughRaiguel.com.



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MARVIN 

Member Profile: Annette Stockley of The Pool & Patio Center

Business talent brought it together!

By Paul F. Eno Editor

They first met at Mammoth Mart. She was 16 and he was 19. Their path to the business that would become their life was long and unlikely. “She” is Annette Stockley, a Rumford native, who, with husband Ken, now owns the Pool & Patio Center Inc. in Coventry.

In the beginning, however, pools and patios weren’t anywhere near their radar.

“Ken worked for Mammoth Mart for years, becoming a store manager and eventually a regional coordinator,” says Annette, who studied “in an old-fashioned administrative-assistant program,” worked for a credit union, then became the only administrative assistant for Autocrat Coffee at the time.

The result: A great deal of practical business knowledge came to the Stockley Family, including administration, production, inventory, sales, shipping and every other aspect of business.

“I was bombarded with work that taught me how to triage, and it certainly prepared me for a certain seasonal business where much of the work is concentrated in two months of the year,” states Annette, who was already involved with pool work part-time.

Meanwhile, Mammoth Mart closed, and Ken went to work for his brother, George, for the next three years. They managed three pool stores. Hmm!

Then, there were Ken and Annette, founding the Pool & Patio Center in 1986. The Stockleys both had their Certified Pool/Spa Operator® (CPO) accreditation from the National Swimming Pool Foundation. Annette also studied at the Community College of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island School of Design. As the Stockleys’ children grew older, Annette remained fascinated with business, emersing herself in “an unbelievable library of business books that really transformed how we do business.”

Pool & Patio Center

Principals: Ken & Annette Stockley

RIBA member since: 1995

Focus: Pool, Hot Tub, Sauna, Spa Sales & Service

Founded: 1986

Based: Coventry, Rhode Island



Annette Stockley

Annette emphasizes that – surprise - the Pool & Patio Center grows every single year.

“Especially in this COVID year, we’re grateful for every single customer we have. We realize there are a lot of people out there right now with no jobs.”

Speaking of COVID, how is Pool & Patio Center handling the health situation?

“Well, we were closed for an entire month. When the state went into ‘Phase 1,’ we were allowed to open, with a certain percentage of customers permitted in the

store. At no point did we lay anyone off, and we’ve been very careful to keep our employees employed,” says Annette, who serves on the Rhode Island Contractors’ Registration and Licensing Board.

The retail store has the now-usual plexiglass barriers between the employees and customers.

“We have a regimen of sanitizing, cleaning and inspections of the store, following state guidelines,” she declares. “We have an overabundance of hand sanitizers and masks. In fact, I’d say we’re fanatically committed to safety.”

Pool & Patio Center is truly a family business. While Ken is now semi-retired, son Joseph Stockley is now operations manager, and a National Swimming Pool Foundation (NSPF) Authorized Instructor.

Pool & Patio Center joined RIBA in 1995. With a few exceptions, the company works within Rhode Island. The company does use subcontractors to do some service work, such as repairing pools and hot tubs, according to Annette

“We really love reading *The Rhode Island Builder* every month, and we enjoy reading about other companies. And we want to take more advantage of the education programs. Ken and I have done so in the past,” Annette says.

The company exhibits at the Rhode Island Home Show every year, as well. What does the future hold for Pool & Patio Center?

“Our son, Joseph, is doing much of the work running the company already, and has been for several years. I’m still working full-time, but Joseph is taking over the business,” Annette reports.

The company’s philosophy will remain the same, she stresses. “How would we want to be treated if we were the customer? That’s what Pool & Patio Center will always live by.”

Find out more at Poolandpatiocenter.com.

Professional Women in Building : PWB NEWS

*We are all missing seeing each other and sharing our experiences.
We can't wait until it is safe enough to schedule our meetings
again. In the meantime, stay safe, be well, and keep your spirits
up, ladies!*



Smithfield Plumbing Networking Event

Fall 2020 Date TBD

PWB Officers

Carol O'Donnell- President
Linda Bohmbach- Vice President
Sophia Karvunis- Treasurer
Jacqueline Pagel- Secretary

Want to learn more about the PWB?

Please visit our site for contact info, up-coming events and news at <http://ribuilders.org/professional-women-in-building>

From the Board of Directors

Industry is on the rebound

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

It was a busy agenda for the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors as they met by live teleconference on July 7th, for the second month in a row.

At the request of President Timothy A. Stasiunas, RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio opened the meeting with an overall report on the association's activities.

"Concerns remain over the COVID-19 crisis and its effect on our industry. There were some hits, but we're rebounding quickly," Mr. Marcantonio said.

Final state-issued protocols for jobsites are still pending, and RIBA is contributing to those and will release them as soon as they are available, according to Mr. Marcantonio.

"One thing they have asked us to communicate is for our industry to avoid ride-sharing. Authorities have been able to document that many of the folks in our industry who have contracted the virus and spread it did so while sharing a ride to and from work," he added.

If ride-sharing can't be avoided, opening the windows and

avoiding the air conditioning is advised. Additionally, final protocols will require that each employer have a COVID plan.

"You don't have to submit this to the state. You just have to have one," Mr. Marcantonio explained, adding that Reopeningri.com is a prime source for reliable information.

Mr. Marcantonio offered a full report on the status of the 70th

see **BOARD...page 34**



RIBA's Board of Directors meets on July 7th via Zoom.



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Pandemic sparks construction boom but creates some supply shortages

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Much to the surprise of many in the residential construction industry, the COVID-19 health crisis seems to have stimulated a boom in building and remodeling in smaller markets, away from major cities.

