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A Publication of The Dalles Chronicle & Hood River News

April 2014



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Home & Garden Briefs

SOIL TESTING: OSU Extension Service Master Gardeners are now offering soil testing, which will continue weekly until October. Garden soil will be tested for nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, pH, humus and texture. Cost is \$25 per sample.

Information on sample collection is available on the OSU Master Gardener website. www.extension.oregonstate.edu/wasco or call 541-296-5494 with your questions. Testing is available for home gardeners only.

MARKER DEDICATION: On Friday, April 11, at 11 a.m., the public is invited as the Celilo Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicates a basalt marker at the Fort Dalles Museum to recognize the Surgeon's Quarters as the only remaining building of the original fort. It is a policy of DAR to catalog historic properties for national records.

The stone was donated by Larry Lange Landscaping and the etching done by Dave Cutler, Columbia Gorge Studios, Mosier.

PLANTS AVAILABLE: Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District still has some plant species available for purchase. Trees: vine maple, white alder, quaking aspen; shrubs: rugosa rose, woods rose, blue enderberry, snowberry; cuttings: peachleaf willow; conifers: noble fire, incense cedar, western larch, ponderosa pine and Douglas fir.

The district also has seedling protection tubes with bamboo stakes.

To ensure the district has specific plants, call 541-296-6178 ext. 101. Plants are available on a first-come, first-served basis and must be paid for at the time of order.



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On the cover: Do-it-yourself weekend project by Kathy Ursprung.

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LOCAL EXPERTS *share tips* to successful building projects

By Ben Mitchell
Hood River News

Designing and building your own home can be an exciting and fulfilling process, but a dream home can quickly turn into a nightmare if prospective buyers don't avoid some common pitfalls other first-time homeowners often make.

Earlier this month, local experts in the fields of home construction, financing, and real estate gathered at the new Viento Winery tasting room in Hood River to give a public talk on what steps to take that will ensure a successful building project.

The event, which was hosted by Green Home Construction, featured presentations from Tom Reid, owner of Green Home Construction; Erik Becker, architect for Green Home Construction; Jeff Sacre, senior mortgage specialist with Directors Mortgage; and Maui Meyer, owner and principal broker of Copper West Properties. The event was moderated by Kristen Godkin of Kestrel Consulting.

Tom Reid said his business tries to set customers in the right direction at the very beginning of any project.

"Not all construction projects go incredibly smoothly," Reid noted, "so we decided to create a system that would allow people to craft their own home." Reid said some key things to remember are:

Establish Your Goals:

At the very beginning of the project, lay out what you want to accomplish. "People get excited about a lot of things, but they don't often set their goals," Reid said.

Establish a Budget:

Not just an overall project budget — make sure you break down the costs for each aspect of your new home, including a budget for landscaping, décor, exterior features, etc.

Understand Your Contractor's Estimate:

Not all estimates are created equal. Reid cautioned homeowners who are budgeting by the square footage that some contractors won't include cost estimates for landscaping, engineering, and permitting. Homeowners should look for "a fairly in-depth spreadsheet" from their builders to ensure that all aspects of the project have been accounted for in the final estimate.



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Panel members discuss home building projects in a recent workshop at Viento Winery in Hood River, sponsored by Green Home Construction. The event was the first gathering held in the still-under-construction building, on Country Club Road near Frankton Road.

Prioritize Your Project's Features:

The process of designing a home is one that can often begin with boundless, manic ambition that is eventually reined in as project costs climb with every new architectural feature added. Reid said it is paramount to “value engineer” and prioritize which aspects of your project is most important to you in case building costs wind up higher than anticipated.

Financing your home is a whole other animal. Sacre advised that lending practices have changed over the years and to keep these things in mind:

Be Prepared for Challenges:

Sacre said that a “construction loan is the second-hardest loan to get” after a land loan. He also advised that lender oversight has become “huge” since the subprime mortgage debacle that contributed to the burst of the housing market bubble in 2007-2008.

Consider Pros and Cons of Loans:

There are several different options for loans and each type carries its own benefits and drawbacks, including variations in financing flexibility, rates, down payment requirements, number of steps required, etc. Choosing the right loan can have a big financial impact now, and years down the road.

Like Reid, Meyer advocated the importance of knowing the full price of a house or the full cost of a project before diving in.

