

SLIPPERY ROCK

GAZETTE

AUGUST 2023

VOL. 29-8

THE BEACON OF THE STONE INDUSTRY www.slipperyrockgazette.net

Real Stone & Granite: Monuments for Heroes

Just lately, mostly after watching a night's worth of world news, I seem to be grappling with the question: Does patriotism create freedom, or does freedom (or the lack of it) create patriotism?

Call it curious conjecture, but I think the answer is that it really depends on when and where you were born. For instance, for me as well as others born soon after World War II, freedom had been a birth-right due to the patriots who had answered Uncle Sam's call to fight. For most of us kids, these freedoms were unappreciated gifts taken for granted while growing up in a country victorious after ridding the world of tyranny, and any patriotism after that, came as an outgrowth of those gifts as we approached adulthood. But what about the children born into war, that's so prevalent

The Florida Vietnam Veteran's Memorial was Jose Ubilla's first major memorial installed at Veterans Memorial Park in Port St. Lucie. It has the names of the 1,952 Florida men and women who died in that war engraved in the black granite panels.

by Peter J. Marcucci

Photos Courtesy Real Stone & Granite

in today's news? They don't know freedom, and at best, if they survive, may only get a glimpse of the patriots fighting for it.

Beginning in 1936, a government known as the Somoza Regime came into power, and through the decades, began tightening its grip on the people of Nicaragua, slowly eroding their freedoms. Born in Chinandega, Nicaragua during this turbulent time, Jose D. Ubilla was raised there until the age of seventeen, at which time he decided to travel to America, recalled Ubilla. "I had a four-year plan, and came to the United States on January 20, 1978 to attend Arcadia University in Pennsylvania and learn English. It was not for political reasons. I then moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1979 to attend the University of Louisiana to learn more English, and after one semester, moved to Lafayette, Louisiana to work on my degree in agricultural economics."



Jose D. Ubilla meets Hershel "Woody" Williams during the dedication of the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument at Trinity Park in West Palm Beach, Florida, in 2019. He was the last living Medal of Honor recipient from the World War II Battle of Iwo Jima before passing away in June 2022. The Gold Star Families Memorial Monument was dedicated on September 25, 2016.

Ubilla's four-year plan included going back to Nicaragua after college; however, history and politics had other plans. Led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, the Nicaraguan revolution, which had been slowly brewing over the years, went into full-tilt boogie mode in 1979. One outcome

of the revolution was that Ubilla's family – his mother and nine brothers and sisters – were now exiled, and forced to emigrate. His family ended up scattered in Central America and South Florida.

[Please turn to page 2](#)

StoneLoads Connects Quarries to Distributors

Imagine: You are the new kid on the block. You have no previous stone experience. In 2016 you come across a great opportunity, and you buy a stone business – a quarry to be exact – and you spend 6 years trying to build your business doing things the way they have always been done, and getting frustrated by the antiquated process.

What do you do? You create a platform that is a whole new way for quarries and distributors to do business with each other that modernizes "the way it's always been done," and offers a simple, expedient solution to handle the sales process.

Let us introduce you to Patrick Wells, owner of Majestic Stone since 2016 and

Sharon Koehler

Stone Industry Consultant

the creator of the stone sales platform **StoneLoads**. Patrick had no prior stone experience when he purchased Majestic Stone, operating in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with quarries located on Dayton Mountain, but he felt that his manufacturing experience would nevertheless be extremely valuable in his new venture. After a while, he realized that the old way of buying stone from quarries was a quagmire of paperwork, unproductive sales calls, and red tape.

[Please turn to page 5](#)



Real Stone & Granite

Continued from page 1

The Big Move and the Beginning of a Dream

After leaving school in 1983, Ubilla moved to Miami, Florida, where he soon learned the stone biz while subcontracting work through his older brother, Pablo, an established architect, civil engineer, and also a tile contractor, he explained. “Whenever stone work became available, it became my passion, automatically, and how I got my feet wet in the stone business.”

In 1987, Ubilla briefly shared a partnership in a company called Interstone. He learned much and the company did well. However, the partnership dissolved after three years, and it was time to move on to bigger things.

In 1993, Ubilla’s dream company Real Stone & Granite had taken shape in a small



Ubilla: “We have an interesting mix of machines. I still believe the Italians have the edge in technology, but I do give credit where credit is due, and Park Industries has made a very serious statement with their equipment— their customer service is amazing.”

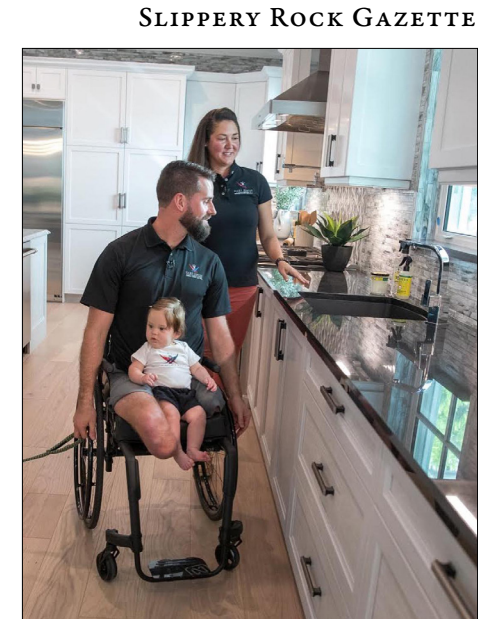
Below: Navy Seal Memorial is located with the Navy Seal Museum on Hutchinson Island, Ft. Pierce, Florida. Ubilla: “We began doing the memorials for those who had paid the ultimate sacrifice, and it became an automatic connection for us.” Right: Project for R.I.S.E.



building in Delray Beach, Florida. Starting out with only a Sawing Systems bridge saw, production grew as new machinery was added, as needed. Within five years, production had surpassed space, and a larger facility was needed. In 1999, the decision was made to pull up roots and move to a 20,000 square-foot facility they had located some 70 miles away in Fort Pierce, Florida.

Currently, the company’s two main markets consist of a high-end custom residential and commercial fabrication division, and a second monument division focused on a specialized clientele. Ubilla’s brother, Vice President Alejandro Ubilla, oversees both divisions as well as other parts of the business. In-house designs, estimating and web marketing for both divisions is overseen by Maria R. Gonzales.

As for market share, President Jose D.



Ubilla recalled, “When we moved here in 1999, the idea was to serve a larger section of Florida. Comfortably, we are within two hours to Orlando, Fort Lauderdale or Miami, and three hours to the Sarasota and Tampa area. So we can cover a large portion of the state within a reasonable amount of time. We do quite a bit of local sales, but our area of concentration is a hundred mile radius from here in Fort Pierce.”

There’s also a third division that’s been since the early ’90s, but up and coming, continued Ubilla. “Real Stone Bahamas Limited is a 17-year-old sister company, managed by Urbano Lopez. It is a showroom/warehouse and installation company, and will soon be a version of the Fort Pierce fabrication facility.” All in all, both locations average a total of 60 team members.

Please turn to page 3

Real Stone & Granite has approximately 60 team members at both the Fort Pierce shop and its sister branch. “We’re a high-capacity shop,” said Ubilla, “and teamwork is very important to us. We couldn’t do all we do without teamwork.”



Real Stone & Granite

Continued from page 2

Honoring the Great Sacrifices, Dreams and Accomplishments of Others

About a year after the big move, Ubilla was offered a proposal by the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 566, to build the Florida Vietnam Veteran's Wall in Veterans Park, in Port Saint Lucie. Being primarily a countertop fabricator and not being setup for producing monuments, this project was quite a challenge at the time, recalled Ubilla. "The project encompassed engraving 1,952 names on the wall, Floridian soldiers who gave it their all in Vietnam. It was a major project for us at the time, and something that made me look into the value of freedom, and the American ideology of freedom. It made me look back and think about why I am here. Working for all these veterans and building this monument made me realize the importance of the American dream, and not being a financial dream like most people perceive it. The American dream is an idea and a way of life, and what this country has been throughout history to be what it is."

The Vietnam Veteran's Wall memorial was designed by Architect David Cleveland. The project consisted of 32,000 pounds of

Below, Left: This high-end kitchen island is cristallo quartzite tied in with a backsplash of glass tile panels.

Below, Right: The Main Bar at OIA Restaurant – Goldwynn Resort & Residences. By Real Stone Bahama Ltd. division.

Khammam Black granite brought in from India by container and placed onsite. The material was fully erected, stenciled and sandblasted, and was proudly unveiled to a crowded audience on June 14, 2001. When viewed, there is no question that this beautiful work of art helps to bring closure to those who have lost their loved ones in this tragic war.

Other notable monument projects include the Navy Seal Monument, The Four Chaplains Monument, The Space Walk of Fame, The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, The Gold Star Family Memorial, The Astronaut Walk of Fame, The Afghanistan War – Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Desert Storm Memorial, and The Korean War, World War II and Pearl Harbor Memorials.

Logistics

Real Stone & Granite's sales consist of approximately 50% quartz, with a healthy mix of Pompeii, and a heavily concentration in porcelain and natural stone. Most are purchased from local distributors, however, Ubilla does occasionally import, he explained. "For commercial projects, many times we coordinate direct importing and even pre-fabricating from overseas. Over the years I've built relationships with quarries run by responsible people in Italy, Brazil, India, Spain, Vietnam, as well as Marmoles de Honduras SA, who we have an extremely close relationship with."

To help keep everyone's finger on the pulse of production, Stoneapp software and Slabsmith software help to facilitate and control all elements from sales to installation. All equipment was handpicked by Ubilla and his team and is first quality.



Top to Bottom: Newly installed Helios Zeus, in addition to Real Stone's Helios CUT500 CNC Saw and a LUX Auto Face Polishing machine, used for monument faces and other projects.

Ubilla says their Park Fusion is a true workhorse.

Korean War Monument, Veteran's Park, Port St. Lucie, Florida. Dedicated in 2006, the monument combines engraved granite with bas-relief bronze.

Purple Heart Monument, also installed in Veteran's park, pays tribute to veterans wounded in the Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iran military actions.

Here's what he had to say: "Our Helios Zeus CNC Router is capable of cutting and fabricating countertops, sink holes, and producing 3D monuments up to eight inches in thickness, while our Helios Cut 500 CNC Saw is fully programmable with a Robo Move feature and hydraulic tilt-table, and is ideal for porcelain slabs, Dekton and engineered stones. We also use a Helios LUX Automatic Face Polisher that is very instrumental for polishing, honing and brushing any type of natural or engineered stone.

"Our Park Industries Fusion Duel Table is great for precise digital cutting of any type of stones or quartz, et cetera. It is fast and furious, and is a combination blade/waterjet cutting system. Our Park Industries Fast Back is ideal for flat polishing any type of natural or engineered stones. It has large production capacity, and leaves a great quality finish on the edges of countertops. Our Park Industries Pro-Edge 4 is also ideal for custom edges on countertops of any type of stones up to 5 inches in thickness. We also employ a Park Industries Wizard that is literally a workhorse. It's a very versatile machine good for many uses from edge polishing and shaping, to face polishing any type of stone. This was a great investment we made in 2002. Still going strong, it's a wonderful, versatile tool that I'll never get rid of!"

Please turn to page 9



Special Feature in this Issue...



SLIPPERYROCK GAZETTE®
The Voice of the Stone Fabricator

Real Stone & Granite: Monuments for Heroes, by Peter Marcucci Begins on 1

Training, Safety and Education

Industry Calendar of Events and Training: August to October 2023..... 5

Do Your Own Push-Ups to Build a Great Business, by Ed Young 6

Use the Right CRM Tool to Foster Your Company's Growth and Revenue, by Justin Shaw 8

Video for the Win: Using Video to Promote Your Countertop Shop, by Stephen Alberts 12

ISFA Announces Mineral Training Surfaces Event in Ohio 23

Industry News, Topics, Tips and Featured Columns

StoneLoads Connects Quarries to Distributors, by Sharon Koehler Begins on 1

Product Review: New EZ Loader is a Game-Changer for Countertop Installers
and Shops Begins on 10

Why You Should Be Wary of AI Tech and the Voice Scams It Helps Create,
by Sharon Koehler 13

TISE and SASE Announce Cambria as Key Exhibitor at 2024 Event 14

L.A. County Ponders Quartz-Surface Ban 15

Stone Restoration and Maintenance Corner – Italy and the Art of Stone,
by Bob Murrell Begins on 17

The Stone Detective – The Case of Mysterious Efflorescence, by Frederick M. Hueston 18

With Each Generation, the Process of Letting Go Comes Full Cycle, by Sam Venable 19

Marketplace 20

Classified Ads 21

Contributors & Staff

Rick Stimac Publisher

Larry M. Hood Editor and Design Director

G. William Brown..... Graphic Designer

Stephen Alberts..... Countertop Marketing Co.

