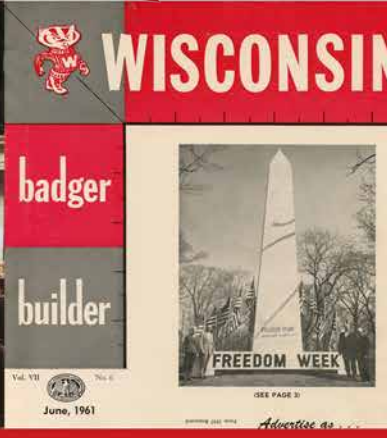
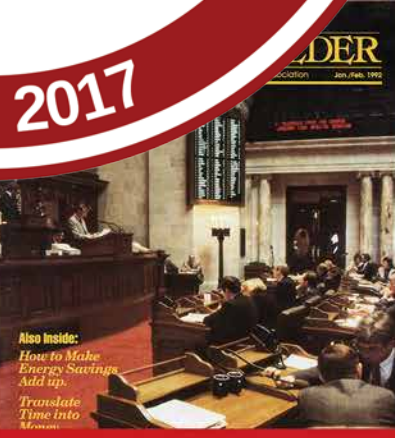
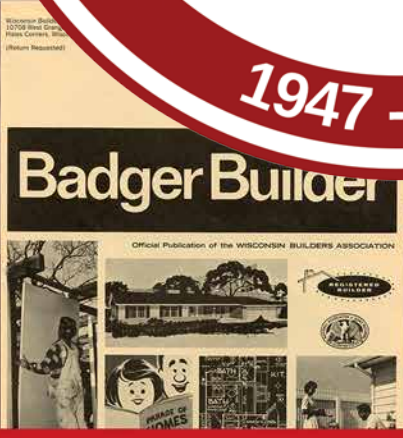
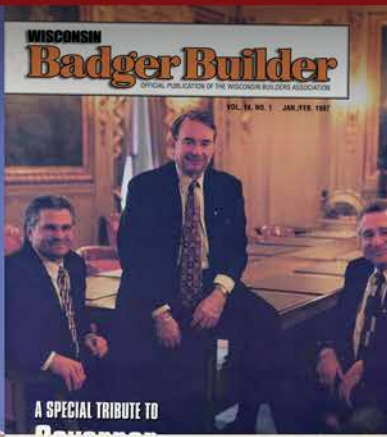
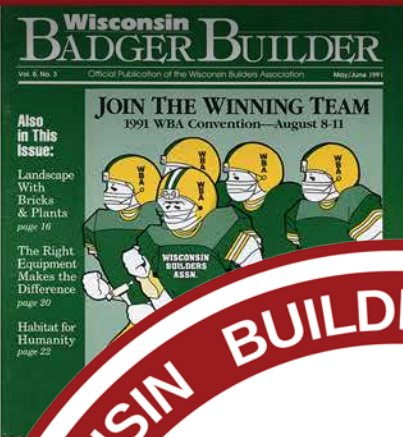


# WISCONSIN Badger BUILDER Official Publication of the Wisconsin Builders Association®

ISSUE 3, 2017



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# Reflections on the Past, Plans for the Future

This year the Wisconsin Builders Association is celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary! It is an incredible milestone, and we are proud of where the association came from, and—more importantly—where it's headed. Our Director of Communications has spent part of her time this past year pouring over old photos, *Badger Builder* back issues, and archives to piece together the history of our first 70 years, and this special edition of the *Badger Builder* is dedicated to those memories. (You can also check out even more at [wisbuild.org/70years](http://wisbuild.org/70years).)

Anniversaries such as these call for moments of reflection, and I find myself looking back at the impact the WBA has had on my business, on Wisconsin, and where the future lies for our association.

I'll admit, I really didn't realize how important my local and state builders associations were until I started getting involved after joining in 2011 (my father was a member for nearly 30 years), but, I can honestly say it was one of the best decisions I have made in my career. While many might think making time for your industry takes away from your business, I have found that to be far from the truth.