Consult a Realtor:

Most Realtors will provide a free consultation for home buyers, according to Meyer. When they do, Meyer said to ask for an “RPR” valuation of the property.

Above Grade or Below Grade?

Be aware of how much of your square-footage is above or below grade, because it can affect the cost of the project.

Don't Overbuild:

Meyer said buyers should always consider the long-term viability of uncommon household features that may make the resale of a home difficult. He told the story of how once he had to convince a client that installing a disco in his home might not be a good long-term idea.

Finally, as an architect, Becker's talk was more focused on design tips than home-buying tips.

Be Aware of Site Specific Elements/Constraints:

For example, Becker said a home with great southern exposure could mean lower heating bills in the winter.

Look at the Whole Project at Once:

Becker said clients sometimes want to design each room individually, but it's important to look at how the house functions as a whole, particularly transitions between rooms. “A good design will change your life,” he noted.

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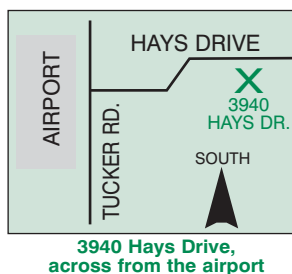


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Happy horses healthy pastures

Join the Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District, Oregon Department of Agriculture and other local horse keepers as they provide a three-hour workshop on April 12 covering the basics of horse keeping and pasture management.

This workshop will provide guidance for horse keeping practices that promote horse health, build good relations between neighbors and add to a horse property's value, all while protecting the land and water quality of the area.

Covered topics include: facility design and location, horse waste management, storm water runoff management, pasture and paddock care, weed control and much more. The last hour of the class will be spent touring a nearby horse facility that is implementing many of the management practices discussed in the class.

Bring all of your horse keeping and pasture questions because there will be plenty of time for discussion both during and after the presentations.

To register, go to Hood River Community Education at hrcommunityed.org or call 541-386-2055. For more information on the class contact Kris at kris@hoodriverswcd.org or 541-386-4588.



The Easter Bunny (also called the Easter Rabbit or Easter Hare) is a fantasy character depicted as a rabbit bringing Easter eggs. Originating among German Lutherans, the Easter Hare originally played the role of a judge, evaluating whether children were good or disobedient in behaviour at the start of the season of Eastertide. The Easter Bunny is sometimes depicted with clothes. In legend, the creature carries colored eggs in his basket, candy and sometimes also toys to the homes of children. In many church services on Easter Sunday, a live rabbit representing the Easter Bunny, is brought into the congregation, especially for the children's message.

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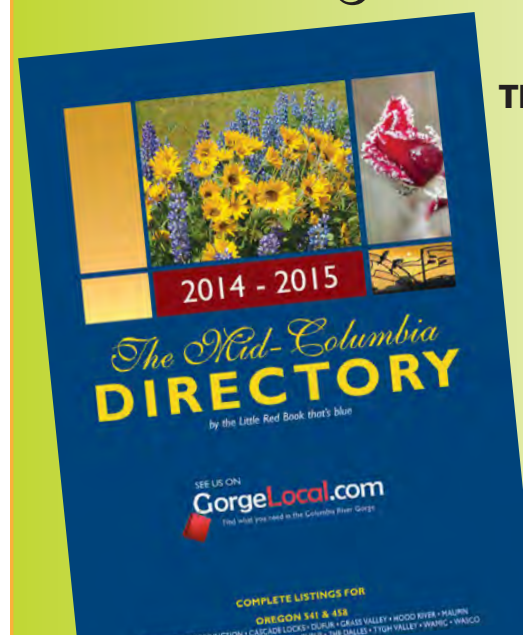
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DIY *weekend*

By Kathy Ursprung
The Dalles Chronicle

Everyone needs a little corner to call their own – a tranquil place to ease into the day, to clear their mind after a tough day at work, or to read a good book before bed.

I set up just such a place a while ago in a tiny corner near the closets of my husband's and my bedroom. It included a tired, but still comfy easy chair I hauled home years back from the Salvation Army, an unpainted bookcase with some of my longtime favorites, a reading lamp and an ugly old ottoman I'd scavenged from my grandfather's house.