Mark Anderson Department of Humor

Frederick M. Hueston Stone Forensics Investigations

Sharon Koehler Stone Industry Consultant

Rufus B. Leakin Guru of Urban Folklore

Peter Marcucci Special Contributor

Bob Murrell Restoration Consultant

Justin Shaw Stone Fabricator Elite

Ed Young Fabricator's Business Coach

Sam Venable Department of Irony

Read our online edition at www.slipperyrockgazette.net. Use the Classified drop-down menu to browse ads and to place a classified ad, and the article links to view stories in the current issue. Send advertising inquiries to LHood@slipperyrockgazette.net, and comments c/o publisher@slipperyrockgazette.net. Subscription requests, a classified ad submission form, current and archived back issues and articles are available online at www.slipperyrockgazette.net.

“If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.” — *George Orwell*

How Do You Compare?

Prove Your Quality & Safety Practices are Best in Class

Only the finest companies in the industry can meet all of the qualifications necessary to earn Natural Stone Institute Accreditation. Differentiate yourself from the competition. Prove to design teams and consumers that your fabrication and installation methods are best in class and that safety is a top priority. Get started by watching our accreditation webinars.

naturalstoneinstitute.org/accreditation

Project completed by Carnevale & Lohr, Natural Stone Institute Accredited since 2014.

THE EASY & POWERFUL WAY TO HANDLE STONE

WOOD'S POWR-GRIP® VACUUM LIFTERS & HAND CUPS

- ✓ Specifically **designed for safety**
- ✓ Every product is **individually tested and approved** before shipping
- ✓ **USA Manufacturer** complies with **ANSI standards**

Visit WPG.com or call **800.548.7341** for more information on WPG's stone-handling products.

Share your project photos of Powr-Grip products in use @woodspowrgrip

INDUSTRY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 2023

ISFA Vanity Workshop Training and Certification

When: Wednesday, August 8 to Thursday, August 9, 2023

Where: Gecko Solid Surface Solutions, San Antonio, Texas

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

Rockheads

When: Thursday, August 9 to Friday, August 10, 2023

Where: Star Lumber, Oklahoma City, OK

Visit www.rockheadsusa.com for more information and to register.

ISFA General Member Meeting

When: Thursday, August 31, 2023 – 2:00PM- 3:00 PM

Where: Virtual Event

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

September 2023

NSI: Colorado Study Tour

When: Sunday, September 10, 2023 to Thursday, September 14, 2023

Where: Grand Junction / Glenwood Springs, Colorado

Visit Naturalstoneinstitute.org for more info.

ISFA Mineral Surfaces Training: Porcelain, Sintered and Ultra-Compact

When: Wednesday, September 13 to Thursday, September 14, 2023

Where: Tower Industries, Massillion, Ohio

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

ISFA: Advanced CNC Technology Training and Certification

When: Wednesday, September 20 to Thursday, September 21, 2023

Where: ZOLLER, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

NSI: Missouri Stone Summit– Fabricator Town Hall

When: Thursday, September 21, 2023

Where: 10800 Linpage Place, St. Louis, MO 63132

Visit Naturalstoneinstitute.org for more info.

Marmomac Industry Trade Show

When: Monday, September 25 to Friday, September 29, 2023

Where: Verona, Italy

Visit <https://www.marmomac.com> for more information.

October 2023

ISFA: 2023 Annual Conference

When: Monday, October 16 to Thursday, October 19, 2023

Where: Sint Maartin; **Registration ends August 30, 2023**

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

NTCA, CTDA, TCNA, TCAA: Total Solutions Plus

When: October 22 to October 24, 2023

Where: Hilton Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, LA

Visit www.ctdahome.org/tsp/2023/ for more information and to register

BACA Systems Training

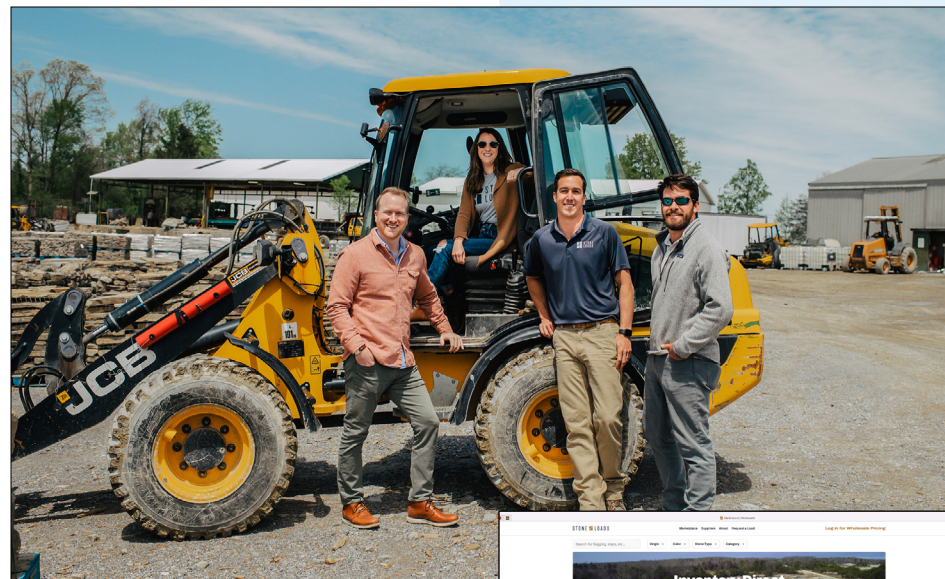
When: October 25 & 26, 2023

Where: Orion Township, Michigan

Other regional and online event opportunities are available through the industry association websites listed above.

StoneLoads Connects

L to R, founders: David Martin, Natalie Martin, Patrick Wells, John Bryant



Continued from page 1

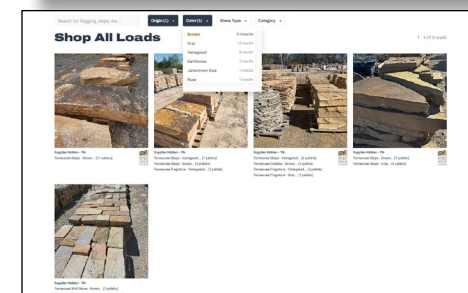
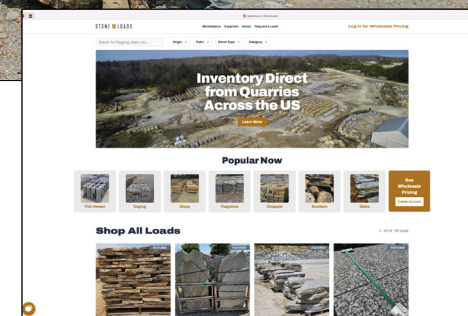
Patrick also realized that there was a huge disconnect between what the quarry could do and what the distributors thought they could do. He knew there had to be a better way... enter technology.

He and a few other forward-thinking individuals researched, designed, and launched StoneLoads aka stoneloads.com, an online platform where quarries and distributors can come together and do business in a fast, simple, all-inclusive way.

Stoneloads.com went live in May 2022, just over a year ago. Despite its short time in the market, it has made a big enough impact on our industry that they were awarded two TISE awards in February 2023 at the Las Vegas show. StoneLoads was recognized as Best of Product and Best of Sustainability/Disruption, and they were named a “Company to Watch in 2023” by *CitiScope* magazine, published in and for Chattanooga. Patrick himself has been a guest on the Stone World Podcast, Scenic Roots, and FreightWaves’ What the Truck?!? Podcasts. He is very involved with NSI and says the NSI has given him an immeasurable amount of support, plus he is on the advisory committee for North American Quarries.

John Bryant, another key contributor, co-founder, and COO of the company has been featured in *Authority* magazine. John had years of experience in distributor sales and worked for Patrick at Majestic Stone. He brought those unique skills and insights to the platform to help create the streamlined, efficient purchasing process.

It’s actually a very simple process for quarries to join the platform. Once they apply and are vetted, usually by visits from Patrick, each quarry is responsible for keeping their own



StoneLoads home page and “Tennessee / Color / Brown Stone” search parameters.

inventory up to date and current in real time. Not every quarry is allowed on the platform. They can be refused for business practices or other reasons. And, once on the platform, quarries can be removed due to business practices and other reasons, as well.

Distributors can also easily join the platform and can search nationwide for the product they need. Once they find it, they can purchase and arrange shipping all at one time. The great thing is that now searches can be done across the nation instead of just local sourcing.

To that issue, Patrick made an excellent point: “There are quarries in Oklahoma that are crushing Flagstone because they have 3 to 5,000 pallets on the ground. Well, that same product? I know distributors in Atlanta, who can’t get enough of it.

Please turn to page 16

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Do Your Own Push-Ups to Build a Great Business

There's a Facebook post that has been making the rounds lately and starts with the line "I'm not ignoring you. I'm overwhelmed. Small business owners will understand..." In it the writer does a great job of describing the chaos, stress, and loneliness that often comes with running a small business. From the comments and likes, it's apparent this message hit home with many fab shop owners.

A few reader comments even extolled the virtues of their favorite business management system as a solution to the challenges expressed in the post and in the other comments.

The problem with business management systems is, whether you are tracking Throughput Dollars daily or Gross Margin and COGS monthly or some other metric; whether you have read a book and are implementing a system DIY or are engaging a business coach – none of this matters if you don't consistently execute the activities prescribed by the system. Let me say this another way: **If you struggle with finding the time to work ON your business and improve how you run your business, then no system will help you.**

A business management system (example: EOS, Throughput, Synchronous Flow) is just a system. It is a structure to help you improve how you run your business. A system will have specific metrics to track. It will educate you on how to use those metrics to make good business decisions. It will have some sort of regular management meeting schedule and specific purpose for those meetings. It may include other system elements appropriate for your business. It may be specific to this industry or not. **But at the end of the day, it is just a system. You still have to consistently work the system.** Without this, you won't get the results you expect.

The most common objection I get to implementing any management system is, "I just don't have the time." This is another way of saying, "My business

Ed Young
Fabricator's Business Coach

runs me. I don't run my business."

One of my most successful clients started with the same mindset. He was so busy he simply couldn't find the time to work ON his business. We talked about what would happen in the next year if he couldn't improve how he ran his business. Then we talked about what the next 5 years would look like if he didn't change. The picture was pretty ugly: long days, short nights, constant stress, not enough money, not enough time with family, health issues caused by stress – all the things he didn't want in life and none of the things he did want.

After some thought, he decided he needed to prioritize improving how he ran his business. Since he was convinced that he couldn't find the time needed during his normal day, he started getting up an hour earlier in the morning and heading to the shop before anyone else got there.

By focusing only on one specific improvement activity each week, he was able to start improving how he managed his business. Slowly, week by week, he was able to make enough progress until he was able to carve out an additional hour during each day. Now he had 2 hours

The thing about business coaches and management systems: they can't do your push-ups for you.

per day he could work ON the business. As he continued to focus on individual improvement activities, he freed up more and more time to put toward improving how he ran his business. Today, he has a solid growth plan, a strong management team, and has almost none of the stress he had when we first started working together.

These positive results would not have happened if HE hadn't made the commitment to find the time to do the work. Without that commitment, I couldn't have helped him. In fact, no business system could have helped him.

IF YOU STRUGGLE WITH FINDING THE TIME TO WORK ON YOUR BUSINESS AND IMPROVE HOW TO RUN YOUR BUSINESS, THEN NO SYSTEM WILL HELP YOU.

That's the thing about business coaches and our management systems – we can't do your push-ups for you. As the owner, you have to do your own push-ups.

Frequently fab shop owners ask, "How do I get from my current \$3M level to \$10M or \$20M? How did those guys do it?" The short answer is, at some point in their growth, they put time into working ON their business. Apple is one of the largest companies in terms of stock market value today. When Jobs and Wozniak started building computers in their

garage, they understood they knew nothing about running a business. So, early on, they hired a capable business manager. The process wasn't always smooth. In fact, at one point, Jobs was pushed out of his own company. Even when he later returned as CEO, others handled the mechanics of running the company so Jobs could focus on product strategy and product design. Apple wouldn't be where it is today without sound business management.

