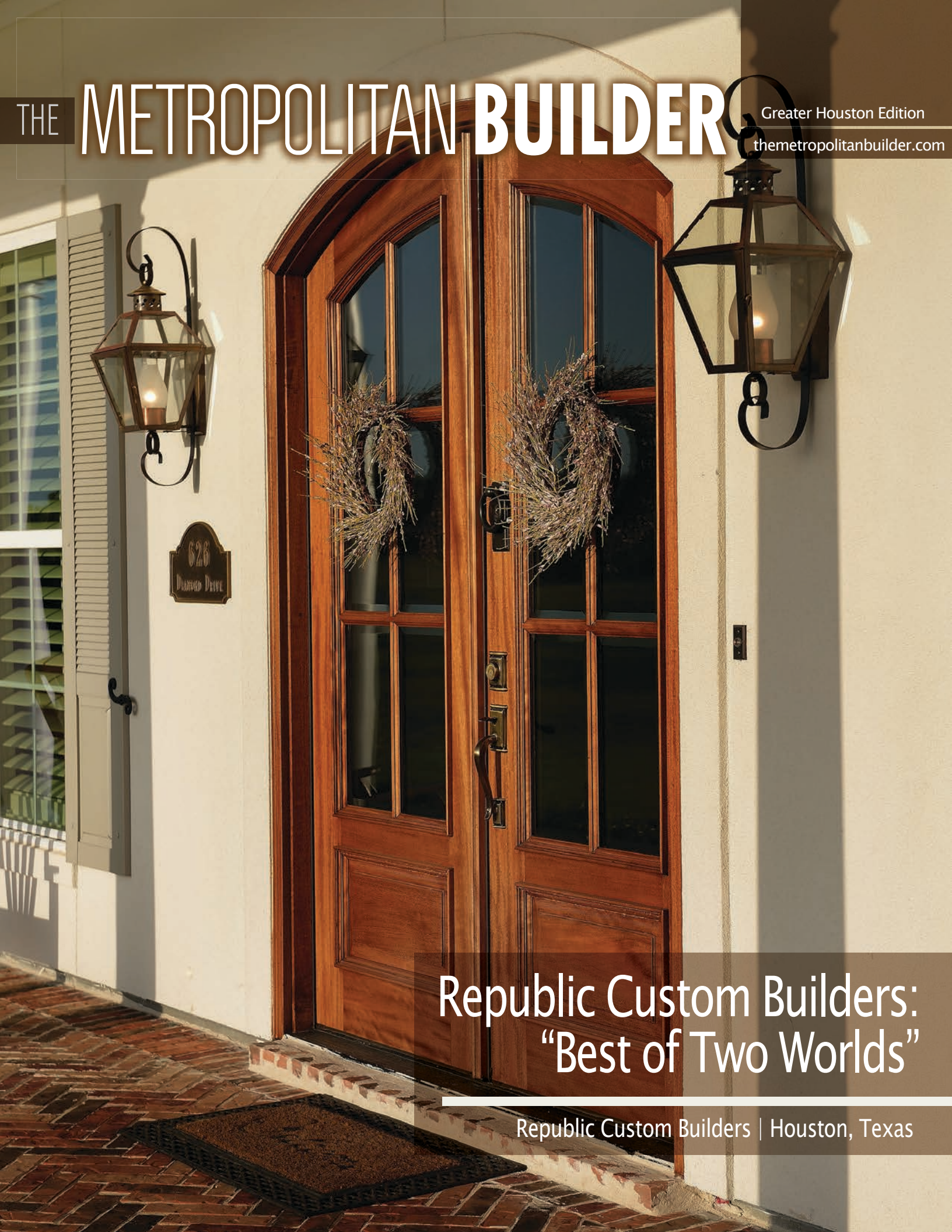


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Republic Custom Builders: "Best of Two Worlds"

Republic Custom Builders | Houston, Texas



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By Penny Smith Jones | Photography by Kathleen O. Ryan



Jessica Belcher, founder and president of Republic Custom Builders in Bellville, believes she has the best parts of two worlds. “I wanted a slower-paced life for my family and I found that slower world in Bellville,” said Jessica. “Bellville is close enough to that other world in Houston for residents to work in Katy or the Energy Corridor, and for the Houston contractors I value and rely on to come out and work for me. More and more people move from the Houston suburbs to this area, drawn by the schools and the laid-back lifestyle. We live a nice life in Bellville.”

