



## ***The Quantum Quote***

Issue 4, August 2011

Good news! We've set a tentative date for the Night with a Contractor, dependent on whether we get enough RSVPs. Please set aside Tuesday, October 4th from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. The event will include refreshments and is intended to provide business and home owners with a forum for answers regarding projects and potential projects. Questions can range from "do it yourself" advice to overall project feasibility. We'll be happy to help you with topics ranging from how to install wood trim or remodel a kitchen to advice in selecting a building site and picking architectural plans.

If you are interested, please RSVP for this event no later than Sept. 13th. If you feel that your question(s) may require a large chunk of time, I may also be able to make arrangements for that afternoon or an alternate day. Remember free consultations are always available!

Josh  
(360) 293-0656

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## **Safety Corner**

### ***Eye Protection***

Close your eyes for just a moment and think about your favorite activity. Now think about how much more difficult it would be if you were blind! Whether at work or home, nearly all of us regularly carry out tasks that involve vision hazards, generally of the flying particle nature. Examples include yard work, construction or remodeling, fishing with amateur fly fishers, first time cooks and some arts and crafts. Workplace hazards (and some more adventurous hobbies)

might also stumble across chemical, heat and radiation hazards. OSHA provides some interesting statistics: an estimated 1000 eye injuries occur each day, and about 90% can be prevented through proper protective gear. Different types of eye protection include spectacles (glasses), goggles and face shields, with each corresponding to a different type of hazard. OSHA provides an [eTool](#) which may help you determine the proper gear for your hazard.

If you face eye hazards in the workplace, your employer is required to provide the proper protective gear to you free of charge. For home use, eye protection can be purchased at most hardware stores and I have a few extra pairs of safety glasses left over from our Business After Hours last month if you're in the area and need a pair.

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## Charity Choice & Last Month's Winner

Quantum has a long history of supporting local charities, from youth sports to medical and charitable organizations. Now, we'd like you to help us choose who receives a \$100 donation for each newsletter. It's easy: just reply to this email with the name of your favorite charity! *Load the odds in your favor by forwarding this newsletter to your friends or coworkers and have them submit a response too!* Remember, it has to be a recognized non-profit. Make sure that the newsletter is at the bottom of their email, that's the ticket to making their entry count! The deadline for entries is September 30th, so get going!

Our winner from our last issue was the **Forgotten Children's Fund** from Mt. Vernon. FCF, as it is abbreviated, was formed in 1976 in Seattle after the discovery of a Letter to Santa from a boy named Craig. The letter provided a map for Santa, as he was told that Santa could not find his house the previous year. The letter also instructs Santa not to bring any gifts for his absent father. FCF fills gaps in the lives of less fortunate children by giving Christmas presents and through adventures on a ranch on Whidbey Island. You can read more about them on their [website](#).

Please take the time to respond to our Charity Choice column with your selection and encourage others to do the same. Charities have been receiving votes in single digit numbers; anything you can do to bring attention to your favorite charity not only provides them with \$100, but also an opportunity for free marketing!

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## Sustainably Built Division and Incentives

You've been reading in our past few emails about our commitment to sustainable and green building. If you missed our Business After Hours in July, you not only missed a great time and great food, but you missed the unveiling of our Sustainably Built Division and the Sustainable Incentives package that accompanies it! Never fear, we've saved a special part of it for our newsletter faithful. Below is the never before seen Quantum Sustainably Built logo.



Sustainably Built, in a nutshell, symbolizes our commitment to building green when possible ([Here's the handout](#) from the BAH in pdf format). To emphasize this, we've put together a [Sustainable Incentives Program](#) to, well, incentivize people to build sustainably, especially if they might be otherwise on the fence. While the link above provides a full overview of the program, here's an example of how it might work: Build a median priced home in Skagit County with a 4 star Built Green Certification or LEED certification and get a full stainless appliance suite and 300 sf sustainable hardwoods free! The program is set up to allow you to pick from rewards that you like. Check it out and let us know what you think, and please, keep us in mind for any green projects!

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## **Sustainable and Efficient**

### ***Salvaged Materials***

Have you ever gone garage sale hopping and found the absolute perfect item for an unbelievable price? Using salvaged materials in a project is a bit like that: you never quite know what you'll find, but often you'll strike gold!

Salvaged materials are those that have been removed from a building or construction site and are often resold at salvage shops or garage sales. You may also find brand new materials that were no longer needed. Unlike recycled content, salvaged materials are not remanufactured, so the salvaged claw foot bathtub may feature some wear and the timbers may boast of nail holes. Most of the time salvaged materials are used, these imperfections add to the charm and story.

You can find just about anything at salvage shops including plumbing fixtures, structural timbers, wood trim, tile, wood flooring, door handles, doors, electrical fixtures, windows (new, old and stained glass), hardware, appliances, architectural details, cabinets, stone countertops, furniture, mirrors, siding, and more!

Most salvage shops rotate inventory at a fairly fast pace. With this and the nature of salvage in mind, here are a few tips to making your project a success:

1. Visit early. If you're doing a major project, you'll want to find certain items early on to ensure they are incorporated. Examples for this tip would include windows, doors, and structural timbers.
2. Visit often. Not only does the inventory rotate quickly, but you'll uncover new items each time you visit each shop and your perspective will change from visit to visit, too.

