

VRMCA Member Wins NECSA Award

By Bob Nablo,
Director of Industry Services

The 2008 NECSA College & University (C&U) Program Representative of the Year has been awarded to Robert Marek of Roanoke Cement. Robert has been in the cement and concrete industry for 30 years, and with Roanoke Cement for 16 years. Robert is a stellar performer in the NECSA C&U Program, as well as in other NECSA promotional programs such as the NECSA USGBC Chapter Program and with the Virginia Ready Mixed Concrete Advisory Council (VRMCAC).

Robert is the NECSA C&U Representative to the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), where he promotes concrete construction to students by presenting the "Concrete in Construction" program to structural engineering students at the Annual Dinner, and participating in the VMI Career Fair.

Robert is also the NECSA C&U Representative to Virginia Polytechnic

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Innovative Green Home Wins Multiple Homearama Awards Builder Chuck Miller guarantees a \$115-a-month utility bill for this 6,571 square foot home

By J. Keith Beazley,
Director of Industry Services

The Tidewater Builders Association drew over 100,000 people for Homearama 2008 in Virginia Beach's Ashville Park subdivision on October 3-19. The annual showcase featured seven homes with the latest innovations in design, products, architectural features, and landscaping.

The home constructed by Miller

Custom Homes of Virginia Beach was the winner of multiple awards in this year's event. The home received the Excellence in Building Award, Most Environmentally Sensitive, Best Green Feature, and Best Usage of Concrete. Chuck Miller typically builds five to six custom homes per year and is the first builder in Tidewater to become certified as an EarthCraft Builder. EarthCraft is an innovative energy-efficient and environmentally conscious home building

program for builders subscribing to the requirements of "Green Building."

The Earthcraft certified green house, built of brick veneer over Polysteel insulating concrete forms, features green products such as solar panels that sell electricity back to the power company, greywater recycling system, geothermal HVAC, whole house backup generator, conditioned crawl space and attic, simulated slate 50-year recycled rubber shingles and tankless water heaters.

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Boxley
Roanoke, VA
Phone: 540-777-7600
lbullock@boxley.com

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Phone: 804-201-1015
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Phone: 757-591-9340
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Lafarge North America
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Phone: 757-647-9409
lee.flemming@lafarge-na.com

NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Mustafa Elias
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Dubrook Concrete Inc.
Chantilly, VA 20151
Phone: 703-327-4334 x 1121
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Phone: 804-233-1888 ext. 304
cwodehouse@flarock.com

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Roanoke Cement
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Phone: 540-915-0390
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mprillaman@boxley.com

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NECSA Award Winner

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Institute. He incorporates NECSA Promotion Partners in his promotion efforts, teaming with Bob Nablo of VRMCAC to attend the Construction Builders Fair at Virginia Tech. Robert handed out PCA College Literature CDs to the faculty and students. Robert Marek and Bob Nablo also attended the grand opening of Bishop-Faverao Hall, which is the new Building Construction Department of Virginia Tech.

Robert's promotion efforts don't stop at the C&U program—he is also a star in the NECSA USGBC Chapter Program. Robert was the first rep to host a plant tour for the Southwest Chapter of the USGBC, which was incorporated into

the Chapter's June Meeting. The event had over 60 attendees, and included a reception, several short presentations and the cement plant tour. Its success can be summarized by the remarks from Nell Boyle, Chair of the Southwest Virginia Chapter of the USGBC: "A tour like this allows our members to be exposed to and educated about how plants can modernize and become more green."

Always going the extra mile, Robert volunteers for many other promotional activities. He is a member of the Roanoke Valley Cool Cities Coalition, and gives pervious concrete presentations to organizations such as the VA Council of Trout Unlimited. NECSA wishes to thank Robert for all his hard work. ❖

VRMCA



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Southwest Council Becomes Parade of Homes Gold Sponsor



By Bob Nablo,
Director of Industry Services

In late summer the Roanoke Regional Home Builders Association came to the Southwest Virginia Council with an urgent request for assistance with their upcoming Parade of Homes. Because of the slowdown in residential construction, the RRHBA desperately needed sponsors and / or materials for the event scheduled for mid-October. RRHBA's initial request was for the SW VA Council to donate one or more concrete driveways for homes on display. A hastily drawn-together Council committee decided that for several reasons this was not feasible for 2008. The most prominent reasons for declining were financial and time restrictions. Having already passed the halfway point in the year, the Council no longer had the funds to donate major projects, and the difficulty in arranging willing driveway contractors who could, and would, do excellent work was too much to overcome. The committee offered to look into providing concrete driveways for the 2009 event.