Some folks ask me, "What is the best business system for my company? Which one should I pick?" The answer is always the same: The best business system for your company is the one that you commit to consistently executing. After you read the books and talk to the coaches and consultants, pick the system that resonates the best with how you want to run your business, and pick the coach you relate the best with. Make sure you are comfortable with both. **Then commit to consistently executing.**

I tell prospective clients all the time that one of the most challenging aspects of what I do is determining if a shop owner and their management team can execute well. Are they committed? What drives their commitment? And I don't always get it right. Sometimes I take on a client that I really want to help, yet I have doubts about their ability to execute. Once it becomes clear that I over-estimated their capability and they really can't make the time to work ON their business, then we have to part ways – because I can't do their push-ups for them.

I get it – when you are in the midst of the constant firefight, it feels impossible to disconnect and work ON your business. But, at the end of the day, it is your business and your life. Only you can decide if the pain and stress you live with are satisfactory or if something has to change!

If you are struggling to reach your business goals or if you're just stressed out and are ready to regain some sanity in your business, visit my website and schedule an assessment, or contact me at Ed@FabricatorsCoach.com. We'll talk about your situation, and I'll help you develop a plan to reduce the chaos, make more money, and get your life back.

✓ MARBLE ✓ GRANITE ✓ QUARTZ ✓ CERAMIC



Scan QR code for details!



Our smooth, transparent, low- yellowing, signature formula.

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Use the Right CRM Tool to Foster Your Company's Growth and Revenue

Running a successful stone fabrication business or countertop company requires efficient management of customer relationships. Yet, many businesses in the industry overlook the potential of a proper Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. In this article, we'll explore why not using a suitable CRM is hindering the growth and revenue potential of stone fabrication businesses and countertop companies.

What is a CRM system and what is its relevance to the industry?

A CRM system is a software tool designed to help businesses manage and nurture customer relationships effectively. For stone fabrication and countertop companies, a CRM can be the backbone of your operation. It enables you to store customer data, track interactions, and manage communications. With a suitable CRM system, you can streamline your sales and marketing strategies, improve customer experiences, and drive growth.

Why does an ERP fall short as a CRM solution?

While an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system may handle various aspects of your business operations, it will not provide the comprehensive features required to manage prospect/customer relationships effectively. ERP systems often focus on inventory management, production, and financials, but they lack the specialized functionality and sales and marketing-centric features of a dedicated CRM.

The limitations of stone industry-specific software

There are several excellent stone industry-specific software packages available. The *Slippery Rock* has reviewed and written about most of them. These valuable tools cater to the specific needs of stone fabrication businesses and countertop companies, and are top-notch in such areas as project management or job tracking, creating takeoffs and estimates. However, in my assessment, they lack some specialized tools to fully support and power your sales, marketing efforts, and growth. Something additional is needed that CRM provides.

Justin Shaw
Stone Fabricator Elite

Excel Spreadsheets are also insufficient for managing deals and pipelines.

Relying on Excel spreadsheets to manage deals and customer information may seem convenient, but it falls short when it comes to managing the complexity of customer relationships. Spreadsheets lack the automation, collaboration, and visualization capabilities necessary to effectively manage a sales pipeline. Investing in a proper CRM system ensures you have the tools to automate tasks, collaborate with team members, and visualize your sales pipeline, enhancing efficiency and driving revenue.

Focus on a proper pipeline, automation, and data visualization system.

A robust CRM system empowers stone fabrication companies by providing a centralized pipeline that aligns with the entire sales process. From lead generation to deal closure, a CRM allows you to track and manage every interaction, ensuring that no opportunities are missed. By automating repetitive tasks, you can save time, reduce errors, and focus on building strong customer relationships that lead to repeat business and referrals.

Leverage the right CRM to power sales and marketing.

A CRM is not just a tool for sales teams; it can also revolutionize your marketing efforts. By capturing and analyzing customer data, a CRM provides valuable insights into customer preferences, behavior, and purchasing patterns. Marketing campaigns such as Facebook and Google ads can be integrated or launched from within the CRM, allowing you to get a clear picture of what marketing efforts are attributing to sales, jobs, and return on investment.

Harness reporting and dashboards for informed decision-making.

A key advantage of a CRM is the



ability to generate comprehensive reports and dashboards that offer real-time visibility into your business's performance. For stone fabrication businesses and countertop companies, this means having insights into sales metrics, customer trends, and marketing campaign effectiveness. By leveraging these insights, you can make data-driven decisions, identify areas for improvement, and optimize your strategies to drive growth and maximize revenue.

Sales reps can sell more jobs, more easily, with a proper CRM.

A CRM provides a structured framework for managing leads, ensuring that none slip through the cracks. Sales reps can easily capture and qualify leads, assign follow-up tasks, and set reminders for timely engagement. With the proper CRM, sales managers can monitor lead progression, identify bottlenecks, and provide necessary support and guidance.

Gain insight into a sales rep's performance with a CRM.

With a CRM, business owners and sales managers gain access to comprehensive performance tracking and reporting features. They can measure key sales metrics, such as conversion rates, call volume, response

time, deal velocity, and revenue generated by each sales rep. This data helps identify top performers, highlight areas for improvement, and implement targeted training or incentive programs.

What's the right CRM for your shop?

We've been working with stone fabricators since 2017, and have been helping shops to build high performing Sales Engines to drive growth and profitability for the past three years. The tool that enables and powers a Sales Engine is a CRM. Not all CRMs are created equal, selecting the right one for your shop should be a well-researched decision. If you want information on the CRM all of our clients are using feel free to get in touch with us directly at info@stonefabricatorelite.com

Justin Shaw is the founder of Stone Fabricator Elite, a new business development and sales improvement agency. Their flagship program includes providing end-to-end CRM implementation, full on-boarding, support and monitoring to ensure sales teams are effectively using the tool and that the shops see a measurable improvement in sales. You can learn more about Stone Fabricator Elite at www.stonefabricatorelite.com.

Real Stone & Granite

Continued from page 3

“We also use a BACA Systems Saw-Jet. It is a fully robotic sawing system capable of cutting 20 slabs per day, and is ideal for high production. Finally, our BACA Systems Miter X is ideal for mitring straight edges on any material. There is zero chipping, and it does perfect miters every time.

“So we have an interesting mix of machines. I still believe the Italians have the edge in technology, but I do give credit where credit is due, and Park Industries has made a very serious statement with their equipment, and their customer service is amazing. As for Helios equipment, it is very precise and easy to use. They use a lot of stainless steel in the construction and it holds up very well. The cost is very reasonable compared to other brands, and their service is excellent. They treat customers like family, and I think that’s extremely important when you build a relationship.” By the time this issue goes to press, Ubilla said that a new twin table BACA Robo JetSaw will also be installed.

The Dream Carried Forward

“All of us at Real Stone & Granite are extremely proud of being chosen for the many memorial projects we’ve done, especially when you get to meet the people



Veteran’s Park at Port St. Lucie, Florida contains monuments to all the veterans and fallen heroes, from WWI onward. Above: World War II Memorial for all armed forces; Below: Ubilla stands by part of the large Vietnam War monument. Right: Space Walk of Fame, at the Space View Park, Trussville, Florida. An extensive series of monuments records America’s Space Program, including a Space Shuttle monument listing all the astronauts and crew of all shuttle missions.

behind these projects, and see why they want to do them,” he continued. “It makes them special in every case. Take the Navy Seal monument in Fort Pierce, Florida. When building it, I learned that it was the original training ground for the Navy Seals in 1949, when they were part of secret military operations. The sad part of building it, however, was that we had to leave blank panels for upcoming wars to make

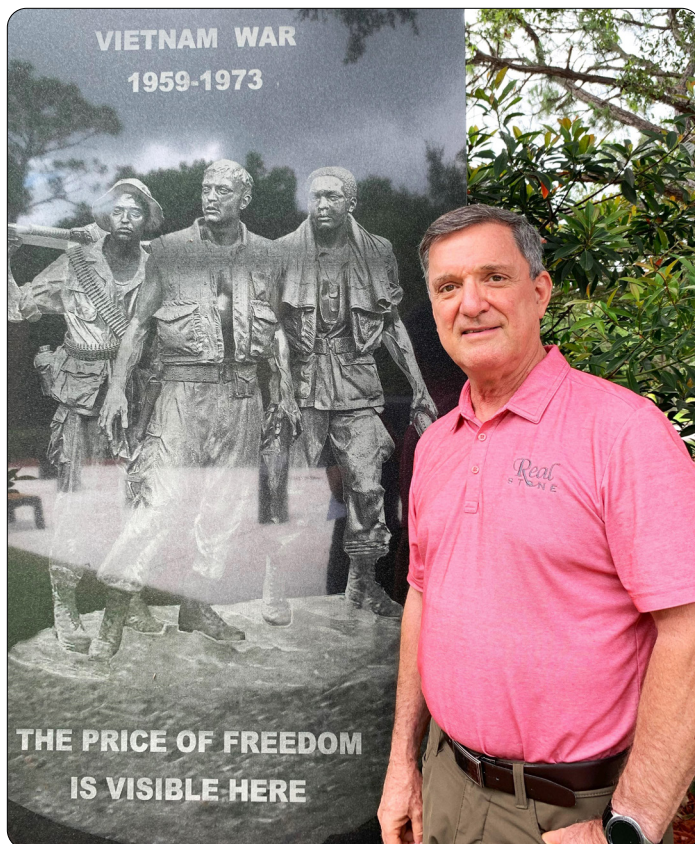
room for more names. These monuments will be there forever, are part of our history, and the people in this country should learn from them and value what America has been through to make it what it is. We have learned much doing these projects and we look forward to doing them for years to come.”



Real Stone & Granite is a member of the National Stone Institute, the National Kitchen and Bath Association, the Treasure Coast Builders Association and the Gary Sinise Foundation.

To see more examples of their fabrication and monument work, visit www.realstone-andgranite.com.

Bottom, Left: Ubilla was offered a proposal by the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 566, to build the Florida Vietnam Veteran’s Wall in Veterans Park, in Port Saint Lucie. Below: Great teams don’t happen overnight. They are formed by outstanding people. Meet the Real Stone Team!



New EZ Loader is a Game-Changer for Countertop Installers and Shops

Ever since granite countertops were introduced to the market in the '60s and '70s, and up until recently, getting large islands installed in residential kitchens has been an industry problem and is often a safety issue.

The EZ Installation Cart with the new EZ Loader is a combo designed by Louwrens Mulder, and is a game-changer for countertop fabricators and installers. According to Mulder, "This device solves several shop and installation issues, making installs safer, and making it easier to move large tops, and especially, installing large island tops. It's designed to reduce the injuries so common with loading, unloading, and installing large pieces of stone."

Louwrens has been an inventor and engineer for decades. He designed and built a number of products for various industries in South Africa and in the USA. In South Africa, he designed and built the first Hydraulic Reset Agricultural Ripper for the farming industry. For South Africa's Gold and Platinum underground mines, he designed and built Knocked Down Scraper Scoops, Rail Carts and Mechanical Roof support systems.

In 2011, Mulder developed and, along with BB Industries, introduced the Tomahawk Stone Splitter to stone companies in the USA, still in use by many stone companies, today.

In everything Mulder builds, he says he always applies the golden rule of design: keep it simple. Make it durable, inexpensive to fabricate and easy to operate. And that is exactly what he accomplished with his latest invention: the EZ Loader (for use in combination with the EZ Installation Cart).

"I designed the EZ Installation Cart first, and introduced it to the stone industry at the 2020 TISE show. The cart provided a simple solution to a common problem- transferring stone into a jobsite. Still, I realized something was missing. About a year ago I began working on a design for another simple device for loading and unloading stone from a transport cart, to the EZ Cart. I designed it to work with the EZ Cart, and together they make one system that eliminates the need to manually lift heavy stone in the shop, and on the jobsite," Mulder recalls.

Every countertop shop owner, as well as every installer, understands what a challenge

Photos Courtesy Patton Productions

it is to transfer, lift, load or install heavy pieces of stone, especially islands. Usually, there are no cranes and forklifts on jobsites, and sometimes there's a limited number of people to get an island from the Transfer Rack or A-frame into the kitchen – let alone get it transferred off the truck or trailer.

"The EZ Loader, along with the EZ Installation Cart, not only reduces back and other injuries, it reduces the number of installers needed to safely transport a large piece of stone into a kitchen space. The EZ Loader used in tandem with the EZ Cart means less chance of injury from lifting heavy stone on the jobsite," said Mulder.



Transferring a large island top from a transport cart to the EZ Installation Cart, can almost effortlessly be done by one person.

"The process of using this equipment to move stone from the shop to the jobsite is simple. For example, say you are preparing to install an island. Most shops have a forklift equipped with a stone lifter, like a Wood's Powr Lifter or a boom equipped with an Abaco Clamp. You would use the devices you have available in your shop to load the island onto the EZ Loader, and strap it down for transport.

