

RockTops: Kansas City Specialists in Ultracompact Fabrication

The stone industry can be a hard one to thrive in, but Kansas City-based RockTops is using the latest waterjet and robotics technologies to carve out a niche in the fabrication of ultra-compact materials.

Co-owner Mike Hyer is a Kansas City native with a background in construction. He and co-owner Tim Richardson founded RockTops nearly five years ago to serve both the retail and new home construction markets. “Business has been great in Kansas City,” he said. “We focused on brand recognition and marketing, and it worked well for us. We grew rapidly. Today we have about 60 employees. It took a lot of strategic planning along the way for that kind of growth.”

Joel Davis

Photos Courtesy RockTops

Fixing a Bottleneck

Part of that strategic planning has involved giving customers even more material choices by branching out into the fabrication of new ultracompact surfaces. Between the technical challenges posed by working with ultra-compact materials and the need to meet changing consumer tastes, RockTops had to significantly redesign the workflow in its fabrication shop.

“For us, it was really about fixing a bottleneck within our shop,” Hyer said. “Miter edging has become more popular these days, but we did not want to jam up our

normal production. It’s a challenge for many shops, because they try to cut miter edges on their normal production equipment, tying it up and slowing everything down. It becomes an issue that most people give up on rather than trying to find a solution.”

RockTops turned to BACA Systems, the leading manufacturer of robotic and automated fabrication solutions for the stone industry, for a solution. In May 2015, they bought a Robo SawJet, which couples the functions of a high-pressure abrasive waterjet and a 25HP direct-drive saw with a precision KUKA Robotics industrial robot, and a BACA FlexJet, which is a 5-axis waterjet.

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This stunning kitchen features a Carrara marble island with 3-inch mitered edge, and Nero Orion on the perimeter countertops.

Soaring Above and Beyond in Stone

As a stone artist since 1991, Andreas von Huene resides in Arrowsic, a small town located along Maine’s southern coastline. Bath, a neighboring coastal town and financial mainstay of the area, is just a stone’s throw from Arrowsic, and was one of the first settlements in New England.

Photo by Peter Marcucci



To mount this cantilevered sculpture, Andreas drilled a 39-inch-deep hole and inserted a machined steel sleeve in the right wing. One end of a 2-inch-thick steel bar was tapered down to 1 inch and then inserted into the bird, while the 2-inch end was inserted into a rock base.

Peter Marcucci

Photos by Peter Marcucci and Courtesy Andreas von Huene

Creativity Inspired

“My love of creating began at age eight, while working in my father’s shop,” explained Andreas von Huene. “Bath was a ghost town when I was growing up. The economy was weak, so we moved to Boston where the shop started in the apartment hallway. My dad had a small lathe to make musical instruments, and just being allowed to use it was great. Even better, I got to hang out with him a lot.

“Years later, my parents bought a building close by. I could walk to the shop after school and pick up a project, sweep the floors, or watch the craftsmen who worked with the exotic woods that smelled good while being shaped. This combination of sights and sounds and smell of the grinder burning up (just kidding, but it happened) was wonderful. My father’s colleagues were especially kind to me. I also learned to feel strongly about making things that respected the beauty of the natural materials we used whether in natural form or processed.

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Bath Iron Works, a shipbuilder founded in 1884 and located on the Kennebec River, nourished the area’s economy until 1909, when shipbuilding slowed. And like the tides that ebbed and flowed throughout the centuries, so ebbed and flowed the area’s economy until 1914, as the dawning of World War I demanded ships — lots of ships. Again, money flowed into the area as the warships sailed out to defend distant lands across the sea.

Around this same time, Bath had become the end of the line for the railroad that served the shipbuilding, fishing, timber and farming enterprises that dotted Maine’s coastline. Upriver stood huge bays of freshwater where ice was harvested, packed in sawdust and loaded onto ships bound for all destinations.

By the time World War I ended in 1918, so did the need for warships. As the economy ebbed again, Bath became a ghost town until the early 1940s when war again raged in distant lands. America was going to war once again, and the money again flowed into the area — this time for nearly a decade...

Soaring Above and Beyond

Continued from page 1

“I also saw the respect with which tools were used — and made! So early on I had very positive associations with people who made things.”

Creativity Elevated

Von Huene continued his engineering studies at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts, and ten years later attended Stanford University working toward a masters degree in engineering. Andreas soon switched to the school’s product design program which combined engineering and art design. In his own words he received the call to not just concentrate on difficult tasks, but to combine thoughts and understanding. Eventually he could flip the time spent doing tedious work such as polishing stone into a rhythm that let him simultaneously think outside the box.

“Engineering extends into my art all the time,” Andreas continued. “The manufacturing, the moving and the understanding of how things move or rotate are universal skills, and I make a point of understanding everything on a jobsite to predict what is going to happen. Do I want it rotating, static, hanging or cantilevered? The engineering discipline builds mental flexibility, which is of great value in any creative endeavor. Good concentration is

also important to sticking with getting a form while carving, and to support that sculpture to its best effect when finished.

“There is a funny point in sculpting; let’s take stone, for example. There’s a point where you have a rough shape, an intermediate shape and then a wonderful stage when everything is starting to pull together and the character of the piece is coming out. You’re able to identify some hints from your efforts, while mistakes also inform you of the character of the work. Then there’s the stage when it’s a dance of every tool. You’re still taking some big deep cuts with a gas saw here and cuts with smaller tools there and magic is happening. There is no word in English that correctly identifies this place that is both work and joy. This is a high level of living for me.”

Soaring Above

I asked Andreas, “So what is your art and what are you thinking while carving?”

“There are people that say I’m all about flow and energy flow,” he continued. “Sometimes that is true — sometimes not; I do so many different things. I do enjoy building character into the work as if I’m engaging the piece, but I don’t want to overstate that. There are lots of pieces that seem to have no character unless you happen to like that kind of work. Then you groove on it. On each piece I like to have the large forms, the small forms, the surfaces, and the craftsmanship available to the viewer. I also like the contrast between organic shapes and geometric shapes. Combined they are very powerful. I also adapt my art to the project that comes into my heart. I cannot say there is just one thread that goes through my work, except that I try to have decent

Left: *Der Traum der Weise*, a sandstone stela sculpture produced at a symposium in Mauren, Germany.

Right: This overhead photo of Andreas’ shop shows an eclectic collection of tools and machines, and speaks volumes of his life and legacy of creation. “Ever since I was little I liked engines and machinery, and still do.”



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craftsmanship. After all, I grew up in a shop making recorders and flutes that had to be right on the money acoustically and aesthetically. So my process of discovery is retold by sculpting both figurative and abstract work with their different rules.

“What kinds of things are going through my mind when I’m carving? A lot of it is shape, such as in the beginning while getting the basic proportions right. Using light, you can see how certain shadows indicate a form, and if I’m in good form, I’ll be paying attention to not just the shape, but the shapes of the shadows, highlights and the gestures of the pose. Sometimes it’s the slightest bit of shaving that makes all the difference. I’ll shave off 1/16 inch, and all of a sudden the form will read correctly. Good craftsmanship is a delight, and therefore permission to go deeper into understanding what the art is about. Conversely, bad craftsmanship negates all the good work by tripping you up as you observe the art.

“What is my art is a tough question to answer. As soon as someone starts to define it, you just turn your ears off, because immediately you can find something that contradicts what they are saying. In terms of artistic endeavor, there are several challenges such as qualities of vision and execution and relevance of the art. Having a friendly opposition (friendly colleagues and critics) giving feedback is of great value, even if only for the learning opportunities. The distinction between doing and thinking bedevils those of us who have such strong urges to make things. It means we also ought to be earnestly thinking about what to do.

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This granite bench installed at the Patten Free Library was carved from Jonesboro Pink, quarried in Jonesboro, Maine by J.C. Stone, in Jefferson, Maine. “Jonesboro Pink is the hardest stone I know of and holds a polish very well,” said von Huene.



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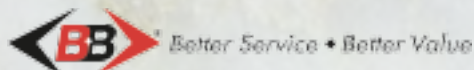
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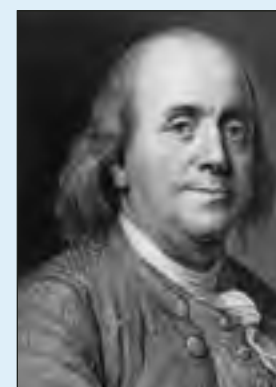
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“A wise man will desire no more than what he may get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contently.
– Benjamin Franklin

SAFETY & EDUCATION

Is Your Stone Shop Safety-Savvy? Safety Keepers Provides Essential Services

Let's face it, a building with tools and equipment is just a building, but a building with people is a company. If you're a well-run company, many of those employees are going to dedicate their lives to the longterm success of your dream. Unfortunately, dreams can turn to nightmares in the blink of an eye.

I once asked a very wise man if he thought that knowledge was power. The man thought for a few seconds and replied, "Yes, but only if you know how to use it."

Safety Keepers, located in Roselle, New Jersey, is a company built on the wisdom that it's better to be safe than sorry, and trust me — with the new OSHA laws

Peter Marcucci
Photos by Safety Keepers

coming through the pipeline, if you don't comply, sorry to say you're going to pay a high price. That is, if you're still allowed to keep the doors open.

Representing Safety Keepers is Pete Richardson. Pete proudly wears the title "Industrial Hygiene, Occupational Health and Safety Specialist." We asked Pete to give us the basics on the services Safety Keepers offers.

Give us a brief explanation of what Safety Keepers offers the stone industry.

"Safety Keepers is a comprehensive occupational safety and health company.

We do it all and are basically a one-stop shop for safety in the workplace. When the owner, Robert Deja, first visualized Safety Keepers, he saw it as a company that would serve the stone fabrication industry, and to a large extent this is the industry we serve."

How comprehensive is your program?

"Our inspectors will come into a company and go through every part of it to identify all of their safety issues. We will then recommend corrective actions. If necessary, and if the company decides not to do the corrective actions themselves, we will do these for them. Additionally, we will look at the policies and procedures that are in place. Many companies



Measuring shop noise levels with a sound level meter.

have verbal safety procedures, but that doesn't keep OSHA happy, because many times these procedures can be misinterpreted, so we will write safety programs that cover all of the hazards in a company. We'll then train the employees in their native language and text so that they know what is expected of them. OSHA rules require that these rules and programs be translated in their language, if needed. So if they speak Spanish, Polish or any language, the information and training is clearly understood. We also provide comprehensive forklift training just like when you got your driver's license. We

have videos and classroom time to make sure that everyone understands the basics, and then give a written test. Those that pass then move on to driver training and a practical test. Then, and only then, if they've accomplished what they are expected to, they and the employer are given certification cards to prove to OSHA that they are trained. If there is any reason they are not successful, we will re-train them to make sure that they are successful, even if it takes two or three tries. We do the same for crane training. This training is mandatory if a facility has overhead cranes."

What about the big one: silica?

"Yes, in the stone industry, silica is the big issue right now. So we will come in, look at the facility and its classification of jobs, identify who and what sections of the shop need to be tested, and monitor the airborne silica. We then send those results to an independent laboratory. What's important about the laboratory we use is that it's government certified, and when the results come back OSHA accepts the evaluation (whatever the result). We'll then interpret these results and make recommendations.

Please turn to page 6

New Touchstone Silk: It's Not Your Grandpa's Epoxy

Since 1962, Bonstone Materials Corporation has been a company synonymous with quality adhesives used for the bonding and patching of natural and engineered stone. Always on the cutting edge of development, it is no surprise that they would introduce the next generation of epoxies to satisfy the demand for white or light stone countertops.

The trend for light-colored countertop colors in an exterior setting seems to be increasing as upscale households extend their living space into the great outdoors. Kitchens, tables and tiki bars on decks and patios are quite vogue within this demographic. So leave it to Bonstone to not only to create a superior working product for light-colored interior stone, but also an



ultraviolet-resistant product that will look good and last year after year, explains Bonstone salesman Rob Elliott.

"Bonstone developed Touchstone Silk after we began hearing from some of our Glacier users. When working with large assemblies like waterfall edges, Glacier was too fast drying, and they needed a small

army of clampers to keep up! So they asked us for an alternative product — one that had the non-staining and knife grade consistency of Glacier, but had a much longer 'working time' so they could get all their clamps in place before the glue set. So we developed Touchstone Silk Gel to meet this need."

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All safety materials have been made available free of charge courtesy of the Natural Stone University sponsors and Natural Stone Institute Safety Committee.



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Is Your Stone Shop Safety-Savvy?

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“It may be engineering controls with things like ventilation or using more water in the fabrication process, or administrative controls such as rotating employees to decrease their exposure. But really, our goal is to avoid moving any employees to the personal protective equipment level such as a respirator. Under the new OSHA silica standards, as soon as any employees have to use personal protection, there is also going to be an extensive medical program required that is very costly to shops. So our goal is to engineer the environment so that it doesn't require respirators. If for any reason it is physically impossible to reduce silica levels, we will provide the medical surveillance service using licensed occupational physicians. We'll then provide the documentation, which remains in the company's file for an OSHA inspection.”

What other hazards are addressed by Safety Keepers?

“The stone industry is a very noisy industry, so we also provide comprehensive hearing protection and hearing conservation services. We have a truck that is equipped with an office, a sound-proof booth and a state-of-the-art Benson audiometer. We are able to go out to any site and provide audio metric hearing testing and education. We also monitor employees for any changes or warning signs that show they are not properly protected, and then specify what type of protection they may need. In order to arrive at the



conclusion that protection is needed, we also conduct noise studies in the environment. If needed, we'll then make recommendations for changes in the tooling, the machinery or the environment. So basically, wherever your hazards are, we will address them. We are very good at identifying all hazards, and when we find them, we will put a program in place to deal with them. We'll even do a chemical inventory of the facility and make sure that there are safety data sheets on file for all of the chemicals they use. Having these sheets is part of the Hazard Communication Program that OSHA has.”

If I were the owner of a fabrication company, why wouldn't I just try and take care of things myself?

“One of the things we've learned is that safety is a complicated topic and most shop owners don't have time for it. That's where we come in. We are able to remain current on what the trends are and what OSHA is looking at. For instance: this year they are looking at forklifts and silica. So when we come in, we know what to look for as opposed to the owner trying to figure it out. This removes a lot of the burden from the owner.

“The second thing is that when OSHA is looking at any training documents of a company, if they see that the training has been done by an independent company, they know that shop owner is serious about safety and has not just printed up forms and had everybody sign it. They know that a company has come in and provided and documented the training. It's that third party documentation, if you will, that carries a lot of weight with OSHA. We work with a lot of shops and with OSHA, and we know most of the inspectors by first name. I was just in one of their offices, and one of their guys said, 'You're here so much, you should have an office here.' They are used to working with us, they know we do a good job, and they know they can trust us. So by bringing in an independent company, it brings credibility to a shop's safety program because the owner had to pay for that service and is committed to safety.

“The third thing is that we have our finger on the pulse of safety at this point, whereas the shop owner might have to research what to do to be compliant with, let's say, the new silica rule. We don't have to do the research!

“We know what has to be done! We do it every day and we are not accidentally going to forget an important step, whereas the shop owner might miss in his or her research. They may never have used

a lab device to measure silica or hearing. We use them every day and our results are precise and can be verified.

“A fourth advantage is our comprehensive nature. If you're trying to put resources together as a shop owner, you're probably going to have to send your people out for hearing testing, and they are going to lose a half-day of work sitting in an office waiting for a test. We come to you and everything is done at your site. We only need your employee for ten minutes, not a half-day, so you are not trying to coordinate your work with you employee's safety and health.

Please turn to page 7

Right: Richardson calibrating noise dosimeters and air pumps prior to shop environment testing.



Below: Safety Keepers has the equipment to conduct onsite pulmonary testing, respirator mask fit testing and hearing testing.



Establishing an emergency plan and training employees how to follow it is an essential part of maintaining OSHA compliance.



Above: an audiogram test provides an individual profile and baseline to monitor hearing loss in all employees.

“If you have a job without aggravations, you don't have a job.”

— *Malcolm Forbes*

Safety Keepers

Continued from page 6

“These services are being delivered to your door, and your operation continues to run smoothly, and that’s important.”

