

# Evolution of the family dwelling marches forward

By PATRICK MORETTI  
General Manager, Ricci Lumber

Big, bigger, and yes even biggest, it's all the rage in recent years. The days of a common 2,000 to 2,400 square foot house seem to be, well 70-ish. For the most part, affordability has given way to space and design, with each home having its own unique distinction. The question is why have the common houses become so uninteresting and the larger-than-life homes have taken center stage?

As in most sectors of the fair trade market, contractors and developers supply what the customers demand.

Fifty years ago, homes were built in developments centered on a familiar community idea. Husbands went to work Monday through Friday, coming home for dinner at dinnertime. Most wives stayed at home and besides working around the house, they visited with other community members during the day. Children, when not in school, played in yards and parks till the sun went down. At night, it was common for neighborhood families to get together to enjoy each others' company. The house back then was just a retreat, a place to sleep, eat and store your possessions. Just big enough to give everyone enough space, just small enough to make it easy to maintain and afford. Space was the great outdoors and the design was how fast and affordable a house could be built.

As times and technology changed, so did the common house and its owner. Twenty five years ago a revolution of sorts ran onto

the housing scene. Fuel shortages and longer work hours forced people to rethink their free time and their living spaces. With heating oil almost tripling overnight, house designs were forced to be more efficient. Thus the 2x6 wall was suddenly required by building codes, allowing for better insulation values, but constricting many house designs. Windows underwent their first major change in decades as thermal pane glass and better weather stripping rolled into the market.

With gasoline shortages, commuting became the buzzword of the day, with people sharing rides with neighbors. Arriving home usually late at night, people retired to the solitude of their homes and family.

Another factor that influenced the market was the addition of a second income in most families. Added money to the bank account transpired to more extras a couple could afford. An additional car, more furniture, a bigger TV and other belongings that they only once dreamed about were within reach. The home was transformed from a place to retire to space to enjoy. Family rooms, rumpus rooms, two car garages all added living space and family places to the house.

Architects designed homes with smaller internal rooms for energy efficiency, but with more spaces for each family member to retire to. Slightly larger than homes of previous decades, the focus was more on individualism and unique designs than livability and comfort. Space was your own little cubical and design was in the eye of the beholder.



The size and space of a house has historically been dependent on a variety of factors, including heating costs and the economy.

As we rolled into Reaganomics and beyond, the family unit was becoming more strained as both parents worked more hours and commuted longer distances. This meant children many times arrived home from school without supervision or guidance. Many parents had their children remain in the house until they arrived home from work. The media coined the phrase latchkey kids and in many ways they were right. Homes became a sort of substitute babysitter, with larger rooms and more open spaces. Children needed a place to entertain themselves while inside, these new designs gave homes the inside space.

With limited quality family time, kitchens underwent the biggest changes. Breakfast and dinner became a place for the family to share the day's events and the kitchen was the focal point. Many house designs placed the kitchen as the entry point to the house. The kitchen was transformed from a storage and prep area, to a fully furnished room. Cabinets and counters created convenience, accessibility and beauty, while adding warmth and comfort to the home. Space had become a blanket, soft and cuddly and the design was functional and affordable.

This brings us to the new millennium, with new designs that bring bigger than life

homes on building lots that can barely contain them. Great rooms, audio visual rooms and full blown game rooms are now common place in many new homes. High ceilings, a large amount of glass area, and rooms that are only used for special reasons, continue to explode in selected areas throughout the region.

The house has become our sanctuary, the place to leave the outside world behind and remain in our zone of comfort. Families spend more time inside their homes today than in their own backyard. With the invention of home offices or workspaces in many houses today, many adults never see the outside of their homes for days.

The connected community is in fact only a wire to which we subscribe to. Families find reasons to spend more time in their house. Pizza is delivered in 30 minutes, movies are piped through space, and we can shop over the internet. Everything you need can be delivered to the front door with a press of a few buttons.

A house gives the feeling of security, something that seems to be lacking in the real world if you turn on any media outlet. We've built our homes to reflect our need for comfort and larger living spaces give us refuge. To an extent, we've built our castles to become isolated.

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## Itchin' for a new kitchen?



