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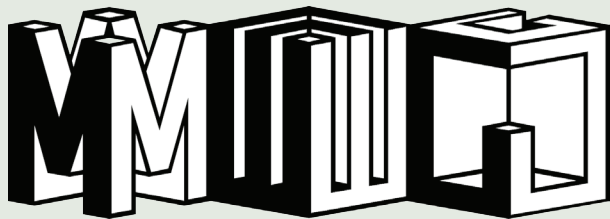


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An Industry Trade Publication | *December 2023*



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Website
www.themetropolitanbuilder.com

Printed in the USA
by Seaway Printing

The Metropolitan Builder is a local trade publication published monthly in an informative and positive manner. Copies are mailed, free of charge, to building professionals throughout the greater Houston area. The opinions and facts expressed in The Metropolitan Builder magazine are those of the authors or columnist and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher, nor do they constitute an endorsement of products or services herein. The Metropolitan Builder strives to ensure the accuracy of the magazine's contents. However, should inaccuracies or omissions occur, we do not assume responsibility. The Metropolitan Builder reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. This publication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the expressed prior written permission of the publisher.

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PUBLISHER'S *note*



Giselle Bernard,
Publisher



In the ever-evolving landscape of business, maintaining a high level of integrity among a sales team is not just a good practice; it is essential for an organization's long-term success and reputation.

The Metropolitan Builder is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of integrity for the businesses and sales professionals we represent in the industry. We achieve this commitment by exclusively engaging with vendors who have been referred by the building professionals we showcase. We request that these building professionals carefully assess the integrity of the companies and sales professionals they choose to recommend.

It's important to note that the companies, the sales team, The Metropolitan Builder represents are the ones that cover the expenses associated with the marketing materials provided to the building professionals. This support aims to facilitate the growth of our featured building professionals' businesses, making it a mutually beneficial arrangement.

Here are some key reasons why the integrity of a salesperson is of utmost importance:

Building Trust: Trust is the foundation of

any successful business relationship. When a salesperson acts with honesty and integrity, they earn the trust of their clients and customers. Trust, once established, leads to more robust and more lasting connections, repeat business, and referrals.

Company Reputation: Salespeople are often the face of a company, and their actions reflect directly on the organization's reputation. A single instance of dishonesty or unethical behavior can tarnish a company's brand image and have long-lasting negative consequences.

Customer Loyalty: When customers believe they are dealing with honest and trustworthy salespeople, they are likelier to become loyal customers. Customer loyalty is invaluable, as it leads to consistent revenue streams and reduces the cost of acquiring new customers.

Legal and Ethical Compliance: In today's business environment, compliance with laws and ethical standards is non-negotiable. Salespeople must adhere to these standards to avoid legal repercussions that could harm a company and its stakeholders.

Long-Term Success: Short-term gains achieved through deceptive practices often result in long-term losses. Salespeople prioritizing integrity contribute to the company's sustainable success by fostering positive relationships with clients and customers.

Employee Morale: A culture of integrity within the sales team also positively impacts overall employee morale. When employees witness their colleagues acting ethically, it reinforces a culture of trust and professionalism.

Harnessing the Untapped Potential

Why Your Business Needs Veterans



In the dynamic landscape of modern business, organizations constantly seek exceptional talent that can bring a unique blend of skills, experience, and perspective. As someone deeply passionate about high performance and personal development, I've observed a remarkable yet often overlooked resource in this talent search: military veterans. Their unique experiences and skills are a treasure trove for any organization aiming to excel and innovate.

Unparalleled Leadership and Teamwork

Veterans are not just trained; they are ingrained with the principles of leadership and teamwork. Their military experience hones their ability to lead diverse groups through challenging situations. They understand the essence of teamwork, often developed in high-pressure environments where effective collaboration is valued and essential for success. This innate understanding of leadership and teamwork can be transformative in a business setting.

Adaptability and Problem-Solving Skills

In a world where change is the only constant, veterans excel in adaptability. They are trained to be flexible and responsive to rapidly changing scenarios. Their problem-solving skills are sharpened in environments where innovative solutions can be critical. Veterans bring this adaptability to the corporate world, offering a perspective that can help navigate business challenges with agility and creativity.

Strong Work Ethic and Integrity

One of the many things I admire about my husband Damon Wallace, a veteran, is his strong work ethic and integrity. While celebrating our anniversary recently, a gentleman asked what was one thing we admired most about each other. I immediately said he always does what he promises,

even when he doesn't like it. I don't know if his work ethic came entirely from the military, but I know the military instills a strong work ethic and a deep sense of integrity.

Veterans are accustomed to high-stakes environments where commitment and reliability are paramount. This translates into a workforce that is dedicated, punctual, and driven by a sense of duty. These qualities are invaluable in any business setting, fostering a culture of trust and accountability.

