

LUAU: Contractors, vendors have chance to mix business, pleasure with Ricci family

▼ Continued from PG. 1

that before," contractor salesperson Desi Brown said. "There were some who brought their kids. That's a whole other dimension we can talk about with (the contractors) that we wouldn't normally see.

"It's something other than the day-to-day things that we can refer back to and smile about."

Irving agreed.

"It helps with the bonding and the friendship," she said.

"We're not a Wal-Mart, where you walk in and don't know the person behind the counter."

Of course, it was not all food, folks and bonding. It was a trade show as well as a luau, and all indications show the business side of the event was as much of a hit as the social side.

"The week after, when the vendors made their sales calls, a lot said it was one of the better shows they went to this year," Brown said.

"The customers were really interested in a lot of the items and what they had to say."

Ricci Yard Foreman Harold Dyer said

he saw a number of vendors giving demonstrations to eager and interested contractors. And he heard from vendors who told him luau environment was a plus.

"The vendors I talked to said it was great," Dyer said. "It breaks the monotony for them of, 'I have to go to a show. I have to go to a show. I have to go to a show.'"

"This is a show that they will look forward to."

Orr said he already knows of one vendor who won a customer at the party.

"One of my friends is a roofer and he swears by a certain kind of paper," Orr said. "He came (to the party) and the vendor gave him a roll of his product, and now he won't use anything else.

"It's a way to get educated while having

a good time. That's all the more reason to buy something. That's good marketing."

And it's a good morale builder at Ricci.

"We're a family organization," Moretti said. "We all work hard, and it was as much of a party for our employees as the contractors."

The party, in a sense, lasted all summer long.

"I think, for me, the best part of it was the buildup all

summer," Brown said. "It was a big morale boost wearing the Hawaiian shirts

on Fridays. There was a different feel on Friday, but we also knew it was building up to something.

"The fact that we were participating every week to win a prize made it special."

The conclusion was pretty special too, she said.

"Generally, we all like spending time together anyway," Brown said. "I don't think there was anyone who went away unhappy."

That includes Moretti, whose Hawaiian shirts were the original inspiration for Tropical Fridays at Ricci.

"We had a great time," he said. "We had a band, all kinds of food and the weather was great. We're already making plans for next year.

"It was such a success that it would be a shame if we didn't do it again."

“It’s a way to get educated while having a good time. That’s all the more reason to buy something. That’s good marketing.”

Gene Orr
Assistant yard foreman,
Ricci Lumber

STILLMAN: Service key to contractor

▼ Continued from PG. 1

"I buy from Ricci because they are very service-oriented," Stillman said.

The contractor can call Ricci at 4 p.m. and have material on site the next morning, he said. That allows him to stay on schedule as he finishes work on a four-condominium complex being built on the former site of a gas station.

The condo project, which features a unique V-shaped design, calls for Bonneville windows and siding from Hardi, Stillman said.

Among newer products on the market, Stillman likes Tri-Flex roof underlayment. He touts the project for its durability.

Stillman Construction takes on jobs from Hampton to Portland, Maine. While Stillman mostly tackles remodeling and additions, the company also has done new construction and commercial work, Stillman said.

Right now, Stillman sees a lot of "ranch to Cape" projects in the residential



AL STILLMAN

market.

"Land is at a premium, and people are still looking to expand their lifestyles," Stillman said. "So they turn a ranch into a two-story Cape. There's not a lot of space to build on right now."

Another way to find land is to reuse existing lots. An example of that is Stillman's next project: a tear-down-build-up job that will produce a new beach house.

