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*Center Spread*

**Economist links  
regulation, high  
housing costs**

Nobel prize-winning economist and *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman blames over-regulation for high housing costs that are driving people out of the Northeast.

*Page 28*

**Are children really  
a liability?**

Most municipalities contend that families with children have a negative economic impact. A Bryant University study scheduled for release in March will examine that assertion.

*Page 23*

**Solarize R.I.  
seeks contractors**

Town by town, this new public-private partnership is attracting home owners and businesses to sign up for solar installations, and more contractors are needed.

*Page 2*

**New funding  
source for builders**

The EB-5 Visa Program has come to Rhode Island and could be a prime funding source for development.

*Page 24*



**Carpentry students at the Providence Career and Technical Academy stand proudly by a section of the Home Showcase they are building for the Rhode Island Home Show, slated for March 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> at the Rhode Island Convention Center. Story on page 9.**

## RIBA member finds IBS an invaluable experience

"Any RIBA member who doesn't attend the International Builders Show (IBS) is missing a unique opportunity to network and learn."

That was the comment from Robert J. Baldwin, one member of the Rhode Island Builders Association who attended the annual event, held in Las Vegas this year.

"The 2015 IBS was great. There was a lot to see and a lot to learn, and there was much better attendance than in recent years," Mr. Baldwin continued.

In fact, some 125,000 housing industry profes-

sionals packed the aisles at Design & Construction Week™, which ran from January 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> and included the IBS, the major exposition and educational event sponsored by the National Association of Home Builders each year.

Now in its second year, Design & Construction Week also included the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show, the International Window Coverings Expo, the International Surface Event and the Las Vegas Market.

*see IBS...page 29*

## Popular solar-installation program moving town by town

# Solarize Rhode Island invites contractor bids

By Paul F. Eno Editor

Solarize Rhode Island is out to convince as many state residents as possible to install solar arrays to meet a portion of their energy needs, one town at a time.

That's the report from Susan AnderBois, energy planning and policy manager at the state's Office of Energy Resources (OER), and she encourages qualified local contractors to consider bidding to be solar installers as the program progresses.

Solarize carried out a pilot program in November and December: Solarize North Smithfield, and the response was big. Over 80 property owners in that town signed up for solar installations through the program.

"Solarize North Smithfield ended on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Now our pilot program moves on to Tiverton and Little Compton," Ms. AnderBois told *The Rhode Island Builder Report*.

"In North Smithfield, there was more demand than we expected. In total, 84 residents and small businesses signed up for systems during the program's eight and a half weeks. That's about 2 percent of North Smithfield customers and amounts to over 600 kilowatts," she added. "It was great to see such interest."

The Tiverton and Little Compton programs were launched on January 26<sup>th</sup>, and people there have until May 8<sup>th</sup> to sign up for installations.

Solarize Rhode Island is a public-private partnership involving the state Office of Energy Resources (OER), Commerce RI and its Renewable Energy Fund, the SmartPower® national marketing organization, National Grid, and municipalities where the Solarize Rhode Island program is offered. OER, Commerce RI and SmartPower administer the program together, according to Ms. AnderBois.

She said that similar programs have been

"very successful" in Massachusetts and Connecticut, covering over 90 municipalities in those states.

Before the campaign begins in a given municipality, Solarize holds an education-

al and sign-up forum for residents interested in the program.

"For Solarize North Smithfield, we had RSVPs from 30 people, and 126 showed

see *SOLARIZE...* page 29

## How to become a solar installer

Contractors licensed to do solar installations may participate in the bidding process to be installers for the Solarize Rhode Island program. Installers are chosen by participating towns through a competitive bidding process administered by Commerce RI. Each town chooses its own installer for the program.

Solarize Rhode Island plans informational sessions for stakeholders, including solar installers, and these will be announced in *The Rhode Island Builder Report* and on the RIBA Facebook page. Anyone interested in being placed on the e-mail notification list for the meetings may contact Sue AnderBois at the state Office of Energy Resources (OER) at (401) 574-9108 or [sue.anderbois@energy.ri.gov](mailto:sue.anderbois@energy.ri.gov).

Requests for proposals (RFPs) as part of the Solarize Rhode Island bidding process can be viewed on the Commerce RI (<http://commerceri.com>) and OER ([www.energy.ri.gov](http://www.energy.ri.gov)) websites.

## How to get licensed

During its 2014 session, with the support of the Rhode Island Builders Association, the General Assembly passed two major pieces of legislation of interest to contractors who work with or want to work with renewable energy.

With the enactment of H 8200 Sub A, any registered contractor who obtains a certificate as a Renewable Energy Professional may install photovoltaics. There is a stipulation that certain work be performed by licensed electricians and/or plumbers.

Lawmakers also created the Renewable Energy Growth Program, establishing a five-year platform to finance solar and other "distributed-generation" projects, including those for private homes. Under the measures, H 7727 and S 2690, the program will make projects self-funding by selling back to National Grid the excess power generated by home and commercial systems.

A bill sponsor, Rep. Deborah Ruggiero (D-Jamestown) was quoted as saying that the program will quadruple the number of renewable energy projects in Rhode Island and open up a significant homeowner solar market in the state.

The program also is expected to generate jobs for contractors who obtain the Renewable Energy Professional (REP) certification. As of this writing, six Rhode Island contractors had earned their certification. For information, visit [www.ENERGY.ri.gov/renewable/REP/BOX](http://www.ENERGY.ri.gov/renewable/REP/BOX).





## Board hears good RIBA financial review



**Local Director Louis Cotoia distributes materials as Kevin Huntley of Restivo Monacelli addresses the Board of Directors.**

A healthy financial position for the Rhode Island Builders Association, and one that continues to improve, was a primary message at a brief Board of Directors meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Kevin Huntley of the accounting firm Restivo Monacelli reported on the annual review of RIBA's finances.

In other business, Legislative Committee Co-Chairman Robert J. Baldwin outlined the priorities for RIBA's state advocacy for the remainder of the 2015 legislative session. *See page 22.*

Executive Director John Marcantonio, Home Show Committee Chairman Ronald J. Smith and committee member Louis Cotoia reported on preparations for the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Home Show in March. Mr. Cotoia stressed that volunteers are needed for setup for the show and take-down afterward. *See page 9.*

Regarding RIBA's educational benefits, Mr. Marcantonio noted that the program is expanding and that classes are increasingly well attended.

