

ACADIANA BUILDER

A man and a woman are standing in a modern kitchen. The woman is wearing a blue denim dress and has her hand on her hip. The man is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and dark jeans. The kitchen features a large island with a marble countertop and a dark blue cabinet with a white X-pattern. There are three pendant lights hanging from the ceiling, and a range hood is visible in the background. The ceiling has a white shiplap design and recessed lighting.

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Publisher's Note

Spring is in full swing here in Acadiana, the season of light, energy and growth. It is the time for planting and cultivating, regenerating, nurturing and tending. How is your own personal garden? How are you taking these changes of seasons and applying them in your own life? What are you doing to develop and grow to improve your services and rewards? Not just in monetary terms, but in happiness, fulfillment, peace of mind and

stronger, long lasting relationships both personally and professionally. The best way to increase growth externally is to develop yourself and your abilities. Spring is a great time to look around and observe and subsequently evaluate what you need to tend in your own life.

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor."

-Vince Lombardi

It is my pleasure to feature Eric Mautner of New Life Homes. Eric builds homes throughout Acadiana. "My goal is to provide home ownership to not only the wealthy but also to everyday, average people. Home ownership is a means of improving the livelihood of an entire community."

Thank you again to the suppliers and sub-contractors who continue to inform me of the builders worthy of the cover story.

Enjoy,
April Becquet

*Please pass me around the office.
Acadiana Builder makes great reading material for anyone interested in the building market.*

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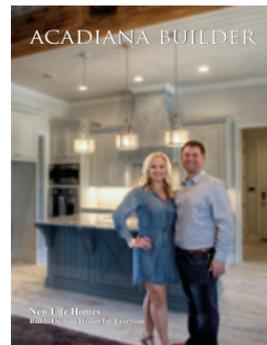
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ABOUT GMFS:

GMFS, LLC opened its Lafayette Branch location in Spring 2014 under the management of Aimia "Mimi" Doucet. Since bringing the Louisiana based Mortgage Company to the Acadiana area, Mimi has added four additional Loan Originators to her team to better serve the area. GMFS-Lafayette is committed to great service to our customers, builders, agents and referral partners. We are proud to offer One Time Close Construction Loan and Renovation Loan Programs that benefits both the builder and the borrower. We are a local company, with local Loan Originators available 24/7 to serve Acadiana!

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One time close New Construction and Renovation Products available

Builder Qualifications

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Maximum cost of Renovation not to exceed \$125,000



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Photo by Virtual Showcase

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Photo by Virtual Showcase

New Life Homes Builds Custom Homes for Everyone

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Eric Mautner, owner of New Life Homes, chose his company name carefully. Not only has homebuilding offered him a new life, but building a home for a family who will start a new life in that home excites him.

“My goal is to provide home ownership to not only the wealthy but also to everyday, average people. Home ownership is a means of improving the livelihood of an entire community.”

“People think you have to be wealthy to build a custom home. They don’t realize that they can have a custom house in a very affordable price range. Any house that I build,

whether it’s \$250,000 or \$750,000, has custom features.”

Mautner said his customers have options for every aspect of the home – window colors, cabinets, paint, countertops, brick selection, and shingle colors, even round sheet rock corners versus square sheet rock corners. And, yes, he also customizes closets, even on pre-sold homes.

“I get a sense of accomplishment taking an empty piece of land and filling that space with a home customized for those owners, a place where they will create their own memories. I get a real sense of happiness seeing people move into

their finished house, to see the smiles on their faces. People love it. I love it.”

Eric captures the excitement of each home’s closing by taking lots of photographs. He typically posts some of those photos on his company’s Facebook page because he’s found that social media complements New Life Homes’ word-of-mouth advertising and website. Eric himself manages his company’s Facebook page. He admits keeping up with Facebook takes a lot of time, but “that’s the way of the world these days.”

His philosophy is to focus on
Continued on Page 12

Home Builders Association Builders Risk Program

Builders Risk is that property coverage you need while you are building that new home for a pre-sold client, or building as a new spec home for sale. Things happen-hurricanes, storms, lightning, vandalism, theft, plainly things that can cause financial loss to you and your business. Your bank or lender will require it, and they will want to be named on your policy. The Home Builders Association exclusive Builders Risk Insurance Program was introduced in November of 2010, to the Louisiana Home Builders Association (LHBA).