Environmental radicals set fires in West

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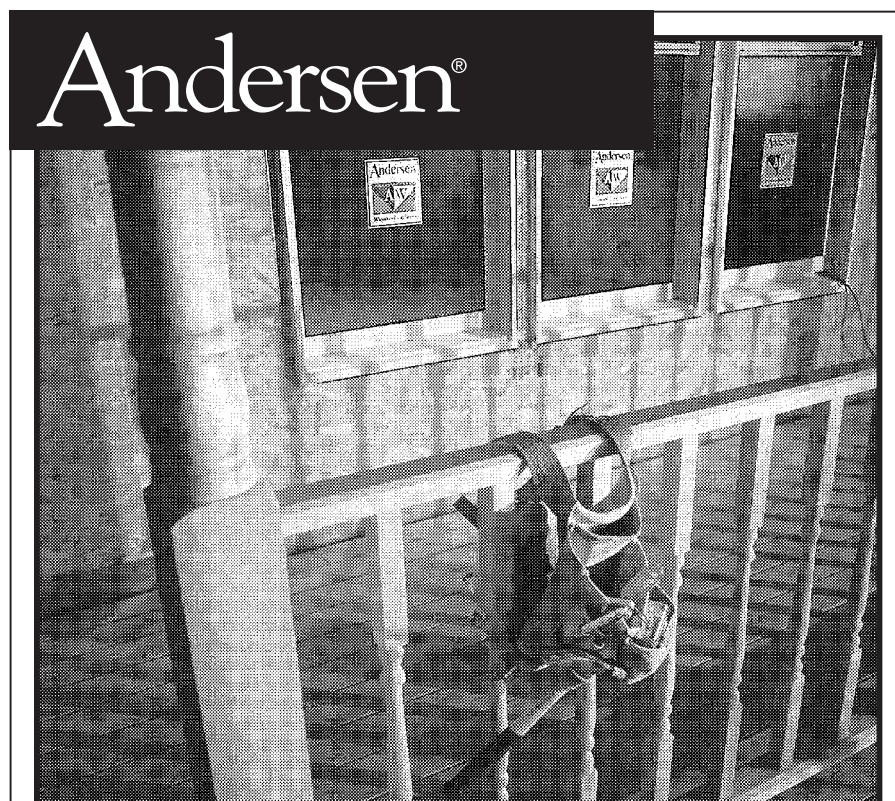
Members of the radical environmental group, Earth Liberation Front (ELF), are claiming responsibility for arson and attempted arson at three residential construction sites in Snohomish County, Wash.

ELF, which uses arson, vandalism and other illegal methods to make their point, also is tied to June's \$1.5 million arson fire in a St. Lake City area lumberyard. The Associated Press reports that the initials "ELF" were spray painted on a building at the lumberyard and on a truck, and that no one was injured. Messages including, "If you build it, we will burn it," along with anti-sprawl

sentiments are typically associated with ELF attacks.

The Seattle Times reported on June 12 that 10 area police departments were put on alert for possible acts of sabotage by ELF during their so-called "day of action and solidarity."

The FBI says that the ELF has caused more than \$100 million in damage since 1996. The group has been linked to arson and vandalism at agriculture research labs, logging operations, sport utility vehicle dealerships and construction sites. The costliest incident to date involved a \$50 million fire last year that destroyed a five-story apartment complex under construction in San Diego. Additionally, the FBI reports that attacks claimed by ELF are moving into more densely populated areas.



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Ricci Lumber Gazette

NEWS FROM THE RICCI LUMBER COMPANIES

Luau and trade show a success

PORTSMOUTH — Who says you cannot combine business and pleasure?

Not the folks who attended Ricci Lumber's first-ever trade show/luau in September.

The luau was the culmination of Ricci's summer-long Tropical Friday promotion and gave Ricci's employees, customers and vendors a chance to gather in a relaxed atmosphere.

"The contractors and everyone really seemed to unwind," Ricci assistant yard foreman Gene Orr said. "They're not in a

See photos, Page 3

hurry. ... With the hustle and bustle around here during the day, things can get hectic.

"(At the luau), we were working, but it was more like a big party."

Twenty Ricci vendors joined the party, and most brought party favors that they shared in the form of door prizes for the more than 40 contractors who attended.