When Safety Keepers takes on a fabrication company, is OSHA alerted that you are going there or alerted when you leave?

“OSHA is never notified by us. The only time that they are involved is when we have a shop approach us for our services because they have already been visited by OSHA, or are anticipating or already received a violation or fine. These cases are less than half of our clients, but are a significant number of shops. You know, the one frustrating part of this business is that safety is sometimes on the back burner until OSHA visits. It is so much easier to prevent the fine if we are onsite before OSHA ever comes by, as opposed to trying to clean up a mess. I will tell you that for those shops that have the unfortunate situation of being issued violations and fines, we will negotiate to reduce or eliminate them, and I will go to New York City, to Washington D.C. or anywhere to represent a client. I am not an attorney, but in the Federal Administrative Law Courts, you can be an appointed representative, and that’s how we function.

“So when a company has violations or fines, it’s not required that the company owner has to go and talk to OSHA. We have been fairly effective at getting significant reductions, and in some cases completely eliminating them.”

When one of your inspectors arrives, where do they begin and how long to they stay?

“Well, it all depends on what the shop owner wants. The owner can choose to take a package or (pick and choose from an) a la carte menu.

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“Everything you add to the truth subtracts from the truth.”

— Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

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The Business of Growth

LinkedIn – We have all heard of it. Most of us have a profile on it. Truthfully, I don't pay that much attention to my LinkedIn, mostly because I have a job that I like and I am not that concerned with finding a new one. That may not always be the case, but for now, I'm good. Anyway, LinkedIn launched in May 2003 as a site where professionals could network as well as look for a job, and companies could post open positions. LinkedIn has over 106 million active users being both individuals seeking positions and employers looking to fill open positions. LinkedIn lets all users create profiles and form "connections" to others. This is online social job networking, so to speak.

BNI (Business Network International) - This is an organization dedicated to helping business growth. There are physical meetings held where members get together and pass business referrals amongst themselves. The idea here is that up close and personal gatherings help you get to know fellow members so that you feel comfortable passing business on to them. It's like everyone in the room is a salesperson for your business. Apparently it does work because it is reported that in 2017 members generated \$13.6 BILLION dollars in referral revenue for member businesses.

Both of these organizations, for lack of a better phrase, have their good points and their bad points. LinkedIn is sleek and modern. Everything is done online, quick and easy. But, LinkedIn is geared more toward individuals. It really is not set up to help business growth. BNI has a great system in place to help business growth but it is based on a lot of "old school" ways like in-person chapter meetings and face to face one-on-ones. Who has

Sharon Koehler Artistic Stone Design

time for all that these days? If only someone would step up, take the best of both and make it work.

Well, someone did. In January 2014, Alignable — The Small Business Network—came to life as a way to promote small business. The site has a LinkedIn feel to it with everything being online but

Your company sets up a profile, much like any other user site. You get a profile and a cover picture much like Facebook. You can also connect your Alignable page to your Facebook page if you want. There are multiple sections that you need to fill out such as Our Ideal Customer, About Us, Products & Services, etc. The more information you give, the easier it is for others to know you and know what you do so



it has a BNI quality about it, as it was created to help small businesses connect with each other and grow through word-of-mouth and referrals. What could be better? The creators of Alignable contend that they did a lot of research before they created the content for this site and the one thing that they ran across over and over was the desire of small businesses to reach out or connect with other small businesses near them. I honestly had never heard of Alignable until just a couple of months ago. One of my vendor reps sent over an e-mail invitation to join. Since I am always interested in things like this, I accepted the invitation on behalf of my company.

First off, it's free. Even if it doesn't work, nothing lost except a little bit of time.

they can help you. You can then search for nearby businesses to connect with, or Alignable will suggest connections for you. Looking at our page right now, we have 12 connections and 231 suggested connections. Once you are connected you can send messages back and forth and get to know other businesses.

Your business profile will also have multiple pages. Besides your Home page there is My Network, My Community, Messages, etcetera, but the one I really like is the Q & A Forum. If a small business has any kind of question, they can post it on that forum and get trusted answers from other small businesses. You can also answer a question from another business and show off your smarts.

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The Stone Shark by Stone Pro Unveiled at TISE 2018

The Stone Shark's small footprint and portability make it the perfect tool for automating the sink cut-out process.

Twelve years ago, Stone Pro Equipment introduced a handy-dandy tool called The Rock Doctor. When used on the jobsite, The Rock Doctor gave the installer the ability to level excessive countertop seam warping.

Fast-forward to 2017, when another bright idea came to Stone Pro Equipment CEO and designer, Barry Brandt. After seeing a miniature CNC being used in the wood industry and then reflecting on the success of the Rock Doctor, the concept came to Brandt to develop a machine to perform precision sink and range cutouts: the Stone Shark.

With the Stone Shark, you simply set and forget it after placing it on the countertop, locking it down, selecting the correct cutout and depth and hitting the switch. It's easy to operate and easy to move, said Brad Winn, of Stone Pro. "The Stone Shark is a light weight, easily mastered



small-scale machine designed for smaller shops that fabricate by hand, and can take the place of the larger CNCs that larger shops use."

The Stone Shark is also penny-wise, added Winn. "We've done extensive testing, and you're going to get two and a half to three sink cutouts per bit. The cost of these bits is nothing compared to the cost of the bits used with large CNCs. We've introduced a soft stone bit and a hard

stone bit, so hard materials like Violetta or quartzites shouldn't be a problem."

One important final point: this portable, 120 pound jewel is available just in the nick of time to help smaller shops conform to the new OSHA silica standards. Think of it! When used in conjunction with an edge profile router, the Stone Shark can really help get your dust level down to an OSHA acceptable level! And if your shop is already wet, it

seems to me that when needed, the Stone Shark could be a huge asset to the owner who is caught between a rock and a hard place on whether to purchase another large CNC machine, or just scale back production to a more manageable level. Instead, these owners could now defer this purchase indefinitely.

Features Include:

- Easy to learn and operate
- Mobile design requires only a little space to store when not in use
- Electrical requirements: Uses standard 110V 20 amp service
- Vacuum cups keep it locked to the surface of natural or engineered stone
- Drills holes for fixtures
- Made of rugged machined aluminum and stainless steel
- Will step-cut any sink or range configuration up to 36 inches wide
- Using Stone Pro's incremental cutters ensures longer tool life

Benefits:

- Uses software that easily converts a DXF file into a physical file

- Saves hundreds of cut out template files
- Allows shops to work more efficiently with much less dust
- Cuts sink cutouts with a perfect 90 degree edge, reducing time spent polishing
- Does sink or cooktop cutouts on any depth countertop
- Provides consistent cutouts every time
- Financing available

Specs:

- Only 120 lbs
- 54 inches wide x 36 inches deep x 18 inches high
- Center water-cooled 2 HP spindle motor
- Takes a 3-GPM standard garden hose connection
- Air: ¼ inch female
- 110v 20-amp service

The Stone Shark is available from Braxton-Bragg. Call a sales representative at 800-575-4401 to let them further explain how the Stone Shark can rock and roll your cutouts and profits! Visit Braxton-Bragg online at www.braxton-bragg.com.

Achilli

EVOLUTION IN STONE TECHNOLOGY

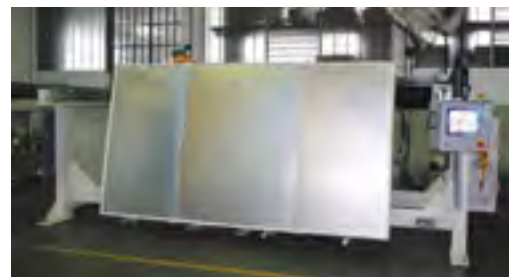
MBS IG TS BRIDGE SAW

- Monoblock design for maximum space savings
- Machine Dimensions: 20' L x 12" W x 9' H
- Weight: 6100 lbs
- Power Requirements: 230 Volt / 3 phase / 60 Hz 60 amp service
- Tilting and rotating worktable ready to pour concrete
- Head motion: X-axis - 11'6", Y-axis - 6'5", Z-axis - 1'3"
- 10" Color touchscreen on swivel arm
- Manual Head Tilt to 45° by hand wheel for miter cutting in X-axis
- Blade tilts to 45° by hand wheel for miter cutting in Y-axis
- Manual Head Rotation with push button hydraulic lock (0°-90°-180°-270°)
- 15 HP motor

Only 2 left in stock!



- Blade sizes: 14", 16", 18", 20"
- Remote pendant control with cable



\$59,900 includes shipping (in cont. USA), installation and training by an Achilli Technician

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Ph. +1 704 893 4634 • Fax +1 833 514 7058 • www.achilliusa.com

The Stone Detective

The Case of the Jigsaw Puzzle

Frederick M. Hueston, PhD



IT was one of those nights that would later give me an Aha! moment. I had just finished dinner and was sitting on the sofa watching the news. I opened my tablet and thought I would put together one of those online jigsaw puzzles. Little did I realize that playing with a jigsaw puzzle the next day would help me solve another stone installation failure.

I woke up the next morning to a new voicemail on my phone. *Someone must have called late last night*, I thought. The voice mail went something like this: *"Hi, this is Mr. Bigshot Lawyer and I got your name from one of your articles and I have a case where I may need your help, can you please return my call."* Now, what do you see wrong with that call? I'll give you a hint: how in the heck am I supposed to call him back when he didn't leave his phone number? Either he assumed I would have it on my caller ID or he just forgot. Well, lucky for him it was on caller ID, but I thought I would wait until after breakfast to give him a jingle.

I guess my loyal readers will know where I went for breakfast? That's right, I visited my favorite greasy spoon for a cup of joe and some sausage and eggs. I greeted Flo and there was a guy I had never seen before seated next to my usual place at the counter. I noticed he had a tablet and was playing the exact jigsaw puzzle I was playing the night before. He looked like he was having some trouble, so I said excuse me and gave him some tips on how to solve the puzzle.

This was yet another clue to the stone inspection I was about to perform. I finished my last cup of joe and walked outside to call the bigshot lawyer. He answered right away and told me about the case. One of his clients had a limestone floor "with some issues," and he asked if I could come inspect it and give him my opinion. Since he was only 20 minutes away I said I could meet him in about an hour. He gave me the address, and I headed

back to my office to pick up my testing equipment.

I plugged the address into my GPS and was off to see Mr. Bigshot Lawyer. I pulled up to a warehouse that was some type of roofing company, so I double-checked my GPS to make sure I was at the right address. It was the correct address, but due to my faulty memory I wondered if I had written it down wrong, so I called the lawyer. After the first ring I noticed a rather large gentleman in a suit across the parking lot answer his phone. Lo and behold it was him, and it was indeed the correct address. I hung up the phone, got out of my old Woody, walked over to him and introduced myself.

He explained that his client had installed a brand-new limestone floor and it had cracked in numerous places. *OK*, I thought, *this is a common problem that I see all the time*. I looked at him, fired off my normal Columbo-type questions, and asked if we could go see it. He said sure. I expected for him to say, "Follow me and we'll head over there." But no, instead he told me it was right out back.

"OK, lead the way," I said. He led me to an open overhead door at the back of the warehouse. We walked inside, and I saw nothing but a bunch of roofing shingles and pails of tar or something. He took me to the back of the warehouse and pointed in the corner. I almost fell on the floor laughing. There were about 25 gallon buckets with little pieces of limestone in them (see the picture). I cleared my throat and asked him if this was the floor. I emphasized "was." He said his client tore out the floor and replaced it and this is the only evidence they had. I've seen a lot of strange things in this business, but never this. I told him that I couldn't determine what the cracks were caused by with the tile in little pieces. As I was telling him how difficult it was, an idea popped into my head. I looked at the buckets of stone and wondered if I could piece them together like a jigsaw



There were about 25 gallon buckets with little pieces of limestone in them. I had to use my jigsaw-solving skills.

puzzle. I revised what I really wanted to tell him (that he must be nuts), and told him I could spend a couple of hours trying to put the floor back together, and of course, he would have to pay me for my time. I gave him no guarantees, but I thought it was worth a try. He said OK and left.

I poured one of the buckets on the floor and tried putting the

pieces back together and got nowhere. Then I remembered what I told the guy at the café how I start solving jigsaw puzzles. I told him to do the border first and then fill in the remaining pieces. So, with that I started looking for all the border pieces. Within a few hours I had a good portion of the floor put together. I found several cracks that were long and linear

Braxton-Bragg Announces Three New Product Partnerships

Braxton-Bragg CEO Rick Stimac announced today three new product lines will be available this Spring, giving Braxton-Bragg customers an ever wider choice of premium products for stone fabrication, and covering the CNC market like never before.

"One of our primary customer concerns was that we did not heavily support CNC, so that is one of the first major partnerships I wanted us to rebuild," says CEO Rick Stimac. "We reconnected our partnership with



DIAMUT
Diamut HYS CNC Tooling



TERMINATOR
DIAMOND PRODUCTS INC.

Terminator Force 25 Blade

Terminator, and are also partnering with Diamut. In addition, we have a new line of exclusive sinks. These partnerships are filling holes we had in our offering, and we will continue to build our offering, based on our customer needs."

Braxton-Bragg will once again partner with Terminator, offering the complete line of Terminator brand blades, CNC tooling, and resin- and metal-bonded diamond tooling. In production for more than 24 years, the Terminator line of stone fabrication products is well known in the industry for high quality and dependability.

In addition, Braxton-Bragg is

and surmised that the cracks were either caused by expansion joints being bridged or no expansion joints at all. It was a guess based on crack dynamics, a subject I teach in my inspection class, and a common failure I was very familiar with.

Mr. Bigshot returned, saw my big limestone jigsaw puzzle, and told me to write a report and send him a bill. Unfortunately, I didn't take any pics of the finished floor, but at least I hopefully solved another case. This should be interesting if it ever goes to court. But I won't hold my breath!

The Stone Detective is a fictional character created by Dr. Frederick M. Hueston, PhD, written to be entertaining and educational. 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 email comments to him at fhueston@stoneforensics.com.

now offering the full line of Diamut premium CNC tooling, including blades, core bits and other diamond abrasives. For more than 30 years, Diamut has manufactured a complete range of diamond tools for stone, glass, and synthetic materials. Diamut tooling works on the majority of the machines on the market today, and is recognized industry-wide for its quality.

In a search for a suitable sink to offer their valued customers, Braxton-Bragg has found a professionally manufactured, consistently high-quality product. Braxton-Bragg's new surgical-grade stainless steel sinks hold up to heavy use, look good in any new or remodeled kitchen, are easy to maintain and clean, and are available at a price point to position them as a true-money maker for fabricators.

Please turn to page 37



Braxton-Bragg has added three new product lines to present a wider selection of premium products.

Safety Keepers

Continued from page 7

“He or she can call me and say, ‘I’m worried about the new silica rule, and I want to make sure my shop is doing what it is supposed to do to comply.’ In this case, it would be a different set of services from the, ‘Hey! Just come in and make my shop OSHA proof.’ So our stay can range anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. We are working with one shop right now that is both a wood and stone fabricator. In this case, we are there for more than just a few weeks because we are dealing with both wood and stone hazards. So it really depends on what you want us to do and how extensive your business is.

“When we are finished, you’ll know three things. First, you will know that your shop is safe. Second, you will know that if OSHA shows up at your door you can call us and we will be there in an hour. Third, and down the road, you will have access to us to make further recommendations. Another thing that I’d like to point out is that we not only deal with OSHA, we also deal with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). So if the DEP comes in and says you’re discharging to ground water and you need to have corrective action, such as installing a water recycling system, we can do that, too, as well as represent you in any DEP proceeding.”


It sounds like what you’re offering is so detailed and so comprehensive, that an owner, when Safety Keepers walks out of their door, might feel OSHA-proof. So should the owner then call OSHA and invite them to come and check them out, basically calling OSHA before they call on them?

“No, but I would suggest something along the same lines. Both New York and New Jersey offer voluntary consultation programs that are provided by their State Labor Department.

Safety Keepers provides test copies to each employee.

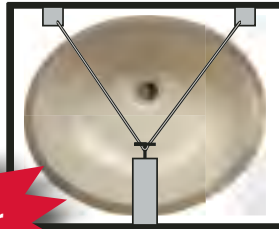
YOU’VE GOT TO SEE THIS VIDEO!