3. Keep an open mind. Many items will need cleaning, polishing or sanding.
4. Repurpose. Not all items need to be used for their original purpose. See the project ideas below.
5. If you're working with a general contractor, let them know as soon as you decide to incorporate salvaged materials. Also, notify them when you find your specific materials. Their building techniques may change depending on the salvaged item.

If you're interested in salvaged items but don't know where to start, review the list below:

- Add an exposed salvaged beam to your remodel for a rustic look
- Place tile or tin ceiling for a creative kitchen backsplash
- Combine a marble countertop and railing balustrades for a kitchen island or cart
- Refinish (or not) cabinets for garage and workshop storage
- Strap together planks for a handsome table
- Flip a door on its side for a bed headboard, or screw two together for a quirky bench
- Hang an old wood-framed window over a picture for a unique frame
- Splice together windows for a greenhouse, sun room or contained outdoor planter
- Use hardwoods or wood trim for a spectacularly clad accent wall
- Build a wine rack from wood trim
- Use railing supplies to separate an overly large room into open but contained spaces. Might be a good way to keep your home office from spilling all over the couch. Or, actually use them as intended and redo your deck railing

So, you're getting excited and ready to go? Here are a few good places to get you started:

Your local [Habitat for Humanity ReStore](#). I use the one in Mt. Vernon on Riverside. Just expanded their selection.

[Skagit Building Salvage](#) is on Memorial Highway in Mt. Vernon. They also have recently expanded and boast a very large selection.

The [RE Store](#), not to be confused with HfH's ReStore, has locations in Bellingham and Seattle. I have not been to these, but have heard great things!

[Earthwise Salvage](#) in Seattle boasts a large selection of antique and historic items.

Do you have a salvage success story? I'd love to hear it! For the rest of you, get salvagin'!

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## Budgeting a Project

Building upon our last newsletter, this article is on successfully establishing a budget and sticking to it. While this article will use a new home as an example, you can take the concepts and easily scale them down into DIY projects or apply them to remodels and commercial building.

For simplicity's sake, we will only look at actual construction cost, but purchasing your land is an important consideration in budgeting. Also, we'll be avoiding specifics for square foot prices. To borrow from [Mark Laliberte](#), buying a house based on square foot price is like buying a car based on weight.

Ok, onto the costs to consider for your budget. First, you'll need to pay an architect to design your home. Fees can range from a few thousand dollars to tens of thousands, depending on the size of your home, the complexity, and the pricing structure of the architect. Note: some architects charge a fixed fee. Others will charge each time they are consulted by you or the builder during the construction process. Picking the right architect is crucial to ensure that you will enjoy your house for years to come.

Next, factor in your permitting costs. These may range up to three or four percent of your home, depending upon where you live. Your local city or county building department can provide you with a more detailed estimate.

An important part of budgeting your project is picking your fixtures and finishes. Each item that you choose before construction begins allows you to find the best pricing and drive down your overall construction cost. Don't worry, if you can't find the right item, your contractor can set an [allowance](#). Here's a list of fixtures and finishes you may want to select:

- Plumbing fixture (toilets, faucets, sinks, specialty shower items, hot water heaters)
- Electrical fixtures (lights, specialty appliances, ceiling fans, bath fans)
- Windows (vinyl, wood, aluminum, opening style)
- Doors (wood, metal, window kits, hollow or solid core, sliding, closet, pocket, door handles and hardware)
- Flooring (carpet, wood, finished concrete, vinyl, linoleum, marmoleum, tile)
- Cabinets (custom, manufactured, style and material)
- Countertops (stone, laminate, wood, glass, steel, concrete)
- Trim and woodwork (painted, stained, MDF, solid wood, crown)
- Heating System (furnace, hydronic, radiant panels, heat pump mini splits, baseboard or wall mount, fireplaces)

A general contractor will help you establish your construction cost, pricing components such as foundation, framing and roofing. Your previous finish and fixture selections will enable accurate comparisons between multiple contractors. General contractors often receive special pricing from suppliers and subcontractors, so ensuring that one is involved at this stage will help you save money in the long run.

When budgeting and financing, it is always recommended to have a contingency fund of 5% to 10% of the total construction cost. This is your reserve, your emergency money in the event that you hit an unexpected cost or splurge on a desired upgrade.

Lastly, you should closely follow the progress of your house during construction. If you have

been running over your allowances, you'll need to dip into your contingency fund or find additional cash. Conversely, if you consistently spend less, you'll have money left over.

Let's finish with a quick overview. When budgeting for your project, you should use a construction cost established by a contractor, with additions for architectural design, permitting, and a contingency fund. It's also important to pick finishes and fixtures, and then stick with them. Adequate budgeting ensures that you end up with the home you truly want. Best of luck in your construction projects!

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[Quantum Construction, Inc.](#) is a family-owned general contractor based in Anacortes, WA. Quantum has been building high quality commercial, custom residential and industrial projects since 1984. For information on how we can give you the best building experience, please contact us by [email](#) or by phone at (360) 293-0656.



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Quantum Construction, Inc.  
12761 Quantum Lane  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
US

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