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Winthrop, WA 98862
www.bearcreeklumber.com

We'll Trade You!
A Free Bear Creek Lumber Coffee Mug
for a picture of Your Bear Creek
Lumber-built Deck!

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TIMBERLINE

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Show Us Your Deck!

Summertime is deck time! Bear Creek Lumber offers a variety of deck materials, including red cedar, yellow cedar, redwood, ironwood and Douglas fir. Every year we troll for more photos for our collection of great looking lumber projects. This year we are upping the ante with the offer of a genuine Bear Creek Lumber 3-season jacket for the best deck photograph of 2000! All entries will get a cobalt blue Bear Creek Lumber coffee mug, because everyone with a deck needs a special cup to enjoy tea or coffee. Isn't that why you built the deck? And what better way to relax! So get out the camera! Send your entry to BCL Deck Contest, P.O. Box 669, Winthrop WA 98862. We are ready to ship



Other deck contests:

The California Redwood Association also has an annual deck contest, although it's limited to decks built with redwood lumber. First prize is \$3,000, with 2nd prize being \$2,000 and a \$1,000 third prize. Deadline is July 31. For more information, visit the Association's website at www.calredwood.org

Dream Homes: Changing Visions

Everyone has a dream home, if only in their hearts. What do today's dreamers long for? For some, what's old is again new: people want "craftsmen" homes that have style and historical reference. Everything from Eastern Seaboard homes to Spanish Colonial to French Country are typical of designs that new home buyers and builders are choosing. Homes need a sense of family, with designs that draw family members together. Wood is increasingly sought after, as



is tile. New owners want gardens (often with ponds), security, natural elements. Neutral color schemes are prevalent with sage green and browns entering more home decors. Home offices are very popular. Flexible floor plans and outdoor "people friendly" zones such as decks and porches are making a big comeback.

In the past three to five years, the size of new homes has shrunk from palatial to more user friendly. People now want more yard space and less indoor open space. Builders are realizing that spaces can feel larger by creating diagonal views. Rooms can perform more than one function and by modulating ceiling height, spaces can grow with the imagination of the user.

Quality and detail are increasingly important values in homes of the future. Hardwood flooring is an extra that sells homes. Wiring for computer applications and home business use is also important. Location has never ceased being a value to most homeowners, but convenience is more critical as roads become more congested and telecommuting makes work and home interchangeable.

Where Dream Homes Are Affordable

Everyone has certain "dream" requirements but if you are looking for value, you can't miss with the Northeast and Midwest "rustbelt". So many people left during the 80's and 90's, that these two markets have an edge pricewise over the rest of the country. Many in real estate expect this trend to turn around within the next three years as the Internet driven economy rediscovers these markets. Another good bet is Texas, where open space and development constraints are few. Even with their booming economies, Dallas and Houston are moderately priced housing markets with loads of potential, according to real estate surveys.

Spring Staff Changes

We are sad to announce the loss of two of our office staff members. Many of you have grown accustomed to speaking with Deb Kalmbach, our receptionist and Amy, our administrative assistant. Both decided to move on to other employment opportunities. Deb has been a big part of the newsletter effort, both editing and writing for this publication. As a receptionist, she seemed to know every caller personally. She will be missed!

Amy Perry has been a wonderful light in the office, organizing parties, outings to the Mariner games and keeping us supplied with M and M's. Our chocoholics will be devastated and we will miss all the fun!

We are very lucky to have two fine women stepping into our office positions. Heidi Hawkins has been working in accounting and will move into the administrative position to assist with sales and purchasing. Heidi has family in the valley and moved here from the other side of the mountains to be able to have more time to ride horses and spend time in the mountains with her husband, who is currently training at police academy. Amy Hodgin will be joining us after working in both computer and camera fields. She brings a background in database management which will be great for our customer tracking. She is also a horsewoman and has family in the valley. Amy's father, David, works as a sawyer and driver in the lumberyard.

Our computer software and accounting ace, Omaste Bannick, will be starting maternity leave this month. Omaste as a new mother, will be telecommuting, focusing her work effort on web page design and other technical work involving our computer systems. Melissa Hinkle, Omaste's protégé, will be anchoring the accounting department.

Mark Buck will be stepping into in-state contractor sales. Mark has been the company project manager, responsible for our new storage facilities and other improvements recently added to the yard.



Pictured clockwise from top left: Heidi, Jim, Amy and Mark

Shakes Vs. Shingles

Both shakes and shingles are made from blocks of wood, usually cedar. Shakes normally have one natural grain textured split surface. Shingles are generally thinner than shakes and have sawn faces and backs, with a taper of standard size at the butt.



Both shingles and shakes are available in 3 grades: #1 grade is called Blue Labels; #2 grade are Red Labels and #3 grade are Black Labels. Grades vary by the number of defects. #1 grade, used both for roofing and sidewall, have no defects. #2 has more flaws allowed but is still suitable for reroofing, starting courses and sidewalls. #3 are appropriate for a two course application, garden sheds, gazebos or sidewalls of out buildings. There are three lengths of product: 16" long products are called Five-x; 18" are called Perfections and 24" are called Royals. Bear Creek can supply you with any grade or length of either shake or shingle.