The RRHBA then made a second request: because they had lost funding from several of their major sponsors, would the SW VA Council consider financing a sponsorship? Hurried discussions determined that although Council funds were limited, several members agreed to contribute special, one-time money toward becoming this year's only Gold Sponsor of the Parade of Homes. For this sponsorship these members would receive particular mention in the event publicity and would be able to place advertising at the Kickoff Dinner, the Opening Ceremonies and at the home sites. This year there were 24 homes included in the tour, ranging in price from under \$200,000 to about \$800,000.

Once again the Parade of Homes was a notable success, with several thousand attendees touring the homes. Chandler Concrete, Boxley Materials, Franklin Ready Mix, Roanoke Cement Co., The SEFA Group and Solomon Colors received special notice for their contributions—and a big "Thanks!" from RRHBA and the Southwest Council. ❖

Market Crash Slams Construction

Associated Construction Publications

"The drop in construction employment accelerated in September and will get much worse unless credit markets reopen," Ken Simonson, chief economist for The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), said October 3 following a Bureau of Labor Statistics report that showed construction lost 35,000 jobs last month. "State governments from California to Maine have been shut out of the bond market, while developers have had bank credit windows slammed shut on their fingers as they reached for their loans.

"All types of construction shed workers in September, following an uptick in nonresidential hiring in August," Simonson noted. "Another ominous sign is that architectural and engineering services employment—a harbinger of demand for future construction—rose until recently but stalled this summer and fell in September.

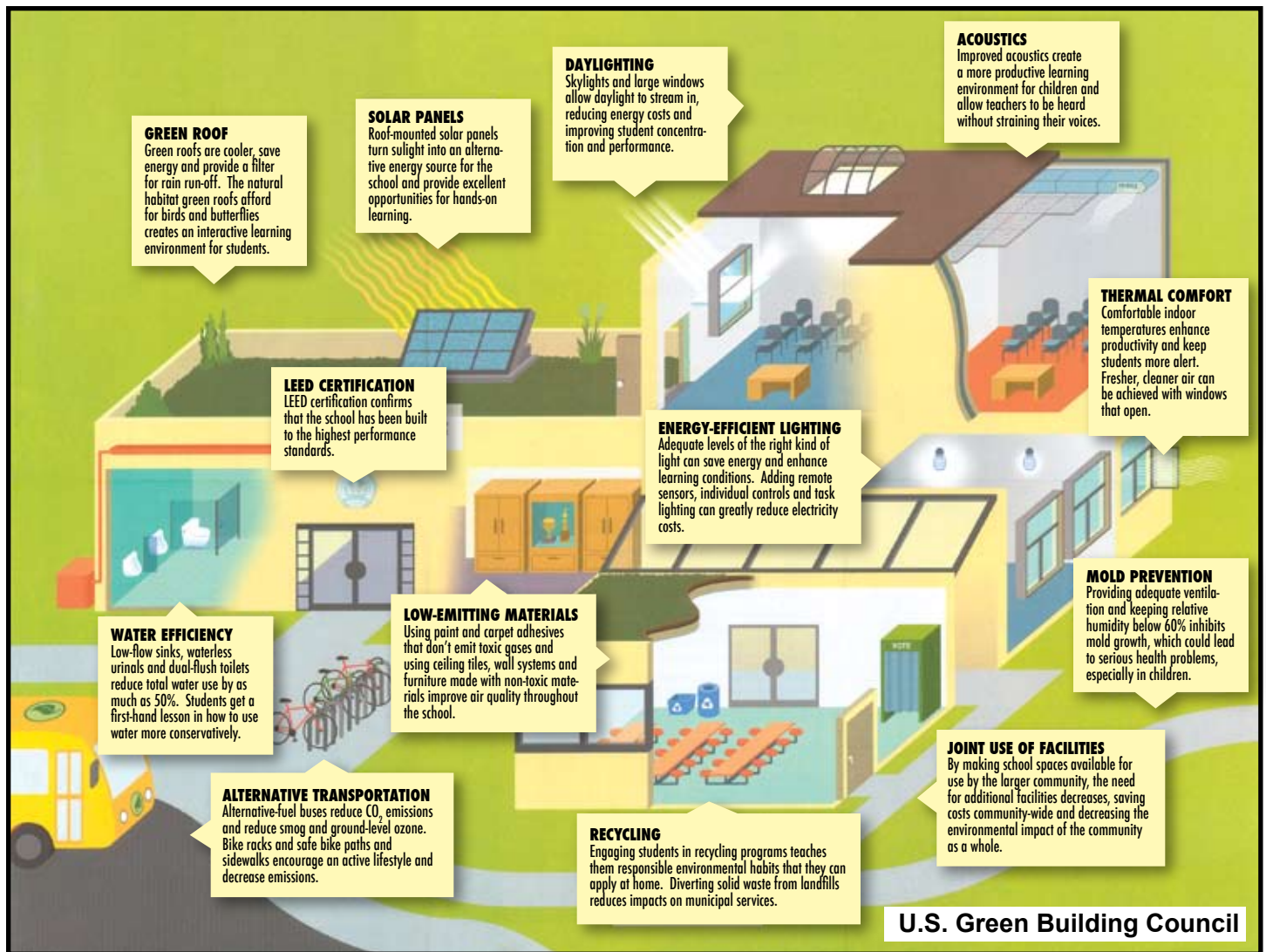
"Further, these numbers only reflect payrolls as of September 12, before

the takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac triggered the current freeze in bank lending," Simonson observed. "Unless Congress adopts a rescue plan immediately, the October report—due out just after Election Day—will be much uglier.

"The bad news on employment comes on the heels of a report from the Census Bureau on Wednesday that private nonresidential construction spending fell by nearly 1 percent in both July and August," Simonson stated.

"State and local construction spending was up, but I fear that will change as more states each week announce budget shortfalls. Highways and schools—60 percent of public construction spending—are in particular jeopardy, because of drops in fuel and property taxes.

"Even the private categories with the best chance of growth in 2009, such as power plants, refineries, hospitals and higher education, have slowed and risk losing access to affordable loans," Simonson concluded. "The 2009 construction employment and spending outlook will be very bleak unless credit markets revive promptly." ❖



Concrete Role in Green & LEED Certified Schools

By Hessam Nabavi,
Director of Industry Services

The U.S. Green Building Council's National Capital Chapter recently sponsored the first one-day summit to share best practices, success stories and available tools and resources for greening our schools. Sustainable Schools Summit drew hundreds of participants from Northern Virginia, District of Columbia and Maryland; teachers, school board members, elected officials, design directors, facility planners, and architects engaged in a dialogue about green school opportunities, benefits and costs.

The USGBC defines a Green school as a school building or facility that creates a healthy environment conducive to learning while saving energy, resources

and money. Twenty percent of America goes to school every day (55 million students and 5 million educators). Too many of these students and teachers attend schools that are inefficient and miss important opportunities to reduce operational costs, foster learning and protect student health. Public and private schools alike are realizing that going green is a no-brainer. If a green school saved \$100,000 per year in operational costs, that's roughly enough to hire two new teachers, buy 200 new computers or purchase 5,000 new textbooks. By promoting the design and construction of green schools, we can make a tremendous impact on student health, test scores, teacher retention, school operational costs and the environment.

Green School Health Benefits

Far too many schoolchildren spend six hours a day in facilities that just barely meet health and safety standards. Green schools are healthier for kids and more conducive to their education. Numerous studies have demonstrated direct benefits to student health and performance. Excellent indoor air quality means improved health for students, teachers and staff. A measured reduction in dangerous air-pollutants can prevent respiratory disease and premature mortality.

Green School Economic Benefits

Research also indicates that teachers are happier and more effective when they have the ability to control their

environments. Healthy, happy teachers save schools money. Green schools commonly report reductions in teacher absenteeism and teacher turnover. Over the lifetime of a school, that amounts to huge saving.

Green schools typically cost less than \$3 per square foot more to build, an investment that is paid back within a few years of operation. Over the lifetime of the school, the savings keep adding up. If all new school construction and school renovations went green starting today, energy savings alone would total \$30 billion over the next 10 years. A typical school facility lasts over 40 years, so if a green school were to save \$100,000 per year, then over the lifetime of a school building, what could the savings amount to? Do the math: Green schools make sense for students, teachers and the bottom line.

Green schools also use far less energy and water than traditional school buildings. Additionally, green schools lessen environmental impacts through responsible approaches to site, reduced demand on municipal infrastructure and increased recycling during and after construction. Like other green buildings, green schools decrease our reliance on fossil fuels, thus decreasing carbon dioxide emissions and other forms of harmful pollution.