The biggest prize of the night went to

Dave "Cartwheel" Cooley, who earned a new nickname with his celebration after winning a \$2,000 trip for himself and his wife.

Entries to the grand prize drawing were earned by contractors who came to Ricci on Tropical Fridays and wore "some type of tropical garb," Ricci General Manager and Vice President Pat Moretti explained, earlier this summer.

The Tropical Fridays were all about fun, and it was a fun-loving crowd that attended the end-of-summer bash.

"The customers loved it," Ricci inventory control specialist Anita Irving said. "They love stuff like that. It was a fun get-together with free food. A lot of them don't see each other during the week."

And even the Ricci employees, who do see a lot of the contractors on a daily basis, got to see them in a whole new light.

"There was one contractor who danced the entire night, and we had never seen

Please see **LUAU PG. 8** ▶



STILLMAN CONSTRUCTION CREWMEMBERS (clockwise, from top left) John Simoneau, Al Stillman and Brandon Smith.

Stillman turns to Ricci to keep projects on track

Al Stillman is not afraid to take his time to complete a job, but he does not want to be kept waiting when he needs materials.

That is why Stillman has always relied on Ricci to supply Stillman Construction, which he has operated for 20 years.

Stillman specializes in what he calls "extreme interior finishes."

The company is known for high-end finish carpentry, such as the job that required a year to complete on a \$2.5-million dollar home.

Stillman and his crew completed

custom moldings and railings, six-piece complex crowns and columns for the job. He said his people enjoy jobs like that because they are demanding and elaborate.

Currently, Stillman Construction is completing a project at the corner of Middle and State streets in Portsmouth. It is a very tight site, and there is little room to store material.

It is also a good example of why Stillman chooses Ricci.

Please see **STILLMAN PG. 8** ▶

Lumber from around the world in stock

Greetings and welcome back to this issue of the Ricci Lumber Gazette. For those of you who attended our Endless Summer bash in late September, thank you. For those of you who couldn't make it, it was an excellent time and you'll have to make the next one in Sept.



HAYES

of 2005. Congratulations to David Cooley who won the grand prize of a \$2000 getaway vacation.

I've always been one of those people who likes to know where things are grown, mined, made or assembled. Call it a weird fascination but if I'm eating a yogurt or a candy bar I'll examine the container or wrapper and try to determine where it was made.

So it's no wonder that I'm interested in finding out all the places where we

get our building materials. During my walk through the yard the other day, I was taken back at how many different places our materials come from. Although 80% of our materials are derived from the good, ole USA, in some respects it's like the United Nations out there. We have 2x4s from Germany, 2x6s from Newfoundland, 2x12's from Austria and Sweden, cdx pine plywood from Brazil, AC plywood from Chile, mahogany and luan plywood from Malaysia and Indonesia, and birch plywood from Russia. Both gun nails and hand nails come from places like South Korea, Taiwan, Italy, China, Austria and Poland. It appears that these other countries have capitalized on the tremendous building explosion that has taken place in the United States over the last several years. They've found profitable niches in the

Please see **HAYES PG. 4** ▶



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Take time to build strong family ties

By PAT MORETTI

Just a few months ago, I picked up my son from the airport after finishing his first year in college. School being over 1,200 miles away, this was the longest distance and time he had ever been away from the family. We had talked regularly on the phone, e-mailed and instant messaged each other when ever either one of us had a minute.

Still, it wasn't like he was in the room next door. Any problem he had would be magnified because of distance. As a parent feeling the empty nest syndrome, I wanted him to feel a bit homesick, anxious to return to his town. Yet, my true wish was that he would enjoy this new environment, take root and excel in his studies.

Many times over the school year I asked if he missed home, only to get shutdown with a firm no. I'm sure that there were times he wished he could raid the refrigerator or sit on the couch and talk to a family member. Over the weeks and months that seemed to last forever for me, he became responsible, self sufficient and learned to challenge himself with a new intensity. Though these traits existed in a small way before he left for college, this was the first time he had done it with out constant prodding.