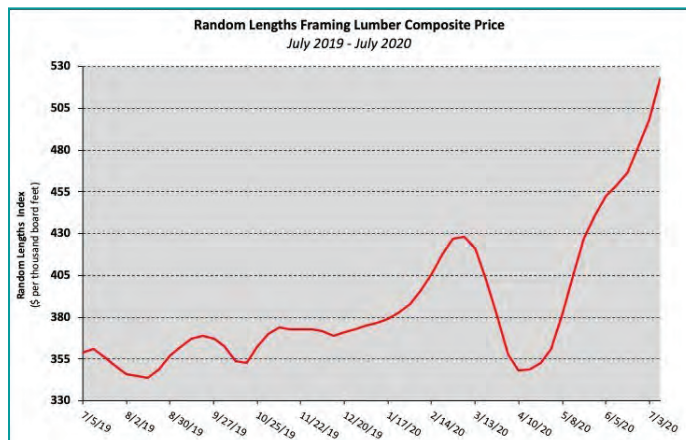
"The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to hasten a housing trend already taking place across the nation—residential construction activity that is expanding at a more rapid rate in lower-density markets such as smaller cities and rural areas," the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) reported on June 2nd.

These were among the findings of the latest quarterly NAHB Home Building Geography Index (HBGI).

"We expect the virus could affect future housing preferences for those currently living in the hardest-hit, high-density environments like central cities, and that housing demand will continue to increase in medium- and low-density communities," said NAHB Chairman Dean Mon, a home builder and developer from New Jersey.

Rhode Island seems to be no exception, and a number of RIBA members are reporting backlogs. *Related stories on pages 7 and 8.*

The general reason given by members as expressed to *The Rhode Island Builder*: 1) People have been stuck at home, many



Source: National Association of Home Builders

for months, and are living with all those indoor and outdoor construction projects they were putting off. 2) They have money in their pockets because of federal stimulus payments and not taking vacations this year.

The dark side

But there's a dark side to the boom: A shortage of building materials because of high demand.

"I've heard from the dealers that there are shortages of pressure-treated (PT) lumber and many decking products on account of high demand," commented Donald Hamel of Andersen Corp. "Some of the shortages are due to companies being closed during the

see *JOB TRAINING...page 34*



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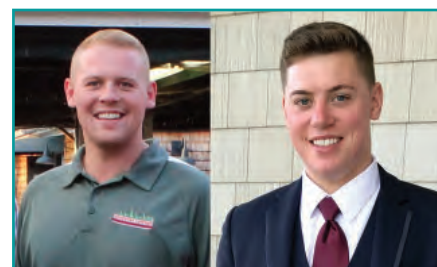
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Coventry Lumber featured on Channel 12

Brothers Sean and Evan Finnegan, of the family that owns Coventry Lumber and its parent company, FI-NETCO®, were interviewed in a June 22nd WPRI-TV Channel 12 report on the building boom and material shortages in the residential construction industry locally. *Related story on page 2.*

The local lumber company was bought by the Finnegans in 2012. "Everyone in the family's heavily involved," Sean Finnegan, the company's controller, said. "The company has been around since 1969."



Sean and Evan Finnegan

Featured Products & Services for August 2020



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RIBA MEMBER BENEFIT GUIDE

RIBuilders.org

Comprehensive RIBA Member Benefits

- Member Solution Services
- Complimentary Education Programs
- Workforce / Trade Training for Employees
- Vital Information Resources
- Legislative Advocacy at State House
- Monthly Magazine
- Business Marketing Opportunities
- Full-Service Insurance Agency
- Member to Member Referrals
- Medical and Dental Plans
- Complimentary Jobsite Safety Service
- Discounts and Rebates
- Social Events and Networking



Find Work/Hire Members

Services include member-to-member referrals, the new and improved RIBAlist.com consumer website, the huge, consumer-based Rhode Island Home Show, held every year since 1948, and the annual *Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide*.

Complimentary Education! (Thousands \$ in value)

Online or in person, our contractor education programs are some of the best association based programs in the country and are designed for your professional development—they are always tuition free! Classes and seminars are given monthly for both owners and their employees. Subject matters include codes, safety, estimating and so much more! Most classes are also eligible for Rhode Island continuing-education credits. MA education credits are also available.

Workforce / Trade Training for Employees (Thousands \$ in value!)

As a member of RIBA, you can send current or prospective employees to trade training. Upskill your current workforce or enroll them in a 26 week pre-apprentice training before you hire them. With 6 locations and Spanish speaking options, this trade training program is one of the best in the Federation — Carpentry, Electrical, and HVAC / Plumbing available.

Complimentary Safety Services

RIBA has a complimentary Safety Service that includes jobsite visits to guide members toward proper workforce-safety procedures, OSHA compliance and lower insurance rates. This is a totally confidential service, and it can save you thousands of dollars!



From RIBA's Executive Officer

Dear Members of the Rhode Island Builders Association:

Please take the time to pull this special Member Benefit Guide out of the magazine or, if you're getting this as a new member, be sure to keep it as your designated resource to quickly reference and recognize everything you have available to you at RIBA.



From the complimentary educational services for you and your employees, the new Safety Service, trade training programs for new hires, networking, business referrals, legislative advocacy and member solution-services, your trade association is structured to help you with every aspect of your business.

Our goal is to make it easier than ever to understand what's included in your membership. So, when you have a chance, give us a call – we'll get you connected to the services we have that can help protect you, make you money, improve your knowledge, keep you safe, and help your business thrive!

I also need your help with a larger cause. Please share this message with your industry colleagues and ask them to join! Our services, advocacy and industry-leading resources depend on membership. With so much to offer, our mission is to reach out and serve. Helping someone join is easy, just have them call the office at (401) 438-7400 and we will take it from there!

Thanks again for being a member, for being a part of this thriving, 70 year old resource, and for allowing us to serve your needs. Please always feel free to call us with any issue, as we are always here for you!

All my best,

John Marcantonio *Executive Officer*

Vital Information Resources

Members stay in the know with information they can only find through RIBA, including the award-winning, monthly Rhode Island Builder magazine; update e-mails from Executive Officer John Marcantonio, national updates from the National Association of Home Builders, member podcasts and so much more! This is a true advantage in the marketplace!