Patent Pending

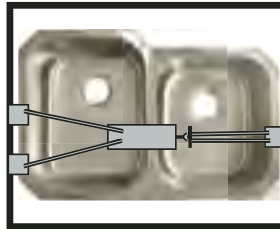


#1 Seller!
Most Popular
Sink Support

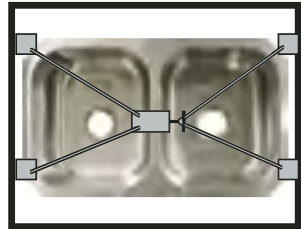
Clips and Draw Bolt Assembly Locations



Ceramic



Stainless 60/40
with Offset Drains



Stainless 50/50
with Center Drains

Why Pay More to Install a Sink?

Why pay more than \$5 for a sink install kit, when you could use the Hercules® Universal Sink Harness and complete your install project in minutes, with no return trip needed?

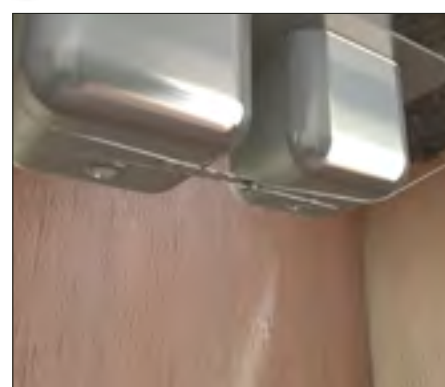
The Hercules® Universal Sink Harness from Braxton-Bragg is another great innovation that can save installers time and money.

At Last, a Simple, Fast Alternative

The Hercules® Universal Sink Harness is a simple, ingenious alternative to expensive brackets that only work on some installations, and a time-saving, more professional alternative to building a scrap wood support system to hold the sink in place while the caulk or adhesive dries. It installs without drilling into expensive countertops or cutting notches into your customer’s cabinets, and without using messy epoxies or relying on adhesives to secure sinks. One of the most immediately recognizable benefits is that you won’t have to make a return trip to remove bracing or jury-rigged 2 x 4 supports.

Fabricator Tested in Thousands of Installs

The Hercules® Universal Sink Harness has been fabricator- and installation-tested under demanding conditions, and can be used to install the most popular types of sinks, including ceramic, stainless steel, and even cast iron undermount. **It is effective on either double bowl or single bowl steel or ceramic vanity sinks. Just imagine—one simple, inexpensive kit can do all of those sinks!** Not only is the Hercules® Universal



See the animated video!
<http://www.braxton-bragg.com/HerculesSinkHarness>

Sink Harness the fastest and most economical system available, it’s also the most versatile.

Be the Go-To Guy to Repair Failed Installs

While the Sink Harness was being developed and tested, we discovered another notable benefit of the Sink Harness: it’s a great system to repair failed undermount installations. Many fabricators are asked to repair someone else’s poor sink installation job. The Hercules® Universal Sink Harness will get the job done quickly. You can become known as the guy who contractors and home owners in your area call for help.

Supports the Heaviest Sink Loads

Some clips and anchor systems rely on the countertop to support the sink—not so with the Hercules® Universal Sink Harness. Just like a suspension bridge, the Hercules® Universal Sink Harness helps to provide support and over-all strength to a countertop installation. It actually transfers all weight to the cabinet and doesn’t add additional stress to the weakest and most easily damaged part of the countertop: the sink cut out. It does its primary function admirably well—support the sink under the heaviest of loads.

Try One and You’ll Believe It!

Braxton-Bragg wants to prove it to everyone who’s faced sink-installation problem, or just wants to save money and keep their shop profitable. Visit www.braxton-bragg.com for the complete Universal Sink Harness video.



Item #	Description	Great Low Price
17310	Hercules® Universal Sink Harness Kit	\$4.95



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



You can invite them into your facility to review what you’ve done and to make any changes they feel relevant. I will be present for this, and if the state inspector says, ‘Well, we think you might have missed this,’ Safety Keepers will then take care of it. Then, and only then you can truly say you are OSHA-proof.”

You mentioned the new silica rule. There was a lot of discussion on this last year in the Slippery Rock. Has

that rule taken affect yet for the stone industry?

“There are two silica compliance dates; one has already passed. The first was for people in the construction industry working with concrete and outdoor stone. The original date was June 23, 2017, and was then moved to September 23, 2017. The compliance date for fabrication shops is June 23 of this year.

Please turn to page 14

RockTops

Continued from page 1

“Out of all the machines we researched, the Robo SawJet had the smallest footprint, the fastest travel speed from position to position, and, technically speaking, it was the most accurate, fastest-cutting machine available,” Hyer said. “We also wanted to be on the front end of technology, and the robot is the future of how all sawjets will be manufactured. There was very little downside to having a robot. The maintenance of the traditional gantry machines is overwhelming. With the robot you literally have no maintenance for five years or 10,000 hours.”

While the Robo SawJet is the workhorse of the shop, the FlexJet provide unparalleled flexibility and precision for jobs where the smallest error could ruin a slab. “The decision to purchase the FlexJet came down to it being the most precise 5-axis waterjet that was in the stone market,” Hyer said. “The precision is phenomenal. It gives us the

ability to cut metal, scrap, stone, wood. We recognize how well it miter material, ultra-compact especially. That was our driving decision behind that purchase.”

It is equipped with a PAC 60™ precision angle control 5-axis cutting head with 60-degree beveling capability. It can produce a true angle with continuous rotation, which means no repositioning of the cutting head is required during the cut. Sophisticated software predicts the optimum “lean forward” angle for the cut to increase speed and reduce undercutting and corner blowout.

FlexJet machines include the patented Flex-Sense Monitoring System enabling true unattended operations. They are optimized to operate with less mess and noise than traditional waterjets.

RockTops uses the Robo SawJet to meet its daily production demands, depending on the sawjet’s fast cutting times for high output, and then using the FlexJet to process materials that are slow to cut with a saw. The FlexJet also gives



Detail and overview of Dekton/Silestone front desk created for Kansas City Sporting Club.



them the flexibility to perform intricate cuts for special projects. “We focus on the more detail-oriented ultra-compact and miter jobs with the FlexJet,” Hyer said.

The shop currently processes about 800 to 1,000 square feet of material per day in one shift. That is a mix of natural stone, quartz, and ultra-compact materials. The main brands of ultra-compact materials it offers are Silestone and Dekton.

Ultracompact Materials

RockTops began fabricating ultracompact materials about three years ago, focusing on Dekton, a popular Consentino product. “It is one of the up and coming products in the marketplace,” Hyer said. “It’s also a difficult product to work with. Typical fabrication methods don’t work well. We feel the FlexJet is the solution.”

Using the FlexJet, RockTops technicians can

cut perfect vein-matched mitered edges with little to no material waste. “Most waterjets are typically 3-axis machines,” he said. “With a 5-axis machine, we have the flexibility of having a 60-degree angle we can cut. It gives us a lot of versatility. Essentially, I could put a 45-degree miter on a circle. That shows what the capability is.”

It’s no secret that most fabricators dislike working with ultra-compact materials, which can be surprisingly fragile during processing. It requires slow, expert handling to produce a quality result. Despite these challenges, RockTops is banking on its ability to process ultra-compact materials as a key marketable difference between it and the competition.

RockTops has gained such a reputation for its skill

at fabricating ultracompact materials that other shops in the Kansas City area have begun outsourcing jobs to them. “We are the Number One shop for fabricating ultracompact materials,” Hyer said. “We do it really well.”

Speed and Dependability

The RockTops shop depends on the Robo SawJet on a daily basis. “We call it our best \$25 an hour employee in the shop,” Hyer said. “It’s dependable. It’s reliable. We’re thankful we have it. We would not be able to be where we are at today without it.”

It takes the Robo SawJet half the time of other machines to cut a standard 40-square-foot kitchen countertop with sink hole from a slab, finishing the job within 15-18 minutes. Since the Robo SawJet is a dual-table system, a slab can be loaded while another is being cut, meaning no downtime.

The investment in the Robo SawJet has paid dividends in increased productivity and profits for RockTops, Hyer said. “In our industry, the quicker you can produce the materials, the more profitable you are. The Robo SawJet is the most efficient, fastest-producing machine in the industry.”

In addition to its speed and reliability, the Robo SawJet is significantly easier to program than other machines in the industry.

Please turn to page 19

This kitchen has a smooth box joint countertop with wood & Daltile Calacatta quartz.



Braxton-Bragg Donates to Knoxville Habitat ReStore

Braxton-Bragg, located in Knoxville, Tennessee, donated nearly \$2,500 in brand new stainless steel sinks to the Knoxville Habitat for Humanity ReStore to help families in need.

“We knew that the sinks could benefit the community from a donation and sales point of view and were happy to share some inventory with Knoxville Habitat ReStore,” said Rick Stimac, Braxton-Bragg CEO. “Braxton-Bragg prides itself on being an



Braxton-Bragg donated a load of premium stainless steel sinks to the Knoxville Habitat for Humanity ReStore program.



active part of our community, and supporting many great nonprofit organizations, including Knoxville Habitat for Humanity.”

April Timko, director of marketing and communications, Knoxville Habitat for Humanity, added, “Braxton-Bragg’s support helps deserving families in need of affordable housing build strength, stability and self-reliance. Profits from all ReStore merchandise sales help families currently working in our program to build and purchase their homes. Furthermore, donations to our ReStore provide a way for community shoppers to purchase items at a fraction of retail costs while also helping to keep hundreds of tons of materials out of area landfills.”

For more information on the Habitat for Humanity program, visit www.habitat.org.

The Business of Growth

Continued from page 8

It’s another way for businesses to know who you are and what you’re about.

Are there any downsides or drawbacks? I am not too sure about any negative issues, as we have not been on the site that long, but I do see two possible issues. The first one is Alignable’s enthusiasm. I am all for energy and positivity, but Alignable seems to send me a lot of e-mail messages. Some are introductions from Alignable staff who want to assist me. Some have tips for use and some are suggested connections. That doesn’t sound like a big deal, but you have to remember that while you are getting all these messages, you are also getting messages from your connections. It can be a bit overwhelming if you aren’t careful.

The only other issue I’ve noticed is their mobile app. I cannot download their mobile app because I have an Android device. The

Alignable app is only available to Apple users. However, even if I had an iPhone I think I would hesitate to download this app. It only has a 2.2 rating out of 5 in the App Store, and the reviews are not good. One fairly recent review suggested that the mobile app will be the downfall of Alignable. Another one suggests that the app development must have gone to the lowest bidder. I hope the Alignable folks listen to their reviews and make a more user-friendly, all device-compatible app.

Alignable: does it work? They have plenty of reviews and testimonials to indicate that it does. As for our shop, I guess we will have to wait and see. If you have any experience with Alignable, good or bad, I would love to hear about it.

Please send your comments to Sharon Koehler at Sharon@asdrva.rocks.



2017 Pinnacle
AWARDS

OTHER PROJECT
TEAM MEMBERS

Zaha Hadid
Design Architect

Ismael Leyva Architects
Architect of Record

Samfet
Stone Supplier

Santucci Armando
(NSI Member Company)
Stone Supplier

STONE

Grigio Brasile

JURORS’ COMMENTS

“In addition to being a beautiful design, the project’s flawless execution and the careful celebration of the stone’s natural characteristics represented a very high level of achievement.”

“The feature wall in this residential building lobby is art. The characteristics of the marble used is a big part of the success of the execution. One of a kind!”

520 W 28th Street
Lobby Feature Wall
New York, New York

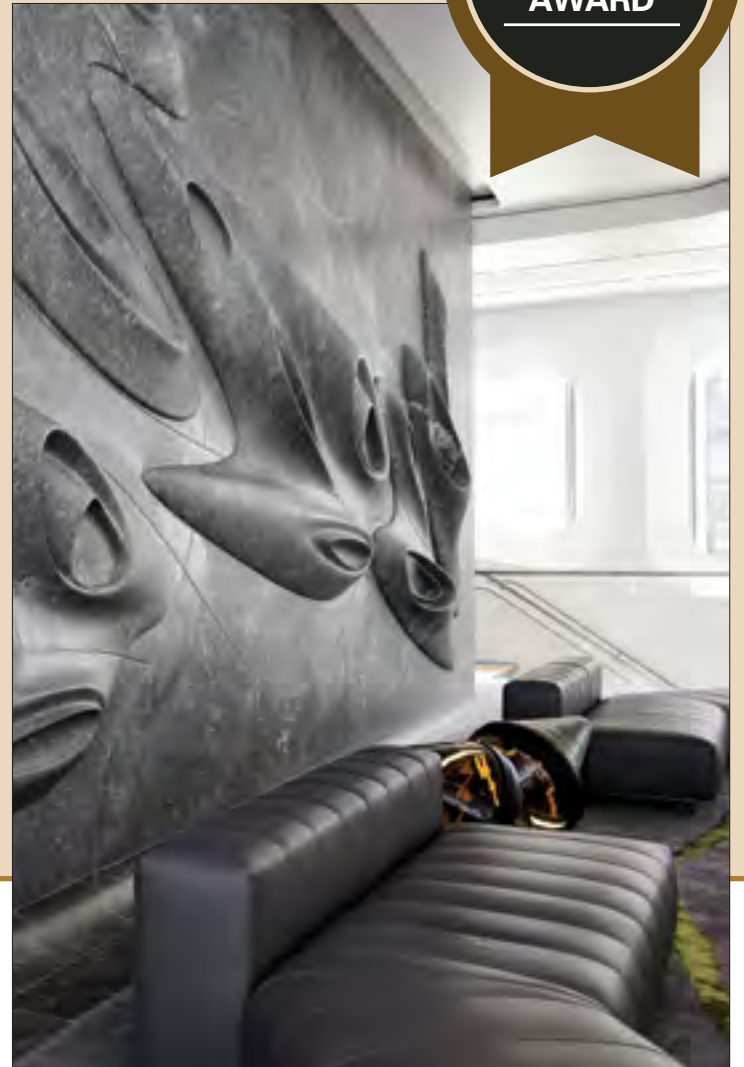
Envisioned and designed by late renowned architect Zaha Hadid, the 520 W 28th Street project is a futuristic and upscale residential condominium building developed by New York City real estate firm, Related Companies.

Apart from the stone work in the condominium’s luxurious apartments, the client also commissioned the engineering and execution of an artistic feature stone wall and matching floor design in the lobby area. Artfully carved from Grigio Brasile marble, the wall creates a breathtaking piece of art that expands a dramatic 34 feet across the lobby. This stone was chosen in part due to its highly durable characteristics, as well as its beautiful smoky grey color tones.

The initial phase of the project started with sourcing marble blocks in Greece that were just the right color variations and quantities for the monochromatic design. The next steps involved

Award of Excellence
Port Morris Tile & Marble
Bronx, New York
Stone Fabricator | Stone Installer

GRAND
PINNACLE
AWARD



SGM Photography



working closely with Hadid’s team to refine the layouts required to accommodate the sizeable blocks, as well as to allow for proper installation of the large, three-dimensional portion of the wall.

From Greece, the stone was shipped to Italy for a highly detailed fabrication process, then carefully transported via airfreight to New York, where the expansive

blocks of marble were expertly installed like one big vertical puzzle.