The program is written by an admitted insurance carrier that has been rated by AM BEST as A++, and a Financial strength rating of XV (\$2 Billion plus). A few of program enhanced coverage that may be important to you;

- Occupancy clause 90 days prior to sale.

- \$ 2,000,000 per structure limit without underwriting approval.

- \$ 5,000,000 catastrophic policy limit.

- Additional reporting period of 12 months after first year.

Reasons that you should consider using the program;

- Reduced premium costs to the builder. In most cases we can show the builder a 20-30% savings in premium costs. It is estimated that since 2010, the program has saved

participating builders over \$1,000,000 in combine Builders Risk insurance premiums.

- This program is exclusive to HBA Builder Members. This program only enhances the coverage available exclusively to our Members just like the Homebuilders SIF (Workers Compensation Insurance Program).

- Your savings could pay for your LHBA Membership dues.

- The LHBA and your local HBA Chapter realize non-dues revenue from this program. In fact since 2010 the program has generated in excess of \$ 150,000 in revenue for the LHBA, and over \$25,000 to local HBA Chapters. By means of memberships, sponsorships, and other non-dues support.

Our program is just another valuable program designed for the LHBA Builder, to benefit from their membership in the Louisiana Home Builders Association. Our program can be accessed through your current agent if they are appointed to represent the program, we currently have over 32 Insurance agencies appointed in the State of Louisiana. Call to see if this program is right for you, contact us today. Thank You and we look forward to hearing from you.



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LHBA Remodelers Announces Winners of the Remodeling Excellence Awards



Kitchen Remodel under \$50,000
1st Place -Chester Development/JLV Construction – New Orleans, LA

The Louisiana Home Builders Remodelers Council has announced the winners of its 2nd Annual Remodeling Excellence Awards for 2015 at the LHBA Installation and Awards Banquet in Bossier City, Louisiana.

The winners of the Louisiana Remodeling Excellence Awards are listed in the four categories judged by industry representatives.

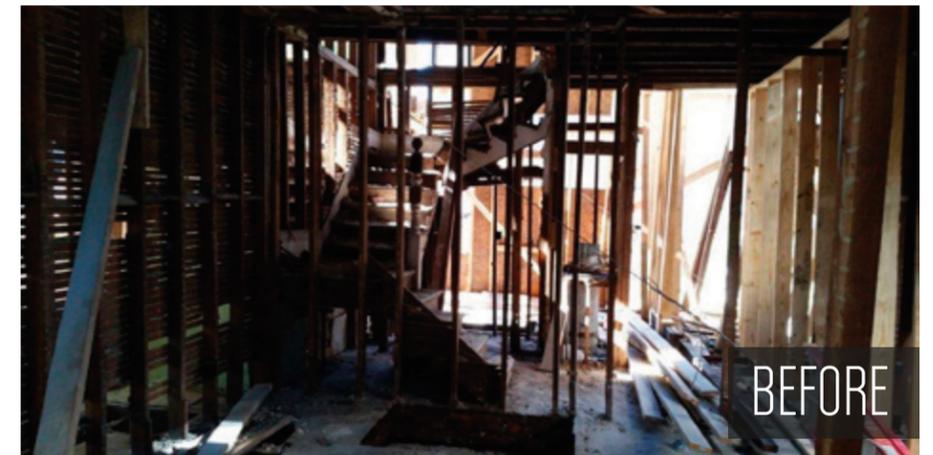
Kitchen Remodel under \$50,000

1st Place - Chester Development/JLV Construction – New Orleans, LA

Kitchen Remodel over \$50,000

1st Place – JEB Design/Build, LLC Shreveport, LA

2nd Place – Quality Home Repair of LA, LLC - New Orleans, LA



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AFTER

Kitchen Remodel over \$50,000
2nd Place – Quality Home Repair of LA, LLC -New Orleans, LA



AFTER

Bathroom Remodel over \$20,000
1st Place - JEB Design/Build, LLC – Shreveport, LA



BEFORE

For more information and to view photos visit our Facebook page: LREA Louisiana Remodeling Excellence Awards.



