



**Ken
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Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Looks Good But Wastes Energy

Architects like to design cool looking houses. Most people love the sight of them but others cringe when they see them. The more interesting a house looks, the more complex the structure will be. If energy conservation was the primary design criteria the world would be full of houses that looked like boxes. No dormers, no reversed rooflines, no bumpouts, and no cantilevers. Every one of those things makes a house harder to insulate and airseal. I believe that cantilevers alone account for more comfort and energy problems than all of the others combined. I think it should be easy to prevent a problem once you know it exists but to this day I see builders creating cantilevers on houses and not insulating them correctly. It makes me a little nuts because when the framing is open it is very easy to correctly seal and insulate a cantilever. Afterward it is very difficult. Let me backup just a little. A cantilever on a house is anywhere that an upper floor projects out past a lower floor. If you start looking for them you will see them on probably 50% of every home in our area. The amount of energy wasted by this framing technique is huge. I've seen them open to the basement, I've seen them over a garage, I've seen them between the first and second floors, and I've seen them built during a remodel. I have yet to see one insulated correctly. They usually don't get blamed for being the cause of high energy bills because they don't create a draft inside the house. They allow cold air to enter between floors and just suck the heat out of the floor above and the ceiling below. Then that air finds its way to the attic and exits the house carrying valuable energy with it. Of all locations, the cantilever at a low level in the house is the worst. In between the first and second floors will only be a problem when the wind is blowing or something creates a pressure difference inside the house. The stack effect, which is warm air rising, is pretty neutral at the midpoint of a home. On the first level a cantilever is an intake point for cold air and it will have a significant impact on energy usage. Often there are water pipes in that cantilever and I have fixed dozens because they froze and burst. I don't know how the energy code could be rewritten to fix this problem but it would be a great thing for homeowners and it would save a massive amount of energy for the US. Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

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NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NCC to Host Hands-on Auto Skills Competition on March 6

By NCC

BETHLEHEM - NCC is hosting local area high school technical students in a Skills USA Auto Skills competition. Six finalist teams of two, who achieved their place through a written exam last fall, will compete in hands-on events to vie for a 1st, 2nd or 3rd place trophy and prizes. Students will be judged across various subjects in the auto field including brake testing, engine diagnosis, electrical training, state inspection and more. Teams will receive an NCC automotive technology shirt and additional gifts. The team placing first will also be awarded NCC scholarships. Additionally, the winning school will get a vehicle donation.

Student teams will be coming from Wallenpaupack High School, Berks Career & Technology Center East, Middle Bucks Institute of Technology, Bethlehem Area Vocational Technical School, Tunkhannock Area High School, and Warren County Technical School.

Wednesday, March 6 at 12 p.m. at Commonwealth Hall Room 136, 3835 Green Pond Rd. Bethlehem, PA 18020 | Bethlehem Campus.

Skills USA is a nationally recognized series of competition events, which allows students of many disciplines to demonstrate what they have learned through their educational experience and see what more they need to know going forward. With the ever-changing technological advancements to the transportation industry, we need to have professional and knowledgeable technicians. Giving students the opportunity to test their knowledge in a real-life, practical setting, provides experience they can take with them as they continue working towards their goals. These competitions highlight skills and foster success for future technicians to keep our industry and county moving. The stations of hands-on activities for students to complete will make for great photo and video opportunities.

If you would like to cover the event or have any questions, please contact Mia Rossi-Marino, mrossimarino@northampton.edu, 610-861-4122.

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