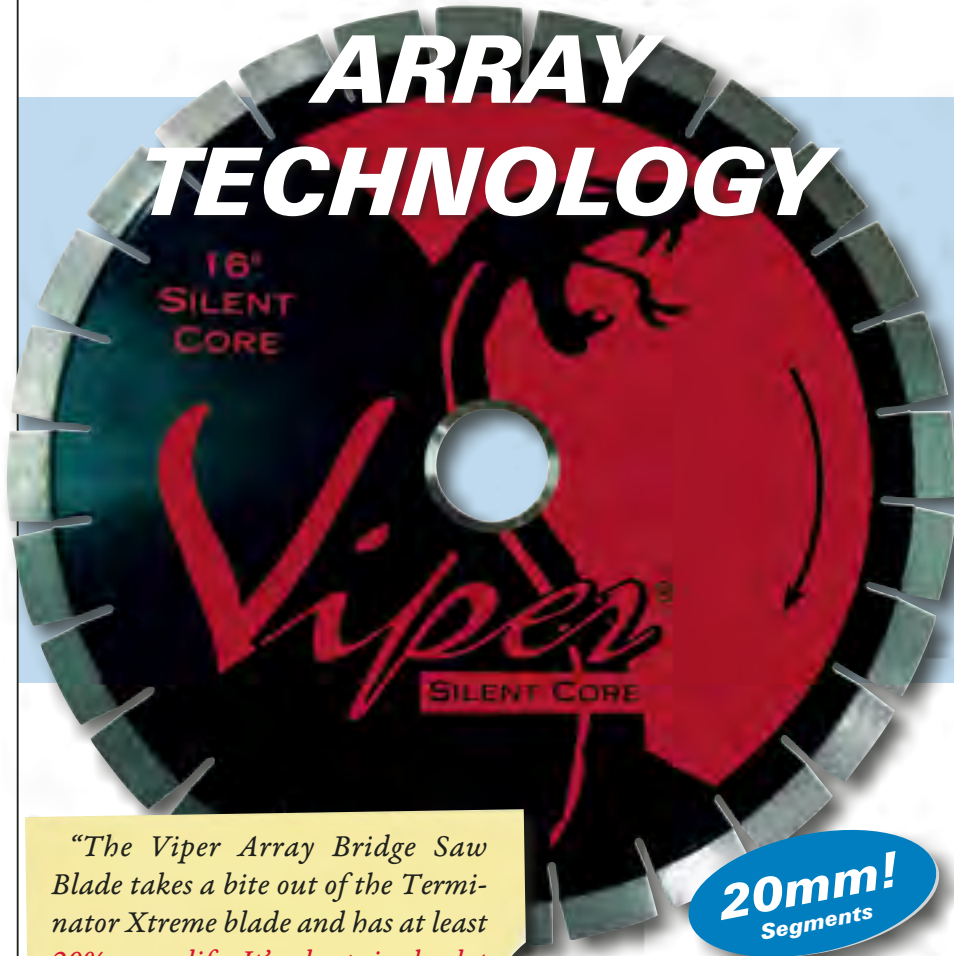
The 520 W 28th Street feature lobby wall project exemplifies unique collaboration of creativity, experience and craftsmanship and is now a standing landmark that represents how an inspired vision combined with skill and engineering can push stone design to the limits.

Please turn to page 20

BEST-SELLING BRIDGE SAW BLADE

FEATURING

ARRAY TECHNOLOGY



“The Viper Array Bridge Saw Blade takes a bite out of the Terminator Xtreme blade and has at least 20% more life. It’s also priced a lot lower than Terminator.”

– Mike Weldon,
Stone Fuzion

Cutting Speed

The cutting speed of this Viper® blade is equal to any blade on the market.

20mm Segment and Array Diamond Technology

Array Technology means that the diamonds used on the Viper® Array blades are evenly spaced to provide the same quality from the first cut of the blade to the last.

Silent Core Blade

Using the best new technology, these premium blades cut even the hardest stone without causing your saw to draw increased amps.



Item #	Description	OUR Low Price
9881	Viper® Array 20mm Segment Silent Core Blade, 14", 4,500 RPM	\$270.12
9882	Viper® Array 20mm Segment Silent Core Blade 16", 3,800 RPM	\$296.21



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

Is Your Stone Shop Safety-Savvy?

Continued from page 11

“The rule basically says that the old acceptable exposure was way too high, and that it has been cut down to [ten percent] of its original number. That’s a lot stricter. The new rule also adds that you not only know the levels of silica, but also requires medical surveillances of your employees if you are over the limit of exposure. The old rule also said that you could simply fit a respirator for the person. Now, if you have to resort to a respirator, you also have to send your people for chest x-rays, respiratory tests, tuberculosis tests and extensive medical examinations. OSHA is doing a lot to get this new standard out there. So what I see is this: when OSHA walks into a shop after June 23 and says, ‘Let me see your silica results,’ and the shop cannot produce those results, they will be considered ‘Willful Violators,’ and the penalty for this is six figures.”

That’s pretty stiff penalty, and maybe catastrophic for some shops.

“Yes! Clearly, for smaller shops, this could mean their death. So if you’re slapped with a \$125,000 fine, you’re talking about an awful lot of granite kitchens that would need to be produced to pay it off. So non-compliance

After June 23, 2018, the fine for “Willful Violation” of OSHA silica exposure standards is over \$100,000.

of this rule will put people out of business. It really would be much better to spend under \$10,000 dollars for compliance, rather than paying a huge fine for a willful violation.”

What can owners expect to pay for your services?

“Our prices are personalized to the size of the business and what we need to do. There are a lot of shops that have only four or five employees and have a good but not huge production volume. So what we need to do for them and their small production space is far less than a large company. Having said that, a great example is this; if you’ve got four employees in one small area, we might only need to take a few silica samples to find out everyone’s exposure. This lowers our costs as opposed to a shop that is spread out over three buildings. We typically ask for a 50 percent deposit to sign on to our services and the other 50 percent upon completion.”

Can some of these costs be offset by lower insurance costs, specifically Worker’s Compensation?

“Yes. We’ve had instances

where a company received a reduction on their Worker’s Compensation surcharge because they engaged safety services. Companies have taken us on because they had a higher premium due to a surcharge for a bad safety record. These companies, even though they were considered a high liability, were given a surcharge reduction because they took Safety Keepers on and corrected their safety deficiencies.

“In addition, and generally speaking for most shops, using our services will cost you less than one violation. Obviously, there are many shops that go all year-long and are never visited by OSHA, but if you were visited and they found you in violation, our services, for sure, would have been the better bargain. The other thing, too, is that once you have our services and OSHA visits you, you’ll offer the inspector a cup of coffee and ask him to wait because we are calling our safety manager. You then call us, and we are there within an hour to meet the inspector. We’ll then take him on a tour of your facility and answer his questions.

“Generally, they’ll walk out happy with no violations or fines.”

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Buff Splitface Veneer

Big Creek Limestone

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Hot Dog Dogma

I am going to lay an important baseball statistic on you. This number is much more significant than runs, hits, errors, ERA, RBI and other boring fluff that clutters the sports pages between April and the World Series.

It's 21,357,316. That's the estimated number of stadium hot dogs fans munch during a typical major league season, according to the Washington, D.C.-based National Hot Dog and Sausage Council.

I'm intrigued by the word "estimated" in the previous paragraph. If the hot dog council had tossed out rough figures like "21.3 million" or "between 21 and 22 million" in its report, I wouldn't have blinked an eye. But to specifically cite 21,357,316 and then call it an "estimate" makes me think these people are chasing their dawgs with high-octane colas.

I know the food industry uses high-tech monitoring techniques to chart consumption of its products. But what happens if, say, a

Sam Venable
Department of Irony

fan at Yankee Stadium orders a concession stand hot dog, then abruptly changes his mind and requests a hamburger instead? Does this mean someone deep inside the hog dog council's research bunker suddenly starts cursing and banging his desk because the "estimate" has now been reduced to 21,357,315?

But let us not quibble over details. Quite the contrary. I wish to lavish praise on the National Hot Dog and Sausage Council for its tips on dog-dining etiquette.

High time, if you ask me. In a perfect world, infants would emerge from the womb with certain knowledge wound into their DNA: how to build a snowman, how to pick their noses, how to eat a hot dog, important stuff like that.

But no. We have heathens in our midst who never were taught the art of doing dogs, and society has



suffered tremendously.

You can find the entire condiment list at www.hot-dog.org. But one entry is of such importance, I must bring it to your attention: "Don't use ketchup on your hot dog after the age of 18."

Amen, brothers and sisters! Preach on! This advice should be adopted as federal law and printed on all hot dog packages.

I speak with personal shame in this regard. My dear wife—we got hitched 49 years ago this month—has many sterling qualities, but there is one serious flaw in her character. She puts the red stuff on her hot dog. Yes, I would welcome any prayers you might offer

up for her salvation.

Alas, an alleged expert does the same. There's a new cookbook on the market: "Haute Dogs," by native Texan Russell Van Kraayenburg. It features 47 recipes for dogs, 15 of which include ketchup as an acceptable condiment. Blasphemy!

If Davy Crockett had known such heresy would emerge from Texas, he never would've gone to the Alamo.

Sam Venable is an author, entertainer, and columnist for the Knoxville (TN) News Sentinel. He may be reached at sam.venable@outlook.com.

Physics According to Looney Toons

A waterfowl hunter is in stable condition after a dead goose fell from the sky and knocked him unconscious.

Robert Meilhammer of Dorchester County was hunting with three other people when one of them fired at a flock of Canada geese overhead in Easton, near the Miles River on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Maryland Natural Resources Police spokeswoman Candy Thomson said a falling goose hit Meilhammer, knocking him out and causing head and facial injuries.

The Washington Post reports that when he came to, he knew who he was, but "little else," according to a Natural Resources police officer.

The agency tweeted that Mr. Meilhammer was in stable condition and awaiting more tests at a Baltimore trauma center.

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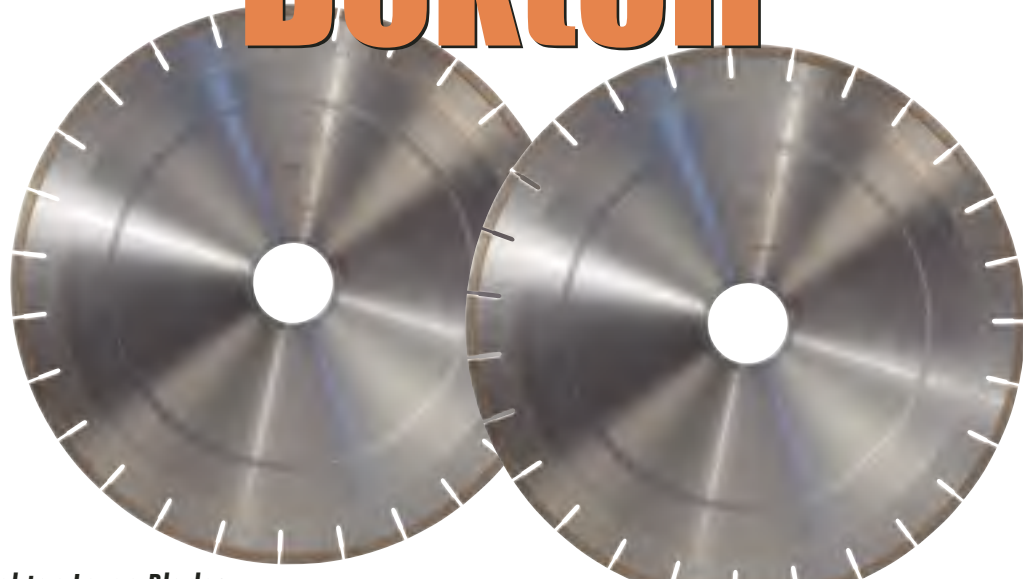


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55803	ItalDiamant Dekton Blade, 5", 20mm, 3,000 RPM	\$68.95
55804	ItalDiamant Dekton CNC Core Bit, 1/2 Gas, 1-3/8" (35mm) 1,900 RPM Max, Feed Rate: 1" to 1-1/2" per minute	\$105.95
55805	ItalDiamant Dekton Finger Bit, 1-3/8" (35mm), 4,100 RPM Max, Feed Rate: 9" to 10" per minute	\$145.95
55906	ItalDiamant Dekton Blade, 14", 10mm (H), 50/60mm 1,900-2,500 RPM Max	\$213.95
55907	ItalDiamant Dekton Blade, 16", 10mm (H), 50/60mm 1,700-2,300 RPM Max	\$259.95
55909	ItalDiamant Dekton Blade, 18", 10mm (H), 50/60mm Bushing 1,400-2,000 RPM Max	\$368.95



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Dekton CNC Core Bit



Dekton Core Bit



Dekton Finger Bit



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Safety Keepers

Continued from page 14

If a shop owner or manager is interested in Safety Keepers, where do they begin?

"We have a website at www.safetykeepers.com. But I'm a believer that there is nothing like just picking up the phone and giving a call. So they can call me 24-hours a day, seven days a week at 551-204-7171. I always answer and an initial consultation is free of charge. If you're interested in taking part in our services, we'll be glad to take you on a client. If not, we'll certainly give you some good advice and hope that you find another company that suits you. Robert and I feel that a safe company is profitable because you're not dealing with lawsuits and insurance claims, and you're a productive company because your employees are at work and not in the hospital or home recovering."

Before contacting you, what information does a prospective client need to have in hand?

"I need to know how large your shop is, how many people work there, what your square footage is, what equipment you have and how many shifts you operate. If you are a two or three shift operation, we would need to do sampling on all of those shifts and meet and work with all of your employees."

Is there any advice you'd like to offer our readers?

"The only other thing I can suggest, is that if you were issued an OSHA violation, ACT FAST, because the clock is ticking and you only have 15 days to resolve

a violation before the fine sticks. So if you call us and tell us you have a problem, we will send a letter of representation to OSHA and stop the clock until we can deal with it for you. That's important, because a lot of shop owners don't realize that if you let that 15-day period go by, you're stuck with it! So stopping the clock is the first thing we're interested in. We will help you deal with it by preparing a letter saying that we are contesting the violation and send it certified mail. The clock again stops at this point and gives us one to two months to deal with OSHA and the problem. After this time, if we are still having difficulty, I can always call the OSHRC and say that we need more time, and be granted a 30-day extension. But the most important thing to know is DON'T LET THAT 15-DAY PERIOD GO BY! Sure, after that, we can abate the condition, but you'll still have to pay the fine. You've got to act fast!"

Thank you for your time, Pete Richardson! Clearly, knowledge is power, and Safety Keepers knows how to use it.

Safety Keepers owner, Robert Deja, has over twenty years experience in the stone industry. Pete Richardson teaches occupational health at the university level, and has been teaching for 27 years.

Safety Keepers provides company-specific forklift training completion certificates and license cards, good for three years.



Stone Restoration and Maintenance Corner

Tech Tips for Spring 2018 Taxes

The deadline for filing your income taxes with the IRS is drawing near. If you are a small business, you will likely have your hands full. Most will have an accountant doing their taxes, others who happen to be a brilliant mathematician and a lucky gambler all in one, will prepare the company's taxes themselves. In either case, you will have to assemble most all of the pertinent data, that of course, we all know you have been diligently collecting and properly filing over the last year, right?

Bob Murrell
M3 Technologies

Photos by Bob Murrell

There is a company deduction that is still in place for major equipment purchases called the Section 179 (used to be referred to as the "Hummer" Tax Loophole) capital equipment deduction. What this deduction does is to allow you to deduct the cost of any major piece of equipment, up to 100 percent (\$500,000), that the company purchased in the year 2017. There is also

be multi-purposed such as large SUVs can only be deducted up to 50 percent of the cost and must be used 50 percent of the time for business only. Many larger pickups with a full-size cargo bed (6,000 lbs. – 14,000 lbs.) may qualify for the full section 179 deduction. Also the Bonus depreciation may be available for up to \$11,160 for these larger vehicles. I suggest you look into the specifics of the section 179 capital equipment deduction to see if it is applicable to your business. This really comes in handy for you fabricators who want to purchase large edge machines, CNC machines, or saws.

Quotes and Bidding

Let's face it, who among us hasn't given the perfect quotation with everything itemized and laid out just right, only to have the customer show it to every competitor you have? And then, it is used to bid against you? Of course you have and it really hacks you off, right?