BEFORE

Bathroom Remodel under \$20,000
1st Place – Chester Development/ JLV Construction – New Orleans, LA

– Shreveport, LA
2nd Place – JEB Design/Build, LLC – Shreveport, LA
Honorable Mention – Quality Home Repair of LA, LLC – New Orleans, LA

Bathroom Remodel over \$20,000
1st Place - JEB Design/Build, LLC

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Continued from Page 7
 quality, service and value. Customer satisfaction is very important to Mautner, which is one reason he tries to make the building process as painless as possible for his clients. He's found that customers appreciate his providing them with options and a timeline for decisions they'll need to make.

Mautner is proud to offer a 2-10 warranty ("The best in the business") on his homes. The company is also HUD and VA approved. He also doesn't turn his back on his customers after the sale. He wants his customers to think, "Yes, if I would do it again, he would be the one to call."

He finds that customers appreciate being able to deal with the builder directly. He is the salesman, the general manager, the superintendent and even the financier at times.

Wearing so many hats makes for long days and limits the number of homes he builds, but he said his customers don't have to wait for the builder to make a decision, which they might if he had superintendent as an intermediary. "There's no 'I'll check with him and see what he says.'



Photo by Virtual Showcase

They're dealing with the guy who's building the house. My company's success is directly related to my and sub-contractors' ability to deliver a product. My subs, in my opinion, are some of the best in the business."

However, Eric does have some



Photo by Virtual Showcase

"....I'll always be part of those families' lives. I'm giving these people a new life...."



assistance from his family and others. His wife Laura helps with a lot of the design elements – picking colors and interiors – on his spec homes, he said. His 14-year-old stepson Collin helps clean up job sites in the summer. Paige Gary Design is one of the interior design companies he uses.

New Life Homes typically builds 10-12 houses a year, according to its owner, who is a Youngsville native. "I'm not a mass producer. I try to do eight custom homes a year, with spec homes filling in the gaps in the schedule."

Mautner partners with private investors or banks for many of his spec homes. He builds spec homes in established subdivisions where he's confident the house will sell quickly. He seldom builds multiple homes in the same subdivision, although he has built four houses in a subdivision in

Meaux.

He builds all over the Acadiana area – New Iberia to Breaux Bridge to Crowley – in the area south of I-10. While most custom homebuyers will have a lot already, he offers a different way to custom build if a customer doesn't have a lot already. He will offer a turnkey package if the customer is approved and the criteria are met.

He said he offers in-house financing because some people are qualified to buy a home, but they can't qualify to build. He acknowledges that not every builder will take out a loan for a customer, but he's dedicated to getting as many people as possible into custom homes.

"I just build homes as they come. I don't try to appeal to a certain group of buyers, such as first-time

homebuyers, because I feel like that limits your appeal. It goes back to my goal of being able to build someone a home where they can make memories."

His homes range from 1,700 to 3,800 sq. ft. of living space. He said it typically takes six months to complete a smaller home and perhaps as long as a year to complete a larger home because of the level of customization those homeowners demand.

His five-year business plan includes developing a subdivision in the Lafayette area.

Mautner learned homebuilding first on the supplier side. His father bought a lumberyard called Parish Lumber & Supply in 2001, when Eric was studying chemical engineering at Louisiana State University. Eric just fell in love with the building process

more than the engineering process and changed his mind about pursuing a career in the oil fields.

After ten years and a soured economy, the senior Mautner shut down the lumber yard business, and Eric transitioned into building, first constructing a couple of spec homes with a partner under the name of New Life Homes. He dissolved that partnership but kept the name New Life Homes. He said he really liked the name, and besides, he was building a new life for himself.

Eric Mautner enjoys his work as a builder, but the 12-hour work days do make it challenging for him to find time to spend with his family, which includes Kaylee, 11, and Nolan, 7, in addition to Collin. While the summer months provide the more free time for many people, for a builder those are usually the busiest months. He also doesn't have much time to enjoy his hobbies of hunting, fishing and going to the beach.

But he recognizes that the only time most of his customers can meet is in the evenings or on Saturdays, so he's committed to long days and short weekends. "It's a demanding job in a demanding industry."