Diversity of Perspective

Veterans bring a diversity of perspectives that enriches the organizational culture. Their experiences, often global, offer insights into different cultures and ways of thinking. This broadened perspective can be a catalyst for innovation and understanding in a globally connected business world.

Consider the example of a burgeoning tech startup that hired a group of veterans to manage its logistics and operations. These veterans applied their skills in logistics management, honed in the military, to streamline the company's supply chain. Their leadership abilities helped build a cohesive team that thrived on collaboration and innovation. The result? A dramatic increase in efficiency and a workplace culture that values discipline, creativity, and mutual respect.

Hiring veterans is not just an act of gratitude for their service; it is a strategic business decision. Veterans bring a wealth of skills and experiences that can propel an organization toward higher performance and success. By integrating veterans into our workforce, we contribute to their successful transition into civilian life and enrich our organizations with their extraordinary capabilities.

For help identifying and recruiting the best talent for your organization, schedule an introduction today <https://meetings.hubspot.com/sheles-wallace>.



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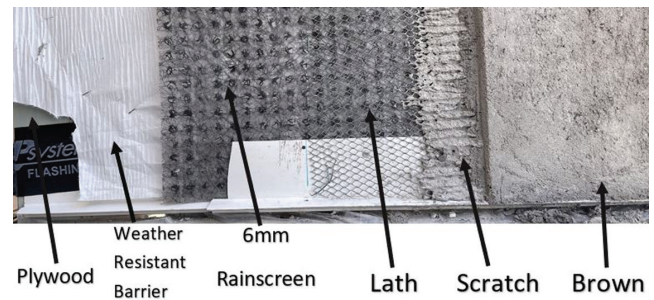
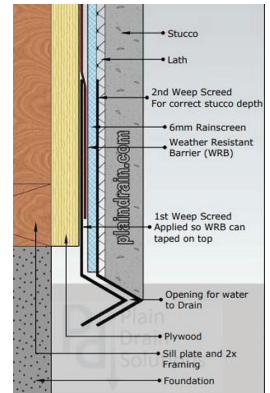
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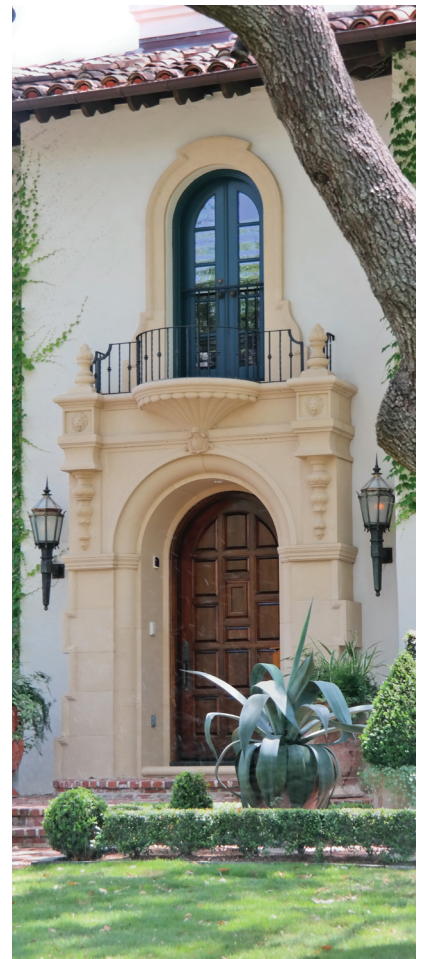
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Living In Color!

By Linda Jennings

Full of energy and positive vibes, the 2024 color of the year from Benjamin Moore Blue Nova celebrates a bright future. The shade of blue with a touch of violet adds a serene aesthetic to dwelling spaces, including kitchens and baths. Imagine a freestanding tub adorned in blue as the centerpiece of the bath for a joyous retreat.

Home design welcomes Benjamin Moore's color of the year - BLUE NOVA!

The blue hue is an alluring shade - a classic look that celebrates modern design yet traditional and forever a classic, creating a timeless update for new home design and renovations. Invest in a builder upgrade that will get noticed. Here are some top picks from manufacturers offering blue fixtures and fittings!



Mallory slipper tub in Sapphire from MTI Baths

Stunning In Sapphire

This rich, jewel-toned hue is one of eight exterior gloss color options, as well as a choice of matte or highly polished gloss finishes, available in MTI Baths' Boutique Collection for a 'wow factor' that is sure to impress. It is shown on the Mallory, a freestanding slipper tub reclined at both ends for a luxurious soaking experience with room enough for two. Its elegant profile is enhanced by gently sculpted curves and a minimalist outer shell. Measuring 65.5" x 35.5" x 26.5", the Mallory is crafted from MTI's signature SculptureStone material, a primarily organic mixture of ground natural minerals and high-performance resins that give the look and feel of molded stone. The finished product is seamlessly solid, exceptionally beautiful, and amazingly durable, with a non-porous surface that is stain- and mildew-resistant and easy to clean and maintain. All MTI tubs are handcrafted in the USA to the highest standards of quality and customer specifications.



