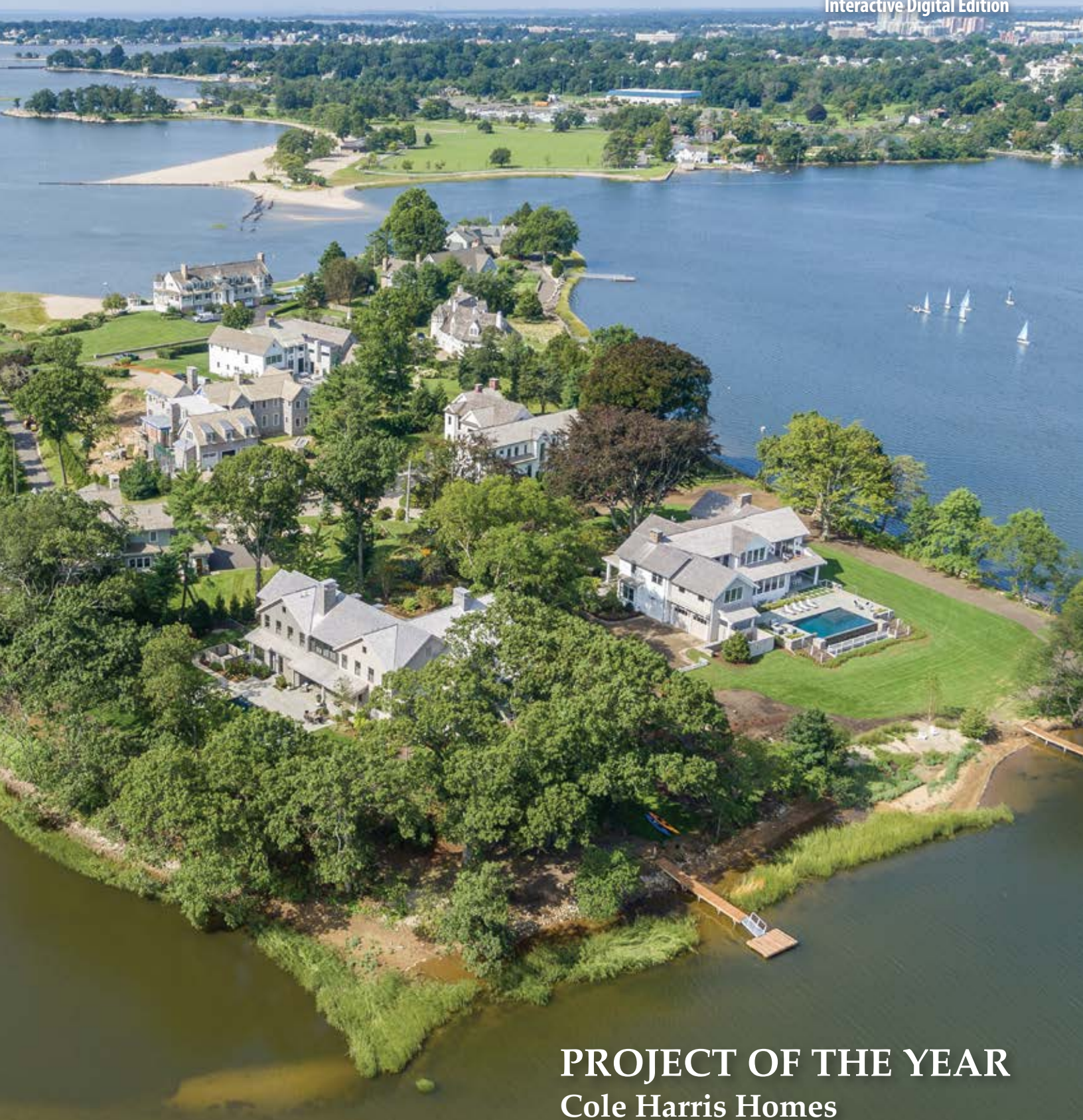


CONNECTICUT BUILDER



The Magazine of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut

Winter/Spring 2019
Interactive Digital Edition



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BOTTOM LEFT: Beinfield Architecture and Clarity Home Interiors



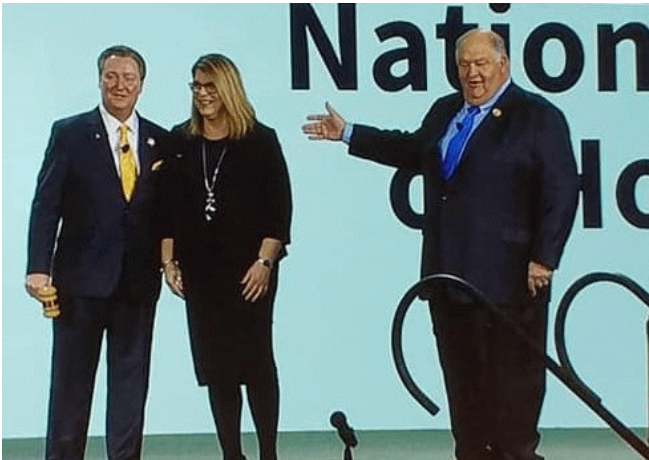
National
Association
of Home
Builders

**Chairman
Greg Ugalde**



Greg Ugalde Elected NAHB Chairman at 75th International Builders Show

On Thursday February 21, 2019, during the 75th Anniversary International Builders' Show in Las Vegas, Connecticut developer, Greg Ugalde, was elected NAHB Chairman, representing the interests of more than 140,000 housing industry professionals across the country.



Granger MacDonald introduces Greg & Mary Jane Ugalde

Greg is president and chief legal officer of Torrington-based T&M Building Co., Inc., one of the state's largest home builders. Since its founding in 1962, T&M has built more than 4,000 new homes in over 45 Connecticut communities for trade-up and first-time buyers. Greg is also the founder and owner of GFU Investments, LLC, a builder/developer minority-owned business that focuses on urban development and workforce housing.

On stage as Greg Ugalde was sworn into office were his family, including his wife, Mary Jane, and three children, Andrew, Sara, Aaron and Kathleen, as well as T&M Building Company CEO, Steve Temkin and his wife, Gayle.





“A top priority this year will be to address ongoing housing affordability concerns. On average, government regulation accounts for nearly 25% of the price of building a single-family home and more than 30% of the cost of a typical multifamily development. We will urge federal policymakers to take appropriate actions to ease regulatory burdens in order to help put families in homes, create jobs and move the economy forward. We will also call on Congress to advance comprehensive housing finance reform and to adopt sensible workforce development and immigration policy that will help our industry fill open jobs.” . – Greg Ugalde

Problem Solvers Caucus Seeks Bipartisan Housing Solutions

In a roundtable discussion moderated by 2019 Chairman, Greg Ugalde, during the NAHB Board of Directors meeting in Las Vegas, Reps. Tom Reed (R-N.Y.) and Josh Gottheimer (D-N.J.) expressed support for working together on a bipartisan basis to advance housing issues.



L-R 2019 NAHB Chairman Greg Ugalde, Rep. Tom Reed (R-N.Y.) and Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-N.J.)

Reed and Gottheimer are the co-chairs of the influential Problem Solvers Caucus, a group of 24 Republican and 24 Democratic lawmakers dedicated to finding common ground and breaking the partisan gridlock in Congress.

“We’re the only bipartisan group in Washington, D.C. that is organized,” said Gottheimer. “We will vote as a block when we get to a consensus position and we are making a difference.”

When asked by Ugalde what issues the Problem Solvers Caucus would be willing to tackle, Reed responded: “Housing affordability is a very important issue.” He called for removing red tape on zoning and working to create economic opportunities for builders on the ground.

Infrastructure, stabilizing the health care market under the Affordable Care Act and prescription drug prices are other areas the Problem Solvers Caucus will address.



The 75th Anniversary of the International Builders Show was the largest in a decade!

IBS in partnership with KBIS (Kitchen & Bath Show) drew exhibitors of every building product and technology and stellar education sessions. Connecticut was there in big numbers to network, learn and support our 2019 NAHB chairman, Greg Ugalde!



L-R Fairfield County HBRA President Anthony DeRosa, CEO Jackie Bertolone, NAHB Chairman Greg Ugalde & Pete Fusaro



L-R Brian Zippin, Joanne Hoerrner, HBRA CEO Jim Perras, Greg Pachten & son William



L-R Joanne Hoerrner, MaryAnne Sok & Steve Temkin



L-R Chris Nelson, Liz Koiva, Allan Koiva & Mary Ellen Nelson

LATEST NEWS . . . DIGITAL-ONLY CONTENT



Connecticut members at NAHB Board meeting. Front row in blue shirts: Steve, Alyssa & Gayle Temkin; back row L-R: Kim DiMatteo, HBRAC Vice-President Eric Santini, HBRAC President Chris Nelson, Ken Boynton & BUILD PAC Rep George LaCava. (Liz Verna taking photo.)

L-R HBRAC CEO Jim Perras, NAHB Chairman Greg Ugalde, Central CT HBRA EO Eric Person, HBA Northwest EO Sheila Leach and Fairfield County HBRA EO Jackie Bertolone



L-R Nort Wheeler, Jim Perras & David Preka with Formica executive

Cocktail Party Hosted by DiMatteo Insurance & Cyclone Home Systems



At Carmine's, Caesar's Palace,
L-R Fairfield County HBRA
Vice-President Kim DiMatteo,
Fairfield County HBRA President
Anthony DeRosa & EO Jackie
Bertolone



L-R Susanne Cook, Carmine's co-host Garret Cook
and Eric Person



L-R Ken Boynton, Liz Verna & Kim DiMatteo



L-R James Narduzzo of Bender with
Steve Temkin



Mark Nuzzolo, Tim Hollister & DJ Collins

Hard Rock Café Party After Greg's Election Hosted by T&M Homes

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L-R Mary Anne Sok, Gayle & Alyssa Temkin, Mary Jane Ugalde & Brenda Davis



The Spasmatics

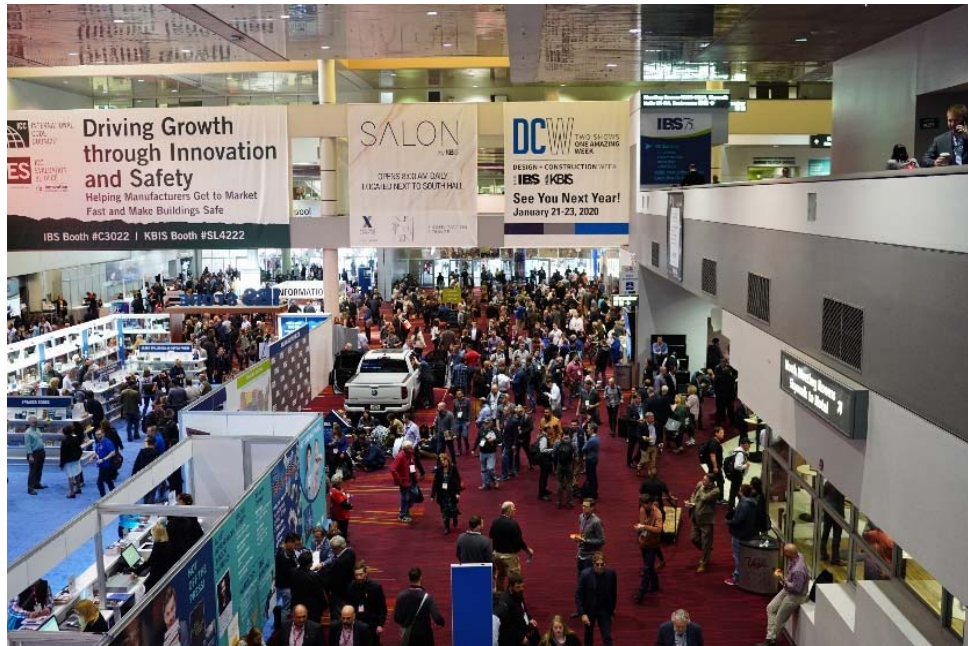


The Gang's all here! L-R Judy Wiedenmann, Susanne Cook, John DiMatteo in hat, Chris Nelson, Bob Wiedenmann (center), Joanne Hoerrner, Eric Santini, Pete Fusaro (white shirt), Mary Ellen Nelson & Liz Koiva



L-R Kim DiMatteo, Bob Wiedenmann, NAHB Chairman Greg Ugalde, John DiMatteo & Liz Verna

IBS Exhibit Floor



Joe Duva of T&M Homes discussing Moen's new leak detection and water meter monitoring product FLO at Moen booth. You can attach the device to your waterline, and it monitors your typical water usage patterns and sends an alert to your phone when it notices a change.



Flo by Moen Leak Detection & Smart Water Meter Monitoring



Joe Duva tries out virtual reality house tour at the Evolution Virtual booth. Here Joe Duva is turned around as he looks through the special headset. The image on the screen shows what he is looking at through the special glasses.

Education Session

Protecting Your Property Rights: How to Win the Games Governments Play



Property Rights seminar with Tim Hollister of Shipman & Goodwin speaking



L-R HBRAC CEO Jim Perras Lois & Eric Santini Sr. Tim Hollister & Liz Verna

Today, residential construction is in post-recession recovery mode, and some state and local governments are “playing games” to slow down projects or get more economic contribution from builders and developers to cover costs.

The expert panel presented a review of the legal protections available for builders and developers, and gave examples of how governments interfere with projects. Attendees left with plenty of information on when and how to push back and protect their property rights including:

- ▶ A review of basic property rights protections under federal, state and local laws.
- ▶ Trends land use attorneys are seeing from government agencies to deny, obstruct or delay projects.
- ▶ Case studies involving development projects from across the country, and how property owners successfully overcame governmental roadblocks.
- ▶ Key areas to watch for to prevent government abuse and protect property rights, and learn when to fight back.

A Record Six NAHB Awards Go to Connecticut

Connecticut cleaned up at the 2019 Awards Event!
Our BUILD-PAC efforts topped the national charts AGAIN, with FIVE awards!

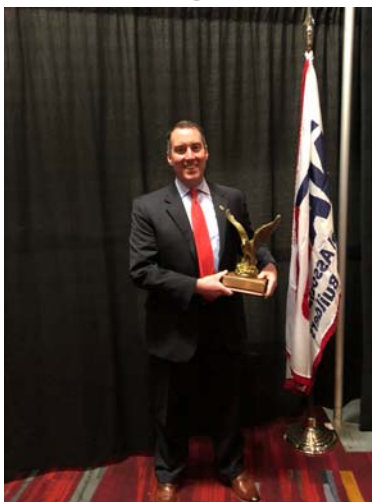
1. **Top Fundraising State by Membership**
2. **Event that Raised the Most Money**
3. **State with the Highest Percentage of Participation**
4. **Event with the Highest Number of Contributors**
5. **State that Surpassed Goal by the Highest Percent**



Ken Boynton - CT BUILD-PAC Alternate Trustee,
Alicia Huey - NAHB BUILD-PAC Chair, and
Sheila Leach - HBRA CC VP & NW EO

Our HBRA staff, officers & members continue to be recognized for their excellent achievements.
Their commitment and leadership are greatly appreciated by the entire membership!