Knowledge, connections, and growth—these are what I've gained from my activity at the local, state, and national levels. As for knowledge, many members of this association are the owners or decision makers for their company, and their collective knowledge of this association is incredible. Being able to work with builders or suppliers who have seen massive shifts in the country, and learn how they handled those situations, is both fascinating and valuable. In addition, the professional and personal connections you gain when involved in an organization like this cannot be measured in terms of dollars, because—after all—how do you determine the value you place on a personal relationship, or knowing the right person to help you deal with a challenge? You simply cannot build those kinds of relationships if you are not actively engaging with fellow members. Lastly, my growth as a businessman through my involvement at all levels cannot be understated; giving back to an association often reveals areas for personal improvement, and I've raised my game as a result (and seen the dividends of my efforts in my own business).

Besides the benefits to my business, I also think about what the WBA has done for our state during my time as a member. This is an easy question to answer when you can simply look at our neighboring states—ones that do not share Wisconsin's pro-business philosophies—and see how that's turned out for them so far. While they are buried in rising taxes, budget deficits, and expensive code changes, we have been rolling back over-regulations and are currently at a historic low for unemployment. The WBA has been instrumental in shaping that legislation to be pro-home building, and, as a result, Wisconsin families have more affordable housing options.

As for the future of the WBA? With the historic announcement of Foxconn moving to Wisconsin and adding 13,000 new jobs, it looks bright. Landing large-scale employers is a terrific sign for our state for many years to come, and underscores that Wisconsin has indeed become a destination to live and work. With that said, the housing industry will need to rise to the challenge to provide affordable homes for this growing population, re-thinking home sizes and subdivision designs to meet the needs of new buyers along the way.

And, just like the last 70 years, the WBA will be there again to support affordable housing legislation, push back against burdensome over-regulations, and ensure a future skilled trades workforce to meet demands.



**David Belman**  
2017 WBA  
President

## Mission Statement

**A professional trade association, WBA advances the housing industry for members and consumers through government involvement, education and promotion.**