Isenberg Tanz kitchen faucet in Navy Blue

Industrial Chic

Isenberg captures the essence of industrial design with the Tanz faucet. With sleek lines and elegant curves, this chic faucet takes inspiration from the unexpected beauty of plumbing mechanics to create an abstract sculptural look that is a true stand-out in the kitchen. Tanz is available in an array of beautifully durable finishes. Options include traditional metallics as well as 20 thin film ceramic-based finishes ranging from glossy white and black to soft shades of green and brown and bolder hues such as navy blue - a match for Benjamin Moore's Color of the Year, Blue Nova. Crafted from premium stainless steel, the Tanz is 16 1/2" tall and features fine ceramic disc cartridges for smooth lever movement, an eco-friendly design with a 1.8 GPM flow rate, and an optional stainless steel side sprayer in matching finish.

Sink Into The Hue Of Blue

Ruvati infuses an array of fresh colors into the bathroom with bold new finish options for their popular epiStone



Ruvati epiStone bath sink in Pacific Blue

series of bathroom sinks. The chic collection of hues are offered in matte black, classic white, Avocado Lime Green, Sedona Clay and the Pacific Blue shown here. Made in Italy by skilled artisans, epiStone is crafted from 70% crushed natural stone and minerals blended with proprietary resins. Ruvati uses state-of-the-art technology to create engineered stone that perfectly mimics the look of real stone and is incredibly strong and durable. Its non-porous surface is easy to maintain and features a lovely satin finish that is silky smooth to the touch. Measuring 19" x 14" with a 5" depth, epiStone sinks are meant to sit securely on the countertop with no mounting ring required.

Exquisite In Blue Murano Glass

Style, tradition and refined luxury meet high-end glass craftsmanship to create the Venezia Collection from Fantini. The series elegantly interprets the theme of transparency to

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Fantini washbasin mixer with blue Murano glass handles

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Belmont Custom Homes'

Our Motto Is: Understanding What Homeowners Want

By Kathy Bowen Stolz



Understanding what homeowners want and helping them understand what will work on their lots is the hallmark of Bo Whiteford's building philosophy.

As owner and president of Belmont Custom Homes, Bo works closely with each homeowner, guiding the client through ordinances, setbacks and deed restrictions to determine what size of home can be built on the lots in the desirable neighborhoods of West University, Bellaire, Memorial, Afton Oaks and River Oaks.

This knowledge allows him to work in harmony with the homeowner and architect to develop the design while also incorporating the latest in-home technologies and energy efficiency.



He noted that the lot itself is a key consideration. Creativity in placing the house on the lot is often necessary, especially in inner-loop neighborhoods with smaller lots and when a swimming pool is part of the plan. Thirty or 40 percent of his clients request a pool and most have an outdoor kitchen, pergola and artificial grass lawns. "Curb appeal is a high priority, and in many cases, backyards have become an extension of the living area, so landscaping is key to making the clients happy."

From the first meeting and throughout the design process, he works with clients to determine their needs and desires for their new home. How many children do they have? What is the frequency of their guests, especially their parents? Where do they like to entertain within a house? Do they need an elevator now or in the future?

During the process he works with the clients, architects and



designers to understand better the qualities the homeowner desires. This level of communication also helps to provide more accurate cost estimates as well as specifications and allowances to follow during the construction process, Bo stated.

Eighty percent of Belmont Custom Homes' work is in the West University neighborhood where Bo has built well over 100 homes in his 30-year career. With only 5,000 lots platted in West U, he is always looking for lots to buy where he can tear down the aging post-WWII houses and replace them with custom luxury homes that range in size from 3,500 to 5,000 sq. ft. and range in price from \$1.5 to \$3 million. Belmont constructs four or five custom homes each year as well as finishing two or three remodeling projects. Belmont does construct speculative homes, although 95 percent of those homes are sold before construction starts!

Looking back over his building career, Bo said that Victorian-style houses in classic brick were the trend in

the 1990s, followed by French Country and now Modern/Transitional styles. Five-piece crown molding is no longer preferred; houses today are more functional with clean lines.

“West U is where I got my start, where my father built before me. If lots are not available in West U, I will look in Bellaire or other areas, but I’m always building in West U. I have also built some houses outside of Houston, so that’s not to say I won’t go out to places like Round Top or Brenham and build someone a custom farmhouse.”

Bo takes pride in learning about soon-to-be-available West U lots from his previous clients or people who are neighbors to one of his building projects. “We work hard to keep neighbors happy by keeping our job sites clean and our trades [people] respecting work hours,” stated Jim Whiteford, project manager and Bo’s cousin. “People will call Bo to offer their lot.”

