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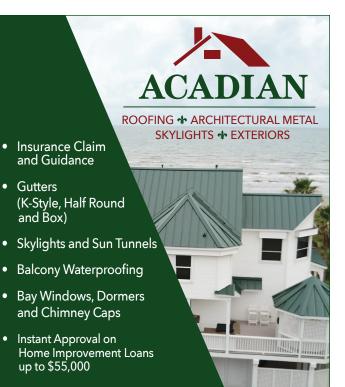
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Giselle Bernard Publisher/Owner

As you know, the COVID-19 novel coronavirus' impact on the economy has forced many business owners to consider their viability. With our elected government officials having to place heavy restrictions on business activity and public mobility, business owners and consumers are struggling to stay afloat. Struggle has become the new normal.

For many people, the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus is the hardest thing to handle because we do not know exactly when or if we will be personally impacted or how bad things might get in the economy. Our anxiety

levels and our focus can become a challenge to manage after we watch the news and read social media posts. I myself have had to unplug from social media as well as the news broadcasts in order to stay focused and on track in running my businesses.

Let us pray that the mitigation strategies from our elected officials and the cooperation of our citizens will allow our nation to fully re-open soon so that we can all get back to business and work at surviving this crisis.



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Sabo Wants to Remodel the Building Process

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Not content just to build or remodel homes, Ed Sabo wants to remodel the building process.

Sabo, owner of Sabo Custom Builders in Houston, thinks the modern model for building or remodeling a home is broken.

The common standard for building a home is based on competition and lack of trust, according to Sabo. "This is the way it works. An architect designs what the client thinks they want, but not necessarily what the client can afford."

Once architects finish their designs, they put the projects out to bid to three "qualified" contractors. The client frequently is not willing to pay for enough detail in the drawings to make them biddable. This method results in the architect giving three un-biddable sets of plans out for contractors to bid, Ed said.

The contractors are asked to make their best guess at what the project will cost when they know that the client will probably choose the lowest bid. This practice encourages the contractors to be over-optimistic in their pricing. The clients then generally choose the lowest priced, most optimistic and unrealistic general contractor to build their project.

Sabo noted that some builders give unrealistic pricing and then "change-order the client to death."

Other times the project price comes back higher than the clients expected. This increase forces the clients to give up part of their dream to build something they can afford.

Sabo wants to flip that concept and base his building projects on a foundation of collaboration and trust. He said the collaborative process is used by many small designbuild firms and home builders, such as himself. He has been using this process effectively for the last few years, he said, and he thinks it is now time to make this process the industry standard.

Sabo's collaboration team includes the architectural



designer, builder, engineer, decorator and clients. Some members of the team may fulfill more than one role, he noted.

In this approach, the clients decide how much they want to spend on the project. Then the budget drives the design process. The contractor's role includes keeping a cost line budget so that the architect will not design something the clients cannot afford.

The architect completes his/her design with every detail and real prices for all of the materials, labor, supervision, profit and overhead. In other words, the project is finished before it starts, Sabo explained.

In this process, the team is committed to using its creativity so the client can get the best product for the lowest cost. Projects built in this collaborative process almost always come in on budget and on time while all members of the team maintain great relationships, Sabo noted.

Ed is already using the collaborative process for several of his current building projects along with the 5 Simple Steps[™], a trademarked collaborative approach giving his clients a five-star experience.

Step 1: Let's Talk™

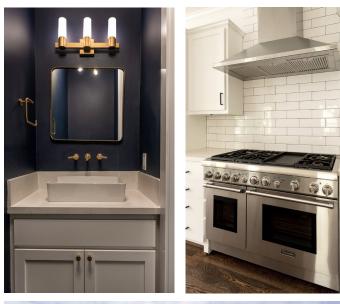
This step is an idea session to identify the scope and estimated budget range of the project as well as the client's design priorities.

Continued on page 6











Continued from page 5

Step 2: The Story Board Process™

The design team is selected, and ideas are transformed into the preliminary schematic floor plan.

Step 3: Rendering to Scale™

Design selections, specifications, full construction plans and bids are submitted for final pricing.