Kitchen sales representative Bethany Small showcases some new kitchen designs at Area Kitchen Centre located next to Ricci Lumber.



# Ricci Lumber Gazette

NEWS FROM THE RICCI LUMBER COMPANIES



Bill Robinson(left), owner of Bill Robinson Building Contractors, and his crew stand before the Green Acres School in Eliot, Maine, on which they have been hard at work for the last year. The facility is nearing completion.

## School contractors rely on Ricci Lumber

### *Bill Robinson Building Contractors keep hard at work on school project*

KITTERY, Maine -- You don't see much of Bill Robinson and his crew off the job site at the Green Acres School project in Eliot, Maine.

Since the ground breaking at the project last year, Bill Robinson Building Contractors have been working virtually around the clock on the 16,000 square foot facility.

At height of project, there have been upwards of 14 craftsmen working on the job, Robinson said. The project is scheduled for completion this month.

The entire interior millwork of the building is Red Oak supplied by Ricci Lumber, milled on-site. Also, the whole building is framed in West Coast Douglas Fir supplied by Ricci.

"Everything from lumber to doorknobs was supplied by Ricci," Robinson said.

Bill Robinson Building Contractors,

based in Kittery, Maine has been in business for 24 years. The company has seven full-time employees doing carpentry, from framing to finish work, as well as masonry.

The company started out the way many do--doing whatever would bring in work. Porches, steps, masonry, carpentry, whatever, Robinson said. Nothing was too small.

That's all different now. The company specializes in high-end custom homes and restoration projects in the Newcastle and Great Bay areas. They also do a sizable amount of commercial jobs, which have included the Eliot Fire Station and the Eliot Public Library.

"At any given time, we're usually working on a couple new custom homes as well as a restoration job," Robinson said. "But the Green Acres project has taken up most of our time and resources."

Right now, the company has a lot of backlog. After the Green Acres job is complete, they have three custom homes to start and a restoration job, Robinson said.

Please see **Robinson**, pg. 4

## From lien to green

### *Knowledge of lien laws can help you collect due payment*

By ED HAYES

PORTSMOUTH -- This is a subject that most of us would rather not dwell on but its importance may determine whether you stay in business or not. I'm talking about mechanic liens and attachments.

Of course, we all know that collecting receivables in a timely fashion helps your overall cash flow and definitely facilitates the transacting of business. You're able to pay yourself and your subs faster. We're lucky in this area in that most of the folks are honest and willing to pay the price for quality workmanship and materials. But what happens when an unscrupulous customer comes along and decides not to

pay your final bill (which in today's world of construction could mean thousands of dollars)? How quickly you react and what steps you take will definitely determine your success in collecting the debt.

This article is no substitute for seeking the advice of your own attorney but here are some steps I'd recommend:

1. Since you already met with the customer without success, the first step is to send a demand letter to the customer outlining exactly what you performed and what you rightfully earned under the contract. Impose a deadline on getting paid (no longer than one week). Mention that necessary legal action may have to be taken if you are not paid by then.

2. If you are still not successful, the next step is to lien the property. If the job is in Maine, you can file a lien certificate for \$12 at the county courthouse in Alfred. A lien certificate is

Please see **Lien**, pg. 4

## Quips and Quotes

By ED HAYES  
President, CEO  
Ricci Lumber

The leaves are changing, the nights are growing cooler and the kids are back in school. Builders are happy to be working in near perfect weather for a c h a n g e . Productivity definitely increases this time of year especially after all of the hot weather we had this summer. In addition, we're in



HAYES

the middle of several key political races.

I swore I'd never talk about politics or religion in the Ricci Gazette but, as many of you know, it's funny some of the people you meet and come across in this business. This story illustrates my point:

One of our salespersons (let's protect his anonymity and call him "Rick") answered the phone one recent Saturday afternoon. The caller identified herself as Jeanne and asked if she could order some Velux Skylights. Jeanne knew exactly the

Please see **Hayes**, pg. 4



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# White is not always right when choosing a house color

BY MARK SYRACUSA  
*Apple Painting & Restoration*

White is the most popular color choice for the exterior of American homes. But is white the right answer for your house? White may indeed be the wrong choice

for certain styles of American homes. For example, white does not do justice to a colonial or a ranch-style home.