Maintaining Your Shake Roof

Good housekeeping is necessary on the surface of a roof, just as it is elsewhere around the house. The accumulation of debris on the roof's surface contributes to premature deterioration of cedar shingle and shake roofing. If allowed to remain, debris, such as leaves or needles from nearby trees, will retain moisture and could result in the formation of moss and fungus which is detrimental to the roofing. This could also impede the run-off of rainwater to a degree that can result in leaks.

Roofs should be cleaned off periodically with either a stiff broom or brush, or high-pressure jet of water. Care should be taken in cleaning roofs so that no damage is done to the roofing. The removal of foreign matter from the spaces (keyways) between the individual shingles or shakes is important. Commercial firms specializing in roof cleaning and sand treatment are recommended.

Having been a contractor and builder for most of his life, Mark can offer his clients both estimate and takeoff from blueprints service. He also heads up our sauna sales.

Welcome back to Jim Austin, who recently returned to Bear Creek Lumber after a three year absence. Born and raised in the Methow, Jim is delighted to be back in the valley with his family. Jim is a driver and yardman.

In addition to these staff changes, our summer work crew is returning shortly. We have high school and college kids who work during their summer break. Some, like Melissa, stay on after high school and become full scale staff members. Melissa has been attending community college in the afternoons and evenings while working the early shift at Bear Creek. Returning this year from University of Idaho will be Jessica Blethen, who is our summer receptionist. Also joining the crew will be high school summer interns Shena Bannick, Levi Estes and James Lehmann.

While employee turnover seems to be a fact of life in this day and age, at Bear Creek we have been really fortunate to have excellent staff replacements at each turn. We look forward to a great year to come!

INDUSTRY NEWS

U.S. lumber output is highest in a decade. A surge in western production, along with an all time high in southern lumber manufacturing, pushed total U.S. lumber softwood output to its highest level in ten years in 1999. The 36.69 billion board feet was almost equal to 1989 output of 37.54 billion board feet. **A recent survey of housing markets found that while most of the country's need for housing has been met, there are still certain states that have room for more.** Most underbuilt home markets: California, South Dakota, Texas, Illinois, Alabama, New Jersey, Kentucky, New York, Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Consumer confidence remains high, although interest rate hikes have many predicting that home mortgage rates will reach 8.5% by fall. Many believe that 2000 could be the decade's third best year for home sales.

The U.S. government issued a 4,000 page report on breaching the Snake River dams. The government opened a comment period in regards to the study that brought standing room only crowds to meetings held close to the dam's locations. But in its wisdom, most meetings were held in locations far from the dam removal's impact area, including a meeting held in southeast Alaska, 2,500 miles away. No meetings were held in North Central Washington, where the impact of the dam's removal, on top of the area's current economic depression, could be devastating.

Fuel surcharges are inching up costs nationwide. Surcharges for lumber shipments are ranging from 3-8%.



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Construction

As labor shortages have been endemic throughout the U.S., South Dakota's governor had an innovative idea. Why not use prison labor to build low cost housing for senior citizens? Prisoners earn 25¢ per hour, as opposed to union carpenters who cost 100 times that. The governor originally proposed building only 768-sq.-ft. homes in towns with less than 5,000 people. But the program was so successful, he expanded it to cover 1,200 sq.ft. homes and then removed limits altogether.



Although the state denies that the original plan has been modified, the state marketing director for the South Dakota Housing Authority does admit that there are no income limits for buyers. When challenged about the absence of income, limits, he said, "I think they are coming, but I can't tell you when. I can tell you one thing, rich people are not buying these homes. Why should they?"

The governor himself has refused comment. Builders are talking. Said one, "We asked him to put income limits on the homes and haven't heard anything back."

Meanwhile, the prisoners have built 440 homes since 1996, with about 177 built in 1999. These are big numbers in economically hard-pressed South Dakota. Only about 2,200 homes are built in the state in a typical year and builders find it difficult to compete with a subsidized program.

More Americans Stay Put

The trend of moving from place to place has been as American as apple pie since the 1950's. New census information tells us that people are now starting to stay put, at least regionally.

In the 1990's, about 16% of Americans on an average packed up and moved within a twelve month period. This was down from the mid-1980's when 20.25% of Americans moved within the same time period.

Of all Americans, those in the 2-24 yr. old age bracket are most likely to be mobile (34.2%).

The biggest demographic group of people moving were those moving out of cities. Suburbs around cities gained 6.2 million residents while cities lost 5.9 million.

More people moved around the West and the South than other parts of the country. The biggest trend has been people heading West, except when it comes to the Midwest. More people moved from the West to the Midwest than the other way around.

People of color are more likely to move than whites, with Hispanics having the highest rates of moving. More renters moved than people who owned homes (30% compared to 5.45%).

The biggest surprise in this report was that people were moving only short distances, staying in the regions they were already located in. The Census taking Bureau credits this trend with the aging of the population. Picking up and moving is not the thrill it once was!