But it was a makeshift place, far too cluttered to be tranquil, not quite comfortable enough to be easy. And over time the bookcase had become a repository for clutter – shelves sagging under books, papers, magazines, playing cards, even some old VCR tapes from the days when my first grader liked to save every program she ever saw (she's 24 now).

Last weekend, I was poring over Pinterest (every home improvement addict's best friend) contemplating a few of my “someday” ideas when I ran across a post in my decorating file picturing the fluffiest-looking ottoman and had a vision of my corner redecorated into a personal oasis.

It was time for a Do-it-Yourself Weekend.

A little paint and fabric, a little appropriating of knickknacks from around the house and I would have the pocket retreat I had dreamed of – a cross between an English country garden, a destination vacation and a cloud – the very definition of the word “aaaah.”

CLUTTER BUSTING

Before I started creating the new, I had to get rid of the old. Emptying out the storage ottoman and the book shelf left me with a small mountain of books, most of which were ready for a new home. In another pile I had half-finished projects, random fabric remnants and my grandmother's old Stereopticon with a four-inch stack of the far-off scenes to be viewed.

Not ready to part with the stereopticon, I forced myself to pare down the remaining keep pile to a fraction of what I started with, tagging the rest either donation or discard.

SHOPPING

A helpful paint department employee at Sawyer's True Value helped me track down two quarts of the indoor latex paint I needed, a creamy white called "Tex" for the base of the fluffy ottoman and a light blue-green called "Spring Beginning" to match a pretty art deco bowl that was my other inspiration.

Note: Consider your project items carefully before shopping. Unfortunately, I almost never come home with everything I need, or end up with things I don't, like the molding I bought to pretty up the battered and bare bookcase. The bookcase boards have rounded front edges and it would have taken more work than I had weekend to make the molding work.

PROJECTS

I was prepared to tackle two small paint projects – this was meant to be a simple weekend endeavor after all.

The first was the ottoman. Yes, you can paint vinyl and this dingy gray thing needed it badly. I wasn't sure paint could save this piece. Just about every house had one of these ugly things when I was a tiny girl, from brown to gray to bilious green. I suspect, rather than being the height of home fashion, they were just cheap and utilitarian. But as the creamy white paint went on, I began to see the potential.

The paint brought out a surprisingly attractive art deco-style geometric pattern and the warm color made it look a little more friendly and comfortable. And the paint took to the vinyl like it belonged there.

I had envisioned "aging" the paint to look more like buckskin (another Pinterest idea) by rubbing brown shoe polish across the pattern, then rubbing it off, but a test area looked like a horrible accident had occurred, so I abandoned that plan.

The painted ottoman received a small throw of faux shearling, my closest approximation of the fluffy ottoman and it was ready to go. The bookshelf was next and, no surprise, I had forgotten to get primer, which

Inspiration



was a requirement on the stained and generally unattractive piece. Primer provides a neutral base – it can also be tinted to match the paint – and a bit of "tooth" for the paint to adhere to. Fortunately, I had a bit of primer left from another project, a little old, a little cottage cheesy, but it smoothed on surprisingly well. *continued on page 10*



CABINETS & COUNTERTOPS
Shannon Brackenbury and Erin Barrett





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In lieu of the abandoned molding, I added an outline of black ribbon to the bookcase, attached with double-sided tape. It was meant to be suggestive of the pinstriping often seen on French-style painted furniture. It added a nice little punch to an otherwise frothy color scheme. Lace is another option for dressing up painted shelves.

I added another project when I realized how careworn my favorite chair had become, added a large pillow covered with a fabric remnant to the seat and recovering the arm caps with another remnant.

ASSEMBLY

Back in the bedroom, I tucked the bookshelf into the corner near the closet and topped it with a maple-framed mirror appropriated from elsewhere in the house. To a black, metal lamp that coordinated nicely with the bookcase, I added silk flowers and the cream silk headband I wore to my wedding. It's a lovely little remnant of a beautiful day and I always like to have it on display.

Then I went on the hunt for more memorabilia from trips past to add to my little tablescape: a fossilized clamshell from a long-ago trip to Egypt, vintage postcards from the California Redwoods, a shell from Long Beach, Wash., and black-and-white photographs from a visit to New York City.