In choosing an appropriate color scheme for any dwelling, Dale Coleman, exterior color consultant, established four

criteria-stated here in order of importance that should be considered:

**Form.** The style of the structure might otherwise be termed the architectural style. Colors can be used to enhance both the artistry and the architectural style of any building. Colors can be used to enhance the artistry and architectural features of almost any building.

In many cases, the color white serves to camouflage the craftsmanship that went into its creation. If the house is historical, an appropriate color scheme can be obtained from "Roger Moss' Century of Color: Exterior Decorations for the American Buildings, 1829 to 1920." Moss' work contains 100 color plates, which detail color codes for specific

architectural periods.

**Function.** After a building's form has been studied, its function-or present purpose-should be considered. If the structure in question was built as a residence and is still being used as such, function may not be such a weighty consideration. However, if a former house is now being used as a commercial structure, function can be important.

**Size.** Color also can be used to manipulate the apparent size of a building. If a large home situated on a small lot is painted white or another light color, it will not only make the house seem larger, but also make the lot seem

Please see **White**, pg. 7

## Nation's unemployment figures show uneven improvements

IRVINE, Calif. -- Typical of an economy in transition that has showed erratic paces of growth since the beginning of the year, recent employment data have been providing some mixed messages as well.

The good news is that the unemployment rate dropped to 5.6% in September, when a rise to 5.9% had been forecasted by economists. The annual rate of job losses also slowed in September, resulting from a month-to-month gain in total non-farm employment for the sixth consecutive month. Furthermore, September's improvements sent the total number of year-over-year job losses below the million mark for the first time since October of last year.

On the down side, seasonally adjusted

employment levels saw their first decline in four months, which was mostly due to a very weak manufacturing sector that shed 35,000 jobs during September.

Consistent with slowly improving economic conditions, personal income growth maintained a steady pace, but rising slightly to annualized rate of 3.5% in August.

While the annual rate of growth has slowed considerably from its 8.5% pace two years ago, the rate of growth in August was the first time since December of 2000 that it surpassed its year-prior levels.

Despite steady gains in personal income over the last few months, consumers reined in their spending a bit during August, reflecting worries over the current business and economic climates.

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**NAHB**  
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**HOOKS**

By *Phil Rea*

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**Ricci Lumber Gazette**

NEWS FROM THE RICCI LUMBER COMPANIES

ISSUE 2 AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2002

Published by

A Division of The Cyl Group  
**STICK-BUILT**  
PUBLISHING  
Custom Publishing for the Building Industry

The official newspaper of

**RICCI**  
LUMBER  
"Helping You Build It Better"

A division of Ricci Supply Co., Inc.  
105 Bartlett St., Portsmouth, NH 03801  
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# NAHB responds to American Farmland Trust report

## *NAHB claims proposed restrictions would drive costs up*

WASHINGTON - Growth restrictions proposed by the American Farmland Trust would sharply increase the cost of housing and price hundreds of thousands of families out of the housing market, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

"Shortage of affordable housing is a critical national problem," said NAHB President Gary Garczynski, a builder/developer from Woodbridge, Va. "In contrast, this nation has no food shortage. In fact, we export roughly 20 percent of our agricultural output."

Growth restrictions and other policy prescriptions are part of a new report, "Farming on the Edge," from the American Farmland Trust. The report recommends farmland subsidy programs and anti-growth policies that would have an immediate impact on land available for development and housing affordability, Garczynski said.

The Farmland Trust calls for farmland preservation incentives that are nothing more than federal subsidies that institutionalize inefficiencies, Garczynski said. In addition, the report calls for designation of farmland protection areas that would distort land markets and restrict the supply of housing.

"Restrictions on residential development

simply worsen the housing shortage and create real hardships for families, especially moderate- and low-income families," Garczynski said.

The report also calls for the elimination of what it terms subsidies that promote sprawl, Garczynski said. "Who are they trying to kid? Builders and developers pay thousands of dollars in taxes and exactions on every house they build. Residential development is one of the most heavily taxed and regulated industries in the country. It's absurd to suggest that residential development is more subsidized than farming."

