

*The Hill Country*

JULY | 2022

# ARTICLE

**Casino Night  
Golf Tournament  
STAR Awards**

**COVER:** Keith Wing Custom Homes  
Photo by Matthew Niemann Photography



The Hill Country Builders Association Magazine

Photo Courtesy of Omni Custom Homes



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# NAHB Urges Congress To Act On Several Fronts To Ease Housing Affordability Crisis

Testifying at a Senate Finance Committee hearing today regarding the role of tax incentives in affordable housing, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) told Congress that the housing affordability crisis is far-reaching and will require action on several fronts, not just the tax arena.

“The housing affordability crisis is the result of failing to produce enough housing to match demand,” said NAHB Chairman Jerry Konter, a home builder and developer from Savannah, Ga. “If we are going to solve this crisis, we must drive down the cost to build as well as the cost to own or rent. Well-structured housing tax incentives can help us achieve this, but Congress needs to take broader action as well.”

Supply-side challenges including building material production bottlenecks, excessive regulations and labor shortages coupled with rising inflation and increased mortgage rates have exacerbated the housing affordability crisis by raising construction and home costs, particularly as they relate to the entry-level market.

“A year ago, nearly one-quarter of new homes were priced under \$300,000. Today, it’s 10%,” said Konter.

Recent housing data indicate the affordability crisis is worsening, as the Commerce Department reported yesterday that single-family housing starts fell below a 1 million annual pace in June and registered the lowest production level in two years. The lackluster housing report is in line with NAHB’s latest Housing Market Index (HMI), which shows builder confidence in the single-family housing market plunged 12 points in July, the largest single-month drop in the history of the HMI, except for the 42-point drop in April 2020.

Congress can take several steps to help reverse this trend. On the tax front, the changes brought by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act significantly reduced the number of taxpayers who itemize by doubling the standard deduction. This effectively changed the mortgage interest deduction into a tax benefit that is now geared primarily to wealthy households. “A better policy is to scrap the mortgage interest deduction in favor of a 15% tax credit claimed against mortgage interest and real estate taxes paid,” said Konter. “This homeownership tax credit would offer a more effective and progressive tax incentive, help first-time home buyers and young couples with growing families, spur job and economic growth, and keep the nation’s long-standing commitment to housing.”

Konter also urged lawmakers to strengthen the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit by enacting the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act to boost production of affordable rental housing. The bill would finance more than 2 million additional multifamily units over the next decade by increasing the credits allocated to each state and expanding

—> *Housing Affordability story continues on page 12*



# HCBA

## Member Highlight



**RICHARD LAUGHLIN**  
*Laughlin Homes & Restoration*

Our July Member Highlight is our Vice President of Trades, Richard Laughlin. Richard has been a member of the HCBA for over 25 years, and he is such an important component to the Board of Directors. He is one of the founding members of the Casa Uber Alles high school trades program in Fredericksburg and has given his time each year to head up this program. You may find him teaching kids on site, ensuring all safety protocols are in place or making sure that everything is compliant. He has also been known to travel the state and speak with representatives or other schools about this amazing

program. Richard is certainly the backbone to Casa Uber Alles and with the help of its founders, it has become a nationally recognized program winning numerous awards along the way.

Richard has owned Laughlin Homes + Restoration for 38 years. He is a custom home builder specializing in handcrafted custom homes along with historic restorations throughout the Hill Country. Richard enjoys doing design/build and loves the personal interaction with clients. He feels it is a true honor to build someone's home. Richard's vision is the epitome of the Texas Hill Country, and he strives to preserve the history and integrity of our area.

Richard, thank you for your hard work and dedication to the HCBA and for sharing your passion to educate the youth on our industry. We appreciate all that you do!

**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).**

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.

2022 | Hill Country Builders Association

# PARADE of HOMES

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OCTOBER  
15<sup>th</sup> ★ 16<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> ★ 23<sup>rd</sup>





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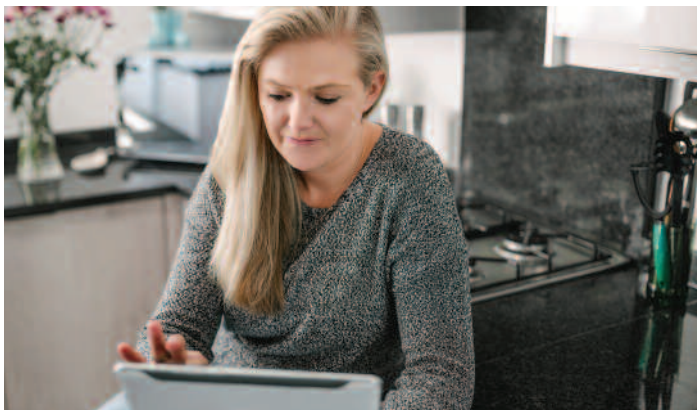
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# Use These New Videos From NAHB To Promote Construction Trade Careers

To help recruit the next generation of residential construction professionals, NAHB has updated its short videos promoting various trade careers and added three new ones that HBAs, home builders, and trade contractors can use to spread the word about the rewarding careers available in home building.