The board meeting was brief in order to accommodate an Open House and Networking Night that evening at RIBA headquarters. *See page 6.*

### **DEADLINES FOR THE APRIL ISSUE**

**All copy, ads and photos must be to us by**

# **Friday, March 6**

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# LOOKING AHEAD!

♦ **March 5-8: 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Home Show** - Sponsored by RIBA at the Rhode Island Convention Center. *Details on page 9.*

**March 18-21: JLC Live Conference and Trade Show for New England Builders** - Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence. Free admission to the exhibit hall for RIBA members registering online with the promo code. Register at [www.JLCLive.com](http://www.JLCLive.com).

*Details and promo code in the Featured Products and Services Special Section, Page 7.*

♦ **March 24: 4-Hour Lead Safe Refresher Class** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. FREE for members, with a \$15 materials charge. \$75 for non-members, with a \$15 materials charge. To register, logon to [RIBUILDERS.org](http://RIBUILDERS.org), and click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy, [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

*Details on page 21.*

♦ **March 25-26: OSHA 10-Hour Course** - 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day at RIBA headquarters. Course is FREE for members with a \$30 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$30 materials/registration fee. For more information and to register, logon to [RIBUILDERS.org](http://RIBUILDERS.org), and click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy, [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on Page 21.*

♦ **Spring Classes TBA:** OSHA Toolbox Talks, another OSHA 10-Hour Course, Code Classes, Classes in Spanish. *Watch for more information.*

**April 22: Spring Construction Forecast Webinar** - 1 to 3 p.m. Sponsored by the National Association of Home Builders, with housing economists David Crowe and Samuel Khater. Get a big-picture view of the housing, labor and credit markets for the rest of 2015 and beyond. NAHB members: \$29.95, non-members \$49.95. Register at [www.NAHB.org](http://www.NAHB.org) or call (202) 266-8338.

♦ **June 11: Networking Barbecue** - Sponsored by Boston Cedar. Free for members and non-members.

♦ **August 7: RIBA 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Clambake** - Noon to 8 p.m., Francis Farm, Rehoboth, Mass. The Rhode Island Builders Association's biggest social event of the year, with great food, contests, networking and fun. Sponsorships are available and will be used entirely to reduce the ticket price. Major sponsors will be provided with exhibit space. *Watch for more information.*

♦ **September 4: RIBA's Annual Golf Classic** - Warwick Country Club. *Watch for more information.*

***More information, registration and payment for most  
RIBA events is available at [RIBUILDERS.org](http://RIBUILDERS.org).***

♦ Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.



# President's Message



Roland J. Fiore

## Naturally affordable housing: We can do this!

Recent statistics from the Rhode Island Association of Realtors® (RIAR) tell a story that any member of the Rhode Island Builders Association already knows: The housing market in this state is flat unless your clients are millionaires: The market for homes \$1 million and up is just fine.

According to RIAR, the median home price in Rhode Island last year was \$215,000, the highest in six years. At the same time, home sales were stagnant, up only 0.25 percent from 2013. And home inventory remained low overall, which indicates that when demand does rise, so will prices.

This means that we've started a new year with an old problem: the lack of a new, market-rate housing supply in Rhode Island. When I say market-rate, I'm referring to houses built at prices that the average person can afford. But this is hard to do in most places in Rhode Island.

Why? It really comes down to our state's locally regulated cost structure, and addressing that may be the key to providing housing at a naturally affordable price, with less need for subsidies.

So how do we get there? Well, we work together to resolve cost and time issues: Permitting, development-process approvals, codes, infrastructure assistance to towns for water and sewer projects, increased density and planning that allows for growth while preserving sound environmental stewardship.

Sounds like a lot of work to do, but if we work together, it really wouldn't take that long.

Lastly, when we talk about the "big picture" in housing, it requires us to change our views on families, as too many of us see children as a liability. We must recognize them for what they are – an economic asset and our future! Providing housing for them is one of the best plans we could devise and implement.



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# RIBA open house draws crowd

It was truly a BIG evening at the Rhode Island Builders Association's East Providence headquarters on Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, as the RIBA Board of Directors and the association's subsidiary, the Builders Insurance Group (BIG), welcomed members and non-members for the first Open House and Networking Night of 2015.

The free event, featuring pizza, calzones, wine, beer and other refreshments, drew over 50 people.

The board held a brief meeting before the Open House, then greeted visitors, who had the chance to mingle, enjoy the refreshments, learn about RIBA, its services and benefits, and to meet the staff.

Attendees also learned about the full line

of targeted insurance products that BIG has to offer members. Those interested in BIG's products are encouraged to contact BIG directly. Find out more or get a quote by calling Joyce Therrien at BIG, (401) 438-4BIG (438-4244). For online information, visit [www.BuilderInsGroup.com](http://www.BuilderInsGroup.com).

BIG also introduced two new brokers: Charles Lowe and Michelle Soares. Both have decades of insurance experience.

Attendees also learned about the many other benefits of RIBA membership. Find out more about membership by calling (401) 438-7400, or visit [www.RIBuilders.org](http://www.RIBuilders.org).



*RIBA's networking events are great ways to learn about your trade association and its many valuable member benefits, but also to make connections with others in the industry. Be sure to bring your non-member colleagues to find out about RIBA!*

**-Executive Director  
John Marcantonio**

The Rhode Island

**builder** report

Official publication of the  
Rhode Island Builders Association  
since 1951

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*The Rhode Island Builder Report*

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**Members and guests gather at Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters on February 3<sup>rd</sup> to network, enjoy gourmet pizza and learn more about the association's many member benefits. The Builders Insurance Group's brokers, Joyce Therrien, Charles Lowe and Michelle Soares, were on hand to answer questions about the RIBA subsidiary's targeted insurance products.**



► Paul McDonald of Atlas Construction, right, chats with Neil Silva of 8T5 Studio.



◀ Jim Deslandes of Deslandes Construction, left, with Arnold Lumber Co. Sales Manager Bruce Charleson.

► From left, RIBA Education Coordinator Sheila McCarthy and Membership Services Coordinator Elise Geddes welcome Andrea Latifi of Admirals Bank.



◀ From left, Carol O'Donnell of CRM Modular Homes meets up with Mark and Carol Carter of Carriage House Custom Homes.