The United States' food supply is in no danger, Garczynski said. In fact, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service acknowledges that "loss of farmland to urban uses does not threaten total cropland or the level of agricultural production." Technological advances have greatly enhanced the nation's productive capacity, and American agricultural productivity is at an all-time high.

The Farmland Trust reports that two acres of farmland are converted to developed use every minute.

"By that same accounting, we're proud to report that we build three homes every minute - 1.6 million homes every year. Those homes are needed to meet the shelter needs of a fast growing population," Garczynski said.

Over the next 10 years, the U.S. population will increase by about 24 million, and new households are being formed at a rate of about one million per

year. Those families need homes, and policies that restrict the availability of land for residential development increase the cost of housing beyond the means of many working families, he said.

The report does have one very sensible recommendation: the elimination of large-lot zoning policies that are a recipe for sprawl.

"The 10-acre zoning policies adopted by many jurisdictions are a very inefficient use of land. We agree with the American Farmland Trust that such policies should be changed, and we would welcome their support in seeking more sensible zoning practices," Garczynski said.

"The nation's builders and developers play an important role in the creation of well-designed homes and communities," Garczynski said. "NAHB is a leader in promoting smart growth, with an emphasis on developing long-term plans to build and pay for the infrastructure (roads, schools, etc.) necessary to serve a growing population. Additionally, NAHB supports the use of innovative land-use techniques and preservation of meaningful open space and sensitive environmental areas as part of urban growth plans, while at the same time providing for a wide range of housing to meet the needs of a diverse population."

## White

From Page 2

smaller. Generally, darker shades are used when the primary objective is to make a building look smaller or shorter. Conversely, lighter shades are used to make a dwelling look taller or bigger.

Setting. If a structure represents a specific period of architecture, chances are that attention to setting was considered by the original architects. Some architects intended that their designs appear as if

they grew up from the natural surroundings. Therefore, these houses should not be painted in tones that cause them to stand out from their settings.

Color should be pervasive. It should accentuate the best points of a dwelling and minimize its worst. White is not always the right choice. Rather, exterior color should be chosen on an individual basis. It should suit and enhance the form, function, size and setting of a structure.

*Mark Syracuse owns Apple Painting and Restoration of Portsmouth; [www.applepaintingrestoration.com](http://www.applepaintingrestoration.com) 603-431-4669.*

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# Contractor Forum

A recent online survey of professional contractors asked about business practices and the general state of the building industry. The survey was conducted by Contractor.com, a Colorado-based Web site that offers a variety of contractor resources.

Here's what it found:

Does your company have a Website?

Yes 77%  
No 23%

What would you pay for Job Leads:

\$5-\$10 for non-confirmed Job Leads .....13%  
\$35-\$50 for confirmed Job Leads\*.....48%  
Win fee only, when I get the Job.....26%  
Not interested in buying Job Leads...13%  
*(\*homeowner has been contacted to ensure seriousness, realistic, and ready to hire)*

What type of vehicle do you drive?

Ford truck.....39%  
Chevy truck.....25%  
Ram truck.....19%  
Imported truck.....6%  
Car.....11%

Do you have a safety program & training?

We have an excellent program & training in place.....28%  
We have a program, limited training. .28%  
We do not have a program in place ..35%  
I do not have time to think about it...9%

Contractor.com is a leading Internet advocate for contractor advancement, providing resources needed to make it easier to be more profitable and attract more qualified customers.

Look for more Contractor Forum in coming issues of the Ricci Lumber Gazette. Got questions? E-mail rooks@cyrgroup.com.

# August home sales hold at strong levels

IRVINE, Calif. -- Ever-dropping mortgage rates continue to motivate homebuyers, and new and existing home sales held at strong levels in August.

Sales of existing homes dipped less than 2% from July levels to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5,280,000 sales, which is down only 5% from the previous year. Though the total inventory of homes for sale increased, the relative months of inventory remained at a healthy level of 5.0 months. A slowing sales pace did little to hamper rising home prices as the median price of an existing home marched upward to \$163,600, which was up 6% from a year earlier. As the average 30-year fixed mortgage rate dropped to 5.99% last week, the affordability ratio rose to 51.2%. With existing home sales holding relatively strong, the Purchase Mortgage Application Index held firm during the week of September 13 at 359.7, indicating that home sales are expected to carry on at a robust pace in the near term.

