



“Preserving the Past while Building the Future.”



Celebrating 128 Years of Service

A note from the Siewers Family...

We are finishing the months of “Spring” in a big way! Next Thursday, May 24th we are having our annual Founders Day Picnic from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. We will be serving lunch and featuring many intriguing outdoor products. Siewers will be celebrating serving Richmond for 128 years. We are very proud of our service to our community; but realize that we have to continue to tweak our products and services to keep up with consumer demands. We want to thank you for helping us make it to our 128th birthday. We appreciate all of your patronage and friendship. Hope to see you on the 24th.

-The Siewers Family

Economic News

U.S. Federal Reserve Beige Book: Richmond District

Business conditions have improved in the area. Manufacturing and trade activity has advanced, although somewhat more slowly than at the beginning of the year. Retail sales activity has risen sharply. Bankers reported modest gains in most types of lending; however, other than refinancing, the amount of mortgage lending remained relatively weak. The good news is that realtors noted an increase in sales of existing homes, and contractors reported an uptick in new home construction. Commercial real estate activity also improved moderately across most segments of the market.

Several contacts in the residential real estate field stated that they were seeing a “ray of hope” in the housing sector. Some agents attributed a rise in foot traffic to the unseasonably warm weather.

To read the complete report www.businessweek.com.

Small-Firm Loans Lagged in the U.S.

Lending to small businesses after the recession recovered more slowly in the U.S. than in other countries according to a report released by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

It found that during the recession, lending to small size businesses generally declined as a percentage of all business loans.

The U.S. pace fell by just over six percentage points in 2010 from 2009, and the level of small-business lending as a percentage of total business loans hasn't returned to precrisis levels.

“The financial institutions in the U.S. tightened credit to small businesses for five (quarters) longer than many other countries,” said Sergio Arzeni, an economist who oversees entrepreneurship and small business for the OECD. *A version of this article appeared on page 7 of the April 19, 2012 Wall Street Journal under the same title.*

Mortgage rates hit record lows for second straight week...

The 30 year fixed rate average dropped to an all-time low falling ever so slightly from 3.84 percent to 3.83 percent, according to the latest data released May 10th from Freddie Mac. The average stood at 4.63 percent this time last year.

Virginia in the Top Ten: Best States for Business

In Chief Executive's eighth annual survey of CEO opinion of Best and Worst States in which to do business, Texas was number one and Virginia came in 6th place. California had the dubious honor of being ranked dead last for the eighth consecutive year.

For the complete article go to the May 2, 2012 Best & Worst States by JP Donlon, found at <http://chiefexecutive.net>

Contractor issues in the news....**The Best Toys Wins**

A new mobile application was released last month that would allow customers to check the status of their job, check invoices, statements, balances, view a product or see a picture of your progress. The user can capture and store pictures related to an order with date and time. You can capture and store a signature related to an order. And don't forget you can capture GPS to coordinate job sites.

“Making current tools available to our customers and our customers' customers is an important part of our overall technology plan with bisTrack.” John Matterson, bisTrack VP at Progressive Solutions. “Having the functionality of our business portal, Web Track, now available on the iPhone and Android smartphone will allow our customers to offer the on-line services that their customers would expect from a premier supplier.”

The iPhone and Android applications can be branded with your look and logo. If you are interested in more information call 1-877-746-4774 or email info@progressive-solutions.com.

Honoring Your Request

Siewers has long provided a service for honoring a customer's request for lengths. Lately, we've been getting a huge request for 16 foot solid moulding or finished lumber. This has diminished our supply and our suppliers do not have enough of the 16 foot material to ship to us.

To help us, check your take-offs and substitute 8', 10', 12' or 14' for casing or simply substitute linear footage for base.

As an alternative, some items are available in finger-joint material, which are usually 16'.

Note: Some websites are time sensitive. If you have any problems opening the site or you wish to recommend an idea for a future story contact Lauren Fields at 358-2103 or email laurenf@siewers.com.

New to you....

Cox Treated Box Columns

There is an alternative to columns made from solid timbers and without the expense of fiberglass; laminated treated box columns. These laminated columns by Cox are treated for ground contact and are kiln dried after treatment. You can paint or stain without any delay. The hollow core of the columns creates an enhanced structural capacity thus giving them a greater load capacity than solid columns.

Since stocking the Cox Columns, Siewers has had a very favorable response and keeps in inventory the following sizes: 6 x 6 x 8', 6 x 6 x 10' and 8 x 8 x 10' with 10 x 10 and 12 x 12 available within a few days. The columns are very popular for screen porches and work very well with the Screeneze (www.screeneze.com) system and leave a very attractive appearance.



Made in the USA!

Oregon- Canadian Forest Products

Oregon-Canadian Forest Products is a leading producer of specialty softwood products from the forest of the Pacific Northwest. They produce up to 40 million board feet per year at their headquarters in North Plains, Oregon.



Siewers carries their beautiful Douglas Fir in 1 x 4 – 1 x 12 and 2 x 4 – 2 x 12. We also carry 5/4 x 4 – 5/4 x 12. Siewers also carries 5/4 VG fir flooring from Oregon-Canadian. (www.ocfp.com)

Quick Contractor Tip

I used to use plywood scraps to make patterns for my projects. But I couldn't see the grain through the plywood when I was ready to trace the pattern. To solve this problem, I now make a negative pattern by cutting out the pattern shape inside a plywood frame. This allows me to place the pattern on the work, move it until I'm happy with the grain, then trace the outline. Saeid Karlmzad, Irvine, California

How would you like to be published in a future issue of Siewers Newsletter?

Be sure it is a quick tip that can help another contractor and one that is simple to understand ("Even I need to understand it!") It also must be economical to create. Submit your tips to laurenf@siewers.com



Siewers is celebrating their 128th birthday!

May 24th Founders Day – 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided so RSVP at 358-2103 or email: laurenf@siewers.com.



Siewers will be closed May 28th in honor of Memorial Day.



Economy Snap Shot.....

	<u>Unemployment Rate – Entire U.S.</u>	<u>Consumer Confidence (Indexed to value of 100 in 1985)</u>	<u>Total Housing Starts /Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate</u>
April 2012	8.1%	69.2	717,000
Prior Month – March 2012	8.2 %	69.5	699,000
Prior Year – April 2011	9.0%	66.0	549,000

	<u>Gallon (\$) Of Gas</u>	<u>Existing Home Sales</u>
April 30, 2012	\$3.82	N/A
Prior Month – March 2012	\$3.93	4,480,000
Prior Year – April 2011	\$3.91	4,200,000

Market Summary

	<u>May 16, 2012</u>	<u>1/01/12</u>	<u>4/30/11</u>
DOW	12,632	12,217	12,810
NASDAQ	2,894	2,605	2,873
S&P 500	1,331	1,257	1,363

Company Mission

To operate and maintain a genuine state-of-the-art lumberyard and mill for Richmond remodelers, with service that is second to none.



“Don’t find fault; find a remedy. Anybody can complain.” Henry Ford

**Siewers Lumber & Millwork
1901 Ellen Road
Richmond, VA 23230**

**Visit our website for product and general information.
www.siewers.com**

Phone: (804) 358-2103 Fax: (804) 359-6986

**Hours:
Monday – Friday
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**If you wish to receive our newsletter each month, forward your email address to
laurenf@siewers.com or us at 804-358-2103.**