NAHB Eagle Award



Eric Person, CEO HBRA Central CT, was recognized by Jerry Howard with the NAHB Eagle for his service as 2018 EOC President

Area 1 National Chairman



Ken Boynton, Boynton Construction, is sworn in as Area 1 National Chairman

CT State Rep Area 1



Pete Fusaro, HBRA CT Immediate Past President, was elected CT State Rep.

Congratulations to all our Connecticut Award Winners!

Save the Date!

Connecticut's 17th Annual NAHB BUILD-PAC
Fiano Family Golf Classic July 8, 2019

Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut Statement Regarding Governor Lamont's Proposed Sales Tax on Home Repair & Renovations

By Jim Perras, CEO



March 1, 2019 – There are several significant public policy reasons why Governor Lamont should reconsider his effort to impose a sales tax on the repair and renovation of Connecticut homes. Not the least of which, is the regressive nature of the sales tax on services and its disproportionate impact on inner cities, the poor and our elderly on fixed incomes.

Connecticut competes with neighboring states for the distinction of having some of the oldest housing stock in the country. Much of that aging housing stock is found in our urban centers. The extra cost of the sales tax could incentivize homeowners in older neighborhoods to hold off on much needed safety-related repairs.

Inner city landlords will be more inclined to delay renovations that could potentially place the health and safety of their tenants at risk, potentially harming our most vulnerable populations. Renovation, Repair and Paint (RRP) lead disturbing activities could also be put off and lead poisoning mitigation could be postponed or done by unqualified contractors working outside the lead safe work practices required by the EPA, further jeopardizing the health and safety of our vulnerable populations. City blight will be exacerbated at a time when our cities can least afford it. The value of housing in Connecticut has not recovered to the same degree as other states (this is particularly true in many of our urban centers) and if people put off renovations, repairs or replacement of necessary systems like heating, air conditioning, roofs, etc., then the value of housing will be further depressed. Ultimately, the Governor's tax proposal is counter intuitive given his stated goals of urban renewal and revitalization.

In addition, Connecticut has some of the most economically and racially segregated housing in the country, due in large part, because of decades of housing affordability and accessibility issues in our more affluent communities. Since 2009, the residential construction industry has been producing residential units at only a fraction of the rate needed to maintain current housing numbers. Consequentially, ensuring Connecticut residents have access to affordable renovation and remodeling services is more important than ever in order to guarantee we have as much of our older housing stock in use to hold the line on housing affordability and accessibility. A well-maintained older housing stock is often the only affordable option for many working families to be able to live where they work. This is especially evident in the western part of our state where issues of affordability are most acute.

Connecticut, like many other states has a large underground home improvement market. Some estimates put this illegal cash market at greater than 40%. These offending contractors are not registered, nor are they likely to be adequately insured. Often, they are without a tax I.D. Especially noteworthy and troublesome is that by virtue of being unregistered, illegal contractors do not pay into the Home Improvement Guaranty Fund. This means an unsuspecting homeowner that does business with an illegal contractor doesn't benefit from the guaranty fund's added protection, leaving homeowners without much for recourse if something goes awry. At the end of the day, law abiding home improvement contractors that would be forced to comply with these new tax requirements would be undercut to an even greater degree than they are now, compelling even more underground home improvement activity and consequently, leaving more homeowners at risk.

The sales tax on residential renovations and repair will never capture anything approaching the entire remodeling market as some unscrupulous remodelers will be even more incentivized to be compensated "under the table". Still, others may even be inclined to collect the tax from a customer without the intention of ever passing it along to the state. In the end, remodelers who "play by the rules" would be penalized, while much needed repairs in older homes could be further delayed or ignored completely.

Our Governor and our legislators know that Connecticut has already lived this folly before. In the early 90's Connecticut taxed many of the very same remodeling services including; paving, painting, siding, roofing and landscaping. Those taxes did not yield anywhere near the intended revenues. In fact, as a result, the underground contracting industry grew significantly and its negative impacts continue to plague the Department of Consumer Protection and our industry at large.

Alternatively, we encourage Governor Lamont and the General Assembly to join us in finding a new way forward in which state government incentivizes remodeling and repair of existing homes. Incentivizing the renovation of our senior's homes so they can age in place will encourage a cost-effective alternative to nursing facilities and lessen the strain on the state's Medicaid expenses ultimately saving tax payers millions. In addition, the state could better incentivize the renovation of aging homes with the goal of increasing energy efficiency, saving homeowners thousands of dollars a year while helping to relieve the strain on our energy infrastructure.

The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) is a professional trade association with over eight hundred business members statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut residents. Our association of small businesses is comprised of residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. We build between 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in Connecticut each year and engage in countless home remodeling projects.

CONNECTICUT BUILDER

The Magazine of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut

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ON THE COVER: Talented architect builder, Paul Harris, turned a unique property on Brush Island Road, Darien into a luxurious natural habitat of perennial gardens and legacy trees for two exquisite \$7+ million spec homes he design built with boat docks.

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From the desk of Chris Nelson



As I start my time as state President, I would like to congratulate Greg Ugalde for the incredible achievement of being installed Chairman and President of the National Association of Home Builders. Greg, you have our

thanks, our congratulations, and our full support for your work at NAHB. You are going to be Awesome!

Next, I want to thank Pete Fusaro for his leadership over the past two years as our State Chairman and President. Under Pete's leadership we have revised our State strategic plan, seen Bill Ethier retire in style, and brought in a new highly capable EO and lobbyist in Jim Perras. Thanks for your commitment and Leadership, Pete!

Continuing to Adapt – CT Housing in 2019!

As our newly elected Lamont Administration and Democratic House and Senate take control, what should we, as the homebuilding industry in Connecticut, expect in 2019? Will our statewide new home permit numbers finally start to recover this year? Or will this be the year where mortgage rates start climbing again, dampening the few bright spots that exist in our weak housing market?

2019 is going to be another year that is hard to read and plan for as a builder or remodeler business.

Only time will tell on most of these questions. For the past several years, I have found myself pinning my turnaround hopes on the business cycle recovery, then on the federal elections, and most recently on our state elections. We have been hoping a change in leadership will somehow reinvigorate our CT housing economy.

So how do we as businesses and as an industry thrive in 2019?

Maybe, it's time to stop complaining, and stop hoping for external fixes to our homebuilding marketplace in Connecticut.

The truth is, there are select homebuilding and remodeling businesses in every corner of our state that have plenty of work, and are thriving right now.

They have figured something out. In spite of the generally weak market, there are remodelers booked 9 months out, there are new homes, and new rental communities popping

up, and there are beautiful high end custom homes under construction. Just take a look at our 2018 HOBI awards entries. Some builders, remodelers, and associates have been quietly adapting to what our new Connecticut marketplace needs and is looking for.

- ▶ Instead of opening new subdivisions, we are seeing builders opening new rental communities.
- ▶ In place of major kitchen renovations, we're seeing new in-law suite additions and aging in place renovations.
- ▶ We are seeing builders diversify into commercial work to augment their workload.
- ▶ In place of big spec homes, we are seeing builders offer more value with smaller in town spec homes and design/build work.
- ▶ In place of renovations following the resale of existing homes, we are seeing needed home improvements to help sell those existing homes.
- ▶ Builders are re-learning how to build and offer homes and condominiums at prices unheard of 10 years ago.
- ▶ Developers are getting more creative and retargeting their work to transit lines, health employment centers and more urban neighborhoods.
- ▶ Members are buying distressed properties, fixing them, and turning them into home rentals.

We have some exceedingly sharp members! We are continuing to learn, get creative and adapt!

We may be a small State, but we are incredibly diverse. From Greenwich to Plainfield, from Stanford to Hartford to New London, one thing is certain, ALL our markets are changing. But then our markets have always been changing, so why should we expect anything different in 2019?

This year, maybe more of us need to focus on how to change our products and services to meet the new market. Maybe more of us can get in front of change, and create our own "new market" – someone will. As homebuilders, we are often slow to change, because as small businesses, we are often too busy working IN our business rather than ON our business. Maybe we need to take a page from other industries and be willing to reinvent our businesses to position our offerings and services for the next 5 years.

(continued)

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From the desk of Chris Nelson

(continued)

Connecticut Home Builders and Remodelers absolutely have a role to play in helping Connecticut recover.

As an example, a few of our members will be meeting with Senator Cassano, the chairman on the Planning and Development Committee. He, like many others, understand that we can only grow jobs and businesses in Connecticut if we have a strong, attractive and affordable housing stock.

I am confident Jim Perras, our new EO and Lobbyist, along with many engaged members from our association, will fight for and see some good ideas on housing implemented this year. We need your help, and then our industry needs to be ready to use these opportunities as they are implemented.

Legislative fixes, and state assisted programs can be helpful, but it will not be enough.

We as businesses need to step out, try new things, adapt our offerings, and innovate.

We need to figure out how to lead the way for meeting Connecticut's housing challenges.

Recently I was re-watching a now old movie, "Independence Day" with Will Smith and Bill Pullman. There is a scene where the good guys finally figure out how to down the alien battleships. Maybe you remember it, Bill Pullman, as President Whitmore, says "Now we know how to take them out General! Spread the word!" We may not be fighting extinction or looking to blow up battleships, but our National NAHB, our state HBRA and our local associations are all fighting to help find ways for each of our businesses to succeed. This year, let's be willing to adapt, let's find those successes in our industry, and with permission, let's "Spread the word!"

All the best,
Chris Nelson, GMB & CGP
Chairman & President HBRA of CT


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***Congratulations Greg Ugalde
on your election as
2019 NAHB Chairman!***



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The 25th Annual HOBI Awards Dinner was held at the Aqua Turf on Tuesday November 13th, and close to 900 Connecticut housing industry professionals celebrated this very special Silver Anniversary milestone! Following a video with testimonials from past winners, HOBI Producer and MC, Joanne Carroll, unveiled a NEW HOBI LOGO by graphic designer, Claire Michalak of Fairfield County HBRA, and winners were given 25th Anniversary totes to take home their awards!



Bluewater Home Builders winning Westport custom home.



Chris Nelson, Paul Stone & Arnold Karp, Steve Temkin & Peter Sciarretta

20 YEAR+ WINNERS

Four outstanding builders, who have consistently won HOBI Awards over the past 20-25 years, were recognized. Chris Nelson, Nelson Construction, Arnold Karp, Karp Associates Steve Temkin, T&M Homes & Peter Sciarretta, Hemingway Construction, have elevated the HOBI Awards with their outstanding custom homes and communities for over twenty years.

The year's Top Trends!

Smaller is Better! The most popular custom home categories were 3,000-4000 sf & 4,000-5,000 sf, BUT these homes have breathtaking views and a fabulous connection to the outdoors. On the interior, this year's winners feature black or gray powder coated window & door frames with plenty of glass, floating open tread staircases, white oak floors, flat panel cabinetry and unique outdoor rooms.

For those brave adventurers still building spec homes, there were two spectacular \$7 million+ specs – by the same builder... Remodeling is still growing as a percentage of the market, which has fueled the trend to Housing as a Service. In fact, one savvy builder won a marketing award for promoting his *Home Management Division*.



Fletcher Development winning custom home.

(continued)

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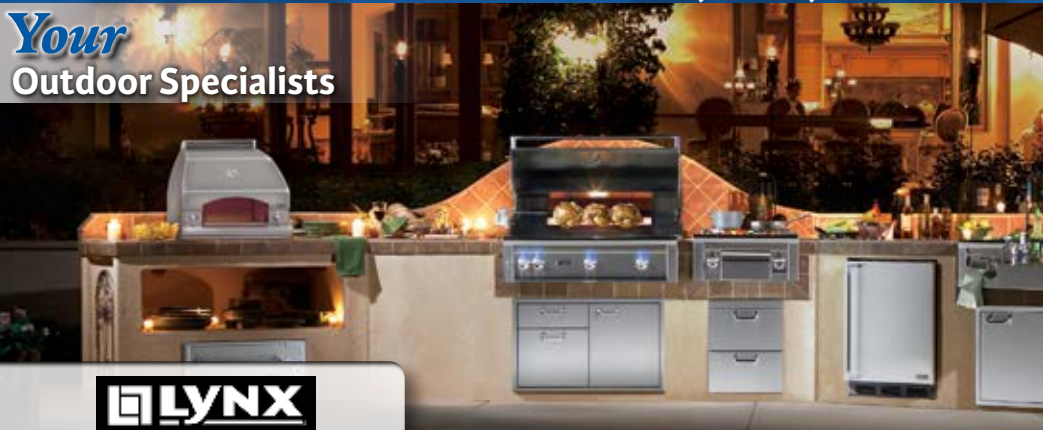
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2017 HOBI Judges

NEW CONSTRUCTION



JARRETT KRAVITZ – Central CT HBRA's 2016 Builder of the Year, Jarrett has won past HOBI awards for both custom & spec homes.



SCOTT BUDDENHAGEN – a successful builder of spec homes in lower Fairfield County, Scott won a HOBI Award last year for a \$3 million Westport home.



JOEL GROSSMAN – Director of New Homes & Land for Calcagni Real Estate, Joel is president of New Haven Middlesex Bd. Of Realtors & serves on the board of Central CT HBRA

REMODELING



DAVID PREKA – President of HBRA of Eastern CT and a diversified builder in New London County.



FRANK SANFORD – owner of lumber supplier Sanford & Hawley & past HOBI judge, Frank contributes a Lumber Update byline to each issue of Connecticut Builder.



LUIGI ALTAMURA – successful lower Fairfield County builder and past HOBI winner.

TECHNOLOGY



JIM FUHRMANN – a West Hartford based website and internet marketing provider serving the home building industry, Jim has won website and virtual staging awards.

(continued)

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Highlights of the 2018 HOBI Awards



HBRA Senior Officers L-R Incoming 2019 President Chris Nelson, 2018 President Pete Fusaro, HOBBI Producer & MC Joanne Carroll, Past Pres. Nort Wheeler, V.P. Eric Santini and CEO Jim Perras.



CEO Jim Perras and Events Director Joanne Hoerner

Jim Perras presenting Joanne Carroll with a Tiffany bracelet for her 25 years as producer and MC of the HOBI Awards.



2019 NAHB Chairman and Connecticut developer, Greg Ugalde addressing attendees.



Gayle Temkin celebrates her birthday at the HOBI's, Joanne Carroll & Gayle's daughters Lily & Alyssa cheer her on.