Green School Learning Benefits

Studies show that all building occupants benefit from daylight and access to views. A study of 21,000 students showed a correlation between natural light and performance 20% faster progression in math, 26% faster in reading. Access to windows with views has also been found to increase performance by as much as 10%.

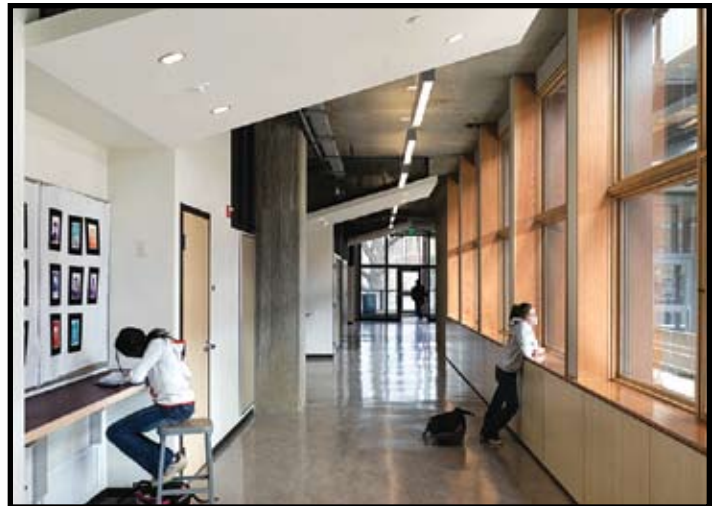
Another important benefit for building green schools is that students learn best when they are engaged and inspired. Imagine the learning potential when

the school building itself becomes an interactive teaching tool, educating the next generation of sustainable leaders through hands-on learning. Picture high school students learning about alternative energy from the solar panels on their roof, kindergarteners growing the organic vegetables they eat for lunch and middle school students studying ecosystems in their constructed wetlands. This is the green school experience. The school building is no longer just a vessel filled with students, teachers and books, but itself an opportunity for experiential learning and discovery.

Concrete Increases LEED Credits

The LEED for schools Green Building Rating System recognizes the unique nature of the design and construction of K-12 schools. Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, LEED for Schools is the recognized benchmark for green schools, with third-party reviews to ensure that schools are healthy for students, comfortable for teachers and cost effective. By addressing the uniqueness of school spaces and children’s health issues, LEED for Schools provides a comprehensive tool for school districts that wish to build green with measurable results. LEED for Schools is designed for use in the design and construction phases of a building. LEED for Schools facilitates and encourages project teams to implement an integrated design approach by using innovative materials from start to finish.

The US Green Building Council has set a goal to build a LEED Certified



School in each county in the next 5 years. The Ready-Mixed Concrete Industry can play a tremendous role—concrete can help schools to achieve LEED Certification. Using concrete in various applications can assist a project to receive 19 to 28 LEED credits (categories include: Sustainable sites, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, and innovation and design process).

For additional information about how concrete assists architects in reaching their goal of designing a LEED Certified School, please check the following literature by NRMCA, Ready Mixed Concrete Industry LEED Reference Guide, Concrete Solutions for Sustainable Development or www.nrmca.org. ❖

Financial Benefits of Green Schools (\$/ft ²)	
Energy	\$9
Emissions	\$1
Water and Wastewater	\$1
Increased Earnings	\$49
Asthma Reduction	\$3
Cold and Flu Reduction	\$5
Teacher Retention	\$4
Employment Impact	\$2
Total	\$74
Cost of Greening	(\$3)
Net Financial Benefits	\$71

“ . . . when it comes to schools, the question is no longer ‘should we build green?’ It’s ‘why wouldn’t we?’”

-Rick Fedrizzi
USGBC President, CEO and Founding Chair

Homearama Winner

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Builder Chuck Miller guarantees a \$115-a-month utility bill for this 6,571 square foot home with 5 bedrooms and 6 baths. It also offers amenities such as a meditation labyrinth, outdoor kitchen, steam shower in master suite, four covered porches, and conditioned wine room and safe room. Beautiful kitchen cabinets were crafted out of reclaimed heart pine taken from a North Carolina barn that was over a hundred years old.