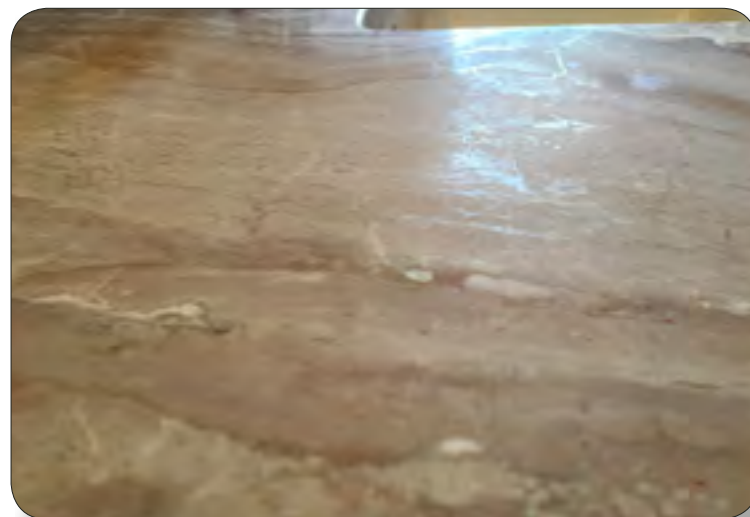
You may think that doing this is a waste of time, but I can assure you that it isn't. You need to be as accurate and professional as possible to describe the work you are proposing to do. If it is used against you, so be it. Of course many of you charge for doing estimates, which is probably not a bad idea either.

We all know that you may not have to do everything specified on the quotation or you may even have to do more (accuracy comes with experience), so you have to insert clauses that allow for unexpected situations that arise.

One of the biggest and most common unexpected situations I get calls for is lippage. Excessive lippage is easy to detect but minor lippage can be tricky. "The floor looked pretty flat to me," says the guy on the other end of the line. I hear this one all the time and have suffered through it many, many times myself. The only flat floor is the one that has been ground (by you) totally flat, period.

Another potential bite in the rear is edge work. This is especially true when working on darker materials. I know that you've heard me say it many times, but once again, always lead every step with the edge and overlap with the floor machine.

Unforeseen issues are why submitting a test area can be of



Before and after photos of a vanity restoration. Proper documentation and client testimonials can be key factors in the success of your restoration business.

extreme importance. You think it is Crema Marfil and it turns out to be a Botticino Fiorito, which can sometimes be more difficult to get a good polish on. Submitting a test area helps confirm these issues and with customer expectations too. Disclaimers (such as furniture that must be removed, fresh paint, poor set tiles, etc.) are another area you must take a close look at and possibly include on the quote.

You may also want to get deposits, draws, or money for any special tooling or products the project may require. This needs to be in writing, in your quotation.

Documentation

We must all start taking before and after photos of every project, using a gloss meter where necessary, and pushing for (or requesting) testimonials from our clients, upon completion of the project. If you want hits on your website, and you really must have a website in the year 2018, you must populate your website with these images and feedback.

When taking before and after

photos, first get the approval from the client, then make sure that you get the same shot as accurately as possible so that it reflects the previous condition against the final product.

Take gloss meter readings and be sure to show the client the before and after numbers. This is a quantifiable way to show your work, and is not as subjective as just the visual appearance. You don't need a \$1,500 gloss meter like mine either. A simple Mini Gloss Meter for under \$500 will do the job, more than adequately.

Testimonials are the best way to get hits on your website. Key words are still important but today's logarithms promote testimonials and instructional videos more than anything. Your website is your signage to the area and the world, so make it count. I always encourage my clients to give a review. Make it easy for them, by giving them your business card and telling them how. Also, you may want to give them some incentive for doing this on their next required service.

Please turn to page 24

2018 Section 179 Tax Deduction Calculator

Enter Cost of Equipment Here: \$

Show My Savings!

Section 179 Deduction: \$

Bonus Depreciation Deduction: \$

Normal 1st Year Depreciation: \$

Total First Year Deduction: \$

Cash Savings on your Purchase: \$ (assuming a 35% tax bracket)

Lowered Cost of Equipment: \$ (after Tax Savings)

Section 179.org is a good place to start if you had major equipment purchases in 2017, to deduct from your taxes.

Perhaps you want to declare the mileage from your "company" vehicles? If so, you need to read all of the qualifications that the IRS requires for this. For example, if in fact you can declare the mileage on your vehicles, you must write down each start and stop point in a log (either physical or digital), such that it is a daily documentation of the metrics of this value.

Bonus Depreciation available. Companies that have been in business for more than two years can generally qualify.

Equipment (such as floor machines, hand tools, gloss meters, and other pieces of equipment) and vehicles used in your business will general qualify for the section 179 deduction. There are fairly strict requirements on the vehicles. Vehicles that may

Laser Products Celebrates Two Global Milestones

Laser Products Industries (LPI) has announced that the company has reached two important corporate milestones with global sales of its digital measuring systems topping 5,000 lasers and simultaneously reaching a record 3,000 customers.

“Laser Products is thrilled at

its rate of expansion,” said Rich Katzmann, president. “In the past two years we have increased our sales team by 33 percent introduced a new, more powerful, more precise laser system and launched our digital solutions into the wood and glass industries. In 2018, we will be aggressively expanding our core business by launching new products and



The LT 2D3D laser system: easy to program, easy to use

services. Watch for more exciting announcements over the coming months.”

For more than two decades, Laser Products has developed and manufactured solutions for the

countertop and cabinet industries where it is the workhorse of 80 percent of the digital fabricators and has won more prestigious awards than any other system in the market. In January 2018, CEO Dan Louis was inducted into the Kitchen and Bath Hall of Fame in recognition of his lifelong contributions to the industry.

Founded in 1994, Laser Products was recognized by *Inc. Magazine* as a 2017 Inc. 5000 “Fastest Growing Private Companies in America.”

“Power always thinks it has a great soul and vast views beyond the comprehension of the weak, and that it is doing God’s service when it is violating all His laws.”
— John Adams

Rock Jockey

NEW!

Another fine tool from Stone Pro

The Rock Jockey Can Reduce the Number One Cause of Injuries in the Stone Industry.



PATENT PENDING

- Remote operation clamp and release reduces risk of injury
- 360° rotation by hand-held remote
- Rechargeable battery

Item #	Description	OUR Price
11698	Stone Pro Rock Jockey with Abaco Release Clip and Weld Tab, 115 Lbs.	\$4,500.00

SEE THE VIDEO
WWW.BRAXTON-BRAGG.COM

Stone Pro Trigger for Overhead Crane

The Trigger is a heavy-duty overhead crane attachment, designed to assist and make the material handling process safe for personnel in the slab warehouse environment.

It allows you to safely position the clamp over the end of the slab, index the clamp at the desired lift point, and press the latch release button on the hand-held remote, eliminating potential injuries and liability claims.

The Trigger has a weight rating of 2200 lbs. Lifting more than one slab at a time with this device is NOT recommended.

Item #	Description	OUR Price
11713	Stone Pro Trigger	\$2,299.00



NEW!

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Your Tax Dollars at Work

Michael Ryder had been approved for \$360 every week in Michigan unemployment benefits — until the state learned he’d been dogging it at the Detroit-area restaurant chain where he supposedly worked.

Ryder is a German Shepherd owned by attorney Michael Haddock, who lives on the other side of the state in Saugatuck.

WZZM-TV reports that Haddock received a benefits letter addressed to “Michael Ryder” from Michigan’s Unemployment Insurance Agency. The station says Haddock contacted the agency about the letter.

The agency says its computer system sent the letter, but the claim later was flagged as suspicious and denied.

Investigations administrator Tim Kolar wrote in a tongue-in-cheek email that he knows “first-hand it is rare for ‘man’s best friend’ to contribute financially to the household and that will continue in this instance.”

© MARK ANDERSON. www.andertoons.com



“Psst! Ten bucks and I’ll tell you where all of them are.”

RockTops



Mike Hyer loves his BACA Robo SawJet. The workhorse of the RockTops shop, it has removed the bottleneck within their shop.

between rebuilds by almost triple the time. It is also quicker and cheaper to rebuild the pumps.

“We’ll buy waterjet components from BACA Systems to use in other machines in the shop,” Hyer said. “We have ordered BACA parts for a competitor’s waterjet system because they were priced better and more readily available.”

Customer Service

BACA Systems treats even minor maintenance issues with the waterjet pumps seriously, Hyer said. “The thing is, we’ve had very minor incidents where we’ve had a high-pressure water line or a fitting go bad. Nothing major. That’s a great thing. Even on these minor issues they’ve stepped up to the plate to support us quickly, efficiently and cost-effectively.”

The H2O waterjet technology provides consistent performance with little downtime. “Honestly, the two BACA machines have not really had any significant maintenance issues compared to some of the others in the industry,” Hyer said. “We have had no issues compared to some of the older technologies that exist.”

Continued from page 12

BACA Systems provides comprehensive training and support in the use of its products. “The training they offered was smooth and easy,” Hyer said. “They outshined the competition. The software on their systems is very user-friendly. It’s been very easy for someone to step in and learn how to use those machines efficiently.”

Material Savings

The BACA Robo SawJet utilizes an IDE Diamond Cutting Head, which ensures easy and consistent alignment as well as pinpoint accuracy. The system’s software optimizes cut patterns to maximize yield from each

slab, saving customers an average of 20 percent on material cost annually.

“Obviously this precision has been a big part of our yield and savings on materials,” Hyer said. “Before we had the jet as an option, we had a lot of wasted material. The Robo SawJet has increased our yield from a slab of useable material by upwards of 30 percent.”

The Robo SawJet uses a durable H2O jet pump, designed to hold up in the 24-hour workday automotive manufacturing environment. The cost to operate the H2O jet pump is less than half of the KMT pumps used in some other types of sawjets, while outlasting the Hypertherm pumps

A beautiful calacatta quartz waterfall mitered edge island with a farmhouse sink make this kitchen.



This house features a stunning fireplace wrapped in a bookmatched Daltile porcelain slab.

The BACA Difference

In the end, RockTops has benefitted from adopting the leading edge of robotic fabrication technology. Hyer is enthusiastic about partnering with BACA Systems, which he said easily sets itself apart from other manufacturers. “They are so passionate about their equipment. They are innovative and have so much experience in robotics and the waterjet business that we felt comfortable working with them. When somebody believes in their products that much, you can see it. We

decided that was the direction we were going to go. We believe in their products, too.”

RockTops is already planning to add another sawjet to its shop. “It will be another BACA,” Hyer said. “I don’t think I would ever move away from BACA for any of my future equipment needs. They are doing a great job addressing the challenges that fabricators have.”

For more information on RockTops, visit their website www.rocktopskc.com.

Vanity for a commercial job features a custom apron and built-in sink. Below: Miter edge detail showcases capability of the BACA FlexJet.





**2017 Pinnacle
AWARDS**

**OTHER PROJECT
TEAM MEMBERS**

**Greenmeme
Art & Design Studio**
Art, Architecture and Landscape

**Cleveland Marble
of Los Angeles**
(NSI Member Company)
Stone Installer

STONE

Academy Black granite

JURORS' COMMENTS

"This is a fine example of public outdoor art/sculpture that utilizes technology and natural stone to create a large-scale multi-function structure."

"This is a wonderful example where a serious engineering undertaking had the foresight to enable the creation of a whimsical, public amenity. The playful, sculptural, granite forms of the design have been carefully and artistically implemented."



Makena Hunt

**Commercial Exterior
Coldspring**

Cold Spring, Minnesota

Stone Supplier | Stone Fabricator | Stone Quarrier

Continued from page 13

**Riverside Roundabout
Los Angeles, California**

The Riverside Roundabout is the first modern roundabout in Los Angeles and will help control smog and exhaust impacts on surrounding residents. The centerpiece of the roundabout provides an artistic experience through nine egg-shaped stone sculptures constructed of Academy Black® granite from California. Measuring 8 to 12 feet tall, the sculptures feature the faces of randomly chosen individuals from the community.

A significant amount of coordination between the architect and granite supplier and fabricator ensured the artistic vision came to life. The granite fabricator and supplier used the designer's electronic files to create the cutting information needed to fabricate the sculptural pieces. The architect's detailed drawings provided

individually numbered templates to assemble the egg-shaped sculptures. Each piece was laid out into slab form per the design. The granite supplier selected and cut the slabs with CNC cutting equipment to provide full utilization of the slab. Sculpture pieces were then epoxied together per the design drawings.

The roundabout serves as a storm water bio-retention landscape, with the capacity to capture and treat a 10-year rainfall event (500,000 gallons) off an adjacent bridge and roads. The system also includes a 25,000-gallon cistern supplying a water feature as well as a solar tracking photovoltaic system powering irrigation, and lighting the artwork. A 100-percent-sustainable project, all parts of the granite slabs were used to create the eggs, with the remaining parts of the slab creating a stone border around the roundabout.

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Weha diamond polishing pads with our Exclusive Geometric Water Displacement Technology Pattern Design!

Weha 4" Quartz Diamond Polishing Pads



The Weha Quartz diamond polishing pads with the Geo Pattern pads are made with high concentration of diamond into each grit, allowing the pad to create a high gloss finish with the speed that other diamond polishing pads can't achieve. Weha Quartz Engineered Stone (ES) Diamond Polishing Pads were made with white resin designed specifically to eliminate all bleeding on Quartz, Engineered Stone materials. However, these premium pads will also work outstandingly on all granite and quartzite stones as well.

Description	MSRP
Weha 4" ES Polishing pad 50 grit	14.00
Weha 4" ES Polishing pad 100 grit	14.00
Weha 4" ES Polishing pad 200 grit	14.00
Weha 4" ES Polishing pad 400 grit	14.00
Weha 4" ES Polishing pad 800 grit	14.00
Weha 4" ES Polishing pad 1500 grit	14.00
Weha 4" ES Polishing pad 3000 grit	14.00

Weha 4" Blitz 7 Step Diamond Polishing Pads

The Weha Blitz Geo Pattern pads are made with high concentration of diamond into each grit, allowing the pad to create a high gloss finish with the speed that other diamond polishing pads can't achieve. These Blitz 7 step pads will polish granite, engineered stone, quartz, and quartzite stone faster than other advertised 5, 6 and 7 step pads, with a much richer, deeper polish. Extreme flexibility and 3mm thick, the Weha Blitz are touted as one of the best premium granite and stone polishing pads on the market.

Description	MSRP
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 50 grit	14.00
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 100 grit	14.00
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 200 grit	14.00
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 400 grit	14.00
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 800 grit	14.00
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 1500 grit	14.00
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 3000 grit	14.00
4" Weha Blitz Diamond Polishing Pad 5000 grit	14.00



Weha Trilogy 3 Step Diamond Polishing Pads



Weha Trilogy 3 Step Diamond polishing pads are the absolute best polishing pads specifically for Black, Brown, Gray, Engineered Stone, Quartz stone. But they are equally as good on black absolute, Baltic Brown, Uba Tuba, and other dark granites and marbles. Additionally, they work amazing on light colored engineered stone, quartz, granite, marble, as well with zero bleeding. Absolutely perfect for Silestone, Cambria, Caesarstone, Zodiaq, Santa Marhergita, and all other Quartz Surfaces. So many fabricators are using 5 step or 7 step pads to match the polish on these dark quartz materials. Now with the Weha Trilogy, 3 pads and THAT'S IT! Not 3 steps and buff. Not 3 steps and more. 3 steps and put it on the truck.

Description	MSRP
4" Weha Trilogy POS 1	27.00
4" Weha Trilogy POS 2	27.00
4" Weha Trilogy POS 3	27.00



**\$349
- 10% =
\$314.10**

**Weha Blizzard Air Polisher
16 cfm @ 90 PSI • 5,000 RPM
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2017 Migliore Award for Lifetime Achievement Goes to Jim Hogan

Praise comes easily from the peers of Jim Hogan, who is the 2017 recipient of the Migliore Award for Lifetime Achievement.

By the time Hogan started his career in the stone industry in 1985, he had already honed his leadership skills as a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. During an 11-year career as a Special Forces airborne ranger in the U.S. Army, he rose to the impressive rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Hogan applied his engineering degree to his job at Carrara Marble Company of America in southern California and worked his way up the ranks there. His management helped grow the business into a powerhouse of the stone industry, now primarily involved in large-scale commercial projects.



Jim Hogan, CEO of Carrara Marble Co. was awarded the 2017 Migliore Award for Lifetime Achievement at the 2018 TISE tradeshow.

Today, he is senior vice president, co-owner and a member of the board of directors of the company whose works are showcases for excellence in natural stone work wherever they are located.