I had planned to piece together some vintage doilies I had tucked away into a runner for the top of the bookshelf (See "Inspiration, page 9), but the large mirror took up too much space. I made do one piece, a delicately tatted linen table scarf that pulled all the other elements together.

That was all it took to create my "aaah" oasis.

The whole project cost about \$50 in paint, fabric and ribbon, plus a lot of "shopping" around the house.

The lesson? Beautifying your home doesn't have to cost a fortune. Sometimes it's a matter of cutting the clutter, then reimagining what you already have.



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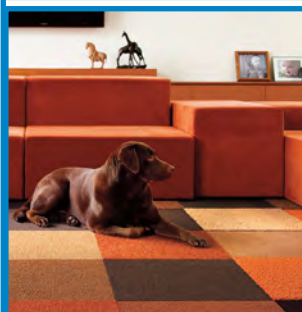
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Help restore library plantings and learn about perennial gardening

By Kirby Neumann-Rea
Hood River News

Has your perennial garden gotten out of hand? Maybe not, but this can happen to the best of gardens.

Are there too many weeds, bad grass, plantings that are no longer attractive, shrubs that have been neglected and need pruning? These problems can seem overwhelming.

Where to begin?

Currently, this is the condition of the Sixth Street border on the Hood River County Library grounds (across from 3 Rivers Grill). Chalk it up to the past few years of low budgets for maintenance of the park. The county used to take responsibility for much of the maintenance, but now it is up to the library, which contracts with the WINGS program for groundskeeping. (WINGS is a non-profit program that provides housing, employment training and life-skills for young men.) However, they do not provide the kind of restoration this border needs.

The OSU Master Gardener Association wants to make the border beautiful again so that it is an asset to the park, not an eyesore. The association invites public participation on April 5 in an opportunity for fans of the library to provide a much needed service and, at the same time, work and learn along with Master Gardeners.

"Please join us to explore ways to restore an out-of-control garden," said spokeswoman Audrey Schneider.

Master Gardeners are planning a three-

hour hands-on session that will begin with a needs assessment of the border and establishing a plan of action. Learning objectives for the session will include:

Plant identification

Pruning perennials, roses and other shrubs

Cutting back ornamental grasses

Digging and dividing plants

Strategies for weed control and sustaining a garden

Learning more about the OSU Master Gardener Program

At the end of our session participants will evaluate the accomplishments of the group and identify any additional needs, inviting ideas from participants.

The date of this event is Saturday April 5, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Save April 12 as a rain date.)

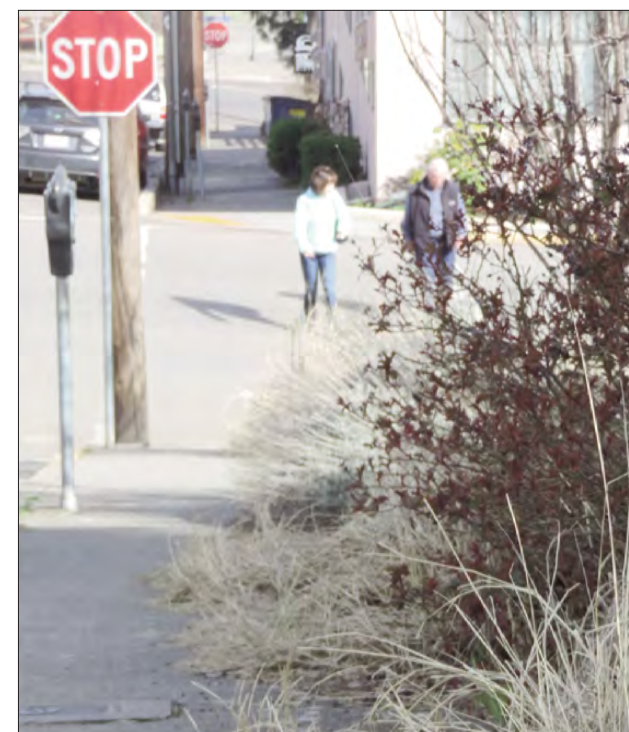
If you have pruners, hand rakes, landscape shovels, weeding tools, please bring them. If not, Master Gardeners will have tools available. Garden gloves are recommended. Meet at the border, 6th and Oak.

For details e-mail
libraryproject@cutcallcosts.com.

