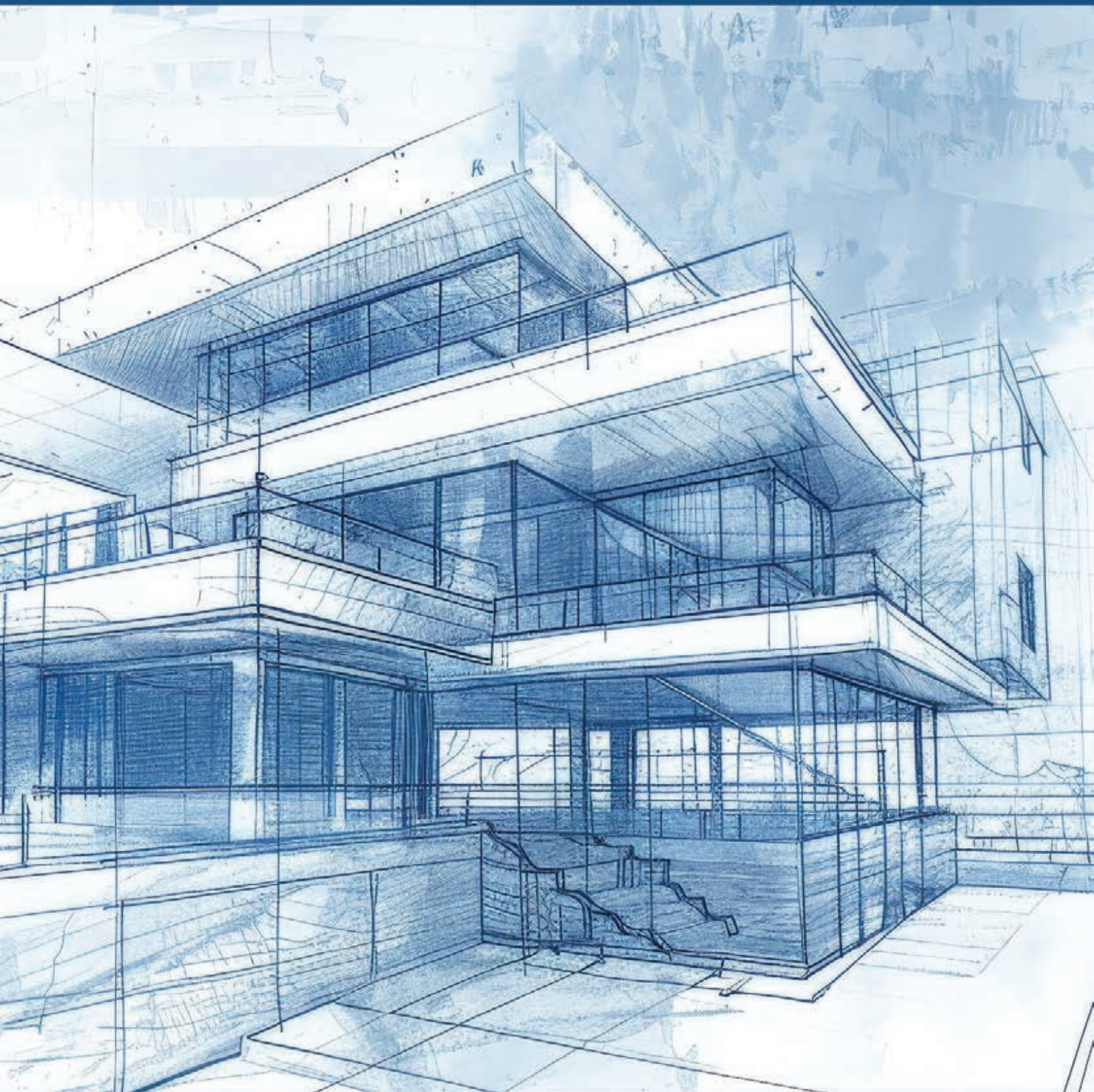


# Builders Profile



**Rick Straus**

- 1 Rick's Introduction
- 2 A snapshot of Rick's professional strategies & achievements
- 3 Project Profiles with project photos

A famous writer wrote, **"You are never wrong if you do the right thing."**  
Uncommon achievements produce extraordinary results.

  - A) **Car Museum-Fashioned as a Vintage 1900s Replica Dairy Barn**  
21,000 square feet, cultivating many different skills simultaneously.
  - B) **State Fair 1937 Building Rebirthed**  
A 1937 Building transformation with an 80-day timeline to Design, Budget, Demo, & Rebuild. The coordination of Administrative and Project Management skills provided a landmark achievement.
  - C) **Classic Cars Round Building**  
I chose the path of high skillset to produce precision fit components for this 88-ft diameter structure. This formula resulted in a masterfully accurate and flawless build. Every goal was successfully achieved.
  - D) **Habitat for Humanity base Foundation**  
One man and myself installed with speed and accuracy the forms to pour the foundation. Help was on deck during the pour. The remaining buildout was completed in a five-day Blitz Build.
  - E) **Wastewater Treatment Plant**  
An Industrial Construction Project with many unique characteristics. I had the liberty of working closely with field management.
- 4 Additional supporting Construction Management Skills.  
Communication, organization, and duties facilitating well-managed, well-budgeted, on-time, successful projects.
- 5 Testimonials

## Introduction

Greetings, my name is Rick Straus. I have personal experience working in the Building Construction Industry as a Construction Manager for many years. The largest need in the Construction industry is the management of Talent. My goal is to share how I have had success managing projects with the discerning use of talent within the category of Skillsets. From Technical to Interpersonal, the cultivation of a winning strategy remains the same; it is the suitability that changes.

I am a career Professional who has participated in the Actual Physical day-to-day Construction activities as well as performing active Administrative Management operations. My duties ranged from developing the clients' original concepts through design, selections, engineering, procurement and the final creation through field management of expectations.

Orchestrating and organizing the back-office management tools and distributing communication onto the field is a concerted effort. The order and the refinement of that process is a science. It is in the repeated cycle and the proper use of resources, talent and interpersonal skills that make for the Hallmark of a great team working together. This is my gift, and I do it with great passion and care. My involvement in the building process is full service. From concept to finalization, the process and the methodical order is scalable. With prioritization and precise administrative followthrough, the net result is an outstanding product when it is completed. When the prescribed order is followed and completed, the warranting of this procedure and the resulting finished product is seamless and flawlessly provided. The best is achieved when all the team members share in the same goals, with the same degree of care, working from the same library of information. From the vetting of artisans to administrative team members, the leadership sets the standard and leads by way of example.

Technical and interpersonal skills working together simultaneously excel in the culture of a highly organized, reliable, and proven flow method netting the desired expectations that set the extraordinary apart from the average.



