

THE JOURNAL OF LIGHT CONSTRUCTION

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JLC's

Letters

Building Trades No Caste System

To the Editor:

In response to Michael Gavan's letter (*Letters*, 11/00), I'm in complete agreement that high school students should complete their education and (at a minimum) sample college, or better yet, complete college.

I take exception to his belief that to promote entry into the construction trades is to "encourage our future generations into a caste system...."

I feel that if you could pull together a framing crew, interior or exterior trim crew, painting, roofing, drywall, stucco, masonry, or plumbing crew that would: 1) turn around prompt quotes you could stand behind, 2) show up as promised, 3) work professionally, and 4) service (punch out) your work promptly and without complaint, you would be considered a major find by any builder or remodeling contractor nationwide. Do this for two to three years and your reputation is made. You can write your own ticket and begin to align your guys with the premier builders and assure yourself a full "dance card" of work. Hardly a "caste system." Admittedly, often the work is hot, or cold, or occasionally dirty, but the rewards of creating something and doing honest work are meaningful — at least in my mind.

Steve Thomas
Columbus, Ohio

Eaves Membrane Detail Questioned

To the Editor:

In the November 2000 *On the House* column, Tim Harwood from Grace Products states that peel-and-stick eaves membrane should always be installed under the drip edge. According to the CertainTeed Shingle Applicator's Manual, "Along the

eaves, when WinterGuard is installed flush to the edge, the drip edge must be installed first, with WinterGuard on top."

Mark Fulmer
Pillar to Post Home Inspection
Webster, N.Y.

To the Editor:

Regarding Tim Harwood's advice (*On the House*, 11/00) to run the eaves membrane first, then the drip edge: Conventional roofing wisdom puts the first material applied to a roof deck at the lowest edge, and then subsequent materials go on top of this as one works up hill. It has always worked for felt, shingles, and flashings, so why should a drip edge be different? I'll admit it looks nicer to have the membrane and felt all framed out with metal, but my question remains.

If water gets to the membrane of a finished roof, the chances of keeping it off the sheathing edge are worse if it can run down and under the drip edge. The idea of adding yet another strip of membrane may work but is, in my opinion, another way to sell membrane.

Wayne Richard
via email

Please Don't Change

To the Editor:

I just read the item "A New Name on the Door" in *Letters* (11/00). Big decision, I bet, but I can't help but cringe a little. I have always viewed *JLC* as separate from the rest, a bit more connected to the realities of field work, a real asset for my business.

As a formally trained carpenter (30 years plus of field experience) who is still very humbled by the demands of my craft, I can appreciate the raw

talent, ingenuity, and background it takes to maintain those high standards — standards that set a business apart from the pack. Often, the caliber of your distinctions parallels the caliber of your audience.

Reading *JLC* over the years has been a little like eating comfort food. Just knowing that there are other wood miners out there still hungry for the details lures me to put my feet up and savor each page, cover to cover, the very day it arrives in the mail.

Thanks for all the hard work up to this point. Please promise me that when the tough decisions come, you won't change your format.

Bob Hill
President, Bob Hill Builder Inc.
Tallahassee, Fla.

Makeup Air Advice on Target

To the Editor:

Pat Huelman's response to the question on providing makeup air for a fireplace and the 600-cfm range hood fan was excellent (*On the House*, 10/00). These huge range hood fans are a problem and, as Pat suggested, do not belong in single-family homes. Pat's suggestion to go with sealed combustion appliances was right on. Not that he needs to hear that from me. Having an expert relay this information in this format will help some builders, and hopefully their customers, realize the overkill of such a system. Good job, Pat, and thank you, *JLC*.

Jeff Klonowski
Greenville, Wisc.

Handheld Penetrometer Sources

To the Editor:

I am looking for information regarding suppliers for a handheld penetrometer that was mentioned in the article "Footing Fundamentals" written by Brent Anderson (10/00). I have searched several times on the Internet but have not had any luck.

Mark Pung
Raymar Homes
Hudsonville, Mich.

The editors respond: Search the Ben Meadows company website (www.benmeadows.com) for "penetrometer" and you'll get six hits. The one you probably want is the pocket penetrometer for \$57, or the aluminum one for \$49. The others are pretty expensive and, though interesting, are more for engineers.

A second online source is www.forestry-suppliers.com, which sells a pocket penetrometer for \$50.

The pocket penetrometer is just for the surface. Both of these companies also have a compaction tester that sells for about \$220 and measures 2 feet deep.

Lap Siding Tip

To the Editor:

Here's a tip to use when installing horizontal lap siding. Instead of checking the exposure of each siding course with a tape measure, it's handy to have a gauge. To make a quick, durable exposure gauge, just cut down a Speed Square to the length of the siding exposure. Now you can use the square to hold the siding in position with one hand, while you nail the siding with the other hand.

Danny Waite
Pine Ridge Builders
Graham, Wash.

Kudos for "Job-Site Glues"

To the Editor:

I would like to reiterate Steven Pedracine's opening line in his letter to you (*Letters*, 10/00). Your publication is my most anticipated piece of mail. I have to resist the urge to immediately read it cover to cover in order to prolong my enjoyment of the knowledge you have to share. I even carry your subscription cards with me and hand them out to other remodelers. I urge them to learn more and take our profession to a higher level by absorbing the knowledge your journal has to offer. *The Journal of Light Construction* has established a new standard for our trade ... I cannot say thank you enough and please keep up the great work you are doing.

With that said, I would like to also thank you for the article "Q&A: Job-Site

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Glues" (10/00). I had to write you even before I finished reading the "Glue Glossary" and the "Great Glue Test" sections of the article. Once again you have provided me with critically valuable information that could make a difference on a job.

George E. Tuite
Newington, Conn.

Tool Reviews Helpful

To the Editor:

I have been a subscriber to *JLC* for several years. I have been a full-time math teacher for the past thirty years. During that time, I renovated several homes and did quite a few jobs for

friends, as time permitted. Since retiring last June, I have been flooded with work. Recently, before I began a large deck project, I decided to buy a new nail gun. I had just thrown away my copy of *JLC* that contained your evaluation of nail guns, but I was able to find the article and your recommendations on your website. As always, I was very pleased because you put the tools you test in the hands of contractors and give "real" recommendations, not just wishy-washy information like a lot of other magazines do. I purchased a Paslode *Powermaster* and have been very pleased with it. I plan to replace

many of my older power tools in the near future, and you can be sure that I will consult *JLC* before every purchase. Thanks for all the useful information, and keep up the good work!

Mike McCurdy
Loveland, Ohio

KEEP 'EM COMING! Letters must be signed and include the writer's address. *The Journal of Light Construction* reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, and clarity. Mail letters to *JLC*, 186 Allen Brook Ln., Williston, VT 05495; or e-mail to jlc@bginet.com.