▲ Cheryl Boyd of Arnold Lumber, left, and Ally Maloney of Maloney Interiors.



▲ Executive Director John Marcantonio welcomes Rob Wenhold of ABC Supply Co.



# Boyd wins PWB top regional recruiting award

Cheryl Boyd, marketing manager at Arnold Lumber Co., Inc. and past president of the Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council (PWB), received top national honors at the International Builders Show (IBS) in January.

Ms. Boyd received the Spike Award for Top Recruiter, Region A, from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) PWB. Region A includes Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and Vermont.

The award is a \$300 scholarship from the national PWB Building Hope Scholarship Fund. RIBA's PWB may present the scholarship to any college or trade school



Cheryl Boyd

student in a course of study related to the housing industry, or a student enrolled in continuing education classes in the building industry.

PWB is the premier professional organization that provides strategies and solutions for professional women in the building industry. It offers publications, awards, scholarships, seminars and programs, and it offers women in the building industry

the professional advantage necessary to excel and succeed.

Members include women who are RIBA/NAHB members (builders, associates, affiliates) and women who are affiliated with a RIBA/NAHB member (including employees, spouses and extended family).

Members also receive well deserved recognition for their contributions to the homebuilding industry and to home own-

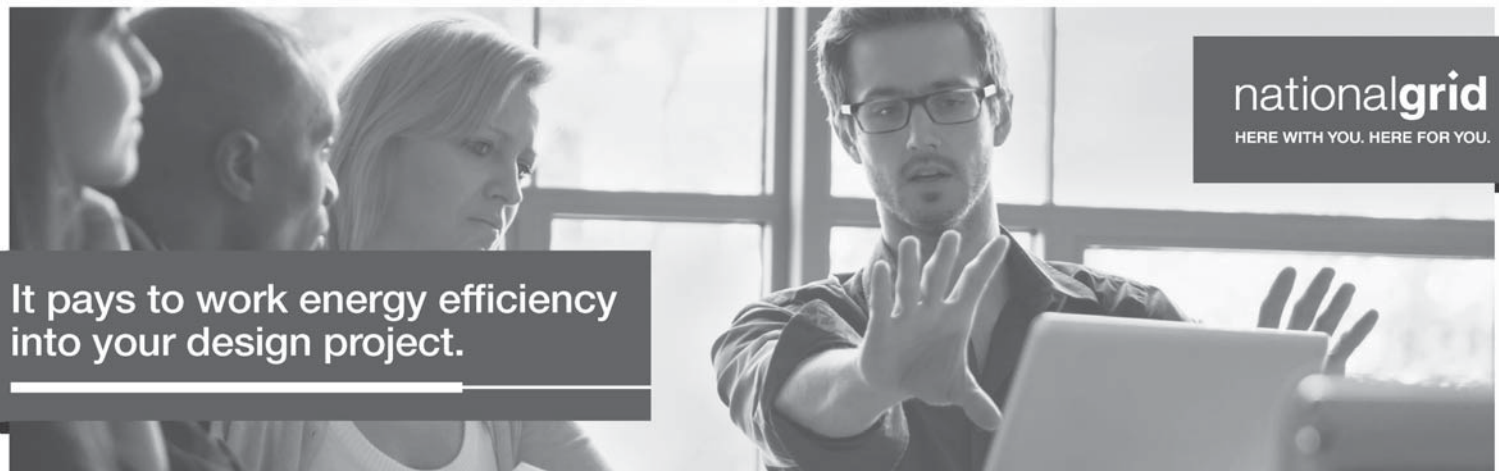
ership.

PWB provides direct service to the general RIBA membership through education and training programs that focus on professional and leadership development, networking opportunities and industry-related information.

The PWB recognizes its role in supporting the overall building industry by mobilizing its membership to assist efforts spearheaded by local, state and national builders associations.

To find out more about the PWB, visit [www.RIBuilders.org](http://www.RIBuilders.org) or contact President Tracey Boyajian at [tboyajian@abcleads.com](mailto:tboyajian@abcleads.com) or (401) 471-6115.

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*There are still last-minute opportunities to exhibit*

# The Home Show is here!

**WHEN:** March 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>  
**WHERE:** Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence  
**FOR INFORMATION AND TO OBTAIN EXHIBIT SPACE:** Contact John Marcantonio or Elizabeth Carpenter at RIBA, (401) 438-7400.



Visitors and exhibitors alike can look forward to a great experience at the Rhode Island Builders Association's 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Home Show in March, the biggest and best in southern New England, with new features and attractions for all.

And there's still time to exhibit: Surveys overwhelmingly indicate that Home Show visitors want to see more contractors and suppliers they can talk to at the show.

Meanwhile, carpentry students at the Providence Career and Technical Academy are working hard to finish the structure for the unique Interior Design Showcase. This central attraction will be joined by The Tiny House, showing just how much homeowners can do with today's trends toward "living small." And there will be three amazing landscapes to walk through, courtesy of the Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association.

The Rhode Island Lumber and Building Materials Dealers Association (RILBMDA) has generously donated all the materials. Visitors will be able to stroll through the showcase and see custom-designed, multiple-room settings featuring Cabot House furniture.

There will be plenty to see at this year's Energy Expo, sponsored by National Grid and the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources. Students from the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center are building the structures for those exhibits.

On exhibit will be everything for the home, from interior and exterior décor, design and remodeling ideas, furniture and even landscaping in all sizes and shapes. All this, along with educational seminars, cooking demonstrations by Chef Terranova and some cool activities for kids.

So, regardless of how large or small your business might be, there's still time to reserve your exhibit space. RIBA members can exhibit at a discount for the whole show or for just one day at the RIBA-sponsored

contractor pavilion, which will help new exhibitors "get their feet wet."

"First-time contractor exhibitors will have the option to rent space for a day rather than committing to the whole four-day show," explained RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio. "There's still time to contact us about exhibiting, especially if you want to get in on the new RIBA Contractor Pavilion, but hurry!" Mr. Marcantonio said.




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# Past President Roland Ferland, 86

Roland O. Ferland, president of the Rhode Island Builders Association from 1964-1965, passed away on December 11<sup>th</sup> at the Epoch Assisted Living Center, Providence. He was 86.