## Vision Statement

**Affordable, innovative and environmentally conscious homes accessible to all.**

## Motto

**"Protecting the American Dream"**



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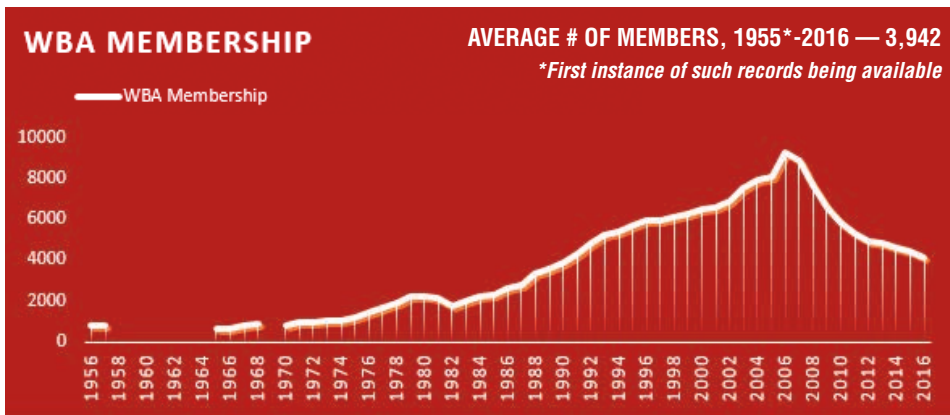
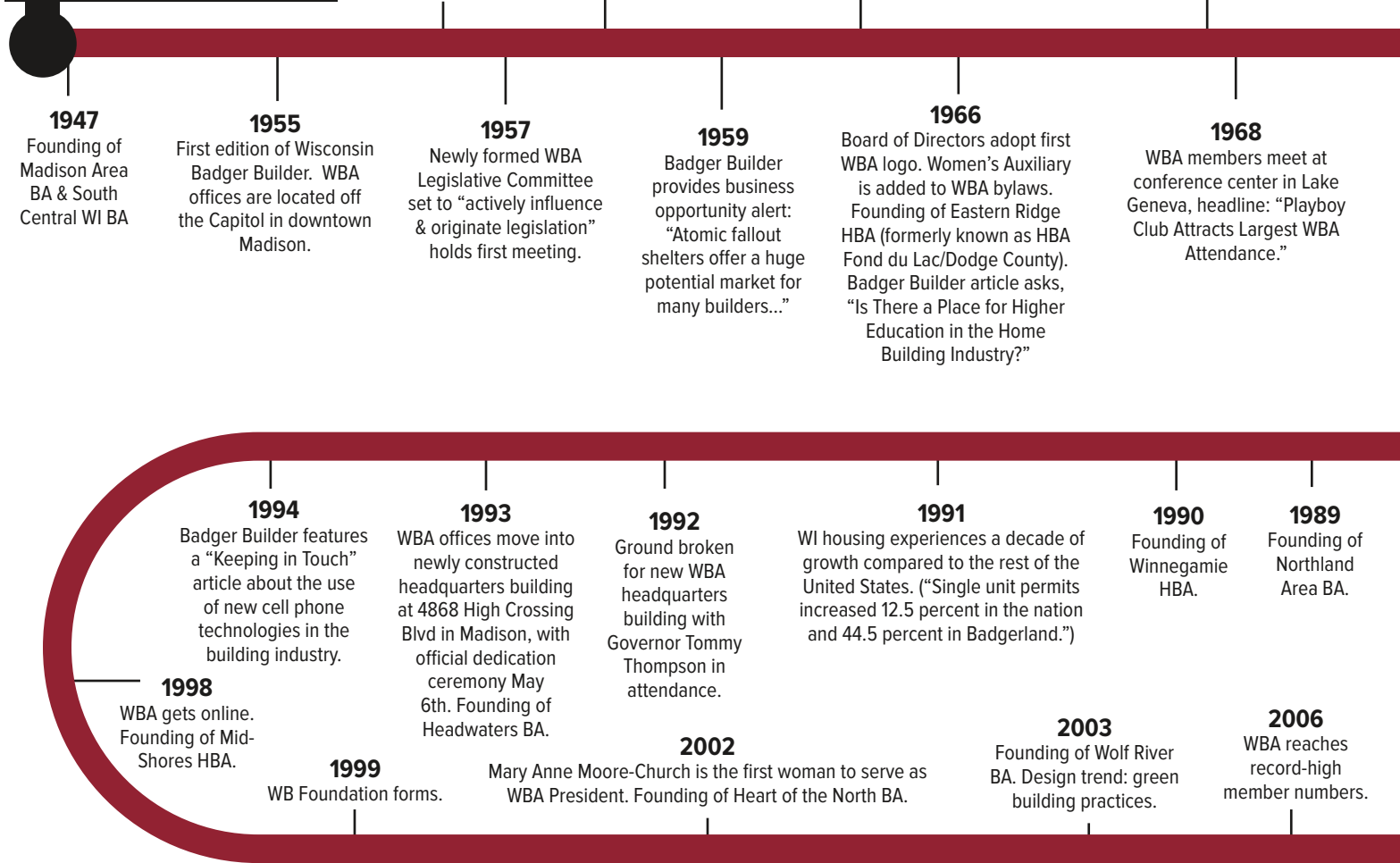
Member





# 70 Years of Protecting the AMERICAN DREAM

**Wisconsin Builders Association founded in 1947, receiving charter from NAHB on February 22nd. Metropolitan BA precedes state founding in 1942.**



"I firmly believe that the future is in our hands. Through continual, heavy involvement in the political process and close communications with each other and allied organizations, we can and will make a difference... I'm convinced that we have the strength, and the will, to solve our own problems and to chart our own course."