Step 4: The Big Event™

The Sabo Custom Builders construction team transforms the plans into reality.

Sabo also provides all of his clients with access to a secure website portal that details the work on their projects. This industry-leading platform is easy to use and web-based, and Sabo Custom Builders puts documents, photos and more at its clients' fingertips. The simple online system makes it possible for clients to access their project from any computer, tablet or smartphone from anywhere in the world. His team takes daily photos of each project's progress so the clients can see the project unfold in real time.

Step 5: Happily Ever After™

The project is completed, on time, on budget, and Sabo Custom Builders has earned another five-star review from its clients

"It is our goal to make certain that everyone who has contact with our brand shares in the predictable excellence of a Sabo Custom Builders' five-star experience," Ed said.



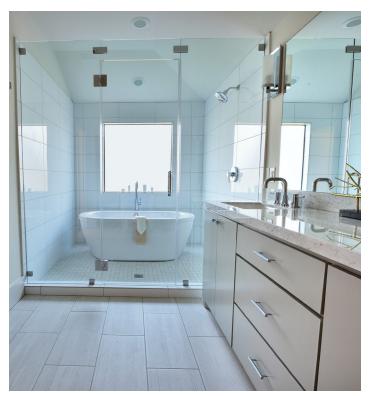
Sabo Custom Builders is known for building custom homes and garage apartments as well as remodeling in the Houston area over the past decade. With a bachelor's degree in construction management and a master's in business administration, Sabo worked in commercial construction and then "Corporate America" in supply chain management for seven years before becoming a selfemployed builder.

With the help of a business coach and part of a group of builders across the country that talks regularly, he finds value in collaboration. He finds he can get a solution to almost any problem by talking with others who have different perspectives. Sabo is a founding member – and the only one in Houston – of the Certified Luxury Builders Network. The group has developed a Code of Ethics and Standards to be the best of the best, Sabo said.

If there's one thing Ed Sabo strives for, it is to be the best of the best. But, no matter what the circumstances, he will continue to provide high-quality work with the clients' needs first and foremost. And his clients thank him for it.

You may contact by mail Sabo Custom Builders at P.O. Box 701007, Houston, TX 77270-1007 or by phone at 713-344-1241 or by visiting www.SaboCustomBuilders.com. The company's office is located at 2233 Yale St. in Houston.





Crystal Nichols - A Dealer of Unique Antiques

By Mary Lynn Mabray, ASID



Crystal Nichols has always had an interest in the exceptional. Now she brings the exceptional to the Texas design market.

In 2019 Crystal was shopping for unusual statement pieces for her

own home. She met and hit it off with an antique dealer whose method of acquiring antiques and then selling them to designers intrigued her.

Although she was not in the design business at the time, she recognized a need. She knew her area of San Angelo/ Midland/Odessa/Abilene could use a unique antique store, one that featured 18th century French, Italian and European crystal chandeliers, mirrors, commodes, bureaus, armoires, beds, candelabras, accessory tables, dining tables, chairs, paintings and much more. And she knew that offering these items at a fair market prices that few dealers could match would also fill a need.

And Crystal knows how to fulfill needs. She and her husband breed quarter horses at a ranch in San Angelo, where their stallions stand stud and the couple raise colts and fillies. They ship their horses' semen all over the world to other ranchers and breeders in the high-dollar quarter-horse industry.

Using the work ethic she practices in her successful breeding facility, Crystal Nichols began to research the antiques business, finding sources, networking and connecting with dealers and designers all over the world by advertising on Instagram. Her company, Bella Vita, was born and has since expanded to a Houston warehouse. I found Crystal on Instagram when I was looking for a glass, brass and plexi-glass cocktail table for a client. Crystal had exactly what I was looking for and shipped it to me right away. My client was beyond excited!

Recently, through Crystal's overseas sources and



pickers, Bella Vita has expanded its offerings to include Mid-Century Modern chairs, tables, lamps and modern chandeliers. All are made in Italy and France. They make quite the statement.