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Bo added, “We’ve built numerous houses for people who’ve lived next door to one of our projects or on the same block. We spend more than some other builders to keep jobsites clean, and neighbors appreciate that effort. When you help someone, they will help you back.”

Customer service is paramount to Belmont Custom Homes’ business. “We strive to make the homeowners happy, to become friends. If they’re happy with the process, they’ll be happy when they move in.” Bo personally visits each job site several times a day and meets with homeowners on a regular basis. “People appreciate that we go back in a year and fix the bumps and bruises that occur without charging extra,” he added.

Quality is another factor in Belmont’s success. “We build a really good quality home because we want to. For example, we use BoraCare treatment, which prohibits bugs and mold, up to the top plate of the first floor, not just two feet up. We have used the same subcontractors for 20-25 years because they follow the level of quality that we and our clients expect.”

He continued, “The foundation is the most important factor in building a house in Houston because the soil is highly active, expanding and contracting constantly. We pour a six-inch slab, not four-inch, with 3,500 psi concrete instead of 3,000 psi.” He personally checks the columns/piers in each foundation.

Bo also attributes his company’s success to honesty and transparency. “Every house we build has its own bank account.”

He shared another business philosophy: “I’m a fourth generation Houstonian. I have always taken pride that my company treats our customers honestly and fairly. Right rather than wrong is clearly the path to follow and is what makes my company strong and will keep it strong in the future.”



To contact

Belmont Custom Homes’

Bo Whiteford

call 713-828-8288 (cell)

email belmontcustomhm@aol.com

or visit www.belmontcustomhomesinc.com

*The mailing address is
5210 Spruce St., Bellaire, TX 77401.*

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create a unique design with a strong identity. The stars of the collection are the tapered horizontal levers crafted in Murano glass and offered blue, white, red, black or transparent. Pair the handles with a variety of faucet configurations and finishes for a bespoke look. The Venezia Collection includes a wide product selection from faucets to tub fillers and showers for a cohesive look in the bath.

Bold And Beautiful

Elegance in design meets practicality in the Simas VIGNONI collection of sanitary ware. The rimless wall-hung toilet and bidet become a fabulous focal point in Capri, a deep stand-out hue between blue and cyan. The toilet features the brand's proprietary Vertigo Flush with an ultra-quiet, water-saving 2.5 or 4-liter flush, a fully-glazed bowl for easy cleaning and a slow-action quick-release seat. The VIGNONI collection is designed to correlate with Simas washbasin collections sharing most of the color range in glossy and matte finishes.



Simas VIGNONI toilet and bidet in Capri

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Function + Form: A Specialty of Whodid It Designs

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

While many general contractors have a signature style, you would be hard-pressed to put a stamp on a Whodid It Designs & Remodeling project. Owner Sherry Pruitt is a remodeler with design in mind who has a passion for merging form seamlessly with function.

“There’s no typical Sherry Pruitt design. I’m not a cookie cutter. I design for the person and their function, not for the trend,” said Pruitt.

She emphasized that she’s not an interior decorator but an interior structural designer who loves to remodel. “I love the spaces where life is really happening – a bath because that is where you start and finish the day, a kitchen because that is the center of the home, and an outdoor space because that should be an oasis.

“I take the time to get to know my clients’ habits and how they function because I want them to have what they need and where they need it.

“For example, I ask what’s their routine for laundry, where

they feed the dog, so they can function the best within their home. I may replace the pull-out trash drawer in the kitchen with a dog food dispenser because that’s where the homeowner feeds the dog,” she explained.

“With every project, I want it to have everything that the client needs, finding and making ordinary spaces into extraordinary spaces. I love doing things that are different and not the norm. The most mundane things can be exciting and special if they’re done right. And I love it when a client says, ‘This is my favorite part! You made it so that it fits me!’”

Whodid It Designs serves the Fort Bend and Houston areas. Most of Sherry’s portfolio consists of single-family residences in addition to two or three condominium projects annually. She also enjoys taking on an occasional commercial project because she got her start in the building industry by being the owner representative for a major relocation and construction project at her own church in Sugar Land 25 years ago.



“The multi-tasking facet of overseeing ground-up construction and then facilitating the 186,000-sq.-ft. church and school for 15 years prepared me for being a contractor. It was the best project management class I could have ever taken!”

Sherry acknowledged that her background in construction has helped her. “When I’m in the planning stage of a remodeling project, it helps knowing how the house is constructed. There are not a lot of surprises for me. When I call my structural engineer, my plumbers, my air conditioning guys, they know that I know what’s behind the walls. They trust me.”