Life in Bellville may move at a slower pace but Jessica doesn't. The custom home market in Bellville is booming

and so is her company. Armed with a degree in industrial engineering from Texas A&M University, and strong professional experience in the electrical engineering industry, Jessica is no figurehead. “My engineering education and background are a perfect platform for home building. Folks assume that my husband is part of the company but he works in Katy. I’m the builder, I’m out there on the project sites, and my contractors tell me that I am the most organized builder they work with.” Jessica founded RCB in 2013. She builds only custom

homes because she never wants to build the same house twice. “We are a highly custom builder and our goal has always been to focus on three to four builds at a time, which allows me to give each home the true attention to detail it deserves. This year, we are contracted for a few more. I love turning ideas into houses. Working with the clients, the contractors, and going through the whole creative process is such a positive challenge. My work is never mundane; in fact, it never feels like work to me. It’s fun.”



Jessica is very aware of how overwhelming building a home can be for most people. “I have heard so many horror stories about peoples’ building experiences and I want to change that. A house is normally the largest investment most people make but that shouldn’t necessarily equate to a stressful situation. I work very hard to make the process as smooth and stream-lined as possible.”

The company builds homes in Bellville and throughout Austin County, as well as in and around Brenham, Hempstead, Waller, and Round Top. Construction prices range from \$300,000 to upwards of \$800,000 on sites that



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range from a single acre to 30 or 40-acre tracts. Jessica doesn’t scout and develop property; she builds for her clients on their own land.

An on-staff architect and an interior designer guide clients through the design phase, from selecting a style and drawing the plans to selecting the finishes. “It’s very hands on,” she notes. “I also participate in the design phase and we cover every detail of how they like to live and what they want in their house. For instance, there’s a trend for larger home sites that accommodate extras like a RV garage.”

“The design phase is almost always a unique experience for clients; some take a long time to go through it and others move full-speed ahead. We also accommodate clients who come to us with their house plans already prepared. It just depends on the client. Sometimes I’m their problem solver as well as their builder, especially for families who may never have built a home before. Once we start moving dirt, it takes us about six months to get them into their house.”

“My projects stand out because they aren’t spec or production builds. Each is very individual. Without model homes and on-site sales staff, I can offer better finishes at a competitive price. There are also more choices in high-end decorative accents than ever before and they have become more affordable.”





Energy-efficiency has also become more affordable and is a standard in her homes, according to Jessica. “My clients are very individual thinkers and they think about everything that goes into their home. Most ask for green features such as tankless water heaters and foam insulation and my inclination is to make those things as standard – and affordable – as possible.”

Jessica’s plans for RCB include growth – but not a significant size increase. “I’ve been asked to merge with other builders but I am not looking to grow in size. We are at a comfortable level as we are; in fact, we are operating on a wait list. We don’t advertise, we operate from referrals - and that word-of-mouth in a small community means everything.”

“Going forward, I am interested in building ever-more challenging homes and possibly taking on some commercial projects. Above all, I want to stay in Bellville and the Austin County area. I build for my neighbors, my daughter’s classmates’ families, people in my church community, and others who live here. I see my clients at the grocery store, and the attention and care that I give to my relationships is just as important as the attention I give to their homes.”

You may contact Republic Custom Builders at 979-450-5354 or RepublicCB@gmail.com. For more information log onto: www.RepublicCustomBuilders.com