Custom Home of Year winner Dibico Inc. Matt Yordon, Project Supervisor & Julio DiBiase with 2018 HBRA President Peter Fusaro

Project of Year winner Paul Harris, Cole Harris Homes with 2018 HBRA President Pete Fusaro.



Spec Home of Year winner Bluewater Home Builders Darren Andreoli & Bob Sprouls with 2019 HBRA President Chris Nelson.



Remodeled Home of the Year winner Prutting & Company L-R Heath Horn, Project Managers & Evan Cronly, HBRA President Peter Fusaro & Prutting & Co. Manager Daniel Callahan



Community of the Year winner Canal Crossing LLC L-R Lauren Tagliatella, Louis Tagliatella & Dana Coughlin flanked by 2019 & 2018 HBRA Presidents Chris Nelson & Pete Fusaro.



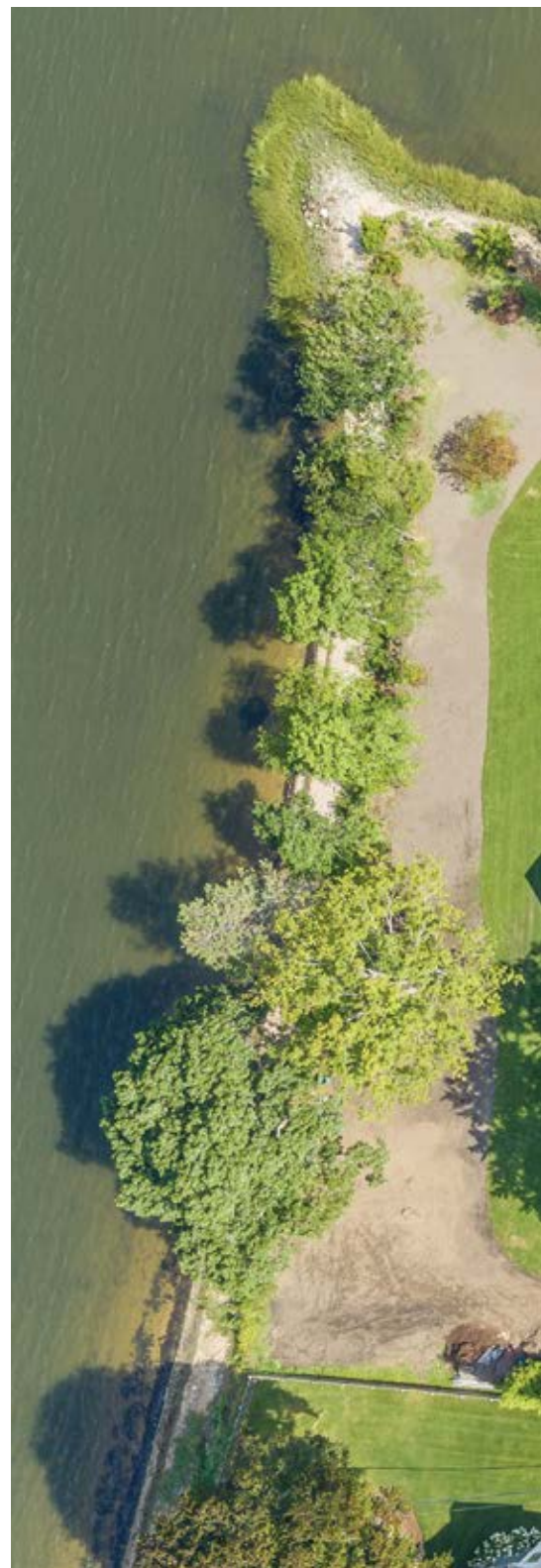
PROJECT OF THE YEAR

COLE HARRIS HOMES



The top award of the year was one of five recognizing architect builder Paul Harris, Cole Harris Homes. Harris launched Westport-based Cole Harris Associates in 1991, and developed a reputation designing outstanding custom homes. In 2014, he and Lynette Snow formed Archetype, to build recession proof smaller homes that live big! Paul design built his first spec home, a five bedroom 4,600 sf farmhouse style on Nearwater Lane in Darien. It sold in 4 days at full asking price of \$1.35 million. This home, as well as two more spec homes Paul design built on the same Nearwater Lane cul-de-sac, won HOBI awards for the incredible value they offered, with overscaled windows, ceiling heights, hallways and staircases.

This year, Cole Harris Homes was recognized for the development of a magnificent piece of property on Long Island Sound. Paul Harris design built two exquisite \$7 million + spec homes and transformed several acres on Brush Island, Darien into a uniquely appealing natural habitat. He was recognized with Outstanding Spec Home Over \$7 Million for 21 Brush Island, as well as Best Spec Home Over \$7 Million, Best Kitchen and Leia Ward, LTW Design, won Best Home Staging – all for 17 Brush Island Road.





BEST AMENITY

It took painstaking effort and the talents of Cole Harris, Les Arbres, Ricky & Sons Landscaping, Environmental Land Solutions & McChord Engineering to save and restore three legacy trees, including a 96" diameter European Beech tree, plant 50 more trees, including 18 ft. hollies, 500 shrubs, 7 perennial gardens and two boat docks.

PROJECT OF THE YEAR

COLE HARRIS HOMES



BEST SPEC HOME OVER \$7 MILLION & BEST KITCHEN – 17 BRUSH ISLAND ROAD

Paul Harris designed this handsome contemporary rustic home with a roof garden over its entry, and water view from every room. Highlights include this exquisitely detailed study with mitered marble fireplace and simplified drywall moldings, a winning kitchen with stunning flat panel white oak cabinetry and island tops of white oak flooring and quartz. The kitchen opens to a soaring two story family room with one-of-a-kind sculptured LED chandelier in driftwood moss and steel. See photos top of page 15.





BEST HOME STAGING

Talented Leia Ward of LTW Design staged the entire 7,900 sf home, including this appealing aerie for stargazing, and a sitting area overlooking the family room, with rolling white oak barn doors leading to this sumptuous master suite with fireplace and balcony.



Outside, a stone terrace and pool overlook Holly Pond, which attracts rare birds and even bald eagles to a peaceful natural habitat.



PROJECT OF THE YEAR

COLE HARRIS HOMES



OUTSTANDING SPEC HOME OVER \$7 MILLION – 21 BRUSH ISLAND ROAD

Cole Harris Homes design built this adjacent historically inspired farmhouse around a 96" diameter beech tree. Inside, windows frame the outdoors. Waterfall stone counters wrap the striking kitchen, which features frosted tile, a waterfall island and 400 lb. stone range hood bolted to the wall. In the breakfast area, three sides of glass frame the water. Three levels of multi-purpose rooms support entertaining and multi-generational activities, as does the covered terrace, infinity edge pool, outdoor shower and boat dock.

At \$7.25 and \$7.75 million, these two amazing homes offer incredible value! And once more, it took Cole Harris Homes just 14 months to build both homes, two boat docks and install all landscaping.



"There are many people in our industry who work extremely hard to deliver strong projects to their clients, and have done so for many years. To receive "Project of the Year" was humbling and something my staff, subs and investors will not forget. We are finishing the year on a high note and we truly thank your dedicated team of judges for their work!"

– Paul Harris, Cole Harris Homes



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DIBICO WINS A RECORD TEN HOBI AWARDS IN THREE DIFFERENT CATEGORIES



This year, Julio DiBiase and his team were recognized with four Housing awards, three Special Focus Awards and three Sales & Marketing awards. This sets a new HOBI record for number of awards won by one builder in the same year. What is even more impressive is the versatility that Dibico demonstrated in being honored in three separate categories!

In 1991, Julio DiBiase Jr. founded Dibico Construction, using the talent and knowledge passed on to him by his father, an Italian immigrant, who grew from being a carpenter with a small woodshop in his garage, to a thriving custom remodeler and home builder. Today, Dibico Construction still brings that fine, detailed craftsmanship to each of their homes. Based in Greenwich, CT, Dibico Construction has a solid reputation for building and remodeling outstanding quality homes throughout Fairfield and Westchester Counties and New York City. Moreover, Dibico is the only high-end custom home builder offering a comprehensive suite of luxury building and lifestyle services that include home management – with scheduled preventative maintenance, repairs and lifestyle concierge – luxury renovations, and their exclusive “House-Lift™” program, which won HOBI awards.



BEST ACCESSORY BUILDING



Julio DiBiase built this subterranean Sports Annex for an athletic Greenwich family who take hockey and tennis very seriously. This detached structure is nestled into what was once a steep hill and is now the gentle slope of their backyard. At almost 70% below grade, it features a full sized hockey rink that transforms into a multi-sport court, and a fully outfitted clubhouse with catering kitchen, showers and barnwood walls.

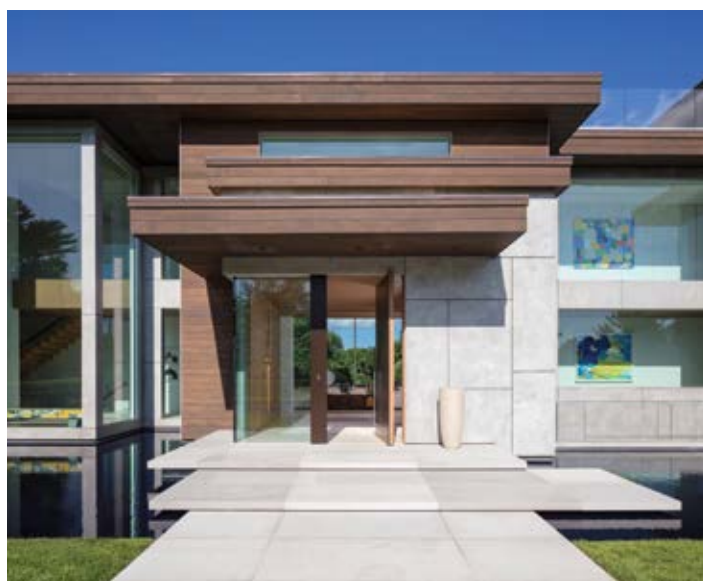


CUSTOM HOME OF THE YEAR

DIBICO INC.
MARCHESE GASHI ARCHITECTS

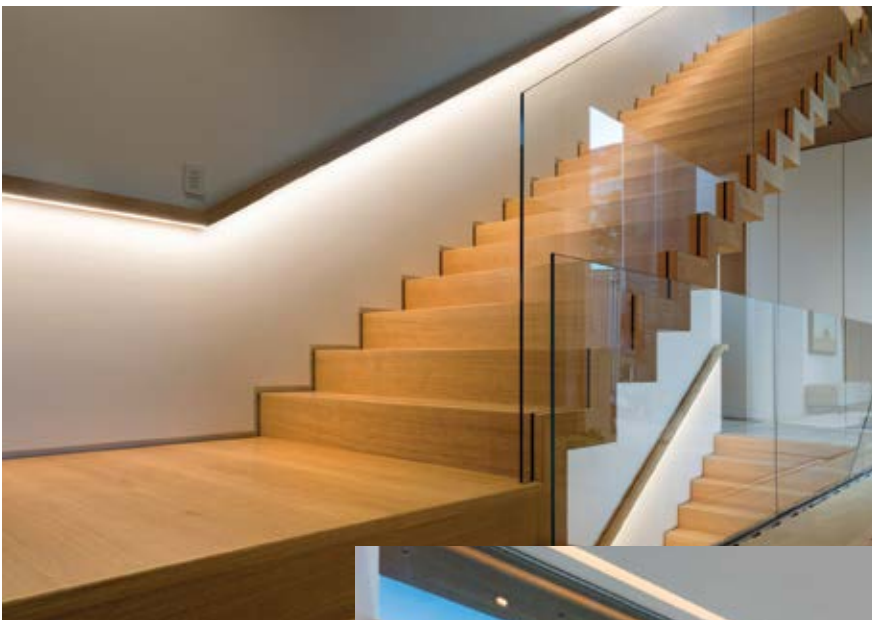


Julio DiBiase spent four years building this 34,000 sf mahogany contemporary in Greenwich, designed by Marchese Gashi with a wrap around moat and 6'X10 ft' pivoting front door. Carved into the sloping hillside, the main house is spread over five levels - three above ground and two below, built with 26 geothermal zones, 39 radiant heat zones and plaster walls over sound reducing Quiet Rock®. The lowest level includes an 18-car garage, a squash and basketball court, a locker room and a recreation area. The basement boasts a stunning indoor pool and spa with a green wall, a game room, gym, media room, wine cellar and guest suites.





BEST INTERIOR FEATURE - a stunning quarter-sawn oak floating staircase with custom lit handrails.



A wall of 11ft. high Vitrocsa Swiss windows and a polished concrete floor highlight the two story living room with separate pocket doors leading to exquisite his and her offices.





CUSTOM HOME OF THE YEAR

DIBICO INC.
MARCHESE GASHI ARCHITECTS

(continued)



Exquisite his and her offices are accessed from living room pocket door. His luxurious master closet is elegantly outfitted, and on the lowest level is the stunning infinity edge indoor pool and spa with green wall.



BEST OUTDOOR LIVING ENVIRONMENT AND BEST POOL HOUSE



The outdoor living environment of Dibico's Custom Home of the Year in Greenwich is lavish, and was recognized for its wrap around decks, balconies and several outdoor rooms. Featured on the cover of our fall issue of *Connecticut Builder*, the winning pool house design makes it difficult to tell where the outdoors ends and the indoors begin. Disappearing doors connect the outdoor and indoor living rooms which feature surround sound and a radiant heated deck. The spectacular invisible edge pool and spa with waterfall and dramatic lighting, complete the resort-like feel.

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BEST IN TOWN CUSTOM HOME EAST COAST STRUCTURES



John Sullivan and architect, Joe Matto, design built this classic Rowayton home with reclaimed beams in the family room, a reclaimed wood inset in the kitchen ceiling, this outstanding multi-purpose butler's pantry office, a paneled study, shiplap bunk room, and this gorgeous master bedroom with fireplace and deck.





BEST NEW OLD HOME REDWOOD CONSTRUCTION



Cassie Stevenson meticulously renovated the circa 1645 Feake Ferris House - the oldest house in Greenwich - which now functions as her client's offices. A breezeway connects it to the client's new custom home, which features an underlit floating staircase, fumed oak floors, and a stunning kitchen with enormous 11'X 6 ft Bianco island and stainless cabinets.



OUTSTANDING NEW OLD HOME CUSTOM HOME



This cape by Early New England Homes, is timber & conventionally framed with modern amenities and 1750's style wide plank pine flooring and bee hive oven.



BEST GREEN ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOME TARZIA GROUP



Nick Tarzia built this modern NAHB Green Certified beach house in Norwalk using Low E Marvin windows, a Viessmann gas boiler, warmboard and radiant heat, a Tesla power wall and an abundance of outdoor living!



