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2010

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Some people stand out in a crowd  
when it comes to making things happen.  
They are the risk takers — individuals  
with the initiative and talent to establish  
a business and see it through to success.

Our A-list spotlights people  
you'll want to get to know,  
all living right here in Greater Lafayette,  
where the spirit of entrepreneurship is alive and well.

LAFAYETTE  
MAGAZINE

COMPILED BY JENNIFER STREISAND PHOTOS BY ED LAUSCH PHOTOGRAPHY



## Jay Andrew

## Jim Andrew

## Tom Andrew

**A**s president and owner of two companies, Henry Poor Lumber Co. and Home Works, Jim Andrew works closely with his sons Jay and Tom to supply building materials and services to a wide range of

*“our customers are friends of ours. We get to know them on a long-term basis.”*

- Jim Andrew

customers from professional builders to those remodeling their own homes. A Lafayette fixture

since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Henry Poor Lumber has always sought to expand its product offering and meet the changing needs of its customers. Andrew bought the business in 1983 and opened Home Works in 1987.

Home Works carries all of the items necessary for interior remodeling and new construction, which Andrew says is strong in Greater Lafayette. “We do a lot of carpet and a lot of floor covering, ceramic tile, hardwood, countertops, back splashes, kitchens, bathrooms, just a myriad of interior products,” says Andrew.

The staff at Henry Poor can design and create custom woodwork with its on-site milling operations. “We can take raw lumber and turn it into molding, furniture, cabinets, windows, doors to match whatever the customer wants,” he says. Henry Poor also offers siding, windows, doors, fireplaces and a full line of premium building materials. Andrew notes, “The most enjoyable part of my job is working with our customers and staff. Most of our customers are friends of ours. We get to know them on a long-term basis.”



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## Christine **Bowman**

## Randy **Bellinger**

**C**hristine Bowman and Randy Bellinger say it's the variety of the outdoors that makes them so passionate about running their businesses, Bellinger's Professional Grounds Maintenance, Inc. and Bellinger's Tree Care LLC. The two founded Bellinger's Professional Grounds Maintenance in 1978 as recent graduates of Purdue University: Bowman with a major in forestry and Bellinger in turf science.

*"We both love Lafayette."*

- Christine Bowman

"We both love Lafayette," says Bowman. "Lafayette was home as soon as we stepped foot on campus, for both of us."

Their first business, Bellinger's Professional Grounds Maintenance, Inc. helps its clients with the important task of maintaining and beautifying their lawn and landscapes. In 2004 they founded a second business: Bellinger's Tree Care. The companies have two large nurseries—a 32-acre property on 350 South and Old Romney Road, and a 50-acre property on State Road 25 West, where they

grow 20,000 trees.

"We have a big fall tree sale every year," says Bellinger. "People come right to the field where there are 20,000 trees from which to choose."

As co-owners of their staff of 15, they never ask anyone to do a job they haven't done themselves, and the growth of their businesses hasn't just meant revenue. They have been able to branch out to attend to the nuances of outdoor life, often to take a piece of land that is an eyesore, and make it beautiful.



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# Eva & John Christodoulakis



**E**va and John Christodoulakis love traveling. Inevitably they find a restaurant or a street vendor with a different perspective on food. The goal is to recreate that experience in their Lafayette restaurant, RedSeven Bar & Grill, which opened downtown in 2008.

*“...the restaurant becomes an extension of our home.”*

- John Christodoulakis

“When we travel, we think about, ‘How do we apply this, how do we bring these flavors to Lafayette,’” says John.

Every part of their life is reflected in the restaurant, says Eva. When they designed RedSeven, they combined the trendy atmosphere of a bigger city restaurant with Midwestern hospitality. Operating the restaurant is also a collaboration between the two of them. John oversees the atmosphere and design, and Eva, the food and the menu, which is seasonal with additions every four or five months. She calls the menu “American eclectic,” including gourmet sandwiches, angus steaks, salads, and seafood.

“America is a melting pot, so we have a variety of Asian dishes,” she says. “American standards and some Latin influences. To me that is American—something from every culture.”

While the two spend their vacation time traveling to try different cuisines, most of the year they are in the restaurant.

“It is pleasurable for us because we get to know our customers,” says John. “And as they get to know us, the restaurant becomes an extension of our home.”



# Red Seven

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## Walter Cornelius

**W**hen Walter Cornelius opened Roof Recovery Complete Exterior in 2008, he was concerned about starting a business in the middle of an economic down-

*“That comes back to doing the job right and really going above and beyond for the homeowner.”*

- Walter Cornelius

turn, but his business venture has thrived.