Born in Pawtucket, Mr. Ferland came from a family that has been a pillar of RIBA since the association's earliest years, providing two other presidents in addition to himself. He graduated from St. Raphael Academy and attended Providence College and the University of Rhode Island.

Very active in community and trade organizations, Mr. Ferland belonged to the National Housing Hall of Fame (the only Rhode Islander, inducted in 1990), the Fannie Mae Advisory Council, the Housing America Foundation, the Build-PAC political action committee, the National Association of Home Builders and the fed-



eral Standing Committee on Government Affairs, in addition to RIBA. He was an incorporator of the Pawtucket Institution for Savings and the Pawtucket Board of Realtors®.

Mr. Ferland became president when RIBA was still the Home Builders Association of Rhode Island, and he helped solidify its position as the voice of the residential construction industry in the state. Under his leadership, the association moved into new headquarters at the Biltmore Hotel in Providence. He also built lasting relationships with planning boards, town officials and the Rhode Island Development Council.

"A new spirit prevails...greater cooperation among members.... There is no doubt we're on the move!" Mr. Ferland commented in 1964.

see **FERLAND...**page 29



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## Modern Yankee wins 'Best of Houzz'

Modern Yankee Builders has been awarded "Best of Houzz" for Design by Houzz.com, an online platform for home remodeling and design.

According to a statement from Houzz.com, the 15-year-old design/build remodeling company, based in Cumberland, was chosen "by the more than 25 million monthly unique users that comprise the Houzz community from among more than 500,000 active home building, remodeling and design industry professionals."

"Our design/build process has always been about developing the best solution for each unique client, so it's validating to have won awards for both customer satisfaction and for design work," says Modern Yankee Builders President Joseph C. Cracco.

For more information, visit [www.HOUZZ.com/pro/joseph-cracco/modern-yankee-builders](http://www.HOUZZ.com/pro/joseph-cracco/modern-yankee-builders).



Joseph C. Cracco



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### Member Profile: Ann Clark of Ann Clark Architects

# She makes the old new again

By Paul F. Eno Editor

Turning the old into the new is nothing new for Ann Clark. But doing so in New England is somewhat more challenging that it was in her native Chicago, where she has spent most of her career as an architect.

“‘Old’ in Chicago is 100 or 120 years. But much of the city was destroyed in the Chicago Fire of 1871, so it’s rare to find buildings any older than that. Most of the city was rebuilt,” Ann says.

“But when I came to New England, I found working on these 200-year-old-plus homes an challenge and a treat!”

Ann found one such treat in the 6,500-square-foot, 200-year-old Eliza Ward House at Benefit and George Streets in Providence.

“It was a rare adventure to work on a centuries-old home with a full history of owners,” she states. “This lovely house had been neglected for the previous 50 years.”

There’s a portfolio of photos on Ann’s blog at [www.AnnClarkArch.com](http://www.AnnClarkArch.com).

So how did this Midwestern girl get into architecture in the first place, never mind bridge the gulf from the Windy City to Providence? The answers to both questions reside in a trip to Boston to visit a friend.

Born and raised in Chicago, Ann always loved art and being an artist.

“My parents advised against trying to make art my career, for obvious reasons,” she remembers.

So off Ann went to Duke University in North Carolina to study German and economics, emerging with her undergraduate degree in 1982. But once back in Chicago, her identity crisis hit.

“I still loved art, but I wasn’t even thinking about architecture. I



Ann Clark

managed to land a job with an art magazine, so off I went to New York City.”

One day she headed to Boston to visit a friend who had recently moved there.

“As we walked around Boston and admired the buildings, old and new, a light suddenly went on. Architecture! I’m good at math and science. I can do this!”

Ann used her art portfolio when applying for the architecture school at the University of Pennsylvania. So there she was in 1986, an architect. Then came marriage, family and an architectural firm in Chicago, which she operated with her husband for many years. But she never forgot New England and that trip to Boston.

“Both my children are artists, and my son’s attendance at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) helped me become familiar with Providence,” she recalls.

When her son graduated in 2013, he stayed in Providence, so did Ann, and so did Ann Clark Architects.

Now, happily settled on College Hill but still with an office in Chicago, Ann handles all kinds of restoration and construction, wherever that work might take her. This includes a 4,000-square-foot log cabin, built in 1927, which Ann turned into a community center in Illinois, and an old tire warehouse that became a luxurious, 7,500-square-foot residence in North Carolina.

Then there’s Haiti, where in 2009 Ann teamed up with college classmate Dr. Paul Farmer, the well-known anthropologist and physician, to build the Mirebalais National Teaching Hospital with his organization, Partners in Health.

“This turned into a larger project because the earthquake hit a year later, and we had to accommodate the needs from that,” Ann says. “But the hospital today is state-of-the-art, not just for Haiti but for the entire Caribbean.”

It was at a Providence Chamber of Commerce reception where Ann first heard about the Rhode Island Builders Association. Before you know it, she was in touch with Executive Director John Marcantonio, and she joined in January.

“I joined because I want to meet people in the industry here. I want to do more work in New England. Chicago has nothing else around it, but here there are so many places close by, with so much history and culture!”



### **Ann Clark Architects**

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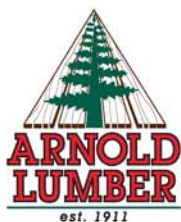
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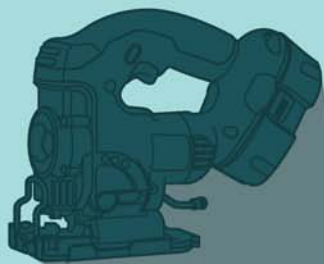
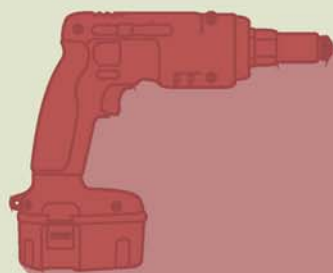
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## Lead licensing refresher

### March 24

**WHEN:** Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

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

**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$30 materials charge. A \$75 charge for non-members and a \$30 materials charge.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** March 17<sup>th</sup>.

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org), click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Elizabeth Carpenter at [ecarpenter@ribuilders.org](mailto:ecarpenter@ribuilders.org) or Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a four-hour refresher class with Sharon & John Barr of Lead Safe RI. It's meant for contractors who have their lead renovator/remodeler license and whose license is up for renewal or has expired within the prior six months.