Continued on page 14



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Continued from page 13

Juggling five projects currently, Sherry said she usually has two major projects and several smaller projects underway at any given time. The projects range from \$50,000 to \$500,000.

On top of her heavy workload, she takes on a charity project each year, “A project that centers around the home can change a life or that of a family, and that is an investment well made for the greater good.”

Sherry credits her start in building to her late father. “I grew up with a hammer in one hand and a saw in the other. I’m very mechanically minded. My dad always said to me, ‘How do you know you can’t do it if you haven’t tried?’ Although he’s no longer with us, my mom tells me how proud he would be of what I’ve accomplished.”

While she started in the design business as Sherry’s Interiors and Drapery, she knew she wanted to do residential remodeling eventually. She earned her Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) and Certified Graduate Remodeler (CGR) credentials by spending a year taking courses offered by the Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA). A member since 2014, she has been active in the GHBA Remodeler’s Council – serving as its president in 2019 and will be the president of the Professional Women in Buildings in 2024.

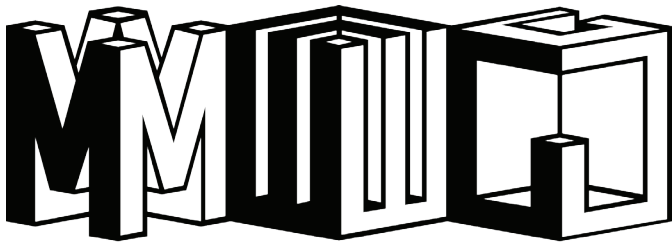
She noted that achieving her CAPS had special meaning because she saw how a disability within a family could have a major impact on its housing needs. She watched



her in-laws struggle to maneuver her husband’s late twin brother, who had cerebral palsy from birth, in and out of a bathtub from a wheelchair. “I will try to help anyone with any kind of disability, such as multiple sclerosis or Parkinson’s or any veteran.”

She opened Whodid It Designs 10 years ago, choosing the name at her daughter’s suggestion, because people will always ask Who Did It?

***To contact Sherry Pruitt at
Whodid It Designs & Remodeling,
visit www.whodiditdesigns.com
or email sherry@whodiditdesigns.com
or call 713-899-0307.***



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Photos courtesy of Fairmont Custom Homes

Customer Reviews

Matt Sneller -
Sneller Custom Homes

We are a custom builder/remodeler and have been working with Esvin/MWG for about 4 years now. They are one of our best trade partners that we have. Esvin is extremely creative and great around our clients, but he also does what he says he's going to do and is great about staying in communication. He has done everything from simple framed glass shower doors to very detailed shower enclosures to custom cabinet doors to a custom metal and wood table for our new conference room. I would highly recommend working with MWG!

Michael Pelletier
President/Owner Fairmont Custom Homes

We have been working with Esvin Tista and MWG Innovations for over 5 years. Esvin is our go to for shower glass and mirror work. I am proud to say that we have been able to set market trends with the help of MWG Innovations and his excellent customer service. Rarely, do I find an individual that is as reliable as Esvin in our world of building custom homes. Esvin has been a great partner for Fairmont Custom Homes bringing excellent value to our customers and helping us become the number one builder in Fulshear, TX. We look forward to our continued relationship with MWG Innovations.

Brandon Kraut -
Construction Project Manager at Urban Craftsman
The MWG team does beautiful work, has great customer service, communicates clearly, and provides a great experience! I am a project manager for a custom home builder and we exclusively use MWG for our shower enclosures and glass work. I had them do my new shower enclosure at home as well. You can't go wrong with MWG!

Sales Professionals



Esvin Tista - *Esvin@mwginnovations.com*

In his 12 years of experience in the glass industry, Esvin found himself wanting to do more than install glass. As a true Texan, he believes everything is bigger in Texas and decided to open his own business in 2018. Esvin is talented and has the passion and vision for designing and fabricating unique pieces of art for metal, wood, and glass consisting of shower doors, vanities, mirrors, handrails, and more. He credits his passion to his loving family and success to his professional team. When his not working, you will find Esvin enjoying the beautiful Houston weather fishing, hoping to catch more than a cold breeze on a sunny, rainy day, all in one trip to the bay!



Lilian Tista - *ltista@mwginnovations.com*

Lilian is experienced in management accounting. In search of a better balance between work and family time, she joined Metal Wood Glass Innovations LLC in 2021. Her commitment is to provide excellent service, helping the corporation to create and build a better business. She enjoys the opportunity to serve customers on a personal level and the originality behind each project. She spends her free time with her son. She loves to run, and occasionally you will find her running marathons and obstacle course races.