As owner of the company, Cornelius attributes its

success to unmatched workmanship and attention to detail.

“We did start in the midst of all of these tough times, and we are doing well,” he says. “That comes back to doing the job right and really going above and beyond for the homeowner.”

Roof Recovery Complete Exterior specializes in installation of new roofs and roof repairs, in addition to siding, gutters, and shingle stain removal.

“I enjoy working with homeowners and making it easy for

them because when it comes to your home, it is such a big investment,” he says. He has the privilege of making his living in his hometown as a lifelong resident of Lafayette.

Cornelius is proud of his staff, which are with him all year long, and he is proud of his family. Everyone has contributed to the success of the business, he says.

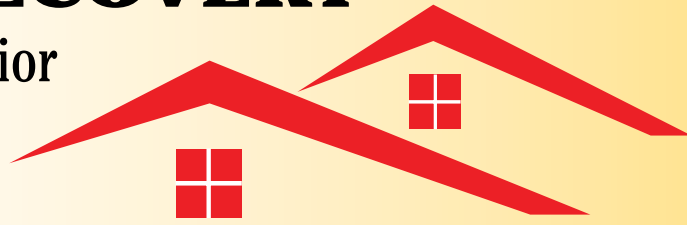
“So doing all of this, raising a family and watching everything grow, it’s my heart, and that’s my biggest achievement.”





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## Rick Davis

## Gary Henriott

**R**ick Davis and Gary Henriott say the new logo and tagline for the Henriott Group, “Client Focused, Results Driven,” was the result of a company-wide effort to describe the values and approach of Henriott, whether it’s with a business and their risk management,

*“We use a process-driven approach to evaluate a client’s needs.”*

*- Rick Davis*

employee benefit needs, or with individuals and families to address

wealth management and insurance issues.

“Every client is different,” says Davis, president of the company. “We use a process-driven approach to evaluate a client’s needs, and then put an action plan together to deliver the results they want.”

Henriott Group Inc., was founded in 1963 by Charles Henriott, Gary’s father. Gary joined the company in 1972, and as CEO, led the company from its roots as a small personal insurance agency into a leading independent broker employing 30 professionals in Lafayette and Indianapolis.

Henriott will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2013.

“The desire to help individuals and businesses solve problems is what attracted me to the company initially, and still motivates me today,” says Henriott.

Rick, Gary, and many members of the staff are also very involved with community service projects. Rick and Gary both cherish family time. Rick and his wife, Jennifer, have a 5-year-old daughter, Madeleine. Gary and his wife, Shelly, have three grown children—David, Carrie, and their daughter, Kelley, who is vice president of operations at Henriott.





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## Connie Fleming

**C**onnie Fleming knew she wanted to be in the bridal business from the time she was a little girl in South Dakota when she attended an aunt's wedding and was infatuated with her beautiful dress.

*"I have always loved pretty dresses."*

- Connie Fleming

"Every year on our birthday, my grandfather bought us a new dress, and so I have always loved pretty dresses," she says.

She attended the Dallas Fashion Merchandising College, and then worked in retail for many years before she and her husband, Earl Fleming, opened Chiffon Formal and Bridal Wear in August 2001. The store carries a full line of wedding gowns, bridesmaids' dresses, prom dresses, and tuxedos. This year they added 3,000 square feet to the store to give customers an even greater selection. The top designers sold are Maggie Sottero, Allure Bridals, and Casablanca.

"You don't have to go to

Chicago or Indianapolis to buy a really special dress," notes Fleming. "It's right here in Lafayette. When we go to market, we buy dresses that are truly special." In fact, the reverse is true: Many brides from Indianapolis and Chicago come to Chiffon to choose their dress.

Perhaps it is her love of weddings that inspires her to spend her free time in the garden surrounded by flowers, and she also enjoys reading.

"I like quiet things," she says.





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## Patrick Johnson

## Tad Ritchie

**C**ooking shows and recipes have become more varied than ever before, so Tad Ritchie and Patrick Johnson of D&R Market in Lafayette are helping people feed their “inner gourmet.” They like

*“We are constantly working to bring in all of the big unique items...”*

- Patrick Johnson

to interact directly with the customers and help them find exactly what they need to make a new recipe or dish—or perhaps find

what customers regularly like at the store.

“We are constantly working to bring in all of the big unique items that you might see in a larger city like Indianapolis or Chicago and to keep current with the newest techniques in cooking,” says Johnson.

Johnson and Ritchie took over operations of D&R when the previous owners, Dave and Ron Shoemaker, retired from the business in 2006. Since then they have maintained the great reputation of the original D&R,

and they have expanded the business with the opening of a catering and barbecue section, D&R II, which is located in the same plaza.

