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Building Interest in Building

Welcome to the Winter edition of Plain Builder.

If you're heading to Oklahoma for Frame Building Expo, you'll find us in booth 351. But we'll most likely be wandering around the Expo floor. Wherever you see us, please ask us about Max Builds.

Max Builds is a series of children's books designed to introduce kids to the construction trades. The official Shield Wall Media office dog decided to document his career in construction. These books are the result.

The first book is *Max Builds a Metal Roof*. The second is *Max Builds a Pole Barn*, which we'll be handing out at Frame Building Expo. We plan to release one

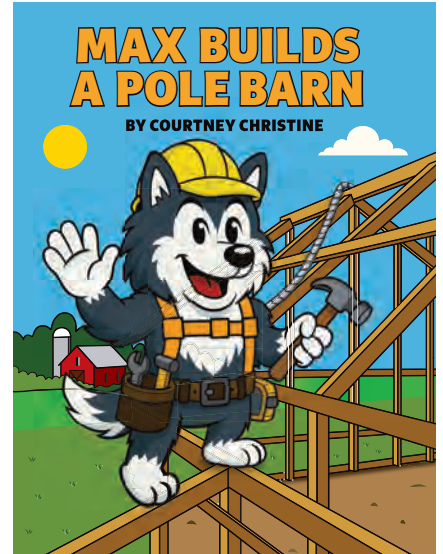
book per quarter. Each new book will focus a type of construction covered in our magazines.

We are giving these books away. If you want one or two for family or a few to give out to your local libraries and schools, let us know. This is a chance for us to share our love of the construction trades with kids and introduce them to a viable career path.

Please help us get the books out, and if you are concerned about the number of people choosing a career in the trades ask me about sponsorship opportunities.

Let's make Max famous.

*Gary Reichert, Publisher
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CORRECTION: The wrong photo of the Formwright Wridge Ladder was published in the "Helpful Jobsite Tools" feature in the Fall edition (page 37). The correct photo is shown above. Plain Builder regrets the error.

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Shield Wall Media supports and recommends the use of commonly accepted safety standards. We recognize, however, that members of some communities are exempt from such standards. To stay true to the members of the Plain Communities and the audience of Plain Builder, you will occasionally see photos in which government-mandated safety standards are not followed. Shield Wall Media does not endorse those practices.

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Gary Reichert,
Publisher, Shield Wall Media

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ON THE COVER:

Countryside Sheds in the process of building a Waffle Cabin.

Photo courtesy of Countryside Sheds





Prefab Horse Barn

Fisher Barns, South Carolina

This Lancaster Barn was designed to provide an aesthetically pleasing stable for 5 horses. The barn features custom Dutch doors, a cupola, 5 stalls with sliding doors, and a tack room. The raised center allows for windows to be placed along the top, which creates natural lighting and keeps the barn much cooler. Having doors on both ends of the spacious center aisle provides weather protection because it allows air to flow through on warm days. Plus, it's useful to have that space for easy feed and bedding handling. Adding a tack/storage room makes the space more organized and user-friendly, as well.

Details:

- Building Size: 36x36 • Roof Pitch: 3/12
- Foundation: Concrete piers with concrete center isle
- Trusses: Stick frame / 2x8 Rafter
- Roof Panels: 29 Gauge Galvalume panel
- Wall Panels: White Pine Board N Batt
- Doors: Custom Dutch Doors
- Special Features: Cupola, 5 stalls with sliding doors, tack room

Phone: 717-216-0972



Event Space

Pequea, Kinzers, Pennsylvania

This 40x80 Kingston Pavilion was built for a church that needed extra space for events and services. With plenty of room for seating, the structure is great for community events, weddings, picnics, and seasonal celebrations.

Sold by Lancaster County Backyard, the TF Shed was also built by Pequea. The Shed is a 12x20 Lancaster Timber Frame Shed featuring Wood Pine T&G, stained Jarrah Brown on Timbers, Natural on T&G, GAF HD Timberline Architectural shingles (Charcoal), and Sherwin-Williams color SW 7547 Sandbar base color.



Details:

- Building Size: 40x80 • Roof Pitch: 6.5/12 @ 26' wide
- Posts: 10', Timber Frame, #1 Douglas-fir with Jarrah Brown and Natural colored Australian Timber Oil, Stained Jarrah Brown on Timbers
- Trusses: Timber Trusses
- Roof: Asphalt Shingles in Williamsburg Slate
- Other Details: 48" Sedona Cupola (Cypress) with Blue Heron weather vane

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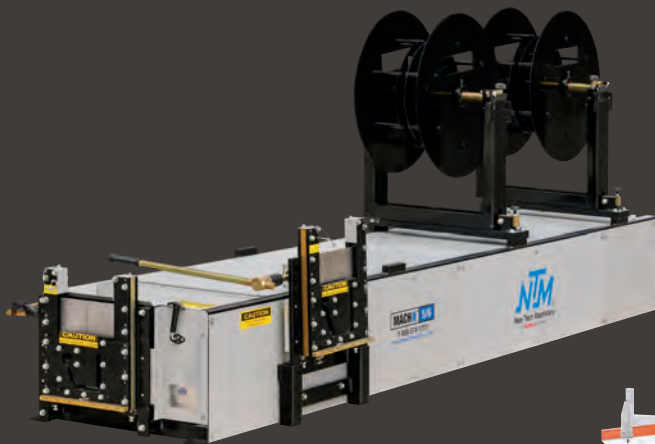
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To have your project or product included for free in Plain Builder's "What Do You Build?" feature, contact editor Karen Knapstein at 715-952-1633 or karen@shieldwallmedia.com.



Lofted Barn

South Country Sheds,
Arcadia, Florida

This 16x46 Lofted Barn Garage was built to provide a lot of additional storage to a family's home. With two lofts on the inside of the structure, the garage provides plenty of storage and is designed to fit alongside the customer's property. The classic barn-style exterior, combined with a metal roof, creates a durable and aesthetic addition to a backyard. The roll-up garage door ensures easy access, allowing for vehicle storage, large equipment, and household goods.

Details:

Building Size: 16x46

Door: White Rollup Door

Roof Panels: Galvalume Metal

Wall Panels: LP Smartside Barn Panel in Dark Gray,

Trim in Jamestown Red

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Hobby Shop

Sunrise Structures,
Rochester, Indiana

This building is a man cave/she-shed all in one! An older couple came into the office, and they wanted a new space where they could be together but still each do their own small thing. The back half of this building is her side. She does small crafts, and the front half will be his space where he cares for and reloads shells/bullets for his guns. It has a finished interior. The Sunrise Structures' crew insulated the walls and ceiling and installed electrical (outlets and lights), then lined the interior with the ship lap siding and painted it. We also installed the customer's choice of vinyl floor covering. Finally, we also installed an AC/heat unit in the wall to keep the interior at a comfortable temperature.