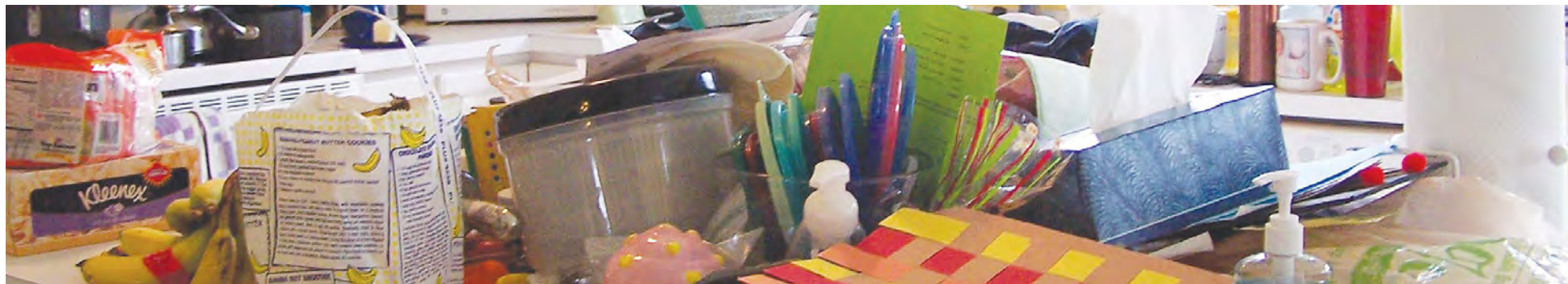
Editors' note: With this story are the "before" photos of the Sixth Street border. See the May Home and Garden for "after" photos.



Sixth Street border, and Hood River Library, looking east across the Rotary pagoda and Georgiana Smith Park. Plaque at the base of the cherry tree is visible, but others in the planting area are obscured by brambles and debris.



Sixth Street border plantings cover part of the sidewalk in this view looking north to Oak Street. Photos by Kirby Neumann-Rea.



SPRING CLEANING:

less clutter means less stress

By Chris Thomas

Oregon News Service

PORTLAND — With spring officially here, Oregonians may be in the mood to do some spring cleaning. With a few simple tips, one expert says, the process doesn't need to be so daunting.

For most people, said professional organizer Amelia Hatcher, it just isn't realistic to maintain a home in perfect order each day - but they can focus on clearing out the clutter.

"Clutter is anything that causes frustration, anxiety or chaos in your life. It completely drains you of your energy," she said. "It could be the pile of paper on your desk. It could be the pile of laundry. It could be your 'dumping ground,' like your kitchen table, and it just completely causes stress."

According to the National Association of Professional Organizers, minimizing clutter saves time and money, and affects everything from emergency preparedness to family interactions.

"Amelia the Clutter Queen" also recommends only tackling one area

at a time, so as not to become overwhelmed and get discouraged.

Hatcher said she was drawn into the profession about five years ago when she began helping family and friends get better organized. For caregivers, she said getting rid of clutter not only minimizes chaos but also helps with safety by improving mobility.

"I've had several situations where people have fallen, broken a hip, and it's actually not safe in the home," she said. "So, it's my goal to go in and change things around to where the home is more accessible to things like walkers, possibly a wheelchair."

Old medications should be properly disposed of, Hatcher said, and no-longer-needed documents with personal information should be shredded to protect against identity theft.

Hatcher's blog of clutter-proofing tips is online at AmeliaTheClutterQueen.com. The National Association of Professional Organizers has a website at napo.net.



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6 Most Common Types of Clutter

When I first started writing about clutter, I focused on how to cut clutter room-by-room in a home. But after doing some research, I realized that before you begin removing clutter, you have to define *what is clutter*. Let's look at a few different types and how you can purge them today.

1. Aspirational Clutter

Simply defined: This is the stuff you buy to try to appear — to others and yourself — a more interesting or skilled person.

Think of a coffee table book you keep on display but have never sat down and read or the set of golf clubs you bought after one lesson that are now collecting dust. Aspirational clutter is the clutter we accumulate because we aspire to be different than who we really are.