My boy had grown up, taking on an



MORETTI

adult role and in some ways he had become more than just my son. It seems like only yesterday, he was taking his first steps, now he was asking for the family wheels.

So as this past summer wore on, I took the time to talk as an adult to both my son and my daughter on their favorite moments over their short lives. Thinking that it would be family excursions, vacations, or times with their friends, I didn't expect the answers I received. It was almost unanimous that it was the personal time my wife and I had spent with them and not the glitz and glamour of vacation destinations. Day trips to the beach, cooking at the stove, going to a ballgame all bubbled to the surface long before Mickey Mouse. They laughed about the stupid things I did or tried, reminding me of memories long forgotten.

I saw through their eyes how important it was to be there during their growing years. Hours later, as we sat on the living room floor trading stories and laughing till it hurt, my feelings of not being

“It's important as a parent that we encourage a child's development.”

Pat Moretti
General Manager,
Ricci Lumber.

involved enough dissolved. My children, in no uncertain terms, felt they had a richer life because of their parent's association in their interests. A prouder father you couldn't have found that night.

OK, so what does this have to do with building materials and the industry in general? Absolutely nothing, or at least not on the surface.

What I mean is that this industry is filled with individuals that own their own business. Family men and woman, who work hard by day and occupying their home offices by night. Many evenings filled with dinner on the run, while the kids stand in the yard waiting for you to put down the cell phone for the fifth time. Your daughter wants to show you here latest tumble or your son how he learned to climb a rope. Did you catch it

or did you turn your back to hear the phone a bit better?

These firsts only happen once. It's important as a parent that we encourage their development. Children understand the need for you to work, but they don't want to be reminded of it every time they ask you to look their way. Keep in mind they are only small once and from personal experience I can tell you they grow fast. Sooner or later they will figure it out how interested you are in what they do, believe me you want to be interested.

An open line of communication at a young age will build trust and open conversations as they approach their tough teen years. It's important that you make family time just that, family time. So turn off that cell phone, shut off that spreadsheet and open that office door. Make this time special, in fact grab the video camera and keep these moments forever. Isn't the family the reason we bust our tails anyway?

Years from now when you are standing your empty child's room surrounded by family pictures and memorabilia, you'll appreciate the moments you shared with them. There will be apprehension that you could have been there more, missed moments lost only to conversation by

Please see MORETTI PG. 7 >

Process integration levels the business playing field

By BILL ALLEN
W.A. Allen Consulting

For some time now, consultants and IT vendors have sung the praises of integrated, automated back-office processes and systems. Not long ago, this meant that estimates could produce purchase orders; purchase orders could update accounts payable functions; and loan draws, customer deposits and accounts payable systems could update the general ledger.

Better Efficiency Through Integration

The benefits are obvious — the payment approval process, in particular, becomes much more efficient. For example:

The superintendent inspects work done in the field and approves it. This triggers automatic approval of the electronic purchase order, which is set up to be invoiced and paid. At the same time, the task is recorded as complete in the construction schedule, and all dependent tasks are then scheduled. Exceptional costs are managed through variances, as are schedule changes and customer additions to contracts.

Integrate Front Office Processes

The next natural move is to integrate

TECH TIPS

automated front-office processes and systems. In this scenario, production schedule milestones automatically update the payment approval process, while sales office systems automatically update the sales and closing backlog and the customer care process. Hand-held computers replace whiteboards and a computerized database replaces file cards containing information about prospects and buyers.

Builders have struggled mightily to get to the point above. Integrated systems and software require everyone in the company to adopt a common set of procedures. Tasks must be standardized so that data used by a variety of systems is perpetually updated — not duplicated or corrupted as is often the case with manual systems.

