



Austin

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Part of the Solutions

Home sweet home



The Innovative Water Solutions staff specializes in water conservation. They know how to have fun around the office, too. L-R: Blake West, owner; Shannon Nettles, office manager; Gabe Vaughn, construction manager; James Grizzard, estimator; Chris Maxwell-Gaines, owner

Chris Maxwell-Gaines and **Blake West** speak two languages besides English: green water management and Ndjukan.

The co-owners of **Innovative Water Solutions** learned the latter, a dying language with African tribal roots and multiple influences, while serving in the Peace Corps in Suriname, a country in South America.

In a group of 26 Americans who were all strangers, Maxwell-Gaines and with his wife and West and his wife were on the same team, and soon, the pairs discovered both were Aggies.

"It was a really cool coincidence, and we became lifelong friends right at that moment," Maxwell-Gaines recalls.

Though they served in separate villages in opposite sides of the country, their common bonds kept them close. In 2002, soon after they returned to the U.S., both moved to Austin.

"Blake and I were drinking some beers and reminiscing about the Peace Corps, and we didn't understand why more people weren't collecting rainwater and that type of stuff here, because that's what we did in the Peace Corps for our drinking purposes," says Maxwell-Gaines, whose background is in civil engineering.

In 2004, West and he officially opened the business, but it was a year before West, whose background is in irrigation,

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The HD Supply Waterworks team works hard at the Pflugerville location.

Customer service representative **Serferino Arevalo** says **HD Supply Waterworks** has relocated to a facility in Pflugerville, TX.

"The building used to be a 24-hour UPS freight facility," Arevalo said. "We are very glad to be here. Since the building and the yard are centrally located, everything is quicker and easier to get to. The yard space is about the same as our previous location."

In his free time, Arevalo says his hobbies are spending time with his four children and watching football on the weekends.

Wayne Taylor is the district manager, **Ralph Bowen**, **John Murphy**, **Guy Riemenschneider** and **Jeff Gregory** are

account representatives and **Greg Torres** is the warehouse manager.

The customer service representative is **Jose Garza**, the estimators are **Eric Wolff** and **Dallas Pack**, the warehouse assistants are **Scott Arocha** and **Kenneth Curtis** and the drivers are **Ralph Carrington** and **Jackie Churchill**.

"All the salesman and drivers at the company like to go hunting and fishing and spend time in the great outdoors," Arevalo said. "They usually go hunting and fishing in the Hill Country."

Lisa Word, operations manager, says the company has Working Wednesday lunches during the year.

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Seeing is believing

Van & Van Austin is the general contractor for the recently completed Kerbey Lane Optical project located at 3709 Kerbey Lane. **Bruce Van Waes** is the owner of Van & Van Austin.

"Previously a salon, the 1,242-sf building was maintained in good condition," Van Waes said. "With the addition of almost 800 sf, it became a great investment for Dr. Ross, the optometrist who has maintained his practice in the area for over 30 years.

"We worked with Dr. Ross to design the office with additions extending off two different sides of the existing antique building. We also compromised the footprint of one of the additions to save a large oak tree that will continue to offer shade for the new office.

"Although not recognized as a historic site, it was our primary goal to maintain the quaint appearance of the original 1940s vintage home, but feature state-of-



Kerbey Lane Optical

the-art energy efficient systems such as open cell spray foam attic and wall insulation and a 15 SEER, 95 percent Lennox heating and cooling system."

Van Waes says the construction team replaced all the vintage counter weight windows with new wood jamb, insulated low E glass windows.

"We also replaced all the existing light fixtures with the latest available dimmable, LED fixtures," he said. "Our project manager **Bob Storey** worked directly with Dr. Ross and even helped him on the weekends with the assembly of the personal office systems and fixtures he provided.

"We consider this a very successful project in the way we smoothly handled working through the city approval and permitting processes, unexpected up-grading of the existing foundation as recommended by **Stewart Palvado**, our

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The front desk area

structural engineer and revising the building footprint to save existing shade trees.

"It always seems a little bittersweet as we complete each project after working so closely, getting to know each owner and their business, and in the end it's also nice to know we have made a new friend."

Van & Van Austin has one office located in Cedar Park, TX. Van Waes started the business in 1980 as a framing contractor with his then brother-in-law **Mike**

vanderHagen, who is now a project manager at the company.

"We contract all types of new construction projects as well as remodeling and rehabs," Van Waes said. "We began designing and building energy efficient, eco friendly structures way before it was cool to do so. The first house I designed in 1983 had passive solar features as well as radiant barrier. Over the last 32 years, we have completed many wood, steel and concrete structures of all sizes, some over 30,000 sf." —ab



The optical area

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could quit his day job, and another year before Maxwell-Gaines received his professional engineer's license and left his day job.

About 60 percent of their residential work is in the Hill Country, since rainwater collection is an effective and quality source of water. Though regular rainfall can be rare in the region, Maxwell-Gaines assures that proper design and planning provides an adequate water supply to sustain a large home even during last year's drought conditions.

"We create rainwater harvesting, graywater reuse, and irrigation systems as well as drainage improvements and landscape solutions," Maxwell-Gaines states. "And now, we're registered as a professional engineering firm. So, now we're a design/build company. I do design work for large commercial projects, and a lot of times, because this is such a niche market, we can roll into the installation of the systems that I design." —mp

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"We try to get all our contractors to come out to the Working Wednesday lunch event," she said. "Vendors give demonstrations and we also have door prizes. The guys cook for everyone too. They will cook barbecue, chili dogs and hamburgers."

"We have been getting really good feedback, so we are thinking about having the event once a quarter."

HD Supply Waterworks distributes a line of water, sewer, fire protection and storm drain products. —ab

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Round-Up

SpawGlass senior living and campus housing division operations manager, **Scott Hobza**, has been promoted to president, Austin region. A 21-year veteran of the firm, Hobza will be directly responsible for the overall leadership of the Austin operations. —ab



Yvonne L. Garcia, Raba Kistner Consultants Inc., has completed her Texas Principles and Practice of Engineering Exam and earned her Professional Engineer (P.E.) license. Garcia is a project engineer for the Geotechnical Group in the Austin office. She holds a B.S. degree in Agriculture Engineering for Texas A & M University. —ab



Peter Magaro has joined **Raba Kistner Environmental, Inc.** as an environmental planner. He has more than 14 years of experience in environmental consulting, assessments, oversight, and analysis. He received his master's degree in environmental science, and his bachelor's in geography (preservation of natural resources) from the University of Texas at San Antonio.



STG Design has promoted four team members at the Austin office. **Wendy Rosamond** and **Shawn Dubiel** have been promoted to associate principal and **Jennifer Mejia** and **Christina Meyers** have been promoted to associate.

Rosamond joined STG Design in 1998 as a project designer. Graduating from Southwest Texas State University with a degree in Interior Design, she also studied Furniture Design at Parsons School of Design.



Dubiel joined STG Design in 1998 as project manager. She earned her Bachelor of Architecture and B.S. in Environmental Design at the University of Oklahoma.



Mejia joined the firm in 2007. She is a graduate of Texas State University with a B.S. in Interior Design.



Myers joined the firm in 2004. She is a graduate of Texas A&M University with a B.A. degree in Economics. —ab



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