Details:

- Building Size: 14x32 • Roof Pitch: 4/12
- Foundation: Crushed Limestone Pad installed by Sunrise Structures' in-house foundation crew
- Posts: 2x4 stud walls
- Trusses: Built in-house by Sunrise Structures
- Roof Panels: RX4 Metal roofing by Ramco Supply
- Wall Panels: 1/2" Real wood Plywood - DuraTemp Plywood | Painted with Sherwin-Williams paint
- Door: Brown fiberglass with 9-lite window by Sunset Doors
- Windows: Brown poly double-pane insulated windows by ClimateGuard
- Insulation: Spray foam insulation on the bottom side of the floor. Walls and ceiling have R-13 batt fiberglass insulation.

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Outdoor Structure Insights

Top 5 Mistakes Dealers Make When Selling Outdoor Structures — and How to Avoid Them



Being upfront and confident about your outdoor structures is the most important quality you can have as a dealer or as a sales team. PHOTOS COURTESY OF PEQUEA/LANCASTER COUNTY BACKYARD

Over my time in the industry, I've noticed an interesting shift in customer priorities. These days, customers are more willing to pay a higher price for quality service than to settle for a lower price with poor service. This move from focusing on price to valuing service means that the relationship between dealers and builders is even more crucial.

Too often, conversations between the two focus only on the most recent build, the one coming down the pipeline, and adjustments on current orders. But if we take the time to listen, share feedback, and offer insights from our respective experiences, we can strengthen our work and create a smoother experience for our

customers.

With a decade under my belt, with a builder like Pequea and its retail branch, Lancaster County Backyard, I've noticed a few common mistakes dealers make during sales. Here are five of the most important ones and how to avoid them.

MISTAKE #1 — Playing Small with Big Structures

My best advice for dealers selling high-end structures like pavilions is to be very straightforward. Being upfront and confident about your structures is the most important quality you can have as a dealer or as a sales team.

Even before you're talking to a potential customer, invest in your website; great

photos help you tell a high-end lifestyle story and can prime the customer for a bigger structure and higher price.

Once you start seeing high-end builds as opportunities, the next step is learning to talk about price with the same confidence.

MISTAKE #2— Apologizing for Price Instead of Owning Value

Position yourself as a company that is comfortable with its products and offerings. Understand that you're not selling a structure; you're selling a gathering space or a more organized life. Being able to talk about a structure beyond the price, to see the structure for what it could mean for your customer's quality of life, marks the sales pitch of a trustworthy dealer.

Don't start a conversation by saying that this model or that one is expensive. You should be confident enough to say: "Here is the price, this is what it is. We're not ripping you off. This is why the price is this way, and here's what is involved."

Your sales team needs to be convinced on the product themselves to be able to acknowledge that there may be cheaper options out there, like a box-store price, but also be able to show why this high-end, expensive option is the real choice. If customers are just comparing dollars, obviously, they're going to choose the cheaper one. But when they understand what your product truly offers, and your sales team can clearly articulate the value your structure provides compared to a big-box alternative, that's when real selling happens.

Customers who come to my team often do so because the cheaper structure they had lasted about three years, and then a windstorm came and blew it over. Now they know that they use it and have an idea for what they really want. Being able



Great photos help you tell a high-end lifestyle story and can prime the customer for a bigger structure and higher price.

to tell that story preemptively can help you own the value of your structure, too.

MISTAKE #3— Letting Change Orders Become Chaos

This is a critical point. When you or your team is navigating between a customer and your builder, the importance of constant,

quality communication can not be overstated. With these moving pieces, there is the potential and possibility for issues.

When a change order does come up, the best practice is this: to acknowledge the request, respond to the request, be straight and upfront on how the pricing/price adjustment will work, immediately update any sales document, and get the customer



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to confirm the change via written confirmation. Going through those steps is very important to make sure you, your builder, and your customer are all satisfied with the final product.

In terms of preventing unnecessary change orders, that kind of knowledge and practice comes with trial and error, experience, and the wherewithal to develop your own system. As the seller, you'll know when it's best to clarify specifics up front with a customer and when it's best to wait until the customer is committed to the purchase. There's no single right approach, but the ability to read your customers and anticipate their needs is essential.

MISTAKE #4—Ignoring Long-Term Resale Value

A common mistake is overlooking how much a well-designed outdoor structure can add to a property's long-term value.

One thing to consider is that people do like well-thought-out, nicely designed outdoor living areas. While you may not be able to provide an exact resale value, you should be able to explain how there is potentially value there.

Potential buyers are going to notice nice outdoor living areas and pay for them. People know that when they make upgrades to their property, it does increase or at least has the potential to increase the resale value.

So, learn how to shift the conversation from spending money to investing or growing value. Purchasing a gazebo for your garden or a shed for your workshop is fun, sure, but it can also increase the value of your property down the line, which makes it even better. Learn how to say that to someone who might be hesitant about just spending money on what's fun.

MISTAKE #5—Overlooking the Importance of Small Details

Even with something as big as a Timber Frame Pavilion, the details define the structure, shape your customers' happiness, and strengthen your business.

Every ordering process requires an order form that includes those small but



A well-designed outdoor structure can add to a property's long-term value.

significant details, so you can't forget them. Having a detailed order form ensures nothing slips through the cracks and shows exactly what's missing when something does.

That's how my team works. We have a detailed order form, and if anything is missing, we double-check with the dealer to make sure we have all the information we need. If we notice any type of discrepancy, potential issue, or run into

any questions or concerns about a custom element, we immediately reach out to the dealer and try to make sure they reach out to the customer when needed.

Before a build gets started or finalized, we want to make sure we understand it completely. We bring any questions to the dealer, which helps confirm that nothing has been overlooked and that the customer's expectations match what's being built.



Making sure the customer's expectations match what's being built is a top priority.

BONUS TIP — Build a Partnership, Not Just a Purchase Order

Relationships are a two-way street. You're going to want to choose a builder you can trust. Someone who is invested in the research and development of new products and who keeps on top of drawings, pricing, and the details. Those are the relationships you want to have, maintain, and keep. A good builder keeps things accurate, interesting, and fun for their dealers.

Above all, communication fuels the strongest of relationships. To keep and maintain strong relationships between dealers and suppliers, communicate and communicate regularly. Talk about the job while it's being sold, when it's sold, and after.