"Once onsite, slide and transfer the Island with the EZ Loader onto the EZ Installation Cart – with my patent-pending roller system it takes very little effort to move the island to the EZ Cart (See photo above). We also



Starting at the shop: loading a large island top from EZ Installation Cart to a transport cart.

offer a transfer ramp to move the cart from your trailer or truck into the jobsite.

"Then, roll the EZ Installation Cart with the island into the jobsite or kitchen; raise the cart up to cabinet level and slide and roll the island onto the support cabinets. Just two people can handle virtually any installation."

Some of the Issues and Problems the EZ Loader Solves:

Workers lifting large islands with just suction cups, hand devices or panel carriers is a well-known cause of injury among stone workers. Some of the many issues and problems are:

- **Back and shoulder injuries.** In most cases an island is just too big or heavy to be easily positioned with brute force. Regardless, the job has to get done, somehow the island has to be lifted and installed. Using body muscle alone, the stone gets maneuvered two, three, four times or more, and then you hear – "I think I just hurt my back, man!" and then, the next morning the boss asking, "Where is my lead installer?" "Sorry, sir – he injured his back yesterday and he is going to the doctor (or at the ER, or in the hospital with a ruptured disk or torn muscles)."

- **Sideline your install crew** for a day, a week or a month while they heal; and the next thing you know you also have to...

- **Pull your shop guys to help with a big island install**, causing a bottleneck in production and...

- **Job delays and changed schedules** in addition to...

- **Insurance claims**, increased expenses, and sometimes permanently sidelining your lead installer, and forcing you to...

- **Search for the strongest guy available.** But no matter how strong the installer is or how well-trained, sooner or later he is going to say to himself, "Enough is enough!" and then your shop and the industry is losing another great and experienced employee.

With any or all of these all-too common scenarios, shops will experience increased cost, lose valuable workers and production time, resulting in lower profit margins.



Island top loaded and ready to roll into the jobsite with the EZ Installation Cart.

Please turn to page 18



T-REX

MODEL S DUAL TABLE
FABRICATION CENTER

THE **FASTEST** COMPLETE FABRICATION CENTER IN THE STONE INDUSTRY



EXCLUSIVE
FEATURES

CALL US TODAY AT:

877.571.5599

FOR ALL DETAILS AND PRICING

 @PoseidonMachines  @PoseidonUSA1  @PoseidonUSA1
Visit us online at poseidonmachinery.com or call us at **877.571.5599**

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Video for the Win: Using Video to Promote Your Countertop Shop

IN today's fast-paced digital world, IN videos has become an essential strategy for businesses looking to stand out and engage with their target audience. Countertop shops can benefit greatly from incorporating video content into their marketing efforts. Videos offer a visually captivating and interactive way to showcase their products, share customer testimonials, demonstrate installation processes, and more. In this article, we will explore how countertop shops can effectively use videos, along with an in-depth breakdown of video specifications for popular platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.

Showcasing Products and Services

One of the most significant advantages of using videos for countertop shops is the ability to showcase your products and services effectively. Videos provide a dynamic medium to display the beauty, durability, and functionality of different countertop materials, colors, and finishes. By featuring close-ups, panning shots, and even 360-degree views, potential customers can get a comprehensive understanding of the available options, helping them make informed decisions.

Customer Testimonials and Case Studies

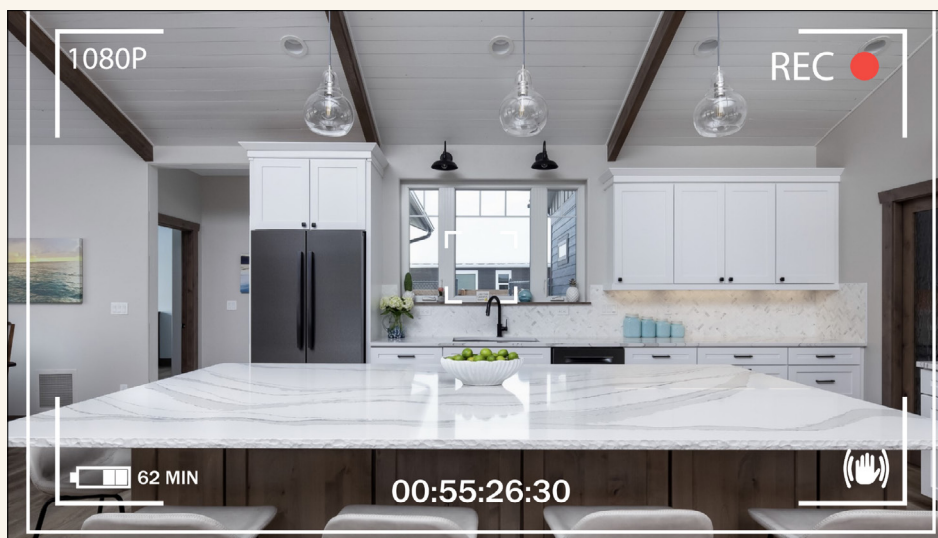
Videos are an excellent platform for sharing customer testimonials and case studies. By recording satisfied customers sharing their positive experiences with your countertops, you can build trust and credibility among your target audience. Additionally, presenting before and after transformations through video case studies can help prospective customers visualize the potential improvements your countertops can bring to their homes.

Virtual Showroom Tours

Another powerful way to utilize videos for your countertop shop is by offering virtual showroom tours. With the help of high-quality video footage, you can provide a visually immersive experience to potential customers who may not be able to visit your physical location.

Stephen Alberts
Countertop Marketing

By showcasing different countertop materials, designs, and styles in a virtual tour, you can help customers visualize how the countertops would look in their own homes. Incorporate close-up shots, pan across various countertop displays, and provide detailed descriptions to give viewers a comprehensive understanding of your offerings. Virtual showroom tours can be shared on your website, social media platforms, and even through email newsletters, allowing you to reach



a broader audience and make a lasting impression.

Video Specifications for the Most Used Social Media Platforms

To effectively leverage videos for your countertop shop, it's crucial to understand the specific requirements of different social media platforms. Let's take a closer look at YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram:

YouTube:

Recommended video length: The ideal length for YouTube videos is typically between 5-10 minutes. However, it's essential to focus on quality content rather than adhering strictly to a specific duration.

Think about it. People remember ...



20%

20% of what they HEAR



30%

30% of what they SEE



70%

70% of what they HEAR & SEE

Aspect ratio: YouTube supports a variety of aspect ratios, but the recommended ratio is 16:9 (widescreen).

Facebook:

Recommended video length: Facebook videos should ideally be between 15-60

Aspect ratio: The recommended aspect ratio for Instagram Stories videos is 9:16 (vertical).

Instagram Reels:

Recommended video length: Instagram Reels can be up to 30 seconds long, offering a short and snappy format to capture users' attention.

Aspect ratio: The recommended aspect ratio for Instagram Reels is 9:16 (vertical).

Videos have become a powerful tool for countertop shops to connect with their audience and boost their marketing efforts. By utilizing videos, countertop shops can effectively showcase their products, share customer testimonials, and more. Understanding the video specifications for popular platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram allows countertop shops to tailor their content accordingly and maximize their reach and engagement. Incorporating videos into your marketing strategy can help your countertop shop gain a competitive edge, increase brand visibility, and ultimately drive sales and customer satisfaction. Embrace the power of video and watch your countertop shop thrive in the digital realm.

seconds to capture users' attention in a fast-scrolling feed. **Aspect ratio:** The recommended aspect ratio for Facebook videos is 16:9 or 9:16 (vertical).

Instagram:

Instagram Feed:

Recommended video length: Videos for the Instagram feed should be around 30 seconds or less to maximize engagement.

Aspect ratio: The ideal aspect ratio for Instagram feed videos is 1:1 (square) or 4:5 (vertical).

Instagram Stories:

Recommended video length: Instagram Stories videos should be 15 seconds or less.

Stephen Alberts is the owner of the Countertop Marketing Co. and STONE ENGAGE. They specialize in helping countertop companies grow the retail side of their business outside of word-of-mouth and referrals. They also offer software to help you engage more with customers and close more countertop projects. To learn more, visit countertopmarketingco.com or stonengage.com. Email Stephen at steve@countertopmarketingco.com.

Why You Should Be Wary of AI Tech and the Voice Scams It Helps Create

Sharon Koehler
Stone Industry Consultant

Artificial Intelligence has the capability of being a boon to society, or a bane.

Recently, we have been hearing a lot about AI (artificial intelligence). It seems to be everywhere. More and more apps are embracing and using it, college kids are using it to write papers, Congress is having meetings and hearings about it, and some of the people who helped to create it are now admitting they are sorry that they did.

Even the Beatles, one of, if not the best rock and roll band of all time, is going to use it. Paul McCartney, founding father of the Beatles, has announced that with the help of AI, they are going to mimic long dead Beatle John Lennon's voice and put out a new song! Seriously!?

AI, scary as it may seem, has the potential to do a lot of good. However, along with the potential to do good, AI also has the potential to do great harm, especially when the scammers get hold of it and start using it, which, truthfully and unfortunately, they already have. AI, in the hands of bad actors, is taking scamming to a new level.

It all started out innocently enough. Most, if not all of us, ask Alexa, Siri, Google Assistant, or some other technological assistant for information pretty doggone frequently. (Like multiple times a day.) In an effort to make those "voices" sound more pleasing and human, the technology behind it was ever-changing and improving. However, the same technology that enables these voice assistants to assist us, can also be used by "bad actors" aka CROOKS and CRIMINALS!!

How exactly do they do this? There are three extremely common ways criminals fool you with AI.

Impersonation: AI voice scammers often impersonate trusted individuals or organizations, such as bank representatives, tech support agents, or government officials. They simulate familiar voices to establish credibility and gain the victim's trust. By imitating the voice of someone known to the victim, the victims lower their guard which increases the chances of success for the scammer.

Social Engineering: Scammers use social engineering tactics to manipulate victims into revealing sensitive information or performing actions that benefit the scammer. By using emotional triggers, urgency, or fear, they bully individuals into revealing personal details, financial information, or even transferring money. These tactics exploit basic human psychology, often catching victims off guard and clouding their judgment.

Spoofing Techniques: AI voice scams can employ techniques like caller ID spoofing to display a legitimate number or organization on the recipient's caller ID, further enhancing the deception. This makes it difficult for victims to discern whether the call is genuine or a scam. Scammers can

also manipulate audio recordings to mimic background noise, making the call sound more authentic. In this instance, the scam or fraud app you have on your phone may not detect the call as a scam or fraud, leading it to look more credible to you.

How can this affect you in real life?

Financial Fraud: Scammers pose as bank representatives, requesting victims to verify their account details or transfer funds to resolve a phony issue such as being overdrawn or a debit/credit card issue. They use AI voice technology to imitate genuine bank employees, making victims believe they are interacting with a trusted source. These scams prey on people's trust in their financial institutions and take advantage of their fear of financial loss.

Tech Support Scams: Scammers impersonate technical support agents, claiming to detect malware or system errors on victims' computers. They convince individuals to grant remote access to their devices or purchase unnecessary software, thereby gaining unauthorized access or financial benefits.

These scams exploit people's reliance on technology and their willingness to seek assistance when facing technical issues, usually because most people don't know how to fix more than the simplest technological problems with their devices.

Voice Phishing (Vishing): AI voice scammers may deploy vishing attacks, wherein they pose as government agencies or law enforcement officers, intimidating victims into sharing personal information or making immediate payments to avoid legal consequences. These scams prey on people's fear of authority and the desire to comply with legal obligations.

Impersonating the IRS is a common scam, and an old one. An agent calls you and tells you that you owe back taxes, and they need immediate payment. Two more very common ones are: A family member calls and says they are kidnapped or in jail and they need help. Or your utility company calls you and says they will cut off the service if you don't pay a past due amount immediately. The list goes on and on.

Recently, on the news, there was a woman who thought her grandson had been kidnapped. She commented that the voice sounded just like her grandson. (AI at work). She was prepared to pay thousands until the little voice in the back of

her mind urged her to call her grandson. He was fine. Another woman in Arizona thought her 15-year-old daughter had been kidnapped. The mother swore it was her child's voice, and she was in distress. It wasn't, and her daughter was fine, ascertained after a panicked phone call. This is happening more and more often.

How can you protect yourself against such scams? While nothing is foolproof, there are some things you can do to help minimize your risk. The best way to avoid being scammed is to educate yourself and keep yourself updated on current scams and how they work.

