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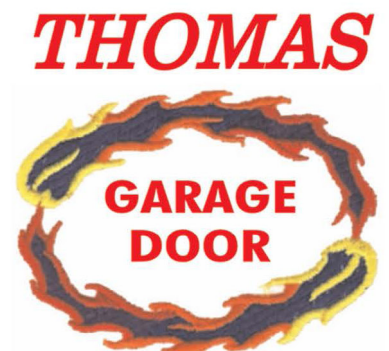
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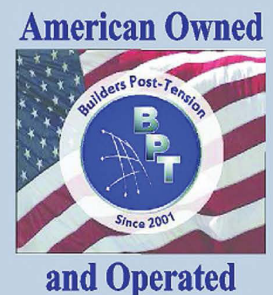
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Giselle Bernard
Publisher

Dear Readers:

I bet most of you, like me, have been trying to wrap your head around the country's political environment and how it may impact the building industry. In my quest to gain a sense of what impact the political unrest may have on the industry, I've learned that great companies look at troubled times as polarities, neither good nor bad but a mixture of both. They position themselves to endure troubled times by always focusing on new solutions, instead of on problems and look for opportunities for growth and long-term prospects instead of mere survivability. In doing so they position their companies to endure during times of uncertainty. A thought to ponder....

Giselle Bernard, Owner/Publisher



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Fractured Ankle Leads to Formation of Lankford Custom Homes

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

As a young man growing up in Galveston County, Nick Lankford was known as a talented baseball player ... so talented that his dream of becoming a professional baseball player seemed realistic. He had a plan to make baseball his career and was following that plan to get to the big leagues. But going pro wasn't in the cards for Nick, although his baseball talents and the resulting scholarships did help him get through college.

"All I ever dreamed of and worked toward was baseball. I didn't have a back-up plan," he admitted.

Baseball did, however, help create in him a very strong work ethic, which has proven to be just as valuable as throwing and batting.

His dad, a college professor, suggested Nick consider construction as a career after Nick said he would prefer a job where he could be outside, be on his feet and interact with people. The career advice paid off. Nick graduated from the construction technology course at Texas State University with a bachelor's degree in 2004.

With the option of pursuing commercial, residential or industrial building, Lankford chose residential building because he knew early on that he wanted to own his own business and that seemed a more viable option as a residential builder.

Founder and president of Dickinson-based Lankford Custom Homes, he likes owning his own business because "I answer to myself and make my own schedule. I didn't want to get stuck in corporate America. I'm a very hard worker and I wanted to put all of my hard work into my own pocket."

After a few years working as a field superintendent for Beazer Homes and Wilshire Homes, he was ready to begin building his own speculative homes. He established Lankford Custom Homes in February 2006 as a side business and then went 100 percent on his own in 2008.

Born and raised in Galveston and having name recognition from being a well-known baseball player helped when he was getting started. Despite the national economic



downturn at that time, “2008 was the best time in this area to start a company because that’s when Hurricane Ike hit. It came inland at Galveston. I did a lot of remodels after Hurricane Ike and generated \$3 million in business in the first year and a half.”

Although he prefers to build pre-sold and speculative homes, after Hurricane Harvey landed in 2017, he focused on remodels once again.

He typically builds homes in the greater Galveston area, including Galveston, Dickinson, League City, Friendswood, Santa Fe and more. He stays in that area because he’s so busy without expanding his market area.

Most of Lankford’s homes range from \$300,000 to \$1 million and start at 2,500 sq. ft. He builds all types of homes – beach, ranch, whatever. During the last year and a half he built 10 town homes, but he usually builds two or three custom spec homes each year.

“I like to make every house I build nicer than the last. I keep up with the newest and best of everything, but I steer

customers away from things that are out of date or will be out of date soon. I steer them toward things that are more timeless and will make their houses nicer,” Lankford stated. “Nine out of 10 homeowners say, ‘That’s a great idea’ when I recommend something.”