Hogan began his service on the board of directors of the Marble Institute of America in 2002 and served as its president in 2008. He



made his work within MIA a priority and took on his responsibilities as President with the same enthusiasm and thoughtful management as his business affairs at Carrara Marble Company of America. As president, Hogan was greeted by perhaps the greatest crisis in the history of the modern natural stone industry – the radon controversy. He rose to the occasion, working nearly full time with MIA staff to lead efforts to fight back against false claims regarding radon emissions in natural stone.

Please turn to page 30

Wilson Industrial Electric Inc. Wins a TISE “Best of Show” Award for Large Booth Design

SURFACES 2018 | StoneExpo Marmomac Americas | TileExpo 2018 has announced the “Best of” Awards Program winners for TISE 2018, and Wilson Industrial Electric, Inc. was chosen as winner in the Best of StoneExpo-2018 Large Booth Design. TISE, along with the awards program sponsors, hosts the “Best of” Award programs to celebrate industry innovation and ingenuity, and exhibitors’ contributions to the industry.

The Winning Booth

Wilson Industrial’s 8 foot x 20 foot display is a self-contained unit that can be hauled from show to show. It contains graphics of the equipment that Wilson Industrial Electric, Inc. manufactures, cabinets for storing materials, and three display TVs for



Matt Wilson and Melisa Black (center and right) accept the Best Large Booth Award at TISE 2018, sponsored by Stone World magazine and Tile magazine.

demonstration videos. The unit was designed and the bottom framework was made by Wilson Industrial Electric, Inc. It was then sent to Storage Master Co. LLC to be constructed on the steel frame. Storage Master Co. LLC is a portable building manufacturer located in Elberton, Georgia. Lightweight materials were used in the construction so the

unit could be kept as light as possible for transport. Materials from M Stone Tile & Stone Co. were used on the backsplash. Platinum Elite Signs from Elberton, Georgia made the graphics for the unit and Tony Jones from Hartwell, Georgia made the custom cabinets.

For more information visit www.wilsonsaws.com.

How to Attract and Retain Quality Employees

American businesses big and small are having challenges with finding quality workers. Adding further strain, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows there is a significant decline in the number of prime-age workers participating in the labor force, while many seasoned workers are entering retirement age, resulting in a shortage of both experienced and entry-level workers.

According to *CNNMoney.com*, many businesses feel they have no choice but to pay higher wages to attract and keep the workers they want. One New England manufacturer reported he was three months behind schedule as he scrambled to hire employees for a new factory. In Missouri, building companies have limited ability to construct new homes as they struggle to find workers. The West Coast’s reported labor shortages are affecting industries from farming to manufacturing, and even after hiking wages, employers still say they can’t find enough people.

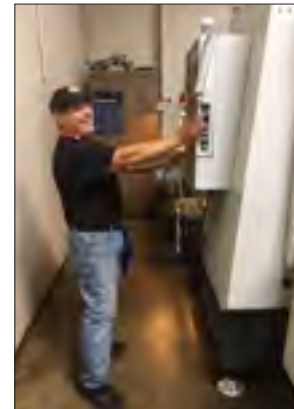
With a dwindling pool of employees and an increasingly competitive job market, how can you give yourself an edge as an employer to attract and retain quality employees? Market your company to prospective candidates by creating a work environment that reaches beyond the paycheck—be a company that people WANT to work for!

In a recent article published on *Forbes.com*, several concepts were identified to help employers navigate the candidate’s job market. The underlying trend? Create an irresistible company culture. A few of the key strategies are:

Be more people-focused and foster employee advocates. Happy employees



Employee appreciation picnic complete with rock wall, bounce house, and taco truck!



This skillful CNC operator always brings a smile to work.

will promote the company everywhere they go. If you invest more internally, you can make your company more externally attractive.

Examine your environment and culture. If you cultivate a positive, healthy workplace environment, you can drive employee performance and productivity,



Quarterly team meeting and luncheon.

and make yourself stand out as a desirable employer.

Promote work-life balance. Employees value work-life balance now more than ever, so try to show employees that you appreciate their dedication to their job as well as their life outside of work.

Provide purpose and emotional connection. Employees want more than just a paycheck—they want to make a contribution and know their role in a company’s journey to success. Be sure to identify a clear and authentic mission for your organization that creates an emotional connection with your staff. Ensure that day-to-day experiences leave employees with a sense of purpose, pride, and commitment to achieving the company’s mission.

“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.”

— Helen Keller

Soaring Above and Beyond



Continued from page 2

“Our society wants us to be seen doing. If you are seen to be daydreaming, you are considered to be wasting time. But the dreaming and thinking and the conjuring up of visions is such a crucial major part of what we do, and it demands that we hold at bay all the pulls on our time from x, y and z tasks.”

Marketing, Sales and Everything in Between

“The most powerful tool I operate is a telephone,” he continued. “The biggest problem so many sculptors face in terms of business is the marketing and the cost in dollars or time spent on that marketing. There seems to be a glass ceiling between most sculpture sales which I think are based on regional reputation, while high-end national and international sales are based on a whole different system. I’ve heard of corporate style marketing offices employed by sculptors with great reputations, but I like to think that a quality

Andreas von Huene and colleague Dan Ucci (at left) installing Owl Rising at Laudholm Farm in Wells, Maine. Photo by Carolyn Broad. Inset: Roughing in Owl Rising with a chop saw.

Right: Cantilevered Owl II

sculpture will sell itself, so we need to keep pushing quality and artistic merit. The gallery scene can work well, too, and also word of mouth, but how many conversations can you have before you feel you need to get back to hands-on work? Oh, the balancing act!

“Who was it said that when businessmen get together they talk about art, and when artists get together they talk about business? This is a constant theme of discussion among my colleagues. I also believe that being in one area long enough has made



Cloud Fountain in Blue Macauba

connections for me that have paid off, it’s been 27 years, and I’ve been very busy.

“So why am I trying to sell art in Maine? I should be trying to sell art in Florida, Texas, LA or New York City. But my sales go through my local connections, and I’m not going to get those connections in New York. You have to make those connections and those connections have to be in a big enough pool with big enough connections. The other side of it is that I have, to some extent, the freedom to chase my dreams, but I have to blend that with being able to sell something. So I cannot chase every flight of

fancy or carve something on speculation, and then wonder who’s going to buy it. I have to carve something that is going to be interesting to somebody.

“Sculpture symposiums let me break that rule. They offer me the opportunity to go big, yet spend only a short amount of time. That to me is another form of artistic freedom where I can give up just a couple of weeks to do something that is more adventurous. I’ve sold things I’ve carved at symposiums for good money, and that helped pay for more mainstream projects. We have a lot of

sculpture shows in Maine, and I get a lot of exposure from them.”

Working Wide and Large

As an artist, marketing in itself seems to be an art, but what impressed me most is the way Andreas finds a work-around to any situation. He, like most artists, is resourceful and inventive, always finding a way to flesh out a new design and make it work no matter what the circumstances or genre. So I thought it fair to ask him how he classifies his art.

Please turn to page 25

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Stone Restoration and Maintenance Corner – Tech Tips for Spring 2018 Taxes



Before and after photos of gloss meter levels are a good way to demonstrate the effectiveness of your restoration polish. Be sure to show the client the before and after numbers. This is a quantifiable way to show your work, and is not as subjective as just the visual appearance.

Continued from page 17

As always, I recommend submitting a test area to confirm the results and the procedure prior to starting a stone or hard surface restoration or maintenance project. Also, the best way to help ensure success is by partnering with a good distributor that knows the business. They can help with technical support, product purchase decisions, logistics, and other pertinent project information.



Bob Murrell has worked in the natural stone industry for over 40 years and is well known for his expertise in natural stone, tile and decorative concrete restoration and maintenance. He helped develop some of the main products and processes which revolutionized the industry, and is currently the Director of Operations for M3 Technologies.

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“I put them all in one basket on purpose. I like to live dangerously.”

“One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results.”

– Milton Friedman

Soaring Above and Beyond



Continued from page 23

"I have a wide range of interests and also a rich environment of tools, materials, shapes, forms and colors to choose from," he responded. "I think it is difficult for my clients and my peers, because they tell me that I'm so inventive saying, 'Will you stop being so inventive and just settle down on a theme!' I tell them, I'm not dead yet, you know! The world is full of interesting things.

"I like working large, but I also like imbuing large pieces with really tight details. I enjoy what's called the "wall of sound"; an expression coined by a '70s rock and roll band with a wall of speakers blasting and every frequency being represented. Some bands it's the high guitars wailing

Now the cornerstone of Acadia Hospital, Maine artist **Andreas von Huene's Zephyr** is unveiled by Hospital President and CEO **Dan Coffey** and **Max Kagan Family Foundation** representative **Leslie Kagan**.

— some bands it's the wumpa thumpas of the lows — but I like to offer the full range on a piece, so that no matter who looks at it, there is something in it for them such as the detail of an eyeball or the shape of a wing. I may not always succeed, but I try."

Soaring Beyond

"So where do you step on the gas and where do you not step on the gas?" he continued. "Capability doesn't necessarily mean you should do it — although if I can, I want to! Watch this, I say when somebody doesn't think I can do it, but I get myself into trouble when I do that. For example: a few years ago I did *Banking Owl* with a six-foot wingspan that stood cantilevered off the wingtip. Finished, it was 450 pounds. So there was some technical work there such as how do I support it without breaking the wing off. And because the

client liked realism, I did a lot of feather work such as polishing, refining and detailing. It is disturbing in that there is nothing above or below to support it. So it looks very realistic!

"The next year I saw this beautiful bubble of a rock that was rough-cut and the end of a huge boulder. It was 2-1/2 feet wide by 6 feet long of this beautiful dark stone. I took it home and made another owl with an almost six-foot wingspan. I allowed myself not to do the feathers, but to do the airfoil form more, and really crank the wings and sculpt it so that it's really moving fast and banking into a turn. That is a very powerful sculpture! Each owl is different, and it was a pleasure to be able to work with such beautiful material that cut and polished well and let me go with the flow. I've also done projects in quartzite, marble, limestone, basalt, granite, alabaster and others. Each offers its own special character and working characteristics. So why would I want to carve anything else?"



Life-size Rufous Screech Owl in Gouldsboro Pink granite.

Please turn to page 31

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Dr. Fred Hueston Announces Live Stone and Tile Radio Program

DR. Fred Hueston has announced he is returning to the air with a weekly radio show dedicated to exploring stone- and tile-related problems and solutions. "Its been nearly eight years since my last live Stone and Tile Radio show, and it's time to bring it back."

Please set your calendars for Wednesdays at 6 p.m. EST to listen live to stone and tile expert Fred Hueston.

"I will be answering questions and hopefully solving your stone and tile problems. The show will have interviews and live call-ins. Topics will include everything about stone and tile from



countertops to floors and more. This broadcast is designed for homeowners, architects and professionals in the stone and tile industry.

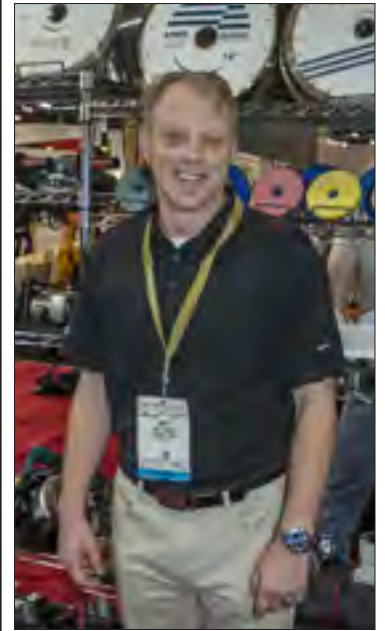
The first show aired February

21, 2018 at 6 p.m. on Blog Talk web radio.

Dr. Fred said, "I am also looking for folks to interview. So if you have a product or even a story to share with our listeners please send me an email at fhueston@gmail.com.

"Thanks in advanced for listening. Shows will be archived so you can listen to at your convenience." Visit <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/drfred> for Dr. Fred's program.

Braxton-Bragg Hires Maples as Product Manager



Braxton-Bragg has re-hired former customer service representative Matt Maples as product manager. Maples was formerly in the Braxton-Bragg sales department from November 1997 to May 2014. Maples brings more than 20 years of stone industry experience to this position.

Maples is responsible for new product testing and acquisition, managing product inventory and life cycle, and working closely with marketing to share the product offering with customers.

"Braxton-Bragg is expanding our product offerings to better serve customers in the stone fabrication, concrete polishing and janitorial industries by strategically partnering with vendors/manufacturers," says Maples. "We are offering the highest quality products with the best value. I am excited to be back with Braxton-Bragg to see where the future of the industry goes, and how we can expand our foothold as a key supplier."

About Braxton-Bragg

Since its beginning in 1995, Braxton-Bragg's philosophy has been to offer the best customer service and the best value for the money. This is accomplished by providing quality tile, stone and concrete tooling and supplies at the best prices and best in-stock availability. For more info, visit www.braxton-bragg.com and facebook.com/braxtonbragglc.



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New Touchstone Silk: Not Your Grandpa's Epoxy

Continued from page 5

"It's a very different epoxy compared to Glacier — but it meets the fabricators' needs. As a plus, it's also got really good ultraviolet stability — worlds better than a typical epoxy."

Touchstone Silk gel is a translucent, milky-white, two-part epoxy that features a working time of 25 minutes and a setting time of about two hours depending on both the ambient and stone temperatures, said Elliott, adding, "Two-component epoxies are typically the strongest adhesives on the market. Additionally, Touchstone Silk Gel works well with light-colored stones and will not bleed or cause any staining. It has a very unique chemistry that adds better ultraviolet color stability, more resistant to yellowing in the outdoors than other epoxies. Its milky-white translucent color is also a big plus, because it picks up the variations in the stone. Touchstone colors can also be easily added," and there's an additional advantage: During the 20 minute working time, it spreads "smooth like butta!"

"The nice thing about

that our products give them peace of mind knowing that they are not going to fail."

Touchstone Silk Gel Epoxy is available from www.braxton-bragg.com in quart, gallon and five-gallon sizes, and is proudly

made in America. Product and material preparation information as well as technical data such as flexural strength and modular strength are available on the company's website at www.bonstone.com.



"It's only publishers and some journalists who believe that people want simple things. People are tired of simple things. They want to be challenged."
—Umberto Eco



Touchstone Silk Gel," continued Elliott, "is that when you are mixing the part A and part B together, it stays the same consistency and doesn't become runny — staying more like knife grade."

Its strength, however, is the really big benefit, said Elliott. "It is a product that is going to last a very long time, indoors or out, and that is the beauty of epoxies. When you put a miter or lamination together, one of the things that our customers have said over the last few decades is

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JUNE 2018	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 2018
JULY 2018	WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 2018

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Kathy Spanier Receives Woman in Stone Pioneer Award



From Left: 2017 BSI President Daniel Wood, Kathy Spanier, and 2017 MIA President Jon Lancto

Kathy Spanier was recently honored with the 2016 Person of the Year award that, among other achievements, highlighted her dedication to the development of Natural Stone Council's sustainability standard for natural dimension stone - NSC373. As the 2018 recipient of Women in Stone's Pioneer Award, Kathy continues to be outstanding in her field.

For more than a decade, Kathy, director of marketing for Coldspring, has made a powerful impact on the natural stone industry with her tireless efforts to position natural stone as a sustainable product within the building industry, and for her vision and leadership in creating a mentorship program to elevate women in the stone industry. Getting involved is not a new concept to Spanier. Over the course of her 35-year marketing career she has continually assumed leadership roles in a number of industry associations. Kathy reflects on her own role in the Women in Stone program as a way to share her leadership experience with other women that helps foster and mentor their success in the industry. "It's a beautiful industry," she said. "There's so much collaboration and networking, and having somebody help them and mentor them, again, it's a great network of people. I've met many more people after getting involved in the Women in Stone program." Brenda Edwards of TexaStone Quarries and recipient of the first Women in Stone Pioneer Award shares this about Kathy's most recent accomplishments: "She has chaired the Sustainability Committee for the NSC373 standard, and gone far beyond the call of duty for that.