I think, across the board, no matter the industry, my tip would be: be fun to work with. That makes work fun for everyone as

well as eases communication and strong relationship building.

Whether you're selling a single shed or a full outdoor living space, the key is the same: lead with confidence, clarity, and collaboration.

At Pequea, we exist to support our dealer network. Of course, a big part of this is providing new and exciting structures that are built to the best possible standards. But it also looks like the direct help we give our dealers. We give out lots of information to our dealers, such as good photos they can use, easy access to handbook-type information, free prints, and that kind of thing. Beyond that, the biggest help we provide is availability for quick support, whether it be phone calls

or emails. We want to provide anything we can think of that is important to dealers. I strongly suggest you work with dealers who prioritize their builders similarly.

Whether you're selling a single shed or a full outdoor living space, the key is the same: lead with confidence, clarity, and collaboration. A great dealer does more than close sales; they create experiences. And when builders and dealers approach each project as partners, the results can be truly incredible. **PB**

Kevin King is the Retail Manager at Pequea and Lancaster County Backyard, where he has led marketing project coordination and customer service for over a decade. Pequea is a premier manufacturer of Timber Frame Pavilions, catering high-end outdoor structures to the dealer and wholesale market.



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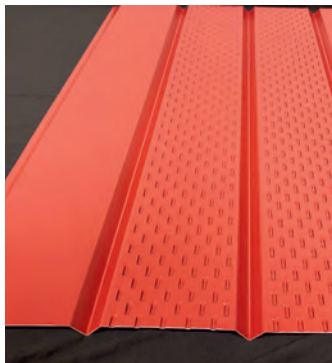
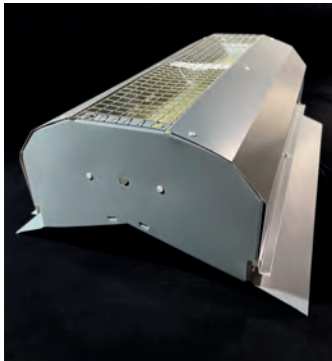
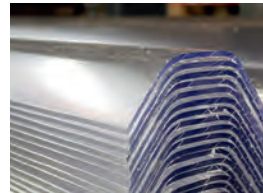
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Family Friendly

Families Welcome at the Post-Frame Builder Show, York, Pennsylvania

■ By Missy Beyer, Event Director

Once again, this June, Pennsylvania becomes a hub for builders, suppliers, and industry professionals as the Post-Frame Builder Show [<https://postframebuildershow.com>] takes over the York Expo Center. While this event is rooted in business-to-business networking and education within the post-frame, rural and plain construction industries, it has also gained recognition for its welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere—a feature that sets it apart from standard trade shows.

At its core, the Post-Frame Builder Show is designed to help professionals connect with exhibitors, discover new products, and gain insights through informational sessions. Exhibitors travel from across the country to showcase the latest in materials, tools, and building solutions tailored to post-frame and other types of rural construction businesses. The event's schedule includes dedicated informational session and exhibit hours on June 10 and 11, 2026, providing attendees with focused time to do business while still leaving room in their calendars for personal experiences and family time.

What truly distinguishes this event is the commitment to making it a comfortable and inclusive experience for attendees who bring along family members. Recognizing that many trade professionals balance business with family life, the show integrates elements that help make the visit enjoyable for all ages—without distracting from its professional purpose.

One of the most talked-about features is the Rest Stop, located right in the mix of things within the exhibit hall. This thoughtful space offers an oasis amid the bustling show floor, where families can



POST-FRAME ■ RURAL ■ PLAIN BUILDER SHOW

take a breather. Parents can sit down with their children, relax, recharge phones or devices, and regroup before heading back into the exhibits. The Rest Stop provides a much-needed break for younger visitors who might otherwise find the exhibit hall overwhelming or tiring.

This oasis isn't just a kid friendly zone with games, it's a comfortable, dedicated space designed with families in mind. Its presence sends a strong message: while the Post-Frame Builder Show is focused on business, it respects the needs of attendees who travel with spouses, children, or companions. It's a place to pause, share a snack, check out local travel guides, or simply enjoy a quieter moment away from conversations about suppliers and specifications.

In addition to the dedicated family space, the overall atmosphere of the venue during the event is warm and collegial. Attendees often comment on the friendly interactions not just among professionals but with those who accompany them. Exhibitors know that families might explore booths together during slower show times, and many are happy to engage respectfully

There's always a place for families at Shield Wall Media events. SHIELD WALL MEDIA PHOTOS.



and inclusively with non-industry visitors.

This family-friendly approach reflects a broader trend in professional events: making trade shows not just about deals and demos, but about community. For many visitors, the Post-Frame Builder Show becomes more than a business stop—it's part of a summer trip, an opportunity to enjoy York's historic downtown, and a shared experience that combines work and family time.

Whether you're a seasoned builder or new to the industry, bringing along family to the Post-Frame Builder Show can turn a productive business visit into an enjoyable experience for everyone—thanks in part to thoughtful touches like the Rest Stop. **PB**

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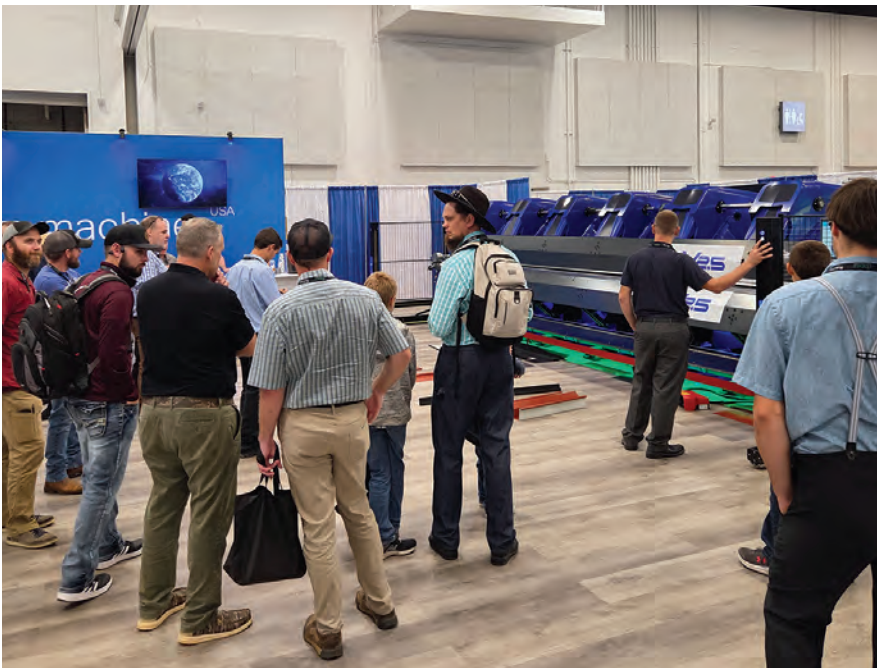
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Invest Wisely

Maximizing the Benefits of Your 2026 Trade Show Experiences



Take advantage of the opportunities at trade shows to speak face-to-face with suppliers and service providers. PHOTO BY SHIELD WALL MEDIA



Viewing equipment demonstrations first-hand is a strong reason to invest in attending a trade show. PHOTO BY SHIELD WALL MEDIA

As the 2026 trade show season approaches, builders and manufacturers have a unique opportunity to connect with suppliers, peers, and industry experts in person.

