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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Giselle Bernard
Publisher

A new year is the opportunity for new beginnings, and regardless of what's happening in the world around me, I will make 2016 a good one. I will work to achieve not only success in growing my business bigger and better, but I will also work at achieving a healthier balance between work and my personal life. I love my work, but I also want time to spend enjoying my family and friends, keeping fit, pursuing my hobbies and perhaps even traveling a little more.

I know that in order to spend quality time with family and friends, I have to understand and learn my limitations. What I don't have time to do, I need to delegate. I am going to reevaluate my business, assess what's working well and what's not, and then set realistic goals, while making sure that I have an ample amount of time for personal enjoyment. You know what they say about all work and no play....

Too often the task of promoting a small business slips to the bottom of the to-do list in the press of urgent tasks. Because customer satisfactions is extremely important to me and because I want to attract new customers, I am going to make promoting my customers and my business even a bigger priority. Another key to growing business is networking. This year, I've decided to become even more involved in my trade association and perhaps even join a couple of others.

I believe that learning something new will add to my skill set and create a new dimension of interest to my life. Last year I became a licensed realtor. This year I've signed up for golf lessons and have vowed to learn Spanish.

Ever heard of paying it forward? Well, this year I will pay it forward by becoming more involved in my church and my community. What will your goals be this year? **-GB**



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Macedo Homes: A Truly Custom Experience in Build- On-Your-Land Homes

By Penny Smith Jones | Photography by Kathleen O. Ryan



Santiago Macedo, president of Macedo Homes, has carved an enviable niche in the build-on-your-land home market in the Houston area. Macedo builds highly custom homes on clients' own properties and to their specifications, generally on half-acre to two-acre parcels in the city of Houston and surrounding region.

Macedo Homes advertises with road signs and on-line marketing, but the majority of the company's business comes via referrals from happy customers. "Word-of-mouth is king for us," Macedo said.

Macedo loves what he does. "Because we build directly for clients on their own lots, each of our projects

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City of Houston Changes International Residential Code

By Ian P. Faria & Jon Paul Hoelscher of
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The City of Houston recently approved the adoption of the 2012 Construction Code Package. The package includes amendments to the International Building Code (IBC), International Fire Code, International Residential Code, Uniform Mechanical Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code. Plans submitted before Feb. 1, 2016, that meet the City's Plan Review requirements will be reviewed under the codes in effect at the time of submittal.

City of Houston officials have also indicated that there are two previously unenforced codes that will be enforced beginning Feb. 1, 2016. While these requirements have always been present in the code, the city has not enforced them previously.

First, all projections that are less than 3 feet from the property line (such as eaves or soffits) must have one-hour fire resistant material placed on the face and underside of the projection and will be subject to inspection at the time of the firewall installation. Area builder groups have suggested builders consider limiting and/or eliminating eaves so that projections remain greater than 3 feet from the property line.

Second, the amended International Residential Code now requires a 32-inch clear path of egress to a public right of way. If a builder is building 3 feet from the property line, then the builder would have to be sure to keep fences, overflows, gas meters, cleanouts, etc. at least 32 inches from the property line. Also, the use of siding or stucco will decrease the space between the building and property line.

The code amendments and the city's pledge to enforce these two code requirements will likely impact all new projects. Builders and contractors should always ensure they are working within the parameters of the most current building codes to avoid costly mistakes and delays due to red-tags for code issues.



Ian P. Faria is a Director with Coats Rose and a member of the firm's Construction/Surety Law and Oil and Gas/Energy sections. Ian was selected as a Texas Super Lawyer in 2014 in Construction Law. This is an honor conferred upon only on 5% of the total lawyers in Texas (previously he was selected as a Texas Super Lawyer "Rising Star" in Construction Law in 2012 and 2013). He was also selected by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America© 2014 and 2015 in the field of Construction Law. In 2015, he received the highest rating, AV Preeminent®, by Martindale-Hubbell® Law Directory. This is Martindale-Hubbell's highest possible rating for both ethical standards and legal ability.



Jon Paul Hoelscher is an Associate Attorney in the Houston office of Coats | Rose. He is a member of the Firm's Construction and Litigation sections. He has been selected as a Texas Super Lawyer "Rising Star" for Construction Law by Texas Monthly since 2012, an honor conferred upon only 2.5% of the total lawyers in Texas. He also currently serves as Treasurer for the Houston Bar Association Construction Law Section.