## Rick Straus

701.955.0088

Rick@JCKing.builders

## Skills

Organizational Skills  
Interpersonal Skills  
Problem Solving Skills  
Teamwork and Collaboration  
Successful Strategies  
Critical Thinking  
Industrial Engineering  
Creativity  
Custom Design  
Public Speaking  
Customer Service  
Technologically Competent  
Fluid Communication  
Leadership Principles  
Administrative Organization  
Fiscal Accountability  
Honest  
Diligent  
Ethical  
Loyal

# Construction Management

## Summary

Professional Construction Manager with over 40 years in Light Commercial & Residential new construction and remodeling. Managed multiple projects simultaneously with values well into seven digits. Multiple NAHB awards. Noted for on-time and on-budget completions. Strong administrative and interpersonal skills.

## Experience

My experience was gleaned through the lens of old school Artisan Carpenters who understood the building process thoroughly. Precision was at the forefront. I worked in several states from east to west, north to south within leadership roles. My administrative gifts and talents were developed in Commercial & Residential Building Construction. I was often involved in specialized tasks and requested by supervisors, architects, and clients.

- Created administrative organizational order, fulfilling my role as a Project Manager with passion and care.
- Improved continually the strategies leading to innovative design and function solutions while preserving timelines and budget.
- Developed sales and estimating abilities to cost out in detail Light Commercial and Residential projects with extreme accuracy on all deliverables.
- Succeeded in earning the respect and alliance of clients through effective communication and knowledge of the total design-build construction process.
- Advised, supervised, and assisted with design services on a multitude of projects that are iconic in nature and in use to this day.
- Constructed various model homes for The Parade of Homes, which won awards for Design, Craftsmanship, and Value.
- Developed raw land with Entitlements. Generated biddings on all aspects associated with Civil Engineering Group. Worked with City Public Works Department and Utility providers to complete the infrastructure and utilities connections.
- Designed solutions and communicated cooperatively as the liaison with Government Entities to complete goals publicly and privately.

## My Philosophy In Practice

“Discovery and use of the keys that I have obtained to unlock valuable assets involves several Principles. The foundational tool is comprehending how time management and organizational concepts communicate through many departments, both in the office and at the physical Project site.

“Detailed formatting is customized per project. This customization plays an important role in meeting the client’s expectations. Together with proper technical skills and vetted artisans, the discipline exercised helps champion the final goals as extraordinary achievements.”

-Rick Straus

# Rick Straus

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## Additional Skillset Qualifications

### Development Skills

1. Land Development Feasibility analysis scope explanation written into Land Acquisition Contract with contingencies.
2. Planning and Zoning Staff recommendations and City approvals with supporting passage through Public Hearings and City Council approvals.
3. Civil Engineering with Engineers cost estimates defining all horizontal scope details.
4. City approval of infrastructure design along with municipal agreements acceptable and agreed to in written acceptance.
5. Assembling total cost analysis with Engineers Documents and preparation involving full scope of operations defined.
6. Procuring and vetting Contractors for final bid submittals using administrative processes of invitation to bid RFPs and RFQs to assess fair values for finished improvements.
7. Final managing of all site improvements and vertical building of permanent structures.

### Qualifications

- Development and procurement of farmland and Inner-City property developed into Residential Sub-Divisions
- Real Estate Sales and Construction of Hundreds of Homes
- Commercial Construction, Industrial Construction.
- Traveled to foreign countries and led construction teams on projects.
- Charitable involvement with Habitat for Humanity board member and lead Construction Site Manager
- State Commerce as an active licensed builder with decades of experience in numerous states

### Experience Skills

### Administrative Abilities

- Real Estate Purchase Agreements and Building Contracts and contract writing along with administrative financial closing documents for construction financing and end loans.
- Administrative office management of 100s of homes built with several simultaneous project builds.
- Administrative corrections of design oversights discovered before bid process and resolved.
- Budget management and disbursements with progress payments, lien rights and justification
- Bidding and total pricing of active and future projects with a NTE price formula.

## Additional Skillset continued

### Experience Skills      Field Technology

The degree of experience that I have gained has aided in the overall logistics of site management, including deliveries and storage of all project resources. The careful placement and set up for orderly and efficient access is partly a science and partly an innate skill. The act of job site safety while handling necessary products in an orderly manner equates into time and material management. This operation is ongoing and requires a coordinated understanding much like a sports professional. Damage and loss of time or materials are never recoverable. Incident Avoidance is the best plan in site management.

- Field operation and maintenance of a host of various heavy and light machinery
- Active CDL License. Owned and operated 18 wheel semi.
- Directed remote tower crane and experienced with manlifts, telehandlers, forklifts, small wheel loaders on site with safety and logistics
- Hauling and moving all types of building materials and structural steel.
- Placing timber, laminate beams and structural red iron.

### Experience Skills      Interpersonal Communication

When the project involves upwards of 100 skilled personnel, it becomes important to know how to create order and bring progress to the daily goals. Every project has its own unique challenges. Overcoming the challenges with a team is determined by the leadership. Cultivating a Champion mindset creates the future that is desired.

- Managing people's skills and their natural gifts make assignments come alive with passion and excitement.
- The Strategies for Successful decision making is an ongoing process the awareness levels and the importance of implementing.
- While working with a host of Artisans, the facts are not everyone possesses the same background experience or set of values.
- Assigning the correct talent to the task is the role of leadership.

### Objective

- The ownership principle requires eliminating chaos, controlling the environment and making every minute count towards the end goal.
- Managing the expected outcome while highlighting people's skill and their natural gifts causes the resulting assignments to come alive with passion and excitement.

# Rick Straus

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**Additional Studies** This is the location for a few links B.I.M. S.I.M. V.D.C. Also the Wastewater Treatment site lift off list. Industrial Construction

- B.I.M. Link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VYIYMnONS8>
- S.I.M. Link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AP4J6c4e20c>
- V.D.C.Link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=KI0h-VwaMNUl>
- Wastewater Link <https://metro council.org/Wastewater-Water/Services/Wastewater-Treatment.aspx>

## Summary

- The combination of Technical and Interpersonal skills along with the implementation of Successful Strategies will bring out extraordinary achievements.
- Time management disciplines turn your perception into focused goals, which become uncommon and progressive goal achievements.
- Planting uncommon goals will challenge oneself to turn barriers into bridges.

## Links

- <http://www.jcking.builders>

DATE	FALL 2015-2017
PROJECT	PRIVATE AUTO MUSEUM (21,000 SQUARE FEET)
UNIQUENESS	1900s VINTAGE REPLICA TIMBER DAIRY BARN MUSEUM

#### COMMENTS

This Building was Vintage in nature including the structural assembly. The Vintage aspect called for Reclaimed Timber in its structure and within the interior finishes. The Timber used was sourced from several different states across the country. While the timber came from structures originally built in the early 1900's, the trees from which the timber came from were more than a century old when they were originally cut, sawn, and used. Working with reclaimed timber leaves no room for mistakes, since it is not off the shelf and easily replaced. This building structurally spanned 60 feet in width and 120 feet in length. With 3 levels, the square footage came in around 21,000. This Building's Construction assembly method was not typical; every aspect had to pass engineering. This project called for experienced artisans and the cultivation of many skills working together simultaneously. The years of invested experience brought by this group of Artisans exceeds 100s of years of combined experience. The joining of all the physical parts required ingenuity since this installation package was not explained with a tutorial. While overseeing the physical selection of building materials and making design decisions in process, it became necessary to see also to the overall best fit and assembly. The selection of the right labor necessitated vetting each artisan individually knowing a cost estimate was forthcoming. A formal Estimate was prepared with a Not to Exceed (NTE) price figure for the owners. The physical erecting and finishes of interior and exterior were very exacting in detail. With 14,000 ln. ft. of interior Beech flooring and 27,000 ln. ft. of nickel gap ship-lap interior wall finish, the entire building became a stunning work of art. The physical person-hours that were expended in this building exceeded 14,000 for the above ground building portion alone. In conclusion, the highest outcome was achieved: the project was unmistakably a total success in every way. This is most certainly a one-of-a-kind structure.