Additionally, Bella Vita is now offering rare 18th century stone works, fountains, stone pieces, mantels, garden pots and urns that Crystal has gathered from estate sales and house clearings in Italy, France, Sweden and other European countries. One of her more interesting sources has become the Vatican's expert restorer of fine art and antique.













In yet another way of fulfilling needs, Crystal will offer designers the opportunity to design unique lamps, fixtures, accessories, vases and chandeliers directly from Italy for their clients. Crystal is importing custom-made luxury hand-blown Murano lamps and accessories from the famous Murano Glass Company in Venice, Italy.

About the Author

Mary Lynn Mabray, ASID, is an interior designer with 25 years of expertise. She may be contacted at 713-203-4047 or at www.MaryLynnInteriorDesign.com.





Textured Surfaces Brings Cascade Collection Glass Tiles to Brilliant Life

Cascade Collection glass tiles from Island Stone combine classic shapes with a textured finish to create subtle movement on the surface that mimics water. A dynamic alternative to matte- or gloss-finish glass tile, the custom engineered texture offers a compelling visual that is modern and fresh. The aesthetic is ideal for creating a retreat-like vibe on shower walls, kitchen backsplashes, interior and exterior accent walls, and more.

"Cascade Collection tiles bring texture to everyday life, transforming any space into a dreamy oasis," said Nigel Eaton, CEO for Island Stone. "The effect is particularly striking in the shower, where the texture mimics water trickling over the glass."

The tiles come in six nature-

inspired colors—Midnight; Mojave; Oceana; Pure Silk; Stratos; Tule. The hues coordinate with Island Stone's Glass Essentials line, allowing designers to easily mix and match the tiles along the wall and around the room. Three patterns are available: 1" x 2" Straight Set mosaic; 2" x 8" field tile; 6" x 12" field tile.

About Island Stone

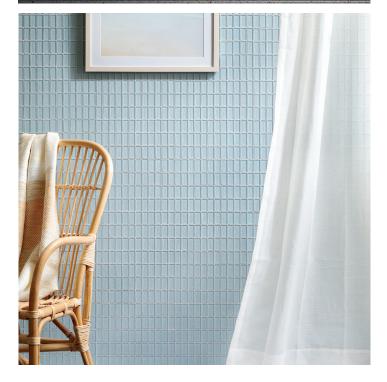
Island Stone has its origins in Indonesia, where company founders were inspired by the nation's handicraft industry and natural stones to create the flagship Perfect Pebble Tile.

New tiles from Island Stone brings the subtle movement of water across its surface The company's original mosaics diversified into other natural mosaics, using exotic stones. Anchored in wanderlust for exploration, culture, and design, the company continues to evolve its creative use of natural and timeless materials, sourcing from distinct locales around the globe and featuring a range of natural stone tiles and mosaics, glass tiles and mosaics, as well as

natural stone wall tiles and timber wall panels and cladding. For more information visit IslandStone.com or call 1-800-371-0001. Follow Island Stone on Instagram for the latest updates.









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PROUDLY MADE IN THE USA

by Linda Jennings

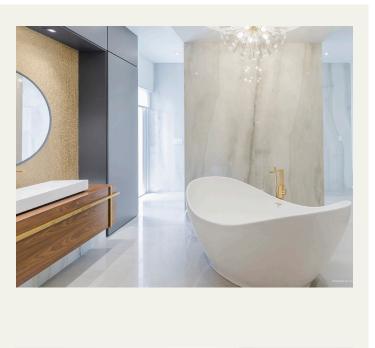
W hen it comes to specifying fixtures for your next remodeling project there are many options and if Americanmade is a priority then you'll want to check out these brands. From furniture handcrafted by local artisans to bath fixtures manufactured with customized care these companies take great pride in being American-owned companies with products made in the USA!