His customers are often homebuyers in their 30s and 40s with children who are building their second or third homes. Others are retirees who are building their dream homes.

He encourages all of his buyers to consider make their homes accessible for aging in place with 3-foot doorways and sunken showers. “Even if they don’t need these features, a future owner may. It’s a good sales point [for the future]” because there’s a demand. When he was working as a field superintendent for Wilshire Homes in the Tuscan Lakes master plan community, he saw that the 55+ neighborhood sold first.

Because Nick doesn’t have any staff, he refers customers to local architects and designers. He also suggests customers

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Dialogue with a Designer

Melissa Roberts

International Flooring knows that dreams, reality and inspiration make a house a home. It also knows that an interior designer or interior design firm often becomes an integral part of this process. As a National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA)-certified company, International Flooring takes great pride in working with some of the finest professionals in the Houston market, providing the best quality wood flooring and carpets available and providing superb customer service. International Flooring offers its clients a private showroom full of exotic wood floors not found in retail showrooms. This month International Flooring speaks with Melissa Roberts of Melissa Roberts Interiors.

Melissa Roberts has forged a successful career that centers on her innate ability to see the sum of an exquisitely designed space. Her passion for design, along with her faith, drive and the support of family and friends has propelled her forward in building a unique business in which she proudly delivers exceptional service as well as distinctive designs, assisting each client in finding the perfect element which reflects their style. Melissa prides herself in making sure every decision fits her client's needs in creating a custom space they will be happy with for years to come.

International Flooring: What motivated you to go into the interior design field?

Melissa Roberts: Passion; 100 percent my passion. Interior design is something I enjoy doing and love to be a part of. It's an exciting venture with something new and exciting every day.

International Flooring: How can an experienced interior designer help custom home builders or a remodeling contractors with their building or remodeling projects?

Melissa Roberts: As a creative I am able to assist the general contractor with the overall design and function of the project. I often work in conjunction with the builder to ensure that there is a systematic yet creative process underway. I can appropriately represent the design concept by eliminating doubt by incorporating colors, materials, tiles, lighting and more.

International Flooring: What sets you apart from other designers?

Melissa Roberts: I specialize in personalized, residential design that's both affordable and achievable. As a brand, I set myself apart by offering personalized concierge service customized to each project. I accomplish this by providing one-on-one services with inspiration coming directly from my clients.

International Flooring: What has been your most

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Discover Excellence.





Zappone Shingles Designed and Manufactured for Longevity

The U.S.'s best-selling copper shingle that is most specified by architects, contractors and homeowners has its roots in a European vacation. The architectural design provides an aesthetically pleasing residential appearance which is stylistically appropriate for most homes.

While company founder, J. Joseph Zappone III was touring Europe in the 1960s, he was struck with two observations. First of all, wood and composition materials were not commonly used for roofing. Unlike the roofs of North America, European residential roofs were not meant to be temporary. Secondly, copper roofs performed better and looked better over the centuries than did slate or tile.

When he returned home, Zappone decided to produce a metal roof that would, as did those in Europe, last not just one but many lifetimes.

He studied available metal roofing and noted a few weaknesses that would hamper their effectiveness in residential use. Metal roofs of that time were primarily sheet metal in seamed or seamless systems. These products, quite often, were noisy, difficult to install, had exposed fasteners that could work loose and were damaged by foot traffic. They were made of steel that would eventually rust, even when coated. Most experienced wind-lift problems and resembled barn or factory roofs. Damage of even the smallest of areas required the replacement of large, full pieces of metal.

In 1969 Mr. Zappone established Zappone Manufacturing in Spokane, Wash., and introduced an individual 15 ft. x 9 1/8 ft. metal shingle with an anti-capillary interlocking system and an interior shadow-cup. This simple product incorporated all of the positive characteristics of metal while eliminating the weaknesses of the sheet style systems.

He decided to produce the shingle only from semi-precious, non-ferrous metals to eliminate any possibility of rusting. He chose aluminum and, of course, copper – two metals known for their desirable natural properties, longevity, durability and rich appearance.