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BEST MODERN CUSTOM HOME

VITA DESIGN GROUP



What a treat! Lucien Vita & Gary Chase design built this exquisite modern home using Shou Sugi Ban charred cypress siding, high performance European windows and doors and artistic sleek interiors that embrace the outdoors. A steel & glass canopy is cantilevered above the pool terrace dining, and a stunning master bath looks out to a roof garden.





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*An SBP Homes project and 2014 HOBI Award winner
"Custom Home of the Year"*

Photo credits: Erez Sabag & Bartek Sherman



BEST CUSTOM HOME 10,000-15,000 SF FORE GROUP



Fore Group built this Georgian brick estate home on 60 acres in Marlborough. Outdoor amenities include dining arbor, firepit, seating area and gated pool.





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BEST CUSTOM HOME 8,000-10,000 SF

SBP HOMES



This spectacular Sound Beach design build custom home offers a dramatic entry foyer with slatted wood wall, glass railed staircase and contemporary dining room with glass wine closet beyond.

BEST HOME KITCHEN

The winning kitchen is designed by Doron Sabag with an 11ft ceiling, milk glass island, and unique Faber triple cylinder stainless hood above a 60" Wolf range. A striking office for the man of the house is outfitted with a FPL wall of blackened steel.



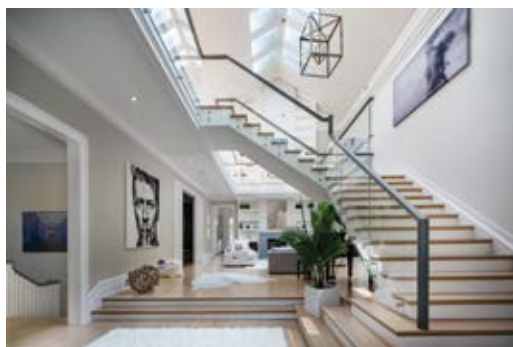


BEST CUSTOM HOME 6,000-7,000 SF

SBP HOMES



Another elegant design build by Doran Sabag and Jim Hoffman in the heart of Greenwich, has beautiful symmetry and formal porte cochere that won BEST ENTRY. A show stopping floating staircase and soaring skylit ceiling overlook the spectacular family room with two story built-ins and wrap around glass rail balcony.



BEST CUSTOM HOME 7,000 -8,000 SF

VAS CONSTRUCTION



Vinnie Sciaretta built this 7,500 sf beauty designed by Michael Smith on two acres in Darien. The kitchen, family room and office open out to a elevated wraparound porch with concrete deck faced with Chinese granite and field stone veneer. The pool deck is also Chinese granite with blue stone coping and auto cover. The master suite balcony overlooking the pool has heated flooring for instant snow removal.



BEST HARTFORD COUNTY CUSTOM HOME FORE GROUP



Fore Group built this stately stone and clapboard home in Farmington featuring a striking family room with built-ins, fully equipped bar and butler's pantry in gentleman gray, as well as a winning eight car heated garage.



BEST CUSTOM HOME 5,000-6,000 SF J&J CUSTOM HOMES



Joe Filanowski built this charming shingle style home with first floor Weiland window walls and contemporary spaces, a cantilevered porch with cozy outdoor kitchen & fireplace and an infinity edge pool built against the foundation with acrylic glass wall and a pool length linear gas "Wall of Fire" that won BEST OUTDOOR FEATURE.



BEST CUSTOM HOME 4,000-5,000 SF FLETCHER DEVELOPMENT



Ryan Fletcher built this modern Redding farmhouse designed by Chris Pagliaro, PBS Architects, with a dramatic two story interior space with open bridge, and a 500 bottle floating wine room on cables, and black windows framing the landscape. On the upper levels, a cathedral plank ceiling game room and cathedral master suite.



BEST CUSTOM HOME UNDER 3,000 SF ADVANCED GROUP

David Preka built this 2,800 sf home at 5 Grove Avenue in Mystic, designed by Point One, with charming columned front porch, Hardie siding, brick piers, lattice skirt, metal roof and guest apartment over detached garage.



BEST CUSTOM HOME 3,000-4,000 SF

BLUEWATER HOME BUILDERS



Bob Sprouls and Darren Andreoli built this Westport custom – designed by Tanner White for a woman sculptor – and every room overlooks the water. The artistically modern interior is focused on the water and features stainless steel counters and flat panel cabinetry. The master bath is outfitted in elegant, yet calming, moss green tile, with a picture window framing the water. The third floor balcony entertainment space, pictured earlier in this article, won OUTSTANDING SPECIAL PURPOSE ROOM. This custom winner epitomizes the luxury housing trend to smaller homes with breathtaking views.



OUTSTANDING CUSTOM HOME 3,000-4,000 SF

BLANSFIELD BUILDERS



Jim Blansfield and Michael LoBuglio design built this Danbury custom home. The stunning kitchen is designed by Jason Landau with olive wood island, quartz counters, and LED lighting delineating the dining area. Skillful interior design by At Home Design is evident in the family room pictured here with plush furniture, unique fireplace and deeply coffered ceiling. The spectacular master bath features a shower big enough a couple to enter or either side and meet in the middle!



BEST NOT SO BIG CUSTOM HOME

RICCI CONSTRUCTION

John Ricci made every inch count in this 843 square foot 1 bedroom 2 bath Milford beach house with parking under, and ship lap walls in the two story family room, and unobstructed views.



SPEC HOME OF THE YEAR BLUEWATER HOME BUILDERS



Bob Sprouls and Darren Andreoli of Bluewater Home Builders have been recognized with this top award an amazing four times in the last six years! That is quite an achievement, and a tribute to the talent and personalities of this trendsetting duo. They continue to be intuitive about the changing desires of their Westport market, and they never stop innovating and reinventing their homebuilding business.

This year Bluewater won the top award, as well as BEST SPEC HOME \$3-4 MILLION for this four level Nantucket shingle style they built on a steeply pitched site – which is their specialty – and in their favorite Compo Beach neighborhood of Westport..



The home's foyer gallery was creatively designed by Anthony Tartaglia with open shelved rift sawn oak built-ins, which allow a view into the family room, living room, and to a stunning landscaped patio and pool beyond.



The eye-catching all white kitchen features glassos bar stool island and a sun drenched breakfast area overlooking the back yard. The second floor master suite offers his and her dressing rooms, a spacious tray ceiling master bedroom with hi gloss charcoal gray ship lap fireplace wall and private balcony, and a transitional master bath with radiantly heated natural stone floor, floating double vanity and stand alone soaking tub.



2018 HOBI AWARDS

BEST SPEC HOME UNDER \$500,000 SEAD HOMES



In a tribute to the diverse quality work being done by builders in our small state, Dan Sirois built this three bedroom, three bath home in Oakville, Litchfield County. The home features a beautifully detailed exterior with burgundy clad Marvin windows, an ICF foundation and a two story Great Room with stone fireplace, and is listed at \$349,000.

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BEST SPEC HOME UNDER \$500,000-750,000 OUTSTANDING CLUSTER COMMUNITY BY CARRIER



Rajean Carrier built this four bedroom home in Farmington with thick granite island, luxury stainless appliances and lower level theater. It's listed at \$649,000, and is one of five at *Sanford Cove*, which won OUTSTANDING CLUSTER COMMUNITY.



BEST SPEC HOME \$1-2 MILLION OLSEN BUILT HOMES



John Olsen built this 5,000 sf Fairfield spec with two story family room & wide plank oak floors, elegant marble master bath with mirrored linen closets, and a huge unfinished WOB and attic \$1.8 million.

BEST IN TOWN SPEC HOME MICHAUD GROUP



Rob & Marc Michaud built this in town Fairfield home in cedar shake with mahogany porch, Viking appliances and wine fridge and a marble master bath with split vanities and a stand alone tub. It SOLD during framing \$1.27 million.



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BEST SPEC HOME \$2-3 MILLION CCO HABITAT



This 5,000 sf Westport farmhouse style spec home by David Vyneryb features a stunning living room with linear fireplace and a spectacular tent ceiling master bedroom with another linear fireplace. The home SOLD in just 10 days at \$2 million.



OUTSTANDING CONTEMPORARY SPEC HOME MILTON DEVELOPMENT



Milton Development built this striking Compo Beach contemporary in Westport designed by Donald Fairbanks in white stucco with black framed windows, balconies on each floor, and a roof deck, which won OUTSTANDING OUTDOOR FEATURE. Inside – modern black stained cabinetry with no hardware and interiors by Ariana Thill & Heike Heim.

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BEST SPEC HOME \$4-5 MILLION RIVERSIDE DESIGN + BUILD



This classic New Canaan home by Riverside Design + Build is designed by Michelle Rudolph with dramatic 25 ft high curtain wall on axis with an infinity edge pool that won BEST EXTERIOR/INTERIOR FEATURE. Gracious interiors are beautifully detailed and include a stunning double island kitchen.



BEST SPEC HOME \$5-6 MILLION ARGUS DEVELOPMENT



Tim O'Malley nailed it once again with this American shingle style in Riverside, designed by Mockler Taylor with arched portico and gracious foyer with rift sawn oak floors and built-ins throughout. It SOLD at \$5.4 mil or \$1,198 sf.





BEST SPEC HOME \$6-7 MILLION FORE GROUP



This New Canaan colonial by Fore Group opens to a graceful wrap around main staircase, large island kitchen, a winning mudroom and back stair. The **BEST MASTER BATH** is designed with a unique back to back glass box shower and soaking tub/ and the **BEST WALK-IN CLOSET** is equipped with an island dresser.



BEST TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY BEST SINGLE FAMILY HOME OVER \$800,000 TOLL BROTHERS INC. - ESTATES AT SOUTH WINDSOR



At Toll Brothers single family community, *Estates at South Windsor*, in just one year, Nikki, Shannon & Marie sold 34 of 45 homes at \$500,000-1million. The Columbia Devonshire model features outdoor dining and firepit, two story family room, luxury kitchen and three chandelier master walk-in closet.





COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR

CANAL CROSSING LLC



Canal Crossing in Hamden is a gated apartment community of seven solar powered buildings which are being built by Franklin Construction. The first 3 buildings are completed, and they fully leased in less than one year!

Millennials love the amenity rich living, like the Bark Park, “a Disneyland for dogs”, which won BEST COMMUNITY AMENITY, and the WINNING post & beam CLUBHOUSE with 24 hr. fitness center and lounge, outdoor kitchen and firepit and salt water pool. Each apartment has a patio or balcony and keyless entry, and 20% are affordable. Rents range from \$1,000-\$2,400 per month.

Canal Crossing LLC also won BEST COMMUNITY WEBSITE for LiveatCanalCrossing.com, which is interactive with 3D floor-plans that give dimensions of rooms.



Lumber Market Update

by Frank Sanford, Sanford & Hawley, Inc.

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Over the past four months lumber prices bottomed in early November, then rose slowly with some ups and downs through mid-January and then took off following the rally in the Futures Market. Plywood continued dropping through late December and increased slowly through January. OSB has been flat since late December after dropping through the fall. Prices are close to where they were two years ago before tariffs were mentioned.

What has happened?

Since September, Douglas Fir is down 2% (it was down 12% at its low), while KDSPF is down 11% (it was down 17%).

Douglas Fir plywood is down 16% (it was down 19%) and OSB is down 29%. KDSPF is currently at a larger than normal

discount of 15% to Douglas Fir.

Why has this happened?

Supply and demand reached equilibrium in early November in the case of lumber, later in the case of plywood and OSB. There are supply shortages primarily in B.C. which are causing the current run up.

British Columbia

The annual allowable cut and hence production is still dropping in B.C.. This is an ongoing situation and will continue for years. There are also some short term log shortages causing temporary mill curtailments.

Forest Fires

2018's severe forest fire season was not as disruptive to the lumber industry as 2017's. There is finally talk of better managing forests, removing brush and dead or dying trees. This will be very helpful in the long run. We'll have to wait and see what happens in 2019.

Imports

Lumber imports continued to increase, primarily in European Spruce species. While these are generally very nice in appearance, strength varies significantly from species to species and all are weaker than domestic and Canadian KDSPF. Be sure to refer to the appropriate span tables if you use these. Imports of framing lumber are still insignificant compared to the volumes from Canada.

Conclusion

Pay attention! My last conclusion was right on, if I do say so myself. Going into the spring I would expect prices to rise as demand increases seasonally. Lumber supply will increase in the southern U.S. this year as new and expanded mills come on line. OSB prices may be held down as significant new production is coming on line as well. With a bit of luck, we may not repeat the cycle of the last two years. n

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BEST SINGLE FAMILY HOME \$600,000-750,000 BY CARRIER



At By Carrier's *Washington Farms* community in Burlington, a buyer collects cars, so Rajean Carrier built a side entry 3 bay garage and continued the driveway to two more bays under the deck!

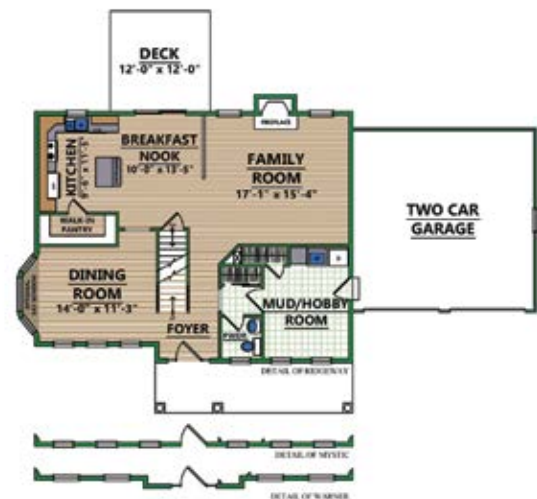
BEST SINGLE FAMILY HOME \$500,000-600,000 T&M HOMES



T&M Homes won for this model at *South Windsor Woods* with skylit kitchen with tiered island, a formal dining room and master bath with soaking tub and shower at \$515,000



BEST SINGLE FAMILY HOME \$400,000-500,000 T&M HOMES



At *Suffield Chace*, T&M's Grand Plus model features a bar stool kitchen and mud room/hobby room off the garage. Over the two car garage is a 3rd bedroom with two walk-in closets and tech zone.



BEST CLUSTER COMMUNITY & BEST POCKET COMMUNITY

SILVER HEIGHTS DEVELOPMENT FOR WINDOVER IN NORWALK



Windover in Norwalk is a hamlet of 8 homes by Silver Heights Development & Beinfield Architecture with colonial New England exteriors and that modern WOW factor inside. Pictured, the saltbox model with dramatic vaulted ceiling, steel trussed family room, floating kitchen, and sliding barn door to the BEST BUTLER'S PANTRY with Sub Zero wine fridge and dishwasher. Two homes SOLD on the first day at an average sale of \$1.5 million.