Solution Services

Industry-based professionals are available to find answers for you and to help you with your most troubling issues – from permitting, to new-regulations compliance, to financing resources, the solutions staff at RIBA gives you peace of mind and lets you know that you're not alone out there!

Insurance & Bonding

RIBA has its own full-service, in-house insurance agency – The Builders Insurance Group (BIG). Members will find a rewarding service experience, trusted advice on insurance products, and the knowledge that the resources of this RIBA subsidiary go toward helping the industry.

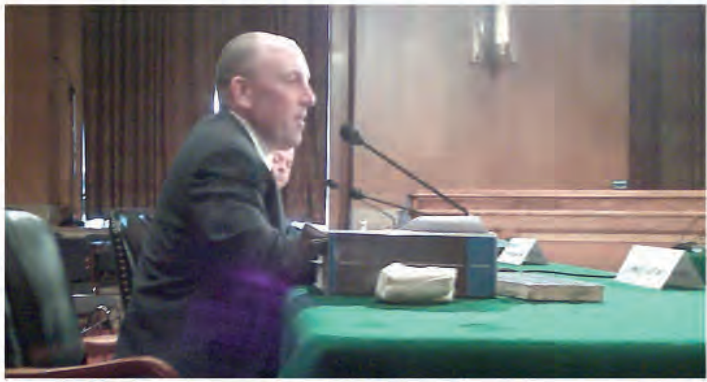


Medical & Dental Plans for You and Your Employees

Speaking of insurance, RIBA offers complete health and dental plans for you and your employees. The dental plans, in particular, are the best available when it comes to cost. RIBA has its own pool and its own rate.

**To access member resources,
please call us today 401.438.7400.**

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Powerful Legislative Advocacy

RIBA represents you locally, at the State House and on the federal level with all things regulatory, and with very effective political lobbying. We track every bill that affects you, and we put in legislation to help the state's housing needs. Feel free to join our committees, get updates on bills, and advocate with the executive officer on key legislation.



Socialize, Network & Enjoy!

RIBA has events! Take advantage of big, fun events like our Annual Clambake, Golf Classic, monthly network events, Christmas parties, cookouts, annual meeting.... And if you like to socialize, and make this your focus, just let us know.

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CCTP grad finds home with Red Cardinal Residential

"If I could have more people like Felicha, it would be amazing!"

That's the word from Deb Burton of Red Cardinal Residential when she talks about Felicha Maldonado, a recent graduate of an East Providence session of RIBA's Carpentry Career Training Program (CCTP). *Related story on page 1.*

Deb hired Felicha after talking with RIBA Professional Development Manager Bob Salvias at one of the classes.

"Bob put me in touch with Cheryl Boyd and Lou Cotoia (who head RIBA's job training programs)."

Based in North Scituate, Red Cardinal Residential does primarily handyman, hardscape and odd-job work for older homeowners.

"I was looking for someone three days a week, and Felicha was looking for part-time. It was a perfect fit," Deb says.

Felicha started with Red Cardinal on July 7th.

"I heard about the CCTP on Facebook, when one of my cousins shared it with me. I said 'hmm,' and I called and applied," she says.

"Cheryl and Lou introduced me to Deb. Such a nice person!"

Felicha works for Deb three days a week, operating a food truck the rest of the time.

"CCTP is a very good career path, and it's free. And the teachers are great! You can tell they're really excited about teaching us," Felicha states.



Felicha Maldonado, a recent graduate of an East Providence session of RIBA's Carpentry Career Training Program (CCTP), concentrates on a roofing project.

Deb is just as enthusiastic.

"Felicha is a great worker. She was reliable with her class attendance and very sweet! We're grateful to RIBA for this training and the skilled people they are producing," she says.

"Felicha didn't bat an eye about getting stones out of the truck and pushing a wheelbarrow."

For training program details and to register, contact Elise Geddes at (401) 438-7400 or egeddes@ribuilders.org, or visit RCWPjobs.com.



ENTHUSIASM...from page 1

- Kenneth Jones of Ken Jones Construction

"I sent employees to be upskilled, and they used the knowledge they acquired in the class on the job. They loved the classes, and they're learning a lot," Mr. Jones said.



Ken Jones and Jeff Sweenor

from URI, but we have been able to show him another career opportunity."

For details on RIBA job training programs and to register, contact Elise Geddes at (401) 438-7400 or egeddes@ribuilders.org, or visit RCWPjobs.com.



- Jeffrey Sweenor of Sweenor Builders Inc.

"We were thrilled with the CCTP class, based on our employee, Joe Martinez, who attended," Mr. Sweenor said.

"He has learned a lot and enjoys the class. He graduated with a teaching degree



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Classes start this September and
meet Mondays, Tuesdays and
Thursdays from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Learn more and apply online at:
RIBuilders.org/training-programs/



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fully equipped training facilities.

Home Builders Institute (HBI) Curriculum
Training includes:

- 85 Hours of contextualized English
training and Construction Terminology
- 95 Hours of hands-on training
- Manufacturer Demonstrations
- Employability Skills
- OSHA 10 Construction Card

Check online for class start dates,
classes meet Monday through
Thursday from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Learn more, contact Betty Bernal
at 401-205-1877 and apply online
at: RIBuilders.org/training-programs/



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you are looking to fill.

Our construction career training
participants and recent graduates
are actively seeking employment
and their resumes can be found on
the job portal so don't hesitate to
sign up for your free account and
start posting your jobs today.

To learn more about how to post a
job or apply for a job on this website,
please contact the Rhode Island
Builders Association at 401-438-7400
or email egeddes@ribuilders.org



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Though classes have temporarily moved to Zoom online conferencing (see page 1), the Rhode Island Builders Association continues the Contractor Training Program in June, expanding its educational offerings for members and their employees! Call for details and to register, contact RIBA Professional Development Manager Robert Salvas at (401) 438-7400 or e-mail bsalvas@ribuilders.org.

