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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Giselle Bernard

Publisher/Owner

Let's get some normalcy back into our lives and start the new year off by attending the International Builders Show. I was unable to attend last year; however, I will make plans to attend in 2021. How about you?

According to the NAHB:

The annual International Builders' Show® (IBS) offers attendees more than 150 education sessions during the three-day event.

Attendees find both formal classes and numerous informal learning opportunities with ideas, information, tips and techniques they can put to work immediately.

Programs cover a broad range of topics on housing industry concerns including economic trends, business opportunities and new markets, technology, green building, sales and marketing, construction methods,

business management, legal issues, government regulation, architecture, design, community planning and more.

1,500+ Exhibitors Showcase Products

IBS also is the nation's largest annual residential housing construction trade event for manufacturers and suppliers of home construction products and services; its exposition provides an unmatched opportunity for attendees to see and learn about cutting edge new products.

IBS is co-located with the National Kitchen & Bath Association's Kitchen & Bath Industry Show® (KBIS) creating an annual mega-event called Design and Construction Week.® All registered IBS attendees have access to the exhibit floors of both shows.

The next International Builders' Show will be held Feb. 9-11, 2021 in Orlando.



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Memory Builders Evolving to Meet Human and Technology Needs

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Despite being in business for less than a decade, Memory Builders is evolving to meet the needs of both humans and technology.

Brent Zuber, owner, said the Houston company is dedicated to “whatever makes you feel comfortable at home,” whether it’s waterfalls and bird feeders in the back yard or dual home offices to meet the needs of people spending more time at home.

For many busy homeowners, an element of being comfortable in their home is turning their home’s maintenance over to professionals. Zuber said many homeowners don’t have time (or skills) to complete honey-do lists. Instead, they are using professional services for grocery and food deliveries, landscaping and pool maintenance to manage their time.

Zuber said his company is following this trend by expanding its handyman services into a Custom Home

Maintenance Program that will offer a limited lifetime warranty so that their houses will “always be brand new.” Homeowners will be able to coordinate all maintenance services, such as pressure washing, air conditioner checks and annual window caulking through Memory Builders.

“We already know everything about your home because we built it; so let us use our knowledge to maintain it,” Zuber stated.

Recognizing that routine home maintenance will save homeowners time and money while increasing property values, Memory Builders will extend its program to maintain homes constructed by other builders in the last 10 years.

The program is evolving, he continued. “We are considering offering different plans at the platinum, gold and silver levels.” With staff and logistics in place on “the backside,” his goal is to have 20-30 homeowners subscribe to his monthly maintenance program.



However, Zuber foresees his company evolving in an additional way. He eventually wants to franchise his business model to up-and-coming building superintendents who want to be their own bosses and work in their own neighborhoods. “I know a couple of people right now who are interested in running their own businesses, but they aren’t quite ready.”

These franchisees will learn Memory Builders’ techniques at the company’s headquarters before they go out on their own providing building, remodeling and maintenance services under the Memory Builders’ name. “They must work at corporate headquarters until we feel comfortable with their skills,” Zuber said. His staff will provide sales leads and expert advice, including marketing and energy performance consultants, an important feature to this LEED-certified builder.

Although admitting that the scariest part of running a business is making the right decisions, Zuber feels confident that this idea will work based on his business school training and discussions with entrepreneur friends. “Homebuilding is a service industry,” so following a service industry franchise model should work, he said.

He is dedicated to using technology for efficiency. His company uses iPads and iPhones to communicate effectively with each other and with homeowners. It uses social media as a primary marketing tool.

But Zuber’s most excited about the technology within the Tesla Cybertruck that he ordered within two minutes of its launch. He plans to add a solar panel on the back of its bed so his crews can run all of their electric tools from

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it. “It’s so eye-catching that I’m not going to wrap it in advertising,” he announced.

About 50 percent of the company’s current business comes from remodeling and the other half from new construction, but the percentages may vary based on market demands.