To make the most of any trade show, start by choosing events aligned with your goals. Consider the show's focus, educational opportunities, networking potential, exhibitors, location, and timing. Ask yourself: Is the focus of the show appropriate for your business? Also, make sure the show's strengths match your objectives. Strengths could include education, networking opportunities, or specific exhibitors. Location, travel, expense, and timing of the show are also important factors to consider. If you are driving, check the availability and convenience of parking at the show venue.

Once there, set clear objectives, plan which exhibitors to visit, and remain open to unexpected opportunities. Work the show floor and have a list of "must-see" exhibitors. Be prepared for opportunities in unexpected places—people are often outside their booths. Shows are busiest on the first day and slower toward the end. Use that to your advantage.

TO DO #1: Take Advantage of Face-to-Face Opportunities

One of the biggest advantages of a show is the time spent with vendors, customers, and peers. Meeting in person provides unique opportunities to build relationships faster and in ways not possible through email or video meetings. Relationships are the key to long-term success in any business-to-business endeavor. Use this opportunity fully.

There is a saying: "A good salesperson has the gift of gab; a great salesperson listens twice as much as they talk." It is human nature to talk about yourself, but lis-

tening allows you to gather valuable information. The easiest way to get people to talk is to ask questions.

Understand the function of questions. There are two main types, each with a different purpose:

Closed questions typically have yes/no or one-word answers. They are used to confirm information or maintain control of the conversation. For example: “Can I borrow a pen?” The answer is yes or no, and both parties can move on. Closed questions are useful strategically but imply a “stop” after the answer.

Open-ended questions encourage the respondent to elaborate and share information. For example: “Why do you need a pen?” A closed follow-up might be: “Did you need to sign something?” Open-ended questions create broader answers and personal conversation.

Open-ended questions help make interactions more personal, a key to building strong relationships. Exhibitors often speak to attendees hundreds of times during a show, repeating the same product pitch. Personal conversations—about family, hobbies, or shared experiences—stand out and are what people remember after the show.

TO DO #2: Follow Up

If a contact or conversation at the show is important, follow up. It is unrealistic to expect salespeople to remember every interaction. A personal detail or two helps you stand out. Share something you learned or experienced together. For example: “Hi John, I hope your son’s birthday party was a success. Five is a fun age.” Then move on to the business discussion.

The formula for successful follow-up is Courtesy, Purpose, Action. The personal detail is the Courtesy phase, leading into: “I am emailing because ...” Building relationships is about the other person—not you. When you acknowledge something personal, people feel naturally inclined to respond.

Conclusion

There are many ways to work a trade show. Times have changed, and many of us remember when exhibitors were expected to greet everyone, even in the aisle. Our staff business cards are still blank on the back to take notes. Badge scans and digital cards have changed the dynamic, but person-to-person contact and post-show follow-up remain best practices.

Whether you attend the Frame Building Expo, the Construction Rollforming Show, the Post-Frame Builder Show, or any other construction-related trade show, taking these steps will help you maximize your return on investment and make the event a success. **PB**



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Natural Lighting

Daylighting Systems Deliver Measurable Benefits Across Building Types

■ By Plain Builder Staff

There are many reasons for using daylighting systems: reduced energy usage, cost savings, the effect of natural light on the aesthetics of a space, and the mood-brightening many people experience. There are, however, even greater benefits depending on how the space is used.

People experience improved cognition and recuperation times when exposed to natural light, said Neall Digert, Ph.D., MIES, Vice President of Innovation and Market Development, Kingspan Light + Air North America. Daylighting has also been shown to reduce the need for painkillers, he added. Naturally, these are strong reasons to incorporate daylighting into health care settings.

The benefits translate well to schools and offices. The visual cues of daylight affect both human psychology and physiology, resulting in happier students and employees who often experience increased productivity throughout the day.

In retail settings, the benefits extend beyond employee well-being to customers, who tend to have a more positive in-store experience and trust that the color of the apparel they're viewing will remain the same once they leave the store.

Institutional and civic buildings, convention centers, sports arenas, manufacturing facilities, and warehouses—any building where people spend time—can benefit from natural daylighting. Residences, both single-family and multi-family, can also be dramatically improved with natural lighting.

Daylighting is also closely aligned



Solatube natural lighting tubes incorporated into a living roof system.
PHOTO COURTESY OF KINGSPAN LIGHT + AIR NORTH AMERICA

with the values of many plain-clothes communities, who emphasize simplicity, stewardship, and a natural approach to daily living. These communities often prefer natural light because it reduces dependence on electrical systems, supports energy efficiency, and maintains a calm, consistent indoor environment. For many, natural illumination is both practical and consistent with long-standing cultural values that prioritize modesty, resourcefulness, and a close connection to the rhythms of the natural world. Daylighting systems that eliminate UV exposure and reduce heat gain can support these preferences while providing balanced, reliable illumination for reading, handcraft work, and everyday tasks.

That said, many would point out that

windows offer similar benefits. However, it is not that simple.

Contrary to what one might think, the benefits discussed here have nothing to do with improved vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is produced in the skin when exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light; however, UV can also lead to health problems, specifically skin damage. UV light also tends to fade colors, so daylighting systems like Solatube filter UV out of the light entering a building. Instead, it is the tuning of spectral content that leads to improvements in cognition, neural energy, and mood, according to Digert.

Tubular daylighting selectively captures sunlight, stripping it of ultraviolet light and heat. It redistributes this filtered light by redirecting it much like a duct guides

air through a structure. The reflective surface inside the tube allows light to traverse straightaways, angles, and 90-degree turns through ceilings and walls with minimal loss. The light can be dimmed as it enters through the ceiling fixture and even directed to highlight a wall or table display.