CRAFTED TO PERFECTION

As the curator of fine bath products – from tubs to counter-sinks - MTI Baths can attribute its success to its unmatched degree of quality and craftsmanship. Each product is built to order and handcrafted by artisans here in the USA. There are no robots in MTI's production facilities - only real people creating exceptional products, one careful step at a time. And even with nearly limitless customization options, most MTI products ship within seven business days, the fastest in the industry. Shown here is the award-winning Juliet freestanding tub, characterized by an asymmetrical design and the streamlined Wymara 2 sink. Part of their Boutique Collection, Juliet and Wymara are constructed using MTI's proprietary SculptureStone® material that is approximately 70% organic materials and 100% solid throughout. The non-porous surface is extremely durable, resistant to stains and scratches, and is easy to clean and maintain. They are offered in white or biscuit in both matte and a hand-polished deep gloss finish.

RIGHT AT HOME

The Furniture Guild, known for heirloom-quality bath vanities, has expanded into the world of home furnishings with a new line of handcrafted high-end furniture. Their first offering in this new arena is the Josie Collection, a beautiful Mid Century Modern style line of bedroom furnishings based on their popular vanity by the same name. Crafted by hand in Georgia, the Josie Collection includes dressers, nightstands and a writing desk in a range of sizes with details like solid brass legs and brassbanded inset drawers. The bedroom line features all the customization options common in the brand's signature line of bathroom vanities. Panel finishes range from traditional and exotic wood stains to a rainbow of painted colors, and the metal trim is available in eight distinctive finishes. Customization options are available for the interiors too, including walnut drawers with glass dividers and jar inserts, in-drawer LED lighting, and a built-in charging station. Create a cohesive look in the bed and bath suite with made to order pieces made in the USA by skilled craftsmen and artisans.





For more information visit www.mtibaths.com furnitureguild.com







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NAHB Safety Handbook Primes Builders on Newly-Released OSHA Regulations

In the residential construction industry, a safe work environment and well-written, up-to-date program is not optional, it's legally essential. Not only does it keep employees healthy and safe, but it can stave off huge losses including everything from workers' compensation to equipment issues, administrative costs and even periods of low productivity.

Builder Books, the publishing arm of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) recently released the fourth edition of its Jobsite Safety Handbook, to help builders navigate and comply with the latest OSHA requirements.

The comprehensive guide, that features both English and Spanish translations, describes how those in the residential construction industry can comply with OSHA regulations while focusing on the most common hazards found on jobsites. It also covers the key issues residential builders and trade contractors need to focus on to reduce accidents and injuries.

The pocket-sized handbook includes a series of general safety tips that are explained in simple terms and are accompanied by illustrated, colorful examples of common best practices that can be incorporated into a company's safety and health programs.

"The health and safety of our workers is the top priority on any jobsite," said NAHB Chairman Dean Mon, a home builder and developer from Shrewsbury, N.J. "The new edition of this handbook is a great resource that covers key safety issues and offers concise tips for complying with OSHA regulations, to keep workers safe."

With clear illustration and color photographs, the Jobsite Safety Handbook includes new information on topics such as:



National Association of Home Builders

- Fall protection for roofing work and around openings
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Working in confined spaces
- Heat and cold stress
- Hazardous materials and silica
- First aid and medical services
- Employer duties, including training and protective equipment

For more information and resources on construction safety, OSHA compliance and other safety guidelines, visit www.nahb.org/OSHA.

Jobsite Safety Handbook, Fourth Edition is available for purchase at:

www.BuilderBooks.com. Soft-cover/130 pages, \$13.95 retail, \$12.50 NAHB member, ISBN 978-0-86718-777-9.

Ashley Norton's Wood Cabinet Hardware Collection Brings out the Unique Beauty of Wood

An array of natural wood shapes and styles blend versatility and function, making a statement in the kitchen or bath

Architectural hardware manufacturer Ashley Norton knows that going natural can be beautiful. The company's unique collection of all-natural Wood Cabinet Hardware helps make a bold design statement when paired with kitchen and bath cabinetry. From the curvy Wave Pull to the angular Wing Knob, each ergonomic yet distinctive design adds personality to the kitchen or bath. Plus, an array of available sizes for most designs means there's a wooden knob or pull just right for any cabinet.