Memory Builders constructs four to six custom homes each year in the \$1-2-million range in addition to building one large luxury home in the \$10-million range. The company also completes five to 10 remodeling or home addition projects in the \$25,000-500,000 range annually. Brent said his staff also will tackle commercial projects, such as finishing interior retail spaces, when clients come to them.

He emphasized that Memory Builders’ staff focuses on the

building performances of its houses because of Houston’s hot, humid air. It is crucial to Zuber that all facets of a home – windows, doors, stucco – can meet the demands of the climate and prevent mold. He regularly analyses new products to determine if they can withstand the elements and improve the building performance.

Zuber’s proud that his company has had no warranty claims since it started in 2014. He said a group of friends and family helped him choose the name Memory Builders with the idea that homeowners will build lasting memories in each of his houses, whether they live in them for a year or a lifetime. His goal is to build a custom home where homebuyers can live in their style.

Memory Builders’ market area covers the Heights, Timbergrove, Garden Oaks, Spring Valley, Spring



Valley Village, Spring Branch, Piney Point, Memorial, Tanglewood, River Oaks, Upper Kirby, Rice Military, Montrose, Museum District, Texas Medical Center, West University, Southside Place, Galleria, Bellaire, Meyerland and Braeswood.

Besides new construction, remodeling and home maintenance, the company also provides project management.

Memory Builders' staff includes a project manager, a project coordinator and a superintendent who handles remodels and maintenance. Although he did everything in the early days of the company, Zuber's focus now is on sales and finances, utilizing his degree in finance from Stephen F. Austin University. He also concentrates on expanding the company's brand within the greater

Houston market and on creating SOPs [standard operating procedures] so Memory Builders can function as a well-oiled machine.

"We are a small, experienced and highly focused team," Zuber stated. "We debrief after completing each project, evaluating our quality control, the finances, and the budget tracking. Everybody on my team is laid back and easy-going. We respect our clients. Our core values guide our actions, unite our team and define our brand."

To contact Memory Builders, email info@texasmb.com, visit www.memory-builders.com or call 713-853-9298. The mailing address is P.O. Box 70110, Houston, TX 77270.



LGI Oriental Rugs Antique, Semi-Antique and Vintage and Their Meanings

By Mary Lynn Mabray, ASID

Oriental rugs are carpets that are hand-knotted only in Asia, China, India, Iran (formerly known as Persia), Russia, Turkey, Pakistan, Tibet and Nepal.

An antique rug is one that is over 100 years old. Antique rugs have been known to be as old as 2500. Historical records show that the Achaemenian court of Cyrus the Great at Pasargade was decked with magnificent rugs that captivated Alexander the second of Macedonia.

Semi-antique rugs are less than 100 years but more than fifty years old. Vintage rugs are considered fifty to twenty-five years old.

The weaving technique of antique rugs is a bit different in that each thread of wool is tied in individual knots. Some rugs such as high court Persian rugs have as many as 500 single knots per square inch. With that kind of construction, these rugs are almost impervious to time and the elements.

Before the 1870's more wool was hand dyed by plant materials, indigo, madder, oak, sumac, pomegranate, cochineal and larkspur. Natural dyes tend to gently

fade over time leaving the rugs with a wonderful muted appearance.

Knot density is an important indicator of rug quality. Most weavers measure the number of knots per linear inch along the warp (i.e.) the length of the rug), along with the number of knots per square inch across the width of the rug or the weft.

Rugs are created on large vertical looms. Between two – eight people sit in front of the loom and are responsible for one section or design of the rug. They are given a piece of the pattern and only work on that particular segment. Some tribal rugs are made on horizontal looms which account for a more primitive or tribal look.

Animals:

Ram Horn signify male fertility, deer – well being, bats – happiness, dogs – protector of noble places, Stag – long life, duck – faithful marriage, camel – wealth, crab- invincible knowledge – elephant – power, butterfly happiness – crane longevity – fish – abundance and prosperity, phoenix – empress – dragon – emperor –



Open field, peacock eye design, tight weave - Semi-Antique 80-100 years



Loose weave - hallmark of design 100 knots per square inch



The sheen is accomplished by glycerin coating each thread before it is woven.