The light may be softer or stronger depending on the day's conditions, but there are no shifting beams of light, and the level can be adjusted for comfort.

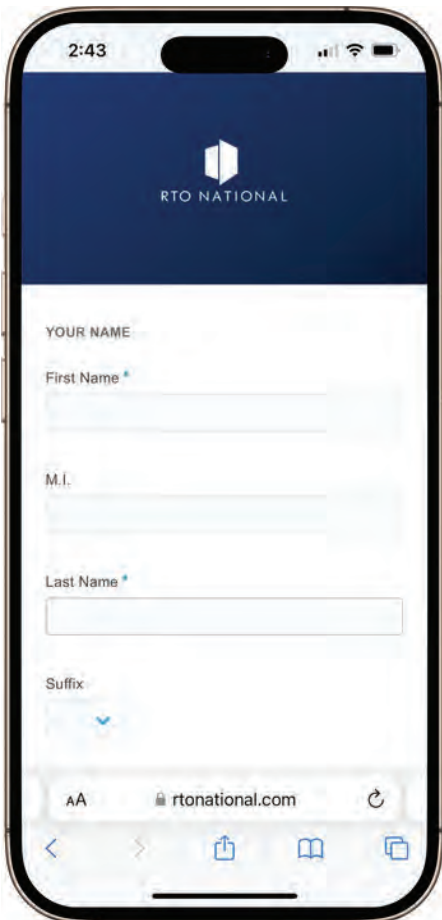
The daylighting system and the electrical lighting system can also be integrated so that the source of filtered daylight during daytime hours becomes the source of electric light once daylight fades.

A common concern with daylighting systems is leakage. These systems are designed to be leak-proof. Solatube tubular daylighting devices are engineered so that all openings into the building are protected, with glazing materials overlapping and encapsulating internal openings to ensure water cannot penetrate. Additionally, the system's flashings use a special sealant that maintains flexibility over time at all points of contact with the building envelope. As a result, future movement in the building roof or structure typically does not cause leaks.

Tom Larwa, Vice President of Customer Experience at Kingspan Light + Air North America, and Digert agree that these systems can have very long lifespans. "We've seen the Solatube in use for decades without any issue," Digert concluded. **PB**



Tubular daylighting selectively captures sunlight, stripping it of ultraviolet light and heat, and redistributes it. PHOTO COURTESY OF KINGSPAN LIGHT + AIR NORTH AMERICA



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Daylighting That Works: A Builder's Perspective

■ By Daystar Systems

Natural sunlight has long been known to be superior to any kind of artificial light source. It contains the full spectrum of colors and studies show that people are generally happier and healthier living, working, and shopping in sunlit environments.

As a result, business and warehouse owners are turning to daylighting systems to reduce and sometimes even eliminate the need for artificial lighting during the day. Daylighting systems, which passively harness and enhance the sun's light, are not simple skylights. Rather, applying physics to standard glass domes facilitates and diffuses the light entering a building without harshness or glare.

One example of these daylighting systems is DayStar. Their system is composed of four parts. First, sunlight is gathered and diffused through an ultra-clear outer dome and inner collimation lens. A light shaft made of insulated panels with highly reflective interior surfaces amplifies natural light as it is captured. And finally, a ceiling lens, engineered to diffuse highly concentrated light into a broad lighting pattern, is installed on the interior ceiling.

Avoiding Leakage

The contractor is usually focused on two things: ease of installation and reliability. The contractor's prime concern typically is "after the job, can I sleep at night without worrying about getting a callback for leakage after the first rain?"

After all, any penetration of a watertight roof membrane can introduce a potential pathway for water, which no one wants. So, contractors need to trust that the systems they install will have a high level of leak-free integrity.



Business and warehouse owners are turning to daylighting systems to reduce and sometimes even eliminate the need for artificial lighting during the day.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAYSTAR

One way to ensure leak prevention is to begin with a properly installed essential roof curb that ensures the daylighting components have a level platform for attachment. Rooftop curbs are raised metal frames designed for mounting structures safely to the roof. Some skylights are comprised of a dome with pre-attached metal flashing, which the contractor cuts around to fit into an opening, and then seals with caulk. This arrangement requires the contractor to be very careful when installing.

Insulated roof curbs made of galvalume steel or aluminum with continuously welded watertight seams work well to stop leakage. Fit the curb to the roof pitch and metal rib design. A system may also come in regular slope and ridge-mounted versions. Rib caps may be supplied to fit the roof panel and mastic sealant should

be applied between the roof curb flange and roof metal.

A manufacturer that will work with you on different configurations to make the system function well with different roofs or roof profiles can help facilitate leak-free installation according to Jonas Yoder, owner of JY Construction and a 30-year contractor.

Thermal Efficiency

After concerns about potential water leaks, many contractors seek a system that will prevent outdoor hot or cold air intrusion, or transfer through the components. Features that can help with thermal efficiency include an insulated roof curb, a double-glazed top dome with a vinyl thermal barrier, an insulated light shaft and lens, which can provide a great thermal value. In addition, these

enhancements can create a system that has a low solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) as well as U Values (a measure of insulating performance) that are over twice the thermal efficiency ratings of some common skylights. This means the customer will lose less heat in the winter and gain less heat in the summer.

Installation Instructions

The daylighting installation process is quite simple, and a contractor does not need any special experience to perform an expert job. The installation instructions from the manufacturer should make it easy to install, step by step. If it is not, contact the manufacturer and ask questions.

Trust Earned

If you follow the instructions and the system has problems, the manufacturer should always stand behind their product. Of course, the hope is that you will not have to ask them to do that because the system

Daylighting Product Suppliers

• DayStar Natural Lighting Systems	allenconsultinggroup.net/product/daystar-daylighting/
• AmeriLux International	ameriluxinternational.com
• Onduline	www.ondulinenorthamerica.com
• Klar	klar.us.com
• Palram Americas	palram.com
• Everlast Roofing	everlastroofing.com
• Solatube International	solatube.com
• Advanced Glazings (Solera)	advancedglazings.com
• MWI Components	mwicomponents.com

performs reliably over the long term. If you have no experience with a product, see what other contractors have to say.

