

*The Hill Country*

FEB | 2022

# ARTICLE

*Premiere*  
ISSUE

**Welcome To  
Your Magazine**

**BBQ Cook-Off**

**Member Highlight**



The Hill Country Builders Association Magazine



# The Hill Country ARTICLE



## Welcome To Your New Magazine!



**COVER PHOTO:** Jackson Custom Homes | Awarded 2021 HCBA Parade of Homes overall Best Home.

**THIS PHOTO:** Brother Sun Builders | Awarded 2021 HCBA Parade of Homes Peoples Choice.

Welcome to the Hill Country Builders Association's digital magazine! A publication to keep our members up to date on local, state, and national news. Inside our monthly issues, you will find HCBA event dates and details, Member Highlights that will

showcase our talented builder and associate members and informative content that is trending throughout the construction industry. We hope you enjoy *The Hill Country Article*.

The Hill Country Builders Association (HCBA) is a local trade association that offers opportunities to its members to display their products and services. We make no representation, express or implied, regarding the qualifications of members or the quality of their products and services, but invite you to examine them for yourself.

*The Hill Country Article* is the official publication of the HCBA. It is designed and produced by VH3 Creative, LLC and published monthly by HCBA.

HCBA Address - 1401 Broadway, St B1, Marble Falls, TX 78654 | Phone - (830) 798-2266 | Email us at [info@hillcountrybuilders.org](mailto:info@hillcountrybuilders.org) for more information.





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## Member Highlight



### JOHN AKIN

Owner | Akin  
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(830) 456-5870  
[jakin1223@gmail.com](mailto:jakin1223@gmail.com)

wife, Megan, moved their young family (10, 8, and 6) to Fredericksburg in 1998, where he currently owns and operates Akin Construction, Co.

John is very active in our community serving on the HCBA's Casa Uber Alles (CUA) board for several years and is serving as the Project Manager for CUA 6.0. He is passionate about the trades and enjoys educating our youth on the importance of the building industry.

John has an amazing team at Akin Construction, Co. where they pride themselves "on changing something that IS to something that CAN BE." Their entire crew goes above and beyond to ensure the client has a smooth building process.

We thank John for his long standing membership with the HCBA and his service to our Board and Community!

We are proud to introduce our first Member Highlight of 2022, our new Association President, John Akin.

John has served on our board as Secretary and Vice President prior to his current role. The HCBA is blessed to have such an involved and generous President to lead us through 2022.

John has over 37 years of residential construction experience. He began his career in the multi-family industry prior to transitioning to remodeling where he self-performed most of his work. He and his

Every month we will be showcasing one of our members. We are proud of our members and we would like to share with you a little bit of history, company information and community involvement on each member. If you would like to nominate a Company or Member to highlight, please email us at [info@hillcountrybuilders.org](mailto:info@hillcountrybuilders.org).

# HCBA

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### **Gina Graves**

*Memberships / Media  
Coordinator*



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[hillcountrybuilders.org](http://hillcountrybuilders.org)

# NAHB Announces Best of IBS Product Winners at 2022 International Builders' Show

NAHB named the winning products in its ninth annual Best of IBS™ Awards during the NAHB International Builders' Show® (IBS) in Orlando. The awards were presented during a ceremony on the final day of the show.

This year's Best of IBS Awards received more than 200 entries. Decided by a panel of 24 independent judges made up of attending reporters and building professionals, the awards were given in eight categories, plus the Best in Show winner.

Awards were given to exhibitors with a product or line that shows the best combination of design, functionality and innovation, as well as its usefulness to consumers and/or home builders.

The winners are:

**Best in Show:** Evolve Stone

**Best Energy Efficient Product:** SPAN Gen2 Smart Panel

**Best Home Technology Product:** SPAN Gen2 Smart Panel

**Best Indoor Product:** Murphy Door Flush Mount Pantry Door

**Best Kitchen & Bath Product:** Swidget 20/40/60 Control Switch

**Best Outdoor Product:** Barrette Outdoor Screen Panels

—> IBS story continues on page 12



# Soaring Construction Costs Drop Housing Affordability To Lowest Level In A Decade

Supply-chain bottlenecks that put upward pressure on home prices along with rising interest rates contributed to housing affordability falling to a 10-year low. The likelihood of higher interest rates in the months ahead (as the Federal Reserve moves to tighten interest rates) along with ongoing production challenges threaten to drive housing affordability even lower in 2022.