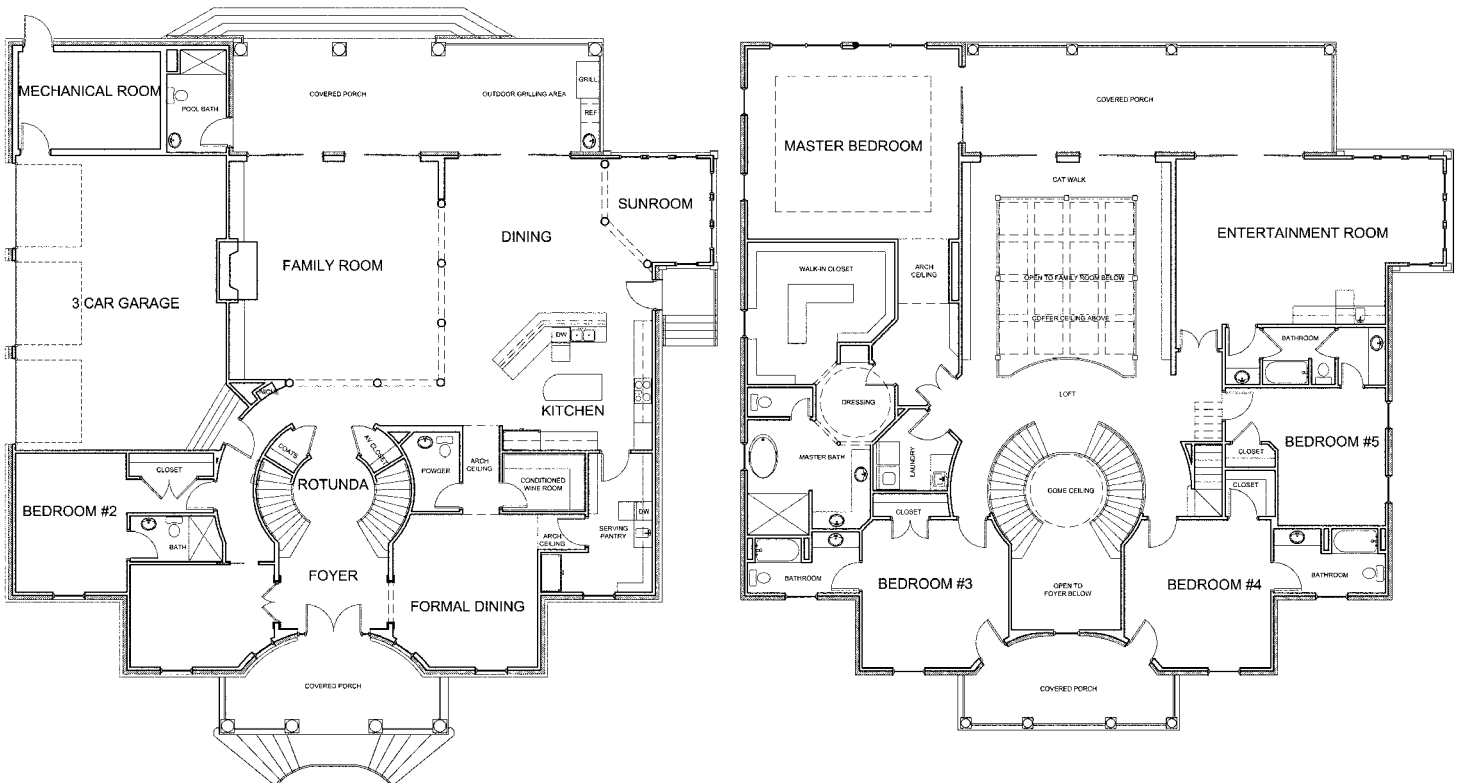
Air Cannon Safety Demonstration

The Tidewater Builder Association dedicated a five acre lot across from the Homearama Homes for the VRMCA Air Cannon and for the demonstration of wall strengths and storm safety. Hurricanes and tornados are very much a concern in the Hampton Roads area and this demonstration was very well attended during the event. Dominion Building Group, the local Polysteel distributor, helped with the building of



the walls and the demonstrations during the event. Wall sections were tested of brick veneer, cement siding, vinyl siding, and ICF walls and the crowd was shocked by the little protection received from conventional wall construction. The same ICF wall section was used during the entire two-week period but the other wall sections were destroyed and had to be replaced for each day's firing event.

While the Homearama 2008 was smaller than in past years due to the economy, the opportunity was greater for the awareness of concrete products and the benefits that are received from the usage of concrete products. A builder attending the event stated that with the public interest in "Green Building" and energy conservation, concrete is the product to use in today's market. ❖



(First and second floor plans from award winning design by Miller Custom Homes of Virginia Beach.)

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