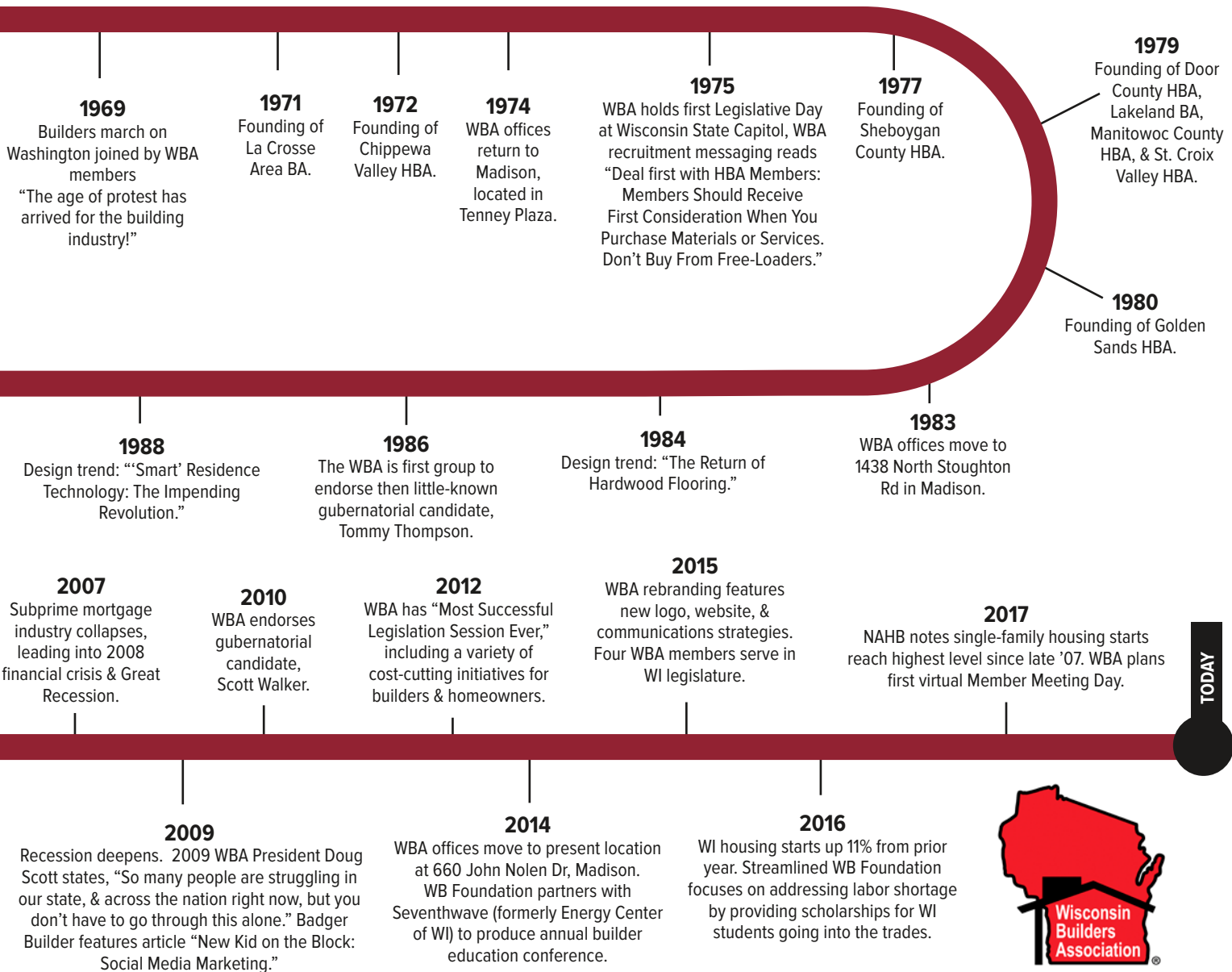
– 1984-85 WBA President Bryce Styza

**by Samantha Long, Director of Communications**

In celebration of the Wisconsin Builders Association’s 70 years of ensuring safe, affordable homes for Wisconsin families, we decided to do a deep dive into our history and find out a little more about where we came from and how we have grown. After all, learning from the past is a vital step to shaping the future, and we intend to be around for another 70 years and more!

At first glance, the task seemed overwhelming, as no such endeavor had been previously attempted. Boxes upon boxes of photos dating back to the 1950s, strewn about in no particular order, lay forgotten in storage. 58 years’ worth of *Badger Builder* back issues collected dust. Past meeting minutes and data about our members waited to be discovered, and some items were unfortunately lost to time. However, despite numerous obstacles, the story of our history slowly began to emerge and what a story it is! An inspiring tale underscored by countless everyday builders and affiliates working together—even during the toughest times—to make the home building industry better for all.