Notable by the typical intricate peacock designs



80-100 years old. Medallions are not centered.

dove- peace, horse speed, tarantula – prevents bad luck – peacock- divine protection.

Plants:

Bamboo – wealth and honor, Chrysanthemum, Pomegranate – fertility, Iris-liberty, Cypress Tree- immortality, Lily-purity, Weeping willow- meditation, carnation – wisdom, Tree of Life – heaven or eternal paradise, Lotus – purity – Peony – rank and wealth

Colors:

Red – Happiness or joy, Orange – devotion or piety, yellow – power or glory, Green – paradise – the sacred prophet's color, blue – solitude, truth, black – destruction, brown –

fertility – White purity, peace or grief.

LGI ORIENTAL RUGS – 7026 Old Katy Road #155 – Houston, Texas – 77024 – 713-862-4434 *To the Trade

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.



Milestone Windows Give Homes 'Vision'

By Kathy Bowen Stolz



What gives a home its “personality”? Of course exterior colors and facade materials make a statement, as does the roof, but it’s the windows and doors that are the “eyes” of a home, letting the outside in and the inside out.

Gene Miles, the owner of Milestone Windows & Doors, understands that windows are inspirational to homeowners and that they can expect their windows to make a strong statement about their home, whether they are choosing windows for new construction or replacement. He said that many homeowners are drawing their inspiration from the modern farmhouse style, with black-framed windows currently being the most popular. Milestone offers aluminum-, wood-, vinyl- and Anderson Fibrex-framed windows in many configurations and colors. Customers can see the products in the company’s showroom.

“There’s a lot more to selecting windows than you would think. From frame material, color and operation, it can be overwhelming for a homeowner, and that’s where we come in. We aspire to inform and educate our customers on all of their options so they can make the right choice for their situation,” he said. “We have windows for all architectural styles and have the ability to work within the customers’ budget. Our core business is designing, supplying and installing replacement and new construction windows.”

The company’s website, www.milestonewindows.com, includes descriptions of each style of window with its advantages and features. Milestone Windows carries the brands Sierra Pacific, MI, NT, Don Young, Andersen and Showcase. Choices include horizontal sliders, single hung, double hung, casement, awning, picture, radius, bay and bow, jalousie and garden windows.

Educating the customer is a core value of Milestone’s business, which he started in 2015. While builders and



contractors may know precisely what type of window they want, homeowners who are purchasing replacement windows may not have that knowledge. Milestone puts emphasis on informing all customers of their options and allows them to make the decision that is right for them. “With over 20 years of experience in the home construction industry, I am able to share my knowledge and experience with the customer,” said Gene.

Milestone’s crews also repair windows for homeowners, landlords and realtors as part of their full-service approach.



Many of this family-owned business' customers are replacing windows in homes built in the 1980s and 1990s which have single-pane or the first generation of double-pane windows with failing seals.

Milestone does not give an estimate during the first appointment because many factors must be considered prior to giving the consumer that estimate. "We understand it's a big investment and not a spur-of-the-moment decision; thus, we give the customer ample time to make a decision. I have found most customers prefer this method rather than a high-pressure or 'buy today' type of approach," he stated. Milestone does offer third-party financing.

Installation is part of the purchase price with replacement windows, Milestone has AAMA- (American Architectural Manufacturers Association) certified installers, some with 30+ years of experience installing windows. They understand the different procedures necessary for installation of each type of window for each manufacturer.

"The project is really only as good as the installation, and Milestone takes pride in every one of our installations. Our crews understand the value of our customers and work hard to install our windows with little interruption to their daily life. Cleanliness and timeliness are important, and we leave

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their home in great condition. Our work is superior, and our promise is to stand behind our word and our work,” Gene noted.

“Our customers are our greatest ambassadors. We receive calls from previous clients who are referring us to their friends, family and neighbors weekly. This has been cultivated by making our clients the most important, finishing their projects on time and keeping our word. Milestone Windows & Doors has grown and succeeded rapidly in the window industry due to our integrity. We want to be the company consumers think of when they think of buying windows. We value honesty, integrity, doing what is promised – and all at a fair price.” he continued.