2. Clutter Without a Storage Space

There's a saying that has been attributed to Samuel Smiles, Isabella Beeton & Benjamin



Aspirational clutter - Colorful modern kitchen.
Sarah M. Golonka/Photodisc/Getty Images

Franklin: "A place for everything, and everything in its place." Simple, elegant & easy, right? Not always. Some of your clutter isn't really clutter, it's "stuff" without a home: mail you have yet to open, books you haven't put on your bookshelf (because your bookshelf is overflowing), or the beach chairs lying in a pile in the corner of your garage. This is the type of clutter that is going to take some extra steps and time to deal with; here are 2

resources: How to Organize Anything and Maximize Storage Spaces

3. Trash Masquerading as Clutter

This is the easiest type of clutter to banish. Some of the stuff you have lying around your home is really just stuff you need to throw out. This is why every single guide to organizing (Clothes, Garage, Kitchen Cabinets, Kitchen Pantry, Shoes) I write for this site begins with a "decluttering" phase. Decluttering is sorting your things and trashing or donating what you no longer need or use.

Decluttering Resource: How to Declutter Your Home, A room-by-room guide to decluttering every room in your home and on your computer, too.

4. Bargain Clutter

Can't resist a good sale? Is "free gift with purchase" too enticing to resist? You might be hoarding bargain clutter. Just because something was on sale -- or even free! -- doesn't mean you need to bring it into your home.

5. Abundance Clutter

Is stocking up your favorite weekend activity? Do you regularly buy new items in triplicate "just in case" you need it someday? You might be stocking up on abundance clutter if you keep large amounts of products around the house that go unused.

6. Sentimental Clutter

Are you afraid to throw out your baby blanket? Or the crystal vase you received from Aunt Vera? The one you've never displayed? Do you have to move your wedding dress out of the way to reach your everyday work clothes? If so, you might be holding onto sentimental clutter.

— Elizabeth Larkin

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SEE WHAT'S NEW:



Cameron Curtis stands in the well-lit showroom on Highway 35 in Hood River, overlooking the Hood River marina and Columbia River. Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

CURTIS HOMES

Builds NEW HQ with a view

By Kirby Neumann-Rea
Hood River News



Cameron Curtis, owner of Curtis Homes, has announced the construction of the company's new office at 403 Highway 35 in Hood River, directly across from Tum-A-Lum Lumber, near Highway 30.

The new tilt-roof building replaces a white building that had long been empty. The old structure was dilapidated, yet the foundation was still in great condition and the new building will be on the same footprint as the previous building, according to Curtis.

Using green building techniques Curtis Homes is constructing the new 700-square-foot building and opening the office in April.

The ground floor will serve as offices while upstairs, clients can visit the showroom to view building finishes, by appointment only, on large-screen televisions. The showroom boasts panoramic views of the Columbia River.

Curtis Homes holds an open house and ribbon cutting at noon on April 4.

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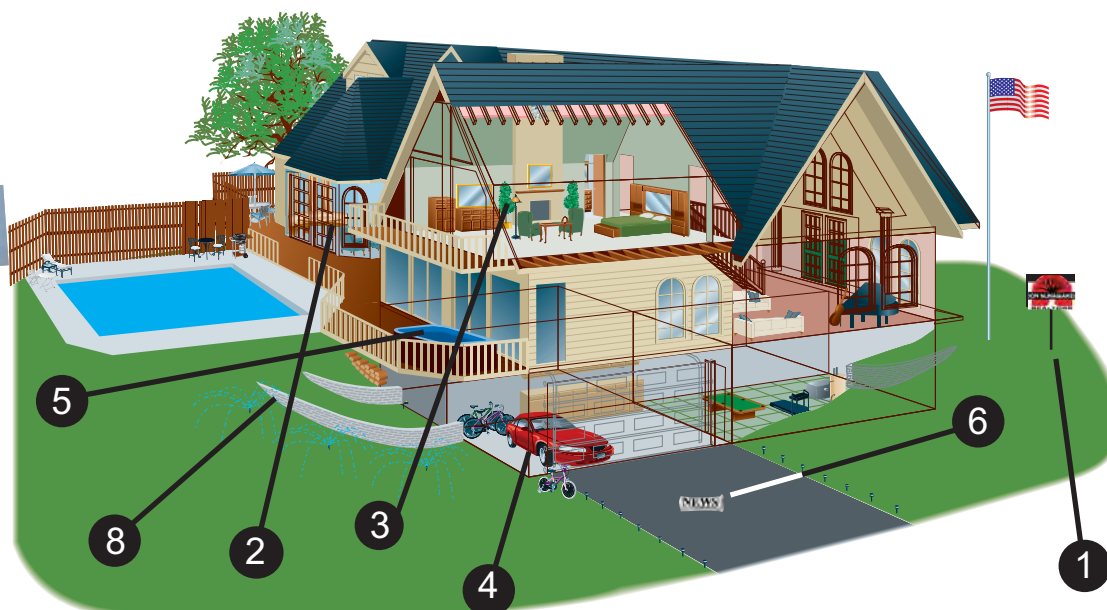
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2 HOUSES - HOOD RIVER