Vaughn Veit letter of Referral,

As President and Founder of the Veit Automotive Foundation it became apparent we had once again out grown our exhibit space for our vintage automobile collection. After a full study of our needs, the foundation's design team opted for an early 1900's gothic arch dairy barn. Not only would the barn have to be authentic looking, it had to support the automobiles and large - scale farm machinery.

Rick worked with us in 2008 to build our previous barn where he exhibited craftsmanship and detail. When we were ready to expand the collection, Rick was once again our craftsman of choice. He brought the ability to realize our dream to its finished state. Rick and his team, executed the finite details of the build with care and correctness. Details include:

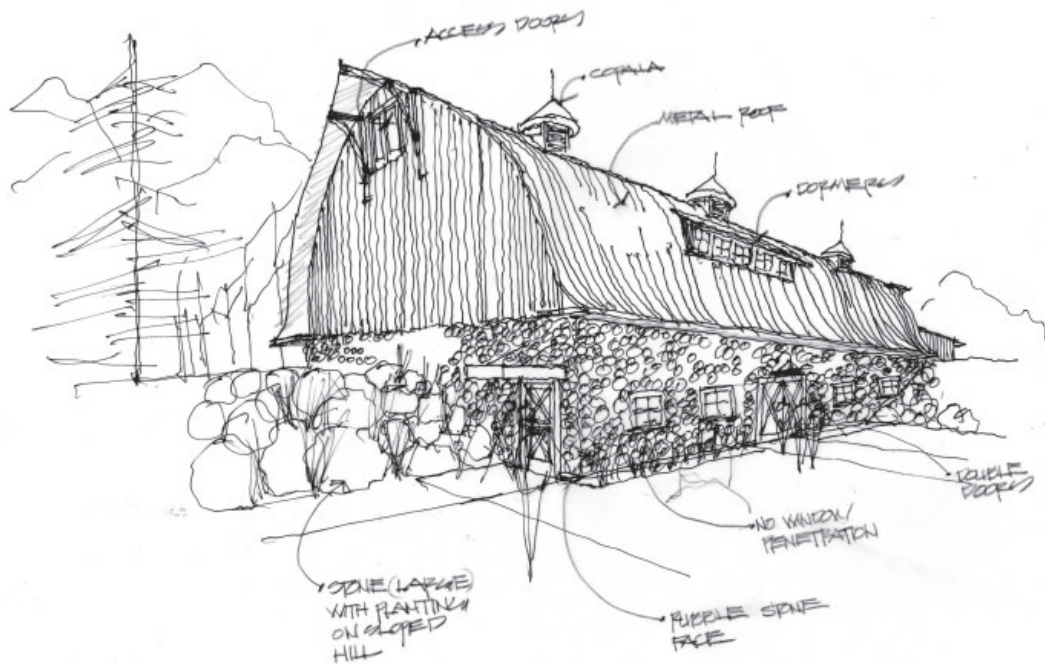
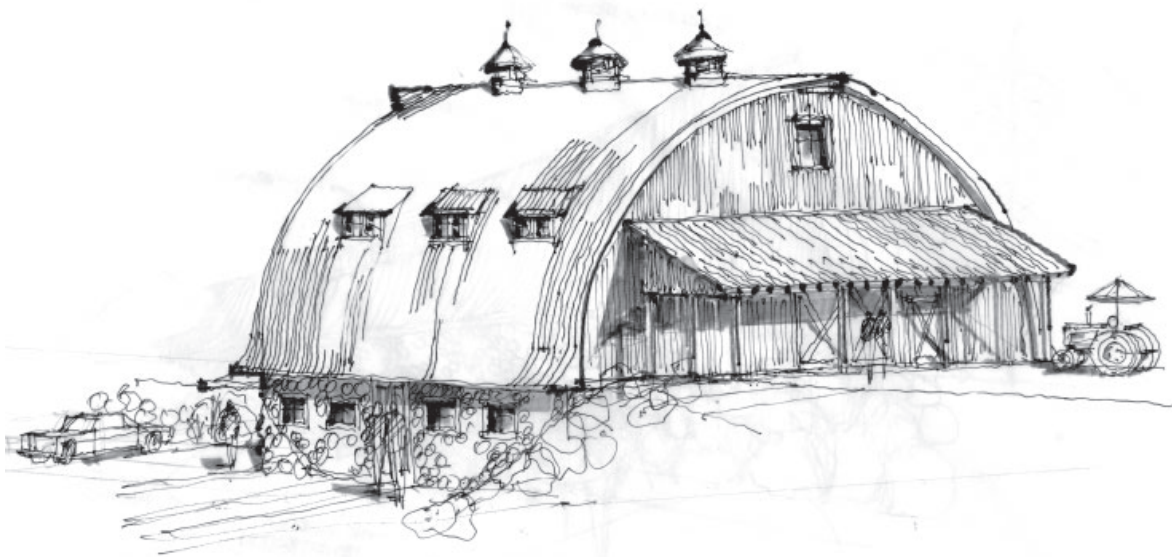
- 700 lb trap door allows access for items to be craned up to 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- The 1895 Rock Island structural bridge supports hold the staircase walls as supports
- 40-foot timbers perch atop the 12" x 12" wood reclaimed columns
- The three restored vintage cupolas adorn the building's roof line.
- Reclaimed heavy timbers were brought in from the Northeast, Southeast and the Northwest to hold up the building.
- 14,000 sq ft of reclaimed tobacco barn hardwood flooring
- 27,000 lineal feet of ship-lapped interior - completed in a horizontal application

Despite many intricate details, Rick and his team offered well thought out solutions to carefully and methodically integrate the overall vision of the new space.