New home sales reached 996,000 in August, not only representing a new record high but also eclipsing the

previous record of 995,000 in November of 1998. Also, new home sales are up from a year earlier in three of four regions, the Northeast registering only a 2% year-over-year decline. Amid strong sales levels, builders have been able to keep a tight hold on inventory, which dropped to 4.0 months of supply during August. With mortgage rates dropping to new lows, homebuyers can qualify for a higher priced home, which drove the median price of a new home up to \$175,300 in August. Low mortgage rates also contributed to the affordability of new homes holding steady at 47.6%.

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# Enthusiasm – Take it with you . . . everywhere!

**En\_thu\_si\_asm** (n.) 1. Strong excitement of feeling 2. A source or cause of great excitement or interest.

Have you ever been around a salesperson that had too much enthusiasm? In fact, it is often just the opposite. You encounter a salesperson that has little to no passion for the product and would rather be anywhere else than where they are.

**“Knowledge instills confidence, confidence instills enthusiasm, and enthusiasm sells.”**

Do you believe that? Think about it for a minute. How important is your enthusiasm to a sale? How much of a factor does it play when you make a purchase? How do you interpret that enthusiasm? What does that enthusiasm say to you about the person and/or their product? What does a lack of enthusiasm say?



REA

## HOOKS

By *Phil Rea*

My office manager, Jo, and I recently visited a web designer to inquire about having a website built. About halfway through the presentation the designer said, “I’m getting so excited, this is going to be good! In fact, one of the things I love about this business is every website I design, could be my best yet!”

Case closed — I was sold. Early in his presentation he informed us the minimum site he developed cost \$1,000, but when he ball-parked me between \$3,000 - \$5,000, he had me so excited I forgot all about the \$1,000 website he mentioned earlier. He told us he would work up a better estimate and have it to us by the end of the next workday. When we walked out of his office, I told Jo, “That’s the guy I want doing our website, and do you know when he sold me? He sold me when he said our site could be his best ever. I liked that!” Jo replied, “I could see you getting excited.”

Enthusiasm sold me. He did get the estimate to us the next day, and we have given him the job. Did it enter my mind to shop around? No way! What would I have shopped for? I couldn’t have found anyone with more enthusiasm for my project. I hired a guy that’s excited to be working for me, and on something that is important to me. I’m lucky to have found him, and lucky that he chose to work with me.

Another quick enthusiasm story. A friend and I went shopping for a Christmas tree. The first place we went was a large nursery with a lot of employees walking around, but not helping anyone. After 20 minutes of me wrestling with trees, what little enthusiasm I did have was gone. I wanted someone else to do all the work, and I wanted to stand back and look. In other words, I wanted to be the customer, not the worker. So we went to the next place and met Mr. Enthusiasm. I knew he was the guy I wanted to do business with. He was all over us, showing us trees, telling us the pros and cons of all the different types. We found one that fit the bill 95%, and were contemplating purchasing it. Seeing that we were not

100% sold, Mr. Enthusiasm jumped right in. He wanted us to be 100% satisfied. He said, “Listen, I’ve got another lot with even more trees a few miles down the road. Let me put this one aside, and you two can go look at my other lot and see if you can find a better one.” We went to that lot and before we could even get out of the car, out of the trailer came Mr. Enthusiasm, Junior. His enthusiasm was contagious, and we did find the perfect tree. I told the salesman he had done everything but take it in the house and set it up for us. He replied, “How far do you live from here? If one of you will stay on the lot, I’ll go with you and set it up.” How do you not buy from a guy like this every year?

Is what you sell any different? It doesn’t matter if you are selling websites, Christmas trees, or remodeling — people deal with people. We are in the people business. Make people happy and feel good about who they are, the decisions they make, and make them feel good about doing business with you. All of this can be achieved with enthusiasm! Happy Selling!

Phil Rea

## Four helpful ways to solve your labor shortage

“I can’t find qualified workers!” I hear this lament all over the country. Many experts think this labor shortage will be with us for years to come. Some estimate the growing demand for skilled workers will exceed new people coming into the industry by two to one. What can you do?

