

# Are the Stars Out Tonight?

23445 Butterfield Trail

*Eleven acres of privacy, room to roam, living options, and expansion possibilities.*

Yes! The stars, the planets, and sometimes, even the Aurora Borealis are right outside your door. Step onto your back patio and gaze upward for a fantastic view of the nighttime sky. Enjoy a year-round parade of wildlife from the windows in your great room. Don't be surprised to see a deer or two peering at you as you dine. Listen to a chorus of coyotes in the evening. Keep your bird identification books nearby. Species that have visited include hawks, owls, chickadees, house finches, hummingbirds, mourning doves, quail, towhees, flickers, woodpeckers and others. Need to stretch your legs? Thousands of acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, suitable for hiking, biking and horseback riding (no motorized vehicles), are a short walk away. If you enjoy winter sports, the slopes of Mt. Bachelor and Mt. Hood are short drives. Snowy winters ensure wildflowers will carpet the desert floor in the spring. During summer months, the lakes and rivers are ready for water sports and fishing.

Jim Chauncy, owner of SunTerra Homes ([www.sunterrahomes.com](http://www.sunterrahomes.com)), designed the house. SunTerra specializes in custom, energy-efficient, passive solar homes. Chauncy is fond of curves and arches; these design elements are evident in the home's architecture. The house is insulated with icynene (spray foam insulation) and has durable, fire-resistant Hardie Plank siding. Hallways are over 40 inches wide; doorways are over 30 inches wide. A full-size pickup truck will fit in the garage.

The home's unique floor plan allows various options for living arrangements. The west side of the house could be a separate living area, craft room, home business/office, etc. The front room (originally used as a music room) could be a formal dining room, office, play area, etc. Use your imagination for the bonus room over the garage. This area could be a guest or mother-in-law suite. The upstairs storage room could also be finished and used as living area.

The room on the far west side of the house has a doorway into the garage. Electric outlets in this room are located at countertop height. (The room was originally planned as a workshop.) The room also has plumbing, so a small sink could be installed.

In the 22-plus years I have lived in this house, the Connestoga Hills neighborhood has been a quiet, safe area. Neighbors have been friendly and helpful. The postal service frequently leaves packages on the front porch (no worries about porch pirates). I have thoroughly enjoyed living in this house. I hope you will enjoy it too.

## About Passive Solar

Passive solar homes have a few features that are not available in a non-passive solar home. The position of the house is slightly off due north/south for maximum solar gain during winter months and minimal solar gain during summer months.

When the weather is cool, I set the thermostat at 65 degrees. With the sun out during the day and the pleated shades (on windows along the south side of the house) open, the temperature inside the house can increase to 72 to 74 degrees F, and the radiant floor heat remains off. During summer months, adjust the top-down, bottom-up pleated shades to block the sun, which helps to keep the house cool. If the house gets too warm, open the downstairs windows in the evening and open the skylights in the bonus room to create an updraft. Cool air enters through the windows downstairs and warm air exits through the windows upstairs. It's a great way to cool the house. (I don't think the temperature inside the house has ever exceeded 88 degrees F.)

Overhangs on the house are wider than those on a non-passive solar house. The overhangs block sun in the summer. By 5:00 PM on a summer evening, shade starts to creep across the back patio, and it's a pleasant place to have dinner.

## **Fire-Free Zone**

The current requirement for a fire-free zone is a 100-foot radius around the house. Trees within 100 feet of the house have been trimmed to meet the requirement.

The fire department recommends that no plants or bark dust be placed directly next to the house. There should be a 6-inch gap between ground level and the lower edge of the siding.

## **Irrigation**

The irrigation system is available on the north, south and east side of the house. Control panel for irrigation is on the east wall inside the garage. Every year, I tweak the length of the tubing and drippers to match wherever plants are growing. I use **Everist Irrigation** (541-362-1389) to turn on the irrigation in the spring and to winterize the system in the fall.

With adequate irrigation, fertilizer, and care it is possible to grow a flourishing vegetable and flower garden on the south side of the house. Flowers and a small bird bath will attract all sorts of birds, butterflies, and bees.

## **Kitchen**

Refrigerator - New as of December 2022

Large Oven - New as of January 2023

Small Oven - original

Microwave - New as of February 2023

Cooktop - New as of October 2019

Garbage Disposal – New as of 2024

## **Propane Fireplace**

Fireside (541-382-2597, 424 NE Third St., Bend, OR 97701) installed the propane fireplace. Fireside cleaned and serviced the fireplace in January 2023. The fireplace has not been used since. The propane tank is located on the west side of the house. There is an annual tank rental fee.

## **Radiant Floor Heat and Hot Water**

There are two water tanks in the garage. One supplies domestic hot water; the other is for radiant floor heat.

**Scott Gordon, Plumber** - Replaced the hot water tank in March 2022.

**Bend Heating and Sheet Metal**, Radiant Division, Steve Zettle (owner), bendheating.com, 61540 American Lane, Bend, 541-382-8696 - Replaced the tank for radiant floor heat in March 2022. Bend Heating maintains the heating system. Last maintenance check was on December 15, 2025.

## **Septic System**

The septic system was inspected and the tank was emptied in December 2022. Septic system passed inspection with no problems.

1500 gallon septic tank

drain field is located on the southwest side of the house

## **Snow Removal**

I clear the entire driveway with my snowblower.