Please turn to page 33

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Jim Hogan Receives 2017 Migliore Award

Continued from page 22

An article published in 2008 highlighted Hogan's understanding of the gravity of this attack: "The misinformation campaign is driven through front groups that purport to be consumer advocates, but are merely trying to create consumer fears about natural stone. We must aggressively fight the unfounded fear mongering to reassure the public. It is important that we have all the legal, technical, public relations and marketing/advertising tools we need to protect the good name of granite and reassure consumers that granite is as safe as it is beautiful, durable and practical."

standards that would position natural stone as a consistent product to architects, developers, owners, and general contractors. His goal is to ensure there is a conformance to established standards and a dialogue that people in the stone industry are working together. Despite the competition among stone companies, Hogan believes in the importance of working together for the good of the industry.

Long after the radon crisis, Hogan continues to contribute to the industry in countless ways, including reviewing technical papers and traveling to Washington D.C. for legislative visits on Capitol Hill. Jim Hogan has been a true leader in the natural stone industry from the beginning of his career, and is an ideal individual to receive the 2017 Migliore Aware for Lifetime Achievement.

For more information on past recipients of the Migliore Award, please visit www.naturalstoneinstitute.org/awards/migliore-awards.

"Jim's leadership during a very challenging time for our industry was unwavering and his continued commitment to the industry deserves recognition. We are proud to call Jim Hogan a friend and colleague and are pleased to nominate him for the Migliore Award for Lifetime Achievement."

Scott Lardner
President
Rocky Mountain Stone
Jonathan Zanger
President
Walker Zanger

"His impact is felt every time you use natural stone."

Robert Zavagno
President
The Cleveland Marble
Mosaic Company

"As a leader, Jim Hogan has the courage to WIN. He has always been there and stands up for our organization."

G.K. Naquin
President
Stone Interiors

Hogan's contributions to the natural stone industry have been immeasurable. His insights and understanding of the global stone industry, along with his contacts and prestige within the domestic commercial arena, have helped advance the work of the association within the architectural and residential construction disciplines. He has pushed forward ideas to develop

David Castellucci Receives 2017 Natural Stone Institute Person of the Year Award

David Castellucci, Director of Business Development at Kenneth Castellucci & Associates in Lincoln, RI, has been named 2017 Person of the Year by the Natural Stone Institute.

Castellucci served as MIA president in 2016 during the first year of the association's joint venture. In the past two years, he has also served as Chair of the Board Nomination Committee, Chair of the Branding Committee, speaker at Coverings and TISE, and advisor to the New England chapter. He has served on delegations to the Xiamen Stone Fair, Middle East Stone Show, Marmomac, Vitoria Stone Fair, and Carrara Marmotec. He also acted as chair of the 2017 Pinnacle Awards jury and as a legislative delegate to Washington DC to assist with industry promotional efforts.



David Castellucci (center) with 2017 BSI President Daniel Wood and 2017 MIA President Jon Lancto.

2017 BSI President Daniel Wood (Lurvey Supply) worked alongside Castellucci and commented: "David was there at every turn, leading and contributing. He was tireless in his encouragement of what we could become by joining forces."

Please turn to page 32

*No More
Twist and Shout...*

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BATTERY**

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Rechargeable Cup

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PRO**

When you use the Stone Pro SR2 Vacuum Support Rail System

Have you ever done the fabricator's "twist and shout?"

Imagine you're carrying a sink section of countertop and suddenly you *twist* the slab a little too much, hear a crack and *shout* in frustration. That's what the twist and shout is all about. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be this way thanks to this brand new system.

The SR2 Support System adds rigidity to sink cutouts so you can avoid the dreaded "twist and shout."

No one in the stone industry has a system like this that can vacuum to stone that has a textured surface. It also works great on polished stone surfaces as well.

Item #	Description	OUR Price
2743	Stone Pro SR2 Combo Pack Vacuum Support Rails With Rechargeable Cups, Includes: (1) 3-1/2 Ft Rail, (1) 7 Ft Rail, (1) Charger (4) Suction Cups, including one rechargeable master cup	\$597.95



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www.braxton-bragg.com

That's a Loaded Question

Talk about one heckuva reported the weapon one an explosive donation. Sunday.

Authorities say a grenade launcher, loaded with a live grenade, was left with other donated items at a Florida Goodwill store.

The *Bradenton Herald* reports that employees at a Goodwill store near Tampa

because they didn't know what it was. Deputies say they disposed of the active grenade in a Hazmat locker, and the launcher was stored in the agency's property room. It's not known who generously donated the items.



Soaring Above and Beyond



Continued from page 25 Gyrfalcon in feldspar granite, wings folded to dive.

Closing Words of Wisdom from a Master

"I think our culture's commercial nature is set up to anticipate what you want, then offer you the solution in a little gift-wrapped package, but what you really want should be on the wish list in your back pocket, not on the shelf at your store. The corollary to that is what do you wish for the most?"

"The most wonderful thing you can get in life is a worthy challenge. People ask me, 'Andreas, can you make this for me?' 'Oh, I don't know,' I'll say, 'but I'll sure try!' That's better

than me saying, 'Oh sure, I'll just knock that off.' The question is stronger than the answer. So when beginning something new, do it, adjust to it, and do it some more. Moreover, be friends with other sculptors. Don't be an island. Visit and talk to other artists. Doing that will give you courage. The number one thing is to have courage and go for it. That's hard, but it is rewarding!"

Currently the Arrows and Bath economies are quite good, harboring scores of thriving shops and restaurants, while Bath Iron Works continues to produce

very low numbers of very expensive ships per year, such as a stealth destroyer I witnessed being fitted for duty during my visit. The area also supports a robust tourist industry featuring vacation homes and dining. How long it will last is anybody's guess, but one thing is for sure: the economy will continue to ebb and flow with the decades. As for Andreas, he continues to push the limits of his craft above and beyond.

For more information please visit www.andreasvonhuene.com.

Below left: Portrait in bronze of Friedrich von Huene, Andreas' father. Photo by Dennis Griggs



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Makita® 5" Grinder
Variable Speed
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Makita® 4" Wet Polisher
Variable Speed
Item # 9001



Makita® 4-1/2" Grinder
Variable Speed
Item # 9377



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Item #	Description	OUR Price
9375	Makita® 5" Grinder, 9565CV	\$149.98
9001	Makita® 4" Wet Polisher, PW5001C	\$299.97
9377	Makita® 4-1/2" Grinder, 9564CV	\$149.98



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David Castellucci

Continued from page 30

2017 MIA President Jon Lancto (Big Fish Consulting) agreed, adding that “every time we needed help on a key initiative, David volunteered to assist and lead.”

2015 MIA President Dan Rea (Coldspring) referred to Castellucci as a “road warrior,” referencing his willingness to represent the association at key industry events and trade shows.

He commented: “David loves the member engagement and has been instrumental in advancing several industry initiatives during his travels.” Natural Stone Institute Executive Vice President Jane Bennet added: “David is a dedicated leader for the association and the industry. No one has devoted more hours to key committees and initiatives. David made a difference and is a role model for how a key volunteer can support the association and its staff.”

In fitting form, Castellucci is still contributing. In March he joined several industry volunteers on a delegation to the IZMIR Fair (Marble 24) in Turkey. This will be the association’s first visit to the fair in several years.

To learn more, please visit www.naturalstoneinstitute.org.

“The most dangerous form of sentimental debauch is to give expression to good wishes on behalf of virtue while you do nothing about it. Justice is not merely words. It is to be translated into living acts.”

– Theodore Roosevelt

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A true, state-of-the-art engineered and manufactured labor-reducing pad is finally available for Granite, Marble and Quartz Polishing.



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This breakthrough combination allows you to harness the power of elliptical motion without losing the center water feed vital for stone polishing. The result is a nearly perfect polish with less physical pressure and less manipulation of the hand-held polisher.

In other words, you get a better polish with less effort from your polishing craftsman (50-80% less human energy needed). The combination of cutting edge engineering, manufacturing and labor reduction is the reason we can confidently say you’ll save up to \$2 per foot on your production costs.



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Item #	Description	Great Low Price
4-1/4" Elipse® Wet Polishing Pads Hook & Loop-Backed		
22509	Elipse® 6-Step Granite Wet Pad, Step 1, Red	\$24.95
22510	Elipse® 6-Step Granite Wet Pad, Step 2, Yellow	\$24.95
22511	Elipse® 6-Step Granite Wet Pad, Step 3, Blue	\$24.95
22512	Elipse® 6-Step Granite Wet Pad, Step 4, Green	\$24.95
22513	Elipse® 6-Step Granite Wet Pad, Step 5, Orange	\$24.95
22514	Elipse® 6-Step Granite Wet Pad, Step 6, Pink	\$24.95
22507	Elipse® Aluminum Oscillating Back-Up Pad	\$29.95



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Kathy Spanier Receives Woman in Stone Pioneer Award

Continued from page 29

“She has also chaired the mentorship program for Women in Stone, and she’s absolutely wonderful.”

2017 BSI President Daniel Wood, Lurvey Supply, who has been active as a Sustainability Standard educator to the design community said, “Kathy has been quite a champion with sustainability efforts with stone and getting it positioned within all the green rating programs and our NSC373 standard, we truly could not be where we are without Kathy and her efforts.”

Jane Bennett, Executive Vice President of the Natural Stone Institute, agrees: “She just took charge, and she made that happen for us. That in itself is being a pioneer for the industry. Her leadership efforts were critical in advancing the standard.”

The natural stone industry is blessed with many talented women business owners and managers, but there is no doubt Kathy Spanier is one of the best of the best.

Dan Rea, Senior Vice President of Sales at Coldspring, concluded: “It’s hard for me to think of anyone more deserving than Kathy for this prestigious award. I’ve known Kathy for quite a few years and am blessed to be able to work with her and her dedication, her devotion, and her tireless energy for the industry and the people around here. It’s just been amazing. So congratulations, Kathy.”

“There is only one form of political strategy in which I have any confidence, and that is to try to do the right thing—and sometimes be able to succeed.”
— Calvin Coolidge



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How can glue save you money? Stone Shield™ Transparent Knife Grade is high quality **polyester adhesive**, made in America and offered at a great price.

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K-Bond Coloring Kit, 10 Colors, 2 oz.



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Compatible with all major adhesive color mixes including K-Bond Granite Color Pigments — what could be easier?

Adhesive Spreaders & Stirring Sticks



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Item #	Description	Our Low Price
46404	Stone Shield™ Transparent Knife Grade, Quart	\$12.95
46405	Stone Shield™ Transparent Knife Grade, Gallon	\$43.95
46406	Stone Shield™ Transparent Knife Grade, 5 Gallons	\$169.95

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Mad About Marble

From the shimmering aura of the Taj Mahal, to the humble floor of a public bathroom, marble is one of the world's most revered and useful natural materials. Marble is Michelangelo's David, the Washington Monument, and the Duomo of Florence. It is also the primary ingredient in Tums antacid.

Tune into any kitchen design message board and you'll encounter a sharp divide over the utility of marble. Some people wouldn't dream of designing a kitchen without marble. Others decry that choice, citing marble's imperfections and fragility. Many are caught somewhere in the middle: in love with marble's irresistible appeal, but uncertain if it's the right choice for their circumstance. In an attempt to create the "perfect" material, legions of synthetic quartz products claim to look "just like marble," but marble enthusiasts aren't swayed. Few stones can match the warm glow, the softly flowing colors, the timelessness, and the authenticity of marble. There's good reason this stone has been used for over 5,000 years.

A Seabed, Transformed

Marble is a metamorphic rock; it once was a different kind of rock, and was then transformed by a change of circumstance. Before marble becomes marble, it is first limestone, which forms on the shores and floors of tropical seas. Limestone is an accumulation of shells, shelly fragments, microscopically tiny shells, and

Karin Kirk

usenaturalstone.com

Oculus photo © Karin Kirk

dissolved shells. Depending on the conditions at a particular beach or sea, limestone's shelly sediment may be punctuated with occasional layers of clay or lenses of sand. But by and large, limestone is an assortment of shell-remnants, which are made of the mineral calcite.

The tropical shoals that give rise to limestone do not stay peaceful

Arabescato marble

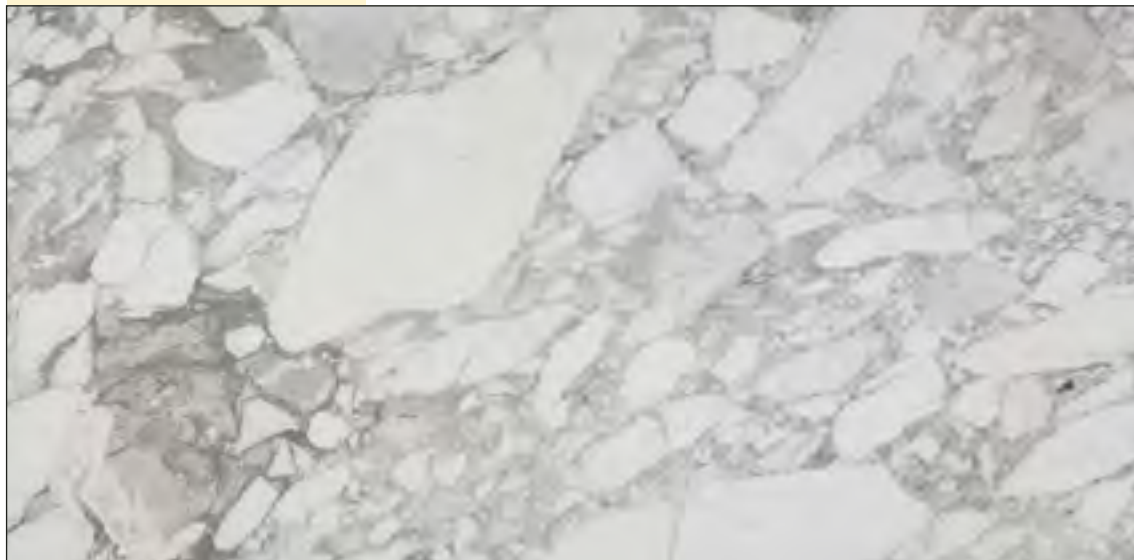


Photo courtesy Arizona Tile

indefinitely. Oceans are basically geologic conveyor belts. The ocean floor slowly spreads apart from the center and slips underneath continents at the edges, gradually rearranging the map of the world.

When a limestone seabed gets dragged down into the Earth's crust, the additional heat transforms the calcite grains and



fuses them together tightly. The dynamic action of rock layers as they become buried, twisted, and shoved around causes the original flat-lying layers to bend, buckle, and swirl together. A rock in this heated state doesn't melt. It's simply warm and flexible, much like a chocolate bar left in your pocket. This process of heating and warping is responsible for marble's trademark aesthetic of gracefully flowing bands of color. The grey swirls in marble are simply clay layers that got folded,

smear, and re-folded into the marble like a ribbon of chocolate infused throughout fudge ripple ice cream.

Patterns and Colorways Give Marble Versatility and Character

Part of what makes natural stone so appealing is the huge range of colors and variations expressed in solid rock. On one hand, these patterns tug on our heartstrings and offer aesthetic possibilities. On the other hand, each of these variations has its root in some sort of geologic process.

Most marble is white. The classic, white marble is pure calcite, without intervening minerals to lend it color. Yule and Thassos marbles are well-known examples of pristine white marbles.

But marble can take on a

Marble quarry in Carrara, Italy, a stone that's been quarried for over 2,000 years.



Yule marble, as featured on the exterior of the Lincoln Memorial.

delightful range of hues and textures. Pink marble is tinted by iron oxide, as is golden marble. Green marble and deep red marble contain serpentine, rich in magnesium. Fossil-rich limestone

in addition to limestone and marble, calcite is the primary ingredient in travertine and onyx.

Calcite has a few properties that you should know about before you fall head over heels in love with a stunning marble slab. Calcite is 3 on Mohs hardness scale, which means it will get scratched by knife blades, ceramics, and a cast iron skillet accidentally slid across the kitchen island.

Calcite is also chemically reactive with common acids, like lemonade, wine, and Coke. When acidic liquids land on a marble slab, a tiny amount of the stone is dissolved, or "etched." This doesn't affect the integrity of the stone, but it does leave a slight change in the color and/or luster of the stone. On a polished stone, an etch looks like an unpolished area. Etches can be polished out, or they can be left alone and considered part of the natural patina that marble will acquire over time.