Continuing Education

Courses headlined in **RED** on The RIBA Contractor Training Pages qualify for continuing education requirements. EVERY RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTOR registered to work in Rhode Island must take five hours of continuing education before his or her next renewal date, and must provide class certificates as evidence of completion.

2½ Credit Hours:

Insulation & Wall Board

August 4th

WHEN: Tuesday, August 4th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Jon Erickson for a class that focuses on the building science behind insulation and air tightness codes.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



***As an added benefit
to RIBA's Education Program,
our instructors are happy to speak
with class attendees by phone,
after class, if they have
additional questions
or issues to discuss.***

***For information, contact Bob Salvas,
bsalvas@ribuilders.org
or call (401) 438-7400.***

1 Credit Hour:

Construction Safety Protocols for COVID-19

August 5th

WHEN: Wednesday, August 5th, 9 to 10 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio, this class will review workers' personal responsibilities, social distancing, general jobsite and office practices. Also considered will be personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitation and cleanliness, and jobsite visitors. Workers entering occupied buildings and homes will also be discussed.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



***RIBA reserves the right
to limit the number of attendees from a
single company
at courses taught on-site.
For information, contact Bob Salvas,
bsalvas@ribuilders.org
or call (401) 438-7400.***

2½ Credit Hours:
Windows & Doors
August 11th

WHEN: Tuesday, August 11th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Don Hamel of Andersen Corp. for this class, which will provide guidance on the basic design of residential window and door installations.

You must pre-register for this class. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. .



2 Credit Hours:
Hardwood Flooring
August 14th

WHEN: Friday, August 14th, 8 to 10 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This class will discuss the different materials used for flooring and which are best used in particular situations. Also covered will be traditional, raw wood installation versus prefinished hardwood, how to finish raw wood, best practices for refinishing hardwood floors, and how to design a hardwood flooring layout for one or more spaces.

The instructor is Mike Sarah.

You must pre-register for this class. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



**For RIBA
membership information
contact Elise Geddes
401-438-7400 • or egeddes@ribuilders.org**

5 Credit Hours:
Advanced Framing/Air Leakage
/Shallow Foundations
August 13th

WHEN: Thursday, August 13th, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This class with instructor Mike Guertin covers:

- How to reduce framing materials and increase insulation,
- How to prepare for blower door tests,
- Simple, effective air-sealing strategies,
- How to design and install frost-protected shallow foundations only 12 inches deep.

You must pre-register for this class. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



2½ Credit Hours:
Accounting
and Cash Flow
August 18th

WHEN: Tuesday, August 18th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Instructor David Lucier will provide an overview of how a contractor can understand the basics of accounting and how to manage cash flow.

Understanding these principles can determine whether or not your construction business succeeds.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.





RIBA Contractor Training

2 Credit Hours:
Job Scheduling
is the Key to Success
August 19th

WHEN: Wednesday, August 19th, 8 to 10 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by instructor Justin Zeller, this class will discuss the effect of scheduling on making money, client happiness and professionalism. These are all crucial factors in the success of your construction business.

You must pre-register for this class. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



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3 Credit Hours:
Kitchen Design
and Installation
August 21st

WHEN: Friday, August 21st, 8 to 11 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by Jason Oliveira, this class will cover the basics of designing a well-planned kitchen and how to install the cabinetry. Also discussed will be:

- The design process,
- Material choices for cabinets and counters,
- Utility and appliance placement
- Traffic flow and storage,
- Installation tips and tricks.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



5 Credit Hours:
Residential Estimating
August 26th

WHEN: Wednesday, August 26th, 8 to 1 p.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by Justin Zeller, this class will cover basic construction math and how it is used to estimate the labor and material costs of a residential construction project.

You must pre-register for this class. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



Painting 101 *August 7th*

WHEN: Friday, August 7th, 8 to 10 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor James DiMarzio to learn best practices for indoor and outdoor painting, including techniques and spraying.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



Basic HR

for Small Construction Businesses *August 25th*

WHEN: Tuesday, August 25th, 8 to 10 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by Gary Convertino, this class will help you deal with critical human resources in your construction business.

Topics covered will include:

- Dept. of Labor guidelines,
- Performance evaluations,
- Promotions
- Onboarding/offboarding
- Hiring/recruitment,
- Benefits.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



**For RIBA
membership information
contact Elise Geddes
401-438-7400
or egeddes@ribuilders.org**




**Additional Classes
Offered by RIBA this Month**

Deadline to register is one day before class.
For more information and to register: Contact Bob Salvas
at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

The New Home Construction Process *August 24th*

WHEN: Monday, August 24th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Elise Geddes of Geddes Builders and review the steps you will need to keep in mind before you build a new home for spec or for contract.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



New VESL class begins in September

The most recent Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) Basic Carpentry class ends on August 14th, and another is expected to begin in late September.

That's the word from Betty Bernal, the Rhode Island Builders Association's Latino outreach coordinator.

"This was the first virtual class from beginning to end, because of the COVID-19 pandemic," Ms. Bernal said.

"Although it was not a hands-on class, students are reporting they learned a lot. What instructor Chen Chhork has been teaching through demonstrations has helped them understand the essentials of residential construction," she continued.

"We are currently recruiting for the next VESL class, which is expected to start toward the end of September."

The class is expected to start online but will move to a physical venue as soon as possible.

For further information about VESL, contact Ms. Bernal at (401) 500-9146 or bbernal@ribuilders.org, or register online at <https://ribuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details>.



Dr. Joshua M. Drucker

Associate Professor of Urban Planning, University of Illinois

Dr. Joshua M. Drucker specializes in the study of regional and local development, economic policy, industrial structure, analytical methods for planning, and related areas. A native of the Detroit area, Dr. Drucker earned a bachelor of science in mathematics and economics from the University of Michigan, and masters and doctoral degrees in city and regional planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He worked with the North Carolina Dept. of Commerce and the Southern Growth Policies Board on projects ranging from industry and impact studies and economic development strategies to analyses of technology policy and the development and programming of automated economic analysis tools. Dr. Drucker belongs to the American Institute of Certified Planners and the American Planning Association. He joined the University of Illinois Dept. of Urban Planning and Policy in August 2008.