OSHA has been emphasizing lead enforcement on residential jobsites lately, so don't neglect to ensure that your lead license is up to date!

The class will review lead-hazard controls and update attendees on any changes to regulations since they were issued their licenses.

## OSHA-10 Course

### March 25-26

**WHEN:** Wednesday & Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day.

**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy., East Providence

**COST:** FREE for members with a \$30 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$30 materials/registration fee.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** March 20<sup>th</sup>

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org), click on any of these events under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Scott Asprey of Risk & Safety Management will take participants through the OSHA 10-Hour Certification Course, which provides training in compliance with the Dept. of Labor & Training's municipal jobsite rules.

The course trains safety directors, foremen and field employees in OSHA standards and highlights major safety concerns so that jobsite accidents can be reduced. Everyone completing the course will receive a copy of the OSHA Standard 29 CFR Part 1926 and an OSHA-10 certification card.



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# RIBA's legislative agenda...



**Steven Carlino**

As we approach the middle of the 2015 General Assembly session, the meat-and-potatoes of the Rhode Island Builders Association's advocacy activities for the year are right in front of us. We have several prime legislative priorities.

Among these is re-submission of the "Spec and Rehab" bill, which would eliminate any local inventory tax on new residential construction, and would prevent a tax on improvements to foreclosed properties.

In addition, we will continue to work for permitting reform, and a good bill based on the work of the Legislative Task Force on Wetland and OWTS Setbacks for single statewide standards in this arena.

Other target areas for us are impact fees, phaseout of cesspools, fair health-care policies for self-employed contractors, and independent contractor definitions.

Of course, in all these areas, we need the support of every RIBA member! If you're not familiar with these issues, please contact

RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400. He has all the information you'll need.

Then, contact your local senator and representative to stress the importance of these measures for your business and the Rhode Island economy.

Opinions mean a lot more to them when they come from constituents!

### Deborah Gist

In the matter of career and technical education (CTE), which RIBA considers crucial to Rhode Island's economic future, we are sorry to bid *adieu* to a great supporter on CTE reform: Deborah Gist, who will be the new superintendent of schools in her hometown of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Dr. Gist worked closely with us on CTE reform, resulting in enactment of the landmark reform that is currently in process. A tremendous supporter of CTE reform and workforce training, she worked very diligently to improve them. We are disappointed to see her go, but we wish her the best in Tulsa!



**Robert J. Baldwin**

## RIBA's Legislative Committee

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**Robert J. Baldwin, Co-Chairman**  
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# Bryant University report on economic impact of children expected in March

By Paul F. Eno Editor

Are families with children a financial liability or an asset to a community?

As we went to press, a landmark report on that subject was being prepared by the Center for Global and Regional Economic Studies at Bryant University.

Authored by two economists, Dr. Edinaldo Tebaldi and Dr. Jongsung Kim, the report, entitled *The Economic Impact of School-Age Population Loss on Rhode Island's Economy*, will be the first formal academic study on this question, a crucial one for residential growth policy in Rhode Island and elsewhere.



Dr. Edinaldo Tebaldi

"An important issue in the overall discussion on housing is municipalities' decades-old contention that families with children are a drain on services, especially schools," said John Marcantonio, executive director of the Rhode Island Builders Association.

"Our goal is to find out what the true facts are on this. If children are a liability to a community, it will mean the state has to do more. If children are a financial asset, and many of us believe they are, then housing needs to be looked at differently," Mr. Mar-

cantonio added.

RIBA and HousingWorks RI commissioned the Bryant University study. A final version of the study is expected in March.



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# EB-5 Visa Program: New funding source for R.I. development

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

There could be significant opportunities for local builders and developers in a combined immigration and investment program that has been popular in other parts of the country but is only now being actively promoted in Rhode Island.

The EB-5 Visa Program, created in its current form by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) in 2011, is now being facilitated here by the RIEB-5 Regional Center, which pairs foreign investors with local projects that create full-time jobs for Americans. In return, the foreign investors receive a U.S. permanent resident visa ("green card") for themselves and their immediate families.

The required minimum investment is usually \$1 million. But because Rhode Island is a federally-designated "targeted-employment area" because of high unemployment, the minimum investment is \$500,000, according to John Cronin, CEO of RIEB-5.

EB-5 stands for "employment-based, 5<sup>th</sup> preference." The "preference" level is a complex system for designating what foreign investors are investing in, and its intended result – in this case, more jobs for Americans.

## *The 'multiplier effect'*

The key to the EB-5 program for builders and developers is the "multiplier effect," according to Mr. Cronin.

"New construction projects not only supply jobs for construction workers. They bring in new residents who will patronize local businesses, pay taxes and otherwise support the economy on a permanent basis. This is all figured into how many jobs a project will create," Mr. Cronin said.

The EB-5 program is administered through the regional centers, which are private, for-profit investment companies that partner with government to bring together local projects and foreign investors. Along with USCIS, RIEB-5's partners include Commerce RI, the City of Warwick, the Rhode Island Dept. of Labor & Training, the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association and the Polaris Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

"This very much involves the real estate and residential construction industries also. Not only are there potential development projects, but workers attracted to Rhode Island by other projects we facilitate will need places to live," Mr. Cronin said.

To qualify for the EB-5 Visa Program, a foreign investor must pass a background check. Then, USCIS must determine that the funds for the investment "come from a legitimate and lawful



John Cronin

source." The investor must present evidence that traces the funds through bank transfers and other documentation, from the investor directly to the enterprise. There also must be evidence of a "qualifying financial background" for at least the last five years as defined by USCIS.

Once the investor is approved and the investment delivered, the regional center that facilitated it will monitor the direct and indirect jobs created by the investment, Mr. Cronin explained.

RIEB-5's first project is matching foreign investors with Quick Fitting Manufacturing Company (QFM), which seeks debt financing totaling \$20 million to build a state-of-the-art factory in Warwick. QFM designs, markets and manufactures "push connect" technology for fluid handling, fire suppression, electrical, HVAC, compressed air and inert gases.

## *Permanent jobs*

The QFM project is expected to create 680 permanent jobs.

EB-5 Visa Program projects in other parts of the country involve building hotels, senior-housing developments and golf resorts, Mr. Cronin said.