Yoder says he originally installed 40 DayStar systems in a 24,000 sq. ft. pre-engineered steel building about 10 years ago. "Now, the same, industrial warehouse customer is looking to build another 9,000 sq. ft. structure with 12 more daylight systems. In my mind, that shows long-term value and reliability," he concludes. **PB**

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Werner Ready Step Fiberglass Step Ladder

Werner® has announced the launch of its newest innovation, the Werner Ready Step, a lightweight and compact fiberglass step ladder built for residential trades professionals, including HVAC technicians, electricians, remodelers and contractors who demand safety, worksite durability, and tool organization in one highly efficient, professional-grade design.

Available in 4 ft. and 5.5 ft. sizes, the Werner Ready Step is 15% lighter than standard step ladders without compromising strength or stability. With a 300 lb. load capacity and a slim 4-inch profile when closed, it is engineered for easy transport and storage in work trucks and vans, or storage in tight worksite spaces.

The new ladder features a Quick-Setup Platform, providing an extra-large, standing surface, delivering 5X (4 ft model) or 3X (5.5 ft model) the standing room of a traditional step ladder. This stable, slip-resistant surface allows users to work longer with less fatigue. And the one-handed open-and-close operation with a no-pinch design gets users to the task quickly and safely, while minimizing downtime.

The new LOCKTOP™ ladder top keeps

essential tools close at hand with the ability to hold ten different tools, securely placing an impact driver, screwdrivers, tape measure, small parts, and a phone at hand while working. The new WERNER Ready Step is also

LOCK-IN® accessory compatible, allowing pros to attach paint cups, job caddies and basic tools to expand storage as needed.

www.wernerco.com

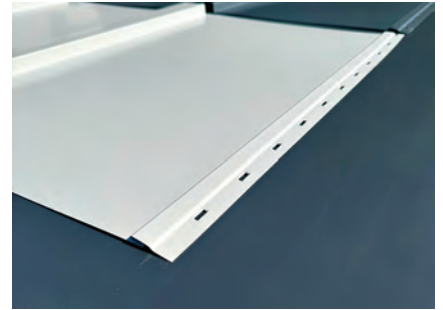


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Inspire provides versatility and low maintenance of steel for residential spaces, as well as commercial applications. With precision-formed planks and fade-resistant color options, it's a smart choice for builders and homeowners who want lasting beauty.

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Sheet Metal Supply Board & Batten

Sheet Metal Supply has added a Board & Batten metal panel option to its growing envelope offering. The Board & Batten profile, fire and pest resistant, is for vertical applications. It's available in all SMS color offerings, plus copper, zinc, exotics and woodgrain finishes. SMS also has a full line of supporting trim in matching or contrasting colors to meet architectural and client demands. LTL-specific crating and a vast network of shipping options ensures quick nationwide delivery.

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Malco Tools TurboShear® Rotary Panel Cutters

Malco Tools has announced its new TurboShear® Rotary Panel Cutters.

Designed for metal construction professionals, Malco's new TurboShear® Rotary Panel Cutter (TSPC1) is the newest innovation in the TurboShear® line, built to handle tough jobs with confidence and deliver long-term performance without compromise.

The TurboShear® Rotary Panel Cutter features dual opposing cutting wheels, designed to self-advance the tool smoothly through metal and vinyl material, leaving a clean, precise cut and eliminating hand fatigue associated with forcing blades through metal. A clear sight line allows pros to see exactly where they're cutting – ensuring clean, straight cuts every time, in addition to a smooth, quieter operation.

The cutter's hardened high-strength alloy steel cutting discs are replaceable, and can handle a variety of materials, including 22-gauge steel, 26-gauge stainless steel, .04" aluminum and .055" (1.4mm) vinyl siding.

320-274-8246

Simpson Strong-Tie PFPS24 Purlin Splice

Simpson Strong-Tie has introduced the PFPS24 purlin splice, a connector



designed to streamline roof purlin installation in post-frame construction. The PFPS24 keeps purlins aligned in a continuous line across the length of a gable roof, removing the need for offset or overlapping pieces. This allows builders to use shorter, more economical purlin stock

and improves overall installation efficiency by maintaining consistent positioning for roof panels and fasteners. The connector offers tested load values for both nail and screw fastening options, and it can be installed individually or doubled where higher capacity is required.

Made from 18-gauge galvanized steel, the PFPS24 accommodates purlin sizes from 2x4 to 2x6 and is centered over the splice location within ±1/8 inch. A larger 2 7/8-inch flange can be placed on either the upslope or downslope face, depending on project needs. The product is code listed and fully tested for strength and durability, and it is packaged in boxes of 50, with fasteners sold separately. Overall, the PFPS24 provides a straightforward way to improve alignment, reduce installation time, and support reliable performance in post-frame roof systems.

www.strongtie.com



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fischer Launches New ClassicFast II Screw Generation

fischer has introduced the ClassicFast II series, a new line of universal chipboard screws designed for use across a wide range of wood-based materials, including applications requiring load-bearing performance. The screws are CE-marked to EN 14592, confirming their suitability for structural timber connections. Key features include a TX star recess drive for secure bit engagement and efficient power transmission, zinc-plated steel with blue passivation for improved corrosion protection, and a countersunk head with milling ribs that allows the screw to sit cleanly and flush with the wood surface—an advantage in visible applications such as interior finishes and furniture. Partial-thread versions 70 mm and longer incorporate an integrated shank cutter to reduce driving torque and ease installation, while the optimized tip and thread geometry helps the screws start quickly

and fasten reliably. The line includes full-thread screws in diameters from 3 to 5 mm and lengths from 16 to 60 mm, as well as partial-thread options from 3 to 6 mm in diameters and 35 to 200 mm in lengths. Overall, the ClassicFast II screws provide a straightforward fastening option for structural timber work, interior construction, furniture assembly, and other projects involving common wood-based materials.

www.fischer.group

Brass Knuckle® SmartCut™ Gloves

Cut-resistant gloves need to protect the hands of real people doing real work. They must be flexible, offer a sure grip for handling dry, wet, or oily parts and surfaces, and provide the proper level of cut protection without bulk.

Brass Knuckle's SmartCut™ line of gloves offers three ANSI A2 cut-resistant glove solutions designed to perform in specific applications and conditions. They're constructed with a cut-resistant shell (base fabric), a protective coating, and a textured finish for better grip.

SmartCut Touchscreen Gloves (BKCR201) provide dexterity, grip, and medium cut protection, and then adds a special fingertip dip that allows for the use of touchscreen devices while providing all the safety and durability needed on the job.

SmartCut BKCR3520 is made of a high-



performance polyethylene (HPPE) shell with a foam nitrile coating for applications requiring a higher level of tactile sensitivity. The glove's flexibility is derived from its thinner, 15-gauge composite shell. A reinforced thumb crotch adds strength and protection between the thumb and forefinger, an area that is susceptible to wear and tear.