The timeline here represents just a handful of highlights in the WBA’s path to the present day. (To see a detailed history of our advocacy efforts, turn to page 10). More information, including photo collections, can be viewed at [wisbuild.org/70years](http://wisbuild.org/70years). We thank all members, past and present, for getting us where we are today—our journey would not be the same without you!



“Finally, permit me to state that in my many years of experience in business and association work, the year of 1957 shall be recorded as the most memorable and enjoyable year I have ever had.”

– 1957 WBA President Joseph E. Shaffron

View even more of our past at [wisbuild.org/70years](http://wisbuild.org/70years)



# Lunch with 1975 WBA President Herman Brandenburg

by **Samantha Long, Director of Communications**

In June, WBA staff had the privilege of catching up for lunch with WBA Past President Herman Brandenburg, who held several leadership positions within the WBA before becoming president of the association in 1975. Now 88 years young, Brandenburg shared memories of his time in the industry, the association, and how he's given back to the community since retirement.

Growing up on a farm, Brandenburg noticed he "had a knack for fixing up things," and looked to homebuilding as a more lucrative career than farming. In 1955, he took the plunge ("a bit of it was just kind of hoping it all worked out") and began building homes, with one of the first homes he built located in then-Monona Village, coming in at 1,248 square feet with 3 bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, dining, and living room, and an attached single-car garage. The cost for house and lot combined? \$18,900.

As Brandenburg's career progressed, he decided to get involved with the Madison Area Builders Association, primarily so he could participate in their Parade of Homes. However, he soon became interested in the politics of the home building industry, working to secure its future successes in Wisconsin.

Serving as a vice president for a number of years before becoming President in 1975, Brandenburg recalled traveling around the state to various local meetings, an NAHB convention in Houston where Lyndon B. Johnson spoke, and several lobbying trips to DC during Richard Nixon's tenure where builders addressed high-interest rates and high Canadian lumber prices (the latter of which he was surprised to discover is a hot-button issue again).

