

# BUILDER'S SPOTLIGHT

## COOK BUILDERS CREATING CUSTOM HOMES FOR DISCERNING CLIENTS

**W**ith more than 30 years experience in residential construction, Cook Builders has earned a reputation for creating custom homes for very discerning clients.

Started by Rich Cook in 1974, Cook Builders continues to provide a level of personalization expected by clients. Cook is "the man in the field," according to Brad Ericks, who runs the company office.

"If a client needs to talk with someone, there's always someone available," Ericks said.

Building currently in Lake Hills, Feather Rock and Weston Ridge, Cook Builders specializes in luxury homes in a range from \$400,000 to \$900,000. One of the company's most well-known homes is the Timberframe house currently being completed in Lake Hills

The couple who wanted the house called on Cook to be the general contractor, and selected Pine Ridge, a Canadian company, to design the house and install the timber framework.

The home's entire structure rests on 23 massive white pine logs that stand upright in the basement and will form a part of the rustic décor the owners plan for their recreation room.

As the timbers were being assembled, the beauty and intricacy of the framework could be seen, rising to a peak of more than 30 feet from the foundation.

Through the framework, the observer could see arches like those in cathedrals and beams that will form part of the ceiling in this two-story home. The year "2005", deeply carved into one long beam that runs along the home's back wall, will remain part of the house as long as it stands.

Once the timbers were in place, Pine Ridge craftsmen began installing the tongue-and-groove wooden ceiling that creates the "rustic elegance" the owners want. At this point the Canadian crews went on to their next project and Cook's construction crews took over.

Other interior designs complement that timber frame, Cook said. An open wooden staircase rises from the main level to two bedrooms on the second floor. A wooden bridge on the second level overlooks

the first floor while providing access to the upstairs bedrooms. And a two-sided stone fireplace provides both warmth and a cozy atmosphere. Construction is expected to be completed in February, Cook said.

More traditional designs by Cook Builders are also part of Lake Hills, a former golf course that features rolling terrain and strands of mature trees as well as the lake that is part of the area's name. The minimum price of a home in this neighborhood is \$500,000 for the house and lot, Ericks said.

Cook is building homes in Feather Rock in the \$400,000 and up range, while homes in Weston Ridge are from \$300,000 to \$400,000, he noted.

When clients express an interest in a Cook Builders home, Ericks said the process includes meetings on what type of home the clients want, what the realistic

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Richard and Nancy Cook

budget is and where they want to live.

Then the staff creates a custom blueprint that will optimize the views the clients want from their home. This is extremely important, Ericks said, because views are very important to homeowners. Customizing the home and orienting it properly on the lot are ways to achieve this, he said.

Cook Builders also helps clients by making suggestions about how they might utilize various spaces in the future.

Cook Builders constructs only about 12 homes a year. Most homes are completed in eight to ten months.

During that time, Ericks said, the team at Cook Builders "develop a relationship with the client. We work to keep this relationship as positive as possible. That helps us keep our reputation for being a builder who is a pleasure to work with."

In addition, Cook Builders offers "outstanding construction financing," Ericks said. The company has arrangements with Sand Ridge Bank to provide construction financing. The client never has to be involved in any "draws" or monies that are usually given to a contractor several times during construction. All of that is handled for the client by Sand Ridge. The loan origination fee is also about one-third of typical construction loans, Ericks said.

"We are committed to making the process of building a house as easy as possible," he noted.

To learn more about Cook Builders and available homesites, call (219) 322-3303 or e-mail Brad Ericks at [brad@cookbuilders.com](mailto:brad@cookbuilders.com). You can also log on to the company's Web site at [www.cookbuilders.com](http://www.cookbuilders.com).