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Business Media

# Residential DESIGN & BUILD

Design Trends and New Products for  
the **CUSTOM HOME MARKET**

July/August 2007

2007  
**EXCELLENCE  
AWARDS**

[rdbmagazine.com](http://rdbmagazine.com)

**BUILDING SPECIALISTS**

Roanoke, Va.  
 bsiva.com

**COMPANY STATS**

Projects designed/built annually: 44  
 Residential work: 75 percent  
 New construction: 13 percent  
 Average annual revenue: \$5.75 million

**PREFERRED SUPPLIERS:**

On-Q/Legrand • Kohler Co. • Weather Shield  
 Windows and Doors • Sub-Zero Inc. • Wolf  
 Appliance • James Hardie • Delta Lighting •  
 Armstrong Ceilings • Interface/FLOR



All photography courtesy of  
 Richard Boyd Photography

# Community Involvement

*For love of his city*

To hear Bob Fetzer speak about Roanoke, Va., in such fond and uplifting terms, a logical assumption would be that he's the mayor. But he's not, which makes his devotion to improving and contributing to the city more impressive.

When Fetzer, president of Building Specialists, moved to Roanoke roughly 30 years ago, he joined various leadership groups which opened his eyes to the needs of the community. In addition to addressing issues such as poverty and homelessness, Fetzer believes improving a city's physical beauty can benefit a community as well. For example, decades ago he secured a loan to rehabilitate a dilapidated building nobody wanted, which is now a treasured highlight of the downtown area.

Building Specialists' commitment to community has evolved in many directions. Staff members regularly educate Roanoke's professional community, including teaching real estate appraisers a course on the true value of remodeling work. "We educated them on how costs have gone up, and how customized work costs a lot more money," Fetzer says.

"Our goal is to make them more aware so they can provide more accurate appraisals so owners get the benefits of the increased value of their property. Their education is beneficial to the banking community as well, and we're helping home buyers get the value of their work so they can finance their projects," Fetzer says.



Bob Fetzer oversees demolition in preparation for the home pictured above for a needy family.

Building Specialists' largest recent act of charity was its 2006 participation in the television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" which provides a renovated or new home to needy families. The overwhelming challenge was building a new home (pictured above) in 107 hours, with thousands of volunteers.

Despite competing with hunting season, record bad weather and a monumental coordination effort, everything came together in the final hours. "This was a testimonial to the spirit of the community. Our firm is small and we could not have done this ourselves. If it were not for the community connections we've built through community activities, we would not have had the confidence to do it," Fetzer says.

The home builder has not benefited financially from any of its charitable efforts, but has established a trust factor with other businesses and community leaders, Fetzer says. "I think the other rewarding aspect has been in terms of influencing community policy, and good building design." ▲



The team at Building Specialists in Roanoke, Va.

## Building Specialists

CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

It's not what we build. It's how.

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