Here are a few strategies for getting the workers you need. The core element in each strategy is excellent personnel practices-- clear and accurate job descriptions, competitive wages tied to skill levels, performance reviews, and an honest appreciation and acknowledgment for an employee’s contribution to company success.

1. Keep who you have. Run a company that values its people and they know it. This company meets more than the financial needs of its employees. It’s a company that shares its mission and goals and shares the success and profitability of the business with the people who helped make it happen.

I work with a retailer who is not the highest paying employer in the area. However, she treats her people right and values their contributions. She shares the company plan and its profits.

Although her people regularly get job offers from other retailers, they don’t respond to these offers because of how their company treats them.

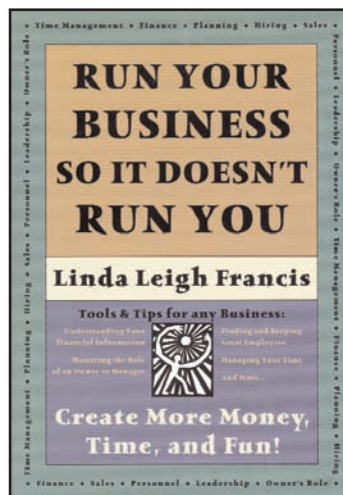
If you are only keeping people with money, there will always be a higher bidder. Go beyond the dollar and meet the other needs of your employees.

2. Grow your own. Nordstrom’s department store has a saying “Hire nice and train cash register”. You can teach someone to use a cash register, but you can’t teach them to be nice. What attributes do you need in an employee? Intelligence? Good people skills? Mechanically inclined? Good work habits? Hire green with these characteristics in mind. You can teach people to mix and match paint, take measurements, and hang wallpaper.

You also have to offer people a career path within your organization, both in terms of new



FRANCIS



For more practical advice on running your business, read Linda Leigh Francis’ book, “Run Your Business so it Doesn’t Run You”.

skills and increased wages.

A plumbing, heating, and cooling service company I work with uses the grow your own strategy. The owner is on the Board of Directors of a local apprenticeship training school and gets a shot at the cream of the crop. She has clear job descriptions tied to a salary schedule so that employees can see a future within her company. She carefully places the apprentices with journeymen who use specific training criteria

that lead to in-house certification. She has opened her books. Everyone in her company knows how much it costs to run the business, what the profits are, and each shares in the company’s success. Lots of work? You bet! But, she has excellent employees and a very healthy business.

3. Attract people from other companies. I am not talking about unethically “stealing” employees. I’m talking about attracting reliable employees with your reputation as an employer.

Good employees pick and choose where they want to work. If your company is known for being a great place to work, the word spreads. The painting and decorating industry is small, and workers talk. They know who’s worthwhile to work for and who’s not. Good workers want to work for good companies. So when you advertise for employees, make sure the word on the street about you encourages people to apply.

4. Seek non-traditional workers. Hire women. Women are entering the building trades in larger numbers. I know a painting contractor who employed a woman who became his best detailer. A plumbing service

company finds that women customers will request his female plumber because they are more comfortable with her in their home.

Hire non-English speaking immigrants. Make an investment in English as a second language training, and you will create a good and loyal employee. In addition, word travels fast, and your employees will be great recruiters for you.

Make skills training, whether English or technical, a requirement of ongoing employment.

Finally, for truly long term solutions, you, your trade associations, local schools, and politicians need to put time, money, and effort into training programs, and spread the word that the trades are a great career and profession. For an example of how one association is addressing this issue contact North Coast Builders Exchange at 707 542-9502 or ncbexexec@sonic.net.

For information on management workshops or to order Francis’ book “Run Your Business so it Doesn’t Run You,” contact Linda at (707) 485-0612 or lfrancis@pacific.net. Linda Francis All rights reserved

# Lien

From Page 1

a simple statement signed under oath as to what is owed to you. Usually an attorney is not needed at this stage. If the job is in New Hampshire, however, you should seek legal counsel as NH doesn't use lien certificates like Maine does and the process for placing liens is more complicated than in Maine. Maine and New Hampshire allow you to place a lien on the owner's property up to 120 days from the date that you last performed meaningful work at the jobsite which sounds like a lot of time, but really isn't.