Then watch out for:

- Urgent, bullying language.
- Demands for payment in unusual ways such as crypto or gift cards.
- No background noises.
- Buffering or awkward silences.
- Inconsistencies in their story to you.

Ask for a contact name and return phone number. If they can't or won't provide one – be wary.

Recently, I received a call from AT&T asking for payment on a past due bill. The problem? I didn't use AT&T for phone, internet, TV, or home security. I knew the call was bogus so when I asked for a number to call back after I checked my records, they hung up. Another time I had an "IRS" agent call me about back taxes. She wanted immediate payment. When I asked for her IRS ID number to give my attorney, she refused and quickly hung up. Sound like a red flag to you? The real issue is that these calls came across my phone as AT&T and Internal Revenue Service. Let's face it, that second one is scary, no matter who you are.

Are you wondering how these scammers get all these "voices" to duplicate? Social media is the prime source. Think about all the videos you post online and how your online presence leads back to people you are close to, family and friends alike. Scammers are tricky people. They can take a voice clip and do wonders with it. (Or evil, as the case may be.)

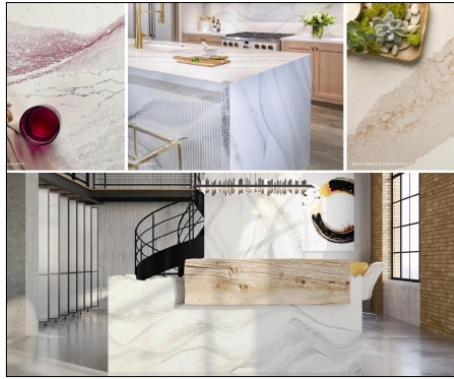
The bottom line is: Be vigilant. Be educated. Be aware and most of all, be careful. AI has a lot of positive, good uses. However, it can be used by bad people for bad things. Don't become a victim.

Please send your thoughts and comments on this article to Sharon Koehler at SharonK.SRG@gmail.com.



TISE and SASE Announce Cambria as Key Exhibitor at 2024 Event

Cambria will be a key new exhibitor in 2024 at The International Surface Event (TISE): SURFACES | StonExpo | TileExpo. Cambria is a leading manufactured surfaces supplier, who brings the high standards of an American company and the passion of a family-owned business to everything they do.



In partnership with the **Stone Equipment Suppliers Alliance (SESA)** who has selected TISE as their exclusive exhibition for stone equipment and tools, and the International Surface Fabricator Association (ISFA), a longtime partner to TISE, the 2024 event edition will present manufactured surfaces such as quartz, solid surfaces, large format porcelain tile, and more with Cambria leading the way. This rapidly expanding product segment in

the industry is in high demand by industry professionals attending the event and will benefit attendees and participating manufacturers by fostering one-stop product sourcing, product education, and installation training for these specialty categories.

Save the Date 2024

Cambria will be at TISE 2024 in the Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, January 24–26, 2024. Complimentary tickets to The International Surface Event (TISE): SURFACES | StonExpo | TileExpo will be available through Cambria and the partner associations, SESA and ISFA, when registration for TISE 2024 opens in September. To be notified when registration opens, join the TISE Notify Me list, www.intlsurfaceevent.com.com/notifyme.

The International Surface Event (TISE): SURFACES | StonExpo | TileExpo has served nearly 30 years as an industry marketplace for floor covering, stone, and tile businesses to come together, seek products and services, build relationships, and develop their businesses. For more information, please visit www.intlsurfaceevent.com.

“We are pleased to have Cambria join SESA and participate in the TISE event. We feel their presence will make the experience better and even more relevant for fabricators seeking information on all the products they work with daily,” said SESA President, Mike Schlough.

“The event team is so excited to welcome Cambria to TISE 2024 and the opportunity to add an even wider breath of surface materials for attendees.” ~ Dana Hicks, Group Show Director, The International Surface Event

“Energy in the executive is a leading character in the definition of good government. It is essential to the protection of the community against foreign attacks; it is not less essential to the steady administration of the laws; to the protection of property against those irregular and high-handed combinations which sometimes interrupt the ordinary course of justice; to the security of liberty against the enterprises and assaults of ambition, of faction, and of anarchy.”

—Alexander Hamilton

STONEBIZ PUERTO RICO On The Beach

Business Seminars

Gino Wickman - Entrepreneur and author of the best-selling "Traction - Get a grip on your business" book library which has sold over 3million copies! He is the founder of EOS (entrepreneurial operating systems) Worldwide, an organization that has helped over 190,000 companies succeed with his operating systems. His skills include helping leaders run better businesses, get better control, have better life balance, and gain more traction while working as a cohesive team!



Casey Brown - a pricing expert and the president of Boost Pricing! Her slogan is "IF YOU ARE EXCELLENT AT WHAT YOU DO, YOU SHOULD BE PAID LIKE YOU ARE EXCELLENT." Casey is a prominent global keynote speaker, with a resume in the fortune 500 and TEDX talks!



The Stay



Wyndham Grand Rio Mar Puerto Rico



Mark your calendars!
NOVEMBER 1st-4th 2023

- Zip Lining
- Horse Back Riding
- ATV Tours
- Cigar Rolling
- Catamaran Trip
- Rum Factory Tour
- Bio Bay Kayaking

EVENT PLATINUM SPONSORS




REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!!

WWW.STONEBIZONTHEBEACH.COM

VIP PACKAGE: \$1,850
ADDITIONAL GUEST: \$495

L.A. County Ponders Quartz-Surface Ban

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted June 6, 2023 to begin consideration of banning what it called “silica-fabricated stone” within its borders.

The action directed various county officials to report back to the board in 90 days “on the options to ban the sale, fabrication and installation of silica-fabricated stone” and possibly provide money and technical assistance for converting to other materials.

Quartz surfaces could be outlawed for future use in L.A. County, California later this year due to silicosis concerns.



 BiesseStone

Smart 625

Compact, Multi-purpose and easy to use. The newest addition to our machine lineup, the **Smart 625 Bridge Saw**, carries out the most advanced machining operations, guaranteeing first class quality fabrication when cutting natural stone, granite, marble, quartz and ultra-compact surfaces.



 Biesse

Discover our
product range

biesse.com



The board also instructed the heads of its public-works and internal-services department to report in 45 days with recommendations on banning future use of quartz surfaces on any county-funded projects.

Any action by the board would have a major influence on the U.S. market and follows in the wake of recent silicosis-related laws and actions, mainly in Australia.

Los Angeles County includes a population of 9.8 million in 88 municipalities, including the cities of Los Angeles, Long Beach, Santa Monica, Pasadena and Burbank. While all cities have localized control of some services and planning/zoning, the county sets policies on other issues, including public health.

The supervisors also declared June as Silicosis Awareness Month, and directed county public-health, business-affairs, and social-services directors to report in six months on outreach and education plans for fabricators and consumers regarding health risks.

The Los Angeles County action comes as the state’s main workplace-health agency — Cal/OSHA — plans increased enforcement of air-quality rules concerning crystalline-silica exposure with quartz-surface fabrication.

In early May, the agency and the California Department of Public Health contacted 814 stone-fabrication businesses detailing the dangers of silica, along with the need to protect employees. The letter also linked silica exposure to lung cancer, noting that the state considers crystalline silica a regulated carcinogen under its Section 5203 regulations.

The letter also directed fabrication companies to file a report with Cal/OSHA concerning its operations.

“Cal/OSHA Enforcement will prioritize inspections for employers who have not reported repairable crystalline silica use pursuant to section 5203,” the letter stated.

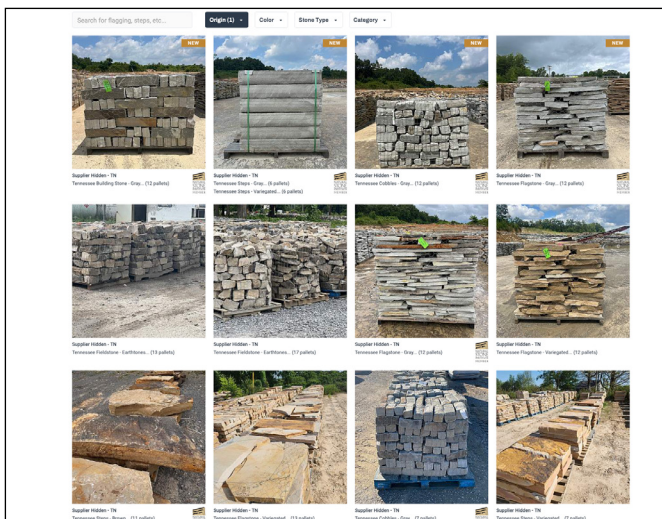
The letter also noted California’s standards on crystalline-silica exposure — Section 5204 — and cited resources available to aid in compliance.

StoneLoads Connects

Continued from page 5

“And that doesn’t make sense to me. How you have quarries where the pallets are literally rotting underneath the stone, and then you have people who can’t buy enough, that need more of it, and are ultimately being pushed away to an import product because the supply chain from domestic quarries isn’t strong enough. That’s what this platform is built for.”

Loads are sold by the truckload, not just pieced out. They are sold to distributors, not the general public. They have firewalls in place to prevent just “anyone” from seeing pricing. A company has to apply to have an account. The account is free, but StoneLoads is very clear about who they allow to buy on their site. StoneLoads accounts are reserved for landscape supply yards and stone distributors. No contractors or homeowners are allowed access to the StoneLoads marketplace.



There are literally just 3 steps to the whole process:

- 1) Suppliers create a product listing including specifications, photos, weight, and pricing.
- 2) Buyers shop on the platform and place orders.
- 3) The load ships and payment is made to the seller.

Everything happens on the StoneLoads platform. No going from site to site for

StoneLoads site members can search for the stone and color they need, place their order, and pay for the shipment all in 3 easy steps. Affiliated stone sources are tagged with the NSI logo.

product, payment, and shipping. In December 2022, they partnered with Loadsmart out of Chicago, to offer shipping and they also partner with Stripe, a payment app. There is always an option to pick up the product. The process is

all-inclusive and easy on StoneLoads.

“We in the stone business tend to over-complicate things. The question that I asked myself over and over was: ‘Does it truly have to be that complicated?’ I understand it’s natural stone. I understand there are variations. I understand the nuances of natural stone and the importance for the end user to know about natural stone, the maintenance of it, the care of it. I understand all that. But from a supplier to distributor standpoint, our

job is to educate the distributors and let the distributors educate the end users. Other than that, let’s get stone on pallets, take a few pictures of it and let’s give people the opportunity to buy it. Make sure it’s quality product and get it on down the road. That’s what we are trying to do, and we are trying to make it simple.”

Currently, StoneLoads handles outside landscaping and hardscapes material such as dimensional stone, flagstone, pavers, stack stone, boulders, etc. They have 103 quarries represented on the site, and roughly 280 distributors that represent over 500 locations across the country. The site is free for buyers/distributors. Quarries do pay a small commission fee when the load is sold.

Per Patrick: “Our target is to get 1,500 distributors and another 200 plus quarries. We started in the southeast and we are working our way out. We have one Colorado quarry and one Idaho quarry, plus we have two Pennsylvania quarries, and as you know, Pennsylvania Bluestone is sold nationwide.

Please turn to page 20

JOIN ISFA IN THE CARIBBEAN FOR THE



THE INTERNATIONAL SURFACE FABRICATORS ASSOCIATION'S
2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Sint Maarten

OCTOBER 16-19, 2023

LEARN MORE AT
WWW.ISFACONFERENCE.COM



ENJOY FOUR DAYS OF EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS, NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES AND MORE AT THE SONESTA OCEAN POINT RESORT ON THE CARIBBEAN ISLAND OF SINT MAARTEN.

THIS YEAR'S THEMES INCLUDE:

- IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY
- STREAMLINING OPERATIONS
- STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP
- FOSTERING A POSITIVE COMPANY CULTURE
- AND MORE!

IN BETWEEN WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS, NETWORK WITH YOUR PEERS OVER GREAT FOOD, ENTERTAINMENT AND A BREATHTAKING ISLAND BACKDROP.

**REGISTRATION CLOSING
AUGUST 30!**

RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!



Stone Restoration and Maintenance Corner

Italy and the Art of Stone

I recently took a family trip to the wonderful and old-world country of Italy. We have taken similar trips to Italy through the years, but this time it seemed more vivid. As I'm getting older, I suppose I have developed a greater appreciation for the finer things in life. When I say finer things, I mean the ways and accomplishments of ancient people and things like thousand-plus-year-old buildings and structures. These fine old structures were all hewed from marble and other stone without the use of modern-day power equipment and abrasive diamonds. Italy has some of the world's most interesting history and historic structures constructed of – you guessed it – mostly stone, including a lot of marble, travertine and some really ancient concrete, as well.



