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## Designer thinks 'green' Barnard keen on environmentally friendly, appropriate design.

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MISHAWAKA -- In one of those strange twists of fate, a teacher from Australia at a California university set Bill Barnard on a path that landed him at a Mishawaka firm.

The whole thing has to do with "green" building -- making buildings as environmentally friendly and healthy as possible.

Barnard took several architecture classes at California Polytechnic University at San Luis Obispo in which sustainable and appropriate building was mentioned.

But a teacher from Australia who talked about appropriate technology really got his attention. Barnard spend two and a half months in Africa touring Habitat for Humanity projects. He learned it wasn't appropriate to use a metal roof on a church in tropical parts of Africa because you can't really hear the sermon when it's raining on the roof.

And concrete doesn't work because it costs so much to get it shipped.

He said the whole experience helped him understand the concept of building materials that are not just sustainable but also appropriate.

After that trip, Barnard helped design a project for Habitat for Humanity for which LeRoy Troyer was the main architect.

That led to Barnard being offered a job with The Troyer Group in Mishawaka. The Troyer Group as a firm is a charter member of the Indiana Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council.

Barnard is now chairman of the group.

And he's proud to say he has never been to a meeting in person. He figures the three-hour drive to Indianapolis for an hour-and-a-half meeting is not sustainable. So he attends electronically.

One of the Green Building Council's main programs is the Leadership in

### For more information

Here are some Web sites to find more information on green building. They also contain links to other sites.

- The U.S. Green Building Council -- [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

- BuildingGreen -- [www.BuildingGreen.com](http://www.BuildingGreen.com)

- The Troyer Group -- [www.troyergroup.com](http://www.troyergroup.com)

Anyone interested in joining Green Building Council efforts also may call Bill Barnard at (574) 259-9976, or e-mail him at [info@troyergroup.com](mailto:info@troyergroup.com).

### How to green your home and lifestyle

Here are some things anyone can do to make their home more environmentally friendly. They're from the U.S. Green Building Council and Bill Barnard, who is chairman of the Indiana Chapter.

1. Use low or no VOC (volatile organic chemical) paints, cleaners and other chemicals.
2. Use compact fluorescent light bulbs.
3. Program your thermostat.
4. Plug air leaks in your home.
5. Have furnace and air conditioning systems tuned by a professional.
6. Buy products made locally if you can.
7. Buy Energy Star rated appliances.
8. Reduce water use.
9. Choose to pay more for electricity from green sources. Check your energy bill for details.
10. Use recycled products or wood from forests certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

## Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, Green Building Rating System.

There already is one building in the area that scores very high on that scale -- Reith Village, part of the Merry Lea Environmental Center, which is part of Goshen College. And The Troyer Group designed the new library being built at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart.

There are LEED rating systems for new and existing homes and businesses and about every other kind of building imaginable.

Barnard said 99.9 percent of the projects The Troyer Group works on have some of the attributes sought in the LEED rating system.

Just because clients aren't trying specifically to meet those criteria doesn't mean they can't benefit from some of the ideals.

Barnard said green building is being used more and more for commercial and office space. Owners of those buildings are more interested in the long-term savings from an efficient building and not so "first-cost driven," he said.

Barnard said studies have shown that practices like not using products that release harmful chemicals can improve the efficiency of workers and even boost retail sales.

"Most of the sustainable things we do are more economically feasible than not," he said of the work The Troyer Group does. "Besides spiritual reasons -- stewardship of the earth -- or love of nature, it also makes sense for the bottom line."

The Green Building Council is now marketing its ideas for homes mostly to developers because they build most of the homes in the country.

But Barnard emphasized that individuals can make demands about their home and suggestions at work.

11. Use rapidly renewable materials like bamboo, cork and eucalyptus for floors and other surfaces instead of wood. They grow fast.
11. Plant trees that provide wind protection and shade.
12. Use native plants.
13. Don't use any more fertilizer or pest control products than are necessary.
15. Use carpools and public transportation. Walk or ride a bicycle.
16. Buy an energy efficient car.