BEST MID-PRICED CONDOMINIUM COMMUNITY BY CARRIER FOR YORKSHIRE AT FARMINGTON ★



At *Yorkshire at Farmington*, Johnny Carrier is building 94 condominiums in vinyl clapboard siding with cedar accents, open floor plans, thick granite counters and HOBI winning a clubhouse with downstairs English pub. Thirty units are sold with 19 contracts in the last nine months at an average sales price of \$500,000.

BEST LUXURY CONDOMINIUM COMMUNITY BEST LUXURY CONDOMINIUM UNIT ★ HORTON GROUP



Kenny Horton won *Project of the Year* for the 1st phase mill building at 66 *High Street* in Guilford. Now he is constructing three new steel frame buildings with parking under, four units per floor, at sales prices of \$625,000 to \$1.9 million. This 4,000 sf condo combines two units and features a high end kitchen, luxury master bath, master bedroom balcony and a 2nd balcony overlooking Long Island Sound. It SOLD at \$2.4 million.



BEST LUXURY TOWNHOUSE COMMUNITY & BEST LUXURY TOWNHOUSE LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE HOMES



Danielle Bijanada and her father, Glen Tatangelo, developed and built this gated 16 townhome community - classic Southport on the outside, and eyepopping modern inside with an open living, dining and kitchen gathering space. To accommodate aging in place for their empty nester market, they offer an elevator option. A walk out terrace level is designed with a floating floor in linen finish tile. The *Village at Southport* Sold out in 15 months at an average sales price of \$1 million.

BEST 55+ COMMUNITY BEST MID-PRICED TOWNHOUSE TOLL BROTHERS INC. FOR THE ENCLAVE AT RIVINGTON



The Enclave is a 55+ neighborhood of 21 attached carriage homes at Toll Brothers *Rivington* in Danbury. Homeowners have access to the 15,000 sf *Rivington Club* for resort style living. The Bucknell model with two story dining, cathedral ceiling family room and kitchen, 1st floor master suite and 2nd floor loft at a sales price of \$615,000.

BEST TOWNHOUSE RENTAL COMMUNITY SANTINI HOMES FOR DEER VALLEY NORTH



Santini Homes has the formula for success with its rental community in Ellington. The clapboard and stone townhouse buildings have the look of large single family homes with private porches, unfinished basements for storage and attached one and two car garages. A number of units have elevators and all have access to two clubhouses and an outdoor patio with grill and firepit. Rents range from \$1,700-2,700 per month.





REMODELED HOME OF THE YEAR

PRUTTING & COMPANY



Prutting and Joe Moore architects transformed a 1964 mid century modern Greenwich home into a spectacular 11,700 sf showpiece. The extremely challenging \$5-7 million renovation involved removing and rebuilding the existing exterior roof and walls and constructing a 94 foot long addition, using a scaffolding system to protect the wetlands. The result: floor to ceiling windows, Venetian plaster walls, stainless steel and Porcelanosa kitchen counters, a long linear fireplace in the living room, and walls of glass framing the Thoreau reminiscent brook and landscape.





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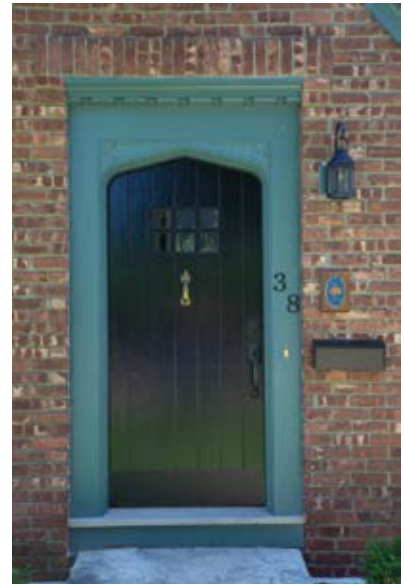
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Gregg B. Wagner, Regional Vice President, New Homes and Land Director | Mobile: 203.979.2652

BEST HISTORIC REHAB RED CANOE PARTNERS ★



John Kavounas preserved and refurbished the historic details of this Greenwich Historic District home including brick, trim, slate roof, lighting and door handles. Paul Hopper architect

BEST ANTIQUE HOME RESTORATION MORGAN CONTRACTING ★



Dan Morgan restored this 1810 Farmington home with new siding, windows and roof, preserving the home's period features, while renovating the kitchen and three baths for today's living.





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BEST VACATION HOME REMODEL

HOBBS INC.



Scott Hobbs did a masterful job turning a stucco Mediterranean into this classic Hamptons getaway. It features gray stained floors and two story living room, billiards room with built-ins and wood chandelier, a dining room with fanciful shutters opening to the kitchen with cerused oak cabinets, a serene tent ceiling master bedroom, gorgeous mosaic tile tub backdrop in the master bath and whimsical windmill shed.



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OUTSTANDING VACATION HOME REMO HORTON GROUP



Last year, Hurricane Irma destroyed Kenny Horton's Florida Keys vacation home and the grounds were filled with 3 feet of sand. Look at it now!! Kenny and crew restored the beach with new palm trees and boat docks, and rebuilt the interior in a record 6 weeks at a cost of \$1 million.

BEST IN TOWN HOME REMODEL ARCHETYPE



In downtown Westport, Paul Harris turned a post & beam home into this stunning remodel with 10ft ceilings, open family room dining and kitchen, a beautiful two story 1st floor master with porch, and a charming garden patio. Then he remodeled an antique cottage on the property as a studio apartment.



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BEST RESIDENTIAL REMODEL \$1-2 MILLION COLE HARRIS HOMES



Cole Harris Homes salvaged the foundation and 20% of the framing of this Darien home, transforming it on the outside, and creating open floor plan living and a fabulous kitchen with awning windows looking out to the garden.



BEST RESIDENTIAL REMODEL \$750,000 -1 MILLION BLANSFIELD BUILDERS



Jim Blansfield and team transformed the exterior of a Danbury home to this appealing one, and then did an exceptional remodel of the interior with a square paneled entry and striking dining room, a gorgeous Jason Landau kitchen with double quartz waterfall islands, framed grasscloth ceiling and white oak cabinets, a dedicated sewing room with porcelain tile floor and beamed media room. Interiors by *At Home Design*



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BEST RESIDENTIAL REMODEL \$500,000 -750,000
DAVENPORT HOME



Here's a fabulous kitchen in a gut renovated Greenwich townhouse by Davenport Home. The kitchen is open to a stunning family room with formal fireplace and gray painted woodwork and beams. (Sterling Design Associates)

BEST RESIDENTIAL REMODEL \$250,000 - 500,000
HEMINGWAY CONSTRUCTION



Hemingway Construction and architect Jon Halper renovated a Westport Georgian with a stunning gray stained white oak kitchen breakfast room and hi gloss blue metallic car paint for the butler's pantry.

OUTSTANDING CONTEMPORARY REMODEL
WERNERT ASSOCIATES



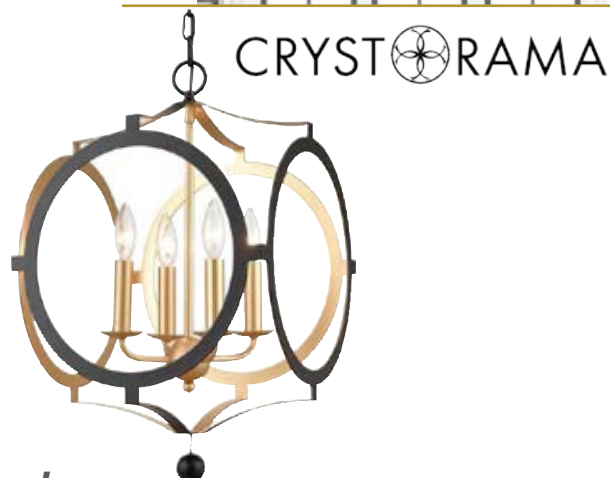
Wernert Associates design built two additions for this Outstanding Contemporary Remodel in Stamford, which features a 25 ft folding glass wall to the patio and this contemporary kitchen.

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BEST RESIDENTIAL REMODEL \$100,000-250,000 KARP ASSOCIATES ★

Karp architect, Robin Carroll, turned an old New Canaan two family into a home for her family by recycling, reusing & reclaiming materials, like this kitchen with Sub Zero and Viking appliances and cabinets from Green Demolitions \$6,000, as well as 1950's retro metal cabinets at \$200. Total cost of the full house renovation was \$150,000 or \$68 sf.



BEST NOT SO BIG REMODEL CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT GROUP ★



Construction Management Group renovated this 1800's home in Stamford's Shippan Point with 12ft wide counterweight window, suspended steel balconies, Doug fir post & beam, a bunk room and a whimsical kid's bath.



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BEST REMODELED KITCHEN DOMUS CONSTRUCTORS ★



Chris Shea demolished everything, and then installed 8" American cherry floors and this beautiful 300sf all white kitchen with seating for seven in a Fairfield home.

BEST REMODELED BATH UNDER \$100,000 ★ CLARK CONSTRUCTION



Ross Clark created a modern master bath in this Ridgefield home with barrier free shower, porcelain slab wall, heated herringbone tile floor, Kohler Veil intelligent toilet and window seat with storage drawer. \$89,000

BEST LUXURY REMODELED BATH HEMINGWAY CONSTRUCTION ★

How amazing is this 18ft long marble bath by Hemingway with bluestone floor, interior soaking tub and this exterior hot tub on the opposite side of a wall of glass \$164,000.



BEST LUXURY REMODELED BATH FRONT ROW KITCHENS ★



Front Row Kitchens used shiplap walls, double vanities and a separate one for makeup, a walk-in shower and frosted glass door to the sauna in this charming New Canaan master bath remodel.

BEST REMODELED LOWER LEVEL ★ FORE GROUP



Fore Group remodeled the entire lower level of a Marlborough home with this home theater, a gym, sauna and bunk room.



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BEST REMODELED ENTRY
LEIGH OVERLAND ARCHITECT ★



Leigh Overland connected two separate homes on this precipitous site in Danbury, by creating an energy-efficient 35' entry with elevator.

BEST NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING OVERALL ★
KARP ASSOCIATES



The Mill River Park Carousel building in Stamford is truly a design and construction marvel!

Designed by Gary Organschi and built by Karp's Paul Stone, it features a retractable glass curtain wall, a laminated wood oculus wood ceiling, and of course – a whimsical Carousel Works carousel.





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OUTSTANDING NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING HORTON GROUP



In Guilford, Kenny Horton constructed this 16,000 sf office building using Hardie siding and Azek trim. One of three in his *Goose Lane Office Park*, it's fully leased at triple net \$26 sf.

BEST OUTDOOR FEATURE MURPHY BROTHERS CONTRACTING



Murphy Brothers built this outdoor room overlooking the Hudson River using a Renson pergola system with motorized drop screens, LED lighting and louvers for shade.

BEST FAIRFIELD COUNTY COMMERCIAL REHAB MURPHY BROTHERS CONTRACTING



Murphy Brothers turned Sotheby's Greenwich offices modern with Italian wood plank floors, fabric walls, ceiling changes and electronic film for privacy. Michael Murphy presented the award with the architect who designed the renovation, Gregg DeAngelis, to Pam Pagnani, Vice President, and Brokerage Manager of Sotheby's International Realty, to the applause of the 50+ Sotheby's agents, who call this their home office. Pam summed up a job well done, "Thank you for bringing a vision to life and providing our agents with the best place to work."



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★ SPECIAL FOCUS AWARDS ★

OUTSTANDING SPECIAL PURPOSE ROOM BY A SUPPLIER



This striking 900 sf Irish pub by **West Hartford Stairs & Cabinets** is built in white oak and features an angled bar, foot rail and built-in cooler, wine fridge and TV.

OUTSTANDING KITCHEN BY A SUPPLIER



Viking Kitchen Cabinets won for this Milford kitchen design by Stacey Trachten with honed quartz island, unique black stone farm sink, Greenfield cabinets, La Cornue range and integrated Sub Zero with wine cooler.

BEST INTERIOR FEATURE BY A SUPPLIER



Karen Bradbury, Closet & Storage Concepts of Norwalk, designed this elegant multi-purpose wood wall with shelving, drawers and two concealed Murphy beds. The creative solution turns the den into a glamorous guest suite.

BEST OUTDOOR ROOM



This Bali inspired outdoor pavilion by **Fairfield House & Garden** is constructed with Western red cedar and offers cooking, dining, TV and a unobstructed view of the pool & tennis court.

Designer

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★ SPECIAL FOCUS AWARDS ★

OUTSTANDING OUTDOOR ROOM ★



Murphy Brothers used shingle style architecture and Nana Walls to create this fabulous indoor/outdoor room for a home.

BEST COMMERCIAL AMENITY ★



Torrison Stone & Garden transformed a tired, outdated Palmer Field in Middletown into this new one with new ticket booth, viewing deck and park like setting.

BEST HOME ELEVATOR ★

Elevator Service Company installed this Symmetry hydraulic home elevator with raised panel cherry cab in a New Hartford home.

According to ESCO owner, Steve Roth, "home elevators are in demand for vertical transportation convenience, as well as to overcome the elevation challenges of flood prone areas and the needs of older parents living with their children or empty nesters wanting to age in place." See Business Product News.



BEST HOME TECHNOLOGY ★



Innerspace Electronics outfitted this winning Sound Beach home with Lutron Homeworks lighting control and 26 audio video zones. A motorized ceiling lift transforms the rec room TV to a 110 inch movie screen.

BEST GREEN FEATURE ★



A **Tamarack Technologies Ghost Whole House Fan** at T&M's *Gledhill Estates* model home is app controlled and saves up to 90% on AC.

BEST CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY ★



T&M won for the U Moen Digital Shower they are showcasing in their model home at *Gledhill Estates*. It's voice or phone controlled and installs easily under a cabinet.

★ SPECIAL FOCUS AWARDS ★

BEST OPTION UPGRADE ★



At *Hillcrest Village* in Southington, Verna offers a package portal option that solves the secure home delivery problem. A keyless entry side door off the garage gives access to deliverymen and keeps your packages secure and dry.

★ BEST SHOWROOM AWARDS ★

BEST NEW HAVEN COUNTY SHOWROOM OVER 10,000 SF ★ BEST NEW HAVEN COUNTY COMMERCIAL REHAB BENDER SHOWROOMS



Bender was recognized with both Showroom and Commercial Rehab awards for their 21,000 sf renovation of an 1889 warehouse on East Street in New Haven as a kitchen, bath tile and lighting showroom. The stunning space features exposed brick and ductwork as a backdrop for faucet and fixture displays as well as working kitchens, lighting and tile.

