

Olympic Peninsula homes designed for simplicity

By Teresa Kenney
Special to NWHomes

SEQUIM — On the white picket fence surrounding the home of Gail and Al Cortese is a small sign that reads “Brierwood Cottage.” The couple moved into their home at Cedar Ridge two years ago, and they say they could not be happier with their decision.

“We have always loved it up here,” says Gail Cortese. “We had a home on 5 acres for 20 years that we called Brierwood Farm. Naming our new home Brierwood Cottage made us feel right at home. We love our house and love our location.”

Cedar Ridge’s setting on the Olympic Peninsula, surrounded by snow-capped mountains, lush green hills and the sparkling water of Sequim Bay and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, also made the couple feel right at home — but not because of their former farm.

Instead, Cortese says, the setting reminds them of San Luis Obispo, California, the city they moved from years ago. “We always missed the hills of San Luis Obispo and then we discovered the east ridge of Sequim.”

Adding to Cedar Ridge’s natural setting is 10 acres of open space, as well as easy access to the Olympic Discovery Trail.

“The community is very peaceful and quiet. And the weather out here is wonderful — we are right in the middle of a blue hole. It’s sunny and warm, and there is barely any rain,” Cortese says.

She says she and her husband like the fact that there are plenty of places to walk, such as the nearby Olympic Discovery Trail. And when the rare snowfall happens (average temperatures in



Cedar Ridge will be built in two sections — The Village and The Estates — and most homes will feature mountain or water views.

January and February are in the high 40s), a snowplow removes any need for homeowners to shovel.

Known around the neighborhood as the “plant whisperer,” Cortese is an avid gardener, and her neighbors often stop by to admire her English roses and perennials when they are out walking their dogs.

“They are nice folks — outgoing and friendly,” Cortese of the people who call Cedar Ridge home. “It’s a very comfortable neighborhood.”

The community includes 179 homes in two sections: The Village and The Estates.

“The homes in The Village are designed for simplicity and range in size from approximately 1,400 to 2,000 square feet,” says Christy Fulmer, new home consultant



Homes combine a contemporary Northwest design with “aging-in-place” elements, such as zero-step entries and wide doors and hallways.

with Anderson Homes, the community’s designer and homebuilder. “Lots are designed for low-maintenance yards and average 6,000 square feet. The Estates, on the other hand, features larger designs set on larger lots averaging one-quarter to

one-third acre. And you can have a completely custom home, if you like. We still have many beautiful locations to choose from.”

For homebuyers interested in a quicker move-in, spec homes are also available for sale. “We currently have three

spec homes under construction ranging in price from \$326,900 to \$499,000,” says Fulmer.

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hallways. Nine-foot ceilings amplify natural light, and master bedrooms include walk-in closets and en suite baths.

Most homesites enjoy mountain or water views.

A community clubhouse offers a common gathering space for neighbors, families and friends, and features a full kitchen, fireside lounge, meeting rooms, a fitness center, free Wi-Fi and a deck that overlooks Cedar Ridge’s pond.

Though tucked away between the hills and Sequim Bay, Cedar Ridge offers easy access to everyday conveniences. Approximately 2 miles away is a shopping center with a QFC and other stores, and John Wayne Marina and Seven Cedars Casino are both only minutes away.

Since 1981, Anderson Homes has built more than 500 homes on the Olympic Peninsula. “We were recently voted the Peninsula’s Best General Contractor for the third year in a row,” says Fulmer.

Cortese says those honors are well deserved. “They were wonderful to work with — just delightful. We’ve dealt with other builders in the past, and Anderson Homes was very honorable. They didn’t try to sell us on something they knew we couldn’t afford. They were straight shooters.”