"Most investors at the moment are from China, where a lot of wealth has been generated. They are attracted by the freedom we have here. They get a green card for themselves and their families, and it's a way to bring cheap capital into the state," he added. "For builders and related trades, we might be in a position to make financing a little easier for the developer, as long as it's a job-creating enterprise."

"High net-worth immigration" programs like EB-5 are common around the world. Canada, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Hungary, Bulgaria and even small countries like Cyprus and Dominica all have them.

For more information, visit <http://rieb5rc.com/> or contact Mr. Cronin at (401) 734-9900 or [jcronin@rieb5rc.com](mailto:jcronin@rieb5rc.com).

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# CTE reform: Can R.I. bring it together?

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Key pieces are poised to turn the jigsaw puzzle of career and technical education (CTE) in Rhode Island into a single picture: A unified statewide system with participation by the private sector and jobs waiting for Rhode Island students when they graduate as skilled workers.

That is, of course, if those pieces fall into place. And there is progress to report.

## A new consultant

After successfully supporting landmark CTE reform legislation in 2014, the Rhode Island Business Coalition (RIBC) is working to help implement that reform. RIBC's subcommittee on CTE reform has recruited Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, retired assistant secretary for career, technical and adult education at the U.S. Dept. of Education, now living in Rhode Island, as a volunteer consultant for the reform process.

"Ms. Dann-Messier has offered to provide ongoing information as the reform is implemented, and she will have information ready for the first meeting of the Rhode Island Career and Technical Board of Trustees (CTBT)," reported Robert J. Baldwin, co-chairman of the Rhode Island Builders Association's Legislative Committee and a member of the RIBC working group.

"She is meeting with school superintendents, CTE administrators and instructors, and generally finding out where we are," he added.

Along with Mr. Baldwin, other members of the RIBC working group include Gary Ezovski of Lincoln Environmental Inc., William McCourt of the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association, John C. Simmons of the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council and John Gregory of the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce.

As of this writing, factors that could be slowing the reform process included everything from the weather to officials and news commentators who seemed unaware of the 2014 legislation that set the CTE re-



**A delegation from Rhode Island, including Rhode Island Builders Association members Robert J. Baldwin, John Bentz and Ronald J. Caniglia, visit the nationally acclaimed Worcester Technical High School in 2014.**

form process in motion.

The legislation created the 15-member CTBT, which will replace the State Advisory Council on Vocational Education, dormant for years. Once appointed, the CTBT will begin a year-long process of uniting the nine existing CTE programs in Rhode Island into a single program, creating partnerships with national, state and local businesses to provide internships and learning opportunities for students and, hopefully, jobs for qualified graduates.

The legislation also created a nine-member Rhode Island Career and Technical Education Trust (CTET) to oversee the not-for-profit investment trust that will fund the statewide CTE reform program.

The model for the program is the nationally acclaimed Worcester Technical High School in Massachusetts, whose success is based in part on the participation over 350 businesses from global corporations to local entrepreneurs.

The legislative deadline for the appointments by Gov. Gina Raimondo was January 30<sup>th</sup>. As of this writing, they had not been announced. The governor's staff indicated that she has been occupied with ongoing storm emergencies and will make the appointments as soon as possible.

## Lack of awareness?

Many officials and news commentators have called for a more skilled workforce, but outside the state Dept. of Education and some business groups, awareness of landmark CTE legislation seems lacking.

One example is the syndicated column by state-attorney-general-turned-news-pundit Arlene Violet for the week of January 11<sup>th</sup>, headlined "A bold team effort will ignite R.I." Ms. Violet made a sweeping call to better prepare students for the job market, but never mentioned the new CTE reform effort.

Nor did Electric Boat President Jeffrey Geiger during a recent speech in Warwick, as reported by the Associated Press, in which he called for better preparation of students for skilled jobs in Rhode Island.

"Regretfully, there seems to be little awareness about CTE reform," commented Mr. Baldwin.

"There has always been a disconnect between people in the public arena and the private sector. They all recognize the need for a connected, cohesive workforce training model, yet they all live in silos," Mr. Baldwin said. "We'll do our best to change that."

# Anna Satterfield

## Region A Field Representative

### National Association of Home Builders

*Anna Satterfield is the new National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) field representative for Region A (Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Vermont). Previously Ms. Satterfield was a recruitment specialist with Prism Inc., a recruiting firm that serves federal and commercial clients in and around Washington, D.C. She has a strong background in human resources and as a presenter. She holds a bachelor of science degree in psychology from Virginia Tech and resides in Virginia.*



**THE BUILDER: What specific training has NAHB given you?**

**SATTERFIELD:** I've been on board with the others since January, and we had a great deal of training. It was a sort of baptism by fire: a lot of information in a short time. At IBS we sat in on the NAHB board meeting and committee meetings, networked with the executive officers, and visited with members from our respective regions.

We have a more well-rounded understanding of the federation after having attending IBS.

Among the people I met was Bob Baldwin from RIBA. (Mr. Baldwin is a former RIBA president and owns Lincoln-based R.B. Homes Inc. -*Editor*).

Overall, we picked up a lot of data and met a great many people.

**THE BUILDER: What is NAHB's Regional Field Representative Program?**

**SATTERFIELD:** The program is quite new, just approved by the NAHB Board of Directors at their fall 2014 meeting. The regional field representatives started with NAHB on January 5<sup>th</sup>. After two weeks of training, we joined members and executive officers at the International Builders Show (IBS) to meet their constituents and continue learning about the NAHB federation.

The Board of Directors approved five initial hires for the program with the anticipation that it would be scaled to 10 field reps in two years and possibly 15 in three years. Each region currently has one field representative.

The purpose is to build and strengthen NAHB's relationship and partnership with state and local home builders associations (HBAs). This will involve meeting their members and staff, getting to know what they need, and making sure they know about, and are connected with, all the resources and services available through NAHB.

We want to make sure that a partnership continues to be fostered between the national and local associations.

I and the other field reps will travel and see the HBAs in their own localities, interacting with officers, staff and members at, say, membership events, meeting with the executive officer and members, attending home shows, parades of homes and other events that showcase the federation. This will help us learn what the HBAs need and also help us see the diversity among them, so we can better understand their interests and needs.

If people want to find out more, there's a report by the task force that prepared this program at [www.NAHB.org](http://www.NAHB.org).