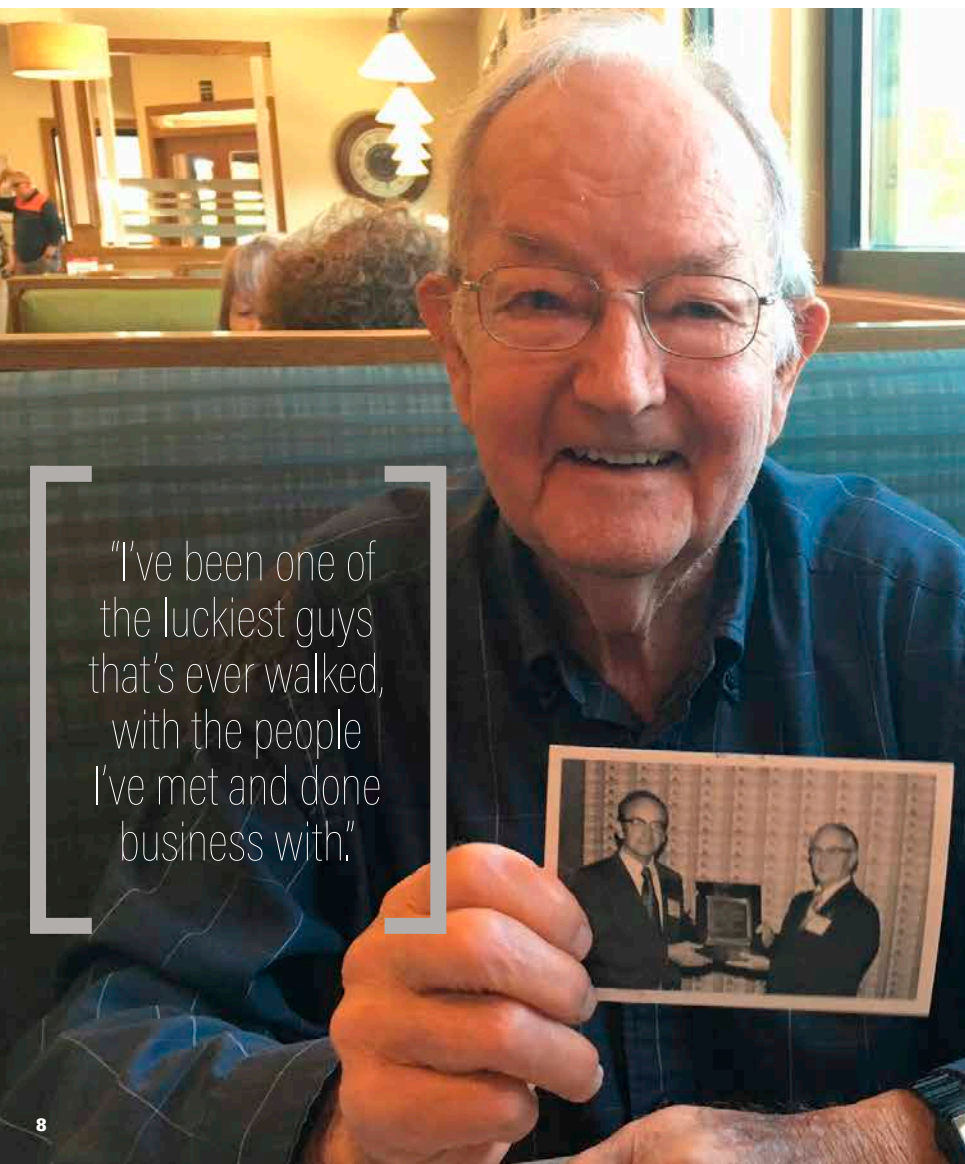
Brandenburg can also be credited with the first WBA "Legislative Day" (now known as the WBA Advocacy Day at the Capitol). In the June 1975 edition of *Badger Builder*, Brandenburg wrote of the inaugural event: "I can tell you that it was a fantastic success. One of the results of the meeting with the legislators is a more visible Wisconsin Builders Association. Furthermore, our lobbyists were afforded a fix on several key issues as a result of our participation."

Following his "retirement" in the early 1990s, Brandenburg became heavily involved in Habitat for Humanity of Dane County, and shared photos of the many homes he helped build in Dane County, Jamaica, and Zambia. In 2004, he was recognized in the community champion category of the MetLife Foundation Older Volunteers Enrich America Awards, and he continued his work with Habitat until his health and the recent passing of his wife brought about his second retirement within the last year.

Reflecting on his career and his time spent giving back to the community, Brandenburg stated, "I've been one of the luckiest guys that's ever walked with the people I've met and done business with." We here at the WBA are lucky to know you, Herman!



1975 WBA President Herman Brandenburg receives award for special dedication and outstanding leadership as president, presented by 1976 WBA President Hans Solem.



"I've been one of the luckiest guys that's ever walked, with the people I've met and done business with."



# THE FIRST HOUSE YOU BUILT!

Featuring WBA Past Presidents

NAME	WBA PRESIDENT	WHEN DID YOU JOIN?	WHEN DID YOU BUILD YOUR FIRST HOUSE?	SQ. FOOTAGE?	COST?
Herman Brandenburg	1975	---	1955	1,248	\$18,900 house and lot
Bryce Styza	1984-1985	1958	1958	1,000	\$12,990 house and lot
Mike Check	1994-1995	---	1972	1,200	\$85,000
John Lautz	1995-1996	1989	1991	1,650	\$98,500
William Binn	1998-2000	1988	1988	2,200	\$120,000
Dan Schneider	2005-2006	1996	1994	1,400	\$147,000
Mark Etrheim	2007-2008	1986	1978	1,104	\$32,500
Jason Steen	2008-2009	1997	1995	2,200	\$149,000
Doug Scott	2009-2010	1991	1975	---	*Under \$20,000
James Kubasta	2010-2011	1994	1994	1,100	\$95,000
Don Esposito	2011-2012	2002	1979	1,998	\$79,000
Brandon Bartow	2014-2015	2001	1999	2,455	\$298,000
Brian McKee	2016	1993	1991	2,000	\$140,000

\*When father was owner of business in late 1960s, homes selling for under \$20,000



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A 1959 Badger Builder advertisement.