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DIALOGUE WITH A DESIGNER

INTERVIEW WITH SUSAN FRUIT ASID, CGR, CAPS

Morrison knows that dreams, reality and inspiration make a house a home. They also know that an interior designer or interior design firm often become an intricate part of this process. Design professionals should be committed to creating individualized and functional designs to meet the lifestyles of their clients' families. They should exemplify an unwavering dedication to open communication, to reliable service, and to building a collaborative design partnership with all of their clients.

*This month Morrison speaks with **SUSAN FRUIT ASID, CGR, CAPS.***

Susan Fruit is an award-winning ASID interior designer, a residential remodeling contractor (CGR), a lighting designer and a certified aging-in-place specialist (CAPS). She has been working in the interior design and home renovation field for 40 years. Tasteful, timeless interiors are the trademarks of her style from trendy traditional to classic contemporary.

Her company, Susan Fruit Interiors, has designed homes in Texas, California, Florida and South America, and her work has been published in numerous design magazines. Susan is a recognized industry expert in solving difficult design dilemmas in interior design, decorating and residential remodeling.

Susan also offers a series of fun and informative Design-On-The-Go Bus Tours to unusual and unique local decorating shops and design resources in Houston several times throughout the year.

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

Fruit: As I child, I was fascinated by beautiful rooms, draperies and accessories. My mother was a wonderful decorator, so she inspired me. From a young age, I started drawing rudimentary floor plans and arranged paper furniture templates in them. I was thrilled when I found out that this activity can actually become a career! So, it was only natural that I majored in interior design in college.

Morrison: How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?

Fruit: It has changed tremendously. When I graduated from Purdue University in 1973, floor plans and renderings were created manually, and a strong emphasis was placed on hand sketching as a way to communicate design ideas to clients. Design students were taught strategic sales skills to prepare them to work with residential clients and to be successful at selling products and services. Now all plans are CAD generated, designer/client relationship skills are not taught and commercial interior design is what is strongly emphasized in all the design schools.

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

Fruit: Experienced interior designers are skilled at selling up a project and in making their design ideas appealing to homeowners. Clients are often resistant to spending more than what they have pre-determined to spend, but a skilled designer knows just how to make certain design upgrades irresistible. Builders and remodeling contractors generally don't do this as well.

Seasoned interior designers can paint beautiful visual images with their words and can tempt homeowners with enticing materials, fresh new color palettes and photos of beautiful design work from the latest design magazines. Homeowners love to be exposed to new ideas and design possibilities. Interior designers excel at doing this.

Morrison: What sets you apart from other designers?

Fruit: Besides being an ASID interior designer for over 40 years, I am also a Certified Graduate Remodeling Contractor (CGR) and an Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS). I am the only interior designer in Houston with this combination of credentials, which is very helpful when working with clients on their remodeling projects.

In addition, I also teach classes on interior design, decorating and home renovation through The Women's Institute of Houston, and I offer a series of fun Design-On-The-Go Bus Tours two-three times a year to interesting local antique shops, design showrooms and fabulous Houston residences.

Morrison: What has been your most challenging project and why?

Fruit: High rise condominiums are always a challenge because they have restricted work hours, generally one designated elevator that all contractors have to use and concrete ceilings, which makes it difficult to add

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is unique, and every day is different. I love taking someone's raw land, creating a home that captures their vision and then driving by afterwards and seeing what we accomplished. I am proud of all of our projects, but my current favorite is a home we completed recently in Richmond."

Clients are "hands-on" in the process of creating and customizing their homes with an unlimited number of vendors and suppliers, and every build is supervised by a Macedo Homes project manager who makes sure that all details are completed to each client's utmost satisfaction. "Our building price point spans the market from \$250,000 to about \$800,000, and we build roughly



"...We also want to make the home building process easier for our clients, trades and suppliers..."



12 homes a year in addition to smaller remodel projects," Macedo said. "Our square footages range from 1,200 to more than 5,500 square feet, and each home takes five to seven months to complete."

One of Macedo's biggest challenges is the weather. "Unexpected delays caused by weather are frustrating for my clients – and for me. They are always anxious to move in, and I always want to get them in on schedule."





Macedo grew up in Sugar Land and learned his way around a construction site when he was still a kid working with his father. He earned a double major in finance and entrepreneurship from the University of Houston C. T. Bauer College of Business/Cyvia and Melvyn Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship. After gaining financial and construction experience working for commercial real estate brokers and developer, he went to work with his father at Macedo Homes and is gradually purchasing the company.

“The commercial brokers and developers with whom I worked early in my career have become friends and mentors,” Macedo said. “Since I founded my company, they’ve always been there to give me advice and guidance as I expand and operate my business. If I hadn’t seized the opportunity to start my company, I would still be working with them in commercial real estate development or perhaps in investment banking.”

