



## A chat with ... Larry Parrish

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DailyCamera.com hosted an online chat Feb. 1 with **Larry Parrish**, who co-owns **Parrish Construction Co.** in Boulder with his wife, Annette. The company was started by **Larry Parrish's** father in 1969.

**Parrish Construction** -- which provides new construction and remodeling services for residential and commercial customers -- also has an award-winning cabinet shop.

The moderated chat included questions from Camera Business Writer Alicia Wallace and members of the public who visited [www.dailycamera.com/chat](http://www.dailycamera.com/chat).

The following has been edited for length and clarity:

**wallacea:** How have the market conditions affected your business or the type of projects that you work on?

**LarryParrish:** Although new construction is slow, the remodeling market continues to be strong. Many people are still moving into the area and find our housing to be a bargain.

Also, our citizens are very mobile -- some downsizing and wanting to customize their new home, or rewarding themselves by making their home into their dream home.

**Moderator:** What should I look out for when trying to choose a general contractor?

**LarryParrish:** I suggest looking for signs of professionalism. This includes involvement in the community, such as service organizations, professional associations and designations, longevity, a long list of satisfied clients and financial stability.

**Serious Business2:** I understand you use a lot internal processes and systems. I'm very curious about that, as my business is also logistics- and detail-heavy, with time crunches in a project like I imagine you face. Can you speak about that?

**LarryParrish:** Thanks. This is an area we're passionate about. We've been inspired by Michael Gerber's book "The E-Myth Revisited," and his concept of business

systems.

I like the analogy of two different types of airplane pilots -- the professional pilot versus the barnstormer. Both know how to fly, but the experience is different. A ride with the barnstormer will be exciting, and you might survive it, but I'll fly commercial every time. The pre-landing checklist ensures the wheels are down before landing.

**Moderator:** Here are two related questions:

**wallacea:** When it comes to remodeling trends, are more people looking for certain types of materials (bamboo flooring, sustainable materials, etc.)?

**Rick:** What materials have current interest in today's kitchens and baths?

**LarryParrish:** Yes, there is a trend to the use of more "green" products -- from sustainable sources, with low toxicity, and leaving less impact on the environment. These products include recycled materials, low VOC finishes, woods from sustainable forestry practices, etc.

Due to the "graying" of America, there is also a trend to durable, low-maintenance products, as people want to age in place (live at home as long as possible).

In kitchens and baths, there is a trend of returning to old classic materials, such as linoleum flooring, claw-foot tubs and custom built-ins.

**chatter:** Speaking of the graying population, how is that changing housing trends and should homeowners considering selling look to remodeling aimed at potential older buyers?

**LarryParrish:** One consideration is stairs. Many people have trouble climbing stairs in multistory homes as they (and their knees) age.

We're installing more elevators in existing (and new) homes. We're also planning for future elevator locations, stacking closets above each other, for example. One architect friend, with a two-story home, designed a studio on the main level that can be converted to a master bedroom when his knees give out.

**Moderator:** Thank you for participating in today's chat! A full transcript of the conversation will be posted later today at [www.dailycamera.com/chat](http://www.dailycamera.com/chat).

**LarryParrish:** Thank you, everyone, for participating, and for your great questions. I've enjoyed this, and hope you have as well.

If anyone would like to continue the conversation, please contact me at 303-444-0033, or [LP@buildboulder.com](mailto:LP@buildboulder.com).

If you'd like to learn more about Parrish Construction, please visit our Web site at [www.buildboulder.com](http://www.buildboulder.com).

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