Many jobs in residential construction pay the equivalent - if not more - than jobs requiring similar experience levels and a college degree. Residential electricians, for example, earn an average of \$61,000+ in the United States. And these careers begin with no or minimal student loan debt.

NAHB has updated its videos promoting the six most common trades and added three more: drywall installation, welding, and building systems technician.

The home building industry needs more skilled trades professionals to meet the demand for new homes and it's up to us to get the word out about these career paths. Even as we're entering a period of economic easing, all projections show continued strong demand for new housing, making home building a stable and lucrative career choice.

Access all nine videos on the Careers in Construction Trades video page on [nahb.org](http://nahb.org), or on the NAHB YouTube channel in this playlist. Watch the welding video below for an example of the videos and spread the word in your local community.

*Courtesy of NAHB*

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*Denim & Diamonds*  
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AUGUST

26

5:00-  
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# EXECUTIVE OFFICER

June and July were very eventful months for the Hill Country Builders Association. We had a great turn out at our Annual Golf Tournament that was held at the beautiful Horseshoe Bay Resort. Thank you, Heath Jackson for chairing this spectacular event and a huge thank you to our sponsors for being such a big part of this year's tournament.

July brought us to the Sunbelt Builders Show and TAB Board Meetings. This gave us a chance to hear about what is happening within our industry and what the forecast may look like for the rest of the year. The Builders show brought the latest trends and products for us to see first-hand.

During this weeklong conference we were able to attend the Star Awards. This event highlights the best within our industry and showcases their amazing work. Sterling Creek Builders took home seven awards for their outstanding work in various categories, Brother Sun Builders won Best 2021 Parade of Homes and the Fredericksburg High School's Casa Uber Alles trades program finished out the night winning Best Tiny House. Congrats to

all the winners, we are proud to have you as members! If you haven't made it to the Sunbelt Builders Show, we hope you can join us next year!

We finished up July with an amazing Mixer at Schumann Granite in Fredericksburg. It was wonderful to catch up with some of our members and network with new individuals as well. Owners, Ransom and Ashley Rust, hosted a top-notch event with great food, drinks and tons of raffle prizes. Thank you, Schumann Granite for being such incredible hosts, we can't wait until next year!

Our next event is the Casino Night for Youth Trades on August 26th. We will be hosting a Denim & Diamonds night on the town with heavy hors'devours, open bar, great raffle prizes and some gambling! There will be twelve gambling tables including Craps, Roulette, Poker and Blackjack along with other side games! So, ladies wear your flashiest cocktail attire and gentlemen wear your best denim, this is one you don't want to miss!

**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.

### PLATINUM



### GOLD







*Photo Courtesy of StrucSure Home Warranty Member, Artisan Creative Homes.*

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## 2022 ADVERTISING RATES

<b>FULL PAGE PREMIUM AD</b>  Premium placement on inside front or inside back cover  7.75" x 10.125"  6 Month Campaign  <b>\$350 / Month</b>	<b>FULL PAGE AD</b>  7.75" x 10.125"  6 Month Campaign  <b>\$300 / Month</b>	<b>HALF PAGE AD</b>  7.75" x 4.937"  6 Month Campaign  <b>\$250 / Month</b>	<b>QUARTER PAGE AD</b>  3.75" x 4.937"  6 Month Campaign  <b>\$150 / Month</b>	<b>BUSINESS CARD AD</b>  3.5" x 2"  6 Month Campaign  <b>\$75 / Month</b>
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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)**

—> *Housing Affordability story continued from page 3*

the number of affordable housing projects that can be built using private activity bonds.

NAHB also supports Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden's proposal for a Middle-Income Housing Tax Credit, which addresses a growing need for affordable workforce rental housing. Konter also urged Congress to address the many housing tax incentives that are not indexed for inflation, such as the capital gains exclusion on the sale of a home, and asked lawmakers to reconsider the current limits on the state and local taxes deduction to help home owners ease cost burdens in high-tax states.

Outside of the tax arena, NAHB is urging Congress to take the following steps to make housing more affordable for home owners and renters alike:

- Call on the Biden administration to suspend tariffs on Canadian lumber imports into the U.S. that are contributing to unprecedented price volatility and raising housing costs and to immediately enter into negotiations with Canada on a new softwood lumber agreement.
- Reduce burdensome regulations that account for nearly 25% of the price of building a single-

—> *Housing Affordability story continues on page 17*



**H/C**  
HILL COUNTRY  
BUILDERS  
ASSOCIATION

## GET INVOLVED!

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- WORK ALONGSIDE LOCAL BUILDING PROFESSIONALS
- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- HELP RESTORE PRIDE AND REINVIGORATE THE BUILDING TRADES INDUSTRY

Casa Über Alles was created by the Hill Country Builders Association to the work with local area high schools' CTE Building Trades education programs to give students hands-on experience and on-the-job knowledge.