Over the 16 years that Macedo Homes has operated, Macedo has seen rapid changes in the custom home building industry. “The best change has been the integration of technology and green practices,” he said. “I love smart homes and the progress that’s been made in affordable energy efficiency.

“Increasing numbers of my clients are embracing a



simpler, low-maintenance, energy-efficient lifestyle. As an example, we are building more and more one-story and one-and-a-half story homes. Approximately 50 percent of our client base is empty nesters between 50 and 60 but our younger clients are requesting the same items. Instead of wood or carpet flooring, we are laying tile floors throughout many of our homes and installing extremely energy-efficient materials and appliances, including high SEER air-conditioning.”



High quality materials, such as marbles and man-made stone, have become much more affordable, and Macedo is able to offer clients more bang for their buck when selecting finishes. “Most of our clients are educated, savvy individuals that do their due diligence on every stage and product for a home. The internet and online shopping has really helped my clients make selections without ever having to visit a showroom.”



Macedo has ambitious plans for his company’s future. “Our target in the next five years is to grow our business to completing 40 custom build-on-your-land homes per year – and to expand our scope to include the Texas Hill Country. We also want to make the home building process easier for our clients, trades and suppliers, and to earn the reputation as the number one build-on-your-land company in Texas.”

You may contact Macedo Homes at 281-468-1440 or e-mailing at santiagomacedo@sbcglobal.net or visiting www.macedohomebuilders.com



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additional ceiling fixtures, which almost all condominium units seem to need. You have to get real creative when highlighting artwork or adding additional ambient lighting, but then that's what makes these projects all the more rewarding in the end.

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

Fruit: After selecting a specific design style with the clients, I carry that design theme in detail throughout the home. I make sure all fixtures, fittings and finishes reflect this theme as well as all architectural elements, trimwork, surfacing materials, etc. Interior designers know just what flooring to select to create a country French look, what light fixtures will create an English country look and what mouldings and trims will create a classic American traditional look. If an interior designer does his or her work right, it makes builders' and remodelers' projects look fabulous.

Morrison: What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?

Fruit: The most common mistake I see builders make is selecting the wrong architectural style for fireplace surrounds and staircases. Many times builders resort to using the same style from the same vendor for every house they build. Windows, doors and trim work also are not always well selected. These important architectural elements are frequently ordered without proper design style consideration.

The biggest mistake I see homeowners make is in not seeking professional interior design guidance with their selections. They typically are very excited when it comes making their house selections, but so many are not aware of what is currently in style and what is not. They may know what they like, but many times what they like, a particular tile or finish or light fixture, is very outdated. Showroom personnel don't always know what trends are current, so the only way builders and homeowners can be assured of getting expert design advice is to engage the services of an interior designer. It generally takes only a few hours for an experienced interior designer to make all the major design selections that a home requires.

Morrison: Speaking about staying current, how to you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends

happening in the industry today?

Fruit: I am constantly educating and refreshing myself by reading design industry publications, such as Architectural Digest and Veranda, which showcase the latest and greatest in architecture, interior design and landscape design. I pay attention to design trends I see evolving on the internet, I read trade industry reports and I attend numerous design industry product meetings throughout the year to stay abreast of all the new innovative products coming out.

Morrison: What is your favorite design style?

Fruit: Right now it's English Country style due to the influence of the hit PBS series "Downton Abbey." I recently had the privilege of staying in a fabulous, centuries-old English manor house, Weston Park, in Shropshire, England, which further instilled in me a love and appreciation for beautiful English Country style design. I believe this comfortable traditional style will always be fashionable if kept fresh and casual for our active American lifestyle.



For more information, contact Susan Fruit ASID, CGR, CAPS at Susan Fruit Interiors at 713-817-6565 or susan@susanfruitinteriors.com or visit her website at www.susanfruitinteriors.com



Instead of Goals, Try Living with Intention

By Shirleen von Hoffmann

When you live with intention, you set out on a predetermined path of success every day. When you don't live with intention, you perform many mindless activities through the day that are possibly a waste of time.

Do you ever get to the end of the day and feel like you didn't accomplish anything?

Do you ever get off the computer and discover you were there for four hours?

When you live mindlessly and roll from one thing to another without thinking or following a predetermined path, you are not being intentional. Though to-do lists and goals are necessary, living with intention is having a regular practice that is done every day and every week so as to not waste one precious moment of life. Living with

intention is to approach life in a bigger way.

As we start a new year, let's focus on living each day with intention. So as you set your intentions and schedule for success in the new year, try creating a schedule that includes good habits that take care of YOU, the human being as well as YOU, the salesperson.