The famous covered Rialto Bridge, In Venice – an amazing marble structure.

Before the trip I was suffering from what some might call trip anxiety. Because I am getting older, I am quite comfortable with my daily routine. Breaking free from the daily routine really didn't sound good to me, at least initially. Once the trip began, the anxiety turned into excitement. We started having fun once the plane lifted off from Atlanta's Hartsfield Airport.

After a not too bad 9-hour flight, we landed in Rome, waited to catch a connecting flight, and finally arrived in Bologna. Once we procured our rental car, we were driving up the Autostrada toward Venice. We had reservations in Montegrotto Terme, which is known for their thermal spas and therapeutic mud treatments. A very quaint yet upscale (marble everywhere) area, very popular with Europeans.

The first morning we took a less than

Bob Murrell
M3 Technologies
Photos by Bob Murrell

one-hour train ride into Venice. Venice never disappoints, yet it was much more crowded than past visits. The month of May is evidently a very popular time for a trip to Italy. We walked Venice pretty much the entire day. From the train station to St. Mark's Square, to the Rialto Bridge, and we even took a boat ride out to the island of Murano, to the world-famous glass factory.

When we got back to Montegrotto Terme, we took full advantage of the thermal spas and they were wonderful. They have different pools with different temperatures, as well as both dry and steam saunas. It was a great way to wind down the first day of trekking around Venice.

The next day we drove to Lake Garda and even visited a theme park called Gardaland. It was a fantastic day, even though mostly cloudy and sprinkles, so we basically had the park to ourselves. I even rode all of the rides with my daughter and her friend (they are 19 years old BTW). I still got it!

So we unwound in the spas again, before leaving for Rome the next morning. This was the longest drive of our trip, about 4-5 hours. We stayed in Castel Gandolfo, overlooking Lake Albano, about a 30 minute



Julie and I also visited a Carrara marble quarry, a real treat for a stone enthusiast.



St. Mark's Square in Venice has a wealth and variety of marble construction.

train ride away from the SPQR (center of the city or world, depending on who you listen to). Here we stayed in an Airbnb, the first of several. This was definitely a cool place, but not the best of our stay.

After a delicious dinner (porchetta) and a good night's sleep, we took the short train ride into the city, the next morning. While we were waiting on our guided tour of the Colosseum and surrounding architecture, we visited one of the oldest and most ornate churches that I have ever visited. The Basilica of St. Clement was officially legitimized as a church in 6 AD. It is adorned with plenty of marble, frescoes, and mosaics. It is absolutely a stunning work of art.

Of course, we toured the Colosseum, which is the world's most famous amphitheater, and the surrounding historic structures. We did the obligatory Chevy Chase Grand Canyon nod and went on back to the train station and departed for some much-needed rest in Castel Gandolfo. Don't get me wrong, I love marveling at these old travertine and marble structures. The materials and workmanship have basically stood the test of time.

We left the Rome area the next morning and headed towards Pisa. After another obligatory nod, we headed to Florence where we stayed in another Airbnb for a couple of nights. Florence is a bustling city with some old history and wonderful architecture. We liked Florence quite a bit.

We next headed toward our favorite destination area on the Mediterranean, with the towns of Carrara, Tellaro, La Spezia,

and our very favorite, Lercici.

Carrara was just as interesting as the last time I visited. While up on the mountain touring the marble quarries, we went for lunch in the small town of Colonnata. At one point, while driving up higher in elevation, the streets became so narrow that we were barely able to turn around. Having 4 adults required a medium-size SUV!

[Please turn to page 23](#)



A quilt marble floor in a shop in Venice. Most of the stone flooring we noticed in Italy was honed.

The Stone Detective

The Case of the Mysterious Efflorescence

The fog crept in like a smokescreen as I sauntered over to my favorite greasy spoon. Desperate for a cup of joe and a conversation with the Admiral, I pushed open the diner's door. Flo was deep in conversation with the Admiral, but when she spotted me, she chimed in, "There was a dame in here earlier, asking for you, and she left a note."

That struck me as peculiar. Usually, I receive phone calls, or perhaps a starry-eyed fan stalks me seeking my autograph — LOL! You see, they call me the Stone Detective — a private eye with a gift for unraveling the hidden secrets of stone, tile, and concrete. My curiosity piqued, I opened the note and found myself face-to-face with a perplexing case that would push my sleuthing skills to the limit.

The note was a little sad, and a desperate plea for help. It described concrete pavers that had a mysterious malady that looked like efflorescence. I knew I would have to dig deep to get to the bottom of this case. I also couldn't help but wonder how the unknown sender knew that I was hanging out at this diner. I took out my phone, typed in the address, and started walking with a to-go cup of coffee in my hand.

When I got to the house, I looked at a spacious concrete patio, which was marred with a layer of white deposits. They call it "Efflorescence"—a curse that had turned beautiful pavers into a mess. I got down on my knees and ran my fingers over the

Dr. Frederick M. Hueston, PhD

rough surface, looking at every feature closely. The powdery residue was an obvious sign of trouble that didn't make sense.

With a scowl of suspicion etched upon my face, I approached the homeowner, a certain Mrs. Sinclair. Her perplexed expression spoke volumes; she was just as clueless as I was. But experience had taught me not to put my trust in anyone. To crack this case, I needed answers, and I needed them yesterday.

As I looked into the mystery more, I heard rumors about a local builder who used strange chemicals to make concrete look like marble: A strange liquid that could change the very nature of stone and concrete.

I went back to Mrs. Sinclair because my gut told me to, and my eyes cut through the fog of anxiety. Her face twitched, which showed how much guilt she felt. The truth then came out all at once, like a dam breaking.

She admitted to hiring this contractor, giving in to his sales pitch, and putting his liquid mixture on the pavers in an unsuccessful attempt to make them look like marble. But, alas, the attempt at art failed. It set off a chain reaction that sent an unholy flood of powder onto the path she loved.

I have seen my fair share of secrets, but this one dared to go against everything I knew to be true. Now that I knew who

did it, I told Sinclair in no uncertain terms how dangerous it is to mess with chemicals you don't know much about, and how important it is to get help from pros. My last thing was to suggest a skilled local stonemason who could fix the problem and make Sinclair's pavers look like they did before.

As I turned away from the scene, I felt the lift of the weight of having solved yet another puzzle. Even though the streets were still covered in fog, justice had won. The Stone Detective would always be there to protect stones, tile and concrete and their mysteries, keeping an eye out for anyone who might try to upset their peace.

Before I said goodbye, I turned around and asked her how she knew I often ate at

the diner. She went into the kitchen with a sly smile and came back a few minutes later with a copy of the *Slippery Rock Gazette*.

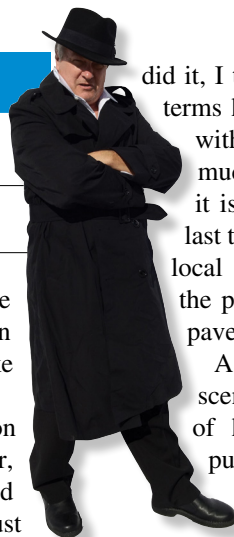
Oh, what power the press has! The dame had been reading the industry's newspaper to keep track of where I was.

Another case solved, but still I was curious about something. I couldn't resist a playful remark. "Seems you've become quite the detective yourself, Mrs. Sinclair," I quipped, reaching into my pocket. I pulled out a pen and a small notepad, scribbling my name upon it. "Here, as a token of appreciation for your assistance in cracking this confounding case: An autograph from the renowned Stone Detective."

She chuckled and graciously accepted the autograph, her eyes gleaming with a mix of relief and gratitude. "Thank you, Stone Detective," she said, her voice filled with genuine warmth. "You've not only solved the mystery but also taught me a valuable lesson."

I tipped my fedora and felt happy that I had done a good job. "I'm glad you liked it, Mrs. Sinclair. Remember, you can always count on the Stone Detective when it comes to stone/masonry and secrets." Waving farewell, I left Mrs. Sinclair to restore her patio back to how it used to look.

The Stone Detective is a fictional character created by Dr. Frederick M. Hueston, PhD, written to entertain and educate. Dr. Fred has written over 33 books on stone and tile installations, fabrication and restoration and also serves as an expert for many legal cases across the world. Send your comments to fhueston@stoneforensics.com.



New EZ Loader

[Continued from page 10](#)

Improving Installation Tech

The countertop industry has grown tremendously in the past decade in terms of technology and high-tech innovations. Many well-designed transport and carrying devices are available, but onsite material handling is still mainly done by hand and muscle power.

The EZ Installation Cart and EZ Loader are manually operated, but because of their simplicity and effectiveness, they require very little physical effort at all. These innovations designed by Mulder make a monster island installation a breeze; what once took several men hours of straining, literally



The roller system on the EZ Loader is designed to slide the heaviest top effortlessly off the transport cart and onto the EZ Installation cart. Mulder: "I've designed the EZ Combo to work on simple principles: no electricity, battery power or compressor is needed."

back-breaking effort can now be done with two workers, safely, and in a fraction of the time.

Mulder: "One of the main purposes driving my stone industry inventions is to make installations easier on the guys who do some of the most physically demanding, and often most dangerous work in the industry. So many great installers and stone workers have had to retire early or find a less physical line of work, due to injury and burn-out. I've seen this scenario played out in

our own countertop company, Stone World Tennessee."

Mulder added, "I've designed the EZ Combo to work on simple principles: no electricity, battery power or compressor is needed. Less than 50 pounds of force — the push of one finger — transfers any size island from a Hercules Transfer Rack or A-Frame onto the EZ Installation Cart. When I have demonstrated these at trade shows, people are surprised at how easy they are to use, and instantly see how it can benefit their shop."

For more information, visit bbindustriesllc.com/EZ_Installation_Cart. Watch a demo and operation video at bbindustriesllc.com/EZ_Cart_Loader.

With Each Generation, the Process of Letting Go Comes Full Cycle

This one is for mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles and other adults everywhere: If parting is sweet sorrow, there is sugared woe aplenty whenever and wherever school bells begin to ring. Here is a time for long hugs and tearful goodbyes.

Any mom or dad with sentiment in their blood can attest to this truth. And it doesn't matter if the fruit of their loins is entering kindergarten down the street or graduate school halfway around the globe.

Where did the years go? How could these babies have been wearing diapers only last week, yet be moving into a college dorm the day after tomorrow?

This process isn't the sole purview of education, of course. Maybe your offspring have just joined the military. Or perhaps they've accepted a job that will take them two time zones away, rarely to return except on holiday respite. The parting is equally as sweet and sorrowful as any other.

Ironically, a man who had no children of his own captured this moment in some of the most moving verse you'll ever read.

Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931) was a Lebanese-American painter, writer, poet and philosopher. His 26-chapter work, *The Prophet*, ruminated on various facets of the human experience. Released in 1923, this book has never been out of print. It has been translated into more than 100 languages. I suspect its fourth chapter, titled "On Children," has played a major role in the publication's success.

My prescient mother, who watched her own brood of four take wing, shared "*On Children*" with Mary Ann and me more than 30 years ago when our teen-aged son Clay flew the nest in a literal

Sam Venable
Department of Irony



sense: on a 727, bound for a summer job in Yellowstone National Park.

We found great comfort in the words, then and now, and emailed them to Clay and his wife Kim when their own teenagers hit the road on adventures this summer: one to the Minnesota-Canada border, the other to the Florida Keys.

Here is part of Gibran's text: "(Children) are the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, and though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams...for life goes not backward nor carries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth. The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far. Let your bending in the archer's hands be for gladness; for even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable."

It's the story of life. One generation yields to the next. The same bonds you broke will one day be shorn from you. 'Twas ever thus; 'twill ever be.

Sam Venable is an author, comedic entertainer, and humor columnist for the Knoxville (TN) News Sentinel. His latest book is "The Joke's on YOU! (All I Did Was Clean Out My Files)." He may be reached at sam.venable@outlook.com.

"Many people will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints in your heart."

—Eleanor Roosevelt

The PREMIER TRADE GROUP

of the Stone Fabrication Industry



Best Practices



Benchmarks



Group Purchasing

Gain valuable business intelligence, find cost-saving opportunities and collaborate with some of the best-in-class within our industry by joining our elite group of surface fabricators. We have all of the tools in one place to help you grow your business.