**THE BUILDER: Each field rep has to cover very large areas of the country. Do you feel you can effectively do that?**

**SATTERFIELD:** The task force indicated having a program that was travel-heavy, roughly 40 weeks out of the year. We were all hired with that in mind. Given that there are only five regional field representatives, it's unrealistic that we'll be able to visit every HBA in our Region within the first year. The first year is really about fostering an understanding of the diversity of the HBAs - size, programs, strengths etc.

As I mentioned earlier, the task force recommended scaling this program so it really won't be at full capacity for two to three years. So with the potential of 15 reps within the next three years, smaller areas could be covered. Reps could be more specialized, depending on what the needs are or for certain issues that come up. But it will take a while to become a robust program.

**THE BUILDER: How often will you be in New England, and in Rhode Island?**

**SATTERFIELD:** I'm starting by contacting the HBAs and asking which events and meetings might be good opportunities for me to come out. It could be as simple as lunch with the executive officer and president, a local membership meeting or a home show. It will depend on what I can make happen with my calendar and the invitations I get from the local level. I won't drop in uninvited.

So if the Rhode Island Builders Association wants me to come out there for specific events, I might be there a little more often than if we weren't in contact as much.





...from previous page

**THE BUILDER: What benefits do you see for individual members in the Field Representative Program?**

**SATTERFIELD:** One of the biggest benefits is having one person, whom they know, from NAHB – someone they know they can reach out to and ask the questions they need to ask about what’s available to them. Someone who really understands what NAHB is and how it works can be very valuable to members.

Of course, anyone who belongs to an HBA automatically belongs to NAHB. There are so many member benefits that they’re difficult to boil down to one list – it’s really based on what the member might be looking for.

Along with lots of money-saving programs like Member Advantage, there are discounts on all sorts of products and services they use in their businesses every day. There’s also free legal advice, research and analysis, educational programs and professional designations, the valuable research done at the Home Builders Institute and the Home Innovation Research Labs, and the invaluable business and information members get through NAHB communications.

Along with those member benefits, there’s the power of NAHB’s advocacy. When you add up the dollar value of NAHB’s legislative victories, you’re talking real money — an average of \$6,882 per housing start for a typical home builder in 2014.

My job is to help members better understand that, and to connect them with the right people at NAHB when they need answers. They now have a direct line. So certainly the Field Representative Program itself is another benefit.

Information will be able to flow in the other direction too: from the HBAs through me and back to NAHB. I’ll be out there learning what’s affecting members, what problems are coming up in their areas, and connecting them to the right staff at NAHB.

That said, my primary point of contact will be the executive officers of the state and local HBAs. But that doesn’t mean that members shouldn’t contact me directly if they have questions or issues best answered by NAHB, especially when it comes to their member benefits.

**THE BUILDER: This goes back to the question of how one person can handle these matters in 12 states and D.C. Each state is so different, so how do you plan to keep up with the many issues and the many different housing markets? For example, at one end of Region A, Rhode Island’s housing market is mostly flat, while at the other end, Virginia’s is gangbusters.**

**SATTERFIELD:** Great question. While my role is to better understand the federation and the nuances between different groups, I’m not an expert on economics, housing markets or the like. This position, by and large, is understanding the scope and then connecting HBAs, executive officers and members to others who can help.

This is where the local and state HBAs, and individual members, come in once again. I’ll need communication from them, and I’ll have the national support as well. There are people specifically at

NAHB who can help answer questions and provide solutions and insight. But having the field reps, who are actually in the region, will be helpful because we can hopefully spot trends that may be forming and communicate those issues in a way that we haven’t been able to in a long time.

In fact, we’ll soon have a customer-relations database so we can capture our touches with the HBAs and ensure that we’re following up on items so that nothing is lost in the shuffle.

**THE BUILDER: This concerns what might be called the “chain of command.” Are there any worries that members might come to you rather than their HBA, and that the state or local group might be left out of the loop on one or another local issue?**

**SATTERFIELD:** That’s why I emphasize that the local executive officer is my primary point of contact. They will definitely be kept in the loop when it comes to information flow and the issues or concerns that I might hear.

**THE BUILDER: When it comes to dealing with so many HBAs in so many different regional economies, what core issues do you expect to deal with?**

**SATTERFIELD:** I expect that membership will be a major topic on which we’ll be able to help. This will include sharing knowledge about best practices in recruitment and retention and, as I’ve said, helping connect HBAs and members with the right NAHB resources.

Certainly I’ll be a conduit for information-sharing among HBAs, if they’re willing. This would include a strategy on a given issue that worked well in one area and might work in another.

There are common legislative issues as well, so down the line I expect that we’ll be more involved in helping to communicate advocacy issues. Thankfully, we have a team of lobbyists and personnel at NAHB who can help on a myriad of issues.

Right out of the gate, though, with such a small starting team, I don’t think that will happen for a while. For now it will be mainly communicating on the issues.

Many HBA leaders have already told me that quite a few members are unaware of what NAHB does and what their member benefits are. We’ll get that message out. As for the rest, we’ll see how the program develops.

**THE BUILDER: RIBA has a very strong Professional Women in Building Council, and also an active Remodelers Committee that hopes to become a Remodelers Council at some point. Can you assist on that level?**

**SATTERFIELD:** Something like that I’d love to hear about, and I can connect those groups with the right people at NAHB. The various councils and good governance structures for them are a major part of what NAHB does. The Field Representative Program is new, and it will be a while before I can come in and solve problems myself. But we’ll get there.

Contact Ms. Satterfield at [asatterfield@nahb.org](mailto:asatterfield@nahb.org) or (800) 368-5242, ext. 8007.



## NAHB and RIBA: Double value for your membership

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) exists to serve its members, and every member of the Rhode Island Builders Association is automatically a member of NAHB.

RIBA works for you and your business on the state and local levels, and NAHB works for you and your business in Washington. On all levels, your membership gives you legislative advocacy on crucial policy issues, excellent and unique educational programs, and outstanding networking opportunities.

In 2014, NAHB's actions on the legislative, codes, regulatory and legal fronts, as well as in other arenas, provided members an estimated savings of \$6,882 per housing start as the association resolved numerous issues affecting home builders.

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interests that could do lasting damage to the housing industry.