THE BUILDER: Overall, how do you see the COVID-19 pandemic affecting municipal and regional planning in general?

DRUCKER: I hope there will be more emphasis on equity issues. With both COVID-19 and the failure of response, we're seeing black and brown people more exposed. People who work in low-income jobs are more exposed, as are people who rely on daycare right now.

I just learned this morning that my (Chicago-area) school district will be keeping my kids in at-home mode for three days a week per kid. That will be interesting for people who work front-line jobs and in retail, who don't get paid well.

So, I hope these issues will be dealt with through more emphasis in planning on community public health. In fact, that need goes way back to the start of planning in this country. The "City Beautiful" movement and the efforts to prevent "miasmas" and promote breathable air go way back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. We may see a resurgence of interest in that sort of planning.

At the same time, we'll see some revenue austerity. There's just not enough money to do a lot of what needs to be done, and that's even assuming the federal government is interested in continuing deficit spending. But there's certainly not enough money on the state and local levels, where planning is mostly conducted.

Strangely enough, when we're in times like these, planning can get a bit of a boost because it's cheap. It's a lot cheaper to make a plan than to actually do it. Often, municipalities will say, "This is what we ought to do," hire consultants, come up with good docu-

ments, then say they'll do it when they have the money.

So we may see more emphasis on planning for community and economic development, which gives a lot greater "bang for the buck" in terms of return for government resources than building roads or regulating land use. We've seen that in some other recessions, like in the Great Recession. We had a lot better job prospects for our students on the economic and community side for a while.

THE BUILDER: Given the combination of COVID-19 and "distancing," the recent civil unrest, and the realization for many people that telecommuting can actually work, do you see an exodus from the cities?

DRUCKER: Planners have been wrong repeatedly about where people want to live. I did some research myself way back, using data to show that telecommuting wasn't working for most people who tried it, and that it wasn't going to be a change-all.

Some of the prominent thinkers in urbanism and in planning always believed there's a huge importance to face-to-face contact and arrangements, even for those jobs where you could theoretically telecommute. Of course, the technology's been getting better and, yes, people are getting used to it.

However, I think the consensus in most places is still that telecommuting works best as a part-time accommodation for most jobs. And that you really do want a place where you can congregate in person, assuming it's healthy and safe to do so. I'm a little skeptical that all of a sudden there will be a huge shift to working from home. I know many people are doing it, but many of those don't like it.

It's hard to imagine a fully corporate workplace that doesn't meet once a month for team-building. Even if you're going in to the office only once a month, you still can't be super-distant (from a city), but you could be farther out. Remember that telecommuting can also exacerbate inequality because there are a lot of jobs where you can't telecommute.

Over time, we've seen a lot of shifts in the desirability of cities vs. suburbs vs. exurbs. Some of that is generational. If you have a desire for the excitement of the city, that desire has pulled a lot of people back into this resurgence of city life in the last 10 years. These were mostly younger people or people without children.

There can be the violence in the city, a lack of quality schools, or crowding – the inability to get your own space. So, there are people who want to move out when they're older. It's also pos-

see *INTERVIEW...next page*

INTERVIEW...from previous page

sible that some people don't change as much as they grow older, like if you are in your 20s and 30s and were raised in the suburbs. But the current generation has spent a lot more of their time in the city. They get used to that.

I do think there's definitely going to be a desire to escape from the close part of the cities. But that implies transportation and building issues.

THE BUILDER: If that's the case, what will this do to urban, suburban and exurban planning, especially density, which has been advocated by the Smart Growth movement? Will we see the rehabilitation of the five-acre lot?

DRUCKER: There's a lot of argument among urban planning academics that density is not bad for public health, but there's really no evidence that denser places are doing worse in this pandemic.

Indeed, in a denser environment, you may have more resources available to you. I mean, I'd be kind of scared being the person who gets really sick, and I'm on a five-acre lot with no-one nearby and no way to get anywhere if I don't feel good enough to drive.

So it really depends on how people perceive the issue. Is there safety in numbers and safety in being with people? Are there ways to distance better when you're with people?

Maybe the inner suburbs would have some advantage and be a good balance, where you can get some distance. You don't need five acres. Maybe you need half an acre or a quarter acre. And, if you need to, you can still walk somewhere or get a carpool going. And there's still a hospital within a short drive, or even public transit.

THE BUILDER: Can you say more about what this scenario will do to Smart Growth principles? For example, will village centers be farther out?

DRUCKER: It's not really something I'm confident in saying because it has a lot to do with psychology and sociology. And we're learning more about how this disease spreads. And there are financial implications.

I don't know that urban areas with austerity budgets are going to be able to redesign themselves very quickly. Planners may be looking around and saying, "What can we use that's already built in the inner-ring suburbs?"

In those areas, there's tons of infrastructure and lots of space, relatively speaking. It's more distant from the cities, and it might be a destination for those looking to move out of the more crowded urban areas.

As for village centers being farther out, they might be more spaced from each other, but do they really have to be farther from the center cities? It takes a long time to see shifts in the urban landscape because most of it's already built. New development is a tiny fraction of total development in any one time period. So, we have to see how long this pandemic lasts, and how long our responses to it will take.

The density question is very interesting from a planning standpoint, and people might not realize that whether it works or not can have a lot to do with topography.

For example, just north of New York City is Westchester County.

It's always amazing to me how many people they manage to cram into that area, yet you don't see it because there are lots of trees with lots of height and distance elevation. So you don't feel that it's all that dense.