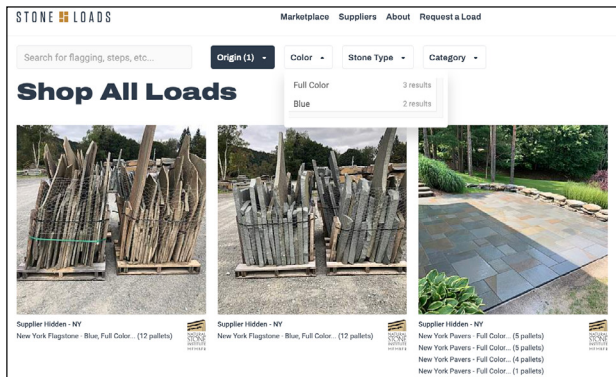
Rich Katzmann
Executive Director
richk@rockheadsusa.com
815.210.1006

Join now at RockheadsUSA.com.



StoneLoads Connects

Continued from page 16



Through StoneLoads, hardscaping distributors have access to stone types and colors outside their local market.

Patrick continued, "That puts a big emphasis on this coming year. These are two big markets that we need to get stronger in. We have strong suppliers in those markets who have sold material on our site, but we need to get more aggressive to get distributors in those markets on our site. We are working on ways to do that."

When asked if he eventually wanted to expand to the more custom aspects of stone like marble or granite, he did say that was in the plans, but since this was such a new venture, they wanted to solidify the landscaping/hardscaping areas first. They do have some of the marble and granite quarries on their site already, but they are currently only promoting their landscaping and hardscaping materials.

StoneLoads does have an admittedly lofty goal of having every domestically quarried item on their site in the next 5 years. One of the things that StoneLoads does is level the playing field for all quarries. A mom-and-pop quarry will have the same opportunity to showcase and sell their product just like the larger, more commercial quarries do. There is a chance and a space for everyone.

"I love seeing the industry grow and hopefully, over a little bit of time, StoneLoads will do its part in strengthening the supply chain, as well. Healthy suppliers create a healthy industry."

The site is simple enough to access. Just go to: <https://stoneloads.com>. Look around. See what they have to offer. If you have any questions, you can email Patrick directly at patrick@stoneloads.com. In Patrick's own words, "This is a game-changer!"

The Slippery Rock Marketplace

Get the Latest in Industry News

STONE UPDATE MAGAZINE
Twice-monthly

Hard-Surface REPORT
Monitoring U.S. Imports
Every month

Slab & Sheet
Every 1st & 3rd Wednesday

Radio-STONE UPDATE
Every 2nd & 4th Wednesday

Scan the QR code

or go to www.stonemag.com/srg

Quality Polyester, Vinyl Ester, Enhancers

STONE SHIELD

BBIndustriesLLC.com 800-575-4401

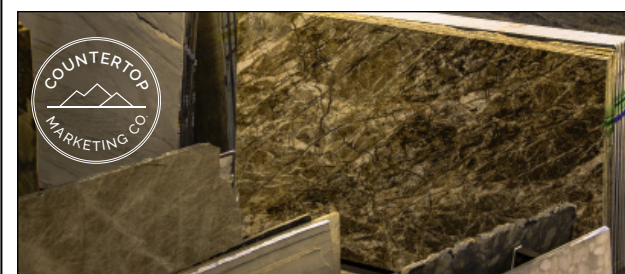
Vibora

There's a new Viper in town

BBIndustriesLLC.com 800-575-4401

Abaco
MACHINES USA

AbacoLifter.tv



Grow the Retail Side of your Countertop Company

- ✗ You only get retail countertop jobs from word-of-mouth leads and referrals.
- ✗ You've tried marketing in the past and it didn't work to bring in jobs.
- ✗ You don't have a system to follow-up with homeowners in order to close more jobs.

BOOK A FREE STRATEGY CALL TODAY

to find out how we can help

<https://countertopmarketingco.com/>



SALESPeople ARE MADE, NOT BORN.

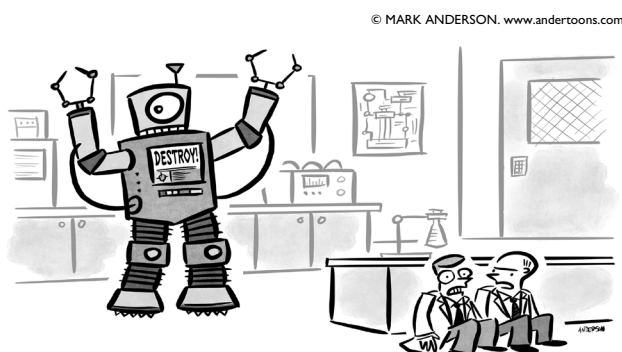
Get industry-specific training.

Increase your close rate without lowering your price.

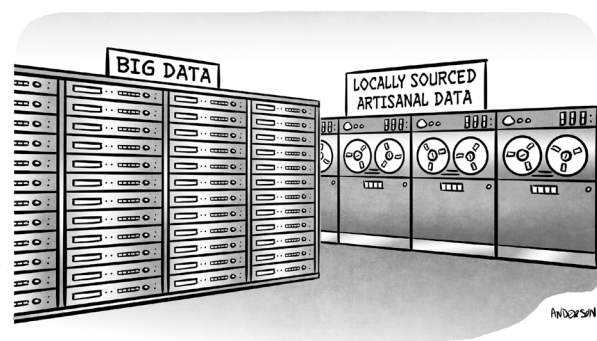
Sales Mastery Program FOR FABRICATORS



SPECIAL RATE FOR SLIPPERY ROCK GAZETTE READERS
<https://fabricatorscoach.com/start-sales-mastery-srg/>



"You and your bloody commitment to innovation!"



BBIndustriesLLC.com
800-575-4401

Save BIG on Hercules stone transport solutions.

HERCULES

MATERIAL HANDLING • AIR TOOLS • ELECTRIC TOOLS

The Slippery Rock Classifieds

To submit a print or online classified ad, use the online form at www.slipperyrockgazette.net/listingform – you will be sent a confirmation email. Send other ad inquiries to publisher@slipperyrockgazette.net.

2023

CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINES

SEPTEMBER 2023 ISSUE

TUESDAY, JULY 25, 2023

OCTOBER 2023 ISSUE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2023

NOVEMBER 2023 ISSUE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2023

Ads not meeting guidelines will not be published.

For Sale

Stone Planer for Sale. Patch-Wegner planer for sale. Hydraulic table. Assortment of shaping knives. Still hooked up to power. I will load onto your truck. Contact: Rock Solid Cut Stone & Supply, 330-575-3871, jeff@rocksolidcutstone.com.

Park SS 150. 1998 Stone Shaper 150 with table. Good Working condition as it will assist in shipping. \$40,000. Contact: Jason, 913-371-7757, Jason.Speer@Sturgismaterials.com.

Used 2013 Tomahawk Stone Splitter \$4900 OBO. Sold the biz and no longer needed! Has radius attachment to create fire pits too! An economical concept in "green" fabrication by using leftover slab pieces to create beautiful stone products. These precision pieces can be stacked, laid or clad with mortar - creating a chiseled wall - or laid out flat to produce innovative flooring and paving. Contact: Jon Hobson, 330-575-3871, jondhobson@gmail.com.

GMM Litox. Selling one of our GMM Litox 5 Axis shaping machines. The machine is currently under power and can be inspected. Please contact if interested to obtain further information. Link to product: www.gmm.it/en/dettaglio-prodotto/5-axis-shaping-machines/litox-1000-cn2/. Contact: Custom Architectural Stone, Inc., infocustomarchstone@gmail.com.

Savage Bridge Saw. Works great. 20 HP Blade Motor. 360 Degree Rotating table (no tilt). 3 phase power. Motorized Gantry, Traverse, and Rise & Fall Motions. (Does not miter). Works great, we are upgrading and we do not have room for it. \$3,000.00 USD OBO. Contact: Keith Shishnia, 605-225-3679, graniteworks1960@gmail.com.

2016 Park Fusion. Single table saw jet with tilt table. Also includes overhead camera for

part location. Still under power, ready for your immediate inspection. Machine location is in the Midwest, \$125,000.00. Contact: Brian, 641-799-3347, brian@millennium-surfaces.com.

HUNDREDS OF PREMIUM STONE FAB PRODUCTS AT DEEP DISCOUNT PRICES: MAKING ROOM FOR INCOMING 2024 PRODUCT LINES. Choose from quality adhesives like Akemi, Integra and Tenax, to bridge saw blades, CNC tooling in various profiles, polishing pads, and Inline tooling. Shop the extensive product list at bbindustriesslc.com/closeout.

Slabsmith with Pathfinder. Slabsmith software with Park Industries Pathfinder hardware. Camera has been upgraded to 5000 mega pixels, unit also includes bar code scanner for inventory tracking. \$18,000.00. Contact: Brian, 641-799-3347, brian@millenniumsrfaces.com.

Business Opportunities

Successful Granite Fabrication Shop for Sale in Tenn. Cumberland County Tennessee continues to grow each year, and has a very large retirement community. No other local fabricator shop! All other tops in area are sourced out of county, a lot of business to be had. We stayed 4-6 months out in manual shop. Contact for details of equipment, materials, and tooling available. Also, willing to stay on for a while to train. Contact: McGinnis Tile and Stone, 931-787-1156, mcginnistile@gmail.com.

Countertop Showrooms For Sale

Established North Alabama business with a focus on quality work and excellent reputation/reviews. Owner started the business in 2006 and wants to retire. Business has two showroom locations in high growth areas with ready made staff to support sales and service. Owner will provide help for smooth transition. Seller financing is available, however subject to final approval. Call 256-864-8050 or email info@nscountertops.com for additional information.

Did You Know?
Slippery Rock Classifieds are available FREE to the Stone Industry!

Submit your ads (maximum 70 words)

to www.slipperyrockgazette.net

Custom Stone Fabrication Business For Sale. This Central MN business has an excellent reputation for quality work. The owner has been in the business for over 44 years, started this business in 2015 and is selling for personal reasons. Sale includes all the equipment, 16' Morgan Box truck, showroom displays, furniture, computers and software, etc. Owner will provide help for smooth transition. Real estate is leased and can be purchased. Phone: 320-251-9300, sdevine@warnert.com.

Delaware Marble Sculptor Retiring & Selling Business After 60 Years. Selling 40 tons of granite, marble, precious stones like onyx and jasper, and some finished sculptures! Also lapidary equipment, diamond saws, and 300+ tools are for sale. Marble man has sold over 700 stone sculptures. Please call (302) 653-4810 for more information. Located in Smyrna, DE – 30 miles from Wilmington, DE. Contact: Richard H Bailey, 302-399-9777, www.richardhbailey.com.

Help Wanted

BB Industries is Hiring!

BBI is seeking qualified candidates for positions with the fastest-growing stone tooling and supplies distributor in the stone industry. We are currently seeking a qualified sales associates and warehouse staff to join our team:

Warehouse Associate for BBI's Salt Lake City, Utah warehouse.

Inside Sales Associate for BBI's Sarasota Florida branch office.

Outside Sales Consultant for BBI, serving our existing and new customers in Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri territories.

Outside Sales Consultant for Utah, based in BBI's Salt Lake City, Utah facility.

BB Industries offers an excellent benefit package that includes 401K with company match, earned vacation, paid holidays and health insurance contribution. We also offer a competitive base pay with a monthly commission structure and bonus opportunity for both sales positions, and monthly bonus potential for the warehouse associate position. Apply to k.hamilton@bbindustriesslc.com for more information and to submit qualifications.

Shop Foreman. Looking for a self-motivator person to assist in building our company. Must have CNC experience and Auto Cad would be an added feature. Must have experience using a Donatoni CNC bridge saw, and a Flow Water Jet. Must be able to communicate

STEJNEX
WE SPLIT IT IN A SECOND

EXW Whitehall, NY

- 132 TON SPLITTING FORCE
- CHOICE OF CONVEYOR DIRECTION
- 18.9" BLADE LENGTH
- 17.72" SPLITTING HEIGHT
- 11 KW PUMP UPGRADE
- 4.44" PER SECOND DESCENT
- 4.98" PER SECOND RETRACT
- REINFORCED 13.12' LONG CONVEYOR w/ HIGH SIDEBARDS
- 39.37" WIDE, 37.4" HIGH, 3.94" PER SECOND SPEEDS
- TESTED and PRESSURES SET PRIOR TO SHIPMENT
- \$52,775.00 USD SPLITTER w/o CONVEYOR

www.ApexEquipmentInternational.com

IGLOO 480 X 450 120t
w/SHERPA T4R*



STONE INSPECTION & TROUBLESHOOTING

STONE FORENSICS will again be offering its popular Stone and Tile Troubleshooting workshop. The next class will be held January 2024 in Las Vegas, Nevada, presented by Dr. Fredrick M. Hueston.