To a small-volume builder, just the process of synchronizing a Blackberry® to Microsoft Outlook® is a big job but has obvious benefits. Integrating every process of a home building operation is a

daunting responsibility even for a mid-size builder, but consider how many redundant steps the payment approval process described above saves.

Communicate Effectively With Trade Contractors, Vendors and Customers

Process and systems integration does not stop there. The next dimension is to go outside the office and allow your automated systems to communicate with

trade contractors, vendors and customers. Many builders are now opening up their Web sites to these “outside parties” with password-protected portals. The Web site is no longer an electronic billboard. It has become part or an extension of the virtual private network.

This is not simply Bill Gates dictating what the future will be. The whole point of process integration is accomplishing more in fewer steps — with less paper

Please see TECH TIPS PG. 7 >

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TECH TIPS

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TECH TIPS: Process integration levels playing field between big, small firms

▼ Continued from PG. 2

and redundancy than ever before. It's also about service to the customer. If you don't embrace this evolution, your vendors and customers will demand it.

Follow These Steps to Make Integration Work Smoothly

Here are some pointers on making process and systems integration work for your home building company:

1. Examine your current processes. Determine how external users (e.g., trade contractors, suppliers, home owners, etc.) could benefit from integrated processes. Just because you save time and redundancy doesn't mean you've made life easier for your external customer.

2. Determine which action steps in your processes affect which internal users (or employees, in this case). Figure out the point of control (the point at which a human decision or intervention is needed; e.g., approving a purchase order, checking a bid list to make sure it's complete, etc.) in each action step.

3. Explain to your staff how automated processes work and the benefits of automating yours. Get your employees' buy-in (and be sure to listen to their concerns) before converting manual processes to automated ones.

4. Explain to your external users how you plan to automate the manual processes they participate in. Ask them if they agree that integrated processes will get the job done better. Give them training and guidance to use automated processes properly and effectively.

5. Evaluate whether or not you still need paper. Could your integrated process work just as well — or possibly even better — if you used electronic documents, databases and records?

6. If you incorporate a feature into your company Web site (such as allowing trades to submit bids online via password-protected portals), figure out how the information collected will automatically mesh with your integrated back-office system. If you have to re-enter the bids into your estimating system, you've put the cart before the horse.

7. There's only so much business you can transact via Web sites, e-mail and other electronic communications.

Identify those aspects of your processes to be automated that require "high touch" (that is, interpersonal) communications to ensure that the end product meets the customers' expectations. Examples include vendor purchasing negotiations and customer selections. Make sure automated processes include prompts as well as a way for users to get in touch with you (or vice versa) for those all-important face-to-face conversations.

8. How will you handle an exception to the planned cycle — e.g., an emergency customer service call, a schedule delay or a purchasing variance? How will such an exception affect other integrated processes and systems?

9. Test your automated, integrated systems in-house before you make them available to your external users. Don't blow the cover until you are ready and able to. This applies to any new system initiative, but especially to something you are asking an external user to interact with.

10. Don't be afraid to abort a process that is not delivering expected results. Have a backup plan in place and know what procedure to return to. My deceased father was a pioneer airline pilot. Another pilot once told him that the greatest maneuver in flying was the 180-degree turn.

Systems Integration Lets You Compete With the Big Guys

The exciting part of integrating systems and processes between the field, front- and back-office functions, and end users is that smaller builders can compete with larger builders using the same arsenal of speed and services on a level playing field. So keep up the grass drills and wind sprints and be agile. It's a new world out there.



Bill Allen is president of W.A. Allen Consulting and a member of NAHB's Business Management & Information Technology Committee. His company, headquartered in Redmond, WA, provides information technology consulting services and process management assistance to the home building industry. Allen can be reached at 425-885-4489 or via e-mail at bill@waallenconsulting.com. Or visit the W.A. Allen Consulting Web site at www.waallenconsulting.com.