BEST LARGE FAIRFIELD COUNTY SHOWROOM ★ AITORO SHOWROOMS



In *Aitoro's* fabulous 12,000 sf Norwalk showroom, customers can test drive the kitchens, as with this recently remodeled Monogram Miele area with extreme water-fall island!

BEST PRODUCT SHOWROOM 5,000-10,000 SF
BEST NEW LONDON COUNTY SHOWROOM UNDER 5,000 SF ★
TILE AMERICA



Tile America's New Haven showroom has 20 vignettes and feature walls showcasing the latest tile with quality plumbing fixtures from Torrcio. In new London, Tile America opened this winning showroom – its 7th in CT.

BEST FAIRFIELD COUNTY SHOWROOM ★
UNDER 5,000 SF



In the small showroom category, **Gault Stone** is a stand out in Fairfield County, with their touch screen work stations, 14 ft screen for lifesize inspiration and 250 products on display.

OUTSTANDING SMALL SHOWROOM ★



O&G redesigned their 20 year old Earth Products showroom in Bridgeport with creatively displayed kitchen & bath vignettes & tile products.

BEST BUILDER SHOWROOM ★



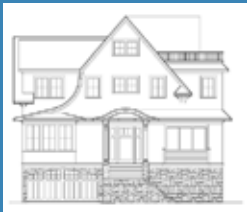
And builder **John Ricci** partnered with Kitchens & Baths by Matter of Style, and built this Cheshire office showroom with James Hardie exterior, kitchen, bath & mudroom vignettes, and his construction offices above.

denise walsh & partners

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★ SALES AND MARKETING ★

2018 NEW HOME SALESPERSON OF THE YEAR
DENISE WALSH ★

L-R Kaitlyn Walsh, Jessica Walsh & Denise Walsh

With over \$20 million in sales and \$11.6 million in current deposits, Denise Walsh, Denise Walsh Partners/William Raveis Real Estate is a firebrand. She and her team are valued by their developer and builder clients for their marketing skill, creative ideas and strategic social media campaigns! Denise Walsh Partners was recognized with two additional HOBI marketing HOBI Awards this year. See Denise's comments on the market in this issue.

BEST MARKETING COMMUNITY &
BEST COMMUNITY WEBSITE
DENISE WALSH PARTNERS ★

In marketing *The Village at Southport*, Denise targeted empty nesters by making it all about LIFESTYLE. She had a website video produced, which depicts the convenience the community offers in its location so close to I-95, and a walk to the Metro North train station and to downtown Southport with shopping, golf, boating, dining & nightlife. Then, using Pinterest events and developer Love Where You Live's gorgeous model, she and her team SOLD all 16 townhouses in 1 year!

BEST SOCIAL MEDIA POST
BEST INTERIOR MERCHANDISING
COUNTY TV & APPLIANCE ★

County TV & Appliance was recognized for their successful Instagram campaign, which has generated 1,200 followers. County also won BEST MERCHANDISING for their eye-catching new Gagneau and Thermador kitchen vignettes, which promote the look and many benefits of these luxury appliances to perfection.



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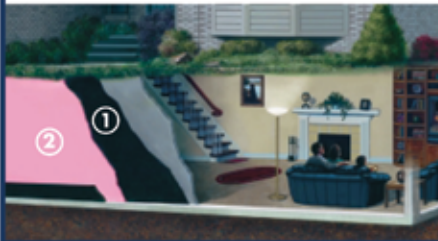
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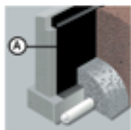
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- [1] The black, flexible membrane of TUFF-N-DRI H8 seamlessly seals out water leaks and seepage.
- [2] Pink WARM-N-DRI® foundation board insulates basement walls on the outside to reduce condensation inside.

*Visit TUFF-N-DRI.com for full details on the 30-year performance warranty. **Builder magazine Brand Use Studies. ©2009, Tremco Barrier Solutions, Inc. TUFF-N-DRI® is a registered trademark of Tremco Barrier Solutions, Inc. WARM-N-DRI® is a registered trademark of Owens Corning.

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★ SALES AND MARKETING ★

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Last year, in Greenwich, it took an average 300 days to sell a home over \$5 million. Dibico's House-Lift Program is a top to bottom face-lift for homes over \$3 million, like this one which SOLD in less than 1 month at a 900% ROI!

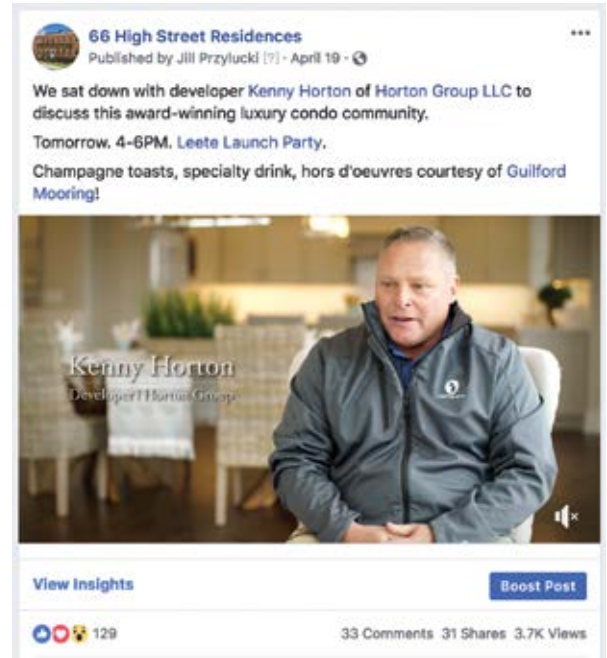
Dibico conducted a neighborhood campaign in Greenwich to promote their Home Management Program with a hand delivered wooden clock & the message "Let Dibico Home Management give you back the one thing money can't buy . . time!" Dibico has 44 home management clients.



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BEST SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN
BEST COMMUNITY SOCIAL MEDIA POST
ONE + COMPANY ★



Realtors Byron Lazine & Nicole White are social media whizzes! Nicole is the realtor behind "The House that Social Media Built." Their boosted Facebook video posts and Instagram campaign netted 8 new contracts at 66 High Street this year.

BEST PRODUCT BROCHURE
O&G INDUSTRIES ★



O&G's elegant lifestyle magazine, *Stylish Spaces with Masonry*, does a great job promoting masonry projects by O&G.

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★ SALES AND MARKETING ★

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Berkshire Hathaway started marketing Copper Brook in Granby - even before final zoning approval. Using a website, Facebook & Instagram BHHS netted 12 contracts in 2018, and five more in January for a total of 17 contracts and six closings for developer Jonathan Vosburgh, Roswell Development. When the project is complete there will be a total of 32 homes.

BEST COMMUNITY BROCHURE ★ BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOME SERVICES NEP



L-R Gregg Wagner, Lynn Rival, Mark Pruner & Brenda Maher

The Estates at North Street is an enclave of 3 estate homes in the heart of Greenwich. Berkshire Hathaway's winning brochure communicates luxury with its heavy paper stock and low-luster finish. Clear Mountain Capital & Fletcher Development.

HOME FINANCING

In a record 22 year repeat, Liberty Bank won
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CUSTOM LOAN**
and for the 3rd year,
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COMMUNITY SERVICE



Karp Associates has been donating guidance, design & construction services to help renovate the Jewish Community Center in Stamford. The café' and this gym are the final phase of work.



Architect Leigh Overland cut his fee in half to spearhead the exterior renovation of STAR Inc. in Norwalk, which offers programs & services to needy and disabled people.



Jeffrey Bodeau, Bodeau Realty Group/ Willaim Raveis, hosts free *Glastonbury Movie Nights* during the summer and he has raised awareness and over \$2,000 for area charities.

Charles Shinn Gives A Cautious 2019 Housing Forecast

While the economy roars, housing hits a soft patch and needs to retool

By Charles C. Shinn Jr., PhD, Founder, Builder Partnerships

With the stimulus from the \$1.5 trillion tax cut package and the reduction of government regulations, some economists have stated that we currently have the best U.S. economy in modern history. Currently, we are effectively at full employment, with unemployment at 3.7 percent for the last three months, the lowest rate since 1969. In November, wages had grown 3.1 percent year over year. Wage growth should strengthen during 2019.

Consumer confidence was the strongest in 18 years in October; consumer spending rose for the seventh straight month. This year's holiday season spending was very strong, with online sales up more than 18 percent. The only concern is the consumer is increasing debt.

The economy is expected to be strong for 2019, even though the effect of the tax stimulus will plateau, interest rates will increase, and consumer debt is rising. Forecasters predict GDP growth for 2019 will be 2.7 to 2.8 percent for the year.

The Federal Reserve raised short-term interest rates four times in 2018 by 25 basis points each time. The 30-year mortgage interest rate in mid-December rose to 5.10 percent; this is a 172-basis point increase since December 2012, which was the cycle low of 3.34 percent. If the Fed follows through with the three increases in 2019, the 30-year rate will increase at least another 0.5 percent.

The soft patch

The housing sector, both new and existing homes, started losing momentum beginning in March. The trend has deepened as interest rates have increased, impacting housing affordability and the buyers' belief that now is a good time to buy a home.

Builders have reported buyer traffic is down, sales are down, and cancellations are increasing. We are beginning to see new home discounts of as much as \$50,000 to \$100,000 and offers of 5 percent real estate co-op commissions. Land developers are being more aggressive in liquidating their land holdings.

The housing affordability index has dropped almost 32 percent since the high registered in January 2013. Existing home sales rates have been decreasing for the last six months. Since the cycle bottom in January 2012, the median sales price for existing homes has increased 65.2 percent, or \$100,800.

New home sales dropped 8.9 percent on an annual rate in October. The rate

has decreased five out of the last seven months, with a decrease of 19 percent since March. For the year, sales are up 2.8 percent through October. However, as sales have slowed since March, the percentage of growth for this year has been diminishing.

The median sales price for new homes peaked in March at \$335,400, revealing a drop of 7.7 percent by October, declining to \$309,700. On a year-over-year basis, the median price has fallen 3.1 percent since October 2017.

New home inventories had been steadily increasing for the last year, with 50,000 more homes in inventory this October than last year; this represents a 17.5 percent increase. Since May, the completed

We are seeing lenders moving funds from new construction to remodeling, with forecasts of a 12 percent to 15 percent reduction in new home loans during the fourth quarter of this year.

As the millennial buyers gain momentum in home buying, there will be an increase in entry-level home purchases of about 15 percent, provided home builders respond and can produce the housing product the millennial buyer wants.

home inventory has expanded by 23.3 percent. In October, inventories jumped 4.3 percent. This added 14,000 homes to inventory, which increased inventory homes to a 7.4-month supply.

My forecast for 2019

With this softening during a strong economy, it has been difficult to forecast where housing is headed. During the last 60 days, most housing economists have been adjusting their 2019 housing forecasts down.

Because of the softening market, the price inflation for housing will moderate from 6 percent in 2018 to only about 2.5 percent for 2019.

At this point, I am more cautious than most of the housing forecasters. I am concerned about affordability with the rapidly escalating home pricing and the increasing mortgage interest rates. Builders need to work very hard to try to keep the monthly mortgage payment in a range that will give them the needed sales velocity. The homes need to be smaller and more efficient.

We will probably see more discounting, mortgage locks, and buy-downs as the interest rates increase. I predict we will begin to see a lot of movement toward a 40-year mortgage in an effort to reduce monthly payments. The millennials are here; they will control the housing markets for the next 50 years like the baby boomers have done for the last 50 years.

The industry needs to retool to address this demographic change. [n](#)

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NAHB Elects CT Builder Greg Ugalde 2019 Chairman

February 21, 2019



Members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) elected four senior officers to top leadership positions within the federation during the association's International Builders' Show in Las Vegas February 19-21.

With more than 700 affiliated state and local home builders associations and more than 140,000 members across the country, NAHB represents the interests of the nation's housing professionals through advocacy, education and research.

Taking the helm as NAHB's Chairman of the Board this year is our own Greg Ugalde, CGP, GMB, a Connecticut builder and developer with more than 25 years of experience in the industry. Greg is president and chief legal officer of Torrington-based T&M Building Co., Inc., one of the largest home builders in the state. T&M Homes has built more than 3,500 new single-family attached and detached homes in over 40 Connecticut communities.

"I am proud to be a Connecticut builder and developer. Members hailing from Connecticut have made many meaningful contributions to the national NAHB federation over the years. A very meaningful example: Our members in Connecticut lead the federation in per capita donations to BUILD-PAC year after year.

As I prepare to assume the NAHB chairmanship, I am humbled and proud to be the first person from Area 1 to fulfill this role. I am equally proud of our national federation and its long tradition of supporting our industry. As a senior officer, I have had the opportunity to learn about major housing concerns in depth, and to see how our federation comes together to address these issues. My



Greg & Mary Jane Ugalde with U.S. Rep Jahana Hayes, CT 5th District

focus and theme for the year, as we prepare for this election cycle is HOUSING AFFORDABILITY!

Burdensome and ineffective regulations that unnecessarily drive up housing costs hurt buyers, builders, developers, remodelers, suppliers, and our entire industry. NAHB makes sure that regulators and legislators understand the harm of overregulation and helps to ensure mandates are reasonable and cost-effective. Our grassroots activity is very strong; NAHB advocacy is highly visible not only in Washington but in state houses and legislative offices throughout our country.

Workforce development is also a top NAHB concern, and the federation is working hard to bring more workers into the home building sector. NAHB has a philanthropic arm — the National Housing Endowment — that enhances residential construction training. Plus, we have a growing Student Chapters program, a Skilled Labor fund and other resources to get students thinking about building careers. Not to mention, our workforce development affiliate, HBI, provides training through many nationwide programs.

My participation in the local, state and national levels of NAHB has shown me how these three tiers work hand-in-hand on issues such as regulation and workforce training. It has also shown me the invaluable support the federation provides to building professionals, who have the greatest responsibility of all: providing safe, comfortable homes for American families across the economic spectrum.



NAHB Chairman Greg Ugalde at State of the Union address

Greg's new position as leader of the nation's builders gives Connecticut and its home building industry the ability to have our voices and issues heard as never before.

Contact Greg at:
Greg.Ugalde@TandM.com

As NAHB chairman, I will be a strong advocate for everyone involved in home building — here in Connecticut and in cities and towns throughout our country.

— Greg Ugalde

Chris Nelson Elected Chairman & President HBRA of CT



Chris Nelson is sworn into office by Greg Ugalde

On January 22, 2019, at the state Board of Directors meeting, Chris Nelson, Nelson Construction was sworn in by incoming NAHB Chairman Greg Ugalde, as 2019-2020 Chairman of the Board and President of the HBRA of Connecticut.