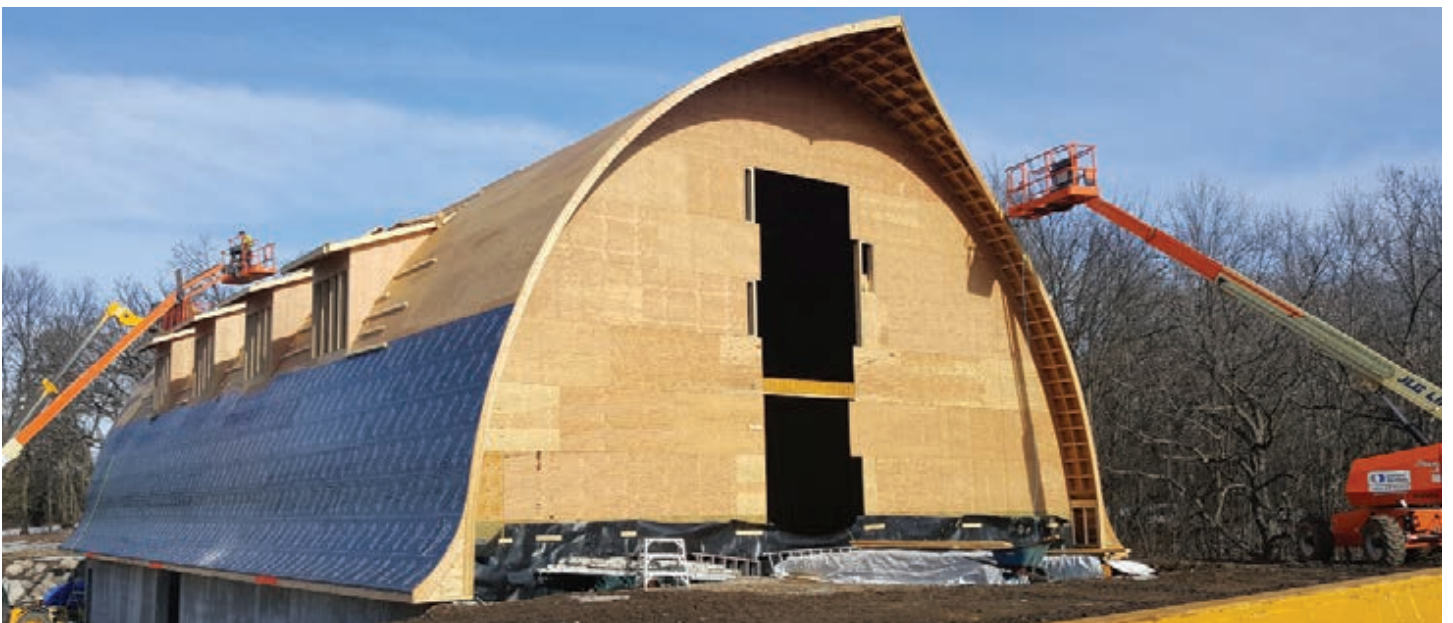
As the 1900's replicated gothic arch barn now stands, it's truly an amazing piece, brought to life by his team. Future guests from all over the world will share in the energy he brought to the build. Should the need or the desire ever arises to build another building we will be calling upon Rick and his team. We can say with all sincerity we wish Rick the best on future projects. It is without reservation, I am sincerely recommending Rick for your next building project needs.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vaughn Veit". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "V" and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Vaughn Veit  
President and Founder of  
Veit Automotive Foundation







DATE

SPRING 2018

PROJECT

PRONTO PUP HISTORIC REBIRTH FROM A 1937 BUILDING

UNIQUENESS

COMMERCIAL COMMISSARY AND RETAIL FOOD SALES

COMMENTS

This Building project offered an existing 1937 building to be transformed into a 2018 fully operating Commissary with retail space. As the key administrator and field manager, Soil borings were conducted immediately for the feasibility of the new structure and the design of the engineered foundation. I had 80 days to Design plans, create Budget, Demo and Construct the new Building. Acceptance of this challenge meant rapid methodical execution of manpower and material deliveries, the specialty equipment that was needed, and added Health Department Requirements that factored into the process. This made the already fast pace of this build a deeper challenge while keeping quality and safety demands at the forefront. We designed around a Building Code Technicality (a grandfather clause required a portion of the old structure to be preserved and included in the new building) This action allowed for the placement of the new completed building within the existing footprint. The criticalness of this Code requirement was our key to allowing this entire building rebirth possibility. The plans for the new structure included many amenities and navigating a second-floor addition at the rear of the building despite an overall height restriction on the design. Adding to the pressure of this project was the fact the Business this family inherited was the Original Pronto Pup secured brand. The thought of having it ready for what is hailed as a Super 12-Day State Fair extravaganza in Minnesota left zero room for failure. The 12-day food event produces \$54 million in gross revenue from all food sales events alone. In terms of this project's criticalness of opening and operating, it was of paramount concern. The 2018 Fair year shall be remembered as the highest attendance in 154 years with over 2 million attendees, making this project historical. Pronto Pup stands as an Icon at the Minnesota State Fair presently. Yes, I can say as a matter of fact all the end goals were achieved successfully.