Marble is ground up into antacid tablets because calcite neutralizes acid, which makes your stomach feel better. That also explains why acid makes a mark on marble. The marble reacts with the acid, neutralizing the acid, but damaging your countertop in the meantime. Ironically, when your teenager dribbles pickle juice on a brand new countertop, you may find yourself reaching for the antacid, triggering the same chemical reaction both on the countertop and in your digestive tract.

The last piece of potentially bad news is that marble can form "star cracks" if a heavy, hard object falls on it. Star cracks look like small, light-colored areas where the impact occurred.

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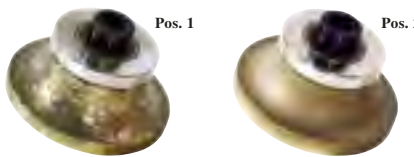
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Designed to give you professional results using Hercules, Master, Magnum, and Sector, when fabricating stone countertops. These fabricator-tested router bits use a special manufacturing process that bonds an extra-thick layer of diamond abrasives to help you achieve great results, and up to 300% longer life.

Position 1 is a Metal Bond/Sintered Router Bit. This very aggressive and long lasting first step is used for quick stock removal and rough edge shaping. Supplied with 2 bearings. The first bearing is over-sized to allow the second tool to refine the profile edge. The second bearing is used when only using the first profile bit.

Position 2 is a Metal Bond/Sintered Router Bit. This second step removes lines, leaving a smooth, honed finish on the edge making it ready for polishing.

- Position 1 comes with 2 bearings
- Use pos. 1 bearing when following it with pos. 2 wheel
- Recommend running speed is 9,000 RPM
- 6mm layer of diamonds for long tool life
- Same geometry as Viper CNC profile wheels
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2cm Radius Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55000	Viper A-20 (2cm), Radius Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$179.95
55001	Viper A-20 (2cm), Radius Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$161.95



2cm Ogee Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55006	Viper F-20 (2cm), Ogee Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$227.95
55007	Viper F-20 (2cm), Ogee Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$217.95



3cm Radius Router Bits



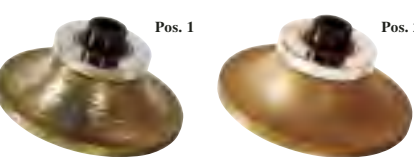
Item #	Description	OUR Price
55020	Viper A-30 (3cm), Radius Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$270.95
55021	Viper A-30 (3cm), Radius Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$251.95



3cm Ogee Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55008	Viper F-30 (3cm), Ogee Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$275.95
55009	Viper F-30 (3cm), Ogee Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$221.95



2cm Demi Bullnose Router Bits



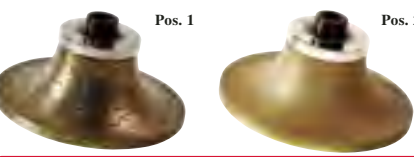
Item #	Description	OUR Price
55002	Viper B-20 (2cm), Demi Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$252.95
55003	Viper B-20 (2cm), Demi Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$246.95



2cm Full Bullnose Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55014	Viper V-20 (2cm), Full Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$235.95
55015	Viper V-20 (2cm), Full Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$232.95



3cm Demi Bullnose Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55004	Viper B-30 (3cm), Demi Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$337.95
55005	Viper B-30 (3cm), Demi Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$330.95



3cm Full Bullnose Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55016	Viper V-30 (3cm), Full Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$361.95
55017	Viper V-30 (3cm), Full Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$342.95



2cm Bevel Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55010	Viper E-20 (2cm), Bevel Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$213.95
55011	Viper E-20 (2cm), Bevel Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$203.95



4cm Full Bullnose Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55018	Viper V-40 (4cm), Full Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$397.95
55019	Viper V-40 (4cm), Full Bullnose Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$379.95



3cm Bevel Router Bits



Item #	Description	OUR Price
55012	Viper E-30 (3cm), Bevel Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 1	\$307.95
55013	Viper E-30 (3cm), Bevel Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 2	\$288.95



5cm Straight Z Profile Router Bit



Item #	Description	OUR Price
10459	Viper Z-50 (5cm), Straight Z Router Profile Wheel, Pos. 1, 36 Grit, 2" OD x 2" H, 9,000 RPM Max	\$190.95

Now YOU can solve a \$200 problem... **3.98**
 for only ~~\$4.95!~~ ~~4.95~~



"We use them when the dishwasher is not on site. Works great, no return trips."

Jeremy Williamson, SFA
 Granite Shop Manager
 Kitchen Craft Inc.
 Osage Beach, MO

NEW size for compact dishwashers!

Item #	Description	Great LOW Price
10565	E-Z Dishwasher Bracket with Mounting Screws, 24"	\$3.98
10578	E-Z Compact Bracket with Mounting Screws, 18"	\$3.98
10763	E-Z Dishwasher Bracket with Mounting Screws, 24" Ship Saver 100 Pack	\$369.00
10764	E-Z Compact Bracket with Mounting Screws, 18" Ship Saver 100 Pack	\$369.00



The E-Z Dishwasher Bracket attaches to the cabinet with wood screws, as well as to the countertop with impact absorbing adhesive caulk or silicone. It is made to accommodate virtually any dishwasher on the market and may be installed prior to or after countertop installation.

More than **ONE MILLION** sold!

Michael Peay, a veteran home builder with 30 years of experience that includes hundreds of kitchen installs, was continually confronted with a nagging problem—mounting the dishwasher. Out of frustration, Michael Peay invented and patented the solution.

Installation Problem

Why is installing the dishwasher always on the punch list? There are many reasons; after all, who is responsible for this task? Is it the granite guy, the plumber, the appliance delivery man, or the general contractor? If the granite installer is responsible and the dishwasher is on site, there is no problem, but many times this is not the case. So in order to preserve your good name and reputation it means an expensive return trip to install the dishwasher.

Installation Solution

Can \$3.98 solve this costly return trip? The answer is YES! It is estimated that it could cost nearly \$200 in time, labor and fuel to pull someone off another job for this one chore. There is no need for the dishwasher to be on site and you can install before or after the countertop is installed. And it is designed to fit all standard dishwashers and install them correctly.

Easy To Use

The E-Z Dishwasher Bracket can be installed in 2 minutes and is a permanent solution. If the dishwasher is not installed or not on site, simply fasten the E-Z Dishwasher Bracket to the cabinet with the hardware supplied, apply silicone to dampen the sound, and install the granite. As simple as that, your job is done, with regard to the dishwasher.

If the dishwasher and countertop are already in place, simply bend the tabs to fit in between the cabinets, apply silicone, put in place and fasten with the hardware supplied.

No More Call Backs to Install a Dishwasher!

This solution seems so simple, the only question you'll ask is, "Why didn't I think of this, before?" This product really works, and we'll prove it to you. We guarantee that you'll agree this is a **real \$3.98 solution**. Call Braxton-Bragg and never have to make that expensive return trip again. Our knowledgeable sales staff wants to let you know "you have a friend in Tennessee," and we listen to you. Count on Braxton-Bragg for all your installation needs.

Call today! Toll free 1-800-575-4401
 This Great Low Price has been extended due to popularity!



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Braxton-Bragg Announces Three New Product Partnerships

Continued from page 10



Envy™ Stainless Steel sink line offers a premium product in six popular designs at an excellent price point for stone shops.

“These partnerships are consistent with our philosophy of Better Service-Better Value, and we are in the process of adding supplier partners to our line until we meet all of our customers’ needs with great quality and world class service,” adds Stimac.

About Braxton-Bragg

Since its beginning in 1995, Braxton-Bragg’s philosophy has been to offer the best customer service and the best value for the money. This is accomplished by providing quality tile, stone and concrete tooling and supplies at the best prices and best in-stock availability. For more info, please visit www.braxton-bragg.com and [facebook.com/braxtonbragglc](https://www.facebook.com/braxtonbragglc).

“The simple step of a courageous individual is not to take part in the lie. ‘One word of truth outweighs the world.’”
—Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn



Stone Shield Penetrating Sealers

Q: Who Would Actually Test Countertops Against Stains Like Ketchup, Mustard, Olive Oil, Wine, and Peanut Butter?

A: Your Customer. Are You Prepared?

Your Reputation Rides on Ketchup!

Think about it. Word of mouth is the best advertising. How are your countertops holding up? Often the difference between a countertop that looks great for several years and one that doesn’t is the sealer.

Your Customer Doesn’t Know

It’s amazing, but most people do not understand that stone is porous. Neither do they understand that harsh supermarket cleaners can harm sealers.

Not All Sealers are Created Equal

Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealers are high performance, impregnator sealers for all natural stone. Stone Shield™ is formulated with the latest solvent-based

fluoropolymer technology to protect against all oil and water-based stains.

Stones Gotta Breathe

Unlike surface sealers, Stone Shield™ is a deep penetrating sealer that leaves the stone to breathe. Small molecules allow for deep penetration and long-lasting protection of the stone without leaving a surface film that quickly wears off.





We Test So You Don’t Have To

The manufacturer of Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealers constantly tests for real life hazards. We know that you don’t have time to test and verify all the materials you use. That’s why we

offer the Braxton-Bragg unconditional guarantee on the Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealer.

Honed, Leather, and Brushed Surfaces

These surfaces need even more protection. That’s why we offer Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealer in two versions. One is for traditional **Polished Surfaces** and one for **Porous Surfaces** that need extra protection.

-  **Won’t change color of stone**
-  **Odorless**
-  **FDA compliant solvent**
-  **Interior and exterior use**

For Porous Surfaces

Item #	Description	Our Low Price
4453	Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealer, Quart	\$39.95
4452	Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealer, Gallon	\$118.72

Coverage: 200-1,500 Sq. Feet/Gallon



For Polished Surfaces

Item #	Description	Our Low Price
4450	Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealer, Quart	\$23.07
4451	Stone Shield™ Penetrating Sealer, Gallon	\$59.65

Coverage: 1,000-1,500 Sq. Feet/Gallon



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Marble

Continued from page 34

This is usually an aesthetic issue, not a structural one, but if an impact occurs at the edge of the stone, it can chip or flake.

One thing you needn't worry about with most marbles is staining. The metamorphism that bakes the stone also knits the minerals together tightly. Porosity for marble is similar for that of granite. That said, the porosity of all stones varies, so check the stone specs and do your own tests with a sample of stone. Marbles are typically sealed to reduce the likelihood of staining. Alas, sealing does not make marble any less prone to etching, I'm sorry to say.

Now you can see why some people love marble while others think that marble-lovers are crazy. To some, the nicks and etches on a marble surface add character and mark the passage of time in a busy household. To others, each blemish resonates as a personal loss. Which way do you see it? This is an important question to consider before you head to the slab yard.

Marble with Magnesium = Dolomite

Dolomitic marble is a close relative of regular marble. Standard marble is made of calcite (CaCO₃), and dolomitic marble has a little magnesium in the mix (CaMgCO₃). There is not a huge difference between the two variations, except that dolomitic marble is a little bit slower to etch. You'll have a moment to wipe up a spill before the chemical reaction takes place.

Marble with Quartz = Confusing

While marble is primarily made of calcite, it's possible for the



Veria Green marble

Photo courtesy of Stone Group International

original limestone to have occasional layers of sand or chert (chert is a marine rock made of pure silica). These interlopers turn into areas of quartz as marble undergoes metamorphism. The end result is a stone that is mostly calcite with some quartz. This combination of ingredients has kicked off industry-wide confusion, because calcite and quartz have distinctly different properties but they look alike.

Unfortunately, marble that contains minor amounts of quartz is sometimes labeled "soft quartzite," which is both an oxymoron and a misnomer. There is no such thing as soft quartzite, and that term should be avoided by dealers, designers, and customers alike. Marble that contains small areas of quartz is still marble and should just be called marble. Super White is one well-known example of a mislabeled stone. Super White is a dolomitic marble with occasional bits of quartz. Super White is neither quartzite nor "soft quartzite." It's marble, and a gorgeous one at that. (You can learn more about the quartzite/marble labeling problem in *The Definitive Guide to Quartzite*.)

The Rose and Cedar varieties of Tennessee marble are the happy result just the right amount of iron oxide.

Photos courtesy of Tennessee Marble



Limestone is Sometimes Classified as Marble

The term "marble" is often applied broadly rather than literally. Polished limestone is sometimes called marble. While there's not a huge difference between the two, marble is much more dense and therefore is resistant to staining. If a slab has fossils, shell fragments, or has open pockets within the stone, it's limestone.

Many stones classified as black marble are actually black limestones. This is particularly true for dark colored stones with stark white veins, like China Black, Dynasty Brown, or Nero Portoro. Because marble has origins as a fluid, heated rock, it's stripes and veins are usually soft, flowing, and curved rather than angular.

Many Ways to Bring Marble into Our Lives

Marble remains a popular choice for countertops, backsplashes, bathrooms, tabletops, flooring, and cladding. Marble's versatility makes it at home in an ancient Greek sculpture, in a lavish hotel lobby, or on a hardworking kitchen island. Marble also finds its way into our lives as household objects like cheese boards, rolling pins, vases, and lamps.

Despite the emergence of marble lookalikes, there's nothing quite like the real thing. Real marble has qualities that cannot be



The Oculus, a calming expanse of soaring white marble ribs, is part of the 9/11 site, located next to the footprint of the fallen towers.

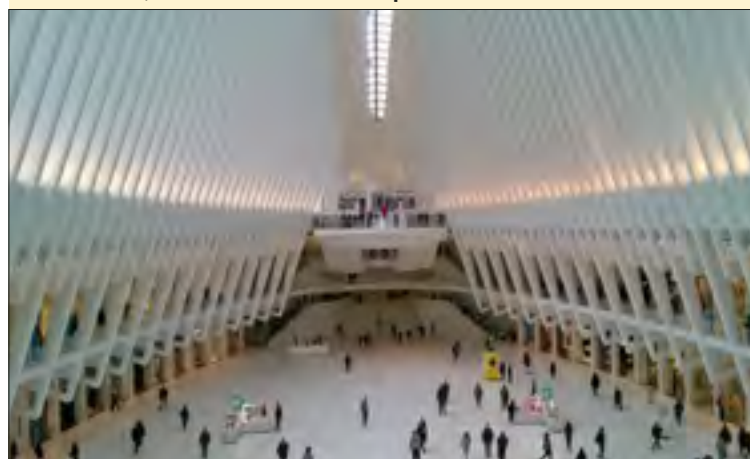


Photo by Karin Kirk

replicated in a lab. I recently visited the 9/11 Memorial, a sobering space of monument, museum, and reflection. Next to the footprint of the fallen towers, rises the one part of the site that inspires optimism. Called the Oculus, it's part transit center, part shopping mall, and its soaring white ribs beckon investigation.

Visitors who step inside are rewarded with a vast, cathedral-like space, covered in pure white marble. The combination of natural light, natural stone, and creative architecture transform the somber mood into a hopeful one. Wandering around the expansive structure, I finally put my finger on my favorite quality of real marble. Light penetrates into the white stone, then radiates back out in heavenly luminosity, filling the room with a warm, soft glow. Leave it to a stone like marble to completely alter the mood of a building. Marble has been a metaphor for worship, reverence, and beauty for millennia. Its ability to do that is all the more appreciated today.

To learn more, you can visit these websites:

The Many Uses of Marble: geology.com/rocks/uses-of-marble/, from Geology.com

Different varieties of marble from Carrara:

www.litonline.com/en/article/2017-sep-13/different-varieties-marble-carrara

More than 150 commercial varieties of marble come from the Carrara area in central Italy. This article describes many different marbles, such as Calacata, Statuary, and more.

Read more about the history of Carrara marble in *Stories in Stone: Travels Through Urban Geology*, by David B. Williams. www.amazon.com/Stories-in-Stone-Travels-Through-Geology/dp/0802716229

Karin Kirk is a geologist and science educator with over 20 years of experience. She has taught college level geology, online courses and organized field trips. She currently works as a freelance science writer and education consultant. She brings with her a different perspective to the stone industry. Karin was an education program presenter at TISE 2018 and a regular contributor to usenaturalstone.com and the Slippery Rock Gazette.

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