Whereas here in Chicago, you see everyone, you see all the buildings, and it's flat. So that affects people's perceptions. The trees and plants also affect people's perceptions. A lot of this has to do with whether people feel at risk from being too close to other people, rather than are you really at risk.

THE BUILDER: So, will we ever see a return to the "old normal" at any point?

DRUCKER: Well, a time of crisis can be when we make major changes because willpower comes into play. We may be sick of the way it is, and feel we have to do something about it. But not always!

I would have thought we'd make more changes after the Great Recession when it came to economic development. As it was, a lot of regulation and oversight was rescinded as soon as we got further away from the crisis.

So, I frankly don't know if we will return to the old normal. We're seeing three crises in one, and people with a lot smarter minds than mine have no idea how long it will all last or what the outcome will be.

Still, I'm not convinced that the overall effect will be away from cities, because, and I've said, there are community needs that can be fulfilled there. In fact, I hope there is no exodus from the cities.

THE BUILDER: What's your ultimate message for developers and planners here in New England?

DRUCKER: I hope that, though all this, we can keep open minds and not make knee-jerk reactions.

I think planners tend to take a long-term perspective. I think most builders and contractors also would have to take at least somewhat of a long-term perspective because you build on speculation a great deal. And you're trying to make sure that you stay solvent. So, let's not rush to judgment on these things before we see how it comes out.

Planners have tended to make mistakes when they make assumptions about how people feel or about how things will work. They're very sorry afterward, but it's difficult to undo that kind of thing, once you've made changes to the landscape.

THE BUILDER: So, you suggest being pragmatic.

DRUCKER: Pragmatic, cautious, and look at all the evidence and science before making major decisions. That's hard to do when you don't have the money, but it's also hard to act when you don't have money, so that might actually help.




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Litigate, mediate or arbitrate?

By Girard A. Visconti Esq.

From the beginning of my practice, I was always an advocate of mediation and arbitration versus litigation, especially in the practice of construction law.

The advantages of arbitration are accelerated hearings, reduced costs, convenience, informality, expertise and privacy. Some opponents argue that there is favoritism with arbitrators; hearings are protracted; and that provisions of contractual rights, case law and statutes are disregarded.

Although I have the highest respect for members of our judiciary and the jury system, it has always been my opinion that construction matters should be mediated and/or arbitrated. The mediation/arbitration process has worked successfully, not only in Rhode Island, but throughout the United States.

Our Supreme, Superior, Family and District Courts use the mediation process, and judges of all courts urge parties to mediate and/or arbitrate cases. There is no question that the mediation/arbitration process leads to a reduction of trials in our court system, and is beneficial to the parties in that there is very little discovery. Hearings can be accelerated, the cost factor is reduced, there is informality, and there are timely decisions.

As noted, the mediation process, prior to an arbitration, is extremely successful. Eighty percent of mediation matters in which I represented a plaintiff or defendant have been successfully settled with fairness to both parties.

Mediation is a simple process where the parties select a mediator, pre-mediation memos are prepared and distributed to the mediator and the opposing party, and a mutually agreed-upon date is established.

At the mediation, the mediator allows both parties to give an opening statement of
see ARBITRATE...page 32



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Phase II reopening well under way in the Bay State

As of July 6th, Massachusetts entered Phase III of its reopening plan in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the office of Gov. Charlie Baker announced.

Step One of Phase III began on May 18th, when the administration released a four-stage plan to reopen the economy based on public health data, spending at least three weeks in each phase.

"Key public health data, such as new cases and hospitalizations, have been closely monitored and have seen a decline, al-

lowing for Phase III to begin on July 6th. Phase III will begin on July 13th in Boston," a statement from the governor's office said.

"Since mid-April, the seven-day average for the positive COVID-19 test rate is down 94 percent, the three-day average of hospitalized patients is down 79 percent, and the number of hospitals in surge is down 86 percent."

More than 1 million total COVID-19 tests have been administered, and testing continues throughout the state, according to the governor's office.

The following businesses became eligible to reopen in Step One of Phase III, subject to industry-specific rules concerning capacity and operations:

- Movie theaters and outdoor performance venues;
- Museums, cultural and historical sites;
- Fitness centers and health clubs;
- Certain indoor recreational activities with low potential for contact;
- Professional sports teams, under the authority of league-wide rules, may hold games without spectators.

Full guidance and list of businesses eligible to reopen in Step One of Phase III can be found at [Mass.gov/reopening](https://www.mass.gov/reopening). Businesses and sectors set to begin opening in Phase III are subject to compliance with all mandatory safety standards.

Residential construction is essential

Workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, builders, contractors, HVAC Technicians, landscapers, inspectors and other service providers "who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses and buildings such as hospitals, health care facilities, senior living facilities, and any temporary construction required to support COVID-19 response" are considered essential in the official state guidance.

This includes "workers performing housing construction related activities, including construction of mixed-use projects that include housing, to ensure additional units can be made available to combat the Commonwealth's existing housing supply shortage."

Official guidance also includes "workers supporting the construction of housing, including those supporting government functions related to the building and development process, such as inspections, permitting and plan review services that can be modified to protect the public health, including allowing qualified private third-party inspections accountable to government agencies).

For complete information, visit [Mass.gov/reopening](https://www.mass.gov/reopening).



Resources for RIBA members who work in Massachusetts

The Rhode Island Builder covers Massachusetts news relevant to members of the Rhode Island Builders Association who work in our neighbor to the north and east.

Here are some sources of regulatory information and forms for contractors who work in the Bay State, or who plan to. For education purposes, RIBA has expanded its education programs to include courses required for work in Massachusetts.

Bear in mind that most Massachusetts government services must be done online during the COVID-19 crisis.

Building Permits: Massachusetts has a statewide formula for building permits. Application forms may vary a little by municipality, but standard forms and information may be found at the Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation (OCABR) website: [Mass.gov/ocabr](https://www.mass.gov/ocabr).