His design uses a smaller shingle size and interlocking system to allow relief for the expansion and contraction of the metal while eliminating the accompanying problems of noise and fasteners working loose.

His shadow-cup design places 70 percent of the shingle squarely on the deck, which allows foot traffic on the roof and eliminates noise from rainfall. Installers can remove and replace individual shingles if a fallen tree limb or other debris causes damage. As the initial shininess wears off the shingle, the shadow-cup visually disappears.

The anti-capillary interlocking system also provides wind and leak resistance. The Zappone Shingle system passed a “hurricane” test of wind and water spray at 110 miles per hour without lifting and without leaking. The hidden fasteners further reduce any possibility of leaking or working loose.

The acceptance of the Zappone Shingle System has been





phenomenal. The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation has utilized it as its copper shingle of choice referring to it as “rich, warm and with an appearance that says ‘home.’”

Zappone is as particular about his production methods as he is his design. Each shingle is individually crafted from top quality, 99.96 percent pure copper or 3000 series aluminum. The accessories are hand-formed, also individually. Quality control is unparalleled. Immediately upon production each and every shingle and accessory are inspected to ensure that it meets the rigid Zappone standards.

While this process is extremely time consuming and prevents Zappone Manufacturing from mass producing millions of shingles, it guarantees that each Zappone Shingle System is of the highest quality and will perform perfectly as it was designed. This “Zappone Pride,” as employees refer to it, has proven contagious. Each carton of shingles not only carries the Zappone name but is also initialed and dated by the employee who produced it.

To further guarantee quality, Zappone has imposed strict restrictions on the quantity of shingles the company produces each year. For example, only enough copper shingles for 300 roofs are produced each year. Once orders are taken for this quantity, all others are placed on a waiting list.

Usually, orders placed between January and October of each year are filled. However, there can be, even among the first 300, a wait of two to six weeks. In consideration of this, the company encourages those who seriously desire a Zappone copper roof to place their order as soon as possible.

Cost, of course will vary from roof to roof depending on size and design. On average, an installed Zappone copper roof costs less than slate but more than shake. An installed Zappone aluminum roof will cost about twice that of high-grade composition shingles.

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Have you already lost your focus?

By Burk Moreland

Remember last month when many of us started the year with gusto? “It’s a brand new year!” we declared. “Now I will start doing everything I have been meaning to! This will be the year of change for me! I am committed to making it happen!” We told ourselves (and our team) that this was the year that we would meet those elusive goals, the ones that always seem just out of reach.

However, if we believe the statistics, after just one month, 80 percent of those commitments are already in our rearview mirror. How are your New Year’s goals? How about your team’s goals? What have you done to ensure you don’t slide right back down the hill you just started climbing?

Some leaders and teams answer this New Year’s challenge by simply refusing to set goals in the first place. “I know we won’t stick with it, so why start it and waste the time?” is their defense.

On the other hand, if you don’t try to improve the status quo, your overall results aren’t likely to change either. With the “avoid failure by avoiding change approach,” you are likely to be facing many of the same problems in 2020 that you are facing now plus a few new problems as well.

Most of us continue to do the same things over and over, year after year, and we are surprised when things don’t improve. We refuse to change because change and the growth that accompanies it can be painful. But without change and growth, our numbers never change. We’ve all experienced that kind of pain, right?

Be honest. Are you so afraid of failing that you are content to sit there at your desk and wait for that important change to happen? Of course not. You didn’t get where you are by waiting for change to come to you. You got where you are by taking control and creating change, remember?

Do you remember how you did that? More than likely, in order to really push yourself, your team, and thereby your organization as a whole to the next level, you had to push beyond the easy processes that most people get by with in a good market.

Let me give you an example from my own experience. Many years ago, when I was selling new homes, one of my managers told me “a trained monkey could sell the homes in this community.” Another day, he said, “Customers would buy a home if there were simply a computer set up in the model where you punched in your information and clicked ‘BUY.’” In other words, he believed the market in general and the homes in that neighborhood were such a good

product that they didn’t need me.