Dialogue with a Designer

House of Cottet LLC

MWG INNOVATIONS - With a passion for designing and working with glass, Esvin Tista founded MWG Innovations in 2018 on the idea that offering custom bath glass and mirrors for new construction and remodeling projects should fall in the line of an exquisite art job. Esvin takes great pride in creating unique pieces of art designed to bring life to the ideas given to him by the builders, designers, and trades he partners with. His work includes intricate designs of fabricated unique custom metal, wood, and glass pieces for shower doors, vanities, mirrors, handrails, and more. MWG Innovations is committed to providing all clients with high-quality products and services in which yield outstanding customer satisfaction.

This month MWG INNOVATIONS. speaks with Alison Cottet, owner of House of Cottet, LLC; proving interior design solutions to residential and commercial clients, as well as new home builders throughout Houston and surrounding area, coordinating all aspects of their projects within budget and timelines.

Alison is described as down to earth and easy to work with, and her design philosophy stresses a close link between the disciplines of architecture and interior decoration. The end results are gorgeous environments

defined by rich color palettes, refined materials and detailing that will AWE your guests. Her expertise ranges from a wide range of styles, including traditional, modern, rustic chic, and eclectic.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What motivated you to go into the interior design field?*

Alison Cottet: Being able to take a plain or nonfunctional space and turn it into something that is breathtaking and functional is what motivates me. Seeing the different styles from traveling led me into wanting to get into the field of Design. In my earlier years of my career, I became a project coordinator for a multimillion-dollar custom home builder where I was even more drawn to Interior design, and it led me to become the interior designer for all projects. The look on my clients faces when they walk into their beautifully designed home is what makes my job priceless.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?*

Alison Cottet: Social Media has grown, new programs have been created and a demand for E-designs has impacted the interior design industry. With social media being a big part of society now, Builders and remodeling

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Jeff Steiner -
jsteiner@bathsofamerica.com

Jeff has always enjoyed working with people and being able to offer them his exceptional services. No matter the size of the job, Jeff makes sure that the customer is satisfied and that the job he started gets his full attention until completion. After sales, Jeff also follows up with clients to ensure they are aware of the functions of the products they have purchased and if he can assist in any product demo in person. Jeff, along with his assistant, Hillary Ratliff, started the appliance builder sales division at Baths of America. He has been in the appliance industry for 30 years now and has led Baths of America to one of the largest appliance dealers in Houston, TX.



Hillary Ratliff -
hratliff@bathsofamerica.com

Hillary has been in appliance builder sales for the past four years and has no plans to go to another industry. Assisting Jeff with his builders, Hillary makes sure that products are ordered, scheduled for installation and the logistics of jobs are handled sufficiently. Hillary enjoys the appliance category as it is a very niche, and the relationships that she's made in this industry. Helping builders and meeting new clients and industry partners has become a reason why Hillary plans to keep continuing her plans to grow in the appliance industry.



Chadney Alvarez-
chadney@bathsofamerica.com

Chadney has been in plumbing and hardware sales for 25 years now. Starting as a bookkeeper at EXPO Design Center at age 18, she has developed herself into one of the leading salespersons in the plumbing and hardware industry. Developing customer relationships is very important to Chadney and a key reason why she's been very successful in maintaining her business. Starting from the beginning, when plans are just on paper, making selections, and seeing the final projects come to fruition a year or so later makes me love what I do.

Customer Reviews

Brian Phillips - Cayson Graye/Alair Homes

As a custom home builder, we have specific needs when it comes to appliances for our projects. Jeff and his team offer not only the selection we need for our clients, but also the expertise, competitive pricing and professional installs. Baths of America is a vendor with whom we are very proud to partner.

Courtney C - Client

After having a horrible experience at another appliance dealer, we stopped into Baths of America on a whim and were paired with Vincent. We told him about our situation and the terrible experience we had been having with the other company, and he was able to get us our appliances in a reasonable time. Not only was he upfront with us, but he was in constant communication with us throughout the whole process. We had some issues with installation on our end due to our contractor's mistake, and Vincent was even able to help us remedy the situation. Thank you, Vincent for helping us 100% through the whole process and always being in constant communication. True customer service!

Coraline Wheeler - Designer Details

Love! Love! Love this place. You will be pleasantly surprised to enter a beautifully designed showroom with a lot of exciting eye candy!! Every time without fail, the customer service has been excellent. Their knowledge and quick turnaround with quotes are always impressive, especially given the current environment. The range of products is a visual delight as well as impressive to take clients to when sourcing appliances, faucets, hardware etc. A must-visit! You won't be disappointed.