Chris is a builder and developer of sustainable single family homes, condominiums and rental communities in the Farmington Valley. Nelson Construction and Landworks have won the top state award, *Community of the Year*, for communities in Farmington and in Simsbury. The 2019-2020 Senior Officers are Eric Santini Jr. Vice-President and David Preka, Treasurer.

In appreciation for his generous and committed service to the HBRA of CT as Chairman and President, the association presented Pete with a framed montage of memories, a gift certificate to Gabriel's restaurant tin Old Greenwich and a plaque commemorating his year as leader of the association.



Chris Nelson shaking hands with Pete Fusaro as Pete passes on the gavel.



BUILD PAC Trustee and Fiano Family Classic co-chair, George LaCava reported that \$56,700 was raised in Connecticut in 2018. Ninety percent of this was contributed by just 31 people or 4% of membership. There were four Capital Club members at \$5,000 each, two Platinum members at \$2,500 and 25 Gold Key members at \$1,000 each. George presented a splitback check for \$22,400 to the HBRA for Connecticut's share of this money.

THANK YOU George LaCava and to the 31 contributors to NAHB BUILD-PAC!

This will be a very exciting year for Connecticut, as Greg Ugalde takes over as Chairman of NAHB. Greg is looking forward to an amazing year of achievement for the NAHB and he has asked George LaCava to chair the NAHB Planning Committee. This is a small committee of five people, plus one non-voting state EO and one non-voting local EO. Eric Person will be the local EO on the committee. George and members of his committee will serve as top level advisors to the NAHB Chairman and Senior Officers. This is the committee that came up with the new membership model currently being piloted at NAHB.



L-R Build Pac Golf Committee Frank Sanford, Joanne Carroll, co-chairman Bill Ferrigno, Chairman George LaCava, Bob Wiedenmann, Greg Ugalde, Anthony DeRosa & Pete Fusaro

In honor of the incoming President and 2019 board of directors, a reception was held at Harry's Sports Bar & Grille after the board meeting.



Tony Denorfria, Propane Pete Battaglio & Eric Santini



Liz Koiva, Jim Perras & HBRA Treasurer, Dave Preka



Builder News

Paul Harris, Cole Harris

Homes & Archetype – In Darien, we continue to have much interest in the two \$7 million Brush Island spec homes, with an offer coming soon. We closed on 3 lots in Tokeneke (Darien) the end of January, and we'll be doing three (\$4-\$5Mil) Archetype homes there. We've also broken ground on another Archetype 4,300 sq ft home (\$2.8 million) on Settlers Trail, Darien, close to our Clocks Lane homes, and we are building a Cole Harris Homes custom design build for a private client.

ANTHONY DEROSA, DEROSA BUILDERS

– In the Greenwich market, year over year, our growth is up, but I expect home prices to continue to slide. Instead of spec or custom homes, we are doing a lot of big remodels. The mega mansions of the 80's and 90's need a ton of work, and instead of moving, these homeowners are hiring us to do \$3 million whole house remodels.

Chris Nelson, Nelson

Construction – In Simsbury, we have 5 spec homes and can't sell a thing, but our multi-family rental is doing great!... Our rental community pays \$1 million per year in taxes or \$4,500 per unit for 225 units. Reducing property taxes would allow a subsidy for more affordable housing and both sides would win!

Tony Denorfria,

A.A. Denorfria Builders – In Southington, new construction sales dropped precipitously. However our rentals at \$1,600 per month are doing well.

Liz Verna, Verna Builders

We had no sales during the last quarter of 2018. In Southington, our price point is \$379,000-439,000 with 3 quick delivery homes, but nobody's biting.

Mario DiGioia, DonMar

Development – In North Haven, we're busy with 8-30G of 76 homes at \$207,000-299,000 with only 2 affordable homes left. In Branford, we broke ground the end of 2018 on 11 lots with houses at \$469,900.

Louis Tagliatella, Franklin

Construction – In Hamden, we have built 3 buildings and leased 185 apartments in one year – first building 100 percent rented six weeks after CO. When completed, Canal Crossing will have 393 apts. in seven buildings.



Builders Bob Wiedenmann, Sunwood Development and Liz Verna, Verna Builders, were enthusiastic campaigners for Senator Len Fasano who was re-elected to his Senate seat and Leader of Senate Republicans in the Connecticut legislature.

Harrison Playhouse Lofts Groundbreaking

With the help and support of family, friends and local elected officials, John Verni and Chris Verni, partners in Verco Properties, broke ground on their latest project, the *Harrison Playhouse Lofts* in downtown Harrison. "The Verni brothers look forward to jump starting the rebirth of downtown Harrison as the next great destination in Westchester County" said John Verni. In attendance were Harrison Mayor Ron Belmont, NYS Senator Shelly Mayer, NYS Assemblyman Steve Otis, and County Legislator Catherine Parker.

The Harrison Playhouse Lofts project is an adaptive reuse of the old Harrison movie theater that has been closed for over a dozen years. The project is a mixed-use, transit-oriented development that will add 36 luxury rental units as well as a new street-level



café on Purdy Street and refurbished stores on Harrison Avenue.

Designed by noted architect, Stephen Tilly Architects, known for their "green building" projects and historical restoration work, the *Harrison Playhouse Lofts* will incorporate several environmentally sustainable design elements to be one of the first Westchester County buildings to

satisfy the FitWel™ standard, the world's leading healthy building certification. The project will be built by Murphy Brothers Contracting of Mamaroneck who have built several high-end, boutique residential projects along the Sound Shore of Westchester County as well as many luxury homes in Westchester and Fairfield County. Sterling National Bank will provide the financing for this exciting, transit-oriented development.

On the Market

Connecticut Builder asked some of Connecticut's leading new home realtors to comment on the 2018 market and what's in store for 2019!

Calcagni New Business Development Director, Joel Grossman CRS GRI Vice-President of the CT Association of Realtors

"Expect a slower start to 2019 than we saw in 2018 which saw strong first quarters sales – Although the shutdown lingers, our builders who repositioned their product and pricing are seeing renewed interest and traffic at the communities that we represent.

- ▶ The stock market ups and downs may discourage would be 2nd home buyers; we don't expect this to effect typical buyers that just want a new place to call home
- ▶ It is still a little early to determine what effect new leadership in Hartford will have on housing, there is a desire to strengthen the housing markets and make new homes more affordable in CT and that is a good thing
- ▶ Builders will have to be nimble and prepared to increase their value proposition.
- ▶ Move-in or quick delivery homes must be a part of the mix of offerings.
- ▶ Builders must be accepting of and offer features that are trending. Specs can no longer be basic and builders must move past stainless steel, hardwood and granite.

Here is how Calcagni is positioning our builders for success

- ▶ Our builder clients benefit from our extensive knowledge about the local markets, keeping a keen eye on buyer's attitudes and what they want and expect in new houses.

- ▶ Trends are spotted quickly with recommendations for changes in models, specs and pricing
- ▶ At HillCrest Village for example, a HOBI winner for Best Option Upgrade, we initiated an across the board revision to plans and 5% adjustment to pricing, which is resulting in renewed interest and sales. Better to take a little less, resulting in higher paced sales, which can lead to momentum that can eventually lead to increasing prices.

Looking back at 2018 and into 2019 regarding sales.

- ▶ Multi family housing units were the rage, and the trend should continue into 2019
- ▶ No one town saw spectacular sales and there was ample supply of new homes in just about all price ranges.
- ▶ For 2018, Hartford County median closed price were \$483,740 with 2,485 sf. Total sales were just 208 units as compared to 2017 with median closed price of \$495,000 with 2,504 sf and just 197 units sold.
- ▶ In New Haven County, 2018 saw an uptick on total sales at 192 compared to 142 in 2017. 2018 median price was \$429,988 with 2,200 sf and 2017 median price was \$411,250 at 2,214 sf.
- ▶ The slight upticks in units sold is promising, and if builders can control costs, respond to the market dynamics, and offer products that appeal to today's buyers, 2019 could be a better year." (Sales info sourced from SmartMLS.)

Denise Walsh – 2918 New Home Salesperson of the Year

William Raveis Real Estate Top 1 Percent, Luxury Properties Division
"The Fall market was slower than expected in 2018, with many new homes carrying over into this Winter/Spring market. Several sources site Fairfield County as having a decrease of 4-9% in average sales prices. The slight decline in pricing, coupled with buyer's reticence and lack of urgency, I am expecting we will all be working hard right out of the gate this year to firm up purchase agreements and stay close in touch with prospective buyers.

The good news is the reports of financial bonuses, a bit lower current inventory and the increase in showings and offers. Buyers are enthusiastic with new homes that still offer some customization, and they continue to look for white kitchens and baths, a home office, larger walk in closets, laundry rooms, pantries, wet bars or wine fridge/rooms and finished lower levels. In the upper tier, exterior amenities are favored as well.

There are opportunities for builders in 2019:

Empty nesters are getting frustrated with the lack of housing geared for their lifestyle at under \$1 million and not necessarily in 55+ communities. Millennials are starting to purchase in all price ranges, and while they know what they want, some still need to be guided through the process for the best experience. On another positive note, there is a noticeably growing number of buyers that prefer new to renovated or older homes. And, while number of homes sold may be down in outlying areas, many have seen an increase in average sales price. The value is bringing buyers over the line."



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EVERSOURCE





Builder News

Karp Associates has been selected by This Old House to build their 2019 Idea House!

Follow the renovation and addition to 4 Main Street in the historic district of New Canaan.

Film crews from the PBS show will follow the transformation of the Circa 1840 Greek revival farmhouse, as Karp Associates restores some antique features and builds a new extension with modern conveniences.

As part of the 5th annual Idea House show, the program will document several steps of the project. Two 24-hour webcams have been installed, “so people can watch the demolition and the renovation,” on This Old House website, said Robin Carroll, project manager for Karp Associates. The webcam can be found at thisoldhouse.com by clicking “watch.”

When the work is done, thousands are expected to tour the house, a tradition with projects featured on the popular reality fix-up show.

“This will be good for New Canaan,” said Arnold Karp, because the broadcast will invariably show off the town.

When Karp purchased the 7,000 sf house for \$810,000, he wanted to save it from demolition. Before he bought it, the once dignified looking building appeared blighted, with overgrown vegetation and the porch missing a pillar. Inside, the roof was leaking and raccoons were wreaking havoc.

“We liked the look of the house,” said Karp who plans to “build something that will last the next 100 years and keep its historic look.”

“It will look old from the street, but have the latest and greatest features,” said Karp.

The house will have many modern conveniences including, security, a professional kitchen, state-of-the art lighting, new baths and a three-car garage. While downsizing to a 6,000-square-foot building, Karp plans to save the antique facade. He has removed eight of the 200-year-old windows, and plans to them and strip and remove lead from the old window sills. A beehive oven from the 1700s, which was used to heat and cook in the original house, will be maintained.

This Old House is part of the American home improvement media brand with television shows, a magazine and a website. The company is headquartered in Stamford.

How's Business? We're #3!

by Dan Woog, town blogger extraordinaire

Chain stores are fleeing Main Street. “Retail Space Available” signs fill the Post Road. Westport (06880) commenters warn that high taxes, crumbling infrastructure and many other factors put our town in peril. But a business environment is more than merchants. And a new study from the Yankee Institute ranks Westport as Connecticut's 3rd most business-friendly town.

The public policy institute collected and measured data from the state's 50 largest municipalities. Criteria included economic vitality (median income and job growth), tax burden, transportation, and “community allure” (education, crime rates, cost of living).

The Yankee Institute report says Westport is heavily reliant on financial service companies, with over 7,000 financial-sector employees. Major companies include Bridgewater Associates and Canaan Partners from the financial services area. But Westport is also home to Terex, a Fortune 500 industrial equipment manufacturing company.

The Yankee Institute adds: “Westport's score was lowered by its high tax burden. But high community allure, economic vitality and transportation infrastructure kept it high on our list.”

I'm not sure what “transportation infrastructure” means — something about ports of entry, interstate highways and rail lines — but we'll take it.

Westport followed Fairfield and Greenwich. Ridgefield was 4th, Simsbury 5th — meaning the state's 4 most business-friendly towns are in Fairfield County. The least business-friendly places were cities like Waterbury, New Haven and Hartford. All face severe fiscal challenges. Stamford was the only major city to score in the top 25. [n](#)



Karp Associates has been selected by This Old House to build their 2019 Idea House!

Michael Church Is A Rising Star in Fairfield County Real Estate

WPSIR agent and Norwalk native outshines his peers as 2018 Broker of the Year the 2nd time he's been honored with the housing industry's top sales & marketing award

At the 25th annual HOBI Awards Gala in November, the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRAC) presented Michael Church with their top Sales & Marketing award, 2018 Broker of the Year.

Michael was recognized for his outstanding record of \$10+ million in Fairfield County transactions last year, including listing and selling homes, leasing apartments and locating income producing properties for investors. The panel of judges were impressed with the respect and admiration his clients and industry peers have for Michael, as both a real estate agent and a man.

WSPIR brokerage manager, Kevin Hickey, has worked with Michael Church for ten years.

"What I love about Michael is his complete transparency and honesty in everything he does. He has a deep knowledge of the Fairfield County market, and investors seek him out to consult on potential projects, and advise them on how to go about their leasing operation. He understands the rental market better than 99 percent of agents."

— Kevin Hickey WSPIR



According to Hickey, the single family infill market in Norwalk is very strong in the \$400,000-600,000 price range, which is another area in which Michael Church outshines his peers.

A recognized achiever in Fairfield County real estate

In 2013, at 30 years of age, Church was named as one of Fairfield County's best and brightest leaders under the age of 40. Already a multi-year award winning broker with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty (WPSIR), he managed a multi-million dollar portfolio, and spearheaded his WPSIR office to their #1 status in overall Norwalk market share.

In 2014, Church was honored as *Broker of the Year* for establishing a thriving rental market in what had been an abandoned neighborhood on the north side of Norwalk. He leased up each phase of townhomes at Summerview Square within two weeks of their release, and with his astute marketing, Summerview consistently outperformed high rise rental developments throughout Norwalk.

"Many superlatives can be used to describe Michael Church," said Dr. Gil Harel, who purchased a single family home in Fairfield with Michael last year. "Michael's knowledge of Fairfield County is prodigious. The information he gave us on each neighborhood and its vibe, as well as schools, mill rates and taxes, was invaluable. We found him to be patient, affable and diligent - attributes which are keys to success in his field of work."

Michael's involvement with builders and the housing market led to his appointment as a director of both the Fairfield County and state Home Builders and Remodelers Association, and in 2019, he will serve on the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Leadership Council.

"Michael Church has been an asset to our board and to the association," said Anthony DeRosa, a Greenwich builder and President of the Fairfield County Home Builders and Remodelers Association. "He can speak intelligently on every topic, and he always does his due diligence. I value his opinion and thoughtfulness."