Although I agree that we had an excellent product, the flaw in this manager’s theory was evident when I left the company. The community I was working in immediately went to one third of the previous sales rate within months of my departure. You see, I added value to the transaction because I didn’t settle for just getting the job done. I put in more effort than your average person. I took advantage of a good situation, but I also made the most of it by working extra hard and creating my own opportunities—opportunities that monkeys and computers would never even notice.

Don’t you think it’s time for you and your team to risk a few growing pains? Declare again that this is the year, but this time, mean what you say. And, prove that you mean it by backing up your words with actions. Model the new behaviors you want from your team—set realistic goals and monitor your progress until you reach those goals.

It’s only when we push ourselves through the painful changes that make us better than the rest of the market that we are likely to experience significant growth and success.

My question for you as this new year goes rushing by is, “Exactly what are you willing to do this year to push the proverbial ‘envelope’ where your company is concerned?”

If you think you are ready to push, it’s not enough to just say you are ready. You need a plan. You need a process to implement that push. Here are a few tips to get you started:

1. Start with a goal in mind. Make sure it meets the classic SMART criteria (Specific, Measured, Achievable, Realistic and Timed). What would you like to see happen as a result of your efforts?
2. Identify mile markers along the time frame to evaluate your progress. By doing that, you will know if you are behind in time to make adjustments. This task will also help you with the Realistic part of the SMART goal.
3. Assign responsible parties to monitor progress and report on data. Be specific about when they report and what they report. Then, share with the group as you monitor progress. Even though you’re the boss, give them permission to call you out if you do not stick to the plan.
4. Finally, decide on a reward if you achieve the goal. It can be company-paid trips, dinner for the entire team and spouses, a company-sponsored party for families or something as simple as the management team washing the team members cars. It doesn’t have to be expensive, it just needs to be genuinely rewarding.

Pushing your team beyond the pack is definitely the road less traveled. It isn’t for everyone. We all like to talk about it, but few actually have the will power and determination it takes to get there. I wish you luck and good fortune in your quest.

And if you need some help figuring it out, contact us today to figure out how at burk@burkmoreland.com or 832-356-4585. Now go be the rainmaker for your team today!

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In addition, Zappone Manufacturing has just released a new design – Copper Diamond shingles that come in either copper or mill finish aluminum.

Zappone Manufacturing offers a bay window copper roofing kit for custom orders. The kits, available in two sizes, include all of the shingles and accessory pieces to roof a bay window. Exhaustive study was done of the bay window industry prior to the design of the package. As a result, the kits will work well with over 90 percent of the bay windows manufactured in the U.S.

The most unique aspect of the Zappone system is the integrated nail flange. Unlike most shingle, panel or sheet systems that use clips, Zappone’s system has made the nail flange an integral aspect in overall design and performance. Clip systems take longer to install, are difficult hold in place while setting the fastener and are the point of failure in high wind conditions. This system will install faster saving on labor cost; cost less, due to not needing an extra accessory piece; and out-perform, by having the nail flange as an actual attached and fixed aspect of the system.

All shingles require two nails per shingle. All flashing has a nail spacing of eight inches on center. All underlayment for roofing applications will be a high temperature membrane

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check out www.architecturalplans.com as a good starting point to help them define and develop their ideas. Visiting this website “can save a lot of time and money. I’ve been doing this [building] long enough that I can look at plans and see where they [his customers] might want to make changes.”

Lankford said he allows his customers to make changes without penalty during the framing process because that’s when they realize how to make their homes more functional. “Homeowners always make changes. We just need to catch them up front before we get too far along so it won’t cost any extra money to make the change.”

He noted, “When customers hire my company, they’re getting a true custom build.

What sets me apart as a builder is that I give the customer special attention. My customers are dealing with the owner directly when they hire me, so there’s no confusion in communication between a superintendent and the builder.”