Continued from page 16

contractors love to collab to show casing completed jobs. Clients are more interested in E-design more than ever and we are digging it! For small room makeovers clients are not scared of taking on a project and get their hands dirty but just need direction from an interior designer and that is where I come in! With all of the new ways people are socializing new technology is made that helps designers show clients a sneak peek of what the space will look like.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?*

Alison Cottet: Let's be honest, home builders and remodeling contractors are not interior designers plus don't have the time to be the role of designer. Partnering up with an interior designer like myself that is experienced makes the project run a million times smoother. Because of my background in project coordinating, I know how important it is to stay on schedule and have everything prepared to hand off to project managers.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What sets you apart from other designers?*

Alison Cottet: My experience in working as a project coordinator for a custom home builder sets me apart from other designers. Knowing what builders and remodeling contractors are expecting when working with an interior

designer is what has been appreciated and complimented. Knowing their processes helps me focus on deadlines and making sure my work is being completed before they are needing any of the selection. A lot of my work is using my creativity, but I also strongly enforce structure and stay organized throughout the project.

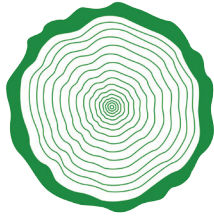
MWG INNOVATIONS: *What has been your most challenging project and why?*

Alison Cottet: *Honestly it would have to be my own home!* With the skill of being able to put together different design styles that I all love so much It became hard to commit to only one style for my home. If I am working on a midcentury modern project with a client then I come home wanting to add a little of that style into my living room because I am inspired.

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

Alison Cottet: The key to having a successful outcome when working on a project with a builder or remodeling contractor is to finalize design selections as early in the construction process as possible. We start by looking at inspirational pictures and getting a good feel of what direction we are wanting to go for as far as style. Budgets are discussed and design plans are made. Putting together

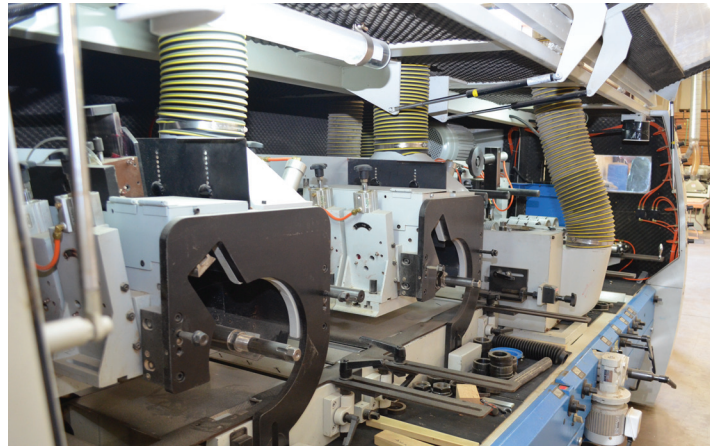
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Charlie Molloy -
cmolloy@hwp.us

Charlie has over 30 years of experience in the building material industry, dating from 1992 to the present. He has expert knowledge of most building products, including hardwood lumber, plywood, cabinet hardware, plastic laminate, and custom moldings. In his previous years, he was a manager in the grocery industry

for Eagle Discount Supermarkets and Randall's Food markets in the Houston area. His strengths include managing employees, customer service relations, logistics, and outside sales. He has lived in the Houston area since 1968 and spent his childhood in Spring Branch, graduating from Spring Woods High School. He went to the University of Houston where he majored in Music, Hotel and Restaurant Management, and Business management. Hobbies include playing the National Anthem with his trumpet at professional baseball games, hiking in the Big Bend area, and woodworking. Charlie has been married 39 years and has one son, a daughter, and two grandchildren.



Kenny Francis -
kfrancis@hwp.us

Kenneth has 32 years of experience in the building industry from 1990 to present. He started at Wilsonart in 1990-2001 in the Houston area. He was employed as the operations manager of over 27 employees. He decided to take his sales knowledge & expertise to Hardwood Products 2001 - present. Kenny enjoys working

with companies & building relationships. From commercial millwork shops and remodelers to Custom Builders. Every day is a challenge, from supply & demand to rising costs. Providing innovation & service for the customer is the bottom line. Kenny has lived in Houston his entire life & knows the area well. His hobbies are anything outdoors, from hunting and exercise to sports. He has a wife of 17 years & two beautiful daughters.

Customer Reviews

Cullen Franz - Savannah Grace Homes

"Hardwood Products has gone over and above to source the best quality materials for the best price to help me grow my business. Kenny Francis and the HWP team has provided me with outstanding customer services that leaves other competitors in the dust. I can't say enough about the value that I have received in partnering with HWP. My custom homes have never looked so good !! Thank you Kenny and HWP !!"

Matt Sneller - Sneller Custom Homes and Remodeling

"I have known and worked with Kenny/Hardwood Products for over 15 years. We consider them to be one of our most loyal and trusted trade partners. We are a custom builder/remodeler and use them for a lot of our interior and exterior trimwork/materials. Their pricing is fantastic, but even better than that is their customer service. Kenny is always easy to get a hold of and super responsive to any issue that arises. We would highly recommend using them!"