In the world of real estate, many of us have goals and or visions that we create each year. This year I would like to challenge you to make Intention Boards instead. Fill them with things you will do daily or weekly that will help with the big picture goals and vision you have for your life.

For instance, doing one task may make a positive result in five different aspects of your life. That is bigger

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picture. Put pictures on those intentions to make them even more powerful. Here's an example:

INTENTIONAL LIVING TIPS

Personal Work

- 0 hours of television; 0 hours of wasted time/negativity
- 1 hour of exercise daily; 1 hour to return email daily
- 2 liters of water daily; 2 hours of prospecting daily
- 3 cups of green tea daily; 3 hours of focused marketing weekly
- 4 short mental breaks daily; 4 return call times of 15 minutes each daily
- 5 small meals daily; 5 minutes of chit chat with each staff member weekly
- 6 A.M. wake up time; 6 handwritten cards of praise/prospecting follow-up
- 7 minutes of laughter daily; 7 new clients weekly
- 8 hours of sleep daily; 8 Lunch and Learns and/or dinner meetings monthly
- 9 hours of reading/music weekly; 9 field calls weekly
- 10 statements of gratitude; 10-minute morning huddles

“YOU” TIPS

- Start your day with a morning walk to get some exercise. Walking gives you time to plan your day mentally, to breathe, to stretch, to meditate, to be grateful. Exercise starts endorphins and moves your body all in one.
- Before arriving at work, have a plan on paper or computer of what you will accomplish that day. Fill your time with YOU elements and work elements. Drive the day; don't let it drive you.
- Water and feed your body throughout the day.
- Get enough rest, both in sleep and time away from work.
- Practice gratitude and laugh daily to improve your mental attitude.

TIME TIPS

- Always value Time as one of the most important components of your day.



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PROSPECTS AND CUSTOMER TIPS

In sales you have many bosses; they are called customers and prospects, and they should get the TLC they deserve. Never, ever take prospects coming through the door for granted as they are your golden goose.

A good way to keep yourself in check is to review every customer encounter with the TLC check:

TIME – Did I do everything possible to maximize my time and efforts with that prospect?

LISTEN – Did I listen carefully to that prospect for his/her needs, sell those needs and listen and respond to the buying signals?

CLOSE – Did I close that prospect and get the deal?

GROWTH TIPS

There is a saying, “As soon as you stop growing, you are dead.” That saying is so true. Most people who feel burnt out are people who have stopped growing. When you stop growing, it seems like you stop loving what you do, you become negative, bitter and not fun to be around. When you continue to grow, you continue to be engaged, optimistic and energetic and positive about the future. And, of course, the extra money you make from growth helps keep you this way!

- Reading constantly leads to growth.
- Never stop learning your trade through coaching and training.
- Build great teams, train and treat them right and trust them to do the work.
- Keep yourself fresh, adapt to change and renew yourself continuously.

- Be a “10” in energy each day; bring influence and positive energy to all you touch.

Living with intention involves engaging all of your energies and strengths. It means both affirming what you want and having fun on the journey. It means honoring your intentions as a number one priority.

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Shirleen von Hoffmann is owner and sales coach for Home Builders Edge. For more information, visit www.homebuildersede.com or contact Shirleen at shirleen@homebuildersede.com.

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*Rates will increase on January 17, 2016, see BuildersShow.com/fees for more information.



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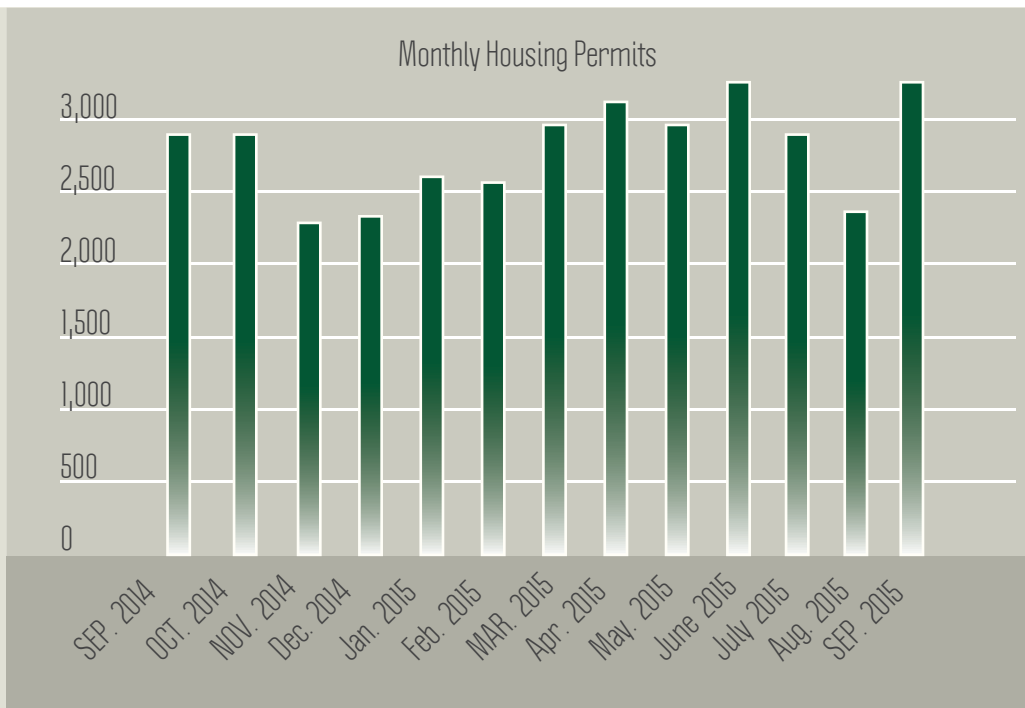
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Houston Housing Picture