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# 70 Years of Protecting Affordable Housing Options for Wisconsin Families

YEAR	MILESTONE	WHAT IT ACCOMPLISHED
1957	WBA Legislative Committee forms	Formal committee to affect legislative change at the state level sets the WBA on a path of growth and influence in the state
1963	WBA only group to support state laws regulating condominiums	Provides better guidance for those purchasing a condominium
1972	Adoption of “Keyman” system	Creates successful, organized system of legislative contacts to get WBA priorities in front of house and senate members
1975	First WBA “Legislative Day”	Also known as Political Education Day, Lobby Day, or Advocacy Day at the Capitol, places WBA in the spotlight of the WI legislature
1980	Uniform 1- and 2-Family Building Code	Building practices now made statewide and uniform across Wisconsin
1981	WBA Caravan Protests High Interest Rates	WBA President James Burkhard and President-Elect Neil Haselwander visit every local association throughout the state over three days, bringing message to members and news media about crippling interest rates – record high of 21.5% reached in 1980, dropped to 11% by 1983
1986	Governor Tommy Thompson elected – WBA first to endorse	As a pro-housing governor (provided with critical early support by the WBA), assists organization with wins throughout the 80s and 90s
1992	Uniform Multi-Family Dwelling Code	Lowers design costs for multifamily buildings
1994	Wisconsin Act 127 – contractor certification bill	Requires proof of financial responsibility and insurance requirements for contractors pulling single-family building permits
1997-1999	Ban on county-imposed transportation fees; establishment of DNR deadlines for consideration of permits	Reduces fees on transfer of materials to reduce cost of housing; quicker action on permits streamlines development and construction process
2003	Home Safety Act – UDC inspections of all new 1- and 2-family dwellings statewide	Provides for inspections of homes in all areas of the state regardless of population of the municipality
2005	Legislation to Reduce Impact Fees	Brings transparency and accountability to the process of enacting impact fees in WI – seen by the NAHB as the “Gold Star” standard
2006	Wisconsin Act 200 – Continuing Education Requirement for Contractors	Ensures that WI families investing in the building of a new home are working with contractors up-to-speed on current building codes and practices
2010	Governor Scott Walker elected – WBA endorsement	Election of pro-housing governor allows WBA to string together several successful legislative sessions—including frozen or reduced property tax rates since 2011
2011-2012	Elimination of land conversion fee; reformation of prevailing wage laws	Saves families \$780/acre; reduces development costs of new housing
2013-2014	Elimination of “Building Contractor Registration;” enacted six-year review for UDC; enacted Uniform Commercial Building Code; Reformation of 1- and 2- family wall bracing code	Eliminates meaningless fee; provides more predictability on code updates; wall bracing rules now easier to follow reducing the cost of a home
2015-2016	Removal of fire sprinkler mandate by administrative rule; adoption of statewide standard for remodeling projects near bodies of water; federalization of WI lead paint rules	Gives builder and consumer direct voice with their elected officials about costly regulations; remodeling jobs in areas near water now more likely to be approved; easier for remodelers to do business across state lines



**by Brad Boycks, Executive Director**

Involvement in advocacy at state level has been at the heart of your Wisconsin Builders Association membership from its inception. With the formation of an official legislative committee a handful of years after the association's founding in 1947, the WBA quickly became a leading advocate for housing affordability at the state capitol, ensuring that elected officials in both political parties always consider Wisconsin families in their decision making.

Personally, it has been my pleasure to be on the frontlines protecting Wisconsin housing since 2004, and I am grateful to all members—past and present—who commit their time and money to making the industry better for builders and homeowners alike.

The table to the left is a summary of milestones in the WBA's political history, including key pieces of legislation passed (though certainly not all). More importantly, it is a testament to the importance of becoming and staying an advocate for your industry, making our vision statement of "*affordable, innovative, and environmentally conscious homes accessible to all*" a reality. When we work together, look at all we can accomplish! Here's to the next 70 years!



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