He added, “I like to do a complete package, a turnkey type of deal. I will handle the landscape and pool construction too. My customers can deal with me on everything.”

In fact, he has a sister company for pool construction, Lankford Custom Pools.

On Lankford’s radar is developing a neighborhood where he can focus on building his own spec houses. And likely to



be selling those homes is his wife, Allison Lankford, who is a realtor as well as the purchasing manager for Lankford Custom Homes.

On Nick’s personal side, it’s no surprise that this almost-professional athlete enjoys going to the gym, working out at least once a day. He also enjoys snow skiing in Colorado and New Mexico, scheduling trips twice a year with a group of long-time friends and with his nine-year-old daughter Coley and his wife.

Although Nick Lankford did not realize his childhood dream of becoming a professional baseball player, he’s happy as a builder, working in the outdoors, doing physical activity and interacting with people. Better yet, along the way he’s made the dreams of many of those people come true!



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Melissa Roberts: I always begin with the client. I let the client/project inspire me so that I know what direction I should take. It is important to provide design elements that not only fit the aesthetics but also ones that work within the budget. After meeting with the client to determine style and budget, I then begin creating a mood board for the project. This mood board evolves as the process continues to eventually become my client's dream home. Every room deserves to be beautiful and functional; this concept is the key to interior design.

International Flooring: *What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?*

Melissa Roberts: Builders and homeowners typically know what they want in terms of aesthetics but struggle with integrating the puzzle pieces to achieve the desired look.

International Flooring: *How do you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?*

Melissa Roberts: Design trends, oh, how I love them. I love to do research online, stay current with catalogues and visit showrooms during the "design week." One thing I always emphasize on social media, my website and to clients is that trends are great but never go too trendy. Keep the overall look of your home timeless but mix in trendy patterns, colors and accessories that can easily be updated when the trend passes.

International Flooring: *What is your favorite design style?*

Melissa Roberts: Personally, I dream of a modern home with old world elements. I appreciate natural elements and incorporate them into every project to keep the home interesting. Imagine a vintage, rustic beam with a modern stain accompanying a dramatic, modern chandelier. I love mixing metals and pairing them alongside warm color tones with contemporary accessories.



For more information, contact
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challenging project and why?

Melissa Roberts: I must admit I love a challenge. I take on projects of all sizes and accommodate all styles. Sometimes this willingness presents a challenge when I work on a style that I don't personally love. However, I can appreciate all design styles and enjoy digging in and designing something that is out of the norm. I have remodeled and helped build clients' dream homes of all styles from Spanish Colonial, to Modern Farmhouse, to French Country, to Transitional and to even more. All projects should present some sort of challenge, so that I am continuing to grow and learn along the way.

International Flooring: *How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders' and remodelers' clients?*

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Continued from page 11

(Peal & Stick/Water-Ice Shield) rated for metal systems or a woven polyethylene sealed per layer to manufacturer's specifications. All vertical walls require typical house wraps, i.e., Tyvek or a comparable substitution.

Vertical Wall Applications are a great way to accent any vertical wall area. The application on a wall is no different than a roofline, other than the flashing pieces. The flashing pieces are typical to pretty much all siding today. Zappone provide all the necessary flashing for its system. All of its flashing has interlocking folds that the shingles tie into. Installers will have to cut and bend shingles to retrofit

certain areas of the roofline, like with all metal roofing systems, but this will ensure all the areas of the roofline are secure from uplift of wind and penetration of moisture.

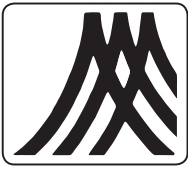
Zappone roofs, admittedly, are not for everyone. They are unmatched in performance, longevity, and appearance, and are enjoyed by homeowners who appreciate and demand that level of quality. Zappone roofs are only for those who have as much pride in their homes as J. Joseph Zappone III has in his products.

For more information visit www.zappone.com or call 800-285-2677. Zappone is headquartered at 2928 N. Pittsburg St., Spokane, WA 99207

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