NEW LISTING



\$559,000 2 houses, barn, 7.16 acres. Main House 3 beds/3 baths, 1970sqft. View of Mt. Hood from pasture. RMLS 14612315

GREAT LOCATION - HOOD RIVER



NEW LISTING



\$299,000 2 story home, quiet neighborhood. 3 bd, 2.5 bth, 1638 sqft, .14 ac. Mt. Adams view, fully landscaped patio w/ hottub. RMLS 14448266

HEIGHTS DUPLEX - HOOD RIVER



NEW PRICE

\$295,000 Duplex, great location, solid rental history, close to schools/shopping. 1 bd, 1 bth units. RMLS 14275538

CUSTOM ELEGANCE - HOOD RIVER



\$465,000 3 beds, 3 baths, 3 levels, 4407 sqft, .71 acre. Formal dining & living room Near golf course, Mt. Hood View. RMLS 13432165

MT. HOOD VIEW - HOOD RIVER



\$760,000 2 story farmhouse with basement. 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Baths, 4656 sqft. 24.35 acres RMLS 13311783

COMMERCIAL - HOOD RIVER



\$380,000 Great location! Open beam ceiling building. Lots of parking. Additional 288sqft concrete building. RMLS 13127138

MOUNTAIN VIEWS - HOOD RIVER



NEW PRICE

\$2,275,000 3 beds, 4.5 baths, .40 acres, 28.5 acres of orchard. Also included 2nd residence and 60'x72' insulated shop. RMLS 13480709

INDUSTRIAL - ODELL



\$99,000 1.19 acre in John Weber Business Park. All Utilities. Large private lot with Mt. Adams View. RMLS 14014516

VIEWS! - WHITE SALMON



\$975,000 Ranch home w/ daylight basement. 9.5 dividable acres. Stunning River, City & Mt. Hood views from the Bluff! RMLS 13445037

LARGE PARCEL - ODELL



\$237,000 2 beds, 1 bath, 1320sqft. Many recent updates throughout, .85 acre RMLS 13018387

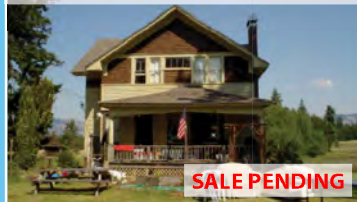
NEAT & TIDY - PARKDALE



SALE PENDING

\$144,900 Manufactured home 2 beds, 1 bath, 972 sqft, .11 acre with open floor plan, nice front & backyards. Fully fenced. RMLS 13636752

DIVIDEABLE ACREAGE - HOOD RIVER



SALE PENDING

\$1,250,000 1910 Craftsman, 1706sqft, 4 beds, 1 bath. 19.55+/- dividable acres. Zoned RR2.5. Mt. Adams view. RMLS 13361765

CORNER LOT - PARKDALE



SALE PENDING

\$229,000 2 Bedroom/2 Bathroom, 1257sqft. 50x100 lot. In town 2 car detached garage RMLS 14025319

CORNER LOT - THE DALLES



SOLD

\$129,500 Well kept ranch home mostly fenced. 2 beds & 1 bath, 1198sqft. Storage/Carport. Original Hardwood Floors. RMLS 13646523

HOOD RIVER



SOLD

\$425,000 Stonegate Community. 3 bd/2 ba, 2572sqft, .16acre 2nd floor loft, gourmet kitchen, great outdoor space! RMLS 13388084