## GLK, Inc.

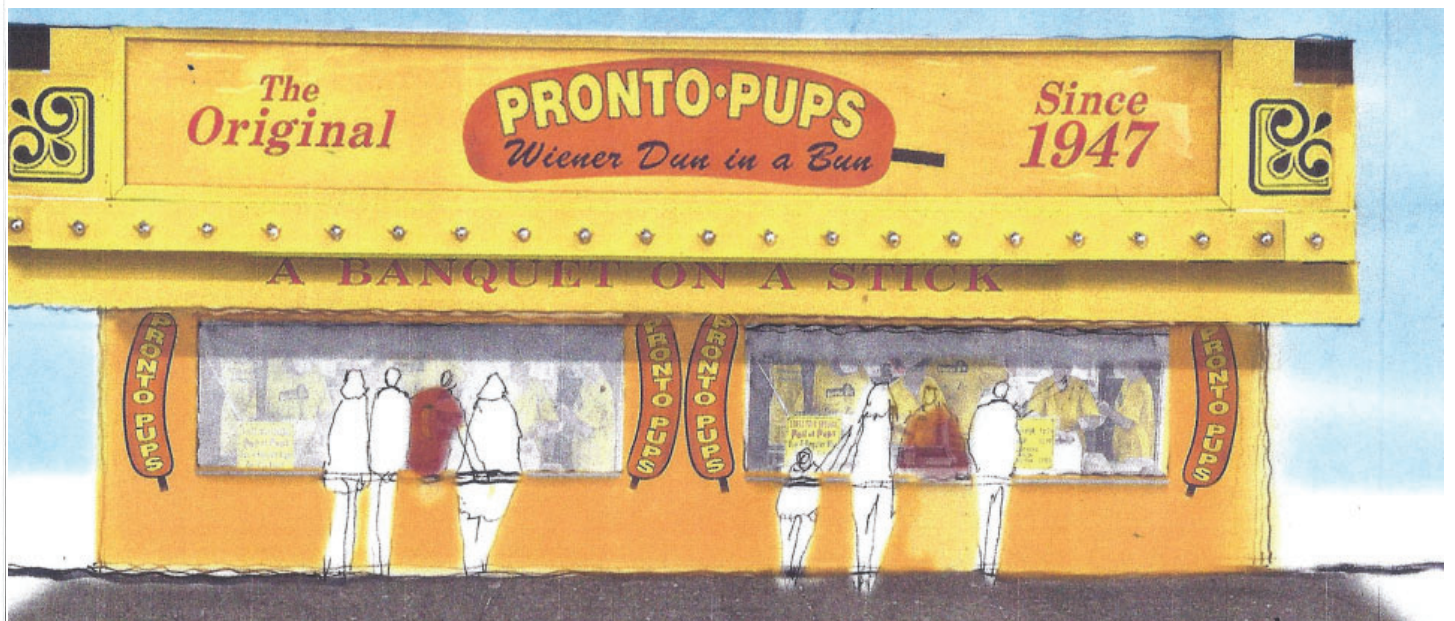
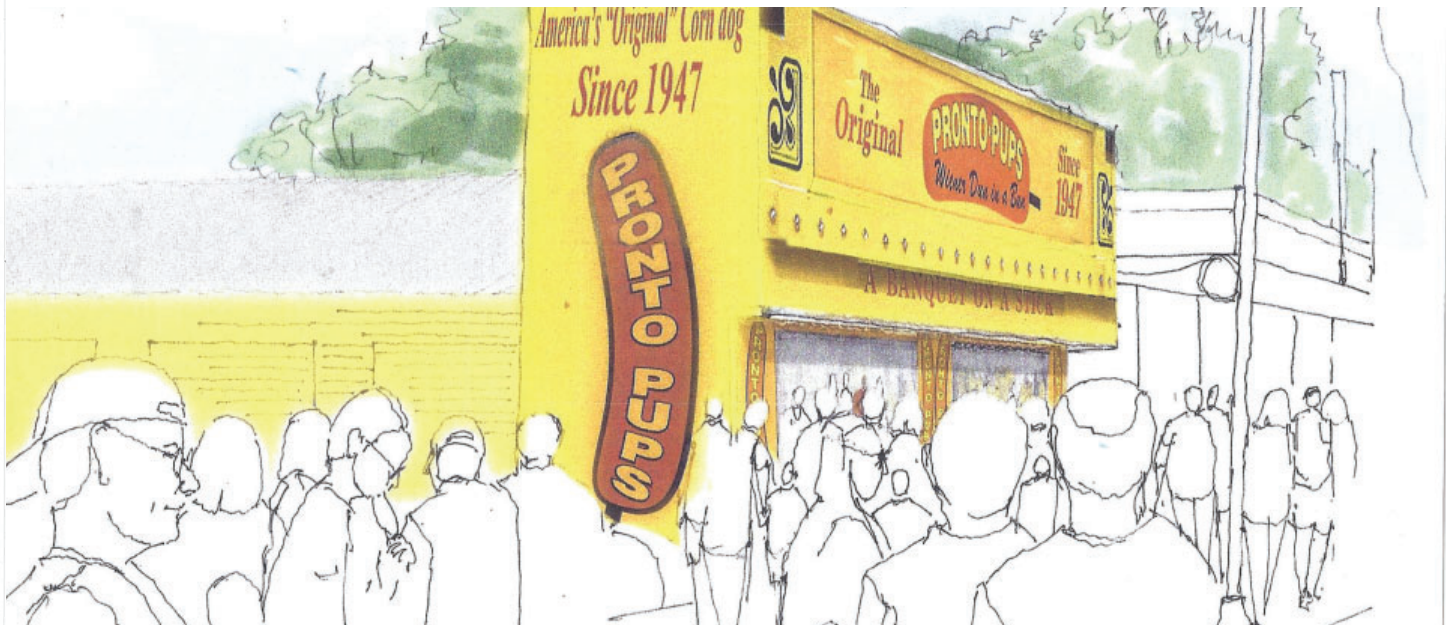
10942-143<sup>rd</sup> Ave SE    Becker, MN 55308

Recently we were awarded an opportunity from the Minnesota State Fair to remodel and rebuild a building on the fairgrounds to move our business into and improve our position significantly at the State Fair. When that happened, I didn't hesitate to contact Rick Straus from JC King Builders to take on the project with me. I had done work with Rick in the past on other projects and I had no doubt that Rick Straus was the man for our job.

As in normal fashion, Rick did an awesome job with the undertaking. His biggest attribute is his attention to detail while at the same time keeping the job on track with the finish date always in mind. Rick is always known for keeping the project on budget as well and he does a good job at that. When the project was completed and on time, I can honestly say that I was glad Rick was the man in charge of everything. If I do another project, you can bet that there is nobody else I'd consider for the job other than Rick Straus and JC King Builders.

**Gregg Karnis/Owner**

**Minnesota State Fair Pronto Pups**





DATE

FALL 2008-2009

PROJECT

CLASSIC ROUND BUILDING USED AS PRIVATE AUTO MUSEUM

UNIQUENESS

TOTALLY ROUND BUILDING, WITH NO INTERIOR WALLS

COMMENTS

This Building's design was totally round with no interior supporting walls. This design required some careful considerations and extraordinary action prior to the physical build. Before I began the actual process, I fashioned the process of building this structure piece by piece in my mind's eye. The question that kept resurfacing was, "what is going to be the best way to achieve a superior build of this structure?" As my experience joined in with the vision, I saw the physical steps necessary throughout each stage of construction and how every piece needed to marry together to ultimately produce the best structure possible. It was only after seeing how it needed to come together that my confidence soared. I chose a high skillset path aided by Computerized Numeric Cutting (CNC) operations to produce precision fit components for this 88-ft diameter structure. Using this formula, I discovered the building would be masterfully accurate and flawlessly built. I spent time and energy and made a personal investment in building a wall-section prototype. With a portion of the precision sample, I won the owner's approval as the best possible method and pathway to follow and thus produce the best building possible.

I contracted the sourcing of all the building materials and wrote the needed text for the entire assembly process. With the use of CNC equipment, the needed details were brought to the table with extreme engineered accuracy. The building's performance had to remain perfectly circular throughout the construction process including up and through the building of the roof and until all the exterior finishes were completed. Every added step created steadfast support to the exterior walls.

It took the work of 8 men working 8 months with 1,000s of man hours to produce this structure. The achieved result is a well-crafted, flawless, pristine, and unique museum structure.



September 24, 2009

To: Whom it May Concern:

**Re: Rick Straus Recommendation**

Recent plans to build a turn-of-the-century structure that would serve as a museum seemed monumental. What made for a very interesting design was its totally round shape joined to a rectangular structure via a two story link. As officers of the Classic Car Foundation and business leader, our expectations were high. As we researched this project, many details surrounding design and engineering needed to be worked out.


As Rick Straus continued offering various solutions, we soon turned to Rick to build this unique structure. While working with Rick, he demonstrated and coordinated great communication strengths. His coordination with numerous artisans produced a superb finished product. It was everything we hoped for right down to the smallest detail, and nothing was lost in the process.

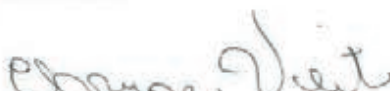
While Rick remained always open and available, he graciously received ideas and changes not originally discussed or presented. The timeliness of the project went smoothly as did the billings and financial transfers.

In the end if we were to do it all again, we would choose Rick Straus as our contractor. We have other projects we are talking to Rick about. We would be happy to refer Rick for any project you may be considering.