According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Opportunity Index (HOI) released today, just 54.2% of new and existing homes sold between the beginning of October and end of December were affordable to families earning the U.S. median income of \$79,900. This is down from the 56.6% of homes sold in the third quarter of 2021 and is the lowest affordability level recorded since the beginning of the revised series in the first quarter of 2012.

The HOI shows that the national median home price increased to a record \$360,000 in the fourth quarter, up \$5,000 from the third quarter and a whopping \$40,000 from the first quarter. Meanwhile, average mortgage rates increased by 21 basis points in the fourth quarter to 3.16% from 2.95% in the third quarter. Currently, mortgage rates are running above 3.5%, and this higher trend will further affect affordability later this year.

Lansing-East Lansing, Mich. was the nation's most affordable major housing market, defined as a metro with a population of at least 500,000. There, 90.6% of all new and existing homes sold in the fourth quarter were affordable to families earning the area's median income of \$79,100.

Meanwhile, Cumberland, Md.-W.Va. was rated the nation's most affordable small market, with 94% of homes sold in the fourth quarter being affordable to families earning the median income of \$60,800.

For the fifth straight quarter, Los Angeles-Long

Beach-Glendale, Calif. remained the nation's least affordable major housing market. There, just 7.5% of the homes sold during the fourth quarter were affordable to families earning the area's median income of \$80,000.

The top five least affordable small housing markets were also in the Golden State. At the very bottom of the affordability chart was Salinas, Calif., where 9.7% of all new and existing homes sold in the fourth quarter were affordable to families earning the area's median income of \$80,900.

Visit [nahb.org/hoi](http://nahb.org/hoi) for tables, historic data and details.

*Courtesy of NAHB*

The graphic features a dark blue background with a light blue geometric pattern. The text is white and light blue. The title 'HCBA Calendar' is at the top. Below it, 'MARCH' is written in bold white letters. Under 'MARCH', the date '26' is in large light blue font, followed by 'Crawfish Boil & Horseshoe Tournament' in white. Below that, 'APRIL' is written in bold white letters. Under 'APRIL', the dates '5-7' and '22' are in large light blue font, followed by 'TAB Board Meetings' and 'Sporting Clay Tournament' in white.





# EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to The Hill Country Builders Association's digital publication. *The Hill Country Article* will provide our member with HCBA, TAB and NAHB news and updates, event and mixer information, as well as advertising opportunities. We are excited for an eventful 2022 as we have added two events to our calendar and handful of mixers. We hope that you join us as we build awareness on the importance of the construction and trades industry.

Our association is proud to be part of various trades programs throughout the Hill Country. The Fredericksburg High School CASA UBER ALLES Program is working on their 5th and 6th tiny house and gaining interest in more schools throughout Texas. These participants get hands on experience while being instructed by our builders and other trade members. The HCBA is honored to have such dedicated members that take time out of their busy day to excite and educate our youth.

Our generous members have enabled us to create scholarships for the CUA program as well. Other

trade initiatives include providing office space to the Workforce Network Solutions organization. They host evening classes educating individuals looking to obtain a career in the HVAC, plumbing and electrical professions. If you are looking to become more involved, please consider joining us for our Casino Night in September that will benefit these programs.

We held our annual BBQ Cook-Off February 4th and 5th and despite the cold weather, we had an amazing turnout. If you were unable to attend the BBQ, we hope you can come out to our newly added Crawfish Boil and Horseshoe Tournament on March 26th. For more information on 2022 events, sponsorships, mixers, or board meeting dates, please contact me!

Thank you and I look forward to sharing a successful year with you.

**MELISSA ECKERT**  
HCBA Executive Officer

## 2022 ANNUAL Partners

Thank you to our Annual Partners for generously committing to sponsor multiple events throughout the year. Your continuous giving plays a huge role in the success of our Association.

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Photo Courtesy of Omni Custom Homes



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The Hill Country Article is a monthly publication of the Texas Hill Country Builders Association featuring industry news, articles, member highlights and opportunities for our members to advertise to other members and the community at-large.