MORETTI: Build in some family time

▼ Continued from PG. 2

others. Still, you can't be there for every kick or music note, but knowing you made the sacrifices to be there as much as possible will ease those disconcerting feelings.

A surprise visit to a practice, being at the game they didn't expect will light up their day and create a remembrance for both of you that won't be forgotten. The value of that second when they see you is

greater than any store bought gift, even though at that time it might seem that way. The old adage of it is the thought that counts rings truer than ever, because you took the time to be with them. With out a doubt, they will remember and enshrine that moment like a collectable for the rest of their lives. It's a fact, if you don't take your kids for granted they won't take you for granted either.

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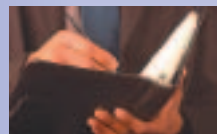
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Information: www.nahb.org

Begin a financial plan with 'end in mind'

By LINDA LEIGH FRANCIS
lfrancis@pacific.net

While covering the use of financial information to manage a business in one of my classes, I looked over at one of the remodelers, and he was shaking his head. "What?" I asked.

He said, "I have never planned out how much I wanted to make in a year and then used my financial information to see if I was on goal. I just keep hustling work and paying bills.



FRANCIS

I never really know how well I am doing until the year-end accounting."

Stephen Covey's concept of "begin with the end in mind" popped into my head. If there is ever a place to begin with the end in mind, this is it.

In this case, the end where you begin, is determining how much you need to make from your business each year.

You need to consider yourself, your

family, and your community. Sit down and figure out how much you need to support your lifestyle, save for a secure retirement, put away for a college education, vacation, hobby, or fulfilling a dream, tithe your church, pay fines at Rotary, or contribute to the community chest.

Now, ask yourself, what return do you want from your investment in your business? If you took those same assets and made reasonable investments in CDs, bonds, or stocks, how much would you make? This, as a minimum, should be your profit goal for your business.

Next, realizing that your expenses dictate the "end" where you need to begin, add up your overhead costs from your P&L and balance sheet. Add to this figure any increases you anticipate in overhead, such as increases in rent, utilities, insurance, or capital expenditures like a new vehicle.

Divide the total of all your expenses, personal and business, by your historical gross profit margin, and voilà, you have your sales goal for the year! Well, maybe.

Suppose that this sales goal is more than you want or can do because of such

limiting factors as a shortage of qualified labor, a slowing economy, or a commitment to your own sanity. Now, you have a choice; modify the end you have in mind, or think about how you can increase your gross profit margin.

You can increase your gross profit margin in primarily two ways.

First, relentlessly control your direct costs. Wasted materials, poorly scheduled personnel, callbacks, warranty work, and high workers' compensation costs all increase direct costs, which decrease your gross profit and gross profit margin. Manage these more effectively, and watch your gross margin rise as your break-even sales figure decreases.

Second, since some jobs can be bid at higher margins, reevaluate your product mix and niche. Consider diversifying into those niches that will sustain higher margins. For example, market more to high-end residential remodel jobs and less to commercial projects because of the higher margins on the residential jobs.

By beginning with the end in mind, you are more likely to have a business that works for you. You can monitor your progress throughout the year to make sure you end up where you want to end up. By beginning with the end in mind, you can eliminate the nagging doubts about how

much work to take or not. Instead, you know you are on a path that will meet your needs. You can have a whole new way of looking at your business and look forward to a successful year that is taking you where YOU want to go.



FOR MORE practical advice on running your business, read Linda Leigh Francis' book, "Run Your Business so it Doesn't Run You", available by contacting Linda at (707) 485-0162 or lfrancis@pacific.net. Linda Leigh Francis also offers workshops and training on how to manage your construction company. For more information, visit www.LindaLFrancis.com.

EWPs: Builders more accepting

▼ Continued from PG. 5

were up 33 percent in the first quarter of 2004. All engineered wood products participated in the growth, and the upward trend continued through the second quarter.