Contractor Registration and Licensing: Massachusetts has licensing for construction supervisors and registration for home improvement contractors. Find the details at [Mass.gov/topics/building-trades](https://www.mass.gov/topics/building-trades).

Also find information about trade licensing at this site.

MassHousing: Similar to Rhode Island Housing, MassHousing is an independent, quasi-public agency that provides financing for affordable housing in Massachusetts.

Created in 1966, MassHousing raises capital by selling bonds, and lends the proceeds to low- and moderate-income homebuyers and homeowners, and to developers who build or preserve affordable and/or mixed-income rental housing. Since its inception, MassHousing has provided more than \$20 billion for affordable housing. Find out more at [MassHousing.com](https://www.masshousing.com).



For RIBA
membership information
contact Elise Geddes

401-438-7400 • or egeddes@ribuilders.org

BOOM...from page 14

pandemic and trying to catch up with a huge demand and normal workload.”

The boom and the shortage are drawing enough attention that Providence’s WPRI Channel 12 interviewed Sean and Evan Finnegan at Coventry Lumber (FINETCO®) about it on June 22nd.

Until the health crisis, “the demand (for PT) was very low. The production levels were low, and the sales were just not there,” Evan Finnegan said during the interview.

Sales started turning around in early April, he stated.

“Ever since then, we can’t get our hands on pressured-treated fast enough. As soon as it comes into the lumber yard, it goes out.”

ARBITRATE...from page 32

their positions, frame the issues, and conferences with each party to discuss the “good and bad points of a case.” After meeting with each party, perhaps numerous times, the mediator attempts to come to a common ground for settlement.

My position is that a mediator should be forthcoming and inform the parties individually of their strengths and weaknesses in a case, since all matters in the mediation are confidential and cannot be disclosed thereafter without the consent of the parties. A mediator should also be forthcoming with his or her opinion to advise the parties of their predicted outcome if the matter went to trial or arbitration, which is not an easy task and may be the reverse conclusion later on in any proceeding. Because mediation is non-binding, both parties have nothing to lose except for costs and time.

Arbitration has the same advantages as mediation. The basic difference is that arbitration is binding, subject to our statutes that allow confirmation, modification and vacating of arbitration awards. Arbitration is governed by various Rhode Island statutes, including the Uniform Arbitration Act, R.I.G.L. §10-3-1, the Rhode Island Public Works Arbitration Act, R.I.G.L. §37-16-1 and various labor arbitration statutes, to name a few.

There is no question that arbitration and/or mediation is the way to go, versus litigation. However, the parties should be cautioned about the risk of arbitration because it’s a binding resolution of a dispute.

The Rhode Island Supreme Court has on numerous occasions held the position that “Rhode Island has a strong public policy in favor of the finality of arbitration awards . . . to preserve the integrity and efficiency of arbitration proceedings, judicial review of arbitration awards is extremely limited . . . parties who have contractually agreed to accept arbitration as binding are not allowed to circumvent an award by coming to the courts and arguing that the arbitrators misconstrued the contract or misapplied the law.”

The General Assembly, pursuant to the arbitration statutes, clearly gave the right to the judiciary to confirm, modify or vacate arbitration awards. However, the reviewing of arbitration awards is clearly limited, and it is a difficult standard, even to reverse an arbitrator who has disregarded the law. There are many Supreme Court cases that overturn arbitration awards because the arbitrator has totally disregarded statutory or contract requirements when the arbitrator knew the law but intentionally ignored it.

So, it’s important to consider whether arbitration should be

Shortages mean higher prices. According to NAHB, the Random Lengths Framing Composite Price hit \$523 per 1,000 board feet for the week ending July 10th, marking the first time prices have topped the \$500 level since July 2018. Indeed, lumber prices have soared 50 percent since April 17th.

“When prices fell between March and April as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, mills projected that housing would be adversely affected and therefore anticipated a large drop in demand,” an NAHB statement said.

But housing weathered the storm much better than most anticipated. For more information on the recent lumber price hikes, contact David Logan at NAHB, (800) 368-5242 x8448 or dlogan@nahb.org.



used, and perhaps to limit the role of the arbitrator in ruling on various issues.

More importantly, the selection of an arbitrator is crucial. There are many “seasoned arbitrators” who are extremely fair, and there are retired members of our judiciary who should be used as arbitrators, since they have the depth and experience of deciding cases on legal principals.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a damper on arbitration and mediation to avoid physical gatherings. However, some mediators and arbitrators are performing these functions by teleconference. I don’t favor this method, since it’s more practical to be in a room, one-on-one, to settle any matter. It’s not realistic for an arbitration to proceed online because of introduction of evidence and the practicalities of trying a case.



A longtime RIBA member, Girard A. Visconti is a partner at Shechtman Halperin Savage, LLP and can be reached at gvisconti@shslawfirm.com.

BOARD...from page 13

Annual Rhode Island Home Show, which had to be moved to April 2021 because of the pandemic. *Information on page 37.*

“We have some 90 percent of our exhibitors who were scheduled for this year moving forward with us to next spring, and 92 percent of the show floor is accounted for in 2021,” the executive officer reported.

There has been a large uptick in enrollment for the many classes offered by RIBA’s greatly expanded Contractor Training Program (see pages 4, 26-29),” he stated.

“We’re seeing 125 to 150 people per month coming through the CTP and over 550 companies are taking advantage of the opportunities there.”

Mr. Marcantonio also reported on the continued success of RIBA’s job training programs. *Related story on page 1.*

RIBA’s Annual Meeting and Election/Installation of Officers, scheduled for October 6th. Members should watch for information.

RIBA’s government affairs advocate, William Walsh, presented an overview of RIBA’s legislative agenda and activities.

“As of right now, the House and Senate have reconvened for hearings on different items,” Mr. Walsh said.

For complete information, call Mr. Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400.



JOB TRAINING...from page 1

Don't wait! Classes in the Rhode Island Builders Association's job training programs are filling up quickly for September.