“At Milestone we have a real passion for windows and customer service. Our ultimate goal is to become the premier window supplier and installer in Greater Houston,” Miles stated.



*To contact Milestone Windows & Doors,
call 281-750-6091, email gene@milestonellcs.com
or visit www.milestonewindows.com.
The office and showroom is at
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Space Saving Bath Updates

By Linda Jennings

After spending so much time at home this year, renovation projects have become a top priority for many homeowners. Builders are answering the call to repurpose living spaces to meet the demands of all household members. The need to share space has us rethinking the most important rooms in the house with the bath as top priority. The following manufacturers offer space saving ideas to reduce clutter and maximize small spaces!

OUT-OF-SIGHT STORAGE

The versatile Container Series by Easy Sanitary Solutions is a great choice to increase storage space and reduce clutter. Their new wall niche system is nearly invisible yet provides a generous space for bathroom essentials behind push-to-open doors. The T-Box is a square wall niche with a built-in shelf that offers easy access to personal items. The taller T-Roll is shaped to conceal unsightly necessities like a toilet brush, waste can, and paper products. Available in a variety of sizes, the seamless systems sit neatly inside the wall with a water-tight fit, making them a perfect addition to bathroom makeovers. Add custom tiles to match the surrounding wall or choose from a variety of finishes such as traditional white or black, a refined cream or anthracite, or stainless steel.

TRANSFORM A TUB INTO A SHOWER

Wishing for a shower in a bathroom with only a tub? Adding a shower is easy, thanks to an innovative drain design from MTI Baths. Their 6036 shower base has a hidden offset drain that allows the unit to replace an existing tub without plumbing hassles. The base is easily installed with either left- or right-side drain placement. Measuring 60" x 36", the base is crafted from durable Lucite and enhanced with multiple layers of fiberglass, resin, titanium and wood. Offered in white, bone or biscuit with a glossy or matte finish, the 6036 includes an integral tile flange on three sides, a hidden drain cover, and an option to add MTI's Radiance integrated shower floor heating system.

STYLISH SPACE FOR TUB NECESSITIES

Isenberg Faucets offers an innovative way to add style AND storage to the bath with their exquisite Cascade Waterfall Tub Filler. Its mesmerizing waterfall effect creates a soothing spa-like atmosphere. As an added benefit, it can do double-duty as a handy shelf, keeping luxurious soaps, bath salts and scented candles close at hand. Created in the award-winning Isenberg Design Lab, this amazing faucet is ideal for renovation projects with a simple ½ inch NPT connection for easy installation and an 8" spout reach. Constructed of solid brass, the Cascade Flow Tub Filler is offered in brushed nickel, chrome, matte black and polished nickel.



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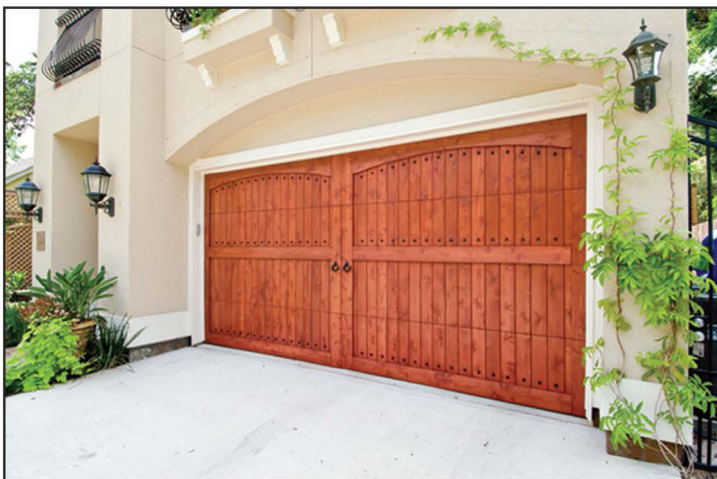
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