For more information, visit our website at [www.hillcountrybuilders.org](http://www.hillcountrybuilders.org)  
or email us at [info@hillcountrybuilders.org](mailto:info@hillcountrybuilders.org)

—> IBS story continued from page 6

**Best Window and Door Product:** Endura  
Panolock Multi-Point Lock

**Most Innovative Building Material:**  
Evolve Stone

**Most Innovative Construction Tool:**  
GAF Energy Timberline Solar Energy Shingles

"The innovation and sustainability of the entries were much more evident in all aspects of products and services, but the biggest take away I saw from a judging standpoint was the efforts to create products that were easy to install for contractors and

the ease of use for the end user," said Pat Coveny, Best of IBS Awards judge and president and owner of Arch Construction Management Inc.

"This year's winners represented innovative and aesthetically-pleasing designs and functions," Tom Wong, Best of IBS Awards judge and associate and senior designer at Danielian Associates. "These products enhanced construction procedures and solved solutions in all aspects of residential construction."

For more information on the Best of IBS Awards, visit [BuildersShow.com/bestofibs](http://BuildersShow.com/bestofibs).

Courtesy of NAHB

# January New Home Sales Lower But Still Solid As Interest Rates Rise

New home sales declined in January on rising interest rates but still posted a steady reading as demand remains strong.

Sales of newly built, single-family homes in January fell 4.5% to an 801,000 seasonally adjusted annual rate from a sharp upwardly revised reading in December, according to newly released data by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau.

“Demand is strong given a lack of existing home inventory,” said NAHB Chairman Jerry Konter. “Builders are grappling with supply-chain issues that are extending construction times and increasing costs. Policymakers need to focus on alleviating

production bottlenecks, particularly as it relates to lumber and other building materials.”

“New home prices continue to rise as the cost of materials increases,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “Higher mortgage rates will slow home buying demand over the course of 2022 and the Russia-Ukraine crisis will add short-term volatility to the bond market.”

A new home sale occurs when a sales contract is signed or a deposit is accepted. The home can be in any stage of construction: not yet started, under construction or completed. In addition to adjusting for seasonal effects, the January reading of 801,000

—> *New Home Sales story continues on page 14*



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## NEW MEMBERS & RENEWALS

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lukegrothues@mgbuildingmaterials.com

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(737) 346-9637  
ericvogel@vogelbuilders.net

**Joe Shoemake**

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(830) 777-9473  
jshoemake1194@gmail.com

#### CUSTOM HOME BUILDERS

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**JB Sales, Inc.**

**Zbranek Holt Custom Homes**  
**Jeter Custom Homes**  
**JB REI**  
**Hill Country Propane, Inc.**

—> *New Home Sales story continued from page 13*

units is the number of homes that would sell if this pace continued for the next 12 months.

New single-family home inventory was up 34.4% over last year, rising to a 6.1 months' supply, with 406,000 available for sale. However, just 37,000 of those are completed and ready to occupy. The median sales price rose to \$423,300 in January from \$395,500 in December, and is up more than 13%

compared to a year ago, due primarily to higher development costs, including materials.

Regionally, on a year-to-date basis, new home sales fell in three regions, down 10.7% in the Northeast, 3.7% in the Midwest and 7.4% in the South. New home sales were up 1.2% in the West.

*Courtesy of NAHB*

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# MEMBERSHIP NEWS

While some of you may already know me from the freelance photography and web design work I've done with the Hill Country Builders Association, I'm excited to officially introduce myself to you as your new Membership/Media Coordinator and Melissa's operations sidekick.

My name is Gina Graves and I'm originally from New Braunfels and a 2002 graduate of Canyon High School, so I'm doubly excited about contributing to an organization that is so heavily involved in improving my Hill Country home.

I've owned two small businesses in New Braunfels since 2012, and I'm passionate about helping other

businesses be successful. I know this organization and its networking power can be the catalyst for your own success.

You can contact me directly if you have questions about your membership, or have new members to send our way. You'll also see me helping with HCBA events, sometimes in an official capacity and other times with a camera in my hand, and I look forward to meeting each of you along the way. I'm available by email at [info@hillcountrybuilders.org](mailto:info@hillcountrybuilders.org).

## GINA GRAVES

HCBA Membership / Media Coordinator

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