Sincerely,

Veit Automotive Foundation

  
Vaughn Veit  
President

  
Chryse Veit  
Director

**VAUGHN & CHRYSE VEIT**  
PO Box 1637, Monticello, MN 55330  
maplehillcv@yahoo.com  
c: 612.919.1369 f: 763.878.0004





DATE

SPRING 2007

PROJECT

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ELK RIVER CHAPTER

UNIQUENESS

BUILD WITH VOLUNTEERS

COMMENTS

With a totally inexperienced but zealous volunteer crew, I was instrumental in constructing a stick built single family home. This effort involved different volunteers at every juncture and often required working with different timelines as well as skill sets. Since money is not the motivating factor, it is often challenging to keep the volunteer group on pace and focused. What this experience taught me was how to vet craftsman skills and quickly assess who was capable and who wasn't. The communication channels were on their highest performance levels. The main ingredient that helped cement the entire process together was the incorporation of many organizational skills. The knowledge of the methodical building order and the managing of the expected outcome were additional factors. When it all came together, it was a professionally finished project with an exceptional conclusion.

The second Habitat build involved the physical construction of the masonry foundation building prior to the remaining building. With one man and myself, the concrete forms were crafted for exact elevation and fit while maintaining accuracy in the squaring of the remaining building. During the physical pour, we recruited some help and the foundation work went well. The forms were removed the following day and once the lumber arrived it took 1 week for the Blitz Build. It was a great project to be a part of and very rewarding.



DATE

SPRING 1975

PROJECT

METROPOLITAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

UNIQUENESS

FIRST OF ITS KIND IN DESIGN AND SIZE

COMMENTS

The remarkable part of any Industrial multi-faceted project is the unusual amount of complexity that needs to culminate in concert to make the finished design work smoothly. Built upon a 170-acre site and capable of processing 251 million gallons of wastewater daily, this plant is one of the largest in the nation. While I was a very young man in my early 20s, I came to this project as a Journeyman Carpenter. I was the 7<sup>th</sup> Carpenter hired out of 120 Carpenters and I worked extremely hard to maintain my position. I was called upon often for projects that were uniquely detailed and included special skills to perform. These assignments often required exact tolerances to allow for specialized machinery to be installed later. The lessons I learned with respect to plan reading and diligence in work ethic yielded huge dividends with the Project's Administrative Staff. I didn't need to be micromanaged. The attitude that repeatedly won out was whatever the challenge I faced, I was determined to go over, around, or through, but failure was not a part of my vocabulary. The taller the challenge, the more I liked it. The experience I gained during this project has stuck with me throughout my entire life. I will forever be thankful to Don Broten of PALCO Construction Co. for the opportunity, because his confidence and faith in me helped shape me into the person I am today.





Precision Microscopic Welding

(612)-425-8818

Fax: (612)-425-8815

Our home building experience with Rick Straus was excellent. In the spring of 2000, we began the arduous journey to find a contractor to build our home. We wanted to find the best builder at the fairest price. As we began the search, we found many builders to be very wonderful and highly recommended by trustworthy friends. How were we to choose? We had several builders do a bid for us and interviewed each of them. We discovered there is quite a difference in the level of professionalism and candor. As we met with Rick it became very apparent that he was a little different from the rest. There were many reasons why we chose Rick Straus to build our home; here are four of them.

- Rick has studied extensively every aspect of the home building process. Many of the other builders we spoke with are excellent job coordinators with excellent people working for them. Rick is not only an excellent job coordinator, but he also has the ability and knowledge to do the job of each specific part of the building process.
- Rick was also very happy to allow us the freedom to take an active part in the building of our home. A family member of ours owns a glass company; we wanted him to do our interior glass and mirrors.
- Rick was also by far the most open when it came to money issues. Everything was disclosed, nothing was kept from us. We not only saw the bottom line but also were allowed to see actual invoices. We knew exactly how every penny was being spent. Rick also did everything he could to save us money. We appreciated his candor in this area.
- Finally, Rick was actively involved on the job site and spoke with us on a daily basis. We were always able to reach him.

Rick is extremely conscientious and is a man of his word. We knew we would be placing our lives and our family's future in a contractor's hands. We are very happy with the choice we made. Our home is beautiful and the procedure went smoothly. Presented with the building process again, we would choose Rick Straus as our builder.

Dave and Patti Erickson



## McMillan Electric Company

PRECISION ELECTRIC MOTORS

December 19, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter on behalf of Rick Straus. It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with Rick on two extensive renovation projects.

The first took place fourteen years ago and lasted nearly one year. My wife Ann and I purchased property on the St. Croix River which was in need of extensive repair. Wainscoted ceilings; dormers; roof line changes; new floors, doors, cabinetry, locks, latches; and more; this house was truly in need of thoughtful renovation.

The second project occurred this fall and involved the demolition of an existing 30' x 40' shed. The plan included rebuilding the structure with 18' clear ceilings in order to accommodate an indoor basketball court. The installation of a large number of windows; fabrication of a custom built 12' door and wainscoted ceilings were the high lights of the project.

You could not find a better partner than Rick Straus to work on projects of this magnitude. Not only is Rick an exceptional carpenter and craftsman, he also is endowed with exceptional design capabilities. Time and time again Rick offered intuitive solutions to construction questions. Where should these windows be placed; how large should they be; what is the most elegant roof design; what colors compliment the surrounding environment; how can you make a 12' door both light weight and sturdy. Literally, these and hundreds of questions that are not on the blue prints were quickly and expertly dealt with by Rick. Working with Rick each day was like having a master carpenter as well as an architect on site. He is honest and patient, he is talented and most of all he cares about the outcome of the job. I simply can not recommend him more highly.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please call me at 715-698-2488. I would be happy to speak further on Rick's behalf.

Sincerely,

Douglas McMillan  
Chief Executive Officer

March 22, 2006

To Whom It May Concern,

My family and I have recently had a new custom built home constructed for us by Rick Straus of Morningstar Homes, Inc. in 2005. I'm personally taking the time to tell anyone who is considering hiring Rick Straus to do a project for them the experience we had building with him.

To put it in a nutshell, the experience was absolutely fantastic. I personally was in the home remodeling business for nearly 5 years. As a result, not only have I heard of all of the horror stories in the business, but I have also been rapped up in them.

The first and foremost thing that my wife and I appreciated was how Rick built our house with as much fervor as though he was building one for his own family. His full time concern for the project was astounding. He was also a man of his word. If Rick said something was going to get done, it would get done. Another thing we appreciated was how Rick, knowing that we were first time home builders, took the time to walk us through the project at a pace that made us feel very comfortable rather than rushing us through it just so he could get on to the next project. He also gave us numerous fantastic ideas based on his experience that added some great luster to our new home. Rick was also very cost conscious for our sake on the project and we were very impressed on how close we ended up to our actual budget when the home was completed.

If I had the time, I could go on and on telling you about the wonderful experience we had building with Morningstar Homes, Inc. and Rick Straus, but in closing I can say this. I've never had a builder/contractor do a job for me that by the time he was done, I would say to myself that I was going to miss this man being around in my life so often. I would definitely recommend Rick Straus of Morningstar Homes, Inc. to construct a project for anyone who is interested at any time. Should you wish to contact me, my number is 612-889-6097.