The programs, funded through Real Jobs Rhode Island and free to employers and students, train and upskill, bringing qualified new workers into the industry, and boosting the skills of existing workers who already have some experience.

Programs include:

- The Carpentry Career Training Program (CCTP), a pre-apprenticeship program,
- Pre-apprenticeship training in electrical,
- Pre-apprenticeship training in plumbing,
- Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) program in basic carpentry.
- The website RCWPjobs.com, where employers can connect with program graduates and other qualified job candidates.

See more information on page 25.

"Send your laborer(s) to gain the skills they need to move up the ladder, send new hires to be trained, or hire one of our recent graduates. We are building the pipeline!" said Ms. Boyd.

Candidates may enroll without a sponsor, but they must first "demonstrate passion, motivation, desire and a commitment to complete training to enter the residential construction field," Ms. Boyd said.

"Hard-working people like Felicha Maldonado (*see page 24*) want to learn a craft and work in the industry, and we help to place them with members, employers or professionals who are in RIBA's network," she continued.

"RIBA members such as Distefano Brothers, Maynard Construction, Deslandes Construction and many more take advantage of sending employees to gain more skills and/or hire our graduates.

New training programs start in September

Because of the COVID-19 crisis, the spring classes were completed via live teleconference, and it's expected that the September classes, which are now enrolling, will begin in that online venue. But classes will be back at the training facilities as soon as possible, Ms. Boyd said.

"Our team is super excited and ready to train and upskill the next generation of construction workers! But space is limited, so register now," she added.

Program grads are available to hire

"We have many graduates from programs that wrapped up in March, and they're ready to work!" said Ms. Boyd.

The graduates come from training in all three of the trade courses, along with the VESL program.

Each course involves 200 Hours of training over 26 weeks, following the curriculum from the Home Builders Institute (HBI), the education arm of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). Training includes manufacturer demonstrations, employability skills, OSHA 10 certification, Lead Safe RRP training/certification, basic first aid training, and the awarding of a tool kit upon completion of the courses.

Resumés are posted at RCWPJobs.com, and employers who

haven't already done so can sign up for a free account.

"Every employer should be posting job openings on the site," Ms. Boyd stated.

To learn more and to register, contact contact Elise Geddes at (401) 438-7400 or egeddes@ribuilders.org.



For Workforce Development

When COVID hit, RIBA was ready

Association was already in position with job training programs to meet the industry's labor needs and help ease state's unemployment. See page 24 for one of the many success stories.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

It's a familiar old saying: "Everything happens for a reason."

Well over a year ago, the Rhode Island Builders Association forcefully began expanding its education and job-training programs, cost-free for employers and students, because the residential construction industry sorely needed skilled labor.

Now, with Rhode Island and the rest of America mired in the unprecedented stew of the COVID-19 crisis, record unemployment, and a building and remodeling boom, RIBA is already in a position to fill the industry's labor needs in our region, and continues to expand this capability.

"It certainly is fortunate that RIBA had already positioned itself as the primary provider of training for the residential construction industry here. We were ready, willing and able to step up during this extraordinary crisis," commented Executive Officer John Marcantonio.

The third in RIBA's News & Information Podcast Series focuses on this very theme. Workforce Development Committee Chairman Ronald J. Caniglia of Stand Corp., RIBA Director of Workforce Programs Cheryl Boyd, along with Mr. Marcantonio, fully outline the many no-cost job-training programs, the hiring opportunities for employers, and just what courses are offered.

The half-hour production was uploaded to the major podcast apps, including Apple Podcasts, on July 1st.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Dept. of Labor reported on July 7th that residential construction hiring is up more than 300,000 nationally since early May.

Total payroll employment increased 4.8 million in June as the overall construction sector added 158,000 jobs after a revised increase of 453,000 in May.

The total number of residential construction jobs rose by 83,200 in June, after an increase of 224,200 in May, according to the agency.



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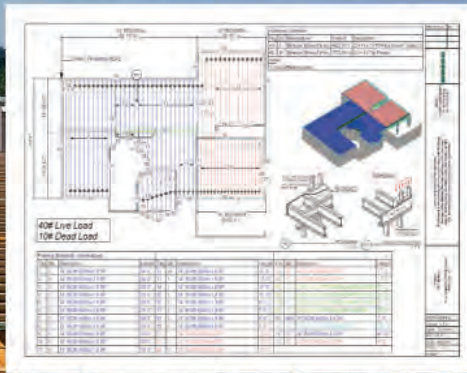
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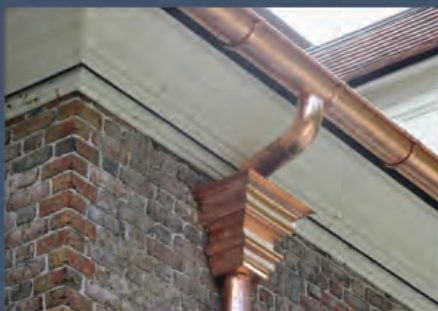
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- The RI Home Show's marketing team will begin sharing Facebook posts from each exhibitor's business page to the RI Home Show Facebook page which has over 7,000 followers! This will begin in May 2020 and run through April 7, 2021
- Up to 3 of your own Facebook posts will be shared by the RI Home Show's Facebook page May 2020 – April 2021
- A new exhibitor directory will be developed on RIBAHomeShow.com which will categorize exhibitors by industry and service-type. Each exhibitor will have the opportunity to provide a brief description, as well as social media handles for their directory listing and promote your show specials
- The website floor plan will transition to a new interactive floor plan that will allow users to interact with each exhibitor's booth space and learn more about the services, products and promotions that you will be offering at the show.

For those exhibitors moving forward to the RI Home Show in 2021, and who want to be a part of the exhibitor social media campaign, please contact Robert Yoffe at 781.639.5200 or email bob@yoffeexpo.com to secure your participation. Then, visit ribahomeshow.com/program to fill out the form to begin.

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