These national steps forward included:

- The EPA dropping its post-construction stormwater rule.
- The U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the Clean Air Act to the benefit of multifamily builders.
- The delay in implementing some Affordable Care Act requirements.
- Extending the tax deduction for mortgage insurance, which preserves new home sales.
- Extending energy tax credits to stimulate new construction and remodeling.
- Saving members money through affinity programs with companies such as General Motors, leading to millions in savings for NAHB members.

These are just a few examples of how NAHB is working to serve our members by helping to make your businesses run better and boosting your bottom line.

Visit [www.ValueofNAHB.org](http://www.ValueofNAHB.org) to learn more about these services, programs and advocacy victories and about how you can take full advantage of your NAHB membership.

Also visit [www.RIBuilders.org](http://www.RIBuilders.org) and see the *2014-2015 Member Benefit Guide* to find out about all your great benefits as a RIBA member.



## NYT columnist blames over-regulation of housing for Northeast exodus

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Americans are being pushed out of the Northeast by high housing costs exacerbated by anti-growth policies.

That's the opinion of Nobel Prize-winning economist and *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman in his August 24, 2014, column in that newspaper. The headline was "Wrong Way Nation."

While many pundits point to superior employment numbers in the Sunbelt states as the reason for people leaving the Northeast and California, Mr. Krugman disagrees.

"Population density and geography are part of the answer. For example, Los Angeles, which pioneered the kind of sprawl now epitomized by Atlanta, has run out of room and become a surprisingly dense metropolis," he writes.

Mr. Krugman cites Harvard University economist Edward Glaeser, who contends that "high housing prices in slow-growing states also owe a lot to policies that sharply limit construction."

Among these policies are limits on urban building heights, zoning that prevents higher densities in suburbs, and other policies that constrict residential development on both coasts.

"Looser regulation in the South has kept the supply of housing elastic and the cost of living low," Mr. Krugman states.

"Americans are moving to places like Texas, but, in a fundamental sense, they're moving the wrong way, leaving local economies where their productivity is high for destinations where it's lower. And the way to make the country richer is to encourage them to move back, by making housing in dense, high-wage metropolitan areas more affordable," he concludes.



## RIBA offers free job postings for members

Looking for help?

As one of the benefits of your membership in the Rhode Island Builders Association, you may place classified ads that solicit job applicants. These will appear on the RIBA website, [www.RIBuilders.org](http://www.RIBuilders.org), free of charge. They also will appear on RIBA's Facebook page.

The website listing will be posted for one month. If at the end of that time you wish to continue the ad, just ask. To place your ad, just contact Elizabeth Carpenter at the RIBA office, (401) 438-7400 or [ecarpenter@ribuilders.org](mailto:ecarpenter@ribuilders.org). Ms. Carpenter also handles member listings on [www.RIBalist.com](http://www.RIBalist.com), the free online directory, so let her know if your listing there needs changes.





## **SOLARIZE...from page 2**

up. We had to turn people away because they wouldn't fit in the room," Ms. AnderBois said.

Each municipality chooses an installer in a competitive bidding process run by Commerce RI. Once chosen, the installer provides a free site evaluation and estimate for each home or business. If the property owner so desires, the installer will apply to the state Renewable Energy Fund (REF) at Commerce RI for a grant that might cover as much as one-third of the installation cost, according to Ms. AnderBois. There also is a 30 percent federal tax credit, and paying for the rest is up to the property owner.

The reason for a single installer in each town is to create lower prices for residents through high volume, she explained.

National Grid expedites installations through its EnergyWise Home Energy Assessment Program. This helps property owners find ways to reduce their energy use before having a solar array designed. Once installed, the array feeds energy to a home's electrical system. Any extra electricity produced by the array goes back

into the grid, and National Grid reduces the property owner's bill accordingly.

Following each local Solarize program, residents and installers are surveyed about their reasons for participating and the experience they had before, during and after the installations, she stated, adding that Solarize Rhode Island holds quarterly stakeholder meetings as well.

Which towns Solarize Rhode Island will tackle next was still being decided as of this writing.


So how do people pay for these installations?

"It varies. Solarize works in conjunction with existing incentives, and there is one installer chosen for each town," Ms. AnderBois explained. "This allows for tiered

pricing: The more people who participate, the lower the price can be for everyone."

The installer for Solarize North Smithfield was RGS Energy, a large national company. The installer, chosen independently by both Tiverton and Little Compton on January 26<sup>th</sup>, is local: the Providence-based Sol Power Cooperative.

"Of course, residents can choose whatever installer they want and they can still apply for the REF grant on their own. But to get in on the lower prices offered through the Solarize program, they would have to use the installer chosen by the town."

For more information on Solarize Rhode Island, visit [www.SolarizeRI.com](http://www.SolarizeRI.com). For information on participating as an installer, see the related story on page 2. 

## **IBS...from page 1**

Official attendance for IBS was 55,237, 8 percent higher than last year. A number of Rhode Island Builders Association members attended.

More than 1,200 exhibitors filled 478,000 square feet of space with everything from the latest in kitchen and bath design to millwork and marketing services. Overall, Design & Construction Week boasted 3,750 exhibitors and 4.7 million net square feet of exhibit space.

On the show floor, exhibitors fielded questions about technologies that didn't even exist five years ago, including smart

phone-controlled home automation systems for security, lighting and entertainment that have only been available for high-end custom homes with big price tags.

Attendees crowded the aisles for a show that almost overwhelmed taxis, hotels, and restaurants in what the Las Vegas Conventions and Visitors Authority believes to be a record-setting week for visitation.


Watch for information on the 2016 IBS and Design & Construction Week, to be held once again in Las Vegas. The 2017 IBS is scheduled for Orlando, Fla.

Visit [www.BuildersShow.com](http://www.BuildersShow.com) for more information. 

## **FERLAND...from page 10**

As president of the Ferland company, he was a pioneer in bringing affordable housing to Rhode Island. He retired in the mid-1980's as president and chairman of the board.

Mr. Ferland was the husband of Arline Ferland for 61 years until her death in 2010. He leaves a son, Roland J. "Jim" Ferland, six grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews. He was the brother of the late Jeannette Casavant, Armand, Albert, Raymond, Arthur and Eugene Ferland (president of RIBA from 1986-1988).

Donations in Mr. Ferland's memory may be made to the Pawtucket Boys and Girls Club. Condolence messages may be posted at [www.DarlingtonHeroux.com](http://www.DarlingtonHeroux.com). 

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