"With its organic lines and one-of-a-kind details, wood makes a handsome design statement. It's also an incredibly functional hardware element that coordinates with just about any style or finish," says Ashish Karnani, Vice President of Ashley Norton.

Just as with all Ashley Norton architectural hardware, comfort and ease of use is always at the forefront of the design. When creating the wood cabinet hardware, the Ashley Norton design team first sketches out a concept. Next, 3D modeling tools help designers ensure the ergonomics of the piece. Finally, it's crafted from high quality wood to achieve the desired look and feel.

Available in both Oak and Walnut wood varieties, and in a multitude of lengths and sizes, the collection of wood pulls includes the Wave Pull, modeled after the flow of the ocean; the Arc Pull, with its bridge-like curve and tapered center; the Cape Pull, reminiscent of free-flowing fabric moving in the wind. Knobs include the steeply oblique Angle Knob; the v-shaped Wing Knob; and the playful Yo-Yo Knob.

Prices for Ashley Norton Wood Cabinet Hardware range from \$16 to \$65, according to size and style.





About Ashley Norton

Established in 1987, Ashley Norton offers a vast collection of handcrafted architectural hardware to suit even the most discerning designers and homeowners. Using only the finest art quality Solid Bronze and Solid Brass, our highly skilled craftsmen produce each piece in the collection, including interior handlesets, entry handlesets, cabinet pull handles, cabinet knobs, appliance and door pulls, bath hardware and other home accessories. The resulting one-of-a-kind texture and patina makes each individual element a personalized work of art. From contemporary to traditional, the array of designs, finishes, and styles we offer allows one to make a cohesive design statement throughout the entire residential, commercial, or hospitality project. We're proud to offer one of the most diverse collections of architectural hardware in the industry, always with a focus on environmental responsibility and impeccable customer service. In addition to today's finest homes, our products can be found in Wynn Las Vegas, Wynn Macau, Treasure Island, The Bellagio, Beau-Rivage, and The Ritz-Carlton Naples. For more information about Ashley Norton call 1-800-393-1097 or visit AshleyNorton.com.

Summer Remodeling Trends

by Linda Jennings

I nnovation is abundant with these new products that exceed expectations in both style and function. From the Dutch modern aesthetic of minimalistic drains to trendy door hardware and marine-grade shower systems that perform in the most demanding environments, here are a few that are heating up building and renovation projects this summer!







NEARLY INVISIBLE AND STYLISH

Upgrade to a stylish and barrier-free bathroom suitable for any age with with the S-Line Easy Drain from ESS. The Dutch brand's newest invisible and stylish linear shower drain is equipped with their patented TAF and WPS systems. The TAF system has been specially developed to enable secondary drainage, and the patented sealing membrane system (WPS) is pre-assembled. This way, a complete watertight installation and an efficient secondary drainage, when needed, is guaranteed. This means 100% water tightness and perfect tile finish that is backed with a 10-year total warranty. The new S-line comes in 5 standard lengths in a brushed stainless steel finish that will look like new use after use. easydrainusa.com

SPACE-SAVING DOORS

Sliding barn doors are another one of today's hottest interior design trends. They transform something basic - an ordinary door - into a dramatic focal point that is both aesthetically pleasing and fully functional. Ageless Iron makes it easy to capture this rustic charm with their complete collection of sliding Barn Door Hardware. This new Barn Door Hardware offers consistent performance, fantastic durability and long-lasting beauty. The collection includes an expertly engineered track crafted from heavyduty powder coated steel for smooth operation and a choice of a grip or agelessironhardware.com pull.

ALFRESCO SHOWERING

Bathrooms are in high demand these days with so many people in the house all the time. One creative solution may be to install an outdoor shower. It's a great way to alleviate overcrowding in the bathroom and add a unique option to enhance outdoor living. Danish plumbing designer and manufacturer QTOO offers a marinegrade stainless steel shower system that is extremely durable and easily withstands environmental demands. Each QTOO outdoor shower system features a volume control diverter with a two-way function for precise control over water flow and temperature. The system includes a head shower and baton hand sprayer and comes in an elegant brushed or polished finish. qtoobath.com



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