"Both of our lines of I-joists continue to find greater acceptance in the marketplace, displacing dimension lumber as the framing product of choice among a growing number of homebuilders," explained sales manager Denny Huston.

"The pricing and supply differential between engineered and dimension lumber has gone slightly in their direction in recent months, but most builders that have built with

engineered wood continue to prefer it. However, with the product in somewhat short supply in certain markets, some builders have reluctantly had to go back to some use of dimension lumber for floor framing."

Acceptance of LVL, he noted, "continues to grow as more and more builders cost-account the value of labor, and find that knot-free, defect-free, precisely sized LVL can substitute for dimension lumber in many areas of the structure and save on labor costs. The result is more dimensionally true homes, less wasted time, and more efficient homebuilding."

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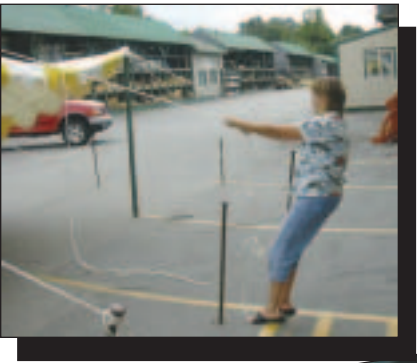
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Home affordability just out of reach for half of all Americans

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Record home prices and rising mortgage rates pushed the affordability ratio below 50 percent for the first time in nearly four years at 47.0 percent, down 3.7 points from May.

There was a larger decline in the affordability ratio for adjustable rate mortgages, which fell from 59.6 percent to 55.6 percent as the gap between adjustable and fixed rate mortgages narrowed due to a hike in short-term interest rates by the Feds.

Even with historically low mortgage rates, a growing number of homebuyers

have opted for ARMs in order to qualify for larger loans as home prices grow rapidly. The affordability ratio indicates that less than half of the nation's households can afford the median priced home with conventional 30-year fixed-rate mortgage, while a little more than half would qualify with an adjustable rate mortgage.

Homebuyers would need a minimum income of \$49,650 to purchase the median priced existing home with a fixed-rate mortgage, while those opting for a variable rate loan would only need a minimum income of \$41,357.

HAYES: Check out our quality lumber

▼ Continued from PG. 1

marketplace and have provided useful and necessary products to an eager consumer.

Growing up, my father was always a big proponent for selling the highest quality materials, especially wall studs and pine. Many times he told me that if we inventoried the best quality pine then word would get out and carpenters from all over would come and buy it. And even though he probably thought I wasn't listening, I really was. As a company, we try to purchase the best building products our marketplace has to offer. Take our Kimberly Bay select pine from New Zealand as an example. Kimberly Bay

pine has been universally well received by you, our discerning Ricci Lumber customers. This pine is wane and knot free, has 4 good edges, and has working qualities similar to Eastern White Pine. Check it out your next time through the Yard. Mike Gorman, our excellent Pine Shed Manager would love to show you.

Let's hope we have a nice, long fall and a mild winter. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to serving you in the future.

In Memoriam

PORTSMOUTH - Constantine J. Addorio, 94, formerly of 20 Islington St., died Monday, Sept. 27, 2004, at Portsmouth Regional Hospital.

Born in Dover on Oct. 20, 1909, he was a son of Camillo and Carmella (DeMatteo) Addorio and had been a resident of Portsmouth for most of his life.

He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and was a longtime employee of Ricci Construction Company.

He was a member of the Sons of Italy.

He is survived by two brothers, Nicholas Addorio and Joseph Addorio, both of Portsmouth; and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a sister, Anna M. Ricci; and three brothers, Paul, Anthony and Dennis Addorio.

PORTSMOUTH - John A. Ehnstrom, 74, of 7 Coolidge Drive, died on Tuesday, Oct. 26, 2004, surrounded by his loving family at the Edgewood Centre.