3. Once the lien is placed on the

owner's property, your attorney will seek judgment against your customer. At this stage, it is incumbent for you to prove your case. Good paperwork is key—especially change orders and the like. Upon obtaining a judgment, you may seek a writ of execution from the court issuing the judgment and seek a Sheriff's sale of the property by foreclosure.

With a judgment and a lien in place, you are in good shape to eventually get paid. Liens will survive, in most cases, for up to 15 years. So when your customer goes to sell, transfer or refinance their house, they'll have to pay you to do so with interest. However, good paperwork and clear communication between you and your customer will hopefully prevent you from having to use these laws.

## Diamond Cabinets ad

### RICCI EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

**Employee:**

Harold Dyer

**Residence:**

Somersworth, NH

**Occupation:**

Yard Foreman

**Profile:** Dyer has been with Ricci for five years. He started out "shoving lumber in bins,"

graduated to doing deliveries, and over the course of his career can boast that he has done "a little bit of everything."

**Ricci Gazette:** What has impressed you most in the five years you have worked at Ricci Lumber?

**Harold Dyer:** It's like a family...everyone looks out for one another, everyone gets involved. It's family owned and operated, and it feels like it.

**RG:** What do you think contractors look for in a lumberyard?

**HD:** Personable people, helpful and friendly service, extensive product line



(and variety).

**RG:** And what about your personal success...what makes you successful?

**HD:** Hard work. Just showing up. It's hard to be out here in the rain, the snow, the heat and cold, but we have to just do it.

**RG:** What trends do you see in the building industry?

**HD:** It's going to cap out pretty quickly, especially new homes. Growth will flatten out, we'll see more renovations. We used to have a lot of new spec homes, but that's slowing down.

**RG:** What's next for Ricci Lumber?

**HD:** Keep improving what we're doing...good service, helping customers in any way we can. We do things like going anywhere for a delivery...places no one else would go, but we have to capitalize on our customers and keep them happy. We'll keep doing that.

**RG:** Sum up your understanding of what Ricci Lumber stands for in one sentence.

**HD:** Quality service and a good group of people...it's the people that make the business.

# Hayes

From Page 1

models and part numbers she wanted. Impressed, Rick took down the information and then proceeded to ask for her full name and phone number. Jeanne told Rick that her last name was *Shaheen* and that she could be reached at her Concord phone number. Rick thanked her for her order, took down her credit card information and casually mentioned that her name sounded vaguely familiar. Jeanne remarked, "you may have heard my name in that I'm the Governor of New Hampshire." Undeterred, Rick responded, "Oh that's it! But I have an excuse, I live in York, Maine."

Those of us working that afternoon almost busted a gut laughing so hard.

When George H.W. Bush (the father)

was elected president in 1988, Ricci Lumber made many deliveries to the "Summer White House" in Kennebunkport to fortify the security at the compound. Other notable political customers of Ricci Lumber include: Executive Councilor Ruth Griffin, State Senator Burt Cohen and Jim Sununu (brother of John). Assistant Mayor Alex Hanson frequents Ricci Lumber as does my Aunt, City Councilor Joanne Grasso. Former Portsmouth mayors Ted Connors and Peter Weeks are regulars as well.

Thank you for your patronage and support of Ricci Lumber. Hope you enjoy this issue of the Gazette and please do not forget to vote.

# Robinson

From Page 1

All along the way, as the company has grown and prospered, Ricci Lumber has been right there with them.

"We get 99 percent of our lumber from Ricci," Robinson said. "The whole Ricci

team has done whatever it takes to help me get through whatever projects we're working on—from special orders, right on down the line."

"They work really hard to be contractor-oriented," he said.

"I go where I'm taken care of. Ricci is always a phone call away and they all know me by name. Ricci has a huge sense of looking after their customers...it's important to them."

# Indoor air pollution can create an unhealthy house

By PATRICK MORETTI  
General Manager  
Ricci Lumber

PORTSMOUTH -- Since the early 1970's when consumers experienced major increases in fossil fuel prices, owners and residents of buildings have been working to seal out Mother Nature.

