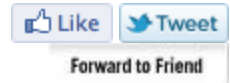




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## HAPPY 2012

The Aiken housing market showed definite signs of improvement as more of our clients found a way to realize their dream of retirement despite a challenging economy. We are thankful for all who chose us to be their builder during 2011 and hope we not only met but exceeded your expectations. A year ago, forecasters called for slow economic improvement in the year to come. We got that, along with an incredibly bumpy ride. Looking forward to 2012, experts are again calling for slow improvement in the local, national and global economy. Positive improvements next year starts with housing. Local economists see a rebound in housing sales, prices and lower construction as key to every recovery. "You can't have robust growth without the housing



## Got Stuff? Storage Options

One of the by-products of a consumer-based society is that we all collect "stuff," from sports equipment and garden tools to holiday decorations, craft and hobby gear, and clothing. In some cases, people have so much stuff that it commandeers their closets, outdoor sheds, and garages to the point of overflow and disorganization.

Homebuyers want relief from their storage woes. To that end, a variety of products and organizational ideas that can add convenient capacity have cropped up for every nook and cranny of the house.

Overall, the most popular trend in storage is the use of modular, adjustable systems that can easily be manipulated to accommodate changing storage needs. In any storage setting, be it a garage or a walk-in master suite closet, these systems employ a simple backbone of tracks or channels secured to the walls on which you can hang a wide variety of components without any penetrating fasteners.

In a clothes closet, for example, the system can include open shelves, door and drawer cabinets, tilted shoe racks, hanger poles, hooks, and laundry hampers. These pieces and parts can be arranged based on a homeowner's particular needs; as those needs change, the components can be moved, replaced, or supplemented.

The garage is another area well suited to these storage systems. There are now wall-hung cabinets, shelving, hooks, and other handy components with the ability to be moved to any point along tracks or channels secured to the wall. Garage storage systems feature cabinets and work surfaces with lock-in-place castors that allow owners to easily bring those elements out into the open, or even to the outside, for better, safer, and more convenient access to their "stuff."

In both of these settings, the storage system typically raises the wall-hung components above the floor, making it easier to vacuum the carpet or

sector growing, and that is about to change." Interest rates are 3.95% on a 30 year home loan and 3.24% on a 15 year home loan. Low mortgage rates were cited as a key reason the National Association of Home Builders survey of builder sentiment rose in December to its highest level in more than a year. Other good news, unemployment was high to start the year but has been reduced to 8.36% as of November. Employment may be the single most important factor in improving our economy because that is what will inspire growth. Simply said, we can spend more if we are employed. Here at Designer Builders we promote Made in America to support this growth and will continue to do our part to help reduce unemployment, which will help us all. A survey of 36 economists by the Associated Press this month found that they expect the economy will generate an average of about 175,000 jobs per month in 2012. The last two months of 2011 are reflective of that trend. In our current

sweep out the garage. Doing so reduces the perception (or reality) of clutter.

In the kitchen, cabinet and appliance manufacturers offer several options to increase storage capacity. In addition to handy drop-down drawers and roll-out shelves, many of the latest cabinet companies provide in-drawer organizers, dedicated trash and recycling bins, and adjustable shelving to suit a variety of needs.

In the laundry room, pedestal drawers set underneath the washer and dryer provide additional and convenient storage while raising the height of the washer and dryer, making them easier to use, as well.

Today's modular storage systems are available in a wide variety of styles and price points, from luxurious, all-wood components that enhance any master suite to ventilated coated wire sections that make sense for kids' rooms and utility areas. Even if there is enough land and ample budget to build a large house with plenty of closets and space for stuff, it's only smart to make those areas, and the entire house, as space-efficient and valuable as possible.

Warm Regards,

*Todd*

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economic environment, low interest rates and reduced building costs for new home construction may offset any reduction in gains from the sale of your current home. This may be the best reason to invest in your retirement dream home today.

Designer Builders is proud to provide a complete custom home service to all our customers, before, during and after completion of your custom home and we look forward to making your Dream Home a reality.

## BUILDING SUCCESS 101

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*Q: What is Lifecycle Assessment?*

A: Lifecycle Assessment (LCA) is a way to evaluate and estimate the value of a particular building product or system across its usable life. LCA considers a product or system's cradle-to-grave environmental impact, from its raw material source to its capacity for recycling and reuse. LCA is a tool for design and building professionals, providing their clients

a better, more  
thorough  
understanding of the  
materials being used  
to construct a project.