Rick Davis - DC Kitchens & Remodeling

I can't say enough about working with Hardwood Products. I've been in business for about 35 years and have been working with Hardwood products for as long as I can remember. I find their entire staff trustworthy and extremely professional, especially Kenny and Laura. The entire staff has a full understanding of their extensive line of hardwood products. I find that they are extremely dependable, and their customer service is outstanding. They always go out of their way in providing the very best in high-quality materials and for the best price. Not only that, I find them to be very dependable. I can trust that they will always be on top of things. I feel more comfortable working with them than anyone else.

Continued from page 18

selections and designing every little detail on paper as soon as architectural plans are ready is what makes our design process different than other design firms. Imagine having all selections finalized while the foundation is being poured!

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?*

Alison Cottet: I run into builders and homeowners wanting or thinking their home needs to have the same two-color tone scheme throughout the entire home. This is a mistake that is on going and takes some convincing to change. A home should flow and keep the same esthetic throughout but there can be specialty rooms that make the space exiting and unique. Think of a wet bar having high gloss emerald-green cabinets with a fun black and white mosaic backsplash and brass hexagon cabinet hardware vs an all-white wet bar that matches the kitchen. Now color is not everyone's cup of tea but playing with textures, tones, and layering can do wonders to a space!

MWG INNOVATIONS: *Speaking about staying current, how do you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?*

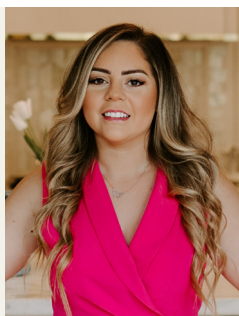
Alison Cottet: Attending design seminars, keeping up to date with new trends and techniques with our trade partners, and following design organizations is how we stay current with design trends. As we all know design trends come and go and we are always up to date on what is in, but we also know what are staple looks that are timeless, so you don't have to update your home regularly. Traveling to beautiful places around the world has always been a secret tool on keeping up to date with trends and incorporating them into my designs. Interior design is totally different around the world, and it is very inspiring seeing new trends that have not hit America yet!

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What is your favorite design style?*

Alison Cottet: Mixing different design styles together is my specialty! I love to play with clean lines and mixing historical pieces or elements in a space. Full modern design can sometimes feel to cold so when you layer historical or traditional pieces, bold colors, and textures together it gives a much more well thought out look.



**To contact House of Cottet
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Alison Cottet
email: Alison@houseofcottet.com
or visit:
Houseofcottet.com**





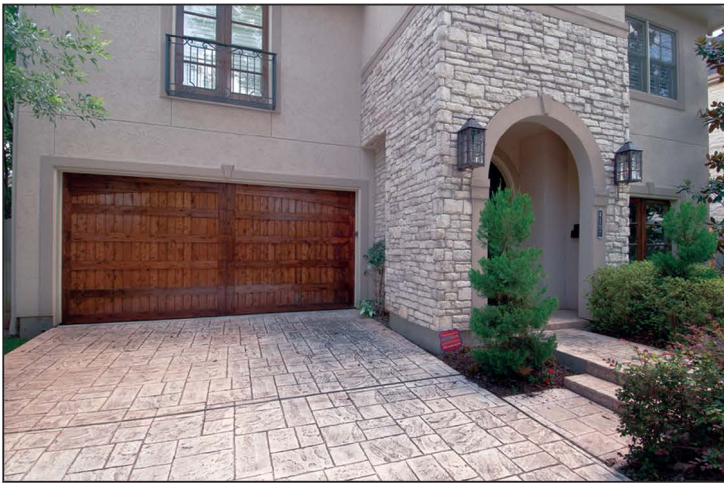
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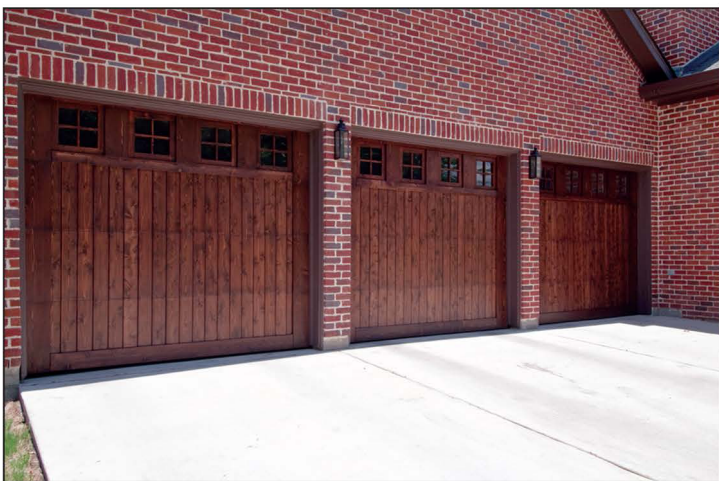
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