It is imperative that we enable our next generation of builders and tradesmen to pursue further education. This ensures our youth will understand all aspects of the building process and take pride in seeing a complete home project to its entirety.

To become part of the CASA ÜBER ALLES program, please reach out to Richard Laughlin, HCBA's Vice President of Trades, Ben Fuller & John Akin, Project Supervisors or the HCBA office.

**Billie Pride, Über Alles!**



RICHARD L. | [RL@HILLCOUNTRYBUILDER.COM](mailto:RL@HILLCOUNTRYBUILDER.COM)  
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# MEMBERSHIP

## NEW MEMBERS & RENEWALS

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# MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The mountains of school supplies at Target rudely reminded me that summer is quickly coming to a close. If you're eager to make the best of these last few weeks with your loved ones, I suggest exploring your NAHB member savings to purchase tickets to some fantastic entertainment options:

- **Up to 55% off at Sea World San Antonio**
- **Over 30% off at Jurassic Quest**
- **45%+ off at Fiesta Texas**

- **20%+ off at iFly Austin**
- **Discounted movie tickets**
- **MUCH MUCH MORE**

Browse these discounts and more at <https://memberdeals.com/nahb/>. This is just one of the many benefits you get with your membership with the HCBA.

**GINA GRAVES**

HCBA Membership / Media Coordinator

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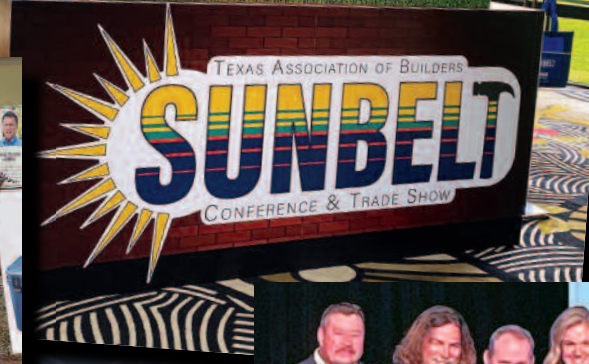
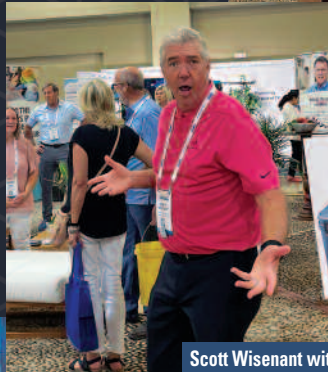
Colby Duke with Hotchkiss Insurance and Matthew Schumann with Schumann Granite enjoy a round of washers at the Sunbelt Conference.



Colby Duke with Hotchkiss Insurance at the Sunbelt Conference.



Scott Wisenart with StrucSure Home Warranty at the Sunbelt Trade Show.



Congratulations to Fredericksburg High School and our Casa Uber Alles program for their award at the Star Awards: Best Tiny House.



Congratulations to Sterling Creek Builders for taking away 7 awards at the TAB Star Awards.  
 -Best Kitchen Under \$500K  
 -Best New Custom Home Under \$500K  
 -Best Overall Interior Design Under \$500K  
 -Best Specialty Room Up to \$750K  
 -Best Owner's Suite \$500K - \$750K  
 -Best Outdoor Living Space \$500K - \$750K  
 -Best New Custom Home \$500K - \$750K



Congratulations to Brother Sun Builders for winning 2021 Best Parade of Homes, Custom Builder.

—> Housing Affordability story continued from page 12

family home and more than 40% of the cost of a typical multifamily development.

- Help ease a chronic construction labor shortage that is delaying home building projects and increasing construction costs by promoting and funding job training programs to prepare individuals for

careers in home building.

- Act to ease production bottlenecks that have contributed to home building material costs rising 19% year-over-year.

Courtesy of NAHB

2022 | Hill Country Builders Association

# PARADE of HOMES

## ABOUT THE PARADE OF HOMES

The Hill Country Parade of Home Tour welcomes visitors from all over the state and beyond for two weekends every year in October. Attendees will experience the latest in Hill Country living. Any size and style of home is welcome in the HCBA Parade of Homes, provided it is submitted by an HCBA builder member in good standing. New, showcase model and remodeled homes are welcome to enter. Each entry is featured in all Parade publications, television, signage and across HCBA social media.

## WHY BE A PART OF OUR PARADE?

- ★ Builders average 6 referrals per Parade
- ★ Featured in Parade Magazine and website
- ★ Homes are professionally judged and awarded
  - ★ Thousands of Parade attendees
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