The program is designed to teach the basics of investigating stone and tile installation failures.

"The amount of failures, poor installations and other issues with stone and tile flooring are on the rise. This seminar is perfect for restoration and installation contractors as well as architects, building engineers and maintenance staff who have to deal with stone and tile installation and restoration," says Dr. Fred.

Class size is limited—register today.

Call 321-514-6845



For more information, visit www.stoneforensics.com

Get a full 4 days of training, covering...

- The geology of stone
- Understanding the structure of different kinds of stone
- Slab & tile production
- Quarry techniques that affect the final product
- Stone and tile forensic investigation
- Problem diagnosis & troubleshooting
- Installation requirements
- Stone and tile restoration
- Lab Testing

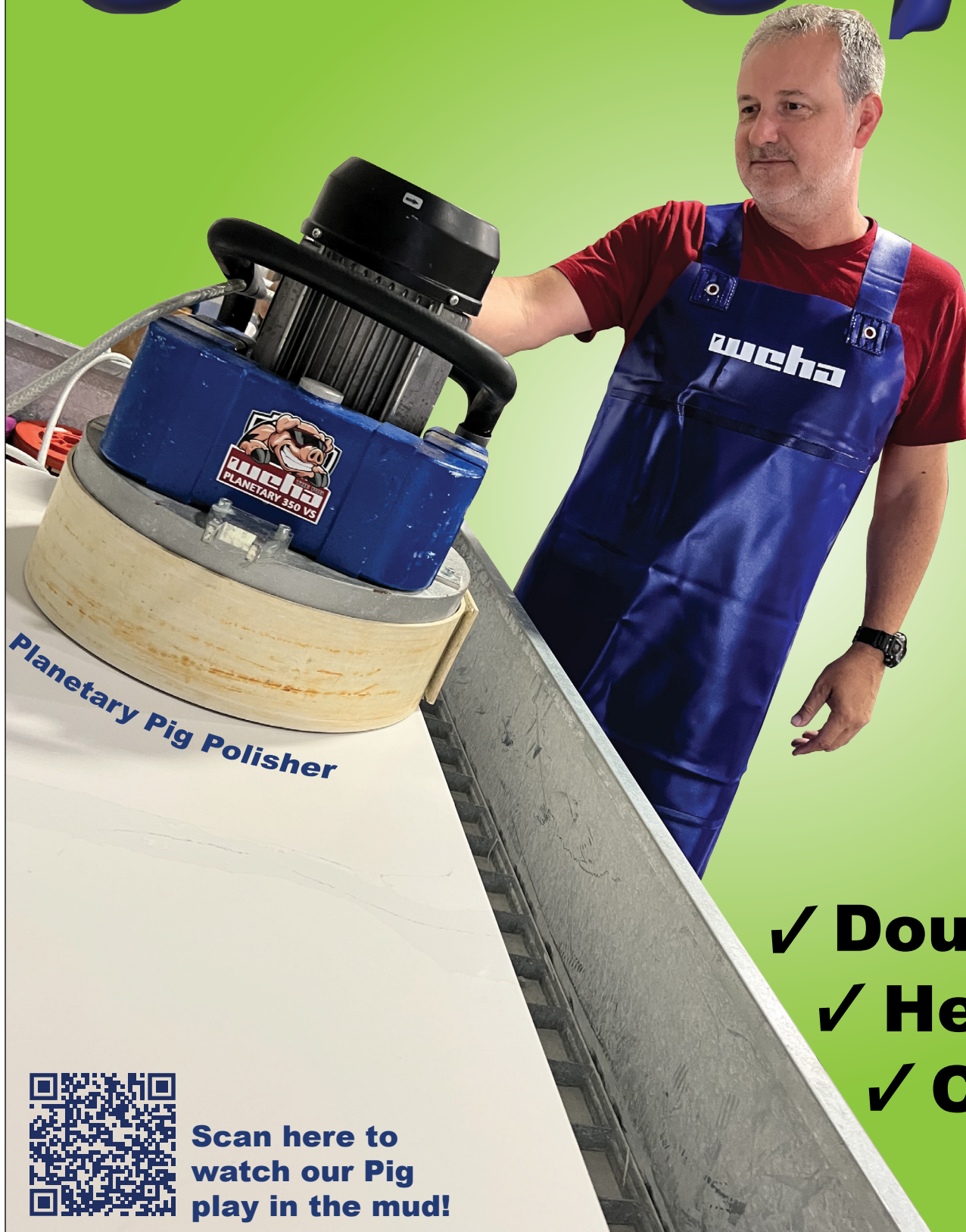
with customers along with motivating and directing 4 employees. Compensation will be equal to your experience. Health and Yearly bonus included. Contact: Michael Germono, 1-408-431-8033, mike@bayside-commercialcaseworks.com.

Stone Countertop Fabricator. We are seeking a Granite Fabricator to become an integral part of Black Rock Design-Build Firm in HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA. We are searching for proactive, motivated, skilled, team-players to join our successful and growing business experienced working with a bridge saw a plus. This position requires fine attention to detail in a fast-paced environment. Minimum of 2 years experience with Granite fabrication and installation. Drivers license required. Contact: Black Rock Granite and Cabinetry, Ltd, 828-482-4424, gerri@blackrockdb.com.

Stone carver opportunity. Immediate opening for skilled and accomplished stone carvers for marble carving (bas-reliefs, moldings) as well as lettering/engraving projects in both sandblasted and hand-cut letters, with have experience in marble and limestone. This is a full-time position and salary will be based on experience. Must be able to relocate to Northern Virginia. Call: 607-651-8585, sam@rugostone.com.

We are expanding and looking for great candidates. We have been rapidly growing year upon year and now encompass most of the Midwest. We are looking for quality candidates wanting to grow with us. Outside Sales, Inside Sales, Drivers, Warehouse, and Office Personnel in all locations. We have facilities in Springfield, Missouri; St Louis, Missouri; Lexington, KY; Iowa City, IA; and Nashville, TN. Send us a resume - let's talk. Contact: Stoneland Granite and Marble, hr@stonelandinc.com.

Blue Apron



**SCAN THIS CODE
FOR MORE
INFORMATION!**



- ✓ **Double Layered**
- ✓ **Heavy Duty**
- ✓ **Comfortable**



**Scan here to
watch our Pig
play in the mud!**

Planetary Pig Polisher

ISFA Announces Mineral Training Surfaces Event in Ohio

The International Surface Fabricators Association (ISFA) has announced a Mineral Surfaces training event scheduled for September 13-14, 2023, in Massillon, Ohio. Hosted by Tower Industries and sponsored by Daltile, the course is designed to arm fabricators with the knowledge and skills they need to embrace these materials to meet growing customer demand. According to the Freedonia Group, porcelain is rapidly rising in status as consumers seek alternatives to quartz and granite. It is expected to be the fastest-growing countertop material in the United States through 2026.

The hands-on, two-day training event will be held at Tower Countertops. It will provide attendees with the skills and knowledge in all facets of the fabrication process, including material handling and inspection, cutting techniques (feed rate, blade recommendations, tension release cuts), sink cutouts, miters, overhangs, seaming, polishing and finishing, installation, and chip and scratch repair techniques.

Raul Amat, the national manager of Panoramic Porcelain Surfaces for Daltile North America, will conduct the training. With over 20 years of experience in sales, training and development of large teams, Raul has helped several companies within the natural stone, countertop and flooring markets by leading their teams and expansion plans in the United States and Canada. Raul will be assisted by Rey Matos, the technical support and fabrication specialist for Daltile North America.

In addition, this training event includes a moderated Shop Safety Best Practices discussion with safety experts from Sheakley, a family-owned firm dedicated to practical and innovative risk management and safety solutions that can enhance business while helping to manage costs and maintain compliance.

Registration fees cover coursework, lunches and an evening excursion to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, with dinner provided. The cost is \$249 per person for ISFA members and \$349 per person for nonmembers.

Participants who complete the Mineral Surfaces Training with a satisfactory result will receive a certificate recognizing that

they are an ISFA Certified Professional. After the course is completed, students have exclusive access to the ISFA Member Exclusive Portal, where they can access:

- **Fabrication training information and guidelines**
- **Technical resources**
- **Material specifications**
- **ISFA standards for solid surface and quartz materials**
- **All ISFA events, programming and member benefits**

“Fabricators — specifically solid surface fabricators — founded our association to provide educational and growth opportunities for professionals within the decorative surfaces industry,” said Nancy Busch, executive director of ISFA. “Today, the association supports fabricators of all kinds of manufactured materials, including quartz, sintered stone, porcelain and more. ISFA is dedicated to delivering the tools and resources fabricators need to keep up with current trends and material innovations across the industry. In this challenging labor market, our training programs are a great way to train new hires, get familiarized with new materials, and gain valuable insights that lead to safe and successful operations.”

Aside from the Mineral Surfaces Training program, ISFA offers Solid Surface Fabrication Training events throughout the year. The next Solid Surface Training sessions are scheduled for August 8-9 in San Antonio, Texas, and October 24-25 in Chicago. In addition, ISFA offers a Solid Surface Training option that is conducted onsite at the registrant’s shop. This is ideal for fabrication shops, facility management and maintenance companies, and other technical trade businesses with several staff members who need training and would benefit from having it in their own space. Onsite training includes the same fabrication coursework as the regularly scheduled events. For more information about onsite training, contact Trainer@ISFAnow.org.

For more information about the International Surface Fabricators Association and all its training programs, visit www.ISFAnow.org.

Stone Restoration

Continued from page 17

While staying at our third Airbnb, we were able to take a small boat out (I was the captain) in La Spezia, eat and drink some of the best cuisine in the world, and shop at the weekend open market in Lerici. My wife went crazy!

If you ever plan to visit Europe, Italy is a most wonderful place to visit, especially if you’re into natural stone like I am. I’ve been in this industry well over 45 years now, and I can really appreciate where it basically all started. Seeing the beautiful structures built by all those craftsmen through the millennia is a testament to our industry.

Believe it or not, I actually did make many observations, as I have before. One of those observations is that most stone flooring surfaces are honed. I did see a couple of polished marble floors, but these were in high-end department stores. Most marble and even granite floor surfaces are honed. In America, most marble is sold polished. But now, honed stone is becoming more popular. It is, after all, the “European look.”

As always and before beginning any new project, I recommend submitting a test area to confirm the results and the



Honed marble steps in a restaurant. Notice the integral traction treads, which are likely from somewhat newer technology!

procedure, prior to starting a stone or hard surface restoration/maintenance project. Also, the best way to help ensure success is by partnering with a good distributor, like BB Industries, that knows the business. They can help with technical support, product purchase decisions, logistics, and other pertinent project information.



One of my favorite places in Italy: Lerici, located on the Northwestern coast. It holds a weekend open market, which Julie can attest is world-class – And is one of the most picturesque places I have ever visited.

SLIPPERY ROCK GAZETTE
4100 APPALACHIAN WAY
KNOXVILLE, TN 37918

PRSRT-STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
KNOXVILLE, TN
PERMIT #255

All Your Fabrication Needs...Including the
Kitchen Sink

BB Industries is proud to present Envy™
an expanded line of top quality Stainless Steel sinks...



Envy™
DESIGNER SINKS



Including the **NEW**
15R radius and
porcelain vanity sinks.

NEW!

Shop Envy Sinks



BBIndustriesLLC.com



BBI **B·B·INDUSTRIES**
Better Service • Better Value

Call 1-800-575-4401
or Order Online www.BBIndustriesLLC.com

Get Integra at



BB Industries is the **LARGEST**
National Distributor for Integra
with over 250 colors
IN STOCK!

Integra products are trusted,
pre-colored seaming and assembly
adhesives formulated for quartz,
natural stone, sintered materials,
solid surface, and more.

Integra Adhesives are the tube
innovator and have the best color
match website to make it the
easiest in the industry.
All others are just imposters!



Meets or exceeds Indoor
Air Quality standards

Shop Integra
Adhesives



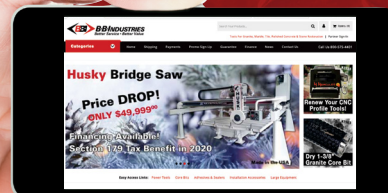
BBIndustriesLLC.com



Integra Adhesives

BBI **B·B·INDUSTRIES**
Better Service • Better Value

Three Easy Ways to Partner with BBI



- Phone
- Web
- In Person

Shopping with Us is so EASY!

www.BBIndustriesLLC.com

800-575-4401