SmartCut BKCR2403 helps wearers feel their way through dry applications with reliable abrasion protection, a flat-coat grip, and basic ANSI A2 cut protection. The glove is made of a synthetic fiber composite that includes HPPE, nylon, and synthetic GLF fiber. The polyurethane coating is balanced against extreme dexterity for tasks calling for very fine motor skills and tactile sensitivity.

SmartCut BKCR303 is ideal for applications requiring cut resistance and dexterity. Its HPPE/nylon/synthetic GLF fiber composition and polyurethane coating pairs ultrahigh molecular-weight polyethylene with 13-gauge material to facilitate dexterity.

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MFM Building Products Marks 65th Anniversary in 2026

MFM Building Products, a manufacturer of a full envelope of waterproofing and weather barrier products for the building industry, will be celebrating the company's 65th Anniversary in 2026.

MFM Building Products was founded in 1961 in Coshocton, Ohio. Initially, the company manufactured products used for wrapping underground pipe to protect from water penetration and pipe contents becoming contaminated. Over the years, MFM expanded this technology to develop sealing and waterproofing products for use within the building envelope. In July 2017, MFM became a 100% employee-owned ESOP company that still holds true to its original core values.

Today, MFM manufactures a wide array of self-adhered weather barrier products that include low-slope roofing membranes, roofing underlayments, window and door flashing tapes, multi-purpose waterproofing membranes, specialized waterproofing tapes, and HVAC duct and pipe wrap. These

exterior, waterproofing membranes are self-adhering and self-sealing for ease of installation and complete waterproofing protection.

MFM products are manufactured in the United States and sold through an extensive distributor network around the globe. The company's products qualify for the Buy American Act (BAA) and Build America Buy American Act (BABAA).

Owens Corning Expands U.S. Footprint with New Shingle and Insulation Plants

Owens Corning is expanding its U.S. manufacturing footprint with two new facilities designed to support growing demand for roofing and insulation products. The company has selected Prattville, Alabama, as the site of a new 250,000-square-foot shingle plant that will feature a four-wide laminator capable of producing roughly six million squares of laminate shingles annually. Construction is expected to begin in early 2026, with production slated for 2027. The plant will create nearly 100 manufacturing jobs and will supply key products such as the Duration® series to the country's highest-demand shingle markets.

In Russellville, Arkansas, Owens Corning has opened a new 150,000-square-foot Foamular® NGX™ insulation facility. Completed in August and fully operational by year-end, the plant adds more than 50 jobs and will increase insulation supply



Owens Corning Prattville, Alabama, rendering. PHOTO BY OWENS CORNING



Owens Corning Russellville, Arkansas, grand opening photo. PHOTO BY OWENS CORNING

for both residential and nonresidential construction. Designed with advanced technology, the facility is intended to improve supply chain efficiency and help meet rising demand for high-performance foam products.

Together, the Prattville and Russellville investments strengthen Owens Corning's manufacturing network and enhance product availability for builders across multiple segments—from roofing to insulation—while supporting regional workforces and expanding the company's presence in the Southeast and South-Central U.S. **PB**

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When Levi's Building Components (LBC) was still in its infancy, a 17-year-old named Steve Fisher was framing houses. Before that, he worked for a local playhouse and shed manufacturer, and often helped his father between jobs. As Steve puts it, "When he was looking ahead with no other family members in the business, I decided to get involved in what is now Levi's Building Components."

That early immersion in construction and manufacturing laid the groundwork for the company we see today—a nationally recognized metal roofing supplier rooted in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, known for quality fasteners, snow guards, accessories, same-day shipping, real-time customer service, and steadfast adherence to Christian principles.

From Apprenticeship to Ownership

Steve traces his strongest early learning to his father, Levi Fisher, the company's founder. "I started working for him, then was a partner with him for five years before buying him out. I learned so much from him. What a blessing!" Steve says.

Beyond family, he added learning through hiring business consultants and intentionally bringing in people smarter than himself. That decision underscores one of his key lessons: growing with the company, rather than becoming the "lid" that holds it back. "As your company grows you either grow with the company, or you become the lid," he explains. "We at Levi's try our best to not become the lid. It's not about one person, it's about the team. Teamwork makes the dream work!"

Values Over Everything

LBC's public profile emphasizes their



Steve presenting key updates and engaging the team during a monthly company meeting. PHOTOS COURTESY OF LEVI'S BUILDING COMPONENTS.

founding on Christian principles, guided by a core set of values: Integrity, Quality, Service, Collaboration, and Growth. These aren't simply posters on the wall—they guide daily operations. Steve says, "Without core values, mission, and vision I am not sure how we would function. We talk about our core values all the time. We celebrate our team when we get them right and call fouls when we don't. We are always trying to learn and become better."

That culture permeates everything: from product development to customer service to how the team treats one another and the community. LBC's mission is clear: "We provide metal roofing accessories and building components to the commercial, residential and agricultural industries."

Quality, Service—and Saying No to Cheap

"If you want to do it right," says Steve,

"you pick your lane." For LBC, that lane is clearly quality and service—rather than competing solely on price. "Most times you can find a cheaper product, but chances are it's not as good of quality. Price is a slippery slope. It's said you can only have two of these three in business: quality, service, or price. We have chosen quality and service."

In practical terms, that means LBC offers fasteners for metal-to-wood, metal-to-metal, specialty fasteners; snow guards in more than 40 colors; ventilation accessories; underlayments; and more. They also operate with a "10-3 Service": custom-painted orders placed by 10 a.m. Eastern Shipping and in-stock orders placed by 3 p.m. are shipped same day.

Leadership, Teamwork & Humility

Steve attributes much of his growth to faith and community. "The Lord. Many

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times, when things get hard, I stress and run up against the wall only to realize I didn't surrender it (the problem) to the Lord. Then the next day, what was a problem isn't even a problem anymore." He also participates in two peer business groups—something he "strongly recommends" to anyone looking to grow.

On hiring and leadership: tackling pricing, customer service, and manufacturing is a process. Steve admits, "You figure it out as the obstacles come up." His advice is rooted in humility—recognizing you don't have to know everything, but you do have to know your numbers. "Many years ago, I heard it said that some business owners would be better off carrying a lunch box working for someone else because they don't know their numbers and don't charge the proper amount. I never forgot this. You must charge a fair price so you can take care of your customers, and your team. I am saying know your numbers, so you don't cut yourself short."