Gregg W. Karnis  
President/GLK, INC.  
Becker, Minnesota

## RELIABLE BUILDERS, INCORPORATED

3745 DREXEL COURT • EAGAN, MINNESOTA 55123

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OFFICE (651) 681-1902  
FAX (651) 688-2407

March 25, 2008

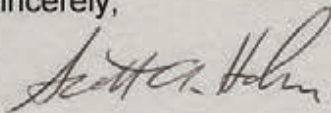
To whom it may concern:

Rick Straus impressed me with his knowledge of tools and craftsmanship the first day I met him in 1982. We were both general contractors and worked together framing new homes. Since that time we have worked together on residential and commercial projects and developments.

Rick is very knowledgeable with all facets of the construction industry and thus his communication skills are excellent at all stages of the project: from the designers, architects, engineers, to suppliers, tradesmen, inspectors and owners. His ability to coordinate the work and team atmosphere of subcontractors is invaluable. Rick's attention to detail is a skill set that is so vital to completing a project successfully. He is very thorough and well organized.

If you want a project done well and on time, Rick Straus is the person you want. Rick Straus was the major reason our latest project together was a success at 3844 Upton Av S Minneapolis. This project consisted of a whole house makeover and addition. Feel free to call me at 612-867-6606 for additional information.

Sincerely,



Scott A. Holm  
President

**PREFERRED BUILDERS, INC.**

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1333 Osborne Road ~ Spring Lake Park, MN ~ U.S.A.  
Phone 786-6000 ~ Fax (612)780-2746

July 13 2001

To Whom It May Concern....

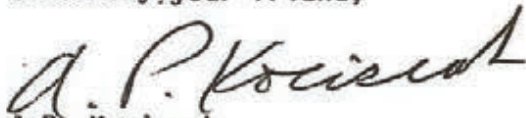
As President and Owner of Preferred Builders, Inc., for 22 years, my opinion of Rick Straus is based on first hand experience.

Rick Straus exhibited attention to detail and tenacity during extreme testings, the results have certainly brought credit to our strong reputation in the Home Building Industry.

It is with great pleasure to take this time recommending Rick for any position he feels ready to meet, for I know he will meet any and all challenges construction can serve at him with integrity, zeal and tenacity.

Thanks Rick for your service and I know you'll do extremely well.

Sincerely, your friend,



A.P. Kociscak

President

Preferred Builders Inc.

### **Letter of Recommendation**

JC King has far exceeded our expectations in so many ways. We definitely got the “A-Team” when we signed on with Rick Straus and his construction company. JC King’s business model and design agreement was an easy process for us to navigate; every detail was spelled out, and Rick’s team handled it all with clarity and aplomb. A call never went unanswered, and communication was clear and concise. We knew exactly what to expect and when. Being in the “people” business all my life (bar/restaurant) (registered nurse), I pride myself on quick assessment of people and situations.

After our first consultation with Rick, I afterwards mentioned to my husband that I had the perfect moniker for Rick besides his title of contractor, and that it was Humble Servant Leader. I was proven so right as JC King Builders follows the values and work ethic of its founder, Rick Straus. Rick is passionate about his life’s calling. He is a visionary and sees the bigger picture and higher purpose. He has integrity and drive and seeks to learn continually. A strong technical background honed over his lifetime has given him the experience and character to build a stellar reputation in the construction field.

I think a great leader attracts and retains the best construction professionals. All the men who helped build our new addition were trustworthy, friendly, and optimistic. Our safety and happiness were always foremost in their concern. Attentive to detail, they cared about their work, having in-depth knowledge in their respective fields for decades.

Our project is complete, and we are “over the moon” with our beautiful, solidly build, custom addition to our home. The entire team has infused our new home with their care and pride of workmanship. We have become friends as well as collaborators. If you want trust, focus, and vision, combined with technical “can-do know-how” for whatever build you have in mind, I’d call JC King Builders. You won’t be disappointed. Both Bear and I would stake our lives and reputations on it.

James and Alana Davis  
(Bear & AB)

June 30, 2003

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Rick Strauss and Morningstar Homes. Rick recently completed our house in Livonia Township, Minnesota. I must say that we are very happy with our new home and with the job that Rick did.

Rick is extremely knowledgeable in all facets of the building process. From start to finish, he appeared to be an expert in each area of construction. He was far more than someone who simply scheduled the sub-contractors. He actually knows what it takes to complete each phase and knows what a quality job looks like. Throughout the entire process, he made it clear that a passing grade wasn't good enough, but that excellence was the final goal. Rick is very detailed conscientious and meticulous.

I was very involved in the entire building process (since I lived close by and am very particular in what I want). Rick made himself available to answer each of my questions in a way that I could understand. There were times during the construction that my wife and I wanted to change things (while the house was being framed we decided we wanted another window in our bedroom). Rick made it very easy for us to approach him with changes. In the instance with the added window, we wanted the window in a particular location that the framers said wasn't possible. Rick was able to instruct the framers how to build the window in.

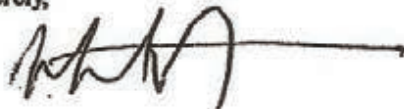
I wanted to participate in the building process to help keep some of the cost. Rick was more than willing to let me do that. He worked up a schedule that built extra time in for me to complete the parts of the construction that I wanted to do. He then reworked the schedule when I went longer than expected. In the end, I'm sure it was a big headache for him. However, he was very gracious and never let on that it was even an inconvenience.

The overall cost of our house was very affordable. We shopped around and were able to get our house built with all the upgrades we wanted and better materials for the same price that other builders quoted without them. We saved tens of thousands of dollars in the end.

Rick continues to be committed to service even after we've moved in. There have been couple of things since we moved in that needed to be addressed. For example, one door started sticking a little and the well froze do to an exceptionally cold winter (not due to a poor workmanship). In each case, I simply called Rick and he contacted to appropriate people to take care of it.

I would recommend Rick Strauss and Morningstar Homes to anyone who wants the house of their dreams on a budget they can afford.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Rogers', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rob Rogers  
Livonia Township, Minnesota

August 1, 2008

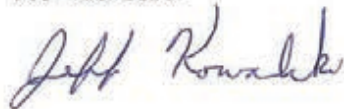
Rick Straus gave us a bid for an addition to our home that would be my new office. He came in with a bid that we felt comfortable with and hired him to do the job.

As the job progressed, I requested a lot of upgrades and additional work which wasn't part of the original bid. Rick was very considerate and made all the changes we asked for with price adjustments to reflect the additions.

Rick helped us build not just another office but a log cabin retreat where my customers have come and many do not want to leave! People have said it feels like being up north and they wish they had a place like ours. Now we're able to help people with almost any health problems they have, in an environment everyone loves.

Rick was always thinking ahead for us to make sure things were done the way we needed them. When we build again I wouldn't even think of getting a bid from anyone else except Rick. Thanks for the wonderful job!