The market sells a large quantity of locally grown produce, which is a natural draw for shoppers, says Ritchie.

“It’s comforting for customers to come into the store and be able to speak to anyone on the staff and get excellent service, which they know results in a better cooking and dining experience at home,” says Ritchie.



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# Trent Johnson



Trent Johnson began his career with State Farm Insurance as an auto insurance underwriter, and he thought he might leave one day to become a teacher and a coach. But he enjoyed the opportunity at State Farm, and stayed.

After working at the State Farm Operations Center for six years,

*“I love  
what  
I do”*

- Trent Johnson

Trent decided it was time to try to become a State Farm Agent, and since then, his office has been recognized for its achievements.

It won the prestigious Chairman’s Circle Award at State Farm six times, an award given to the company’s top performers. Trent and his team of eight staff members sell auto, home, life, health and business insurance, and he says being located in West Lafayette couldn’t be more beneficial to his business.

“We think we have one of the best locations in Tippecanoe County,” he says. “We are conveniently located to all sides of the county and we’re close to Purdue University.”

The unpredictable nature of life makes each day different for Trent and his staff, but his customers can always count on him being there.

“I am usually in my office every day by 7:30, and I’m here until 5. I love what I do. I am an active and involved agent who enjoys giving back to this great community.”





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## Carolyn Kanehe

## Diane Boener

**W**hen Carolyn Kanehe and Diane Boener decided to go into business for themselves, they knew a few things—first, it had to be a great product and second, it needed to have integrity. They came up with Merle Norman Cosmetics— an industry-leading cosmetic company that is still

*“We love to help women look and feel their best.”*

*- Diane Boener*

family-owned and made in the USA. “Not many companies can say still say that!” Kanehe says with pride.

On April 1, 1998, the duo began their business as mother-daughter co-owners of Merle Norman Cosmetics in Lafayette. A few years later, in 2004, the team opened their second studio on the Westside. Boener attributes the success of both stores to their amazing staff of seven, including her sister, Debbie Schneider. Customers often ask if the entire staff is family because of the familiar, warm environment at the studios.

The beauty consultants at Merle Norman strive to be the best. The entire staff is professionally

-trained by world- renowned makeup artists. “We love to help women look and feel their best. And with our training, the women of Lafayette and West Lafayette can feel confident that we are on point when it comes to the latest skincare and makeup tips!” says Boener.

About being in business with her mom, Boener says it’s easy because they complement each other. They feel a great sense of accomplishment in having a successful business for over 12 years. “We have maintained a good business that’s fun AND rewarding,” says mom Kanehe.



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JC-0000153477

# Michael Kaplan



After leaving his hometown to earn a master's in social work, Michael Kaplan returned to Lafayette to take over the furniture business his father, George Kaplan, started in 1957. In 1985, he opened Michael's Furniture Galleries, which he ran until 2003. His dad's store was re-named Kaplan's Furniture, and he ran both until his dad's retirement in 1992.

*"Business is about listening,"*

- Michael Kaplan

In 2003 Kaplan and his wife, Ellie, built the La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries store.

"La-Z-Boy is a great company to work with and they are known for comfort and durability. La-Z-Boy makes a great product and the most comfortable furniture," he says.

Surprisingly, he finds that his background in social work is the perfect fit for customer and staff relations: "Business is about listening, which is one of the skills that you learn in social work training, and it's about understanding and filling people's needs."

In 2008, Michael started Strategic Solutions Coaching, LLC as a way to help other businesses increase their effectiveness. With his Masters of Social Work, over 30 years of successful business experience, and training at the Coaches Training Institute, Kaplan enjoys working with startup and existing businesses.

"My approach would best be classified as a 'Business-Life coach.' I take a holistic approach, working on business systems, strategies, leadership and relationships as well as how it relates to the owner's overall life goals."



# HOW'S YOUR BUSINESS?

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Most small business owners start off working hard, putting in long hours and wear all the hats of their business - this works well...for a while. Many owners end up tired, burnt-out, overwhelmed and feeling trapped in their business - is this you? If so, business coaching may prove critical for you.

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David Cobb- Owner Miracles Rehabilitation,  
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## Duke Karns

**C**reating an enthusiastic team atmosphere where “no one works for anyone else,” is one of the things that makes Duke Karns proud to be the owner of Carpetland USA in Lafayette. His managers—Theresa Hershberger,

*“If it goes on the floor, we most likely sell it.”*

- Duke Karns

controller, Steve Fleming, store manager, Tom Treece, assistant retail manager, John Hodges, commercial manag-

er, and Kevin Hyatt office/warehouse liaison—have all been with the store for more than 10 years, and some for over 30 years.