Mistakes, Growth & Gratitude

Steve says the biggest decision is whether to let mistakes make you bitter—or better. "I often say you can get bitter, or you can get better. Let's get better." When asked what he's most thankful for? "I am thankful for this team, this industry, and our customers. It's such a blessing to be in

Growth – The Next Step Forward



Original Building 1978-1995

In 1995 the company's growth allowed for a new facility in Leola, Pennsylvania.

Our growth continued and in 2021 we moved to our current building in Brownstown, PA.

Levi's Building Components: Evolving through the years – original building (1978-1995), Leola expansion (1995-2021), and our current Brownstown facility since 2021.

this industry surrounded by lots of nice people!"

These statements reflect the LBC story: a family-founded business that added breadth through smart hiring, culture, steady values, innovation and a commitment to participation in the broader community. As noted in a feature on LBC: The company "has significantly expanded its product line ... while playing a vital role in supporting the local economy."

Professional & Personal Guidance, Two Sides of the Same Coin

What can you take away—whether you're leading a manufacturing firm,

planning a startup or building your team? Here are a few core lessons from Steve's voice of experience:

Start early and stay curious. Steve's first job in construction framed his understanding of what craftsmanship and durability meant—giving him context that still guides LBC's product decisions.

Leadership is service. By employing people smarter than himself, Steve built a culture where the team matters most. "It's not about one person, it's about the team."

Values form your anchor. When growth pressures hit, values hold the line. Integrity, quality, service—these aren't soft words; they are the framework for decisions.



The 2025 Team at Levi's Building Components.

Choose your lane wisely. In a competitive marketplace, trying to be everything often dilutes excellence. LBC chose to excel in quality and service—not race to the bottom on price.

Know your numbers. Without understanding costs, margins, pricing—without financial literacy—you risk undercutting yourself. Steve’s advice is blunt and practical: understand the math.

Lead with humility and hands-on spirit. Steve still speaks of starting at 17 framing houses. That practical experience builds empathy, credibility and depth in leadership.

Faith and community matter. Whether you share Steve’s beliefs or simply resonate with his humility, the recognition that you’re part of something bigger than yourself helps in the hard times.

Mistakes don’t define you—growth does. Accept obstacles, use them as learning opportunities, and help your team learn with you.

The Role of Teamwork at Levi’s

Throughout all of this, LBC remains quick to emphasize that the success is not a solo act. Steve cites the team repeatedly: “This team, this industry, and our customers.” The company’s values include “Collaboration: Creating solutions together.” Whether it’s manufacturing fasteners, supplying snow guards, shipping custom-painted orders in one day or supporting customers na-



tionwide, the message is consistent: the work is done together. The team is not just a collection of employees—it’s the foundation of everything.

In conclusion, Steve’s voice of experience isn’t just about decades in one industry. It’s about reflection, humility, deliberate growth, and staying rooted in values. At Levi’s Building Components, Steve Fisher’s journey—from framing houses at 17 to leading a national supplier—is intertwined with a team, a mission and a culture of excellence. Whether you design, build or lead, there’s a blueprint here: build trust, deliver quality, value the team—and your work will stand long. **PB**

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Countryside Sheds Delivers the Waffle Cabin to The Summit



Countryside Sheds is a local, family-owned, Mennonite shed, garage, and cabin builder based in Island City, Oregon.

With over 30 years of shed-building experience, the company specializes in building storage sheds for the Eastern Oregon and Southeast Washington areas.

About the Build:

Countryside Sheds customers, John and Dani Warner, love their Washington home. The family is big on outdoor adventures and exploring the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. As big fans of skiing, when they had the opportunity to open a business in their community, there was no hesitation to dive in.

John and Dani found Countryside Sheds online and soon came to the business in person to explore materials,



Building Specifications:

Location: The Summit Snoqualmie Central, Snoqualmie, Washington

Building Type: Gable Shed

Building Size: 12x14

Roof Pitch: 7/12

Foundation: 4x6 pressure-treated runners, with 2x4 floor joists 16" on-center

Trusses: Engineered trusses (Millers Lumber and Truss, La Grande, Oregon)
275-pound snow-load rating

Roof Panels/Shingles: Northwest Steel, LLC (Milton-Freewater, Oregon) 29 gauge AG Panel "Weathered Copper" metal roof

Wall Panels/Siding: Exterior Siding: Duratemp by Roseburg Lumber (Roseburg, Oregon) stain-grade plywood siding with stain-grade battens, Interior: ½" Roseburg Lumber plywood with Fiberglass Reinforced Paneling (FRP) on interior walls.

Fasteners: galvanized ring-shank nails (floor) and galvanized 2" siding ring-shank nails. General 3" framing nails

Walk Doors: 36" fiberglass pre-hung entrance door (W.E.H. Supply, Inc., Denver, Colorado)

Windows: 96" x 36" XOX Vinyl "Crystal Serving Window" (W.E.H. Supply, Inc., Denver, Colorado)

Ventilation: Hand-crafted custom 12" screened vents at both ends of the shed

Insulation: Owens-Corning R21 in walls and ceiling, R13 in floor

Other Features: 11" roof overhang 18" overhang above serving window, 9' sidewalls, 2x6 walls, LuxGuard (Luxguard.com, Hamptonville, North Carolina) glue-down rubberized diamond-plate flooring. Reverse gable dormer, pre-wired (Johnson Electric, La Grande, Oregon)

Brief background about the structure: Used for a commercial Waffle Cabin – had to meet food handling requirements, extensive snow load rating for 275 pounds for trusses!, electrical wiring requirements, and building aesthetics had to meet existing buildings in décor and color.

see completed cabins, and finalize their plans.

Countryside Sheds' lead sales representative carefully took their ideas and translated every requirement into a detailed proposal that included service windows, signage, electricity, food-handling standards, interior finishes, and exterior roofing and siding that would match The Summit resort's existing buildings. Many factors, including snow load specifications, delivery height, width restrictions, and weight distribution, had to be considered to ensure that the cabin could safely be placed at the site.

Finally, shed permits were secured from Kittitas County Planning, and production began on the cabin. The cabin was smoothly delivered, and now the Waffle Cabin (<https://www.iwannawaffle.com/>) serves hot chocolate and Belgian sugar waffles to skiers at The Summit at



Snoqualmie, Washington.

Visitors can indulge in their signature Belgian Sugar waffles at the base of the slopes! These waffles are unique because they are made with dough, not batter, and are sweeter than other waffles because they are made with pearl sugar. Combined with hot chocolate loaded with whipped cream, marshmallows, and sprinkles, the Waffle Cabin supplies the perfect ski-day treat! **PB**



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