Beyond his industry leadership, Michael is a force in the community. He is Vice-President of the Building Hope Foundation and serves as Chairman of the Board of Ethics for the City of Norwalk and on the Board of the Riverbrook Regional YMCA and the School Governance Council for a local elementary school.

The *HOBI Awards* is the largest home building industry awards program in the country, and Connecticut's most prestigious recognition of excellence in home construction and sales & marketing. **n**

HOBİ Winner Leia Ward Stages Bruce Willis Westchester Home



L TW Design is a full scale staging design firm specializing in exclusive luxury properties. With an expansive inventory of furniture, accessories and artwork, Leia is known for her attention to detail and talent in blending textures, natural light and clean lines in every project. Creating calm and beautifully balanced spaces of casual sophistication has become her signature style.

In November, LTW Design founder, Leia Ward, won a HOBİ Award for her skillful staging of Cole Harris Homes' Best Spec Home Over \$7 Million, a 7,900 sf home on Brush Island Road in Darien.

In December, Bruce Willis & his wife Emma hired LTW Design to stage their Westchester home, Leia Ward and team spent 5 weeks staging the 9,000 sf Craftsman style house, which is located in

Bedford, New York, and it was listed in January for \$12.9 million.

The five-bedroom main house sits on a gated property and includes a playroom, media room and wine cellar, as well as a saltwater pool, pool house, and tennis court.

The house and LTW Design have been featured in People, Architectural Digest,

WSJ Mansion, Town & Country, House Beautiful, and on NBC's Access Hollywood.

Beyond this celebrity listing, LTW Design has staged a number of spec homes in a variety of price ranges, including a beautiful \$2.5 million home in Wilton in February, and \$2-3M spec home in Darien, which was listed in mid February. LTW did that home's lighting design, hardware and countertop selection before staging. Leia also completed the 8,330sf Harbour Project which listed at \$12.9 million. Photos bottom left & right.

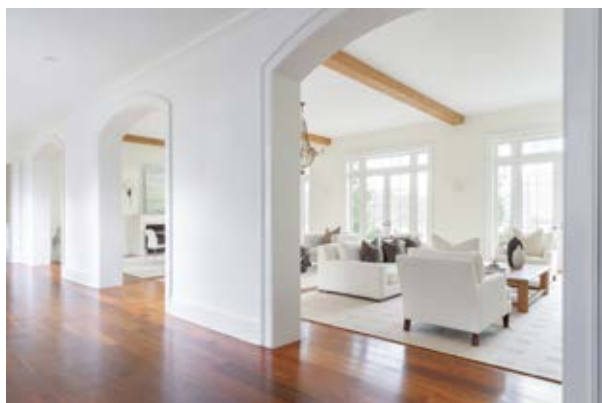
All this, plus a new website and blog, while raising a family of three young children under the age of seven! How about that for talent and multi-tasking! [n](#)



Bruce Willis FR above and LR above right



Robert Lowell Photography





Photographed by Tim Lenz

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HOBBI Winners Rely on Karen Berkemeyer Home to Deliver Everything They Need In Award Winning Kitchens & Baths



Connecticut Builder publisher and HOBBI Awards producer, Joanne Carroll, recently spent some time with Karen Berkemeyer, to learn more about her company, and why so many HOBBI winning builders and interior designers rely on her expertise for their kitchen and bath products and design.

Karen Berkemeyer Home is a full service, kitchen and bath design studio serving consumers and the housing industry for more than 30 years. Originally located in Greenwich, Karen moved to Westport a number of years ago.

Our talented design team provides a true "one stop shop" experience for our clients, allowing a builder or his custom clients to work with one designer throughout each stage of the design process.

Our wide range of products fall within various price points, allowing us to get creative while staying within your budget.

- Karen Berkemeyer

Her Westport studio, located at 175 Post Road West, features over 70 different vendors, and carries the latest in cabinetry, tile, stone, countertops, and plumbing. A talented staff of five designers insures that each client receives expert personalized attention throughout each project.

From small renovations, to large scale spec homes, KB Home's projects embody their clients' personal taste, while reflecting the latest design trends. These kitchens and baths are influenced by contemporary architecture and design, using innovative materials, texture, and color.

BIG NEWS! The 3,000-square-foot Westport showroom is expanding into an adjacent building, allowing Karen Berkemeyer Home to add a beautiful bathroom annex to complement their existing tile and cabinetry showroom. Renovations will be completed in early 2019.





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Dancing with the Stars



Karen Bradbury, owner of Closet & Storage Concepts of Norwalk, is competing in Dancing with the Stars - A Gala Benefit for ElderHouse! Modeled after the popular TV show, Karen and award-winning professional dancer, Martin Goethche from Fred Astaire Dance Studio in Norwalk,, are performing in a dance competition at the Gala fundraiser being held on Saturday, March 23, 2019 at Rolling Hills Country Club in Wilton.

ElderHouse is a worthwhile not-for-profit organization that provides adult day services to older adults with aging conditions like memory loss or physical impairment, offering dignified care in a social setting, and extends much needed support to family caregivers. [n](#)

Elevator Service Company Launches Unique New Warranty

Elevator Service Company (ESCO) has just announced a 15/5 Premium Extended Material Warranty which is unique in the industry. Providing superior product protection, the 15/5 Warranty offers an unheard of 15 years of coverage for its elevators mechanical/structural equipment components and 5 years of coverage for electrical equipment components.

"No one else in our business has this type of product protection," says ESCO owner, Steven Roth.

ESCO can offer this program because of their confidence in particular quality products that they sell. The only customer obligation is to have the elevator maintained by ESCO at ESCO's regular rates. There is no cost for the 15/5 Premium Extended Material Warranty!

What's trending – Some of the latest features in elevators include glass and metal view lifts, pneumatic elevators and key fobs to call an elevator remotely.

"Vertical transportation is not based on need in most instances, but on the desire for convenience," says ESCO owner,



Steve Roth. "Moving seasonal items or luggage or golf clubs into the attic or basement; homes in flood prone areas with necessarily elevated entries; older parents living with their children; or empty nesters wanting the ability to age in place, are all motivators for a home elevator. In fact, ESCO has installed 23 elevators in Eric Santini's Deer Valley rental community in Ellington.

"All we need is (all dimensions sheet-rock to sheetrock) 50 ½" wide x 54" deep to accommodate a wheelchair. The dimensions yield a 36" X 48" cab. Note, elevator cabs are usually customized to the needs of the client and, by code, can be up to 15 sq. ft. clear inside cab dimensions. An elevator is always preferred over a dumbwaiter since the footprint is

only nominally less than an elevator and doesn't allow for a person to be transported. A typical dumbwaiter requires a 36" wide x 36" deep shaft yielding a 30" wide x 30" deep x 36" high cab," said Roth.

According to architect Kaali Nagy, "A spec home will sell faster if it has a home elevator."

Builder Rob Michaud sells spec homes in Fairfield at \$1-2 million, and he plans a home elevator with ESCO in every home he builds. ESCO provides the engineering for elevator pit and wall blocking, and Rob and Marc Michaud frame out the shaft at rim joists for each floor. They sit doors exactly where they need to be on each floor and put in the electrical line. If a homebuyer wants a home elevator, all they have to do is take out the closet floor and ceiling.

"Whatever is in your mind's eye, we can offer technologically advanced, high quality equipment that is stylish, dependable and cost effective. And then offer a substantial 15/5 Premium Extended Material Warranty to round out the entire package," says Steven Roth. [n](#)

FAIRFIELD COUNTY HBRA NEWS

This January, the HBRA of Fairfield County launched a membership drive where current members can invite new members to join at a reduced price of \$395 for their first year. Never offered before, the association hopes to draw in new businesses in the industry, especially young builders and companies looking to grow. Currently at 463 members, the HBRA has seen a spike of over 40 new members in the last 2 months. Now is certainly the time to join! Benefits of membership include eligibility for prestigious awards, discounts & rebates, business development, education & certification courses, legislative advocacy in Hartford and Washington, DC and a variety of great events. Call the office for more information at 203.335.7008 or visit the website at www.buildfairfieldcounty.com.



HBRA EASTERN CT NEWS

On Saturday, November 17th, the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Eastern Connecticut celebrated its Annual Gala & Awards Ceremony at the Mystic Marriott Hotel and Spa in Groton, Connecticut. Nearly 200 attendees gathered for fun, food, induction of the 2019 Board of Directors, and awards.

As the organization rolled out the evening, HBRAECT 2019-2020 President Craig D. Caulkins said that the night was about taking a step back to recognize the accomplishments of its members, and their contributions to the community.

"It's about celebrating the industry," said Caulkins, who noted that the economic gloom of years past is fading. "The industry is booming and now we focus on bringing new, qualified employees to our industry," which is one of his initiatives for the upcoming year.

Caulkins, a 30-year business owner, (Caulkins Design & Building), is no stranger to the challenges facing the industry. As Connecticut's top employers struggle to fill job openings with skilled labor, this also affects small businesses throughout the building industry, Caulkins added that workforce development is a crucial objective for the HBRAECT. "We will be working to implement a long-term strategy to promote construction and trade careers throughout Eastern CT."

The HBRAECT formally installed President Craig D. Caulkins and his Board of Directors for 2019-2020. The board consists of Pete Battaglio, Vice President, Gail Grillo, Associate Vice President, Beth Glynn, Secretary, Jim Williams, Treasurer, Diana Buscetto, Chuck Gimbut, Ev Hyde, Anant Joshi, Rico Mastro-nunzio, Matt Mularski, David Preka, Mark Spinnato, Kathleen Stauffer, Melissa Welch and Nort Wheeler.



L-R David Preka, outgoing President, Craig Caulkins 2019 & 2020 President

Several awards were presented throughout the evening including Richard Wildermuth of Connecticut Valley Homes who won Builder of the Year. Matt Ostrowski, Creative Enclosures, won Remodeler of the Year. Gail Grillo, Marvel Home Decorating, won Associate of the Year. Diana Buscetto and Debbie Yother, Sava Insurance Group, won Volunteer of the Year.



L-R Richard Wildermuth, Catherine Taylor, and Craig Caulkins



L-R Matt Ostrowski and Nort Wheeler



L-R David Preka and Gail Grillo



L-R Debbie Yother and Diana Buscetto

The HBRAECT believes that home ownership is essential in building communities. "At the end of the day," said Caulkins, "we are all working to help people realize the dream of home ownership."

For additional information about the HBRAECT, visit HBRAECT.COM.



HBRA OF CENTRAL CT NEWS

HBRA of Central Connecticut Annual Awards Night honors outstanding members, and this year was the kick off of our 75th anniversary celebration year! We had over 170 in attendance that evening at the Wethersfield Country Club.



IRVING STICH AWARD: **HOUSING HALL OF FAME:**

Johnny Carrier,
By Carrier



Lou Tagliatela,
Franklin Construction



BUILDER OF THE YEAR: **ASSOCIATE OF THE YEAR:**

Nick Uccello,
Uccello Development

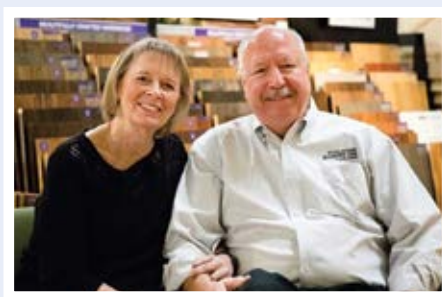


Joel Grossman,
Calcagni Real Estate



REMODELER OF THE YEAR:

Bill Gozzo,
Gozzo Design & Remodel



PRESIDENT'S AWARD:

Steve & Mickey Dalene,
Dalene Flooring Carpet One



PRESIDENT'S AWARD:

George LaCava,
Trilacon Development

Election of Central CT HBRA Directors 2019-2020

- ▶ **Ted Brown**, Valley & Aetna Building Products
- ▶ **Greg Chandler**, Gold Shield Construction
- ▶ **Garrett Cook**, Cyclone Home Systems
- ▶ **Linda Cote**, Webster Bank & HBRA Charitable Foundation
- ▶ **Suzy Couture**, Superior Builders of Manchester
- ▶ **Rich Dalene**, Dalene Flooring
- ▶ **David Director**, Connecticut Lighting Centers
- ▶ **Tim Freeland**, Freeland Bros. Construction
- ▶ **Matt Gilchrist**, EG Homes
- ▶ **Kevin Goff**, Oxford Lumber – Political Affairs
- ▶ **Bill Gozzo**, Gozzo Design & Remodel
- ▶ **Joel Grossman**, Calcagni Real Estate
- ▶ **Brian Liistro**, LICO Group Corp.,
- ▶ **Drew Liljedahl**, Liljedahl Bros.
- ▶ **Rob Mannarino**, Mannarino Builders
- ▶ **Dan Morgan**, Morgan Contracting
- ▶ **Larry Newquist**, Newquist Building Company
- ▶ **Chip Poehnert**, Liberty Bank

Joint meeting with Conn-OSHA

On January 15, we held a joint meeting with Conn-OSHA called “Marijuana & Opioids in the Workplace 2019”. David Jaffe, NAHB VP of Construction Liability presented to a group of over 80 attendees. This was held at CT Dept of Labor in Wethersfield. David Jaffe in the pink shirt is next to John Able from Conn-OSHA..



The Perfect Window For an Award Winning Builder



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Congratulations to Nick Uccello, 2019 BUILDER OF THE YEAR!

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2019 Builder of the Year award from the Central CT HBRA.
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HBA NORTHWEST NEWS

Our annual Legislative Meeting, co-hosted by the HBA of Northwest CT and the Litchfield County Board of Realtors, was held on January 28th at Chatterley's Banquet Facility in Torrington. HBRA of CT CEO Jim Perras attended, along with a number of Litchfield County legislators and realtors.



President Tim Bobroske, staff member Mary Anne Sok, Executive Officer Sheila Leach and Legislative Chairman Steve Temkin



HBRA of CT CEO Jim Perras, Rep. David Wilson (66th district Litchfield), Rep. Jay Case (63rd Winsted), 1st Vice Chair of NAHB Greg Ugalde, Senator Henri Martin (31st Bristol), Rep. Bill Simanski (62nd Granby), Senator Craig Miner (30th Litchfield), Senator Kevin Witkos (8th Canton) and Rep. John Piscopo (76th Thomaston).



Chris Nelson, President of the HBRA of CT, Andrew Ugalde and Eugene Farley (Torrington Lumber Co.)



Rosalee Fanelli, Legislative Committee Chairman of the Litchfield County Board of Realtors, Kristine Newell, President of the Litchfield County Board of Realtors, Rep. David Wilson from Litchfield (66th District), Greg Ugalde, Brenda Davis and Alan Temkin



Tom and Deborah Carey (Thomas Custom Builders) with State Representative Jay Case from Winsted (63rd District).

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