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Green Valley Builders Receives Single Family Builder of the Year Award from EarthCraft Virginia

Over 280 EarthCraft Virginia builders and developers were recognized at the annual awards

RICHMOND, Va. - March 25, 2011 - Green Valley Builders (GVB) of Blacksburg, Va. received the Single Family Builder of the Year award at the second annual EarthCraft Virginia awards held on March 24 at The Willow Oaks Country Club in Richmond, Va.

The awards reception drew leaders from across the state representing nonprofit and for profit housing providers and developers, program sponsors, affordable housing advocates and those interested in creating green housing opportunities in Virginia. The reception recognized more than 280 EarthCraft builders and developers throughout the Commonwealth.

Remarks from Senator John Warner were delivered by David Hallock State Director. Don Ritenour, Virginia Housing Development Authority's (VHDA) Managing Director of Development delivered the keynote address and accepted the Visionary Award on behalf of VHDA.

Since the program was introduced statewide in 2005, GVB has built 19 EarthCraft certified single family homes in the last six years. In 2010 alone, GVB built five EarthCraft homes, three of which achieved greater than 45 percent efficiency compared to code-built homes. All of their homes have been pre-sold EarthCraft houses with no speculative homes, showing the demand in the market for sustainable homes.

"Green Valley Builders has really demonstrated how the EarthCraft standards can be beneficial to homeowners and communities alike," said K.C. McGurren, Executive Director of EarthCraft Virginia. "They stand as an example of how sustainable building doesn't mean sacrificing functionality, beauty or profitability."

In 2007, GVB began construction on Blacksburg's first sustainable community, Mt. Tabor Meadows. The 49-home, two-phase project currently has 15 single-family homes in phase one, including the residence of Justin Boyle, who co-owns GVB with his brother, Jason. The two grew up working the farmland in the Mt. Tabor Meadows neighborhood and were guided by a sense of responsibility to the land and its former owners when they decided to build each home to meet the EarthCraft standards.

“Profit alone was never going to be enough for us,” said Justin Boyle, CFO and co-owner of GVB. “We wanted to ensure we were building a community that would be safe, healthy, and sustainable; the kind of neighborhood families of all sizes and ages would feel good about living in.”

Because each home is EarthCraft certified, the average monthly utility bill for homes in Mt. Tabor Meadows is \$128, including both gas and electric costs for homes averaging 3,000 square feet of conditioned space.

Chris Lewis, a resident of Mt. Tabor Meadows, said that despite having a household of seven ranging from a young granddaughter to her elderly father, the family’s utility bills dropped dramatically after moving to their new home. “After our first month of living here, our monthly utility bills went from over \$700 to about \$180,” Lewis said.

Inspired by GVB’s approach, residents of the neighborhood have joined with the builders in creating CommonSpaces, Inc., a non-profit company helping to further neighborhood open space development into spaces that bring the community together. As winners of a KaBOOM! national playground award, CommonSpaces will create a common area in the neighborhood featuring kids’ play spaces, a walking trail, gardening spaces, and a combination of native trees and retaining ponds so that stormwater runoff will stay within the neighborhood.

As community partners, GVB also works to educate the local population on the benefits of EarthCraft Virginia standards. More than 500 Virginia Tech students and 100 local real estate agents have attended construction tours hosted by GVB, and residents of southwest Virginia have learned about sustainable building through green building tours and workshops.

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About Green Valley Builders

Since 1997, Green Valley Builders (GVB) has designed and built custom homes of the highest quality in new communities and estate lots in Southwest Virginia. As a certified EarthCraft, ENERGY STAR, EPA Indoor airPLUS and LEED for Homes builder, the company focuses on a sustainable approach to building to create a whole house system that is healthy, comfortable, reduces energy bills and protects the environment. GVB is a small design/build team dedicated to customer service and satisfaction in order to meet each client’s needs, budget and long-term well-being. Visit www.greenvalleybuildersinc.com for more information.

About EarthCraft

Originally founded in 1999 by nonprofit Southface and the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association, the EarthCraft green building program serves as a blueprint for energy- and resource-efficient homes built in the Southeast. With growing success and recognition, the EarthCraft program established EarthCraft Virginia a 501c3 nonprofit in 2006 with assistance from Home Builders Association of Virginia, the Virginia Community Development Corporation and Southface. Since EarthCraft Virginia’s adoption in 2006, residential green building efforts in Virginia have far surpassed national averages. EarthCraft Virginia will certify its 1,000th home and certify 4,000 multifamily dwelling units in 2011. Throughout the Southeast the program has certified over 6,000 homes and 6,000 multifamily dwelling units. For more information on EarthCraft or EarthCraft Virginia, please visit www.earthcraftvirginia.org.

EarthCraft Virginia's partners include Southface Energy Institute, the Home Builders Association of Virginia, Habitat for Humanity of Virginia, and Virginia Housing Development Authority.

About Virginia Housing Development Authority

VHDA is a self-supporting, not-for-profit organization created by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1972, to help Virginians attain quality, affordable housing. Our mortgages are funded by bonds we issue, not state taxpayer dollars, and are available primarily for first-time homebuyers and developers of quality rental housing. We also teach free homeownership classes, and help people with disabilities and the elderly make their homes more livable. VHDA works with lenders, developers, local governments, community service organizations and others to help put quality housing within the reach of every Virginian. For more information on VHDA, please visit www.vhda.com.

About the Home Builders Association of Virginia

The Home Builders Association of Virginia (HBAV) is a 6,400-member statewide organization of home builders and firms that provide products and services to the home building industry. HBAV dedicates approximately 60% of its annual resources to representing the home building industry before state lawmakers and state regulators. Please visit www.hbav.com for more information.