Builders and designers have made great strides to create a more efficient, airtight building, reducing overall fuel costs. By encapsulating a structure to improve it, we have given rise to another predicament, indoor air pollution.

Often called the "Sick Building Syndrome", our living and work spaces are becoming polluted by our lifestyle. As we trap the heat or air conditioning in the building, we have sealed out everything else that is good for us. Every cleaning agent, piece of furniture, clothing or manmade product contributes to the contaminants in the air we breath. Add to this nature's contributions like pet dander, dust mites, pollen, mold, and we have a concoction worthy of a scientist's lab. Even older homes can become sick as owners work to upgrade their insulation values or window openings.

Especially in the colder seasons, when the air exchange with the outdoors is at a minimum, indoor air pollution is at its greatest. Some studies suggest that indoor pollution can be as much as 100 times more than outdoor air in the worst city. It has been attributed to respiratory problem in children and fatigue in adults. It's non-discriminating, affecting everyone from infants to senior citizens. The U.S. government considers indoor

air pollution to be the #1 environmental health concern. Billions of dollars are spent each year on medication, filtering systems and quick fixes to help the public endure their indoor environment.

There are simple ways that can improve the indoor environment in a building. Changing furnace filters once a month or making sure that humidifiers and air conditioner drain pans are clean. Open some windows when the weather allows, let some fresh air in. Properly installed vents in a bathroom will reduce moisture in the air and discourage mold growth. New carpet, curtains, and furniture should be aired out before bringing them inside to reduce chemical transmission into the atmosphere. Keep all fossil fuel burning appliances in a house running at peak performance, and don't allow smoking inside the building. Your residents will benefit with a better living environment and the property will have less structural problems

Moisture, considered to be one of the largest contributors to indoor pollution, is also something that can be tamed. Inadequate ventilation of the house structure itself can create a breeding ground for mold. When moisture can't



MORETTI

exit the structure, it condenses on cold surfaces, creating a damp region. An area that is consistently wet will grow *Stachybotris*, a sticky black mold linked to many current health problems. Mold can only grow and sustain itself as long as it has moisture and a food source. The solution is to eliminate the cause: thus by creating proper air movement in a house a builder can minimize its occurrence.

Recently news reports have brought to light the seriousness of this affliction, making building owners nervous.

Lawyers are positioning themselves for the next great class action suit, as media reports soften the public for mass hysteria. But, unlike the treated lumber scare of recent years that was unfounded, this outbreak of sick building caused by mold can be traced backwards. Contractors and builders must make themselves conscious of techniques and building practices that will reduce their liability. Simple

precautions taken during the construction process will almost always insure a parched structure. Properly installed roof and soffit vents can greatly improve the exhausting of moisture and other contaminants out of the house. Allowing a house to breathe while saving energy will continue to be a battle line as technology evolves.

Building a healthy home while making it energy efficient will be the job of architects, engineers and builders to prevail over.

## New Home Pricing Perspective

### Annual New Home Prices 1980 to 2001

Period	Median	Average
2001	\$174,100	\$211,900
2000	\$169,000	\$207,000
1999	\$161,000	\$195,600
1998	\$152,500	\$181,900
1997	\$146,000	\$176,200
1996	\$140,000	\$166,400
1995	\$133,900	\$158,700
1994	\$130,000	\$154,500
1993	\$126,500	\$147,700
1992	\$121,500	\$144,100
1991	\$120,000	\$147,200
1990	\$122,900	\$149,800
1989	\$120,000	\$148,800
1988	\$112,500	\$138,300
1987	\$104,500	\$127,200
1986	\$92,000	\$111,900
1985	\$84,300	\$100,800
1984	\$79,900	\$97,600
1983	\$75,300	\$89,800
1982	\$69,300	\$83,900
1981	\$68,900	\$83,000
1980	\$64,600	\$76,400

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census based on national statistics.

New Home Pricing Perspective:

### How 2002 is stacking up:

Period	Median (\$)	Average (\$)
July 2002 (p)	170,500	215,200
June 2002 (r)	186,200	220,300
May (r)	178,400	225,300
April (r)	187,100	228,100
March	183,400	227,100
February	191,100	226,500
January	187,100	226,900

## Want to make more money?



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