Duke began as a sales person with Carpetland in 1976 and quickly received several promotions, becoming the store manager in 1980 and the owner in 1996. He says his favorite part of the job is working with his staff of 10, and the customers.

“If it goes on the floor, we most likely sell it,” says Duke about the wide selection of carpet and flooring products,

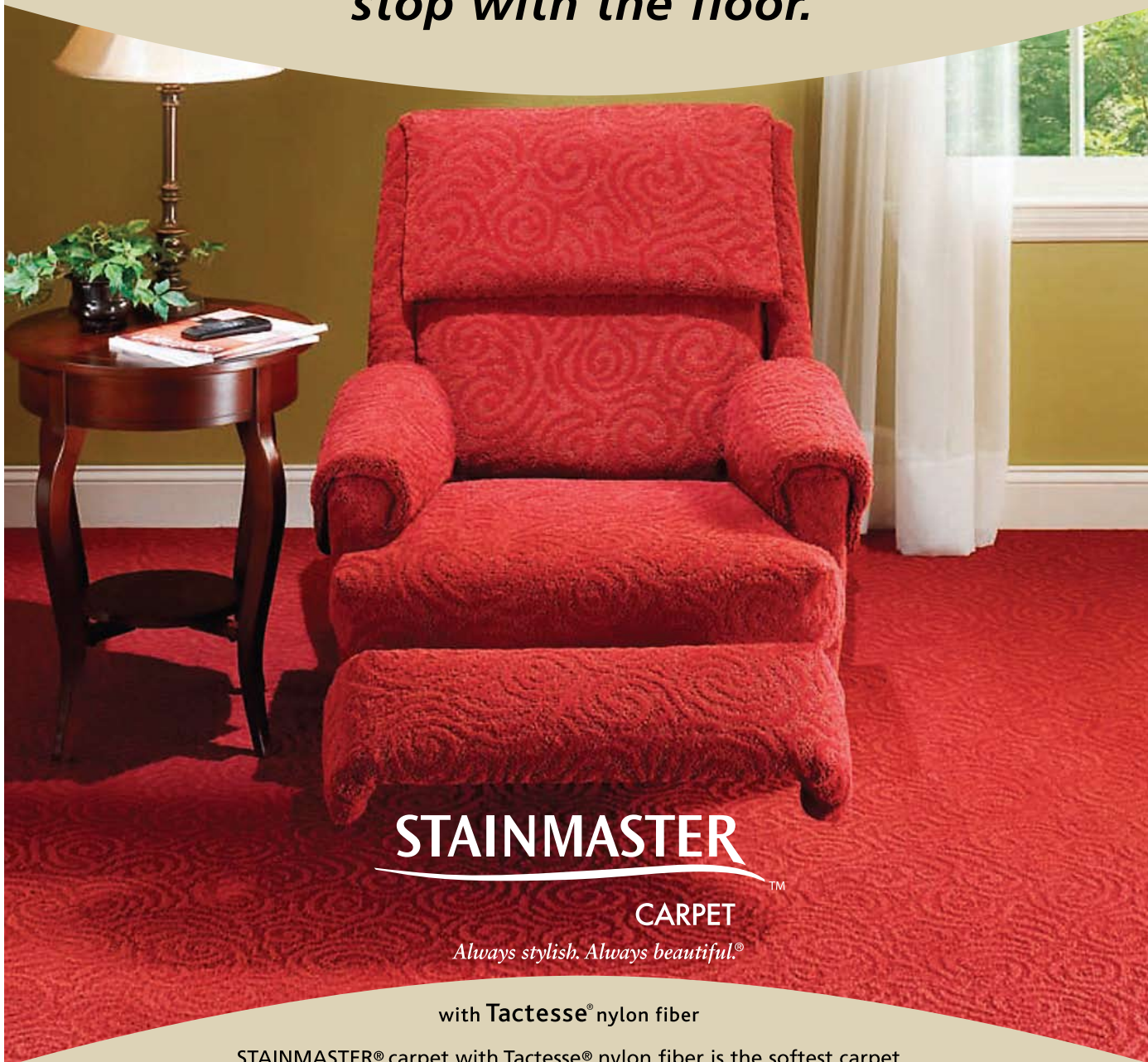
including ceramic tile, hardwood, laminate, vinyl, and all of the newest technology on the market.

Carpetland in Lafayette has been named Retailer of the Year by Alliance Flooring, a buying group, and has been awarded the *Journal & Courier* Reader’s Choice Award for favorite flooring store.

Although he has little free time, when he’s not at the store, Duke is spending time with his six grown children and four grandchildren, and he loves to sail the waters of Lake Michigan.



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