"The thing I keep in mind, the thing that motivates me, is that I'll always be part of those families' lives. I'm giving these people a new life. They're never going to forget me. Whether they stay in the house for four years or forty, I'll always be a part of that memory."

You may contact New Life Homes, LLC, at 337-856-5733 (office) or 337-962-1800 (cell) or email at newlifelifehomesllc@yahoo.com.

You may also contact the company at www.newlifelifehomesllc.com



\$250K Donated to Local Shelter Organizations 2015 Home for the Holidays Proceeds Distributed



Home for the Holidays recently contributed one quarter of a million dollars to local, shelter-related charities, made possible by record ticket sales during the 2015 campaign.

Home for the Holidays is an annual project of the Acadian Home Builders Association (AHBA) and KATC-TV 3 in which AHBA members construct a new, high-end home, raffle it off and donate the proceeds to local non-profit shelter organizations.

"Despite uncertainty in the oil market, the people of Acadiana showed their overwhelming generosity by purchasing a record breaking 6,016 tickets last fall," said Phil Melancon, Home for the Holidays President. "Due to this huge success, we were proud to be able give \$250,000 to our adopted charities."

This year's project brought the total amount of donations to \$1,739,000 since the project's inception eleven years ago.

A reception was held in February

to distribute the proceeds from the 2015 Home for the Holidays to local Acadiana charities and educational programs. Home for the Holidays President Phil Melancon conducted the ceremony while members of the Board of Directors presented the checks.

"It was so exciting to give each charity a check for \$60,000," said Melancon. "Those are the biggest individual donations we have been able to give since Home for the Holidays was founded. It was an amazing feeling."

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Lafayette Habitat for Humanity, which has been a long-time adopted charity of AHBA, was the first organization of the night to receive a donation. Habitat's mission is to make the American dream of home ownership a reality for low income families in the Acadiana area. The organization builds simple, decent, affordable houses and then lends a no profit, no interest mortgage to a selected family to help them purchase one of the newly built homes at a very low monthly payment. In the 20+ years Habitat has been operating in Acadiana, they have built over 100 houses for their partner families.

A contribution was also given to Faith House of Acadiana, which serves an important role in Lafayette by providing protection and aid to abused women and their children. The shelter provides safe housing, food, clothing, health screenings,

medications, counseling and legal assistance to help mistreated individuals and their kids escape dangerous situations.

Home for the Holidays also made a donation to St. Michael Center for Veterans. The center is a division of Catholic Services of Acadiana and is an emergency and transitional housing program for homeless veterans. They offer supportive services including substance abuse

recovery, education, and employment and housing placement.

Healing House also received funds from the campaign. The organization provides support and education for grieving children, their caregivers and the Acadiana community. It is a safe place, where children who have experienced a death of a loved one can express their thoughts and feelings in a comfortable atmosphere through interactive play, expressive

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art work and discussion groups with peers experiencing the same trauma.

Finally, a donation of \$5,000 each was given to the John Harry Hebert Memorial Scholarship Fund through the University of Lafayette's UL Foundation and also to Building a Better Christmas, a charitable project of AHBA's Professional Women in Building.

Located in Tuscany subdivision, the 2015 Home for the Holidays was valued at over \$490,000 and was built by Mike Thompson Homes. The raffle was held and a winner drawn during a live KATC-TV 3 broadcast on December 9th. The lucky winner, Mr. Robin Baroni of Youngsville, took possession of the house in January.

To make a project like Home for the Holidays successful, it takes

numerous donors, laborers and behind the scenes volunteers. At the reception, these important individuals and companies were recognized for their generosity. Platinum sponsors Doug Ashy Building Materials, Tuscany Subdivision, Home Bank, News Talk 96.5 KPEL, Service Cadillac and Mike Thompson Homes were all recognized for their commitment to the project and Acadiana.

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NAHB, Business Groups Urge Congress to Act On Health Reimbursement Arrangements

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and a coalition of more than 160 business groups today sent a letter to House and Senate leaders commending them for championing bipartisan legislation that would reinstate the use of Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs) and calling on Congress to act promptly to pass this measure.

Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.) and Reps. Charles Boustany (R-La.) and Mike Thompson (D-Calif.) last summer introduced the Small Business Healthcare Relief Act (H.R. 2911 in the House and S. 1697 in the Senate). The legislation would help small businesses provide health care for their employees and protect employers against outrageous fines.

HRAs allow businesses to offer pre-tax dollars to insured employees to help pay premiums and other out-of-pocket costs associated with medical care and services. However, the IRS eradicated HRAs in 2013 and decreed that all employers who are voluntarily providing financial assistance to help employees pay for health care through an HRA are subject to fines of \$100 per day per employee. Over the course of a year, that fine would total \$36,500 per employee with a maximum fine of \$500,000 per company.

“It makes absolutely no sense for the IRS to punish small business owners who are trying to do the right thing by providing HRAs to help their employees to mitigate the rising cost

of health care coverage,” said NAHB Chairman Ed Brady, a home builder and developer from Bloomington, Ill. “Any health reform efforts should be geared toward helping hard-working American families. Restoring the use of HRAs will help achieve this goal by allowing home builders and other small businesses to help their employees to pay for health care costs.”

NAHB is spearheading the effort to enact HRA legislation and has worked closely with the Council for Affordable Health Coverage (CAHC) in this endeavor.

“In many cases, the IRS is giving small businesses an ultimatum,” said CAHC President Joel White. “Shut down medical coverage funding for your employees, or shut down your business altogether.”

In its letter to lawmakers, NAHB, CAHC and the diverse business coalition representing millions of American workers reminded lawmakers that the Small Business Healthcare Relief Act is a “bipartisan opportunity to improve affordable health care options for small businesses.”

The letter called on Congress to “move swiftly to pass this vital legislation so that more small employers can help their workers defray the high cost of insurance premiums and/or other out-of-pocket medical expenses.”



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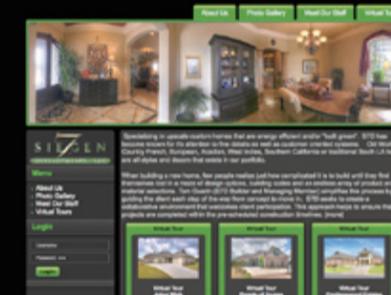


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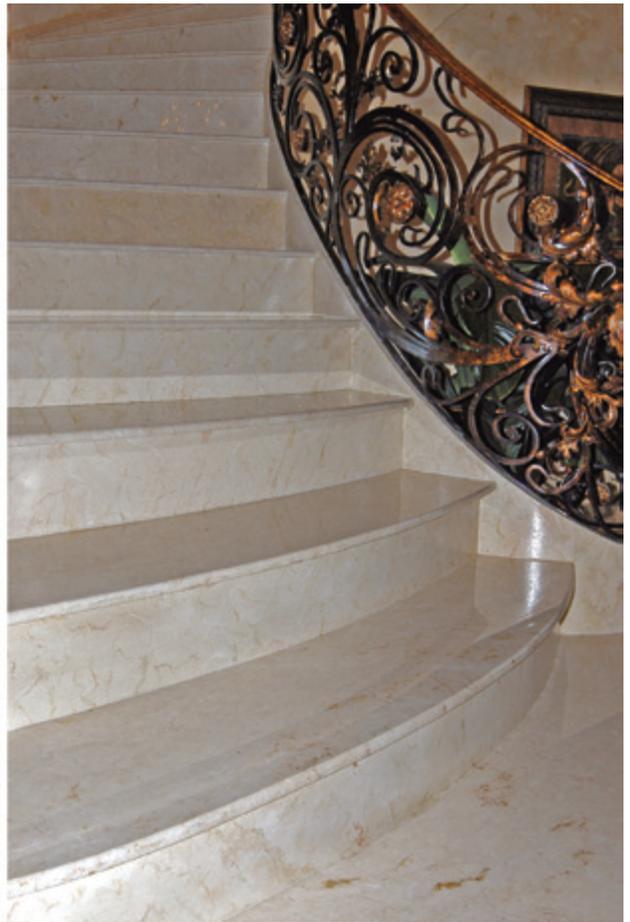


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