Born in Gardner, Mass., on Oct. 20, 1930, he was the son of Rudolph and Esther (Christiansen) Ehnstrom and was

a resident of Portsmouth for most of his life. He had a passion for sports and was an outstanding player on the 1949 Portsmouth High School basketball team. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Korean War.

He was employed for many years with Ricci Construction as a carpenter. In his spare time, he enjoyed building carpentry projects and attending his youngest son's softball games.

He was a loving husband, father and gramps who will be dearly missed by all who knew him.

Survivors include his wife, Rose (Reddy) Ehnstrom; his daughter, Susan Ehnstrom of Dover; his sons, Peter Ehnstrom and his wife, Diane, and James Ehnstrom and his wife, Megan, all of Portsmouth; and his three granddaughters, Katy, Sara and Keeley.

He was predeceased by a brother, David Ehnstrom.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. James Church on Friday at 10 a.m. Visiting hours will be held at the Farrell Funeral Home, 684 State St., Portsmouth, on Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Compass Care at Parrott Avenue Place, 127 Parrott Ave., Portsmouth 03801; or the Alzheimer's Association, 10 Ferry St., Suite 419, Concord 03301.



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RICCI EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Jacki Troy, Accounts Payable and Receivable

Not only has Jacki Troy been working at Ricci Lumber for 10-1/2 years, but she's been in the Accounts Payable and Receivable department for that long, too. She loves where she works and she loves her job.



JACKI TROY

There is a lot of accumulated knowledge that comes naturally from 10 years in one place managing one aspect of the business.

Jacki serves as a valuable resource to her colleagues, and to Ricci.

What has impressed you most in the years you have worked at Ricci Lumber?

Family, working for the entire family is great. They treat everyone well, and we're appreciated. The core people here really are the family.

What do you think contractors look for in a lumberyard?

They want someone to go the extra mile. From an Accounts perspective, they appreciate what we do to keep them informed and explain their statements. We're a small company who understand the problems of running a business. We understand cash-flow and when given the opportunity can work with our customers.

And what about your personal success...what makes you successful?

The fact that I love walking in the door every day.

What trends do you see in the building industry?

Well receivable and payables are higher than I've ever seen them. It's unbelievable.

Management is now looking at finances in different ways to help better manage the business. They are looking to get more detailed information out of the financial numbers. There's certainly more SKUS to manage than ever before.

What's next for Ricci Lumber?

I predict a very busy winter for us.

Sum up your understanding of Ricci Lumber in one word.

Fun.

Engineered wood products on rise

Manufacturing group predicts market for EWPs will hold steady, could grow

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Production of engineered wood products, including glulam timbers, wood I-joists, and laminated veneer lumber, is expected to remain the same as last year or rise just slightly this year, according to the latest forecast by APA—The Engineered Wood Association.

Engineered wood products now command about 6 percent of the wood framing market, and that share is expected in the long term to continue rising. The number of engineered wood product mills in the U.S. and Canada has nearly doubled since 1989, from 54 to 102 last year.

"Currently, all Weyerhaeuser engineered wood products are in high demand, specifically Trus Joist's engineered lumber and Structurwood's oriented strand board panels," said Kathy Carlson, marketing communications for Weyerhaeuser.

In particular, TJ's Silent Floor joists, TimberStrand laminated strand lumber rim board and wall framing, as well as Structurwood Edge Gold premium floor panels are especially popular for the custom home market.

Carlson noted, "The residential

“Both of our lines of I-joists continue to find greater acceptance in the marketplace.”
*Denny Huston
Sales manager,
Boise Building Solutions*

building industry has been faced with a dramatic increase in housing starts for two consecutive years. As a result, demand for wood products has been high and is expected to remain so for the rest of 2004. In working to meet the engineered wood demand, Trus Joist and Weyerhaeuser have not only increased capacity where possible by running plants and mills 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but continue to work diligently with customers to optimize their building products."

Business is also bustling for Boise Building Solutions, where EWP sales

Please see EWPs PG. 6 ►

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