

Bill Spindler sells last board; Spindler Lumber becomes Holyoke Building Center

Written by Chris Lee

Bill Spindler has sold his last board as owner of Spindler Lumber in Holyoke.

The longtime owner sold the business Nov. 1 to Tom Wirges of Holyoke. Wirges has taken over and Spindler has agreed to stay on to the end of the year as a consultant.

“It’s time to retire. I’m going to be 70 next year,” Spindler said of his decision to sell the business.

Those calling the lumber yard will hear the employees answer with, “Holyoke Building Center” as Wirges has changed the name under the new ownership.

Many of the current faces will remain the same. Scott Murray will continue part time as the yard manager. Two other employees will include Casondra Olnes and Shawn Anderson.



Bill Spindler, at left, shakes the hand of Tom Wirges, the new owner of the lumber yard in Holyoke.

Wirges has renamed the company Holyoke Building Center.□

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□ —Enterprise photo

Following his college graduation, Spindler began working for Boise Cascade, a wholesale building materials company in Denver. He spent one year there before moving to Georgia Pacific, another building wholesaler, where he spent four years.

In 1975 Irv and Susie Speer started the lumber yard in Holyoke which was called Speer Lumber Company.

Spindler said while working for Georgia Pacific he met Speer who convinced him to move to Holyoke and manage the lumber yard. Three years later in 1978, Spindler and wife Jeanne purchased the business from Speer and renamed it Spindler Lumber Company.

For 35 years, Spindler has been the man selling wood and other lumber yard products at 200 E. Carnahan St. Jeanne worked with him part time at the store until the early 1990s.

Spindler said the late '70s and early '80s proved to be booming times. "At least for us," he noted. Things began to slow down in the mid '80s, but when the hog farms moved into the area in the early '90s, things picked back up, Spindler said.

"Once we hit the 2000s, the competition has been so tough," Spindler said. He noted larger retail stores, like Home Depot and Menards have taken a lot of business away from smaller lumber yards.

Over the years, Spindler said the products and more importantly, the price of those products, has changed a lot. He noted prices have nearly tripled since he began 35 years ago.

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Spindler said lumber yards aren't the only small town businesses losing customers to the competition. It can relate to all small hometown businesses. "It's because of the big boys," he noted.

Wirges said he hopes to introduce some new items and ideas to the local lumber yard to keep things moving in the right direction.

Wirges, who has worked construction in the area since 1985, said he is willing to listen to customers and order what they want.

He said people are always wanting new "stuff." Stuff can mean a lot of things, Wirges said. He is willing to listen to specific wants from customers and order in the products people want and need locally.

Wirges said he is planning to construct an additional building on the current lot where the office sits to house more material. He also plans to make some room across the street where the lumber is stored that will be used for office space to make helping customers easier and more convenient.

He also hopes to offer a couple different lines of custom cabinets and to implement a computerized point of sale system.

Wirges made the decision to purchase the business in order to maintain a lumber yard in Holyoke. "Bill said he was going to retire and I thought we needed to keep a lumber yard here in Holyoke," Wirges said.

Wirges came to Holyoke from northeast Nebraska in 1985. He has a daughter Anna who lives in Haxtun.

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He is looking forward to providing a service to Holyoke and increasing the inventory to meet the public's needs. Wirges said he plans to have a grand opening next spring to showcase some changes to the business.

Spindler grew up in Aurora and attended college at Metro State College where he received his degree in marketing and management. He and wife Jeanne have two daughters. Shannon lives near Knoxville, Tenn. and Coleen is in nursing school in Texas.

Spindler said the future will entail doing some work on his home, golfing and tinkering with his 16x36 foot model train system.

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