Bohlke Consulting Group, LLC

Monthly housing permits filed by builders in the Houston Area.

Sep 2014	2,891
Oct 2014	2,873
Nov 2014	2,405
Dec 2014	2,439
Jan 2015	2,642
Feb 2015	2,624
Mar 2015	2,961
Apr 2015	3,231
May 2015	2,867
June 2015	3,129
July 2015	2,734
Aug 2015	2,395
Sep 2015	3,212
Sep 14 v. Sep 15	11.1%



MARKET	Oct 13 - Sep 14	Oct 14 - Sep 15	ANNUAL % CHANGE	-	-
GRAND TOTAL	34,561	33,512	-3.0%	-	-
Central	6,204	5,795	-6.6%	-	-
Far North	4,395	3,917	-10.9%	-	-
Northeast	3,357	3,422	1.9%	-	-
Northwest	4,397	4,319	-1.8%	-	-
South	2,160	2,260	-4.6%	-	-
Southeast	1,453	1,404	-3.4%	-	-
Southwest	4,066	4,248	4.5%	-	-
West Northwest	3,370	3,708	10.0%	-	-
West Southwest	5,152	4,424	-14.1%	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-

Monthly permit activity shows a 11.1% increase between September 2014 and September 2015. On a rolling 12 month basis, the September total of 33,512 is down 1,049 permits from 34,561 units compared to the same time period a year ago. This equates to a rolling percentage change of -3.0%.

IBS – Just Days Away in Las Vegas



The NAHB International Builders' Show (IBS) comes to Las Vegas, Nevada Jan. 19-21. The centerpiece of Design and Construction week at the Las Vegas Convention Center, IBS is the place to be this year for home builders, remodelers, developers, contractors and anyone else involved in the home building industry.

But with the show just days away, it's important to register as soon as you can – and grab a hotel room while there are still some available. Visit www.buildersshow.com for the details – but in the meantime, here's what you can expect, and five reasons why IBS is a can't-miss event.

Exhibits. Explore in-demand products on the industry's largest exhibit floor with 1,300+ top manufacturers and suppliers in more than 500,000 square feet of exhibits – or about the size of 10 football fields. Outdoor exhibits feature the latest in modular construction – including a full-size 3-D printed home built with the help of the federal Department of Energy.

Education. Learn from some of the industry's best speakers and access 85% new content in more than 120 education sessions in eight industry tracks. And for those who've left a session wishing they could have just a bit more time, we've added a dozen 90-minute sessions to our schedule so that you can take a deeper dive on more complex issues.

Design & Construction Week®. Your IBS registration includes access to ALL FOUR exhibit floors included in Design & Construction Week – IBS, the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show, International Window Coverings Expo and The International Surface Event. These shows take place at the convention center and also at the Mandalay hotel and exhibit space.

IBS Centrals. Network with industry leaders and focus on questions and issues unique to your niche market with access to 6 IBS Centrals – 55+ Housing, Custom Building, Design, Multifamily, Remodelers and Sales. Sessions here focus on how to make money and stand out from your competition. The Centrals are the hubs

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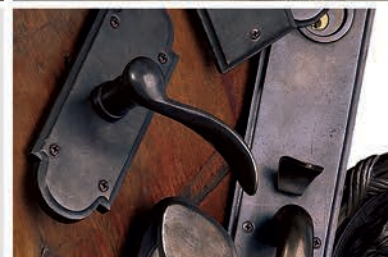
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