Jeff Kowalski  
763-425-1699



Energy Therapy For the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
9205 Woodhall Bay  
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443  
[www.chidvd.com](http://www.chidvd.com)

**To Whom It May Concern:**

**We would highly recommend Rick Strauss to anyone considering building a new home. His experience and integrity as an individual made the whole process less stressful. Many people we had contact with commented on what an excellent builder we were working with.**

**Rick allowed us to do as much or as little of the work as we wanted. He was calm and patient with us throughout the building process and we could tell he truly cared about the people more than the job. Yet, he is a perfectionist that demands high quality from himself and those who work under him.**

**Rick was extremely creative in the design of the home, adding details we would never have thought of ourselves. He helped create a dream home for us while keeping us in budget.**

**Rick Strauss' character, knowledge and skill are the qualities that make him such an excellent builder.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brent and Katie Bowers".

**Brent and Katie Bowers  
24120 113<sup>th</sup> Street  
Zimmerman, MN 55398  
763-856-4036**

To Whom it May Concern,

RE: Letter of Recommendation for Rick Straus

We are very pleased and willing to recommend Rick Straus as a builder. Rick helped us complete our dream of building a retirement home in northern Minnesota. From beginning to end he was a pleasure to work with and we now hold him as a friend as well.

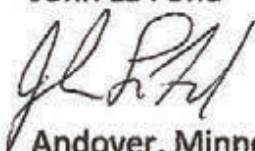
Rick's attention to detail is a one of his many assets. His experience and knowledge of buildings and building methods is another. And organization is a forte. From his initial review of our plans and his recommendations for improvements and clarifications to his last sweep through the house, he always had our best interests at heart and tried to make everything as perfect as possible. And he stayed within our budget.

He was patient though persistent through the process including navigating through and trying to make up for delays caused by the construction loan process, weather and various other unforeseen issues. He coordinated the entire process from clearing the lot through building the house to final grading. He never lost sight of what the remaining tasks to be completed were. And nothing was too small to discuss with Rick.

The associates he had working for him were all very competent and Rick took the time to supervise each group and the phase of the building they were responsible for. He is very skilled at coordinating numerous activities so that more than one phase of construction can be ongoing at the same time.

We feel very fortunate to have been introduced to Rick as our builder and would be more than happy to talk with anyone interested in having Rick build their home or structure for them.

John La Fond



Andover, Minnesota

Karen La Fond



8/12/09

Michael and Mary Doyle  
723 Jewel Ave. N.  
Lake Elmo, Mn.

December 18, 2007

Hello Rick,

Sorry that my schedule yesterday did not allow me to thank you in person for the outstanding job that your company did on our remodeling/addition project in Lake Elmo.

Both Mary and I were very impressed with several aspects of your product:

Your dedication to detail exceeded our expectations and had a significant positive impact on the project outcome.

Your eye for quality was outstanding. As a former cabinet and furniture maker, I have very high standards for the visual end product. You delivered a beautiful end product with excellent craftsmanship. Most importantly, we were highly appreciative of your watchful approach and advice in other important aspects of the project where Mary and I had less personal knowledge (i.e. proper structure, quality & price-value materials). We also appreciated the way that you talked us through options and outcomes on the project. Your frank advice and flexibility to accommodate changes was highly valuable.

Your experienced, friendly, hard working crew was also superb. When you leave your home and valuables in the hands of strangers for several weeks, it was pleasantly reassuring to know it was in the hands of people of such high integrity.

Thanks again for the great work. It was wonderful to work with a contractor that delivered on all important aspects of the project -- quality, timing and price.

Best wishes to you and you team for a great year in 2008. I certainly will be passing your contact information to people at 3M that are considering remodeling/addition projects and will make you our first choice for any future project for Mary and I.

Michael Doyle

Carl and I had worked with Bob Strauss of Cornerstone Builders while building our first home. We were very impressed with the job he did. We met Bob's brother Rick on that project and, since Bob was busy on other projects, chose to work with Rick on our remodel when we purchased a different home. We knew Bob did great work, so knew Rick would be wonderful too.

Rick, Carl and I sat down and discussed our total project for the house. Rick made several wonderful suggestions in regards to items we didn't realize we might run into.

Rick tried to get as much information into our contract to give us as complete a picture of our job as he could. That helped immensely in deciding what we could fit into our budget.

About 2 weeks into the project, we had a terrible storm and water began coming in through the sides of the windows in our great room. I mentioned it to Rick the next day as I had Anderson Window Co. coming out and I wouldn't be around. Rick took the time to check the window, and upon inspecting it, found that it had not been flashed. He took it upon himself to check the others and found that none of the windows in the house had been flashed or installed correctly. He also found that there was moss and other moisture issues showing around the stucco areas of the house. He brought this to our attention and advised us to have a moisture test completed. Thank God we did because we found a mess! Rick recommended we talk with an attorney about the issue as there were signs of repair in various places throughout the home.

As of this time, we are currently suing the previous owner for seller misrepresentation and builder warranty. We would not have known anything about the major damage occurring in the house or what to do about it had it not been for Rick. And the remodeling work that Rick did for us, well, we were exceptionally happy with it. His subs were courteous at all times and very polite. When we had questions, he was right there to answer them. If we disagreed with something, he was right there ready to talk with us and work things out. When the time comes to fix the house issues, we'll be calling Rick once again. He's one of the most knowledgeable and trustworthy builders I know.

Vicki and Carl Logan  
Lindstrom, MN

To Whom It May Concern,

My wife and I are grateful we built with JCKing Builders. We built our first home fifteen years ago, and never desired building again. Then, we met Rick with JCKing Builders, and we experienced superb craftsmanship, relationship, and integrity.

We had a new construction house design in mind, and JCKing Builders created that design. JCKing Builders gave us everything we were looking for and more. Rick thought of all of the details we had not considered. He encouraged wider staircases and more room around the island by the appliances, for example. More room around the island and wider staircases may seem simple, but we increasingly appreciate the design idea and implementation. The subcontractors Rick worked with were professional and helpful.

The home was built with care and precision. Safety, resale, and quality were all accounted factors. I really appreciate that no corners were cut. The emphasis on quality work continues to stand the test of time. Rick's intent was to ensure the best for our family, and we are ever grateful.

JCKing's fabulous service continued after the closing table. Rick has graciously answered any questions. He continues to be available for help when we need advice in maintaining our home the best way or wondering about how something was done during construction while we finished our basement. His knowledge and experience make him a great resource.

We are grateful JCKing Builders worked hard building us the best home possible for the best price possible. They demonstrated respect for our family and our resources. The quality and craftsmanship was top notch. They continue to stand by their work and continue to support us in the homeownership process.

However you can fit JCKing into your plans, you will only benefit through their expertise and guidance. Their customer service, care, and quality is at its finest. My wife and I are blessed to live in our dream house thanks to Rick and JCKing Builders. They helped us accomplish a dream. Let them help accomplish yours.

Chris and Heather Vincent  
Lead Pastor  
The Bridge Church  
sfbridge.org  
763-753-2134  
Sunday Service 10:30  
6433 Norris Lake Road  
Nowthen, MN 55330  
Mailing Address: PO Box 741